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INVISIBLE EXERCISE

INVISIBLE EXERCISE

*Seven Studies in Self Command
With Practical Suggestions and Drills*

BY

GERALD STANLEY LEE

AUTHOR OF "CROWDS" "

Being the story of one man's experience in coming through to a new kind of exercise—a setting-up exercise taken without getting up ten minutes early—an exercise that can be taken in half a minute without interrupting one's work, while sitting at one's desk, while standing and talking in the street, or lying back in an easy chair—taken without anybody's knowing one is taking it, and eventually without even knowing it one's self. . . .



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TO JENNETTE AND A WORLD

*“And I saw the free souls of poets,
The loftiest bards of all ages strode before me,
Strange large men, long unwaked, undisclosed, were
disclosed to me
. . . . O my rapt verse, my call, mock me not!
. . . . I will not be outfaced by irrational things,
I will confront these shows of the day and night
I will know if I am to be less than they,
I will see if I am not as majestic as they,
I will see if I am not as subtle and real as they,
I will see if I have no meaning while the houses and
ships have meaning. . . .”*

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INVISIBLE EXERCISE

INVISIBLE EXERCISE

STARTER

§ i. *On Being Noticed by One's Doctor*

WHEN I step in to a dentist with a toothache, and he has that noble cheerful professional interest in my tooth and in saving my interesting tooth, I feel like saying to him, "But how about *me*?" He regards me—all the rest of the six feet of me—as a semi-detached encumbrance or inconvenience which somehow that tooth, that absorbingly interesting tooth that has got to be saved, must put up with. What happens to me in the six weeks—to all the rest of me—seems to him a meddlesome idea to bring up. I am a subhead under an incisor.

The way a man feels with his dentist (that is with the average run of dentist—not with mine) is the way he feels with nearly all the men who make a profession of looking after the things in him that don't work.

They are a fine type of men, no doubt, but most of the health experts we go to, to set

us up, the men who prescribe programs to us, and regimens for keeping fit, are alike in one thing. It does not seem to have occurred to them to notice us—to notice that we are plain busy people.

Most of our health experts in America do not seem to take American men as they actually are and as they actually have to live, seriously. What they seem to be interested in, is in telling us what we should do if we were somebody else.

What American men ought to do today—most of us living under conditions of competition largely beyond our control—is to get together, face out all these self-centered specialists—health-sticklers who are trying to put health over on us in a way that is convenient for them, or for millionaires, or for angels, but not for us—and tell them in a body what we think.

We are weary of standing before physicians and, in some painful broken-down moment of our lives, having them tell us placidly and as if they were in some other world, just what the things are, we must do to be well, when all the time they know, and everybody knows, that there is no possible way in which anyone who lives in this one, can do them.

We want physicians to notice us, stop put-

ting up regimens and programs for us—for ordinary busy human men—of things to do that only an angel or an acrobat would try to do, and that only a millionaire or a Methuselah would have time for.

If we American men today, instead of having health-experts in a hundred thousand towns and cities trying to put health over on us, in our most helpless and foolish moments, would get together, and instead of taking what they hand out to us, would put in our order to them, for some kind of health-idea, or health-technique that fitted into the lives we have to live, what would this order be like?

§ ii. *On Being Noticed by One's Self*

Here is my declaration of independence, or bill of rights, as to what I want and do not want, in the way of a program for health-command.

First.—I do not want to be an Angel—give up everything I like, right and left, to live—be a noble, wonderful and beautiful character to digest a dinner.

Too many waste motions—it seems to me—just for a dinner.

Second.—I do not want to be an Acrobat.

Of course, if a man really likes it, if he really enjoys standing on his head, walking on his elbows, squirming his stomach and hanging from a trapeze, taking all the pains a monkey has to, to be well, there is no objection, but I don't like it. These things do a monkey good because he is entertained by them. The monkey's way is not a very bright way for me—I cannot help thinking. As in being an angel, there are too many waste motions.

Third.—I do not want to be a Chemist, study my proteids, indulge in fat worries and acid cares while I eat. I do not understand people who, with nice hearty human foods steaming up to them from their plates, sit and brood and moon chemically before they eat. People who, when they are dining with me, put in all their time thinking of their stomachs instead of thinking of me, seem to me rude. I have no use for people who talk about belonging to a Society for Controlling The Appetites, as if it were belonging to a church, people who are Pharisees with a Welsh rabbit—all these delicate sterilized souls brought up on predigested baby foods, who save their saliva, who weigh their pepsin, who are always coddling their faint vague weak alimentaries before everybody.

I do not say I blame people—people who seem to like these deep dreamy visceral broodings—I suppose they are doing the best they can according to their liver and lights, but it must be bad for them. And why should not the study of diet be attended to, decently and privately and once for all and got out of the way?

I believe in chemistry. I believe in saliva and in gastric juice and in pancreatic fluids and all the other chemicals one has to have, as much as anyone, but it does not go with my nature, somehow, at a dinner table to stop doting on the sweetbreads on my plate and sit and dote on mine.

