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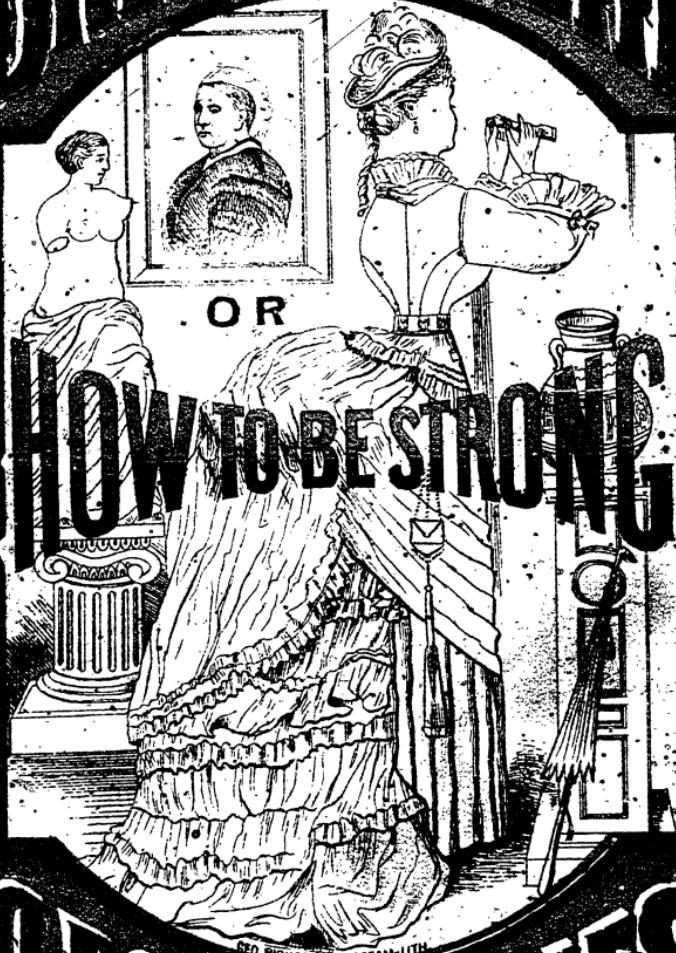
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READ AND LEND

# DRESS AND HEALTH



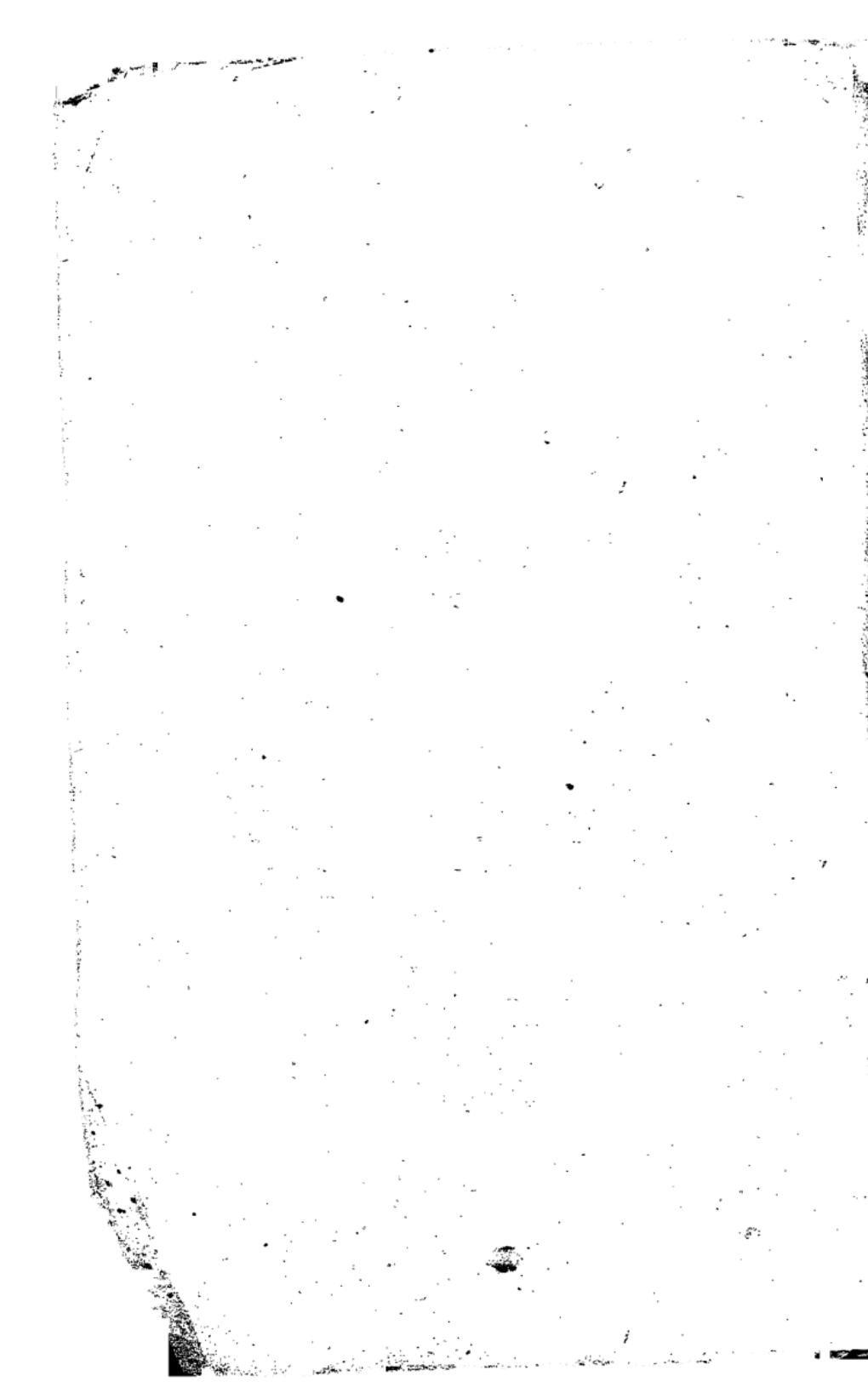
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# HOW TO BE STRONG

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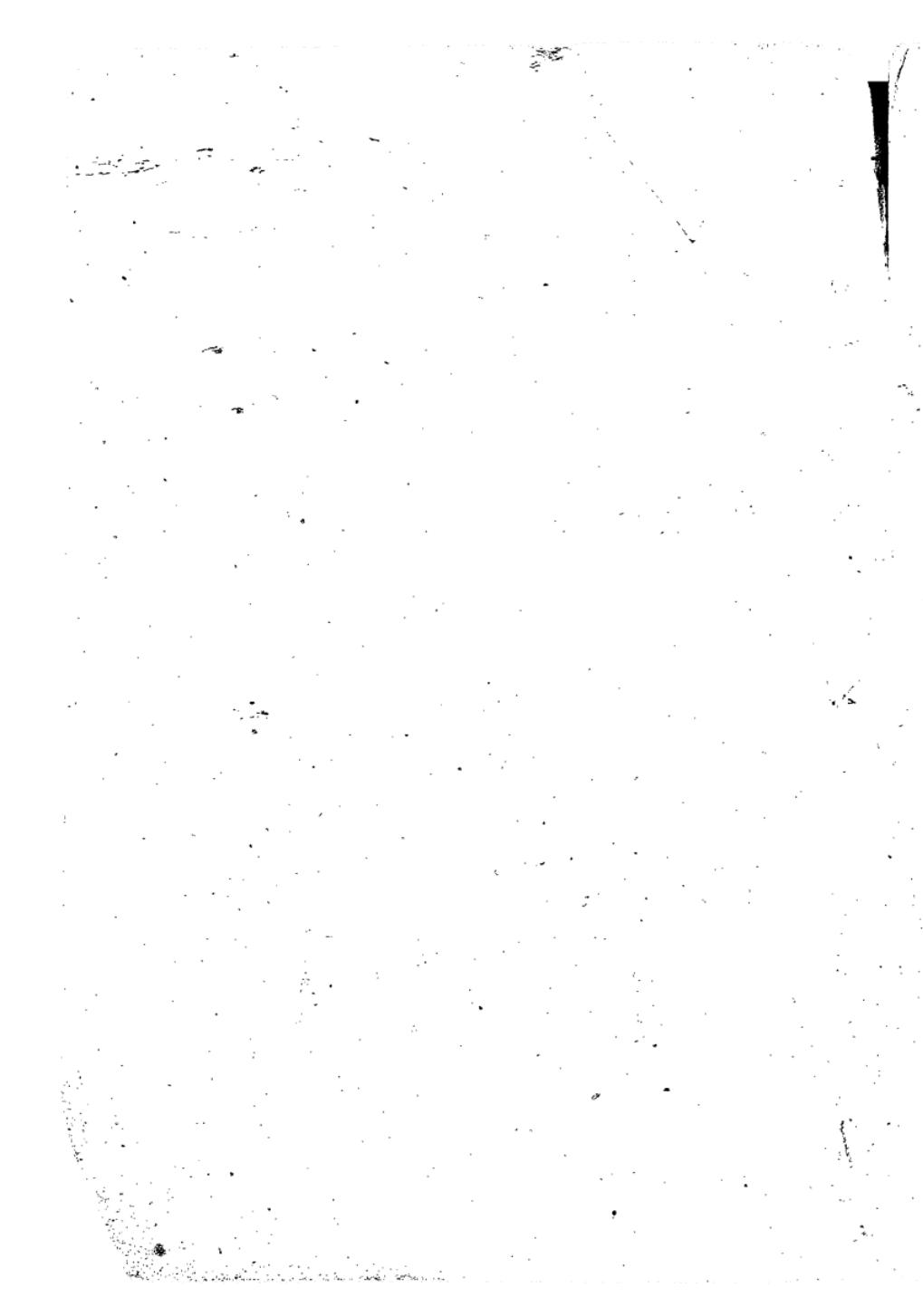
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*Witness Publishing House, Montreal.*

IN THE PRESS.

## HISTORY OF THE GUIBORD CASE.

### ULTRAMONTANISM vs. LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

"Curset is he who maintains that in a conflict between the civil and ecclesiastical laws, the civil law should prevail."—*Sylvaue, Chap. xlii.*

"Individual servitude, however obnoxious, will not satisfy the party now dominant in the Latin Church; the State must also be a slave. No one can become her convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another."—*Gladstone,*

The history of the Guibord case is one of the deepest interest, and illustrates fully the truth of the above quotations, which appear on its title page. Joseph Guibord, a quiet, respectable Roman Catholic, who belonged to the Institut Canadien, which corresponds to a Mechanics' Institute, was with his fellow members denied the rites of the Church at death and Christian burial after it, ostensibly because there were immoral books in the library. The members of the Institute did all they could to appease Bishop Bourget, even sending him a catalogue of books asking that the immoral ones be indicated, but after six months the catalogue was returned unmarked. While the matter was at Rome for adjudication, Guibord was on his death bed, and it was only the night before his death that the information that the general excommunication was sustained reached Montreal, and Guibord died unshaven. Although he owned a plot in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Montreal, burial in it was refused him ; the case came up in the Courts and was appealed from Court to Court till it reached the Privy Council of England, where it was decided in favor of the burial. The corpse was brought to the cemetery gates, but the bearers were stoned away by a drunken crowd ; and the last act was the burial enforced by the presence of the military.

This volume will detail every act in this conflict of might against justice and law, and the means taken on both sides to obtain the victory ; the interesting correspondence between Archbishop Lynch and Mr. Doutre, the Institut Canadien's counsel, on the justice of the burial ; the correspondence of Bishop Bourget on the matter ; the judicial decrees ; the portraits of the most important persons interested, including Bishop Bourget, Mr. Doutre, Guibord and others ; and altogether will be one of the most interesting books lately issued from the press. Price 50 cents.

JOHN LOUGALL & SON Montreal. Publishers.

*Witness Publishing House, Montreal.*

# SOL - FA LESSONS

WITH

## A Selection of Hymns and Songs,

A COMPENDIUM, BY THE AID OF WHICH ANYONE  
WITH A REASONABLE KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC  
CAN BOTH LEARN AND TEACH THE  
TONIC SOL - FA SYSTEM.

—:o:—

EDITED BY

JOHN McLAREN.

—:o:—

During the last few years the Sol-Fa system of music has made great advances, more particularly in England. It is said to be particularly useful in teaching children in Sabbath or other schools. This little book of 48 pages contains some of the newest and best hymns sung by

MR. SANKEY

and others in the revival services, where they have done much good. It is prefaced with a full description of the system, from which any, with only a fair knowledge of vocal music, can both learn or teach it. The following is the appearance of a portion of a page of this book:

*Key A Flat. TUNE "EVAN."*

s <sub>1</sub> : —	s <sub>1</sub> : d ; m : r	d : l <sub>1</sub> ; s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>
m <sub>1</sub> : —	s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub> ; s <sub>1</sub> : f <sub>1</sub>	m <sub>1</sub> : f <sub>1</sub> ; m <sub>1</sub> : m <sub>1</sub>
d <sub>1</sub> : —	m : m ; d : t <sub>1</sub>	d : d ; d : d'
d <sub>1</sub> : —	d <sub>1</sub> : d <sub>1</sub> ; d <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>	l <sub>1</sub> : f ; d : d

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want, He

JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Montreal, Publishers.

Mrs. Jane A. Roger

# DRESS AND HEALTH:

OR,

## HOW TO BE STRONG.

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A Book for Ladies.

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MONTREAL:  
JOHN DOUGALL & SON.

1876.

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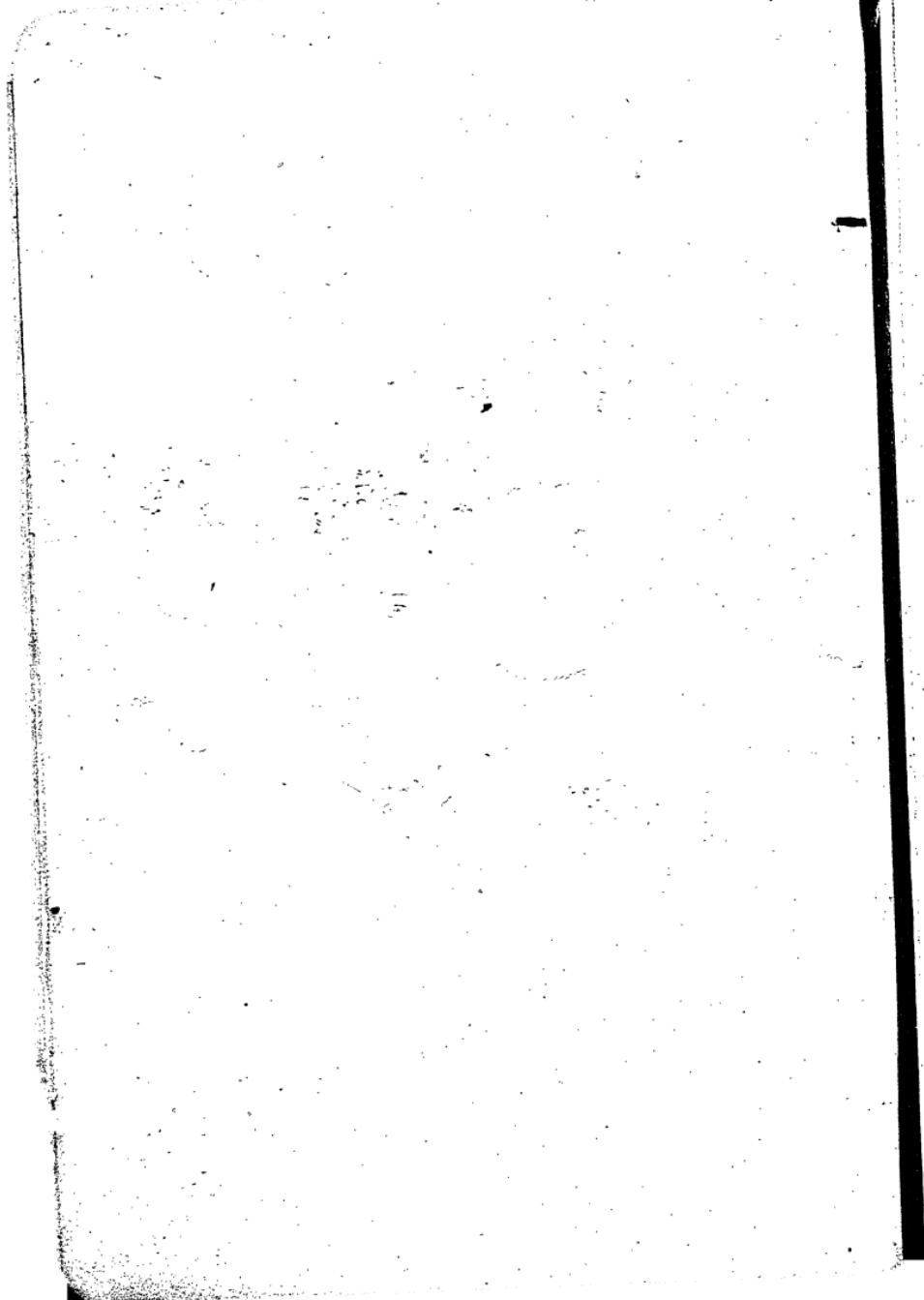
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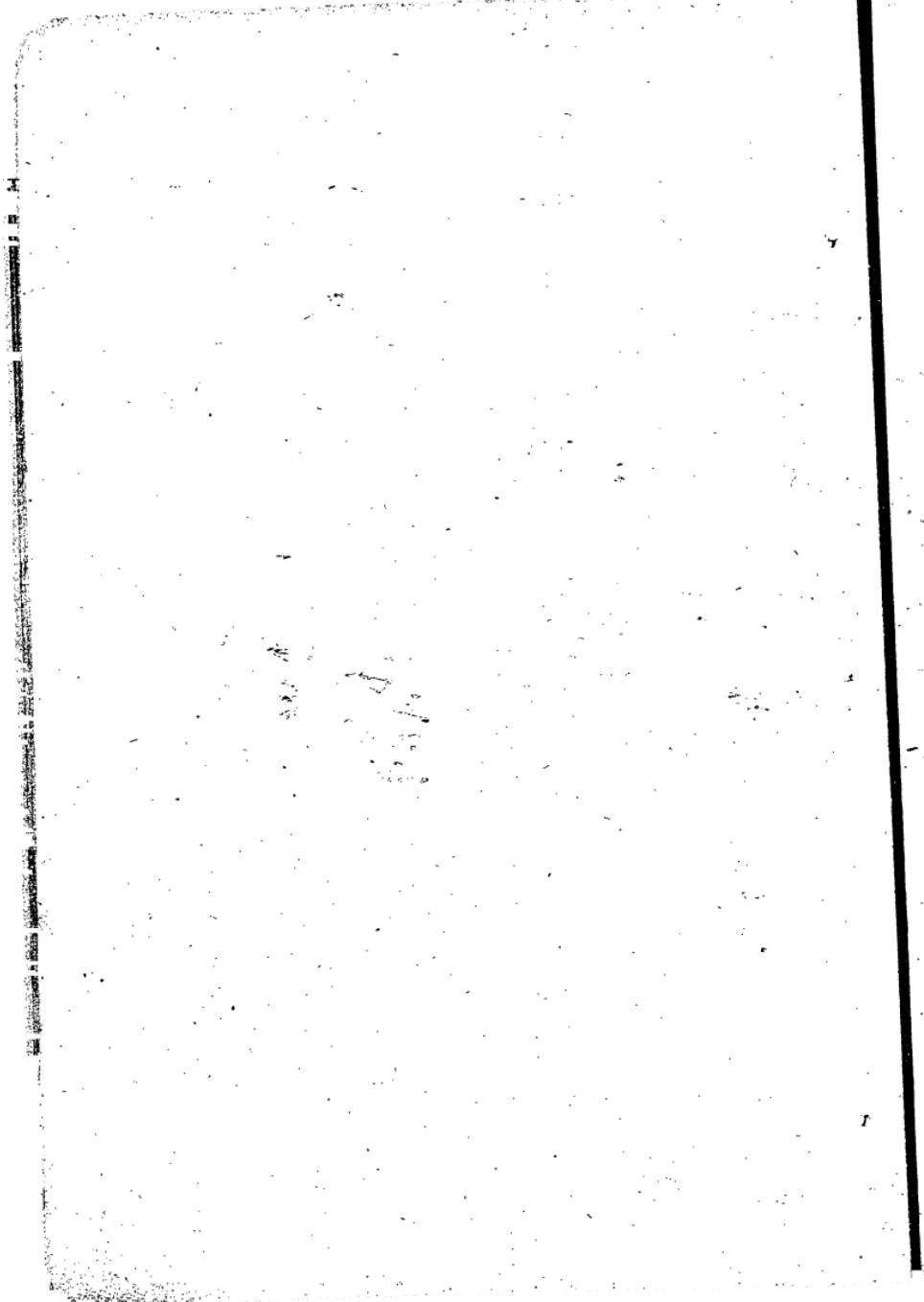
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As will be seen at a glance, this little volume is a compilation rather than an original work. The matter it contains has been selected from many different sources, in order to present as forcible a statement as possible of the evils resulting from the present bad arrangement of the underclothing, and of the possible improvements which may be made. It gives practical directions for making the reform garments, and has been placed at a very low price that it may be within the reach of all.



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# DRESS AND HEALTH.

## I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

DRESS Reform and Dress Emancipation are expressions odious beyond measure to the mind of a large majority of the cultivated and refined women of the day. Why is this? Because the expression seems to them to savor of the ill-odored "Woman's Rights" movement. Because it brings up reminiscences of the days when certain women, more brave than wise, attempted to lead a movement for the deliverance of their sex from the thraldom of dress by the adoption of the "bloomer" costume, which satisfied neither womanly taste nor womanly dignity; and because, farther, certain reformers of the present day have appeared in a mannish garb which has caused people to cry out in disgust "They want to dress like men." For these reasons the idea of dress-reform is a hateful one, though few thoughtful women will refuse to acknowledge that the present style of dress is not only uncomfortable but unhealthful and really burdensome. The idea that

it is possible so to improve upon dress that it shall be all that is desirable, and yet not render the wearer conspicuous, has only begun to dawn upon the civilized world. Many attempts have been made at certain hygienic homes, and by individual enthusiasts, to make matters better, but it has been reserved for a Committee of Boston ladies to work out the idea completely and to inaugurate a movement which, we trust, will become world-wide, and which, if carried out, is likely to relieve women from a large proportion of the diseases, under the weight of which many now drag out weary lives.

The *principles* of this reform are easily understood, and should be taken to heart by all who care for their own health, or that of their children. The *details* by which these principles are brought to bear upon the clothing are more confusing, and will probably take many different forms. In fact, no two ladies are likely to agree in every particular in working out these details, as the same result may be obtained in a dozen different ways. The main point is that the reform should be made, and in insisting upon this we shall avail ourselves of various hygienic works, but mainly of the book published by the Boston Committee in furtherance of their scheme. This book is entitled "DRESS REFORM." It appears

that this Association, believing that what was necessary was not to assail Fashion but to teach Hygiene, took measures for the public delivery of a series of free lectures to women concerning the structure of their dress and the important natural laws with which it conflicts. Believing that no views could be so intelligent, and no words so effective, as those of experienced female physicians, they selected four ladies, regularly educated, and able members of the medical profession, and urged them to lecture upon the theme: "Dress as it affects the Health of Women." One of these ladies has been for thirty years a well-known and successful practitioner, and during that period has had a wide acquaintance with the physical sufferings of her sex. Another is President of the Ladies' Physiological Institute of Boston, and for a long time has taken charge of an important dispensary at the North End. Two are regular professors and one a lecturer in the Medical Department of the new Boston University; and all are practising physicians of good repute. These ladies, without thought of recompense, consented to lecture, animated simply by a benevolent desire to stay the tide of misery and weakness which they are daily called upon to observe, and their words are surely worthy of careful attention. The lectures were delivered to crowded and eager

audiences in Boston, and were afterwards repeated by request in several adjoining cities. These physicians, each speaking from her own point of view, agreed not only in general statements, but also in minute details as to the evil wrought by the present style of dress. These lectures occupy the greater part of the book of which we are speaking, and of course the plan followed involves considerable repetition. Mrs. Abba Goold Woolson followed the other lectures by one taking up particularly the æsthetics of dress, and gives an appendix filled with practical hints with regard to the proposed improvements. We recommend this book ("Dress Reform") to the attention of those who are interested in the spread of the movement, and in the emancipation of others, but for the benefit of those who cannot obtain it and who yet wish to improve upon their present unhygienic dress, we will try to point out in this little work, in the first place the charges brought against the present styles, and, in the second, the principles of the proposed reform, with suggestions as to how they are to be carried out.

