

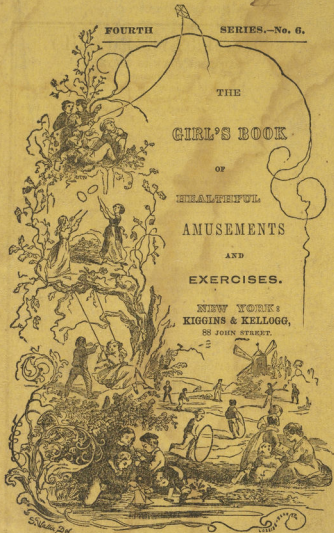
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FOURTH

SERIES.—No. 6.

THE
GIRL'S BOOK
OF
HEALTHFUL
AMUSEMENTS
AND
EXERCISES.

NEW YORK:
KIGGINS & KELLOGG,
88 JOHN STREET.



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88 John street, New York.

THE *Martha C. Brewster*
From her Teacher
Clara L. Evans

YOUNG GIRL'S BOOK

OF

HEALTHFUL AMUSEMENTS

AND

EXERCISES.



NEW YORK:
KIGGINS & KELLOGG,
88 JOHN STREET.



THE
YOUNG GIRL'S BOOK
OF
HEALTHFUL AMUSEMENTS AND EXERCISES.

HEALTHFUL AMUSEMENTS.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE, so beneficial to all, at every period of life, is peculiarly so to children. And if the young girls, into whose hands this little book may fall, wish to be admired for their personal beauty, and graceful carriage, as well as to have the rosy hue of health tinge their cheeks, they will not neglect the opportunities they may have for daily exercise, and as much as possible in the open air. Of all kinds of exercises walking is that which is most universally attainable, and at the same time one of the best. Calling so many muscles into action, and especially those of the lower limbs, of which the circulation is so apt to be very languidly and imperfectly performed, walking is a fine exercise for the purposes of health, independently of its additional, and by no means, small advantage of affording opportunity of breath-

ing the freer and purer air. How often have I seen a restless, weary, discontented child, moving from chair to chair, finding comfort in none, and tired of every indoor sedentary amusement or occupation, with contracted brow, and eyes that looked as if their very vision was dried up. On the other hand, how often have I seen the same little being come in, from an out-door range in search of flowers, berries, or other objects of amusement or attraction, with a countenance flushed with exercise, with the energy of an invigorated mind beaming forth from eyes as beautiful as clear, and with the benevolence of a young warm heart, reflected in the dimpling freshness of a sunny smile. How light, then, seems the task of the unlearned lesson; how refreshing the following meal; how inviting the coming hour of repose. If such be the effect of a single walk, how beneficial must be that of habitual exercise upon both body and mind.

For little girls the swing is a delightful exercise. But it is somewhat dangerous unless used with discretion. Great care should be taken that the ropes are well secured, sufficiently strong, and the seat firmly fastened. Little girls should never strive to swing higher than their companions. It is, at best, a foolish ambition, and may lead to dangerous accidents. Any little girl is unpardonable who pushes another too violently while she is swinging. And when one has swung her portion of time, she should cheerfully give place to, and aid in swinging her companions.

Jumping rope is another healthy exercise, and tends to make the form graceful. It should be used with caution, and never be persevered in



after the strength has become exhausted. There are several ways of jumping a rope: One is simply springing, and passing the rope under the feet with rapidity; another is, crossing arms at the moment of throwing the rope; another, passing the rope under the feet of two or three, who jump at once, standing close, and laying hands on each other's shoulders, the rope being held by two little girls, one at each end; and another is in the same way, two little girls throwing the rope over a single one, who jumps in the centre. When holding the rope and jumping alone, it develops the chest much better to throw the rope over the head backward.

Another beautiful exercise is the "graces;" it derives its name from the graceful attitudes which it occasions. Two sticks are held (one in each hand); and the object is to throw and catch a small hoop upon these sticks. The hoop to be bound with silk or riband, according to fancy. The game is played by two. The sticks are held straight, three or four inches apart, when trying to catch the hoop; and when the hoop is thrown they are crossed like a pair of scissors. Sometimes it is played with two hoops. On the title-page, two girls are seen playing in this way. Each player tossing her own hoop toward her opponent, and immediately endeavoring to catch the other on the points of her own sticks. The hoops are thus alternately thrown backward and forward, and received on the points of the sticks. Every time the hoop is successfully caught, counts one; and the player who can count most when the play is over, wins the game. To become so dexterous as always to catch the hoop requires considerable practice. Beginners, however, had better begin



practising with a single hoop, as it is much easier than to keep two going between them. This little game affords good and healthful exercise, and when well played is extremely graceful.

