

## OVER THE TEACUPS

Boudoir Gossip for Lady Readers

### Physical Culture for Women, Wardrobe Economy.

#### FOR STOUT WOMEN.

An ordinary swing, such as the small members of the household delight in, may be made to furnish outdoor exercise. Such exercise may be taken in ordinary dress, although if your swing is hung in a sufficiently retired, protected spot, so that you can don a gymnasium suit, you will gain more good from it.

At any rate, leave off your corsets, and put on a blouse with a soft, loose, collar, that rolls easily away from the throat, and sleeves which as comfortably turn back at the elbow.

One of the pleasantest variations of the exercises for reducing the hips can be performed by the aid of a swing. Grasp the ropes with both hands, place one foot firmly in the centre of the board, and draw yourself up until you stand upon the swing.

Step down again, repeating the exercise four or five times. Then repeat it with the other leg, or alternate from left to right.

When you swing, get as much exercise out of the motion as possible. The straining back, while you sit, after a greater impetus, is good for both back and legs, and the bending of your body to get the start, when you swing standing, is wonderfully conducive to grace.

If you are used to gymnasium work, a dozen feats will suggest themselves at the sight of that dangling rope—feats of rope-climbing, which, by the way, are a beauty exercise, in that the stretch of the arms over the heads tends to lengthen the waist—a much-sought-after effect these days.

Loose, heavy gloves should be worn while you swing; gripping the ropes as closely as you must, when the whole weight of the body comes on them is hard upon the hands, although it is a wonderful developer of both forearm and upper arm.

When the hands are tired, rest them by throwing your arms about the ropes, so that the rope comes just at the turn of the elbow. The same exercises may be followed without using the hands at all, although they are necessarily more curtailed, both in accomplishment and effect.

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#### Business Principles Applied to Household.

A discussion with a "mere man" the other day upon women's work in the home, which, according to the couplet, is "never done," led to his making the somewhat crushing remark that it was largely woman's own fault that it was so, simply because she so seldom worked upon any system, and never applied any business methods to household matters. This sounds most horribly unsympathetic—"so like a man," as many will say, but I fear there is a certain amount of truth in the remark, and system is often wanting in household matters.

A well-known American writer on domestic subjects says it is quite possible to run a household on business principles. "To begin with," she writes, "take account of your duties, and the time you have to give to each, then try to so order your work that it may be done with the minimum of movement and fatigue. Do not take half-a-dozen trips to the larder or cellar when one would do, and think ahead; for marriage, which includes the proper ordering of a household, is a lifelong contract, not a series of haphazard makeshifts."

The housewife who becomes amiably resigned to the fact that "her head will never save her heels" will have to make a big effort to wrench herself free from the time-honoured custom of walking three times to the pantry when once would do. It can be done. Try it.

Besides excellence of material and a good cut other characteristics are accountable for the amount of contrast which exists between one woman's dress and another's. The anomalous case of the girl with a meagre allowance who manages to look better dressed, better "turned out," and essentially more prosperous and affluent than her friend who has a private income at disposal seems hardly to be wondered at if the capabilities of each as her own "wardrobe maid" are taken into consideration. Clothes are only too apt to mirror character as well as taste, and the woman who acts as a slave driver to her garments soon betrays a want of judgment in the condition of her wardrobe, however extensive it may be. The fashionable "rest cure" is as much needed by modern dress as by modern nerves, and little by little the need for repose applied to the ordinary items of the wardrobe in these times of daily strenuous hurry and haste is forcing itself on the world of dress. However limited the wardrobe, rest is essential. Well brushed, sponged, smoothed, and laid away carefully, will emerge after three days in a freshened condition, while the same rule—varied to suit each case—applies equally to boots and shoes, head-gear, undergarments on every item of the toilette, gloves perhaps excepted.

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#### A Lady's Costly Dresses.

##### DRIVES TO THE CITY WITH CARRIAGE AND PAIR.

The case of Redfrens, Limited, having places of business in London, Paris, Nice, and Monte Carlo, against Winifred Hope, described as of the Hotel Metropole, Brighton, came before the Courts in London last month.

Mr. Gill, K.C., said it was the defendant's appeal from the judgment of Master Wilberforce, acting as a Special Referee, and counsel asked that judgment should be entered for the defendant, or that their lordships should order a new trial. The action was for £748 14s., balance of an account for dresses and other articles of ladies' attire supplied to the defendant by the plaintiffs over a period of two years, during which time she obtained about £3,000 worth of dresses. When the debt was incurred, said counsel, the defendant, who was a young woman, was living with a gentleman named Bennett, and they passed as Mr. and Mrs. Hope. Mr. Bennett was engaged in financial matters in the City, and was in some way connected with mines in foreign countries.

Mr. Bennett apparently desired that the lady should be dressed in the most extravagant fashion. He introduced her to members of his own family as his wife, and she was also in the habit of going to the city to meet him in a carriage with a pair of showy horses. She was always dressed in the height of fashion and extravagant dresses. He seemed to have had an idea, remarked counsel, that it was for his credit in financial transactions that she should be seen driving away from the city with him. The transactions in the purchase of dresses commenced about the end of 1901, after which the defendant purchased dresses at thirty-five guineas each, an evening gown at £100, another gown on the same day at £32 12s. Two days later she was supplied with a gown at £30, and another at £42, and a hat priced at 10 guineas. A few days after she had an evening mantle at £84, coat and skirt at £157 10s., and a new sable costing £78 15s. In various sums £2,000 had been paid from time to time, but Mr. Bennett seemed to have got into difficulties in connection with the transactions on the Stock Exchange, and the balance sued for had not been paid. Counsel contended that the appellant was not liable, as Mr. Bennett held her out as his wife, and was present when some of the dresses were being ordered.