## II.

### REFORM NEEDED.

#### DRESS UNHEALTHFUL

An English physician, J. Milner Fothergill, M.D., M.R.C.P., in a recent book entitled "The Maintenance of Health: A Medical Work for Lay Readers," makes sweeping charges against woman's dress, though he evidently considers any radical change as too much to be hoped for. He says:—

"Next to this grave matter of shoes comes the question of female dress. This is usually hung from the hips and drags heavily upon the waistband, tightly encircling the abdomen, and so pressing down its contents. This is not quite so great an evil since the introduction of drawers into the list of articles of feminine apparel, but still heavy masses of dress, petticoats and skirts, are too frequently worn. The skirt of the dress is really only to conceal the lower limbs in conformity with custom, and a pair of doeskin or flannel drawers will give more comfort than several

layers of dress, flannel or quilted work fashioned as a skirt or petticoat.

"The corset, too, which within certain limits is not objectionable, is too often an utter abomination, and in the older days of stays, with a huge wooden 'staybone' in front, and eyelet holes with a lace at the back, a maid might be seen lacing up, hole by hole, her unhappy mistress; whose bust was driven out at the top of the stays in a most repulsive manner, her respiratory movements almost arrested, and her abdominal viscera squeezed till the indentations of the ribs upon the liver could be distinctly seen on examination after death. The pressure exerted by the combined action of stays and heavy skirts upon the contents of the abdomen and pelvis is most baneful, and displacement of the womb is one of the commonest consequences. The dress arrangements of women are radically bad and need great reform."

Lest the *animus* of this quotation from an English book should be overlooked, we repeat again the last sentence, "the dress arrangements of women are radically bad and need great reform."

#### URDENSOME.

Mrs. Woolson, an American lady, says of her country-woman:—

"She makes a new demand upon her attire.

She must still work in it, she must still look beautiful in it, but she must also be strong and comfortable and happy in it. It is in this requirement which she makes of her present dress that it fails her the most. She does manage to accomplish a deal of earnest work in it, though much less than she is capable of doing. The generations which she must please think she looks beautiful in it, since their eyes have become accustomed to its ugliness; but she finds herself borne down by its weight, breathless from its compressions, and weary with buffeting its opposing folds.

"Off all nations of the earth, we suffer the most from the cruel tyrannies of dress. None need a serviceable costume so much as we, and none have one so bad. Indeed, American ladies are known abroad for two distinguishing traits (besides, possibly, their beauty and self-reliance), and these are their ill-health and their extravagant devotion to dress. The styles they effect, in their reckless disregard of hygienic rules, strike sturdy German and English matrons with dismay. At home, our country-woman suffers the more because she is not content to be useless and indolent in all her fine array. Her energy, her intelligence in other matters, must exercise themselves within her house and without it. With strength impaired, she attempts to live the life of the busy worker in a

dress that the merest idler would find burdensome and oppressive. The result is a pain and a weariness that lead inevitably to discomfort and disease; but she has not yet learned that, while discomfort is a sin against herself, disease is a sin against God."

## UGLY.

Fashionable dress is generally acknowledged to be unhealthful and burdensome, but the further accusation may be made that it is palpably ugly. The writer just quoted says:—

"Probably no obstacle stands more in the way of a sensible dress-reform, such as health and comfort imperatively demand, than the prevailing notion that any such change must necessarily be hideous, and an offence to the eyes.

"We hear much from the opponents of such reform concerning the grace of flowing lines; and short skirts they refuse to tolerate, because an important feature of attractive raiment would thus be destroyed. But look at our modern robe. Where be the flowing lines in the flounces, the ruffles, the puffs, the over-skirts, and the bunchings at the waist, which a friend, for lack of a more definite term, has called the great hereafter? Not a single straight sweeping curve from belt to hem; but a terraced, balconied, Chinese pagoda,

with gingerbread ornaments confusing its architecture, and meaningless pendants swinging from every support. Can any plain, short skirt be half so bad as that?

Those who advocate a real and enduring dress-reform do so not only for the sake of health, but because they cannot forget, through blind adoration of prevailing deformities, in what the true harmonies of form and color consist. One whose life, as an artist, has been given to the study of beauty's laws, arraigns our present dress for 'its inconsistency with the just proportions of the human figure; for its prevention of muscular freedom, and consequent falsity to grace and beauty; for its excessive ornamentation, and its introduction of senseless and glaring deformities, which are disgraceful to the wearer, demoralizing to the community, and an outrage to good taste and common sense.' This is the dress which it is claimed we cannot change to-day without destroying all the loveliness of female apparel: a dress which so clothes the feet that graceful walking is impossible, and substitutes a hobbling limp in place of that firm and noble carriage which denotes the queen,—*incedit regina*; which prevents the arms from being raised above the head, and keeps them skewered feebly to the side; which obliterates curve of outline and sweep of fold by

meaningless and redundant trimming ; which exaggerates the bust, humps the hips, pinches the waist, and in every way tends to destroy freedom of motion and symmetry of form."

#### COMPLICATED.

Another charge brought against the dress of the present day is its complicated nature and the vast amount of work involved in making up the attire. Though this reform will simplify the work somewhat, it still professes to concern itself chiefly with the underwear, and will only affect the outer dress in so far as it educates a more correct taste and encourages sensible styles. It will, however, not be out of place to consider the matter in the light thrown upon it by one of the lecturers of whom we were speaking :—

"There is another evil demanding our earnest consideration, and it is one of the growing evils of the day. I mean the immense labor bestowed on all the garments, and extending to every article that is worn, so that those whose circumstances demand economy must give a large portion of their time to the making and embellishing of their wardrobes. By exhausting strength in too long-continued labor, they deprive themselves of sleep, 'tired Nature's sweet restorer,' and have no time for intellectual pursuits. 'Is not the life more than

meat, and the body more than raiment? And shall we neglect the soul and intellect God has given us, that we may adorn the perishing body?

"The lavish expenditure in dress, so common at the present time, is a matter of serious concern to those who reflect much upon its tendencies. Society, by denying to women the propriety of earning money, or of entering into any business that will make them self-supporting, fixes the badge of poverty upon all who attempt to provide in this manner for their own or their families' wants. Thus the burden of mortified pride is added to the exhausting labor of self-support, which is also rendered heavier for women than for men by the inferior wages the former receive, and by the necessarily higher cost of their wardrobe when they procure it made for themselves, as men procure theirs. In consequence of this expense, women seek to eke out their small incomes by sewing their own clothes; and, when engaged in business, this must be done after the regular task of the day is finished. Such wearying occupation often keeps them at work till the small hours of the night, and thus deprives them of the rest which is needful to refresh their tired bodies, and to render them fit for the labor of the coming day. We need not wonder that many

women break down under these accumulated burdens, especially when we consider that they have to do all this in clothing not fitted to preserve health, but rather calculated to fetter their powers, and to make work and motion a painful effort. Headaches and indigestions must result from the constant application of eyes, mind, and muscles to this most sedentary of all employments; and the persons so occupied become depressed in spirits, unacquainted with the activitics of the world, and little fitted to bear their part in those conversations and amusements which should make the family the centre of intellectual and affectional enjoyments, and which alone can retain husbands and brothers in the pure and tranquillizing atmosphere of a happy and cultivated home."

Thus we see the charges brought against the woman's dress are that it is unhealthy, burdensome, ugly, and unnecessarily complicated. It is, however, with the charge of unhealthfulness that we have principally to do in this volume, and we will consider the points made by the reformers more in detail.

### III.

#### COMPRESSING AND DEPRESSING.

Mary J. Safford-Blake, M.D., whose observations are entitled to special attention, as it is evident that she has carefully studied this matter, says:—

“A woman, accompanied by her husband, came to consult me on one of the dreariest days of last winter. Her teeth chattered with the cold; and you will not wonder at it, any more than I did, when I tell you that she had on cloth gaiter-boots, thin stockings, loose, light cotton drawers, two short skirts of flannel, a long one of water-proof, another of white cotton, an alpaca dress-skirt and an over-skirt. This made seven thicknesses, multiplied by plaits and folds, about the abdomen. Each of these skirts was attached to a double band; and thus the torrid zone of the waist was encircled by fourteen layers. All this weight and pressure rested upon the hips and abdomen; and the results were—what they must be, if this pressure has been long continued—a displacement of

all the internal organ , for you cannot displace one, without in some way interfering with another. Here was this woman, with nerves as sensitive as an aspenleaf to external influences, clad so that every breath of cold chilled her to the marrow, the neck and shoulders protected by furs, the hands and arms pinioned in a muff, the head weighted down by layers of false hair, and the legs almost bare ; while her husband, the personification of all that was vigorous in health, was enveloped, as he told me, from head to foot in flannel. His every garment was so adjusted that it not only added to the heat generated by the body, but helped to retain it. I question whether that hale, hearty man would not have suffered twinges of neuralgia or rheumatism, had he been exposed, as his wife was, to the severity of our atmospheric changes. Even in summer these changes are sudden and severe ; and then men are usually clothed in woollen garments, only a trifle thinner and lighter than those worn in winter ; while women are often decked in nothing but muslin, and are chilled by every sudden nor'-easter.

"The soldiers of Austria were accustomed to retain their pantaloons about the hips by means of a leathern strap. Disease of the kidneys increased so alarmingly among them that especial attention was drawn to the subject ; and it was decided that

the closely buckled band about the loins was the cause of the evil. A decree then went forth making the adoption of suspenders imperative. It would have been wise if that imperial investigation had extended to the garments worn by women, and had led to a prohibition of the many bands and heavy weights that encircle and drag them down. The physical degeneracy of the mothers will leave its impress upon sons, as well as upon daughters; and in the end the national strength languishes under the weaknesses of inheritance.

"The vigor of manhood in Austria is squandered in military service, and this throws much manual labor upon women. In Vienna, you will see in early morning a rank and file of two hundred men and women awaiting the roll-call that shall apportion to each his or her labor for the day. Side by side with the men, women lay railroad iron, dig sewers, and carry up over steep ladders, on their heads or shoulders, brick and mortar for the laying of walls. Their dress, in length at least, is well adapted to the work assigned them; it reaches but little below the knee, and is there usually met by long boots. You see at a glance that the broad peasant waist has never been crowded into corsets, and you rejoice in the belief that it is free from the inward distortions

that bone and steel are known to produce. But a fearful accident occurred in Vienna, while I was in the hospitals : a brick block of houses fell, killing and mangling several women who were employed in building them. 'Now,' I thought, as I entered the pathological room where a *post-mortem* examination was to be held upon them, 'I shall once, at least, have an opportunity of seeing the internal organs of women normally adjusted.' To my utter astonishment, it was quite the reverse. In one case, the liver had been completely cut in two, and was only held together by a calloused bit of tissue. Some ribs overlapped each other ; one had been found to pierce the liver, and almost without exception that organ was displaced below the ribs, instead of being on a line with them. The spleen, in some cases, was much enlarged ; in others, it was atrophied, and adherent to the peritoneal covering. The womb, of all internal organs the most easily displaced, owing to its floating position in the pelvis, and to the fact that it lies at the base, and is pressed upon by all above it, was in every instance more or less removed from a normal position.

"I acknowledge that these peasant women were overburdened by hard labor ; but many of the abnormal conditions I saw were dependent simply upon this fact,—that heavily quilted or home-spun

skirts had been worn from childhood; and that these had always rested upon the hips, with each band snugly drawn about the waist and tied by strings.

"It has been said that the injury caused by bands about the waist is obviated by wearing corsets beneath them. You need but a moment's reflection to see that this cannot be so. The pressure of the bands helps to adjust the steels and bones more closely to the yielding portions of the body. As no support is given to the corsets at the shoulders, and the skirts are not attached to them, they can furnish no relief whatever to the weight of garments resting upon the hips, and they add greatly to the unremitting downward pressure upon the abdominal organs. Although these women did much hard work with nature so violated, still it stands to reason that they could not have had the same amount of strength and endurance that a normally organized body would have given them. It is always observed how much earlier they grow old than the men of their own rank; and this waste of force, this friction upon self, with the various added burdens they bear, is no doubt the cause.

"In my own country, the cases I have examined after death have been limited in number, but nearly every one seen has revealed the same sad

history. Chiefly through the courtesy of other physicians, I have had the opportunity to be present at the autopsy of several unmarried women. They were of the class not compelled to labor unduly, so that most of the abnormal conditions of the generative organs could be rationally accounted for only by improper dress. Whenever it was possible, I inquired into the habits of life and the modes of dress of the subject. In one girl, aged twenty-two, whose waist after death was so slender that you might almost have spanned it with united fingers, there was an atrophied state of all the glandular organs. It seemed to me possible, and even probable, that this condition had its origin largely in a continuous pressure upon that life-endowing nervous centre, the *solar plexus*, and upon the central glandular organs.

"Recent experiments by a well-known physician of New York show conclusively that continual pressure brought to bear upon the stomach of animals causes their death more quickly than when applied to any other organ. The death of women occurring under the influence of anaesthetics has in many instances been traced to impeded circulation resulting from tight clothes.

"However loosely corsets are worn, the steels and bones in them must adjust themselves to the

various curves and depressions of the body, and must be felt, else the sure death that women so often declare would follow their abandonment would not be anticipated. As soon as the muscles give warning, by their weakness, that they are no longer adequate to the support of the body, it is high time they were given every chance to recuperate. Instead of this, we continue to hold them in immovable bondage. If the walls of a building were weak, we should expect only temporary aid from props; but we should seek diligently for the cause of the weakness, and then turn all our efforts to remedy it. So it should be with our own muscular walls.

"It does not require the foresight of a seer to diagnose a chronic case of tight lacing and of heavy skirts. You know in the main what the results must be: you know that when the abdominal muscular walls become inert, almost wasted, one of the important daily functions of the body is rarely, if ever, normally carried on. We might enumerate the ill results that follow; but these are only links in the long chain of disorders that have won the disgraceful appellation of women's diseases, when they should be termed women's follies. There has been no blunder in the formation of women: there would be harmony of action in each organ, and in the function assigned it, if

nature were not defrauded of her rights from the cradle to the grave."

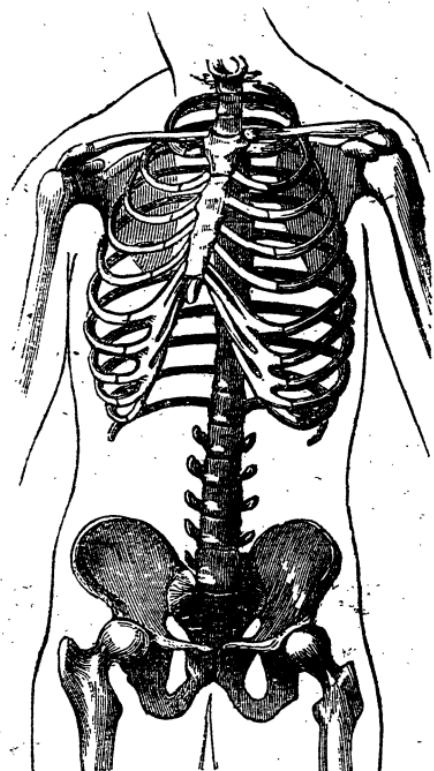
## NATURE'S PACKING.

The following paragraphs are from the lecture of Caroline E. Hastings, M.D., and should be carefully studied by those who are not already familiar with the physiological facts of which she speaks. She says:—

"I do not understand the object of these lectures to be to propose a certain style of attire to be adopted as a uniform; but rather to arouse the minds of women to the fact that the present styles of dress are injurious, and to tell them wherein and how these styles act injuriously, leaving each woman to adopt for herself any external costume or style that she may prefer.

"We only insist that the attire shall be so constructed as to hang from the shoulders; that it shall be of sufficient waist-measure to allow a continual full expansion of the chest, and of a length that shall prevent the dress from doing the work of the scavenger. I say we aim first to convince women that there is need of a reform in dress; and we believe that, when they are once thoroughly convinced of this, they will bring about a style suited to the wants and the comfort of the body.

First, then, we will consider the bony frame-work of the body. Some of the bones enclose cavi-



ties,—as, for instance, the ribs, which enclose the thoracic cavity; and again the hip-bones, as they

are familiarly called, which, with the lower part of the spine, form a cavity known as the pelvic cavity. Between these two cavities lies another, which has no bony walls, only walls of flesh.

"The thoracic cavity, as I have said, is formed by the ribs, twenty-four in number, twelve on each side, with the breast-bone in front, and the spinal column behind. To the spine the ribs are joined by strong ligaments; but they are finished out and attached to the breast-bone by means of cartilage, with the exception of the two lower, which are attached only to the spine. As these are not attached to the breast-bone, they are called floating ribs. The cartilaginous attachments permit the cavity thus enclosed to be expanded to a great extent, provided their elasticity is not interfered with by some contrivance supposed to be an improvement upon the original plan. When these cartilages become ossified, as they sometimes do, from disease or old age, the ribs are fixed in position, and the chest can no longer dilate. This is not considered an advantage, but a misfortune. The same result, if it follows the wearing of a garment, occasions no concern; but I can see little difference between the two evils. I believe that any lady, young or old, must experience serious injury when she interferes with one of Nature's wise designs by compressing these twenty-four

ribs to such an extent that the cartilages in which they terminate cannot act. What difference does it make whether these ribs expand or not, you may ask. The difference between ease and disease. The form of the ribs is more readily changed than that of any other bones of the body; for their situation is such that the constant pressure of the clothing above them day after day needs to be but slight to bend them downwards and inwards. Well, you say, what if they are bent downwards and inwards? what harm is done? It is an old saying that Nature abhors a vacuum. There is no unoccupied space in the body; and to render any part of it smaller than Nature designed is to cause the organs occupying that part to diminish in size, or to crowd together one upon another. In either case, Nature's processes are sadly interrupted. It does not require any great pressure to lessen the capacity of the thoracic cavity, provided the process be begun in early life. Snugly fitting dresses worn from childhood till the age of eighteen or twenty will accomplish the result; but, as if to make assurance doubly sure, the mother buys a compress, which she clasps around the body of her little girl while yet the bones are in their most yielding state. And no wonder the girl of sixteen or eighteen thinks she cannot live without her corsets. The muscles,

never having been allowed to do the work of supporting the spinal column and abdominal organs, refuse to come up to the full measure required of them at a moment's notice, and, as a natural consequence, the young lady feels all she expresses when she says, 'It seems as though I should drop to pieces without my corsets.'

"Within this thoracic cavity of which I have been speaking are contained the vital organs,—viz., the lungs and heart,—called vital because an entire suspension of their functions for a few minutes will result in death.

"The lungs, which are the essential organs of respiration, are composed of tubes, blood-vessels, and air-cells; and these are held together by a thin connective tissue. The tubes are branches of the trachea or wind-pipe. These branches divide again and again, as a tree divides into branches and twigs, till they become too minute to be seen with the naked eye. At the utmost extremity of each of these twigs may be seen little bladders or air-cells, which receive the air as it comes through the tubes. It is estimated that there are 600,000,000 of these air-cells in one pair of lungs. The blood-vessels coming from the heart divide and subdivide, and finally form a network around each one of the air-cells. All the blood in the body passes through the

lungs once in five minutes, to be oxygenized. The oxygen is taken with every breath into these air-cells, and is given off to the blood through the membranes of the air-cells and the blood-vessels. The blood in turn gives up its carbon, and that which upon entering the lungs was a purplish hue becomes a bright cherry color. Thus vitalized, it is returned to the left side of the heart, to be sent out all over the body, carrying life and health to every part. Situated between the lungs is that hollow muscular organ, the heart; and below them is the liver, the greater part of which lies upon the right side, and extends downward, in its normal position, to about the lower border of the tenth rib. The diaphragm is the eternal breathing muscle; and it acts a very important part in the process of respiration. It is attached in front to the lower portion of the breast-bone; on either side, to the inner surfaces of the cartilages and bony portions of six or seven lower ribs; and behind, to that part of the spinal column known as the lumbar region.

"Now as to the action of the diaphragm. It modifies to a great extent the size of the chest above it, and the position of the thoracic and abdominal viscera below. During inspiration, the cavity of the chest enlarges in a vertical direction

nearly two inches, and the greater part of this increase is due to the descent of the diaphragm. I have been thus minute in this description for a reason that will appear later.

"Let us compress the chest by putting a bandage around the ribs: draw it tight, and what is the effect? You can hardly find breath to say, 'Oh! I cannot breathe;' you grow red in the face; the head seems ready to burst. What is the trouble? Why, you have so compressed the lungs that the air cannot pass into the air-cells, and you are in a state of asphyxia; and this means a suspension of the respiratory process.

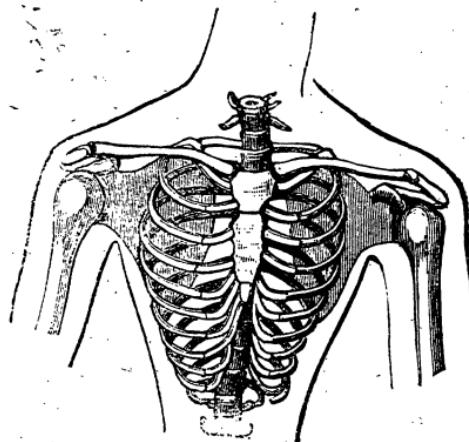
"Let us look for a moment at the result of such a suspension when it becomes entire. You will remember about the network of blood-vessels surrounding the air-cells. A complete suspension of respiration causes a retardation or stoppage of the circulation through this network. Now the blood, arrested in the lungs, ceases to reach the heart in sufficient quantities to support the action of that organ, and the phenomena of life are suspended. In order that the blood may pass through the pulmonary veins into the left heart, it must be changed from venous to arterial blood; that is, the blood which is charged with carbonic acid upon arriving at the lungs must give off this poison, and at the same instant receive the oxygen,

which has been brought into the air-cells in the air we have inhaled. But the pressure we have applied has prevented this change from venous to arterial blood, by cutting off the supply of oxygen; the blood cannot return to the left side of the heart, and the lungs cannot receive any more from the right side of the heart; neither can the right heart receive any further supply from the veins which usually empty their contents into it; and consequently we have a state of congestion all over the system. If this pressure should be kept up from two to five minutes, death would be the result.

"The chest of a pugilist was so much compressed by an attempt to take a plaster cast of his body in one piece that all action of the muscles of respiration was prevented. As he was unable to speak, the danger of death became imminent; but his situation was discovered in time, and his life saved.

"I have been describing the consequence of a complete suspension of respiration, which is death in from two to five minutes. Has it occurred to you that there is one article of woman's dress so constructed that, when clasped around the waist, it applies this pressure,—not to the extent of instant death indeed, but yet to such an extent that those who wear it live at a dying rate? The

corset is the name of this instrument of human torture. So far as I am able to learn, no one takes to corsets naturally, and it is only after hours of suffering that one becomes able to endure them without pain,—I mean, of course, if by good for-



tune one has lived to the age of thirteen or fifteen without them. But now-a-days children's corsets are for sale, and almost as soon as the little girl is able to walk these are put upon her. Too young to enter a protest, and too young to be heeded if she should, she grows up accustomed to the pressure, and scarcely realizes the change from children's to ladies' corsets.

"Just here, perhaps, you are recalling the position of the lungs, and saying that corsets do not encroach upon the region occupied by those organs, and therefore cannot compress them, and that all my charges fall to the ground. Not so fast, my dear girl! Please to recall the diaphragm, and its attachments to the lower part of the breast-bone and to the inner surfaces of five or six lower ribs, and then tell me if the pressure applied by corsets does not fall directly over this region.

"For a complete filling of the air-cells, the cavity of the chest must be enlarged, in order to accommodate an increased expansion of the lungs; and I have shown you that this increase in the size of the cavity is due, in a great measure, to the depression of the diaphragm. Now, if you have compressed the ribs and cartilages so much that they cannot act, the diaphragm remains nearly or quite motionless, the cavity is smaller than is requisite for a complete filling of all the air-cells, a part of the blood is not oxygenized, and the system suffers just in proportion to the amount of carbonic acid retained in the blood.

"But I do not wear my corsets too tight,' every lady is ready to answer. I never yet have been able to find a woman who did, if we accept her own statement; and yet physicians are con-

stantly called upon to treat diseases which are aggravated, if not caused, by wearing corsets. Nature is long suffering, and for a time yields her rights so quietly that we do not realize how we are imposing upon her. But a day of reckoning will surely come, perhaps too late. You do not wear your corsets too tight, you say. Tell me, then, why they unclasp with a snap, and why you involuntarily take a long, deep breath when you unclasp them.