I am not for my sweetbreads. My sweetbreads are for me. If a man is perpetually taking care of his interior utilities they cannot be worth it.

Fourth.—I want health to burn. I do not want anything to do with a doctor more than once, who tells me that I must look out for my health. I propose to have health that looks after me. A man who, with the actual connivance of a serious doctor, arranges with himself to keep niggling at being well, who keeps making nice little moral dabs at his health, insults nature and slanders God. He is mooning about what health is. I pro-

pose to have health to burn or die. The sense every minute, every day, of having health to burn, is what health is.

Fifth.—I do not want to be evicted from my life—put out on the sightseeing dump of the world—in order to be well. If I can help it, I am going to keep out of the hands of a doctor who will make me believe that I must break away from everything I care for,—the ambitions and enthusiasms for which I live—make a great Baedeker-gap in my life, and take a long staring vacation or die. I want a setting-up exercise or program which will rescue me from deliberately vacating my life, and going around outside of everything looking into other people's windows, watching other people live. I glory in my work, and if the way I do it, is not good for me I propose to know why.

Sixth.—I do not want to be evicted from myself to be well—put off with a health program that proceeds upon the assumption that the only possible thing to do with a man who has a natural gift or enthusiasm that is doing its best to run away with him, is to emasculate him. All persons, relatives, doctors, friends, enemies or advisers who will deliberately take, or seek to take, the legitimate natural enthusiasm or central power in a

man's life—the creative desire he finds it difficult to master, and that it is desirable he should find it difficult to master—put this enthusiasm on the one side of him as his secret enemy and then put some safe, drab, tame, meek health, 'way over on the other side of him, as his only friend and savior and tell him solemnly he must choose between these two, must turn against one to have the other—I say that people who do this are superficial and dangerous people to be allowed a hand in a real man's life. They are off on their facts—as to the actual psychology of health control.

They turn the whole process of health-control precisely around.

When a man has a great natural force—a driving power in him that urges him on, the natural gift for seeing a thing so deeply and for caring about it so much he will die for it—this natural force in him, instead of being regarded as his handicap, should be grabbed by his physician with a hurrah as the supreme incalculable asset the man has, with which a physician can compel him to be well.

If a physician instead of looking at a man as a bag of meat and bones, would study him as a whole human being, and would then take hold of the center-hold in the man, he could

handle everything else in him. The moment a man really believes and plainly sees his physician conceiving his health-program for him, and presenting it to him as a part of his day's work, as the best way to get into a day three times as much work, he will meet his physician more than half way. He will begin to fairly plot, to daily conspire with his physician, to help him have health.

The kind of doctor live men are looking for today is the doctor who bones down to his job, the doctor who can really make a sale of some health to a patient, who studies each patient as a whole—studies out a specific technique for him in the way other efficiency engineers do, for living his own particular kind of life.

§ iii. *On Not Grabbing Health by the Tail*

If a man does not propose to be an angel, an acrobat or a chemist to be well—has signed up once for all on his bill of rights as a human being, and has set out to have health to burn, without being turned out of his job, and without being evicted from his own life—what is there he can do to find a technique, a daily program for keeping fit which he can put through himself?

My own feeling is that this technique for health a man should look for, if it is going to be one he will really put through, should have four outstanding points.

It should be simple—one single thing to do.

It should be sure. It should be of such a nature that he will fully understand it and believe in it, will know that it works and why it works.

It should be short, so that it can be conveniently fitted into his daily life and will really be used.

It should be self-running. It should be a technique which when a man has once mastered himself with it, becomes a habit, makes him master of himself daily, automatically and without his thinking of it.

The most important of these four points is that one's technique for health control—for getting the attention of one's body, should be simple.

As I figure it, there are in this country just now—allowed perfectly wild and loose in it—just twenty-nine sets of people out hankering after every man's health.

The first thing a man wonders about and wants to know, facing these twenty-nine people, is how to be simple.

Here is the list of the twenty-nine sets of people one has to extract simplicity from.

- The Eddyites *
- The Psycho-theraps (Mental hygiene)
- The Psycho-Utterers (New thought)
- The Psycho - Putterers (Psycho - analysts)
- The Zone Psychists
- The Hypos (The hypnotists)
- The Auto-Hypos (self-hypnotists)
- The Sanitariummers
- The Annie-Payson-Callers (or Powerful Reposers)
- The Ortheopedites
- The Osteopathites
- The Dieteaters
- The Vegetableites
- The Vibratites or Buzzers
- The Squoogers and Squirmers
- The Headstanders and Upside-downers
- The Chiropracticklers
- Toothites
- Hittites (boxers)
- Pillites
- Cutters and Excavators
- Germers and Sterilizers
- Ductless-Glanders
- Chewers
- Breathers

Fire (bakers and broilers)
Water
Mud
Muldoon *

These twenty-nine sets of people while they are a bit confusing are very much alike, in one regard. They are all alike in making one feel that health is an anxious and complicated problem to be met by the full brunt of one's religion—by calling upon God, or by calling upon somebody who will be anxious for one.