In Mr. Gill's address for the appellant he mentioned that Mr. Bennett was an old gentleman, and he met the defendant in Paris at the end of 1901, after which they came to London, where they lived together till 1904. It was perfectly well known to the plaintiffs, he added, as shown by the correspondence, that they knew the defendant had no other source from which she could get the money to pay for the dresses except from the man with whom she was living.

Without calling on counsel for the respondents, their lordships dismissed the appeal.

Mr. Justice Channell remarked that it was quite clear the defendant was the principal debtor. It seemed to him there was no improbability in the plaintiffs' treating the defendant as the principal debtor, as no doubt they thought the lady could get the money out of Mr. Bennett better than they could themselves.

Leave to appeal was granted.

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#### Short Skirts for Health.

##### REASONS WHY WOMEN SHOULD ESCHEW "TRAILERS."

(By HALLIE EUSTACE MILES.)

It is said that only a French woman has the art of holding up a long skirt gracefully. If, as we walk along the streets, we watch the various methods of making the skirts avoid dirt and dust, we are obliged against our will to acknowledge that, whether a Frenchwoman has the art or not, an ordinary Englishwoman certainly has not. She will clutch at her skirt, or drag and twist it round her body until the "human form divine" is clearly outlined with every step.

There are three types of skirt: first, the long and sweeping one, which ought to be worn only in the house; then the medium, the skirt that is neither long nor short; then the wholly short skirt.

It is against the medium that I wage war. It is too long to be short, too short to be long. Many women who wear medium skirts forget to hold them up at all! It is the medium skirt that has frayed edges and, torn braid, and that gets bedraggled with mud. It is the "medium length" that often stamps its wearer as untidy and careless, and that gathers the disease germs in its train.

#### UNEDIFYING.

The other day I watched a middle-aged lady walking in front of me. She wore a medium-length skirt, which she had "let go," because in her hands she was carrying a bag and some parcels, to say nothing of an umbrella under her arm with the sharp end pointing upwards behind her, ready for the eye of those who followed her. Her skirt was very full, and had about six inches on the ground.

As she moved along I looked ahead on the pavement to see what horrors her skirt would gather up into its wide yet thorough sweep. I forbear to mention what I saw, but nothing escaped that trailing dress, which gathered together enough dirt and germs to keep a German professor of microbes busy for months. Behind her she left a pavement bright and clean, as a ship leaves a white line of sea in its trail. If I ever met that lady face to face, however great might be her general or special charms, I should recollect her skirt and all that it gathered.

The skirt for health, cleanliness, and comfort is not the medium-length one; it is the short skirt, which clears the ground all round—not in the same way that this lady's skirt cleared the ground. I use the word in the same sense as we mean when we speak of "clearing" a hurdle or ditch or other obstacle or hazard.

#### •THE REAL SHORT SKIRT.

When I order a short skirt I do not tell the dressmaker the length I wish the skirt to be. I tell her it is to be five inches from the ground all round. It must have no fatal "droop" at the back. It must be wide at the bottom, so as to fly out from the boots as one walks along—in fact, somewhat like an open umbrella, only less so.

There are some women whose boots never get splashed, and whose skirts never are frayed. The secret lies partly in the shortness of the skirt, unless the long skirt is well held up. The secret lies also in the actual placing of the foot. Each woman should try to walk so daintily that, when she has entered a house, no mud or dirt is left in the room she enters.

As a rule, men are much less muddy walkers than women. I think that they place their feet more firmly on the ground. And then—they have no skirts! And they turn up the heels of their trousers.

Some women walk in a abutting way. Some let their heels come in contact with their skirts. I am sure that women ought to be trained to walk in a manner that will keep their skirts and boots clean, for a woman who has an awkward "gait" is almost sure to have muddy boots and frayed skirts.

It is all very well for certain learned people to decry every attempt on the part of girls or women to be more attractive—or less unattractive—in dress on appearance generally. But behind the attractiveness there often lies a principle that girls and women ought to cultivate.

#### THREE CONSIDERATIONS.

Here, for instance, the mudless state of the boots and skirts involves more than one principle. It involves cleanliness, economy of labour (in cleaning the boots and skirts), and a better walk—a consideration closely connected with health as well as gracefulness.

To have dainty boots and short skirts is, moreover, akin to the characteristics that we admire in flowers. Notice the flowers growing in a garden. One holds itself high and straight, with its slender stem, and refuses to be beaten down on to and into the earth by the wind and rain. Another is beaten down and covered with the wet mud into which it has fallen. And there it lies unnoticed, by all, while the upright and clean flower is treasured above the rest. Our feet and ankles should represent the flower-stems.

For the flowers and plants are our patterns in form as well as in colour. And for a woman to be likened to a flower is the greatest praise that she can have. We owe it largely to cycling, lawn tennis, hockey, and golf that the short skirt is no longer considered "improper." It is far more "proper" than a dirty long or medium skirt. If we had studied the flowers, we should never have despised short skirts.

### The Standard Cough Remedy for Forty-five Years.

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