" If you will allow me, I will explain why you take that long, deep breath. All day the blood has been seeking to enter the blood-vessels of the lungs in a greater quantity than they were able to receive on account of the pressure upon them. Now the pressure is off; and the blood, no longer obstructed, rushes into the network of blood-vessels surrounding the air-cells, and instantly there is a call for oxygen to take the place of the carbonic acid contained in it. Involuntarily we answer this call with a deep breath, and a complete filling of the air-cells. In a moment equilibrium is restored; the blood flows into the lungs more steadily, and an easy respiration is then sufficient to supply the demand for oxygen.

#### PALPITATION OF THE HEART.

" But I have hinted at diseases produced and

aggravated by this continued pressure. For instance, the obstruction of pulmonary circulation may and does cause enlargement of the left ventricle of the heart, as well as congestion of brain, liver, and kidneys.

"Nearly a year ago a young lady complained to me that she was troubled with palpitation of the heart, at times quite seriously so. A glance was sufficient to show me that she wore corsets, and that they were drawn to the last fraction of an inch. I told her she was injuring herself; and, that I might prove it, induced her to let me measure the corsets as she was wearing them. I found they measured just twenty-two inches. I then put the tape-measure around her waist, and, holding it loosely between thumb and finger, asked her to fill her lungs. She did so, and the measure drew out to twenty-six inches. So you can readily see that she was sacrificing health to a fancied style of beauty. I am sorry to say that she would not change her habit, and I have since known this same young lady to get another to hook her corsets for her, because they were so small that she could not possibly bring them together.

"I am very glad to be able to give you an instance which proves, on the other hand, that there is still some sense left among women. A young

lady came to me quite out of health, and with symptoms of weakness of the lungs. Among other remedies I prescribed the leaving off of corsets, which advice she was willing to receive and adopt. She became very much better; and I believe the greater part of the improvement was due to the giving up of corsets, aided by a few weeks in the country, where the lungs were at liberty to take in God's sweet air without hindrance. About six months after, she wished to attend a wedding reception, and thought she would put on the corsets, just for the evening. To use her own words, she was in agony till she could get home and take them off, thus proving what I have before stated, that women do not take to corsets naturally.

#### REMEDY SUGGESTED.

"I think I have given you good reasons why you should not wear corsets; and now let me suggest in their place a waist cut to fit the form, a basque waist, with a strong band stitched upon the skirt or lower part. Upon this band sew five or six buttons, and in the bands of all the skirts work button-holes to correspond. You will then have all your clothes suspended from the shoulders without straps or tapes, which I have always found inconvenient from the fact they will slip off

from the shoulders. Having thus suspended your skirts to a loose, well-fitted waist, you not only allow plenty of room for the expansion of lungs, but you avoid any stricture about that part of the body situated between the thoracic and pelvic cavities, and which has only muscular walls. The stricture caused by bands about the waist when they are worn without corsets has been an argument in favor of the latter article of dress; but the style of waist proposed will remedy this evil, while it accommodates itself to the needs of chest and lungs.

"But why, if we leave the lungs free to act well their part, need we remove the weight of clothing from the hips? This brings us to consider the pelvic cavity and its contents. This cavity is formed by the union of the two bones called in familiar language hip-bones with each other in front, and with the lower part of the spinal column behind. In the lower part of this cavity are situated the bladder and the uterus or womb. Above these organs are twenty-five feet of intestines lying loosely in the abdominal cavity, with no great amount of support from above. These lower organs are joined together by the folding over and around of the membrane called peritoneum, so that whatever displaces one will affect the others to a certain extent. There are

some ligaments which hold them in position, but they will yield if too great or too long-continued pressure be exerted from above downwards. In this way some of the diseases peculiar to woman are brought about.

"When the weight of clothing is supported only by the hips, it has a tendency to press down the intestines, and their weight must then fall upon the organs below. These, in their turn, are forced to yield. One of the rules for treatment of diseases of this nature laid down in the books is, "Remove all weight from the hips."

"Well, having fastened your skirts in this way make them as light as possible for the sake of the shoulders, lest you may overburden them. To this end, make the skirts as free from heavy trimmings as possible, and cut off the extra length that requires a facing of wiggin or leather to keep it tolerably clean. Do this with your walking dresses, at least; and then, having a broad, low heel upon your boot, a half-day's shopping, or even a whole day's, may be accomplished with ease and comfort.

"If you have cut off the train, you will be able to dispense with that other superfluity, the pannier,—I believe that is the name of the excrescence,—and which when worn bears upon a region that ought not to be subjected to heat or pressure.

In the region which this article of dress covers, the kidneys are situated ; and just below them, upon either side, large bundles of nerves make their exit from the spinal-cord, and pass downward to the lower extremities. Any continued pressure over this region will tend to cause either a dormant condition of these nerves, or perhaps an irritation which will result in pain and lameness. A young lady of my acquaintance—who, because it is the fashion, feels herself obliged to wear one of these deformities—always suffers a severe pain in the hip as a penalty, and yet she must wear it when she goes out, for ‘how she would look without it ! ’ ”

## DIO LEWIS ON CORSETS.

Dio Lewis, in his “Chats with Girls,” says :—

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Every one of us lives in proportion to our breathing. If we breathe strong, we live strong ; if our breath is weak, our life is weak. The quantity of air we take into our lungs is the measure of our life. Now go with me to a ball-room. Here we are. Notice that couple ; they are now dancing. Watch them. When they stop, observe their breathing. There, he has taken one deep breath, filling all the lower part of his lungs, and

now his breathing is quiet. But notice her breathing. See how the upper part of her chest works up and down. Watch her ten minutes ; that panting and pumping will go on.

" What do you suppose is the reason for this difference ? Do you suppose the Creator made a woman's lungs so deficient in size that she has to work that way to get her breath ? Among young children there is no difference in the breathing of boys and girls. If we visit a farm where persons of both sexes are engaged in out-door labor, with the same freedom of dress, we shall not find the women breathing in that peculiar way.

" No ; the working and pumping of that chest are owing to her dress. The lower part of the lungs is the large part. There is where most of the breathing should be done. There is where the man does most of his breathing. But she has so squeezed and contracted the lower part of her lungs that very little breath can get down there, so that the small upper end of the lungs is compelled to do most of her breathing. It is that little upper end which is working away so hard under the ribs now. When a lady dances, runs, or goes up stairs, she suffers thumping of the heart and labored breathing, not because the original constitution of her breathing apparatus was faulty, but because she so compresses the

lower, larger part of her lungs that she is like a person who has but a single lung to breathe with. There is a lack of breathing-room, and of course the breathing is labored. With knife on corset-string, every woman should cry out, 'Give me liberty or give me death!'

"Perfect freedom for lungs, heart, liver, and stomach is indispensable to good respiration, circulation, and digestion. Without such freedom, living is not living, but dying.

"You think the corset may be worn so loose that it will not do harm. If worn so loose as not to interfere with respiration when you lean forward in needlework, then it will make the form look badly. A corset to look well must be worn snug and trim. And then you think the corset is important as a skirt-supporter. It certainly may be of service in this way, but it is not half as good a skirt-supporter as a pair of common gentleman's suspenders. No, girls, the corset is bad, and only bad. It is not only a great enemy to health, but it is the great destroyer of female grace and beauty. A rigid stiffness in the centre of the body makes all the movements of the entire body stiff and ungraceful. As to the matter of beauty, it's a question between the Creator and the dress-maker. I take sides with the Creator; some folks take the other side."

## THE BELLE AND THE BELLOWS.

Charles Reade, the novelist, in one of his recent stories, entitled "A Simpleton," gives a striking scene where the sensible doctor who figures in the tale is called in to attend the heroine with whom he is in love. It is as follows :—

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"The examination was concluded.

"Dr. Staines looked at Rosa, and then at her father. The agony in that aged face, and the love that agony implied, won him, and it was to the parent he turned to give his verdict.

"The hemorrhage is from the lungs—'

"Lusignan interrupted him: 'From the lungs!' cried he, in dismay.

"Yes; a slight congestion of the lungs.'

"But not incurable! Oh! not incurable, doctor!"

"Heaven forbid! It is curable—easily—by removing the cause."

"And what is the cause?"

"The cause?"—He hesitated, and looked rather uneasy—"Well, the cause, sir, is—tight stays."

"The tranquility of the meeting was instantly disturbed. 'Tight stays! Me?' cried Rosa. 'Why I am the loosest girl in England. Look, papa!' And, without any apparent effort, she

drew herself in, and poked her little fist between her sash and her gown. ‘There!’

“Dr. Staines smiled sadly and a little sarcastically: he was evidently shy of encountering the lady in this argument; but he was more at his ease with her father; so he turned towards him and lectured him freely.

“‘That is wonderful, sir; and the first four or five female patients that favored me with it, made me disbelieve my other senses; but Miss Lusignan is now about the thirtieth who has shown me that marvellous feat, with a calm countenance that belies the Herculean effort. Nature has her everyday miracles: a boa-constrictor, diameter seventeen inches, can swallow a buffalo; a woman, with her stays bisecting her almost, and lacerating her skin, can yet for one moment make herself seem slack, to deceive a juvenile physician. The snake is the miracle of expansion; the woman is the prodigy of contraction.’

“‘Highly grateful for the comparison!’ said Rosa. ‘Women and snakes!’

“Dr. Staines blushed, and looked uncomfortable. ‘I did not mean to be offensive; it certainly was a very clumsy comparison.’

“‘What does that matter?’ said Mr. Lusignan, impatiently. ‘Be quiet, Rosa, and let Dr. Staines and me talk sense.’

"Oh! then I am nobody in the business!" said this wise young lady.

"You are everybody," said Dr. Staines, soothingly. "But," suggested he, obsequiously, "if you don't mind, I would rather explain my views to your father—on this one subject."

"And a pretty subject it is."

Dr. Staines then invited Mr. Lusignan to his lodgings, and promised to explain the matter anatomically. "Meantime," said he, "would you be good enough to put your hands to my waist, as I did to the patient's."

Mr. Lusignan complied, and the patient began to titter directly, to put them out of countenance.

"Please observe what takes place when I draw a full breath. Now apply the same test to the patient. Breathe your best, please, Miss Lusignan."

The patient put on a face full of saucy mutiny.

"To oblige us both."

"Oh! how tiresome!"

"I am aware it is rather laborious," said Staines, a little dryly; "but, to oblige your father!"

"Oh, anything to oblige papa," said she, spitefully. "There!—And I do hope it will be the last—la! no; I don't hope that, neither."

Doctor Staines politely ignored her little at-

tempts to interrupt the argument. ' You found, sir, that the muscles of my waist, and my intercostal ribs themselves, rose and fell with each inhalation, and exhalation, of air by the lungs.'

" ' I did ; but my daughter's waist was like dead wood, and so were her lower ribs.'

" At this volunteer statement, Rosa colored to her temples. ' Thanks, papa ! Pack me off to London, and sell me for a big doll !'

" ' In other words,' said the lecturer, mild and pertinacious, ' with us the lungs have room to blow, and the whole bony frame expands elastic with them, like the woodwork of a blacksmith's bellows : but with this patient, and many of her sex, that noble and divinely-framed bellows is crippled and confined by a powerful machine of human construction ; so it works lamely and feebly : consequently too little air, and of course too little oxygen, passes through that spongy organ whose very life is air. Now mark the special result in this case ; being otherwise healthy and vigorous, our patient's system sends into the lungs more blood than that one crippled organ can deal with ; a small quantity becomes extravasated at odd times ; it accumulates, and would become dangerous : then Nature, strengthened by sleep, and by some hours' relief from the diabolical engine, makes an effort, and flings it off : that is why

the hemorrhage comes in the morning, and why she is the better for it, feeling neither faint nor sick, but relieved of a weight. This, sir, is the rationale of the complaint! and it is to you I must look for the cure. To judge from my other female patients, and from the few words Miss Lusignan has let fall, I fear we must not count on any very hearty co-operation from her: but you are her father, and have great authority; I conjure you to use it to the full, as you once used it —to my sorrow—in this very room. I am forgetting my character. I was asked here only as her physician. Good-evening.'

"As he seemed in no hurry to repeat his visit, Mr. Lusignan called on him, and said, politely, he had hoped to receive another call ere this. 'Personally,' said he, 'I was much struck with your observations; but my daughter is afraid she will catch cold if she leaves off her corset, and that, you know, might be very serious.'

"Dr. Staines groaned. And, when he had groaned, he lectured. 'Female patients are wonderfully monotonous in this matter; they have a programme of evasions; and whether the patient is a lady, or a housemaid, she seldom varies from that programme. You find her breathing life's air, with half a bellows, and you tell her so. 'Oh no,' says she; and does the gigantic feat of

contraction we witnessed that evening at your house. But, on enquiry, you learn there is a raw red line ploughed in her flesh by cruel stays. 'What is that?' you ask, and flatter yourself you have pinned her. Not a bit. 'That was the last pair. I changed them, because they hurt me.' Driven out of that, by proofs of recent laceration, they say, 'If I leave them off I should catch my death of cold,' which is equivalent to saying there is no flannel in the shops, no common sense nor needles at home.'

"He then laid before him some large French plates, showing the organs of the human trunk, and bade him observe in how small a space, and with what skill, the Creator has packed so many large, yet delicate organs, so that they shall be free and secure from friction, though so close to each other. He showed him the liver, an organ weighing four pounds, and of large circumference, the lungs, a very large organ suspended in the chest and impatient of pressure; the heart, the stomach, the spleen, all of them too closely and artfully packed to bear any further compression.

"Having thus taken him b<sup>r</sup> the eye, he took him by the mind.

"'Is it a small thing for the creature to say to her Creator, 'I can pack all this egg-china better than you can,' and thereupon to jam all those

vital organs close, by a powerful, a very powerful and ingenious machine? Is it a small thing for that sex, which, for good reasons, the Omnipotent has made larger in the waist than the male, to say to her Creator, 'You don't know your business; women ought to be smaller in the waist than men, and shall be throughout the civilized world?'

"In short, he delivered so many true and pointed things on this trite subject, that the old gentleman was convinced, and begged him to come over that very evening and convince Rosa.

"Dr. Staines shook his head, dolefully, and all his fire died out of him at having to face the fair. 'Reason will be wasted. Authority is the only weapon. My profession and my reading have both taught me that the whole character of her sex undergoes a change the moment a man interferes with their dress. From Chaucer's day to our own, neither public satire, nor private remonstrance, has ever shaken any of their monstrous fashions. Easy, obliging, pliable, and weaker of will than men in other things, do but touch their dress, however objectionable, and rock is not harder, iron is not more stubborn, than these soft and yielding creatures. It is no earthly use my coming,—I'll come.'"



We cannot give the whole story ; but for the benefit of interested readers we may state that in the course of time Miss Rossa was convinced, gave up her corsets, "sewed on stiff flannel linings," and was "seen walking miles from home and blooming as a Hebe."

## THE JUGGERNAUT OF FASHION.

Mercy B. Jackson, M.D., speaks in the same strain as the others whom we have quoted :—

"The corsets that encase the body in a prison barred with whalebone and steel are often so closely applied that the action of the muscles within is rendered almost null. This stricture about the waist, by which the liver is so pressed upon that its proper action is greatly obstructed, compresses at the same time the large blood-vessels of the trunk in such a manner as to seriously check the flow of the vital current within. In consequence of this, all the functions of the body are carried on with constantly diminishing force, until the health is completely destroyed and an invalid life makes it impossible longer to endure the pressure of the agent that has wrought such fearful changes in the formerly healthy body.

"The evil just spoken of is not always so great

as here depicted: it is proportioned to the amount of compression, and the strength of the frame subjected to it. The less the compression, the less the evil; and the more vigorous the body, the better able it is to resist the influence, and to carry on its work in spite of the obstacles that oppose it.

"Such consequences as we have mentioned, one might think would be sufficiently alarming to banish from intelligent society the health-destroying corset. But no! The Juggernaut of fashion demands the sacrifice, and its victims must fall down and be crushed by its senseless power.

"Next come the skirts, which hang upon the weakened muscles of the abdomen. These garments are often many in number, and at the present time are generally weighted with heavy trimmings reaching to the knee or hips. All this burdensome material is fastened tightly about the waist to prevent dragging; while the skirt is either so long as to obstruct the movement of the feet in walking, or, still worse, it trails upon the dirty sidewalks, gathering up the refuse of the streets, and disgusting those whose sense of neatness makes them shudder to think of the condition of a nice dress after a public promenade.

"These long dresses, heavily trimmed, not

only entail the evils mentioned, but by their weight drag down the contents of the abdomen, and produce the many diseases peculiar to women, which are the *opprobrium medicale* of the present day. Then comes the over-skirt, which is looped up on the back and sustained there by 'bishops' of a greater or less weight and density. The mass thus formed heats the spine, prevents the wearer from resting comfortably on chair or seat, and fatigues the back by an unnatural position, as well as by the weight thus heaped upon it. Could anything more unsightly be invented? Or could one imagine that any lady, who naturally desires to look well and to be prepossessing in her appearance, would willingly array herself in such a costume?

"The present short walking-dresses are less objectionable than most that have been worn for a long time; but, in order to have them conform to the proper standard, the over-skirt should be dispensed with, and the length curtailed so that they would just touch the instep, and be of the same length all round. Some simple trimming might be used without impairing their usefulness. The waist, too, should be so loose as to allow the full expansion of the chest with every inspiration.

"We had hoped that this short walking-dress, so comfortable and so generally liked, might re-

tain its place in the wardrobe of women; but to our regret and mortification we see it gradually abandoned by almost all, and a demi-train substituted, which outrages all sense of neatness by trailing along the dirty sidewalks. Or, if the wearer would lift it from the ground, she is obliged to swoop it up most ungracefully, or to clutch it still more awkwardly with both hands, thus throwing out the elbows, and reminding one, by the figure she makes, of a turkey displaying his plumage.

"The evils arising from tight dressing are too numerous to be mentioned here; but they are alone sufficient to destroy the health of the most robust person; and even when the pressure thus occasioned is only so little that it is regarded as almost nothing by ladies generally, it is sufficient to lower the standard of health to a considerable degree.

"No dress should be so small as to require the least possible effort to fasten it. It should be closed by merely bringing the edges together, without contraction of the chest; and, when closed, the chest should be as free to expand as if nothing covered it. With such garments, the necessity of support from the shoulders will be apparent.

"When any injurious garment is first worn,

Nature remonstrates, and pain or inconvenience is felt; but if we neglect these monitions, and continue its use, the warning grows less and less loud, until, as it were, discouraged by our wilful neglect of her cautions, Nature ceases to remonstrate. But, though the sufferings first felt are now unnoticed, the penalty is sure to be inflicted, and we pay dearly for our disobedience in impaired health, weakened digestion, poor circulation, diseased liver, restless nights, and the whole host of sufferings that follow in the train of outraged Nature.

"I have already made it apparent, I trust, to any one at all acquainted with physiology, that the present style of woman's attire is subversive of the uses which dress should serve, and that a radical change must be made before it can be adapted to health and comfort."

#### RETRIBUTION CERTAIN.

Arvilla B. Haynes, M.D., adds her testimony to those which have preceded:—

"The corset, as now manufactured and worn, is loosely hooked around the waist. Owing to its own weight and to that of the clothing buttoned over it, it drops down till it rests upon the hips. This arrangement does not remove the pressure caused

by the dragging down of skirts at the waist; it only changes it from one point to another, and the result is equally injurious. When the clothing is worn in this way, pressure is made over the abdomen, the convolutions of the intestines are crowded together and the weight of all the contents of the abdomen is thrown, more or less, upon the organs within the pelvis.

"The steel spring in the front of the corset is used as a support for the body. It presses upon the stomach, causing tenderness of the great *solar plexus* of the sympathetic nerves that lie posterior to the stomach. It weakens the abdominal muscles, and destroys in a measure the true vertical bearing of the body.

"When this vertical bearing of the body is maintained, every part above rests upon that below. The head rests upon the upper part of the vertebral column, the weight of the trunk upon the hips; and the same plan is carried out through the lower extremities to the arch of the foot. When the body is in this position, the vertebral column has two curves,—a lesser curve above, that gives increased capacity to the chest, and a greater one below. Then the abdominal muscles are tense, and the weight of the contents of the abdomen is thrown upon the pubic portion of the pelvis. But when these muscles are weakened and relaxed, and

the greater and lower curve in the spinal column is impaired, owing to pressure from above, the weight of the contents of the abdomen is thrown into the pelvic cavity, causing displacement and prolapsus of the organs situated there.

"Since strings have been discarded, and firm hooks and eyes used to fasten the corset, there may have been a decrease in chest diseases, but there has been a corresponding increase in uterine diseases. Some of the mechanical supports that have been invented for uterine displacements are adjusted with the design of restoring the natural curve in the lower portion of the vertebral column, thus giving the abdominal muscles their true lifting power, and throwing the weight of the abdominal viscera upon the pubic bones of the pelvis, where it belongs.

"When questioned, ladies rarely admit that they wear their clothing tight. The hand can be readily passed under the bands, when the diaphragm is relaxed and the air is expelled from the lungs, and their garments are therefore considered loose and comfortable. They do appear to be so; but this is apparent rather than real. If the chest is subjected to pressure for a considerable length of time, it adapts itself to that condition; and we can go on increasing the pressure gradually, until we have contracted chest-walls

and displacement of the abdominal organs. Such is the effect of habit on the system.

"When the habit is injurious, the changes it effects may be slow and imperceptible, but they will break out ultimately in disease. For, although there is a certain amount of tolerance in the system, no natural law can be disregarded from day to day without bringing, sooner or later, a certain retribution ; and the length of time before it appears will be just in proportion to the nature of the abuse and the amount of vital force that there is to resist it.

"Let us now try the opposite experiment, and begin to increase the size of the bands, and to allow a little more room for the movements of the vital organs. If we continue to do this from time to time, till the bands have been lengthened three or four inches, at the end of a year we shall find that they are about as tight as when we began to enlarge them. But in this case the tendency will have been towards health. The chest-walls have expanded, and respiration has been more perfectly performed. The diaphragm discharges its natural function ; the circulation is unimpeded ; and there is greater freedom in all the movements of the body.

"Mechanical pressure at any point retards the onward flow of the blood through the veins to the

heart. The veins are superficial, or near the surface; and pressure around the limbs at any point will cause a passive congestion of the vessels below that point. This can be readily demonstrated. If you compress the veins of the wrist or arm, in a few minutes the veins of the hand and arm will be swollen. The blood cannot return to the heart. The same takes place if there is pressure at any point around the lower extremities, or on any of the large veins.

#### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE.

"One of the important conditions to be maintained in the adjustment of our clothing is a uniform temperature over the surface of the body, without pressure and with the least weight. In our climate, flannel or woollen goods, as a general rule, should be worn next to the skin over the whole body, from the neck to the wrists and ankles. If there is any idiosyncrasy which prevents this material from being thus worn, it should be used as the second covering.

"All the clothing should be supported from the shoulder. The corset should be discarded; but if it must be retained as an indispensable article of dress, as it is now considered, it should be made without whalebone or steel springs, and should be held up by a band over the shoulder. All the

underclothing external to this should either be attached to it, or so arranged that the weight may rest on the shoulder. This may be managed by means of suspenders, or by a waist fitted to the form. The less the weight, the better, provided the necessary warmth is secured.

"The length of the bands around the waist should be sufficient to allow the utmost freedom to all the movements. Nothing ought to interfere with the action of the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm; and the greatest chest capacity should be secured, in order to enable the lungs to perform properly the function of respiration.

"The skirts should be short enough to clear the pavement, and to prevent their lower edges from becoming damp. They should also allow freedom to the feet and limbs in that most healthful of all out-of-door exercise—walking. No elastic bands should encircle the limbs at any point, as they retard circulation by compressing the blood-vessels. The stockings may be upheld by elastic bands attached at the waist to that portion of the clothing which has its support from the shoulder.

"When the clothing is arranged in this way, all the weight hanging from the shoulder and no pressure at any point, there is freedom of motion in every part. The organs are all in their true

relation to one another, and their functions go on unimpeded."

#### A STANDARD WANTED.

In considering this matter Mrs. Woolson suggests with great sense:—

"If girding the body to the closest outline of the form over the region between the ribs and the hips, and there alone, is to remain the one essential accompaniment of a full-dress costume, might we not, at least, have a fixed standard of size for the waist, so that only those who transcend certain bounds may feel compelled to diminish themselves? As it is, no woman, however small, is small enough. Pinching appears to be indispensable. Nature is never allowed to be right as she is."