Another beautiful active exercise is shuttlecock and battledoor. The shuttlecock, sometimes called the bird, is a little ball stuck full of feathers. The battledoors are covered with parchment; and the object of the players is to keep the bird constantly passing and repassing in the air, by means of striking it with the battledoors, and not allowing it to fall. This game may be played by one person, by tossing the shuttlecock in the air, and keeping it up.

CALISTHENICS.

THIS is the name given to a gentle sort of gymnastics suited to girls. It is free from danger, and its effect is to produce vigorous muscles, graceful motion, and symmetry of form. It is, indeed, truly observed that too many methods can not be adopted to improve the carriage, and banish an awkward air.

THE EXTENSION MOTIONS.

In order to supple the figure, open the chest, and give freedom to the muscles, the extension motions should be daily practised. The body should be erect, the heels close together, and the hands hanging down on each side.

ONE.—Bring the hands and arms to the front, the fingers lightly touching at the points, and the nails downward: then raise them in a circular di-

rection well above the head, the ends of the fingers still touching, the thumbs pointing to the rear, the elbows pressed back, and the shoulders kept down. This serves as a caution, and the motion tends to expand the chest, raise the head, throw back the shoulders, and strengthen the muscles of the back.

Two.—Separate and extend the arms and fingers, forcing them obliquely back, till they come extended on a line with the shoulders; and, as they fall gradually thence to the original position of attention, endeavor, as much as possible, to elevate the neck and chest. These two motions should be frequently practised, with the head turned as much as possible to the right or left, and the body kept square to the front: this tends very materially to supple the neck, &c.



THREE.—Turn the palms of the hands to the front, pressing back the thumbs with the arms ex-

tended, and raise them to the rear, till they meet above the head; the fingers pointing upward, with the ends of the thumbs touching.

FOUR.—Keep the arms and knees straight, and bend over from the hips till the hands touch the feet, the head being brought down in the same direction.



FIVE.—With the arms flexible and easy from the shoulders, raise the body gradually, so as to resume the position of attention.

The whole of these motions should be done very gradually, so as to feel the exertion of the muscles throughout.

SIX.—The forearms are bent upon the arms upward and toward the body, having the elbows depressed, the shut hands touching on the little finger sides, and the knuckles upward, the latter being raised as high as the chin, and at the distance of about a foot before it.

SEVEN.—While the arms are thrown forcibly backward, the forearms are as much as possible bent upon the arms, and the palmar sides of the wrist are turned forward and outward.

These last two motions are to be repeatedly and rather quickly performed. A modification of the



same movements is performed as a separate extension motion, but may be given in continuation, with the numbers following them in consecutive order.

EIGHT.—The arms are extended at full length in front, on the level with the shoulders, the palms of the hands in contact.

NINE.—Thus extended, and the palms retaining



their vertical position, the arms are thrown forcibly backward, so that the backs of the hands may approach each other as nearly as possible.

These motions also are to be repeatedly and rather quickly performed.

Another extension motion, similarly added, consists in swinging the right arm in a circle, in which, beginning from the pendent position, the arm is carried upward in front, by the side of the head, and downward behind, the object being, in the latter part of this course, to throw it as directly backward as possible. The same is then done with the left arm. Lastly, both arms are thus exercised together. These motions are performed quickly.

THE EXERCISES WITH THE ROD.

The rod for this purpose should be light, smooth, inflexible, and need not be more than three or four feet in length.

FIRST EXERCISE.—The rod is first grasped near



the extremities by the two hands, the thumbs being inward.

Without changing the position of the hands on the rod, it is then brought to a vertical position: the right hand being uppermost holds it above the head, the left is against the lower part of the body.

By an opposite movement, the right is lowered and the left raised.

This change is executed repeatedly and quickly.

SECOND EXERCISE.—From the first position of the rod, it is raised over the head; and, in doing so, the closer the hands are, the better will be the effect upon the shoulders.



It is afterward carried behind the back, holding so firmly that no change takes place in the position of the hands.

This movement is then reversed, to bring it back over the head to the first position.

THIRD EXERCISE.—The same exercises are per-



formed by grasping the stick with the hands in an opposite position; that is to say, with the thumbs in front or the palms of the hands forward.

It is raised parallel with the shoulders, extending it first on the left and then on the right arm.



FOURTH EXERCISE.—It is next raised above the head, the hands being still in their new position. It is afterward lowered behind the back.



These exercises can not be performed in all their different movements with promptitude and regularity without many trials and repetitions. Their tendency is to confirm the good position and the flexibility of the shoulders, produced by the extension motions.





THE INDIAN SCEPTRE EXERCISE.

THIS beautiful exercise may be practised in various ways, for instance as follows : two sceptres or sticks (those used in playing the graces will answer the purpose) are held one in each hand, pendent at the side. 1st. The right hand sceptre is carried over the head and left shoulder until it hangs perpendicularly on the right side of the back ; the left over the former in the opposite direction, until it hangs on the opposite side : holding both sceptres still pendent, the hands are raised above the head ; both arms are then extended outward and backward : and lastly, dropping into the first position. All this is done slowly. 2d. Commencing from the same position, the ends of both sceptres are swung upward until they are held, vertically, and side by side, at arms' length, in front of the body. They are next carried at arms' length as far backward as possible ; each is then dropped backward until it hangs vertically downward ; and this exercise ends as the first.