#### SIXTEEN LAYERS.

The same writer shows forcibly the innate badness of the present style:—

"Our ordinary dress provides two tight-fitting waists, either of which suffices to force the vital organs beneath it out of place and upon each other. In the underwear, the corset reigns supreme; in the outer dress, the plain or biased waist is usually buttoned as tightly over the cor-

set as it can possibly be drawn. Beneath such compressions, what becomes of the action of the diaphragm, the lungs, the heart, and the stomach ? Then, again, every one of the lower garments has a binding fastened around the waist, and this binding is composed of a straight piece of cloth folded double. Drawers, underskirts, balmoral, dress skirt, over-skirt, dress-waist, and belt, furnish, accordingly, sixteen layers of cloth girding the stomach and the yielding muscles situated in that region. These bands are all placed one directly over the other on the same line, and are usually made as tight as they can be buttoned ; so that a belt of iron, two inches wide, welded close about the body, could hardly be more unyielding. In such attire, if any one escapes weak lungs, short breath, palpitation of the heart, liver-complaint, and indigestion, it is by a special interposition of the higher powers in her individual case. Who shall say this is not an age of miracles?"

## AGREEMENT OF PHYSICIANS.

"The weight of our clothing increases every year ; and, if much more is added, women will be compelled to maintain a sitting posture the greater part of the time, in order to render their dress durable. Skirts, in their best estate, require considerable cloth ; and the greater number of

them are made of the heaviest material commonly worn,—viz., cotton cloth, with the addition of trimmings. The dress skirt is long, and doubled by an over-skirt; and, in place of the simple gimps and braids and the few ruffles once used for adorning them, the material of the dress is heaped upon the breadths, in the form of puffs, flounces, and plaits. Add to this burden heavy cotton linings, facings, and ‘skirt-protectors’ at the bottom, and the weight can only be described as enormous.

“Then, as to the suspension of clothing from the shoulders. Of course, all the garments worn above the waist hang from the shoulders by necessity; but all the lower garments, as now worn, hang from the hips, and have no connection whatever with any piece above. Many would fain believe that the hips are the proper points of support; but the testimony of all medical intelligence on this subject is clear and indisputable. Our four physicians were unanimous and emphatic in their declarations that the hips should be relieved of all weight; and no physician has been found anywhere to advocate a different view. One says in a published paper, ‘No description can give any adequate idea of the evils consequent upon wearing skirts hanging from the hips;’ and still another says, ‘Women carry their clothing sus-

pended mainly from their hips ; and, as the clothes press by their weight upon the soft abdominal walls, they cause displacement of the internal organs.' It is this dragging down—not upon the hip-bones themselves, but upon the front and unprotected portions of the body which they enclose—that produces the chief harm."

## NOT NEW.

This is no new notion, though perhaps people have been waking up to its importance of late years, since fashion has detached the waist from the skirt of the dress and demanded the excessive trimming of the latter, and thus increased the trouble many fold. In a book published twenty years ago, Miss Catherine Beecher says :—

"It has been shown, when the body is compressed around the waist, that the left side being over the stomach, yields more readily than the right side, which is more firmly sustained by the liver. In consequence of this, the ribs of the left side are forced by any compression more strongly toward one side of the spine than toward the other. This makes a slow and steady *sidewise* pressure until the spine yields and the discs gradually harden, and a permanent *curvature of the spine* is the result. This is seen by the eleva-

tion of one shoulder and the projection of one hip.

"Another result of tight dressing is the entire change in the shape of the thorax. The bones of the body in early life are soft and yielding. Constant pressure on the short ribs bring them nearer together in front, while the internal organs are pressed downward, reduced in size, and often-times misplaced.

"This deformity of the thorax in a mother is often transmitted to her offspring as a hereditary misfortune, to be perpetuated from generation to generation."

And again

"Having thus prepared the bones and muscles by debility to yield readily to any injurious influences, a large majority of the mothers and daughters of the nation adopt a style of dress that is exactly calculated to produce disease and deformity.

"In the first place, they dress the upper portion of the body so thin, that the spine and chest are exposed to sudden and severe changes of temperature in passing from warm to cold rooms, and this tends to weaken that portion. Then they accumulate such loads of clothing around the lower parts of the body, as debilitates the spine

and pelvic organs by excess of heat. At the same time, they bind the ribs so tight, that there is a constant lateral pressure against one side of the spine, tending to produce a curvature that distorts one shoulder and one hip. At the same time the weight of clothing on the hips and abdomen presses down on the most delicate and important organs of life to move them from their proper positions, while pointed bodices, with whalebone pressure, co-operate as a lever in front, to accomplish the same shocking operation. The efforts of the Chinese mother in binding up her child's foot to distortion, is wisdom compared with the murderous folly thus perpetrated or tolerated by thousands of mothers and daughters in this Christian and enlightened age and nation. And the most terrible feature in this monstrous course is, that the evil thus achieved by a mother is often transmitted to her deformed offspring."

## IV.

### TOO MUCH AND TOO LITTLE.

The second great charge brought against dress as at present worn is that there is too much clothing provided for one part of the body and too little for the rest. The hygienists all agree that the extremities ought to be as thickly clothed as the trunk. Indeed, if any difference is permissible the extra clothing ought to be upon the arms and legs. Dio Lewis says in his "Five-Minute Chats" :—

"Take the glass part of a thermometer out of the frame; hold the bulb under your tongue; wait four minutes. Now look. It is 98°. That tells you how warm your blood is. Now hold it against your foot. Don't be in a hurry; give it a chance to feel the exact state. Down it goes to 65°. That tells you how warm your feet are,—33° between your tongue and your feet.

"Don't you know that equable circulation means good health, and that the loss of it means bad health? Let us see. You have a headache. Your head is hot; it throbs. Your feet are icicles

Now put your feet in a pail of hot water. In six minutes you say, 'O mother, how good I feel! That rush in my head is all gone!' You have headache about half the time? No? Well, then, pain in your side? No? Well, I venture that every day you have some bad feeling about the head or neck or chest or back? Now let me tell you something. It is very rare that a hot foot-bath will not remove all those bad feelings for the time being. What does this mean? Why, it means that there is too much blood in the head or neck or shoulders or back, and that there is a lack of it in the feet and legs. A hot foot-bath draws the blood down below, and takes the excess of blood from the upper parts. That's exactly the philosophy of it. Of course the hot foot-bath is a bad thing, but it serves to illustrate the law.

"Now let me whisper in your ear. I will tell you a secret. If, during the damp and cold season, you will wear one or two pairs of thick flannels on your legs, and very thick woollen stockings, and strong, broad-soled shoes, you will have all the time that good flow of blood that the hot foot-bath gave you for the time being. This will keep the blood from crowding into the head and upper parts of the body, and will prevent those uncomfortable feelings.

"What I have been saying about the legs is

true of the arms. The extremities, both upper and lower, will, in our climate, during the damp and cold season, be sure to get cold, and thus the balance in the circulation is lost. Then comes fulness in some organ, or in the head or neck, with heat or pain, or some other uncomfortable feeling. This can all be prevented by keeping the blood flowing equably in all parts. In this climate we must depend upon clothing. Friction is good, exercise is good; but the main dependence is clothing. So you must, for eight months of the year at least, dress your legs and feet and arms with very thick woollen garments.

"Just think how women dress. About the chest, the warmest part of the body, they put one, two, three, four thicknesses; then comes a shawl, and then thick-padded furs; while their legs, with one thickness of cotton, go paddling along under a balloon. They go to the family physician, and say, 'O doctor, my head goes bumpity-bump. Doctor, it seems as if all the blood in my body is in my head and chest.'

"Well, madam, how about your legs and feet?"

"O doctor, they are like chunks of ice."

"Ah, madam, if you dress your legs and feet so that the blood can't get down into them, where can it go? It can't go out visiting. It must stay in the body somewhere; and if it can't go

down into the legs and feet, it of course goes into your head and chest.'

"Girls, most of you wear too much clothing about your shoulders, chest, back, and hips; but there is a sad lack of it about your legs, feet, and arms."

And again :—

"The usual dress is sufficient in quantity, and often good in quality, but it is very badly distributed. There is too much about the trunk, and too little about the lower extremities. If one-quarter of the heavy woollen overcoat or shawl were taken from the trunk, and wrapped about the legs, it would prove a great gain.

"The legs and feet are down near the floor, where the cold currents of air move. The air is so cold near the floor that all prudent mothers say, 'Don't lie there, Peter; get up, Jerusha Ann; play on the sofa; you will take your death cold lying there on the floor.' And they are quite right. If the room be well ventilated, the air down near the floor is very much colder than it is up about our heads. And it is in that cold stratum of air that our feet and legs are constantly.

"Besides this, the feet and legs, on account of their being so far away, and on account of their size, with the air all about them, are disposed to

be too cold, even without being in a colder atmosphere.

"During the damp and cold season the legs should be encased in *very thick* knit woollen drawers, the feet in thick woollen stockings (which must be changed every day), and the shoe-soles must be as broad as the feet when fully spread, so that the blood shall have free passage. If the feet are squeezed in the least, the circulation is checked, and coldness is inevitable. This free circulation cannot be secured by a loose upper with a narrow sole. If when the foot stands naked on a sheet of paper it measures three and a half inches, the sole must measure three and a half.

"I will suppose you have done all this faithfully, and yet your feet and legs are cold. Now add more woollen, or, if you are to travel much in the cars or in a sleigh, procure a pair of chamois-skin or wash-leather drawers, which I have found to be most satisfactory.

"I have known a number of ladies afflicted with hot and aching head, and other evidence of congestion about the upper parts, who were completely relieved by a pair of chamois-skin drawers and broad-soled shoes. Three ladies in every four suffer from some congestion in the upper part of the body. It is felt in a fulness of the head, in sore

throat, in palpitation of the heart, torpid liver, and in many other ways. It is well-known that a hot foot-bath will relieve for the time being any and all of these difficulties. This bath draws the blood into the legs and feet, relieving the congestion above. What the hot foot-bath does for an hour, the broad-soled shoes with thick woollen stockings, and a pair of flannel drawers, with a pair of wash-leather drawers added, will do permanently; of course I am speaking of cold weather. No one hesitates to multiply the clothing about the trunk. Why hesitate to increase the clothing about the legs? As a preventive of many common affections about the chest, throat, and head, including nasal catarrh, I know nothing so effective as the dress of the lower extremities which I am advocating.

"The bath is a good thing, exercise is a good thing, friction is a good thing; but, after all, our main dependence in this climate must ever be, during the cold season, *warm clothing*. Already we overdo this about our trunks, but not one person in ten wears clothing enough about the legs and feet."

#### SUDDEN CHANGES.

Dr. Mary Safford-Blake says:—

"That uniformity of temperature is desirable,

is readily apparent from the fact that when any portion of the body becomes unduly heated for a prolonged period of time, congestion of the part is liable to follow; and when, on the other hand, a part is exposed to cold, the capillaries become contracted, the blood is thrown within, and any organ is liable to become engorged. The one which is weakened for any cause suffers most quickly and severely; and, unless an equilibrium of circulation is soon restored, inflammation follows. The myriad-mouthed pores of the skin, two thousand of which are found to occupy a square inch of surface, become closed, the tubuli leading from them become clogged, the carbonic acid the pores exhaled is retained, the oxygen they drank up is withheld, and the aeration of the blood then becomes wholly the work of the lungs. The frequently congested state of these organs during a cold is the result.

"In woman's dress, from six to ten thicknesses are found, as a rule and not as an exception, to encase the thoracic region, while the lower extremities are covered, more frequently than otherwise, with but one thickness, and that of cotton. Under such circumstances, an effort to obtain proper warmth is usually made by adding an extra supply of skirts, although these garments contribute much more to pressure about the waist,

weight upon the hips, and undue heat in the kidneys and abdominal organs, than to warmth in the lower extremities. But it is in these lower parts of the body that heat is most needed, because there the circulation of the blood is less active, and an under-current of air around them is apt to produce chills.

"Let a woman step from a temperature of, perhaps, seventy degrees within doors, to zero without, and stand on the street corner five minutes for a car, while the breeze inflates her flowing skirts till they become converted into a balloon : the air whizzes through them and beneath them, and a wave of cold envelops the entire lower portion of the body. Then let her ride for an hour in a horse-car, with ankles wet ~~from~~ drabbled skirts, and exposed to a continual draft of air : of course her whole system is chilled through ; and it cannot be otherwise than that a severe cold will follow as the penalty for such exposure."

#### COLD A SEDATIVE.

Dr. Haynes, before quoted, says on this point :—

"When the temperature is such as to require extra clothing or wraps for the chest and upper extremities, the lower extremities also should receive attention. In the inclement season, when

we are liable to sudden alterations of temperature, if the thermometer drops down to zero or near that point, and we go from furnace-heated houses into the open air, we put on cloaks or shawls, furs, and wraps of various kinds; and encase our hands, not only in gloves or mittens, but in muffs. This is all right and should be done; but it is not sufficient. To the lower extremities we should also add leggins and a pair of over-drawers made either of ladies' cloth or flannel; and, in wet weather, overshoes.

"When one part of the body is over-heated, and another part exposed, the nerves of the exposed part are rendered more sensitive to receive impressions.

"In speaking of the influence of alterations of temperature which arise from the application of cold to the surface of the body, I shall use the word *cold* as meaning the absence of heat or calorific. Heat and light act externally as stimulants, and are among the conditions essential to life and health. The normal temperature of the body internally is one hundred degrees; on the surface, it is ninety-eight; and the vital functions cannot be carried on if the temperature is lowered in a considerable degree for any length of time.

"Cold is a sedative, and when applied to the surface of the body it lowers the vital powers. It

acts on the circulation by contracting the blood-vessels ; and thus the blood is driven within from the exposed region. If one part is deprived of its normal quantity of blood, another part must have more than its normal quantity, consequently there must be congestion of some of the internal organs. This is what takes place when the extremities are too thinly clad to maintain an equal temperature over the surface. The lungs and the uterine organs are very liable to congestions from this cause, and this is particularly true in regard to girls at the age of puberty. At that period, the vital powers have been developing and perfecting the system, which is then very susceptible of external influences. Exposure to cold at this age often leads to derangements that become chronic, impairing the general health, and causing a vast amount of suffering, while in many cases they establish right conditions for the development of disease in after life. Who among us cannot trace sad results to only a cold ?

" A proper clothing of the extremities is one of the best preventives ; and we may have congestion of any of the internal organs from a failure to do this.

" When there is exposure to sudden changes of temperature, without sufficient clothing for protection, the impression on the nerves and on the

circulation is often the exciting cause of acute disease. If we look over our medical works as authorities, we find a large number of diseases that are referable to this cause. Who has not observed the prevalence of coughs and colds, as soon as there is a change in the seasons, and summer passes into autumn? This is because there is not a corresponding change in the clothing. The function of the skin as an eliminating organ is checked from these sudden alternations; and substances that should be removed remain in the system. When we remember that from one to three pounds of fluid pass off through the pores of the skin during every twenty-four hours, we see how important it is that the surface of the body should be kept at a proper and equable temperature for its normal action."

#### CHRONIC INFLAMMATION.

Mrs. Woolson thus sums up the errors as to temperature of the dress as worn at present:—

"The limbs have not half the amount of covering which is put upon the trunk of the body. Many garments have no sleeves; and what sleeves there are either come to an end a few inches below the shoulder, or they are loose and flowing at the wrists, so as to expose the arm as far as the elbow

to the cold air. As to the legs, the clothing, which should increase in direct ratio to the distance from the body to the feet, diminishes in the same ratio. Thin drawers, thinner stockings, and wind-blown skirts which keep up constant currents of air, supply little warmth to the limbs beneath. The feet, half-clad, and pinched in tight boots, are chilled in consequence. The trunk of the body has as many varied zones of temperature as the planet it inhabits. Its frigid zone is above, on the shoulders and the chest; for, although the dress-waist extends from the neck to the waist, most, if not all, of the garments worn beneath it are low-necked. The temperate zone lies between the shoulders and the belt; for that region receives the additional coverings of under-vest, corset, and chemise. The torrid zone begins with the belts and bands, and extends to the limbs below; for all the upper garments are continued below the belt, and all the lower garments, the drawers and skirts, come up as far as the belt: so that the clothing over the whole pelvic region must be at least double what it is over any other section. But it is more than double, it is quadruple; for the tops of all these lower garments have a superfluous fulness of material which is brought into the binding by gathers or by plaits. These are especially abundant at the back, over

the spine, where one of the centres of the nervous system is situated, and where the kidneys lie. When to this excess of cloth is added a panier and sash-bows, we can understand why deadly torrid heats prevail in that region, and why the worst consequences follow. The result is stated by a physician to be 'a chronic inflammation of the internal organs,—mother of a hundred ills that afflict women.'

V.

## OTHER NEEDED REFORMS.

The following extracts are all from the volume which we have been quoting so freely, and all show to what an extent women have been murdering themselves through ignorance.

### VEILS.

"If you cover your face with veils, you may save your pallid complexion, but you will injure your sight. I have the best authority that the world has ever known for saying this. Dr. Von Grafe, the lamented oculist of Berlin, whose memory is revered in every land, told me he believed one of the prolific causes of amaurosis,—that disease in which specks float before the eyes,—among women, was the wearing of spotted lace veils; and of near-sightedness among children, the wearing of any veils. So, as you prize the precious gift of sight, avoid the things that may weaken it, or deprive you of it altogether."

## FALSE HAIR.

"And what of her hair? Why, the poor girl has but just begun to recognize her own shadow on the side-walk, since the last sudden decree of fashion, when Simon says, 'Thumbs up,' and forthwith the rats, the mice, the luxuriant braids of hair and of jute rush to the top of her head, as if a pocket battery had been trifling with each. This new arrangement causes no little suffering. There is a great deal of pressure and heat on the top of the brain, and a physician is consulted. Mamma tells *Aesculapius* that once when her child was very young she played out in the sun, without her hat; that a sunstroke, or something like it, occurred: and that this affection is, very probably, the result of that exposure. 'Most likely,' responds *Aesculapius*; and he gives quieting powders. The scalp adapts itself like all else in nature, to circumstances; but then a new fashion-plate arrives, and as with one fell swoop, at the command of 'Thumbs down,' the whole accumulation of braids, puffs, and curls drops from its lofty heights, and hangs suspended at the base of the brain.

"Now the distress of the darling daughter has changed base: spinal meningitis is feared, and medical aid is speedily secured. Mamma can

assign no cause for this new phase of suffering, unless it be that, some years before, her daughter fell on the ice. This time the pain proves so stubborn and severe that the doctor is forced to suggest that the poor sufferer lay aside some of the superfluous weight of hair that has evidently caused more than a mere surface irritation. Vesicants would have been trifling to endure, compared with the mortification of being shorn, for the brief space of a few days, of those uncleanly false braids.

"The causes of all our physical weakness are more assiduously sought for through a generation of grandfathers, than in false hair, kilt plaits, flounces, bustles, and corsets. But this pressure and weight of the daily dress would account for much of the physical prostration and enfeeblement of the women of our time."

#### HIGH HEELS.

"The feet have been covered with boots which are wholly inadequate to furnish protection from cold and damp, while they are so shaped as to compress the foot into the narrowest compass, and to crowd the toes upon each other within the narrow tip. This prevents the action of the muscles of the foot in walking, and throws the

whole labor upon the muscles of the leg, thus disabling our women from healthful exercise to such a degree that not one in twenty can walk three miles without complete exhaustion.

"The Chinese shock our moral sense when they deform the feet of their women by merciless compression in infancy; but we at the same time tolerate—nay, encourage—ours in wearing such covering as lays the foundation for consequences more fatal than theirs. The high heels which have been so fashionable, but which are now, happily, less used, are one of the most fruitful sources of disease. They not only cause contractions of the muscles of the leg, so great in some instances as to make a surgical separation of them necessary, but by raising the heel they bring the weight of the body upon the toes, and thus induce the corns and bunions that alone suffice to make locomotion very painful. Moreover, by inclining the body forward, they throw the uterus out of its normal position, and oblige the ligaments that are designed to steady it to remain constantly in action, in order to restore it to its proper place. These muscles kept continually on the stretch soon lose their contractile power; and then the uterus, thrown out of place by the unnatural pose of the body, remains in this abnormal position, and often becomes adherent to

the adjacent parts. When this is the case, a most serious disease is entailed upon the sufferer."

#### GARTERS.

"The compression of the calf of the leg by tight ligatures, intended to keep the hose in place, is very injurious, for it often causes distended veins, and checks the natural flow of blood in all the vessels of the leg. We find cramps as the result of this in some cases, numbness in others, and coldness in a great many.

"For keeping the stocking in place, no garters are to be thought of. The highest order of English knighthood may adopt the garter as its badge, and may append to it the motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*; but no dress-reformer with a conscience can allow it a place in her wardrobe, and *not* to think evil of it is to be ignorant of the simplest truths that physiology teaches. Neither should the stocking be upheld by any elastic band that connects with a waist-band, for to compress the waist and to drag upon the hips is far worse than to compress the arteries below the knee. When a flannel suit is worn and is close-fitting at the ankle, the stocking may be drawn up over it, and secured at top by a button or small safety-pin. When the suit is loose at the ankle, the stocking

will pass under it; and an elastic or tape band for its suspension must be attached to the upper portion of the garment at some comfortable point, so that the shoulders may serve for the support.

"For this purpose, a piece of stout tape, about a third of a yard long, may be folded over at the middle, so as to give the shape of a letter V with the included angle made acute. Upon the point of the V sew a button; sew the two upper ends of the V to the inside of the flannel or cotton chemiloon, just above the waist-line at the side; then the button will hang free from the garment, and will pull from the shoulder on both front and back. To the button on the lower point of the doubled tape attach some stocking-supporter that may be found convenient. Some portion of this supporter should be elastic; and one end of the upright band should be doubled upon itself, by means of a movable slide or in some other way, so that it can be made longer or shorter according to the length of the stocking. The top of the stocking will be secured by buttons, or by a simple clamping contrivance upon the ends of the supporter."

#### TRAILING SKIRTS.

"It would seem as if any one, however blinded by the customs of his time, might see the ab-

surdity of a nation of intelligent women allowing themselves, under protest, to be converted into city, town, and country scavengers, without thanks or the recompense of admiration from those whose approval is most to be desired. For women who go thus hampered, there can never be one step free from filth and annoyance of some kind, unless the skirts are clutched and held up by main force."

With regard to the trailing skirt, Dio Lewis, with more zeal than discretion, argues the suitability of the gymnastic skirt to muddy roads. There is, however, a happy medium which may be hit by those desirous to dress suitably, and yet fulfil all the requirements of custom. The skirt may come far below the knee and yet be off the ground. He says:—

#### THE LENGTH OF THE SKIRT.

"The most earnest efforts looking toward dress reform have had reference to the length of the skirt. May I be permitted a word on this point? I think one of woman's first duties is to make herself as beautiful as possible. A long skirt—a train even—is in fine taste. Among the dress features of the stage, none is so beautiful as the long train. The artist is ever delighted to intro-

duce it in his pictures of woman. I confess I admire it, and that I wish it could be again made common on all dress occasions. For the drawing-room it is superb. If it is said that expense and inconvenience are involved, I ask, Are they not in paintings, statuary, etc.? When we meet on dress occasions, I cannot see why we may not introduce this exquisite feature.

"For church and our usual afternoon sittings, skirts which nearly touch the floor seem to me in good taste, and every way proper; but for the street, when wet, snowy, or muddy, for the active duties of housekeeping, which involve much running up stairs, for the gymnasium, for mountain trips, etc., etc., I need not argue with those whose brains are not befogged by fashion, that the skirts should fall to about the knee. If Miss Fastidious suggests that the adoption of such a costume would expose the limbs, you have but to point to what may be seen in wet weather on the streets. The attempt to lift long skirts out of the mud displays the lower extremities much more than the shortest skirts. Nothing is more pitiable than this street exhibition, except, perhaps, a woman's attempt to go up stairs with a candle in one hand, a baby in the other, and a bowl of cat-nip-tea in the other."

His last sentence in this extract, though absurd, will bring the subject home to every mother. It is possible, though difficult, to walk in muddy streets with long dresses; but to go up stairs in the same, with arms encumbered, is to endanger one life if not two. Yet who thinks of insisting that the nursemaid at least shall wear short dresses?

## VI.

### SLAUGHTERING THE INNOCENTS. •

It is not possible, we think, for a woman to read to this point without acknowledging that her style of dress is on principles opposed to health. She may, however, have become so used to her fetters, and so satisfied with her languid movements, and more or less frequent ailments, as to be unwilling to make any radical change in her own apparel. We wish, however, to direct her attention to the incalculable and irreparable injury thus done to the young of her own sex, that if possible she may be led to use her influence to promote a radical improvement.

#### MOTHER AND CHILD.

Speaking of the effect upon the next generation, Dr. Haynes says:—

"The externals of dress, though they involve a moral question, seem to me of far less consequence than the arrangement of the under-dress, for that involves health. As now generally worn,

the under-dress is weakening the present generation of women ; and, from the unvarying laws of nature, the effect must be transmitted to future generations. Mothers will confer upon their offspring a lower and lower vitality ; and, when we consider the already fearful mortality in infancy and childhood, there is little hope for the future, unless we can have some reform in this direction. And when the offspring is not thus early cut off from mortal life, in many cases tendencies to disease are inherited, which become active sooner or later ; and thus life is robbed of usefulness and enjoyment. Instead of being self-maintaining and efficient co-workers with their fellows, such children find the burden of physical disability laid upon them ; and they drag out a miserable existence, looking forward to a release from their physical weakness into that greater freedom of life and activity that they hope awaits them."

Mrs. Woolson touches upon a delicate but very important point :—

"In considering the hygienic aspect of this subject, physicians remember not only the daily physical discomfort and suffering of women, but the excessive agonies which child-birth brings upon them, the frequent death which it entails, and the inferior children to which such mothers

must inevitably give birth. A leading female physician of Philadelphia is convinced, from her own observation, that there has been an alarming increase of ill-health among women during even the past two years, and that maternity is fast becoming an unnaturally fearful peril. She believes the dress commonly worn to-day to be the cause of all this.

"That weakness and disease are not inherent in our sex, as is too commonly supposed, will be plainly apparent, if we remember the strength and vigor possessed by the women of savage tribes, of the toiling peasant classes of Europe, and of the harems of the East. What makes the difference in this respect between them and the ladies of Europe and America? No medical authority who has ever worn the dress of the latter can doubt that the habitual disregard of physical laws which it imposes will alone suffice to account for the existence of all their diseases, new and old. Medical authorities who have never worn it may look far and wide for other causes, but it is because they ignore or undervalue evils which they have never experienced.

"We are ready to trace a connection between two facts which Mrs. Leonowens states concerning Siamese women; viz., that they wear only a few ounces of loose silk cloth for covering, and

that they are wholly ignorant of the long train of female weaknesses of which we hear so much."

Dr. Safford-Blake says, moreover:—

"A terrible epidemic raged in the lying-in wards of Vienna, while I resided in the hospital of that city. In one week thirty women were consigned to their last resting-place. Here, also, I sought to make earnest research into the true relation to each other of the internal organs; and when I saw the condition of the majority of these poor women after death, I realized, as I could never have done without such opportunities, how danger and suffering increase, both for mother and child, in proportion as the former compresses and depresses her own body, and the embryo life it shields."

Miss Catherine Beecher says, with regard to inherited deformity:—

"To add to all the mischief of vitiated air, young women are generally girt so tight around the body, that the lower part of the lungs, where the air-cells most abound, are rarely used. *Abdominal breathing* has ceased among probably a majority of American women. The ribs also are girt so tight, in many cases, that even the *full* inspiration at the *top* of the lungs is impossible. And this custom has operated so, from parent to

child, that a large portion of the female children now born have a deformed thorax, that has room only for imperfectly formed lungs. The full round chest of perfect womanhood is a specimen rarely seen, and every day diminishing in frequency."

## DRESS OF INFANTS.

Dr. Jackson says :

"There is another point, concerning the dresses of infants, upon which I desire to speak ; and I wish I could speak loud enough for every mother in the world to hear. But, as I cannot do this, I will ask you all to aid in extending the word, until, with united power, we may be able to induce all mothers who care more for the health and comfort of their offspring than they do for the behests of fashion to adopt a better dress for their children than is at present worn. Such a dress, being often seen, may in time become fashionable, and then those whose only guide in preparing the wardrobe of the coming child is the reigning style will be led into better modes, so that more convenient and comfortable garments will be made.

"The special evil of which I speak is the long skirts, dresses, and cloaks, which are now the fashion for babies. I feel the deepest commis-

eration for a delicate child that has hung upon its tender body a flannel skirt a yard long, and over that a cotton skirt equally long, and over that a dress to cover both, often weighted with heavy embroidery, and, if the child is carried out, a double cloak longer than all, so that the skirts reach nearly to the floor as the infant is borne on the nurse's arm. The longer the clothes, the more aristocratic the baby, would seem to be the idea of the mother! Think of all this weight attached around the waist of the child, and hanging over the little feet, pressing down the toes, and even forcing the feet out of their natural position! How much of deformity and suffering this fashion produces, none can tell; but that it is a great discomfort to the baby, every thinking mother must perceive.

"High necks and long sleeves are now fashionable for babies; but how soon they may be laid aside for low necks and short sleeves cannot be foreseen. That will depend on the enlightenment of women. To expose the delicate chest and arms of a young child in our cold, changeable climate, is often to bring on pneumonia, and greatly to lessen the chances of life. And, should life be spared, there will be sleepless nights and anxious days for the mother, as well as great suffering for the child."

## CHILDREN'S SUFFERINGS.

Dr. Safford-Blake says on this point:—

"It is one of the sad reflections in connection with the absurdities and injuries of dress, that children are so early made to suffer by them. The weight and pressure of wide sashes, long, full bows, and over-skirts, are as heating and wearying, laid upon little backs, as are the various excrescences with which adult spines are freighted. The old saw, that 'beauty unadorned is adorned the most,' is never more aptly applied than to childhood. All that tends to rob this early age of its naturalness and simplicity deprives it of its greatest charm. It may be an old-fashioned whim, but it seems to me that the unsullied, unrumped, high-necked apron, and the plain ungarnished calico of former days, made children more attractive than they can ever be when transformed, as they now are, by dictates of the latest fashion-plate, into miniature men and women."

## THE SCHOOL-GIRL.

It is, however, when the child grows into the school-girl that the principal injury is done by dress. At an age when the girl is growing rapidly, not only in height but in breadth of chest

and girth of bust, she is put into a closely fitting fashionably-made dress, which limits growth in every direction. This dress she wears fifteen or sixteen hours out of the twenty-four and for perhaps six months at a time. It was probably too tight to begin with, to allow of perfect freedom in breathing, and during the six months which elapse before another dress is made, allowing for a little extra size, nature's efforts at expansion are hampered in every possible way. True, dresses are often "let out," but this occurs more frequently after a dress has been laid aside a little while than when it is in constant use, and many a girl wears too tight a dress, without suspecting the fact. It is unreasonable to expect robust health under these circumstances, and yet, when hollow chests, weak lungs, and consumption, are the result, it is called a mysterious Providence.

Further, at an age when for obvious reasons it is imperatively necessary that skirts should be light and entirely suspended from the shoulders, the girl is allowed to exchange the child dress with waist and skirt attached, for the woman's, with skirt on band, which drags at the waist, while, to make it heavier, she adds from six to twelve inches to the length, and perhaps doubles the weight by trimming. What wonder, then, if her health becomes fitful, her periodical sufferings great, and

if her constitution be gradually undermined. Her mother, however, sighs, thinks her daughter must be studying too hard, and talks of the excessive delicacy of girls now-a-days. Now we do not say that all girls, if hygienically dressed, would grow up strong women, for some have inherited feeble constitutions; but we do say that so long as they dress as they do at present, they can hardly fail to be feeble and ailing.

Dr. Safford-Blake says upon this point :—

“The authorities whose opinions we most respect, because they are founded upon observation and research, and not upon blind prejudice, assure us that girls come out from the trying ordeal of coeducation unscathed. In mental calibre they are universally recognized as the peers of boys, now that they are beginning to have equal advantages with them for mental culture. Is it not, then, high time for the dawn of their physical development? But the only pleasurable and invigorating out-of-door exercise that girls have ever had has fallen into disfavor, because their dress was improper, and colds were contracted. Skating for girls seems doomed to be classed among the lost arts. I do not think that this one healthful exercise should be denied them, until it is tried under proper conditions.

"A startling fact nearly precludes all gymnastic exercises in our schools: it is, that girls in their ordinary attire are so hampered in every ligament, joint and muscle, that, in order to have perfect use and command of themselves for the brief space of an hour, this straight jacket, their clothes, in which they are encased sixteen hours of the day, must be wholly laid aside for looser and lighter raiment. If young ladies ride on horseback for exercise, as is done in some of our female colleges, what does it avail them, pinched and burdened as they are by their dress? If they row, it is under like conditions; and the results are the same. What if our young men found it necessary to make an entire change in their apparel before they could drill, play base ball, coast, or row? They would soon find it exceedingly irksome, and would seek, as girls have, their level of muscular inactivity."

Mrs. Woolson says:—

"Of all the seed that can be scattered by the wayside, none will bear such promise of fruit as that which shall fall upon young minds. It is with the girls that this reformation must begin, if it is to prove effectual. We older women, and all like us, however strong and well we may think ourselves, are, at the best, little better than physi-

cal wrecks, capable of repairs more or less thorough, but still hopelessly damaged by the ignorance of ourselves and of our time. What we might have been in our physiques, had we been properly trained and clothed from childhood, we can never know. But the girls of to-day should be saved before they have learned to wear the woman's dress, with its countless abominations, that they may be enabled to grow up untrammeled, vigorous, and happy, to show the world a nobler womanhood and a nobler race of children than our country offers now. Practical teaching of this sort the pupils of our schools seem glad to hear and enthusiastic to follow. In large cities its need is imperative.

"And just now it is especially important, not only to the physical but to the mental well-being of our girls and women, that some thorough dress-reform should be effected. It is the bodily weakness, resulting so largely from their attire, which has become the chief argument for dwarfing and restraining their intellectual growth.

"Admitting, as we must, that the undoubted ill-health of our countrywomen is a national injury and a national disgrace, we should feel called upon as patriotic citizens and as philanthropists to do everything in our power to remove the causes which induce it. No one habit of Ameri-

can life can be held responsible for it ; the agencies are manifold which convert so many of our vigorous girls into suffering invalids before they have fairly grown into women : but, if there be one agency worthy to-be emphasized above all others, I believe it to be our present pernicious style of dress. A physician who could attribute the sad decay of our young women to excessive and continuous study, must be ignorant of very much of what constitutes the daily life of those of whom he speaks ; and I protest against that explanation of the prevailing invalidism which has lately been given. The fact that girls, upon whose muscular and nervous systems such a peculiar strain is to come in their after-lives, are suffered to do nothing in youth which shall strengthen those muscles and tone those nerves ; that half-grown limbs, unfilled lungs, sluggish livers, pinched stomachs, and distorted wombs are carefully cultivated by the corsets and tight waists in which we encase their developing bodies ; and that sedentary habits, bad air, and poor appetites are given them as a daily portion when we keep them in-doors and seek to train them into presentable young ladies,—argues nothing against the native endurance of their physical frames, but rather tends to show that there must be an extraordinary amount of vitality and recuperation.

tive power in what refuses so obstinately to be destroyed. It is a ludicrous mistake to suppose that a few sporadic cases of injudicious study in the few female colleges of the land can be held accountable for the general ill-health of our women. Had any masculine physician who entertains that idea ever made a study of the full feminine regalia in which his delicate patients sit enveloped when they come to consult his professional skill, he would have found, in chilled and encumbered limbs, dragging skirts, overheated abdomen, compressed waist, and hot and burdened head, a better explanation of that state of things which he and all well-wishers of our country and our race must lament. It is not that boys and girls are trained too much alike mentally, but that they are trained too much unlike physically, which works the harm. Not too much knowledge of astronomy and mathematics, but too little knowledge of the laws of life, is what proves fatal to our young women. The remedy for their weakness is to be sought, not by enfeebling the mind till mind and body correspond, but by strengthening the body, through intelligent obedience to its laws, so that mind and body can both attain their perfect stature.

"When the instruction so much needed on vital matters is furnished to our girls by their parents

and teachers, they will abandon for ever the style of apparel which now works such disastrous results ; and then, with proper clothing and proper training, they will be enabled to grow up, not into those strange, unfeminized beings, ashamed of their sex, of whom some writers morbidly dream, but into strong-bodied, strong-limbed, clear-headed, warm-hearted, rosy, happy women, proud of their womanhood, surrounded by husband and children, if they prefer a domestic life, but held in equal honor and esteem, if, for any reasons which may seem to them good, they choose to devote themselves, with self-reliant energies, to other labors for their race.”

#### THE SCHOOL-GIRL'S DRESS.

A due consideration of these arguments will convince parents and teachers that a growing girl ought never to wear habitually a tight close fitting dress, even though it be, as she says, “ quite loose.” The loose blouse waist, or Garibaldi, or, perhaps better, a light gabrielle, without belt, will allow freedom of action and compress none of the growing tissues.

A “good dressmaker” can, even without the aid of corsets, do much to reduce the ribs of a growing girl from the natural condition as represented on page 25 to the deformed condition

depicted on page 32, simply by preventing growth in a natural direction.

Miss Louise S. Hotchkiss, in a published paper, entitled "Corsets vs. Brains," has the following:—

"A few days ago, I stepped into a large corset manufactory that is carried on by a woman. I told her I was interested to know what women and children wear in this line, and asked to see her wares from the least unto the greatest. She began by showing me the tiniest article I ever saw in the shape of a corset, saying that was for babies. Then she brought forward another grade, and still another, and so on, till I think she must have shown me fifteen or twenty different-sized corset moulds, in which she runs the female forms that get into her hands. She informed me that all the genteel waists I should meet on the fashionable streets of the city she made; that the mothers brought their daughters in infancy to her, and that she passed them through the whole course of moulds till they were ready for the real French corset, when she considered them finished and perfect.

"Yesterday I visited the first-class in one of our city girls' grammar schools, consisting of forty-two pupils. I had five questions on a slip

of paper, that I asked permission of the teacher to put to the girls :—

“First.—‘How many of you wear corsets?’

“Answer.—‘Twenty-one.’ I asked them to stretch their arms as high as they could over their heads. In every instance it was hard work, and in most cases impossible, to get them above a right angle at the shoulders.

“Second question.—‘How many of you wear your skirts resting entirely upon your hips, with no shoulder-straps or waists to support them?’

“Answer.—‘Thirty.’

“Third question.—‘How many wear false hair?’

“Answer.—‘Four.’

“Fourth question.—‘How many wear tight boots?’

“Answer.—‘None,’ (which I doubted).

“Fifth question.—‘How many do not wear flannels?’

“Answer.—‘Eighteen.’

“I went across the hall to a boys’ class, corresponding in grade, consisting of forty-four pupils. I asked for the number of boys without flannels, and found only six.

“Of course one hundred per cent. were without corsets, or weight upon hips, or tight boots, or false hair. Every boy could raise his arms in a straight line with his body, as far as he could reach, with perfect ease.

## A BROOKLYN SCHOOL.

No growing child should be permitted to wear a dress in school which does not admit of the freest gymnastic exercises. A subordinate advantage gained by making these exercises a part of the usual school routine would be that the dress would be of necessity suited for them. In an academy in Brooklyn, attended by five hundred children belonging to the first families, first at least so far as intelligence is concerned, gymnastics form part of the regular exercises, and the pupils dress accordingly. The girls wear in winter, with equal pleasure, comfort, and economy, prettily-made dresses of substantial dark blue flannel, trimmed with bands of lighter blue and white pipings. The wide sash is of the same material and the loose blouse waist is attached to the light skirt, which is long enough not to be at all conspicuous in the street. All vieing with each other as to expensiveness and elegance of dress is thus prevented, besides the great gain as to healthfulness.

If such a uniform were introduced into our large schools where a love of dress and of elegant dressmaking is showing itself—a reform which we are almost inclined to hope for—it would be of the first importance to choose a style and material

which would be at once beautiful, durable and economical, so that it would meet with the favor of both parents and scholars. Would it not be well for those in charge of large female seminaries and high schools to consider whether or not the adoption of a simple healthful dress by their pupils would not do away with a number of existing evils, not least of which would be the irregularity of attendance caused by occasional indispositions largely the result of errors in dress?

#### GYNMASTIC DRESS.

As many of our readers will probably be unfamiliar with the gymnastic dress, to which we have alluded, we will copy the description given by Dio Lewis, premising that if intended to be worn in the street going to and from school, the skirts would have to be much longer, though in no case should they touch the ground, as it is a most dangerous thing for girls to sit in school with damp skirts. In giving an account of the Lexington school, he says:—

“The costume which for years had been worn in my gymnastic classes was adopted as the dress of the Lexington school.

“The words ‘dress reform’ mean, to most people, a short skirt. Say to them dress reform, and they reply with the question, ‘How short?’

" The features of the dress worn by our pupils may be put as follows, arranged in the order of their importance. The first is tenfold more important than the last :—

" 1st. Perfect liberty about the waist.

" 2d. Perfect liberty about the shoulders, permitting the arm to be thrust smartly upward without the slightest check, and without moving the waist of the dress.

" 3rd. Warm flannels, extending to the ankles and wrists.

" 4th. Broad-soled, low-heeled shoes, with thick, warm hose.

" 5th. A skirt falling a little below the knee.

" In regard to the material, each pupil was left to her own taste. One or two began with silk, but soon gray flannel became the common dress, a Garibaldi waist, and often no ornament, save a plain white collar and wristbands. A considerable proportion of the pupils—and among them girls who at home had worn rich silks and jewelry—appeared every day of the school year in a gray flannel dress, which cost perhaps five dollars.

#### GYMNASТИC EXERCISES.

" Perhaps I should say, for the information of such readers as may not have an opportunity to

witness exercises in the new school, that the main features of this system are the following :—

“ 1st. The movements are all executed with very light apparatus, wooden dumb-bells, wooden rings, light wooden rods, small clubs, and bean-bags.

“ 2d. The thoroughness of the training depends, not upon the slow movements of heavy weights, but upon the width, sweep, and intensity of the movements. For example, instead of “putting up” an iron dumb-bell of great weight with a very limited and slow motion, with the light wooden dumb-bell of the new school an immense variety of difficult feats and posturings were achieved, thus securing an infinite variety and combination of muscular movements.

“ 3rd. Every movement is adapted to music, which enhances the interest in arm-movements quite as much as in the leg-movements of dancing.

“ These gymnastic exercises figured conspicuously in the Lexington school. Each pupil began with a half-hour or two or three half-hours daily, the amount being determined by the strength of the pupil. I believe that the gymnastic exercises in that school were more complete than have ever been witnessed in any other educational institution. Conscious that I was making the first effort

in the education of girls to combine thorough intellectual training, I gave much attention to the gymnastic exercises. Among the hundreds of girls who were in the school during its history, and all of whom joined in the physical training, not one was injured, although the exercises were exceedingly comprehensive and thorough. It was the common fact that in the thirty-six weeks which constituted our school-year, a pupil gained three inches about the chest under the arms, while two inches' gain about the arm near the shoulder was common. Girls who came to us under the stipulation that they should not go up more than one flight because of physical inability, walked, before the school-year ended, twelve to sixteen miles on a Saturday, which was our day for long tramps. Periodical and sick headaches, with which a majority of the girls began the school-year, disappeared entirely before the end of it. Stooping shoulders and projecting chins soon gave way, while the carriage of our pupils was the subject of general remark and admiration."

#### A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

Girls, whose minds are not too much deformed by artificial training, glory in health and strength, and despise weakness. In schools and academies, when the subject of dress as it affects health has

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been brought before the scholars, much enthusiasm has generally been excited as to the means for preserving and regaining health. Teachers of girls have, therefore, a golden opportunity for benefiting their scholars permanently, and should not let it slip.

## VII.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT IT?

The ordinary physiological errors in dress have been frequently pointed out in the past and are more or less acknowledged by all intelligent women, and yet few have made any radical alteration in their apparel. Two reasons will account for this. In the first place the sufferers did not know exactly how to go about making the change, and, in the second place, while they were thinking about it their interest became dulled, and they finally subsided into an apathetic contentment with the clothing to which they were accustomed, with an occasional spasmodic attempt to improve at some one point as hygienic teachings might be brought to remembrance.

Now, of these reasons we will try and remove the first by showing "*How* to do it." The second cause of neglect will, we fear, still remain largely operative; but it is in the power of every woman who chooses to do much to relieve her ~~self~~ from

the prevalent ill-health of which she ought to be ashamed. If she adopt the reform garments herself, she will probably feel it incumbent upon her to induce as many others to do so as possible, and in this, if her circle of acquaintance be tolerably intelligent, she will have little difficulty. For, after all, the main obstacle is ignorance. Let this be removed by the perusal of this or some similar book, or by simple explanation, and the work will be half done.

#### A THREE-FOLD HARMONY

Dr. Haynes looks hopefully into the future :—

“ There is to-day a growing prejudice against medication ; and, when disease invades the system, many seek, through physical culture, the means of restoration to health. The adoption of a hygienic dress would be one of the best preventives of disease ; and often some such reform is absolutely necessary before strength can be regained.

“ To me the future looks hopeful, when women realize the cause of this tendency to disease, when they ask for knowledge of their own organisms, and inquire the way back to Nature. Let them but understand what they seek to know,—give them a knowledge of their own or-

ganisms, of the relation of one part to another, and a knowledge of the functions these organs are called upon to perform,—let them understand also the unvarying physical laws, and the certain retribution that follows their perversion, and thus enlightened, with their naturally quick perceptions, and their skill in adapting means to ends, they will soon render the dress of every woman and child conformable to the requirements of health.

"Then, there will be harmony throughout the whole human system. Every part will be in its true relation to every other part. All the functions will go on without consciousness. Women will not know they have a nervous system merely from the complaints it makes of abuses, but they will understand its higher offices. The digestive apparatus will properly prepare the alimentary substances it receives into a nutrient fluid, to be conveyed to all parts of the system for their assimilation. The capacity of the lungs to oxygenize and decarbonize the blood will be equal to the demands made upon them, and the excreting organs will remove all waste and worn-out material from the body. No protest from any part of the system will be transmitted through the nerves of sensation to the seat of consciousness, the brain. There will be harmony, also, in the

mental condition. The mind will be clear, all the faculties active, and every part amenable to the will will be quick to do its bidding. The spiritual, when not borne down by the physical, rises to loftier heights ; and there is harmony throughout the whole, in a threefold sense."

#### WHAT DOCTORS MIGHT DO.

If the doctors who see so much of the evil effects of dress would enlighten their patients many now ignorant would at once see the necessity for a change Dr Jackson says :—

" All modes of dress that injure the human body, or make the wearer uncomfortable, are strictly within the province of the doctor ; and he should never lose an opportunity to benefit his patients by teaching them the evils to be avoided by a sensible reform in dress. The protest of one physician may do much ; but what an incalculable amount of good could be done if the whole profession, as with one voice, would unite in decrying all the forms of dress which torture mankind and bring on the innumerable diseases that shorten life and render it miserable ! "

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RICH.

The same writer speaks as follows of the duty of the rich and influential :—

"If woman is to fulfil the high trusts that shall be given her, she must emancipate herself from the engrossments of fashion, must be clothed in garments that will contribute to her comfort, and must cast aside those that destroy her health, cripple her energies, and take all her time and means for their manufacture. She must seek first the liberal education that has so long been considered necessary for her brothers, in order that they may be prepared for the varied duties that are required of them. When the leading women of the age, and those blessed with wealth and high position, come to see that a cultivated mind in a healthy body is more to be desired, and better calculated to lead to honor and esteem, than the most costly or elaborate clothing, women will turn their attention to these higher objects, and will then make it easy for others less favored to follow in the same pathway. A great responsibility is resting upon women who are blessed with the wealth and station that carry so much influence with them. They could easily change the fashions of dress so as to remove the objections to present modes, and by so doing they would contribute greatly to the health and happiness of the wearers."

#### DUTY OF INDIVIDUALS.

Before influencing others, however, it is neces-

sary that each lady should be able to speak from experience of the comfort and healthfulness, not to say economy, of the reform dress. We again quote Mrs. Woolson, the able editor of *Dress Reform*:—

"If any lady has become convinced of a radical and pernicious error in the construction of her dress, and desires to reform it altogether, let her not wait till a costume which is both healthful and elegant shall spring into being, to serve as a model. Individual thought and effort must be expended, if individual wants are to be met. No regulation-suit can be offered which would prove acceptable to all. What one finds agreeable in material and make, another is sure she could not tolerate. Therefore each one will need to work the subject out with patience and devotion. But the result will justify her pains.

"In the first place, she must divest herself of the common notion that a dress-reform necessarily and primarily means a marked change in the outer garment,—the 'dress,' technically so called,—and in that alone. The under-garments are the chief offenders; and it is far more important that they should be remodelled than that any change should be made in the external covering.

"Indeed, there is no necessity for any dress-reformer to play the rôle of a martyr by appearing in a singular and conspicuous garb, unless she chooses to do so. Bring me your latest fashionable costumes,—the dresses just fresh from Paris, made by Worth himself, if you will,—and I will pick one from among them beneath which it shall be possible to dress a woman in almost perfect conformity to the laws of health. Not one binding shall be needed at the waist.

"And if any have succeeded in reconstructing their clothing so as to render it in harmony with hygienic and æsthetic laws, they should endeavor to benefit others by offering practical suggestions, and by extending the advantages they have derived from their own troublous experiences and final triumphs."