DANCING.

THIS graceful exercise is objected to by many people, who consider it a waste of time. But this objection can not apply to children, whose time is not of the value of that of older people. Besides, children must have exercise; and dancing is healthy, innocent, and elegant. Many children, weak and feeble in limb, will, by this exercise, imperceptibly acquire new vigor. On the other hand, with those who are healthy and strong, the practice of dancing will tend to improve their health and strength. Those who learn to dance when very young, acquire an ease of motion that can be gained in no other way; at a very early age, the joints bend easily; and if a habit of moving gracefully is then acquired, it is never lost. Little girls should practise their steps at home every day; it will serve for exercise and amusement, and tend greatly to their improvement. Great care should be taken to turn the feet outward; nothing is more awkward, in either walking or dancing, than feet that turn inward; by taking a little pains, the instep will habitually curve outward the moment the foot is raised from the floor. The arms should never remain crooked, so as to give the elbows a sharp, inelegant appearance, but should hang close to the body, the elbows turned in, and close to the sides; the hands open to the front, with the view of preserving the elbows in the position above described: the little fingers lightly touching the clothing, with the thumbs close to the forefingers. Care should be taken to carry the shoulders back, and the head erect; a dancer who stoops, or runs her chin out,



is a pitiful sight. Here I would tell those who are round-shouldered, or carry their heads too much forward, of an excellent way to cure these habits: walk an hour, or more, every day, with a large heavy book balanced on your head, without any assistance from your hands. The lower orders of Egyptian women are remarkable for walking majestically and gracefully; and it is because they constantly go down to the Nile, to bring up heavy burdens of water upon their heads. On the next page is an engraving of female-peasants of Italy; and one of them has a jar of water upon her head.

Lastly, never toss your feet about, or rise too high from the floor; truly graceful dancing is gliding, not jumping. But, on the other hand, you must not walk round languidly and carelessly, as if you had no interest in the dance; what is worthy of being done at all, is worthy of being done well.



POSITIONS IN DANCING.

In all these positions, as before remarked, the body should be kept perfectly erect; the shoulders thrown back, and the bust advanced; the arms rounded; the forefinger and thumb occupied in holding out the dress; the other fingers neatly grouped.



The first position is formed by placing the heels together and throwing the toes back, so that the feet form a straight line.

In the first attempts at this position, the toes should not be more turned out than will admit of the body maintaining its proper balance: they must be brought to the correct position only by degrees, until the pupil can place the feet, heel to heel, in a straight line, without affecting the steadiness of the body or arms.



The second position is formed by moving the right foot sidewise, from the first position to about the distance of its own length from the heel of the left. Of the foot thus placed, the heel must be raised, so that the toes alone rest on the ground; the instep being bent as much as possible, and the foot retaining its primitive direction outward. In this case, as in the first, the foot should be brought by degrees correctly to perform this action; and the toes should be gradually thrown back as far as the pupil's power to preserve her balance will permit.

The third position is formed by drawing the right foot from the second position, to about the middle of the front of the left; the feet being kept close to each other, so that the heel of one foot is brought to the ankle of the other, and seems to lock in with it: thus the feet are nearly half crossed.



In drawing the right foot into this position, its heel must be brought to the ground as it approaches the left, and kept forward during its progress, so that the toe may retain its proper direction outward.



The fourth position is formed by moving the foot about its own length forward from the third

position, keeping the heel forward, and the toe backward, during the progress of the foot; and it must be so placed as to be exactly opposite to the other heel, or rather to the centre of the left foot, so that the feet half cross without touching.

In moving the right foot forward, the toe may be slightly raised.



The fifth position is formed by drawing the right foot back from the fourth position, so that its heel is brought close to the toes of the left foot, the feet being completely crossed.

The right heel, in this position, is gradually brought to the ground as it approaches the left foot, precisely as in formerly drawing the left foot from the second to the third.

In all these positions, the left foot is to retain its primitive situation.

In all these positions, also, the knees may be bent without raising the heels in the least from the ground; and to give flexibility and strength to the instep, they should be often practised on the toes.



RIDING ON HORSEBACK.

THIS is a most delightful exercise, but is one which should not be attempted at too early an age. Still, with a mild and docile horse, and an older companion for a guide and protector, girls may practise riding on horseback when quite young. They should endeavor to sit upright and gracefully on the horse. In the picture above, the lady on the right sits in an easy and graceful manner; while the one on her left sits in a crooked posture, with one shoulder much higher than the other, and an awkward air in her whole appearance.

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