## VIII.

### CUTTING AND FITTING.

#### THE FOUR PRINCIPLES.

From all that has gone before, the following principles of healthful dressing are to be deduced. *First:*

#### ALLOW THE VITAL ORGANS UNIMPEDED ACTION.

This requires the removal of all tight fitting waists, and of all unsupported waist-bands, whether tight or loose—the latter, for this reason, if tight, they compress the ribs; if loose, they slide downwards and depress the abdomen. *Second:*

#### SUSPEND THE CLOTHING FROM THE SHOULDERS.

This requires the attachment of all the lower garments to the upper or to suspenders passing over the shoulder. *Third:*

#### REDUCE THE WEIGHT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

This involves careful calculation to render the skirts as few and short and light as possible. *Fourth:*

## PRESERVE A UNIFORM TEMPERATURE OF THE BODY.

This involves, theoretically, that every thickness of cloth which covers the trunk should furnish sleeves and drawers for the limbs; practically, however, especially so far as the arms are concerned, less than this will be found sufficient.

## WHAT TO OMIT.

To fulfil these rules the Boston Committee recommend the entire abandonment of the corset and the chemise. Mrs. Woolson is so eloquent in her denunciation of these articles that we cannot forbear copying her remarks almost as they stand:—

"Some garments are found to be wholly irreconcilable with these laws, and should therefore be dispensed with altogether. Of these, the most important are the corset and the chemise. Since they are the very two without which the average female mind will find it impossible to conceive of further existence upon this terrestrial sphere, I shall do well to pause, and state clearly wherein their objectionable characteristics lie, and why they are past remedy.

*"Corset.—Concerning the evils of this garment, it would seem that enough has already been*

said. Physicians have always denounced it as most pernicious, and have refused to compromise with it in any of its forms. But, in spite of these protests, women still cling to it, and still declare that they must wear it or perish. It holds its place because of one or two plausible arguments in its favor, which are not met and reasoned away, but suffered to remain unrecognized and unrefuted. Since they prove so powerful, they ought to receive more serious attention.

"Enfeebled by past errors in dress, and with muscles rendered incapable, by enforced inaction, of doing their appointed work, wearers of the corset assert that it is absolutely essential to the support of the body, and that without it they would collapse into an uncertain shape, with neither contours nor comeliness. They claim that its upper portion is needed for the support of the bust, and that its lower portion serves as a shield and protector for the abdomen, so that heavy skirts do not drag them to the earth.

"In short, had no human being been bright enough for the invention of this garment, one-half of God's humanity must have been a hopeless failure. He was able, it appears, to construct man so that he should be equal to the requirements of the life conferred upon him; but woman came forth from his hand wholly incompetent to

maintain herself erect, or to discharge the daily duties enjoined upon her. Fortunately, some one of his creatures, seeing the deficiency, succeeded in supplementing his work. Thus one skeleton sufficed for men; but for women it had to be propped up externally by another skeleton strapped about it. Does any one believe that, when the Creator gave to women their forms, he did not also give them the muscles which its proper maintenance would require?

"Tie a strong, healthy arm to a board, and keep it there for months; then remove its artificial prop. The arm cannot lift itself; it falls helpless at the side: *ergo*, never take the arm from the board, and it will never be weak. The great majority of women, growing up without corsets, would find them wholly useless. In strength the body would prove sufficient unto itself. To doubt this is to doubt divine foresight, power, or benevolence.

"It is true that corsets prevent one from feeling, at every motion, the pull and drag of each separate binding at the waist. The whole body beneath them being crowded together till its parts are incapable of much distinct motion among themselves, no one portion is conscious of more discomfort than the rest. This is why they render the skirt-bands endurable. Give up the

corset, and retain all other garments as previously worn, and the clothing becomes insupportable. The remedy is not to replace the compress as before, but to modify the remainder of the clothing till it is brought into some accordance with physiological laws.

"But many say, the corset is only bad when it is worn tight; loosen it, and it can do no harm; its abuse and not its use should be condemned. This statement is inadmissible. A corset is always bad, whether laced or not. Its very structure necessitates a pinching of the waist in front, even when no strings are tied: for, by many slender gores artfully woven into the cloth, it is given the shape of an hour-glass; and, if it is tight enough to retain its place at all, it must enforce this shape upon the yielding body beneath, with the stomach crowded into the neck of the glass.

"It is not thus that Nature models her human beings, whether women or men. The trunk of the body resembles an Egyptian column, with the greatest girth about the middle. The lower ribs spread out, and enclose a larger space than the upper ribs.\* Below these floating ribs, there are no bones whatever at the waist, if we except the spine behind, which serves as a connecting line

\* See page 25.

between the upper and lower portions of the framework. The reason for this is apparent. No bones can be trusted over this region, lest they impede the full and free action of vital organs beneath. Soft flesh and elastic muscles are the only wrapping allowed. Thus Nature has left the body. Should not this teach woman how to construct the covering she adds to this part of her system? But what does she do? Taking advantage of its yielding character, she crowds this section inward, instead of permitting it to expand outward; and girds and laces and binds and tortures it, till it is smaller than any bones would compel it to be. What should be the base of the pyramid is converted into its apex. While it was designed that all human beings should be larger below the ribs than below the arms, women have so re-formed themselves that they would be ashamed to resemble the Venus of Milo, or even the petite and mincing Venus de Medici. They go, however, in their best 'glove-fitting' French corsets, to study those famous marbles in galleries of art, and express unbounded admiration for the superb loveliness of their forms, and the wonderful fidelity to nature which ancient sculptors displayed.

"Furthermore, the trunk of the body is meant to be flexible, to bend backward and forward

easily within certain limits. To allow this, the one bone which runs its entire length—the backbone—is broken wholly apart at every inch of its extent, and a supple joint inserted. But the corset, by means of two long, stiff whalebones behind, and two long metal bars in front, forces the body to remain as inflexible throughout that section as if, for half a yard, it were strapped firmly between two iron bars. The lower cells of the lungs would expand, the bars say, No; the stomach would rise and fall as the heart throbs, the bars say, No; the body would bend backward and forward at the waist in a hundred slight movements, the bars say, No: keep to your line; thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. But Nature is both sly and strong, and she loves her way. She will outwit artifice in the long run, whatever it may cost her. The iron bars defy her power; but, by days and months of steady pressure, thrusting them back from her persistently, she forces them to bend. This done, the human hand, that could not curve them at first, cannot make them straight again. Nature has moulded her barriers to accommodate, in some measure, her own needs; and, when they are replaced with new, she sets herself again to the work.

"But it is said, 'You can improve corsets in several ways, and render them harmless.' With-

out doubt there is a choice in their varieties. There are manufacturers who proclaim 'comfort corsets,' with shoulder-straps above, and buttons for stocking-suspenders below, and lacings under the arm as well as behind, and other contrivances intended to render them worthy to be worn in the millennium. None, however, banish the iron in front, which is one of their worst features. But these efforts to improve corsets reveal a determination on the part of their makers to keep them in vogue. All they can do, however, will furnish but trifling mitigations of an evil which can never be converted into a good. A witty writer once discoursed on the 'total depravity of material things,' and, if one thing can be more totally depraved than another, that thing is the corset. By and by, as intelligence increases, and the practices of ignorance disappear, the compression of the waist now practised by European and American women will be held to be as ridiculous and far more pernicious than the compression of the feet practised by the Chinese. Indeed, our-heathen sisters must appear far more sensible than we; for their favorite torture affects only a remote and comparatively unimportant part of the body, while ours is a torture of the trunk at its very centre, where the springs of life are certain to be weakened and diseased.

"One of the strongest reasons for the general adoption of the corset—though it is one not commonly avowed—is the belief that it conduces to beauty and symmetry of figure. Slender forms are usually praised, and chiefly because they are associated with the liteness and the undeveloped graces of youth. But a pinched waist cannot make a slender form, or give the appearance of one, if above and below there be breadth and thickness which no efforts can diminish. Indeed, broad shoulders and a full chest only appear the larger by contrast with the slight span of a girded waist; and thus they become more conspicuous from the attempt made to conceal them. The waist itself, lacking the easy, varied motion and the peculiar shape which Nature gives, deceives no one as to the cause of its small dimensions; and the poor sufferer, who would fain pass for a wand-like sylph, tortures herself in vain, and has only her pains for her labor. Although all men disclaim any liking for an unnaturally small waist, all women persist in believing that a wasp-like appearance, at whatever age, and under whatever conditions, is sure to render them lovelier in the eyes of their admirers. Mature matrons should have a look of stability, and that dignity of presence and carriage which only a portly, well-developed person seems to confer.

Such a mien is as much the beauty of middle age, as slenderness is the beauty of youth. And a large, robust woman never looks so well-shaped and comely as when waist and shoulders retain the proportionate size which Nature gave.

*"Chemise."*—I have shown why the corset must inevitably perish. The chemise is condemned for quite different reasons. No charge of compression or of inflexible shape can be brought against that: it errs in the other direction, if that can be said to err which appears to be wholly without use, and to offer no excuse for its existence. But its sins are not merely negative. It produces a great inequality in the temperature of the system, by affording no covering for neck and arms, while it furnishes loose folds of useless cloth to be wrapped about the body on its warmest part and under the tight dress-waist. There is an excess of material where it is not needed, over the lower portion of the trunk; and a deficiency where it is needed, over the extremities. The chemise can offer no support to any other garment; and in every respect a more absurd and worthless article of clothing could not possibly have been devised. Its rude and primitive construction should recommend it to no intelligence higher than that of South Sea Islanders, by whom it is doubtless worn. In civilized countries it is

doomed to follow the corset to that limbo which dress-reformers will hereafter keep for the cumbersome and injurious habiliments of the past."

#### THE REFORM COSTUME.

Our readers having heard so much of what is *not* to be worn are doubtless by this time anxious for a description of the new garments in which they are to be so comfortable, and for specific directions as to how to make them, and we will now describe several suits which will approximate to the ideal hygienic costume.

#### SUMMER GARMENTS—THE CHEMILETTE.

In summer one lady will wear first a gauze merino vest, or perhaps, we say it with all deference to Mrs. Woolson, a scant, light cotton chemise, or whatever she may find most comfortable. Above this comes the *chemilette* the distinctive garment of the reform. It is not easy to explain lucidly the manner of cutting out a garment; but this is in reality a combination of two already in use, and therefore there will be no serious difficulty in the way of the would-be reformer. Take an ordinary high slip waist, or corset cover, cut to the figure with darts, &c., and extending five inches below the waist; then take a pair of

wers, off cut the draband, and as many inches below as would correspond to the extension of the waist, and sew the two articles together. This contains the secret of the make in a nutshell. It will, however, probably require various modifications and adaptations according to the taste and figure of the wearer. It is important, for instance, that the shoulders should be short and the sleeves well curved at the top to permit of raising the arm without drawing up the garment. The drawers should be comfortably wide at the top, and should overlap slightly and be furnished with buttons and button-holes both before and behind. The whole garment should be easy every way and need not be stinted in trimming, as it supplies the place of chemise, drawers, and corset. In the pattern sent by the Boston Committee, the front of the waist is cut in the same piece with the leg of the drawers, and the back is cut separ-

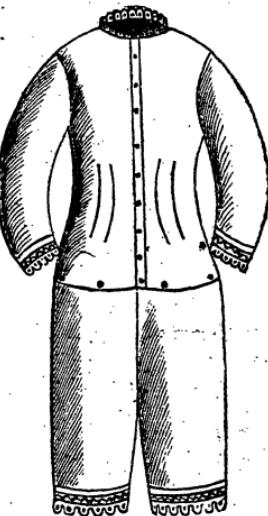


FIGURE I.

ately and set in. For those that prefer the closed pattern, the back of the drawers is put upon a band and buttoned to the back of the waist, and the garment is only left partially open in front.

It is desirable that the model should be actually worn, before others are cut from it, as unexpected deficiencies may be found in practise. If a slip waist of the required pattern is not to be had, a substitute may easily be cut from the basque of the dress, remembering that it is less trouble to cut the back in two pieces than in three.

The garment may be cut out of from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{3}{4}$  yards of cotton. The illustration shows the position of the buttons to which the flannel skirt is to be attached. There is also one in the centre of the back. Speaking of buttons we may remark here that no button should be placed directly below the breast. The upper buttons are to support the dress drawers, or an outer skirt. The sleeves should, of course, be shorter than those of the dress. Though not strictly hygienic, most ladies will want a few low-necked chemilettes to wear under thin dresses for evening parties and for summer. Any chemises which are worth the trouble may be cut over to form the top of these. •

## THE FLANNEL SKIRT.

At the junction of these garments, that is four or five inches below the waist, as we have said, five buttons are placed, on which she will suspend a light white or colored flannel skirt. That this skirt may contain no unnecessary fulness, the Boston Committee recommend that it should be cut semi-circular in shape, something in the style

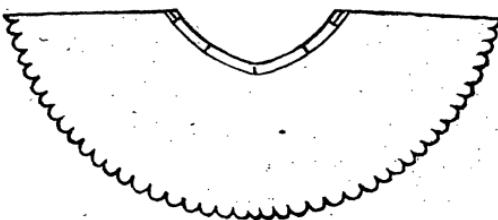


FIGURE 2.

of a child's cape. A piece of the same shape is cut from the centre, and the two straight edges are sewed together, leaving the opening on the left side near the front. The bottom is then scalloped and the top faced for button-holes. As, however, it is difficult to get flannel of suitable width, most people will find it quite satisfactory to gore the skirt in such a way that it will exactly fit at the top and be wide enough at the bottom. This, as we said, is to be buttoned on to the chemlette and

need not be unbuttoned except when taken off to be washed.

The little gored flannel skirt will be found very easy to make. Two of them may be cut out of three yards and a half of flannel. They have a gored width in front, a gore at each side, and a half-width behind. They may be faced at the top with tape, in which the button-holes are cut. The spare, as will be seen, is at the side of the front width. Figure *third* shows the chemilette

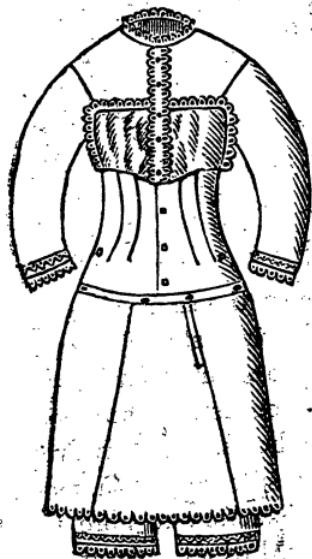


FIGURE 3.

with short flannel skirt attached. We have given a different style of waist here that many prefer to number two. A very full pleating or puffing of the same or lighter material is sewed upon the bosom, as shown, though not very clearly, in the illustration, and the cotton under it is cut out. This serves two purposes. For full figures it supports the bust and prevents any unpleasant "drag," and for unde-

veloped figures it may be starched, and will then take the place of the unhealthy pads which dress-makers often insist upon inserting, but which should be carefully avoided by all who value their health.

#### THE UNDER SKIRT.

Above this she will wear a white skirt with high or low waist, cut Gabrielle fashion (the two waists will not be found too much as the corset is omitted—with the chemilette waist alone the dress would hardly fit properly.) Or she will wear, perhaps, a well-gored moreen or fancy stuff skirt attached to a waist of its own, made in a similar manner to the chemilette waist, the junction being of course several inches below the waist. The waist may be of grey linen or holland, and may be cut low in the neck for summer. It should be merely basted strongly to the skirt that it may be easily ripped off to be washed when necessary. If the skirt be of stiff material it will be desirable to make the junction a little lower down than shown in the illustration, and care must be taken to have sufficient fulness, in order that the fit may be as perfect when the wearer is seated as when she is standing. If these precautions are not taken the skirt may wrinkle up in a distressing manner. The spare of this skirt

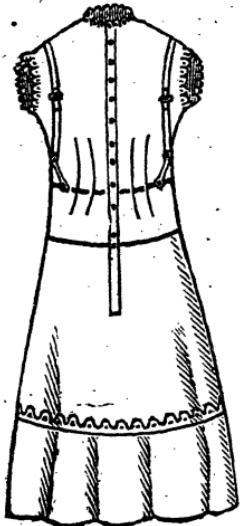


FIGURE 4.

comes directly in front, and should be very neatly made. The upper part of the skirt is supposed to be cut in a semi-circle as before described and the flounce is set on to the bottom of this. An ordinary bought skirt if sufficiently light will answer the purpose.

#### THE DRESS SKIRT.

Above this comes the dress skirt which, for walking, is made quite narrow and nearly off the ground, with hardly any lining, and as little weight of trimming as possible. It will have no unnecessary fulness at the top, and will be held up by suspenders.

The dotted line in figure *four* represents the waist-band of the dress, rather lower than it should be, with the suspenders attached to it. Care must be taken to bring the front band of the suspenders down almost under the arm or injury will be done.

The band, both of skirt and over-skirt, should be two or three inches wider than the waist, that there may be no pressure anywhere, and that you may be quite sure that they are really suspended from the shoulders and are not, as formerly, resting upon the hips.

#### THE BASQUE.

The basque, which, with the present fashion, completes the costume, should be so loose as to permit the wearer to draw a full breath in any position. Of course, pressure will need to be brought to bear upon the dressmaker to induce her to make it in this way. She will kindly inform you that you have "no figure" if you go to her without a corset, and will probably assert that a dress can never be made to fit if it be made loose. In this assertion, however, she simply shows her ignorance and want of skill, and foolish is the lady who will allow herself, against her better judgment, to be thus bound in fetters which will prevent her from enjoying all the blessings of health.

#### OTHER STYLES.

Another lady will consider that with the long over-skirts and trimmed dresses now in fashion, one skirt will be sufficient under the dress; she

will, therefore, choose some suitable material for the short skirt which we first described, and will cut it longer, or better, lengthen it, by a plain flounce set on at the bottom. She will then put her dress skirt upon a linen waist of its own, as before joining this to the dress material several inches below the waist. It may be asked in this connection, Why not attach the dress to a band as usual and sew that to a waist? The reason is this. In order really to support the skirt the waist must be made very short waisted indeed, and this will bring the thickness of the band and pleatings far too high for convenience. If made the usual length, the weight of the skirt will, as before, simply press upon the lower part of the body.

Another lady will prefer to wear the comfortable hoop skirt which prevents the skirts from clogging the limbs in walking, and gives to some

extent the appearance without the discomfort and unhealthfulness of a bustle. She will cut off entirely the front part of the waist binding of this, and attach the rest to the chemilette buttons or to suspenders. A light Balmoral may be fastened to the topmost hoop, and the two be put on and taken off together.



FIGURE 5.

## THE GABRIELLE.

Another lady will prefer to adopt the recommendation of the Boston Committee with regard to the dress. They recommend the Gabrielle or gored dress with additions and modifications. Mrs. Woolson says of this:—

"It requires less cloth than any other, and is consequently lighter, as well as cheaper; its weight depends entirely from the shoulders; it has no band and no fulness at the waist; and its lines, flowing from shoulder to foot, blend bodice with skirt by graceful curves. This alone will form the house-dress. For the street superadd a polonaise, or, if you prefer, an over-skirt and a short sack. The color and material of these last garments may be different from the Gabrielle, which will appear to outward view only as the black under-skirt of the dress.

"Would you make this costume? Buy a good paper pattern of the Gabrielle; cut off its train, rendering it as short as you can wear it, and still retain your peace of mind; trim some fulness from the gores behind and from the side-seams of the skirt; and fit its waist loosely to your form. Make it of black alpaca, cashmere, or silk, and it will be durable, and suitable to all seasons. If you must yield to the tempter and trim the bot-

tom, one broad flounce with a puffed heading should suffice; but let the trimming upon the neck, coat-sleeves and side-pockets be flat, so as to be well hidden beneath the polonaise. White cuffs, collar, and bright necktie will render it pretty for the house. Of cambric, with no waist-lining, it is that cool, light, washable robe of which we dream when the dog-days are upon us and Sirius rages. Let the polonaise be comfortably loose below the arms; hem the edge of its skirt; and, if the material be good, it will be sufficiently ornamented with handsome buttons upon the front, and a ruff, or what you will, about the neck. The over-skirt which is to be worn under the sack should have straps fastened to it and a loose binding, that it may not be felt at the waist.

"The ornament used upon the dress should be light, durable, and simple. The heaviest trimmings known are kilt-plaits, and fringes of jet beads; and no approval of fashion should tempt one to wear them. The softness of lace, the gloss and swing of silken fringes, smooth, stitched bands of cloth or of braid,—these offer styles of adornment that are always tasteful and unobjectionable. There is no need of profuse trimmings where the material of the dress is rich and handsome; and, where it is cheap and simple, they are

certainly out of place. Thomas Fuller says of the good wife, 'She makes plain cloth to be velvet by her handsome wearing of it,' and a well-cut garment, of becoming shape and color, has in itself a beauty of contour and a play of fold which belong to smooth and floating surfaces and lines.

"Belts for the outer dress are no more deserving of favor than those found in the under-wear. If any one cannot yet reconcile herself to the flowing curves of a loose Gabrielle waist, she may take refuge in an infinite variety of pretty little sacques, made beautiful with trimming; and with their adjunct of an overskirt, she can move as freely and breathe as deeply as she may wish."

#### WINTER COMFORTS—THE UNDER FLANNEL.

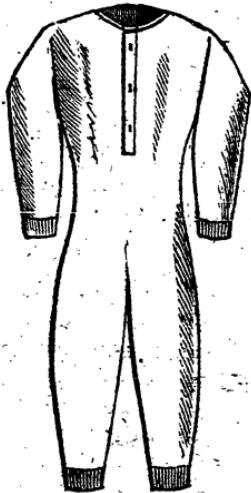
As to the changes necessary for cold weather, these likewise allow of great variation. A woven undergarment, all in one piece, of wool or merino, similar to those sold for children, will be found very comfortable. If it cannot be purchased all in one piece, the drawers and vest may be bought separately and sewed, buttoned, or laced together, after cutting a piece off the top of one or the bottom of the other.

Our illustration represents what is called in the United States the "Union Underflannel." This

may be purchased here in good quality of lamb's wool and merino at from \$3.50 to \$4.75. each. The American make is entirely open, and is much more convenient, as it may be put on along with as several other garments—a great comfort in point of rapidity and ease of dressing. A garment made of flannel, which will not shrink, may more economically be used instead of this, though of course it is clumsier. The principal objection to the white lamb's wool is that it shrinks to a great extent. These garments are not yet, so far as we know, made in gray wool for ladies; but

we may whisper to them the fact that they can, if they like, purchase a suit of that made for men, and by cutting, fitting, joining and neatly binding with ribbon, they may manufacture a neat garment, of which no one will suspect the origin, and which will cost even less than flannel.

THE BLOOMERS.  
Above this comes the cotton chemilette, and



then for outdoors the colored flannel drawers or "bloomers" called "Dress Drawers" in the States, which are fortunately customary in this country. Those who are feeble, or who live in cold houses, will find themselves very comfortable if, instead of bloomers, they wear an entire chemilette of colored flannel above the two others, thus covering themselves completely from waist to ankle, with three thicknesses of warm clothing. We say to ankle, for the drawers ought to be very long, and the stocking should be pulled up over the under ones at least. Those who prefer a less complicated arrangement, will make a long sleeved chemilette of heavy Canton flannel, reaching to the ankle under the stockings and will simply button the bloomers, the legs of which should be made both wide and long, to it. Instead of putting the bloomers on an elastic at the waist, it will be found advantageous to put them on a neatly fitting yoke band; say six inches wide, containing four button-holes around the top to meet corresponding buttons on the chemilette. This will make them wear better, but, if lightness be more desired than strength, they may be gored to fit between the hip and the waist and faced with broad tape at the top, and button-holes inserted as before.

It is important in connection with this to remember that the chemilette, though it supplies

the place of three garments, will not be nearly equal to them in warmth. It is cooler for summer wear than the former arrangement; but in winter it must be reduplicated to be sufficiently warm—the great advantage being that the warmth thus gained is evenly distributed over the body.

#### WINTER DRESSES.

A word as to winter dresses. Those who do no active housework and who ride in their carriages, instead of walking, can afford to wear heavy dresses. Those who would possess the health, strength, vigor, and beauty, which are only to be attained as the result of active exercise *cannot* afford to do this. Walking is difficult enough in winter, and we need not make it more so by adding pounds of unnecessary weight to the clothing. The problem of how to have a handsome winter dress which will not be heavy, is a difficult one, and each lady will have to work it out for herself. A few hints, however, may help. *First*—do not attempt to loop up a train to make a short walking-skirt. The train, graceful enough in the drawing-room, should be confined to it, as it necessitates extra widths of the material, out of the question for walking. *Second*—Having made your skirt as narrow as possible, and of reasonable length, avoid the use of unnecessary linings,

facings, and the heavy "skirt protectors." *Third*—Avoid heavy trimmings. The weight of a skirt is sometimes doubled or trebled by the trimmings. In the days when a dress skirt was attached to the waist, a few rows of braid, ribbon or velvet were considered sufficient for trimming. Now, when the skirt has no support, it is loaded down with puffs and flounces and pleatings, and if fashion demands it, with jet trimmings, of which no one who has not felt it, can imagine the weight. Now if the material be heavy, trimmings of the same ought to be out of the question; if it be comparatively light they ought to be flat, and should contain as little cloth as possible. The top of the dress-skirt may be put upon lining some twelve or fifteen inches below the waist, the gap being concealed by the overskirt or polonaise, or the linen basque waist to which it is attached may be extended downwards for the same distance, thus forming in effect a Gabrielle dress made of two materials instead of one, the make being concealed by basque and overskirt. Here we may say a word in favor of cloth dresses. A broadcloth dress will look handsome, though made up with perfect plainness; will be light and comfortable, and will wear winter after winter. The material is apparently an expensive one, but will be found really very economical on account of its dura-

bility and of the immense saving which will be made by having no trimming to go out of fashion. Materials of this sort will, we think, be much more in favor in the future than they have been in the past, when ladies learn that it is not absolutely necessary for their position and happiness that they should always appear in garments cut in the most recent fashion.

One of the authorities already quoted says on this subject :—

“ Time and money considered, nothing is more important in dress than the material of which it is made. A substantial, plain, elegant fabric carries on the face of it its own recommendation. Like a well-bred person, it is always presentable in any place and upon any occasion ; while the flimsy stuff, however much ornamented, like a merely superficial character, shows its worthless origin ; and the more you attempt to cover over its defects by gaudy externals, the more apparent they become.

“ And how much more economical and sensible is it to have one comfortable suit of clothes, adapted, in color, cut, and warmth, to our needs, than to possess a variety of garments, none worn enough to justify us in abandoning them, but all left on our hands when the season ends ! The remodelling of such attire, which thus becomes a

part of the next year's labor, really consumes more time, and gives more annoyance, than the making of wholly new garments."

## SKIRTS FOR WARMTH.

We cannot leave the subject of skirts without having a little more to say about the evil of trusting to them to supply the necessary warmth. The idea that extra skirts are the proper way of supplying extra warmth, is so firmly rooted in the feminine mind that we fear the effort to entirely eradicate it will be futile, yet common sense shows that it is far more to the purpose to put the extra thickness into the drawers than into the skirts, and medical authorities agree that it is much safer. If necessary, wear three pair of warm drawers in the house and more out of it, but keep your feet warm—and your skirts light. We cannot resist making another quotation from Dio Lewis, whose remarks are so much to the point:—

"Women should dress their arms and legs with one or two thicknesses of knit woollen garments which fit them. The absurdity of loose flowing sleeves and wide-spread skirts I will not discuss.

"Do you ask why the arms and legs may not become accustomed to exposure, like the face? I answer, God has provided the face with an immense circulation, because it must be exposed.

"The underskirts should be no heavier in January than in July, for it is bad to carry a load suspended either at your waist, or from the shoulders, and certainly very absurd to think of keeping your legs and hips warm by skirts which hang a foot more or less from them."

#### INFLATING DISFIGUREMENTS.

Speaking of skirts, Mrs. Woolson says:—

"They seem intended for two purposes,—to keep the legs warm and to conceal them. As producers of warmth, they are utter failures: one-half the cloth they require, if put into the form of drawers, will give twice the protection from cold, while the swinging motion of the skirts gives rise to a constant current of air beneath them. But nothing can take their place as inflating disfigurements. So let us be wise in our day and generation: let us seem to wear them, and yet wear only enough to save our appearance."

"By skirts in this connection, I do not mean those of the outer dress, but all beneath them. Before speaking of their number, a few hints may be given in regard to lessening the weight of each. Put as little cloth into them as possible; make them no wider or longer than good looks re-

quire. The hem of the longest should be at least four inches from the ground, their tops two or three inches below the waist-line. From these tops, all superfluous material should be removed, by gores or other means, and not retained in gathers and plaits. Thus heat, as well as weight, will be diminished. Make them of the lightest serviceable cloth: the manufactured Balmorals of felt are too heavy and too thick at the top, though admirably shaped. For white goods, cambric weighs much less than 'muslin.' If tucks must adorn them, let them be few and fine.

"In former times skirts of the quilted variety, made at home with much labor, were gathered over the hips so as to contribute excessive heat to that region, and were worn with weariness to the flesh. The plain tunnels of felt that have driven them out of existence are a great improvement on the straight quilted skirt; but they also are too heavy and too warm, and, moreover, they cannot usually be washed. It is better to substitute a skirt made of colored flannel, or other washable material, with its top made like the under-skirt just described, and with a straight, scant flounce set upon its lower edge, at the knee. If cloth is found sufficiently wide to cut the entire length of the skirt of this semicircular shape, the flounce will not be needed."

## THE EMANCIPATION WAIST.

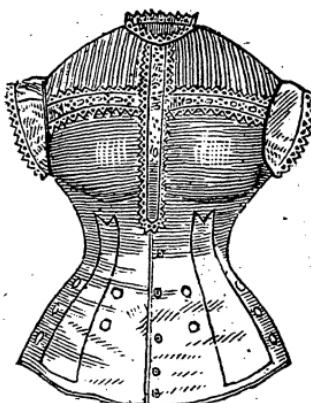


FIGURE 7.

outer skirts should each come in a different place. Some button the drawers to it also. This illustration may furnish hints as to shape and trimming to those who desire a waist for this purpose.

## SUSPENDERS.

As to the suspenders to which we have alluded, they may be either bought or made at home. Mrs. Woolson recommends a particular kind, the description of which will give an idea of the qualities required, she says:—

"As to these articles, no style seems so good as the regular men's suspender of the Guyot pattern, stamped also as the *bretelles hygiéniques*. They

The garment of this name, which has recently been patented in the United States, is intended for those who do not adopt the other reform garments, but who merely wish for a waist on which to button their skirts. It is made of double cotton and the buttons are so arranged that the bands of the

cannot fall over the arms ; and, however full the bust may be, they will, if properly adjusted, pass behind it. They are to be bought anywhere, as white, as delicate, as washable as one could wish. Ladies who have worn them for years pronounce them perfect. There are many new patterns of suspenders made especially for women, each claiming peculiar excellences. Dress-reformers have grown learned concerning them, but space fails us to rehearse their ins and their outs. We are firm in the faith that no one need be without a comfortable suspender of some sort, many women to the contrary notwithstanding."

One kind, made especially for ladies, is arranged with safety pins of a peculiar construction, and has the advantage that it can be attached to both skirt and over-skirt. These suspenders, with others of more or less merit, may be purchased at from 45c. to 75c.

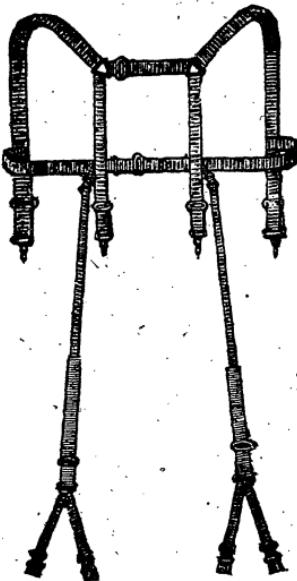


FIGURE 8.

They may, however, easily be made at home with a little ingenuity. Broad, white tape, sewed double, answers very well. Two straight strips, about three-quarters of a yard long and joined between the shoulders by a cross-piece of five or six inches, may be sewed on the waist-band at the back, and be attached by buttons in front. This is a very simple arrangement, and those whose time is valuable will find it convenient to have them thus attached to each dress-skirt, instead of having movable ones which take time to adjust. The stocking suspenders may, in like manner, be either purchased or made at home. One kind is sold, having two elastics attached to a waist-band. This style has a fatal error in the construction and should be carefully avoided, as it is much more dangerous to wear than the ordinary garter. A combination shoulder-brace, stocking and skirt supporter, represented in Figure *eight* is recommended by the Boston Committee; but, as we have said, simpler arrangements may be made that will be quite as satisfactory.

## LEGGINS.

Figure *nine* shows the leggins which are intended to keep the leg from ankle to



knee dry and warm during cold and wet weather. This is a very important

FIGURE 9.

article of dress, as many colds are taken through sitting with wet ankles, and there are many days in winter when it is impossible without them to keep oneself dry. Yet it is, so far as we know, impossible to obtain them ready-made, and no little ingenuity is required to make them at home. We hope, however, that the time is not far off, when these useful articles, as well as broad-soled low-heeled boots, may be obtained without difficulty.

## WRAPS.

With regard to wraps and clothing for the extremities, we copy the concluding pages of the Boston book :—

“ *Wraps.*—For outer garments, the short sacque is the most serviceable. The shawl has antiquity and grace to recommend it: we remember how universally its shape entered into the component parts of the female dress of the Greeks, in what rich folds of drapery it sweeps down from the shoulders, and how, in the hands of a Lady Hamilton, it may lend a charm even to the swaying motion of the dance that bears its name; but it impedes the movement of the body in walking, covers the arms till they are nearly useless, and crowds about the neck. When we have a mind to be statuesque at all hazards, or when we

can rest at ease on carriage cushions, or take a siesta at home, it may be made available; but, when we wish to walk or to work, it can be nothing but an encumbrance. Then a simple, sleeved garment is far preferable.

*“Clothing of the Extremities.*—The hands in winter should never be confined in a muff; nor should furs be worn about the neck. Mittens are better than gloves for warmth; and women should learn to move their arms freely at the side, instead of keeping them bent, with the hands pinioned at the waist. The sleeve has reached perfection in the close coat-sleeve, cut high on the shoulder, so as to give freedom of movement to the shoulder-joint. We are indebted to the French for so many pernicious fashions, that we may thank them for a style as sensible as this.

“I need not say that a low-heeled, broad-soled boot or shoe, of soft, stout leather, not too loose or too tight, is requisite to the proper clothing of the foot, and to an easy and elastic gait. There may be a variety in the shoes to be worn on different occasions; and they should be changed often, as should also the stocking, owing to the moisture of the foot. Calf-skin is the best leather for ordinary wear; but, while goat-skin is no protection against wet, its porous nature allows the exhalations from the foot to pass off freely. Noth-

ing should be suffered to interfere with this function of the skin. Cork-soles covered on one surface with enamelled cloth, and rubber shoes, are too impervious to the air. Indeed, rubber shoes, and especially rubber boots, should very seldom be worn. The Maine lumbermen secured rubber boots for themselves as soon as these articles appeared in the market, thinking thus to keep their feet dry while rafting logs on the Penobscot; but they soon found their feet more damp than before, and were obliged to abandon the boots. The exhaled moisture of the foot, instead of passing off into the air, was again absorbed, to the injury of the system.

"For the head, a soft, light hat seems perfection; and one may not deny it the ornament of a curling ostrich feather; though if birds would only teach us the art of keeping their plumes in curl in damp weather, so that we could wear them confidently in a fog, there would be no drawback to their grace and beauty. That conglomeration of bows, muslin flowers, buckles, feathers, lace, and beads, usually heaped upon the useless articles called hats, presents a style of composite architecture not edifying to behold. The width of the hat-brim should render parasol and veil unnecessary; but it should not be wide enough to become unmanageable in the wind.

"Such is the apparel which intelligent care would proffer to the women of our time. Clothe yourselves thus, and life is no longer a burden. You look like other women, and no one suspects that you are not as miserable as they ; but you breathe where they gasp, the library books on the top shelf are within your reach, and when a friend asks you to walk a mile you are ready to go with him twain.

"Even in this day of pinching corsets and entangling trains, women are fast learning to respect the nature in themselves ; and they will, ere long, forswear bands and burdensome toggery, and roam the meadows and walk the streets, if not kirtled like Diana and her nymphs when equipped for the chase, yet with a dress too simple to absorb their minds, too easy to cripple their movements, too healthful to rob their cheeks of a bloom which should be as fresh and rosy as that of the clover-tops they tread."

## IX.

### RESOLVING AND DOING.

We have now laid before our readers the proposed dress-reform, both in its principles and in its details, and with them remains the responsibility of carrying it out. We say the responsibility, for it is no mere question of comfort or taste or fashion. It is the *duty* of every woman to use every means within her power to preserve or regain her health. It is her *duty* to be as strong as possible, and as fit for the work which God has given her to do. If then she finds the testimony of this book as to the injurious nature of her present attire unanswerable, let her begin as soon as possible to improve matters.

Those who are so conservative as to be quite unwilling to give up at once their accustomed garments, or who have worn their corsets so tight that they feel as if they were "falling to pieces" without them, and who therefore cling to them with a not unnatural desperation, should consider carefully what point they are willing to yield,

and begin there. Do not relinquish the hope of relief because you are unwilling at first to go the whole length. If you are willing to loosen your corsets, do so. If you can agree to lighten your skirts and wear suspenders, do not hesitate to do it because you object to the chemilette. It is so much clear gain. If you can make up your mind to the chemilette, wear, if you must, your corsets above it, but loosen them and support the outer skirts by waists and suspenders, and by and by you will find yourself forgetting to put them on at all, and then you may consider the victory gained, and month by month you will see with pleased surprise your former ailments and weaknesses disappear, and will wonder much at former blindness and ignorance. You will not then despair if you find your friends as slow to avail themselves of the way of escape as you were, but will persevere in pointing out the right way.

A caution here may be necessary. Many have tried to reform at one point or another, and the change not being in harmony with the rest of the dress has made them very uncomfortable, and they have speedily returned to the old style. Many, for instance, after reading or hearing of the evil of the corset, have laid that article aside and have attempted to button the waist-bands to an under-waist. The result of this policy was a

feeling of discomfort, as though the waist were girt about with a tightly fastened rope. Experience teaches that if the corset is abandoned the waist-bands must be abandoned also. Others have experimented on stocking suspenders, attempting to fasten them to the corset or waist-band, and have soon relinquished the plan as unfeasible. Others declare skirt suspenders injurious, because they have not the wit to fasten the front strap nearly under the arm, where it can do no harm.

Any one with a moderate amount of resolution and intelligence can easily surmount all obstacles and make her "freedom" suit, as enthusiasts call the new attire, everything that is desirable and beautiful. She will then feel inclined to call her neighbors and friends to exult with her over the wonderful discovery which she has made, and will soon induce them to follow her example if she perseveres in keeping before them the merits of the system, letting nothing turn her aside from her purpose.

#### FALSE ECONOMY.

The first thought which will arise in most minds on this subject, will probably phrase itself something as follows: "My underclothes are all made; I have enough to last me for several months

or years. It will be time enough when they are worn out to attempt the new kind. I cannot afford to do anything at present." "Cannot afford" generally means "will not afford." The same people who cannot afford the two or three dollars necessary to purchase the material for the new underclothes, will manage in one way or another to afford the new bonnet and handsomely trimmed suit when the season changes. It depends upon what relative importance you attach to health compared with outside appearance as to which style of garment will have the preference in the immediate future. If economy be necessary, you will, as we have shown, be able, with a little ingenuity, to transform most of your present garments into those demanded by the reform. It is a very false economy to save off matters affecting one's health. Illness and doctor's bills will come to far more than chemilettes and suspenders.

#### PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE.

The main difficulty is to persuade women that they are really injuring their health at present. Retribution comes surely, but it comes often so slowly that the victims of dress cannot be persuaded that it is coming at all. Many will read this book carelessly and yield but a half assent to

is teachings, and the effect will soon pass off without producing any result. We can only advise such as do not feel themselves sufficiently impressed to reperuse the chapter entitled "COMPRESSING AND DEPRESSING," and to notice that so many qualified observers all agree exactly as to the injury done, and point out the same remedy.

"The mills of God grind slowly,  
But they grind exceeding small."

Your health may be now what you call perfect, but there is no doubt that by errors of dress you, in the first place, lose a great deal of that elasticity and buoyancy which is your natural right; and, in the second place, if you do not change, injury is being gradually done which will certainly show itself in the course of time—*injury* which is proportioned to the *compression* caused by the corset and bands and to the *depression* caused by the weight of skirts. A glance at the delicate subject treated in pages 87 to 91 will show one of the most serious of the ways in which harm may be done, and yet perhaps the one which is least often attributed to dress. Teach the young to be wise in time.

#### HINTS FOR REFORMERS.

Now that the ordinary underclothing is imported at such rates as to undersell that produced

in our midst, those who are interested in the sale of the latter would probably find it for their advantage to provide a supply of the new underwear, of which they are likely to have, for a while at least, the monopoly. To introduce these it would be well to obtain a variety of patterns and make up several complete suits in different styles, and then call the attention of customers to them by advertising. Prejudice may be excited by exhibiting the individual articles, but when the whole underclothing is seen together, and the facility is observed with which it may be slipped on and off *en masse*, as well as the comfort and economy of the whole arrangement, no thoughtful women can fail to feel that it supplies a long-felt want. If it is not considered desirable to make the garments until sure of the demand, a large doll might be dressed hygienically and exhibited to customers, and orders be taken. Measurements would have to be numerous and exact to make sure of the garments fitting well.

Speaking of patterns, we may say that the circular of the Boston Committee giving description and price may be obtained by addressing Miss H. L. Lang, No. 4 Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass. Madam Demorest also publishes a pattern which she calls the "Ladies' chemise drawers," giving the puffed piece for the bust represented in

our third illustration. Other pattern makers will doubtless follow in a short time, but those who have only themselves to provide for, will probably find a pattern cut from a neatly fitting waist and drawers quite satisfactory.

If the fashion is set in any place by ladies of position and influence it will not be long before it is followed by the mass, and we may hope that it will soon be as much the fashion to be healthy as it is now to be delicate.

The position which this reform is taking in the United States may perhaps be best shown by a chapter taken from Miss Alcott's last work, "The Eight Cousins." It is entitled,

"FASHION AND PHYSIOLOGY."

It may be explained that Rose, the heroine, had become quite delicate under the unwise nurture bestowed upon her by her aunts, when fortunately her guardian uncle, Dr. Alec, returned from abroad, and with a few months under his wise physical training the weakly girl had grown strong and hearty:—

"Please, sir, I guess you'd better step up right away, or it will be too late, for I heard Miss Rose say she knew you wouldn't like it, and she'd never dare to let you see her."

"Phebe said this as she popped her head into the study, where Dr. Alec sat reading a new book.

"They are at it, are they?" he said, looking up quickly, and giving himself a shake, as if ready for a battle of some sort.

"Yes, sir, as hard as they can talk, and Miss Rose don't seem to know what to do, for the things are ever so stylish, and she looks elegant in 'em; though I like her best in the old ones," answered Phebe.

"You are a girl of sense. I'll settle matters for Rosy, and you'll lend a hand. Is everything ready in her room, and are you sure you understand how they go?"

"Oh, yes, sir; but they are so funny! I know Miss Rose will think it's a joke," and Phebe laughed as if something tickled her immensely.

"Never mind what she thinks so long as she obeys. Tell her to do it for my sake, and she will find it the best joke she ever saw. I expect to have a tough time of it, but we'll win yet," said the Doctor, as he marched upstairs with the book in his hand, and an odd smile on his face.

"There was such a clatter of tongues in the sewing-room, that no one heard his tap at the door, so he pushed it open and took an observation. Aunt Plenty, Aunt Clara, and Aunt Jessie were all absorbed in gazing at Rose, who slowly

revolved between them and the great mirror, in a full winter costume of the latest fashion.

"Bless my heart! worse even than I expected," thought the Doctor, with an inward groan, for, to his benighted eyes, the girl looked like a trussed fowl, and the fine new dress had neither grace, beauty, nor fitness to recommend it.

"The suit was of two peculiar shades of blue, so arranged that patches of light and dark distracted the eye. The upper skirt was tied so tightly back that it was impossible to take a long step, and the under one was so loaded with plaited frills that it 'wobbled'—no other word will express it—ungracefully, both four and aft. A bunch of folds was gathered up just below the waist behind, and a great bow rode a-top. A small jacket of the same material was adorned with a high ruff at the back, and laid well open over the breast, to display some lace and a locket. Heavy fringes, bows, puffs, ruffles and *revers* finished off the dress, making one's head ache to think of the amount of work wasted, for not a single graceful line struck the eye, and the beauty of the material was quite lost in the profusion of ornament.

"A high velvet hat, audaciously turned up in front, with a bunch of pink roses and a sweeping plume, was cocked over one ear, and with her

curls braided into a club at the back of her neck, Rose's head looked more like that of a dashing young cavalier than a modest little girl's. High-heeled boots tilted her well forward, a tiny muff pinioned her arms, and a spotted veil tied so closely over her face that her eyelashes were rumped led by it, gave the last touch of absurdity to her appearance.

"Now she looks like other girls, and as *I* like to see her," Mrs. Clara was saying, with an air of great satisfaction.

"She does look like a fashionable young lady, but somehow I miss my little Rose, for children dressed like children in my day," answered Aunt Plenty, peering through her glasses with a troubled look, for she could not imagine the creature before her ever sitting in her lap, running to wait upon her, or making the house gay with a child's blithe presence.

"Things have changed since your day, Aunt, and it takes time to get used to new ways. But you, Jessie, surely like this costume better than the dowdy things Rose has been wearing all summer. Now, be honest, and own you do," said Mrs. Clara, bent on being praised for her work.

"Well, dear, to be *quite* honest then, I think it is frightful," answered Mrs. Jessie with a candor that caused revolving Rose to stop in dismay.

"Hear, hear," cried a deep voice, and with a general start the ladies became aware that the enemy was among them.

Rose blushed up to her hat brim, and stood, looking, as she felt, like a fool, while Mrs. Clara hastened to explain.

"Of course I don't expect *you* to like it, Alec, but I don't consider you a judge of what is proper and becoming for a young lady. Therefore I have taken the liberty of providing a pretty street suit for Rose. She need not wear it if you object, for I know we promised to let you do what you liked with the poor dear for a year."

"It is a street costume, is it?" asked the Doctor, mildly. "Do you know, I never should have guessed that it was meant for winter weather and brisk locomotion. Take a turn, Rosy, and let me see all its beauties and advantages."

Rose tried to walk off with her usual free tread, but the under-skirt got in her way, the over-skirt was so tight she could not take a long step, and her boots made it impossible to carry herself perfectly erect.

"I haven't got used to it yet," she said, petulantly, kicking at her train, as she turned to toddle back again.

"Suppose a mad dog or a runaway horse was after you, could you get out of the way without

upsetting, Colonel?' asked the Doctor, with a twinkle in the eyes that were fixed on the rakish hat.

"Don't think I could, but I'll try," and Rose made a rush across the room. Her boot-heels caught on a rug, several strings broke, her hat tipped over her eyes, and she plunged promiscuously into a chair, where she sat laughing so infectiously that all but Mrs. Clara joined in her mirth.

"I should say that a walking suit in which one could not walk, and a winter suit which exposes the throat, head and feet to cold and damp, rather a failure, Clara; especially as it has no beauty to reconcile one to its utter unfitness," said Dr. Alec, as he helped Rose undo her veil, adding, in a low tone: "Nice thing for the eyes; you'll soon see spots when it is off as well as when it is on, and, by and by, be a case for an oculist."

"No beauty!" cried Mrs. Clara, warmly. "Now that is just a man's blindness. This is the best of silk and camel's hair, real ostrich feathers, and an expensive ermine muff. What *could* be in better taste, or more proper for a young girl?"

"I'll show you, if Rose will go to her room and oblige me by putting on what she finds there," answered the Doctor, with unexpected readiness.

"Alec, if it is a Bloomer, I shall protest. I've been expecting it, but I know I *cannot* bear to see that pretty child sacrificed to your wild ideas of health. Tell me it *isn't* a Bloomer!" and Mrs. Clara clasped her hands imploringly.

"It is not."

"Thank Heaven!" and she resigned herself with a sigh of relief, adding plaintively, "I did hope you'd accept my suit, for poor Rose has been afflicted with frightful clothes long enough to spoil the taste of any girl."

"You talk of *my* afflicting the child, and then make a helpless guy like that of *her*!" answered the Doctor, pointing to the little fashion plate that was scuttling out of sight as fast as it could go.

"He closed the door with a shrug, but before any one could speak, his quick eye fell upon an object which caused him to frown, and demand in an indignant tone:—

"After all I have said, were you really going to tempt my girl with those abominable things?"

"I thought we put them away when she wouldn't wear them," murmured Mrs. Clara, whisking a little pair of corsets out of sight, with guilty haste. "I only brought them to try, for Rose is growing stout, and will have no figure if it is not attended to soon," she added, with an air

of calm conviction that roused the Doctor still more, for this was one of his especial abominations.

"‘‘Growing stout! Yes, thank Heaven, she is, and shall continue to do it, for Nature knows how to mold a woman better than any corset-maker, and I won’t have her interfered with. My dear Clara, *have* you lost your senses that you can for a moment dream of putting a growing girl into an instrument of torture like this?’—and with a sudden gesture he plucked forth the offending corsets from under the sofa cushion, and held them out with the expression one would wear on beholding the thumbscrews or the rack of ancient times.

"‘‘Don’t be absurd, Alec. There is no torture about it, for tight lacing is out of fashion, and we have nice, sensible things now-a-days. Every one wears them; even babies have stiffened waists to support their weak little backs,’ began Mrs. Clara, rushing to the defense of the pet delusion of most women:

"‘‘I know it, and so the poor little souls have weak backs all their days, as their mothers had before them. It is vain to argue the matter, and I won’t try, but I wish to state, once for all, that if I ever see a pair of corsets near Rose, I’ll put them in the fire, and you may send the bill to me.’

"As he spoke, the corsets were on their way to destruction, but Mrs. Jessie caught his arm, exclaiming merrily, 'Don't burn them, for mercy's sake, Alec; they are full of whalebones, and will make a dreadful odor. Give them to me. I'll see that they do no harm.'

"Whalebones indeed! A regular fence of them, and metal gate-posts in front. As if our own bones were not enough, if we'd give them a chance to do their duty,' growled the Doctor, yielding up the bone of contention with a last shake of contempt. Then his face cleared suddenly, and he held up his finger, saying, with a smile, 'Hear those girls laugh; cramped lungs could not make hearty music like that.'

"Peals of laughter issued from Rose's room, and smiles involuntarily touched the lips of those who listened to the happy sound.

"Some new prank of yours, Alec?" asked Aunt Plenty, indulgently, for she had come to believe in most of her nephew's odd notions, because they seemed to work so well.

"Yes, ma'm, my last, and I hope you will like it. I discovered what Clara was at, and got my rival suit ready for to-day. I'm not going to 'afflict' Rose, but let her choose, and if I'm not entirely mistaken, she will like my rig best. While we wait I'll explain, and then you will appreciate

the general effect better. I got hold of this little book, and was struck with its good sense and good taste, for it suggests a way to clothe women both healthfully and handsomely, and that is a great point. It begins at the foundations, as you will see if you will look at these pictures, and I should think women would rejoice at this lightening of their burdens.'

"As he spoke, the Doctor laid the book before Aunt Plenty, who obediently brought her spectacles to bear upon the illustrations, and after a long look exclaimed with a scandalized face :

"'Mercy on us, these things are like the night-drawers Jamie wears! You don't mean to say you want Rose to come out in this costume? It's not proper, and I won't consent to it!'

"'I do mean it, and I'm sure my sensible Aunt *will* consent when she understands that these—well—I'll call them by an Indian name, and say—pajamas—are for underwear, and Rose can have as pretty frocks as she likes, outside. These two suits of flannel, each in one piece from head to foot, with a skirt or so hung on this easily fitting waist, will keep the child warm without burdening her with belts, and gathers, and buckles, and bunches round the waist, and leave free the muscles that need plenty of room to work in. She shall never have the back-ache if *I* can help it, nor the

long list of ills you dear women think you cannot escape.'

"'I don't consider it modest, and I'm sure Rose will be shocked at it,' began Mrs. Clara, but stopped suddenly as Rose appeared in the doorway, not looking shocked a bit.'

"'Come on, my hygienic model, and let us see you,' said her uncle, with an approving glance, as she walked in looking so mischievously merry, that it was evident she enjoyed the joke.'

"'Well, I don't see anything remarkable. That is a neat, plain, suit; the materials are good, and it's not unbecoming, if you want her to look like a little school-girl; but it has not a particle of style, and no one would ever give it a second glance,' said Mrs. Clara, feeling that her last remark condemned the whole thing.'

"'Exactly what I want,' answered the provoking Doctor, rubbing his hands with a satisfied air. 'Rosy looks now like what she is, a modest little girl, who does not want to be stared at. I think she would get a glance of approval, though, from people who like sense and simplicity, rather than fuss and feathers. Revolve, my Hebe, and let me refresh my eyes by the sight of you.'

"There was very little to see, however, only a pretty Gabrielle dress, of a soft, warm shade of brown, coming to the tops of a trim pair of boots.

with low heels. A seal-skin sack, cap, and mittens, with a glimpse of scarlet at the throat, and the pretty curls tied up with a bright velvet of the same color, completed the external adornment, making her look like a robin red-breast—wintery, yet warm.

"How do you like it, Rosy?" asked the Doctor, feeling that *her* opinion was more important to the success of his new idea than that of all the aunts on the hill.

"I feel very odd and light, but I'm warm as a toast, and nothing seems to be in my way," answered Rose, with a skip which displayed shapely gaiters on legs that now might be as free and active as a boy's, under the modest skirts of the girl.

"You can run away from the mad dogs, and walk off at a smart pace without tumbling on your nose, now, I fancy?"

"Yes, uncle! suppose the dog coming, I just hop over a wall so—and when I walk of a cold day, I go like this—."

Entering fully into the spirit of the thing, Rose swung herself over the high back of the sofa as easily as one of her cousins, and then went down the long hall as if her stout boots were related to the famous seven leaguers.

"There! you see how it will be; dress her in that boyish way and she will act like a boy. I do hate all these inventions of strong-minded women!" exclaimed Mrs. Clara, as Rose came back at a run.

"Ah, but you see some of these sensible inventions come from the brain of a fashionable *modiste*, who will make you lovely, or what you value more—'stylish' outside and comfortable within. Mrs. Van Tassel has been to Madame Stone, and is wearing a full suit of this sort. Van himself told me, when I asked how she was, that she had given up lying on the sofa, and was going about in a most astonishing way, considering her feeble health."

"You don't say so! Let me see that book a moment," and Aunt Clara examined the new patterns with a more respectful air, for if the elegant Mrs. Van Tassel wore these 'dreadful things' it would never do to be left behind, in spite of her prejudices.

"Dr. Alec looked at Mrs. Jessie, and both smiled, for 'little Mum' had been in the secret, and enjoyed it mightily.

"I thought that would settle it," he said with a nod.

"I didn't wait for Mrs. Van to lead the way, and for once in my life I have adopted a new fashion before Clara. My freedom suit is ordered,

and you *may see* me playing tag with Rose and the boys before long,' answered Mrs. Jessie, nodding back at him.

"Meantime Aunt Plenty was examining Rose's costume, for the hat and sack were off, and the girl was eagerly explaining the new undergarments.

"See, Auntie, all nice scarlet flannel, and a gay little petticoat, and long stockings, oh, so warm! Phebe and I nearly died laughing when I put this rig on, but I like it ever so much. The dress is so comfortable, and doesn't need any belt or sash, and I can sit without rumpling any trimming, that's *such a comfort!* I like to be tidy, and so, when I wear fussed up things, I'm thinking of my clothes all the time, and that's so tiresome. Do say you like it. I resolved I would, just to please uncle, for he does know more about health than any one else, I'm sure, and I'd wear a bag if he asked me to do it."

"I don't ask that, Rose, but I wish you'd weigh and compare the two suits, and then choose which seems best. I leave it to your own common sense," answered Dr. Alec, feeling pretty sure he had won.

"Why, I take this one, of course, uncle. The other is fashionable, and—yes—I must say I think it's pretty—but it's very heavy, and I should have

to go round like a walking doll if I wore it. I'm much obliged to auntie, but I'll keep this, please.'

"Rose spoke gently but decidedly, though there was a look of regret, when her eye fell on the other suit which Phebe had brought in; and it was very natural to like to look as other girls did. Aunt Clara sighed, Uncle Alec smiled, and said heartily:

"Thank you, dear; now read this book and you will understand why I ask it of you. Then, if you like, I'll give you a new lesson; you asked for one yesterday, and this is more necessary than French or housekeeping."

"Oh, what?" and Rose caught up the book which Mrs. Clara had thrown down with a disgusted look.

"Physiology, Rose. Wouldn't you like to be a little medical student with Uncle Doctor for teacher, and be ready to take up his practice when he has to stop? If you agree, I'll hunt up my old skeleton to-morrow."

"That was too much for Aunt Clara, and she hastily departed with her mind in a sad state of perturbation about Mrs. Van Tassel's new costume, and Rose's new study."

## X.

### THOUGHTS FOR THE THOUGHTFUL.

#### CAUSE AND EFFECT.

It is to be expected that many readers of this little book will at first feel incredulous as to the statements made of the amount of injury done by dress. They have never considered the subject, but have taken for granted that women suffered under natural physical disabilities, and could never expect to be very strong ; and they have not observed many startling facts, because their eyes have not been open. Intelligent observers have, however, been noticing an apparent general decay of vigor in the girls and women of our day. They have noticed that country-bred girls, reared under many of the most favorable conditions, coming into the city to take situations at service, are often not strong enough to do more than half a woman's work. They have noticed that girls in the higher classes of the schools, and in Normal Schools, are apt to drop out of their places for months, or perhaps altogether, from ill-health. Those familiar

with Bible-class work among the middle and lower classes, know with what sad frequency the excuse of ill-health is given for prolonged absence. Among women, rich and poor, married and single, a certain amount of ill-health seems to be the rule rather than the exception. This fact is often unrecognized, for with true martyr spirit most women conceal from their own immediate family a great part of their sufferings, and go about with a smiling face while the body is racked with pain or exhausted with sleepless nights and weary days.

This general ill-health, when it has been observed, has been attributed to various causes. Now it is overwork that is blamed; now too much devotion to study; now it is the sewing machine, and again the many stairs that have to be climbed in modern mansions. Now it is the standing in shops, then it is the exposure to all weathers, and the rapid monotonous movements exacted from the factory operative. Then we hear that it is the luxurious idleness of the drawing-room, or the late hours and excitement of the woman of fashion that is at fault. With another writer, the diet is the sole trouble, while some one else lays the blame on the fact that girls cultivate delicacy of health in order to increase their attractiveness. That so many reasons are found for ill-health.

proves, in the first place, that there is a great deal of it to be accounted for; and, in the second place, that there is something radically wrong in our arrangements. What that something is, the readers of this book are now prepared to point out. All the causes named are probably at work to produce the effect, but a moment's reflection will show that there is hardly one of them which is not aggravated by the prevalent errors of dress. If standing all day, or running up numerous stairs, or overwork, be injurious under any circumstances, how much more so will it be if heavy skirts drag the internal organs out of position, and at the same time free breathing is prevented. If the diet be faulty, digestion is certainly not helped by the corset steel and waist-band pressing the stomach out of shape. Exposure to the weather is not dangerous if suitable clothing be worn. Hard study would not have the same chance to injure, if the body of the growing girl were not cramped in clothes which prevent the natural development. The child is early taught to substitute an artificial shape for that given her by nature; and it is not altogether wonderful if in other matters she distrusts nature and attempts to improve upon it.

Dress thus intensifies and aggravates every other cause of ill-health and it becomes the duty of

every sensible woman to do what she can for its reform.

#### ETHICS AND AESTHETICS.

We have touched but lightly, so far, upon the outside dress, and have treated it entirely with regard to health of body. There is another and equally serious aspect, however, about which we would like to say a few words. If dress so easily affects the health of the body, it may, with equal facility, affect the health of both mind and soul. Let us put a case. Suppose a man of education and refinement with a small income for which he does not need to work, and which, with economy, suffices for his wants. Suppose that, with the exception of some hours given to society, he spends his time in the construction of his garments, making them himself for the purpose of saving tailor's bills and spending the money thus saved in the purchase of clothes as fine as any worn by his wealthy neighbors. Let us suppose, farther, that he stints himself in food—for body or mind—all summer, that he may be able to purchase a handsome fur coat when winter comes; that he goes to church chiefly to study the new clothes worn by the worshippers, and that when a new style is observed on any one whom it would be safe to copy, he straightway rips his own garment to

pieces, and, laboriously, matching the cloth, does his best to imitate the stylish model, at the expense of perhaps a week's work.

The whole supposition is absurd,—no one would for a moment imagine such a man to be sane. If sanity could by any possibility be pre-supposed, no words would suffice to express the scorn with which such conduct would be viewed. It is only women who can spend their lives in this way with impunity. Of course we have taken an extreme case, and, besides, the parallel between a man in such circumstances and a woman is not exact. But are there not many women whose conduct approximates in foolishness that of the man in the case we have described? Is it then with impunity that they thus spend their lives? To take a low view of the matter—can any one give the mind to the never-ceasing consideration of clothes and not have it essentially vulgarized thereby? How much more true refinement there would be in wearing such clothes as could be easily afforded, and not attempting to vie with those who are richer. It is very desirable to dress well. Every garment should be neat, suitable and becoming; but the question of becomingness is very different from that of expense and from that of following every vagary of the fashion. A garment that is becoming one year ought, if well preserved, to

be equally so the next, even though the fashion books suggest something a little different.

The fashionable color, the stylish ruffle, the prevalent mode of dressing the hair or of cutting the dress-waist, may all be most unsuitable to the complexion, shape of head, or figure of the wearer, yet the slave of fashion prefers to be most unbecomingly dressed rather than show in the least her independence of fashion's freaks. Ladies of education and presumably of culture, will, if not possessed of sufficient means to employ freely the art of the dressmaker and milliner, frequently sacrifice their entire time and power of thought, as well as all the money they can obtain from father or husband, to the petty desire of wearing as elegant garments as the neighbor or relative who may have six times as much money to dress upon. This, however, is not the worst of it. The melancholy thing is to hear these ladies boasting that they do all their own sewing, and expecting, for this, to receive the praise of all right-thinking people. They look complacently at the ruffles and frills and pleatings, the shirrs and *revers*, the puffings and cordings; the fortnight's work put upon one dress of flimsy material and expect praise for "doing their own sewing." They have no time for reading—they do all their own sewing. They have no time to play with or instruct

their children ; no time for Sunday-school visiting ; no time for correspondence—they do all their own sewing. They have no time, in fact, for the things which make life really valuable, because if they do not keep the sewing machine running vigorously they may be left behind in the race after style. Doing all one's own sewing, may be praiseworthy, or it may not; let the reader judge which it is in her own case. Might it not be better to dress more simply, and with the money thus saved pay the needy seamstress or the widowed dressmaker, who is trying to bring up her family respectably, for doing the work. Bring conscience into your dressing, and, looking at the matter in the fear of God, do as seems right to you. The Christian's time is not her own, but is bought with a price, and should be used for the glory of God.

The evil which we have pointed out does not end with *ladies*. The wealthy lady dresses richly and can afford to do so; the well-to-do lady imitates her richer sister, which she can do without any great sacrifice of time or comfort. The lady whose income is barely sufficient for the wants of her family must attempt to dress equally well, and must therefore make up in time and thought and skill what she lacks in money. If she has three or four daughters, all to be dressed in equal

style, what sacrifices must be made only the victims can tell. Over-worked teachers must sit up far into the night to do what they can to imitate the style of the rich; shop girls must, as they may, vie with the carriage lady in elegance of attire; and the servant girl and the factory operative must do without flannels, underclothing, overshoes, and other necessaries, that their Sunday dress may have as many flounces and puffings of the overskirt as are presented by the fashion-book; and when the attire required by the season is not in perfect readiness, or when the weather threatens destruction to its flimsy material, they easily excuse themselves from church and Sunday-school, and thus lose a large proportion of their scanty opportunities of learning of a better life.

If people of all classes would be satisfied to dress according to their means, these evils would be largely done away with. We would not, however, be understood to say that this ambition to dress as others do is all bad. It is a manifestation of that spirit which is now working in all classes, rousing them from apathetic contentment with their lot and stirring them up to seek a better and a higher life. This particular manifestation, however, needs to be confined within rather close limits, as it has the power of causing an incalculable amount of evil. The true solution of the prob-

lem will probably be found in the future, when all who aspire to the position of true ladies will be content with modest, well-made, durable garments, and when it will be considered a mark of vulgarity and inferiority to spend a large proportion of the income in personal adornments, or to wear anything which excites attention by reason of its expensiveness, or because it is in the extreme of fashion. A reform beginning at the top would thus work downwards, by degrees, until it reached every class of society.

## HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

Many ladies are not anxious to vie with those who are richer, they merely want to dress according to their own station in life; but they find that to do this requires more money and time and thought than they are willing to give. They groan under the slavery, but see no means of relief. A few suggestions may be helpful to these.

In the first place, then, we would say,—Try to get things of real value for your money. Only rich people can afford to buy bargains. Never buy a cheap or poor material. It costs as much, perhaps more, to have a poor material made up as a good one, and it will only last a third or fourth of the time, and never look as well. A cheap material tempts to excessive trimming to cover its

poorness, while a good stuff will be a continual pleasure from its own excellence. A good dress material may be worn for years. It may be scoured, turned, dipped, made over, and at last given away, while a flimsy one is unfit even to give away after a little wear. To trimmings the same principle will apply. A woman will often spend in two or three years, on fringes and fancy trimmings, an amount which would purchase real lace sufficient for a life-time. The fringes wear out, fade, and are good for nothing in less than a season, while the lace would last out her time and then go down to her descendants. Yet she says she cannot afford to buy real lace. In purchasing dress goods, fancy stuffs should be looked upon with great suspicion, especially if they present an unusually fine appearance for the price. It is safer to keep to standard materials of which you have proved the durability, though even these will vary greatly in different years. If ladies would insist on obtaining durability, rather than cheapness, the manufacturers would soon rise to the demand, and would improve the style of their goods as fast as they are deteriorating them at present.

Having chosen a good material, have it, in the *second place, well made.* A well made garment wears longer, looks better, and is in every way

more satisfactory, than one that is badly cut and poorly put together. The wearer is tempted to lay aside a poorly made dress, long before it is worn out. To secure this point, you will probably have to secure the aid of an experienced and skillful dress-maker, and this is generally the truest economy, as, apart from the fact that it will be better done, your time is probably worth more to yourself, and your family, than the few dollars which you will have to pay out. It is better to have one or two durable, well made dresses, than half a dozen poor ones.

In the *third* place, choose a material and a style which are not likely soon to go out of fashion. Many styles are evidently so ephemeral, that no economical person should have anything to do with them. Extremes of fashion should in all cases be avoided, while sensible styles should secure your support and approval, and you should cling to them as long as possible. It is needless to say, that it is not necessary to wear anything which looks absurd, merely because others do, or that it is wrong to wear anything which is injurious to health.

In the *fourth* place, after you have bought good material, and have had it well made in a sensible fashion, wear it without alteration as long as possible. There is something very vulgarizing in

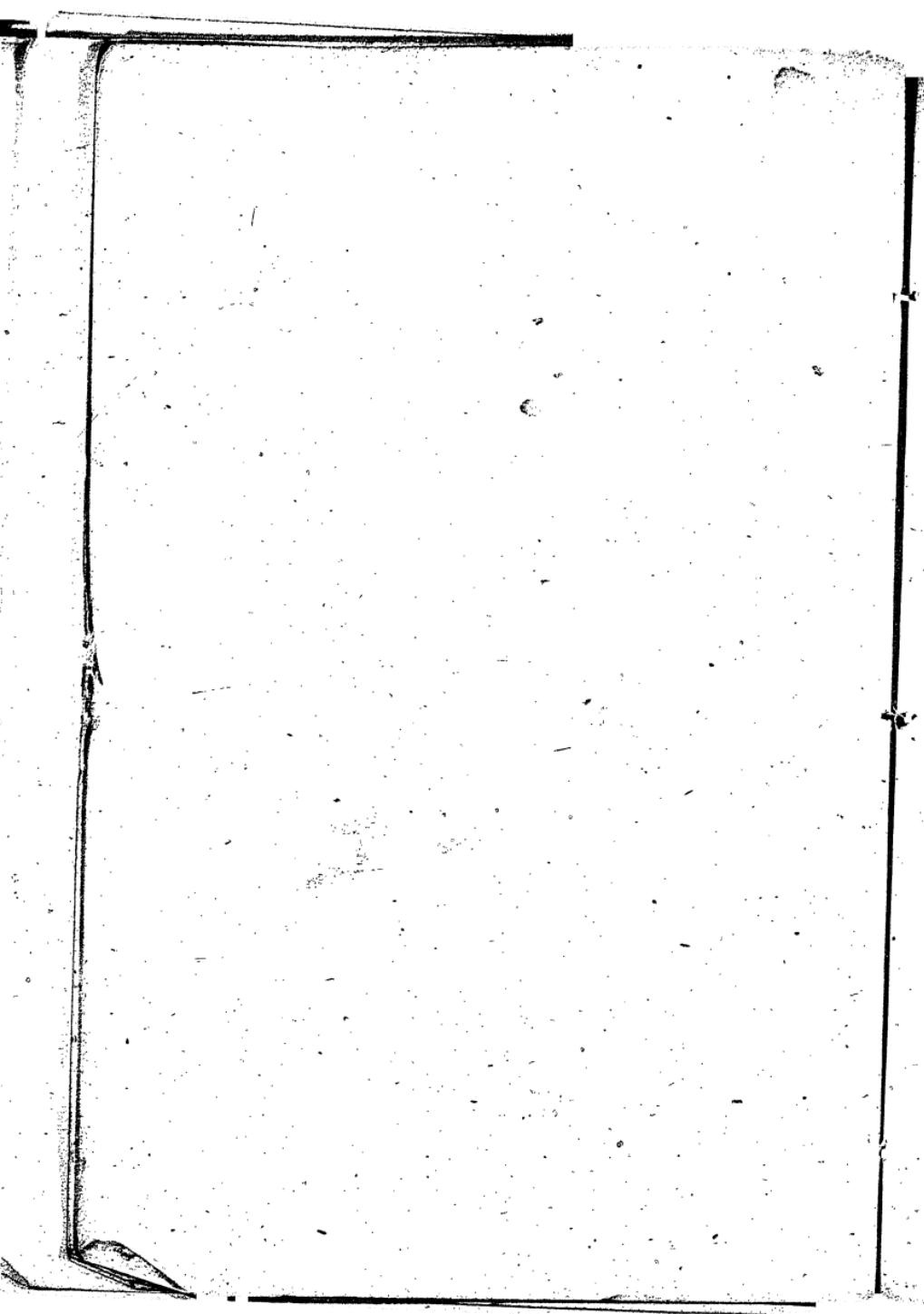
the present wide spread notion that it is necessary to keep things in the latest fashion by continual alterations. The mind should be engaged on better things than the continual study of the cut and make of garments—a study which interferes not only with culture, but too often with devotion. If a garment gets so much out of date as to attract attention from its singularity, it may be time to think of altering it; but if, as we advise, the extremes of fashion are avoided, this will not often take place.

In the *fifth* place, every woman should decide how much money she can afford and ought to afford to spend upon her own dress in the year, and then she should rigidly keep within that sum. A little calculation will show how much money is required for under-clothing, how much for the shoemaker, how much to pay the seamstress, how much for millinery, and how much for dresses and dress-makers. A little system would do away with the vague wonder which many feel as to whether or not they can afford every pretty thing they see, and save many of the interminable hours which some spend in shopping. In connection with this, we would advise strongly that every woman should pay ready money for every article of dry goods. It is an invaluable check upon the purchase of unnecessary or extravagant

articles. Running up bills is a most dangerous thing to do. Especially should the cash system be adhered to in paying for work done, both in justice to those you employ and in justice to yourself. If you pay well and promptly you are in a position to insist upon having your work done well and promptly ; and you should do so. If ladies would never employ a second time those who lightly promise work for a definite time and as lightly fail to have it done, there would soon be an end to the intentional deception practised by so many dressmakers, milliners, shoemakers, and others who undertake work. These few suggestions will, if carried out, assist ladies in dressing well, without giving too much time, thought and money to the work. Of course, the subject is not nearly exhausted.

We have shown at length in this book the danger to health of a blind following of the example of others in matters of dress ; and we have hinted at the effects produced on mind and soul by the devotion of so much time and thought to the question of wherewithal we shall be clothed. To simplify dress and render it healthful, and thus deliver woman from the two-fold slavery which saps the vigor of both body and mind, is surely a worthy subject of thought and endeavor. Let our most cultivated and refined women lead

this movement, being careful to avoid every thing which would excite the prejudices of the ignorant or rouse the fears of the fastidious; and there is hope that in a short time a wonderful revolution may be effected. Indeed it is not impossible that sometime in the future a time will come when it will not be necessary for a woman to give any more time and thought to her dress than is now necessary for a man. Let us be up and doing and not rest apathetically satisfied with the present unwholesome state of things.



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