There are four courses of action the ordinary exposed American can take with regard to the twenty-nine ideas these people say he must keep thinking of.

(1) He can say Pooh! to the whole twenty-nine, and put them off on God.

(2) He can go to their twenty-nine places one after the other and try out on the premises each idea—as long as he lasts.

(3) He can stay at home and every day

* The people in this list, from The Christian Scientists to Muldoon are named not without regard—in some cases the very highest regard for their contribution to our time, as the reader will see later in this book and in the appendix.

I am merely giving the list here in this way just to run the gamut of the bewilderment of the world, and show what any simplicity a man may get, has to be extracted from.

as he goes to bed or gets up in the morning or sits down to a meal he can think of the twenty-nine things he has got to remember—the twenty-nine things they all say he has got to keep thinking of, every minute, every hour, every day,—as long as he lasts.

(4) He can insist on being simple. He can say he will not keep nagging himself every day thinking of the twenty-nine things, that he will see the twenty-nine things as they are in their relation to one another, jam the whole twenty-nine into one and think of that.

More people would have time to be well and would stop postponing it, if someone would just mention to this country, what this one thing to be thought of was.

I have found myself asking myself two or three questions about it and making preliminary answers as well as I could.

From what direction should I look for such an idea to come?

Not from the twenty-nine specialists and experts, but from some common or garden kind of man who is tired of being cut up and separated, and tired of having one twenty-ninth of him cured at a time.

What would I know the idea by when it came?

I decided that whatever else might be true

of this central idea, a hundred million people want, there was one thing of which I could be sure. There would be something inevitable about it, universal and elemental. I would not make the mistake of looking for it as if it would have to be some great thundering discovery that would take people's breath away. I would know it probably at first by its seeming almost foolishly simple.

It would be an idea which, when once acted on and carried out would involve no worry, no philosophy, no religion, no scientific study, no profound expert, to help a normal man to take advantage of it.

Probably too, this centralizing idea would turn out to be something old and made up of almost disgracefully familiar facts—facts people think they see, but never see enough to see together.

What I propose to do in these pages is to take a few of these facts—facts I have experienced and that we all have experienced, look at them hard enough and long enough, to steady them, focus them and act on them together.

Three Little N. B.'s**I**

This is not going to be an anxious book on health.

An anxious book on health is a disease of itself. There is not going to be a single pathological minute in this book.

I should hate—just because I am writing about being well—to be abandoned by a hundred million husky readers of books in this country and feel myself being side-tracked, put off in what I have to say, on a vast lonely Physiological Siding with invalids and tired people.

If I had dared I would have swept across the whole front of this book in big bouncing letters the title

FOR WELL MEN ONLY

I would rather add twenty per cent to the efficiency of well men than sixty per cent to the efficiency of sick ones. Sick men do sick things, or tired things, and the more one adds to their efficiency—the more one is exposing the country to them, and exposing the world. One does not want to wish sick men were dead, but when one thinks of the world

today and of what sick men—(in Russia for instance) the more efficient ones, are doing to it, and of what tired or hysterical men are doing to it—the last thing one wants to be a party to, is saying anything or whispering anything in this world just now that will make the sick more efficient in it.

The things I have to say are human, not pathological, and are addressed—addressed above all others—to men who feel fine, who are never conscious of anything more than some passing vague discomfort, and who would be amused at the idea of there being any particular need of their reading a book on learning to lie down or on learning to sit up.

II

It would be too bad to feel people following up what I have to say about self-control, because of any false pretension or over pretension. So I like to say before anyone goes on any further, that the people in this world who, instead of getting a good honest straight self-control themselves—a self-control that has some nerve in it because they have got it themselves—expect to have some nice ready-made self-control handed over to them,

presented to them outright in a book, will miss something in this one.

I wish also to disclaim writing in these pages for people who want to be told what to do about their health—people who expect to be given rules and orders and to be told to mind, who want to be tucked up in bed by Mother, shut their eyes, have a pill put in their mouths and trust Providence and the Pill—particularly the Pill.

A pill does for a man what it is supposed to do anyway—whatever he does—does it when he is asleep.

There is no pill—spiritual or otherwise in this book.

And there is no authority in it—no big bow-wow. It is just one man getting up and telling a straight plain story of what has happened to him.

What the nice white space at the end of each chapter says is, *Take It Or Leave It.*

III

If there were any way it could be managed I would have this book equipped with a powerful little steel spring in the back and the book would shut up tight all by itself, no

matter what the reader thought or said, every fifteen minutes.

It would remain locked for five minutes for the reader to think.

A reader really ought to be allowed that long, while reading,—it seems to me—to think. Incidentally among other things he thinks of in his five minutes, locked out of the book, he can think whether he really wants to go on in it as much as he thinks he does. Then if he likes he can go on.

This provision for letting a reader spend fifteen minutes in having things happen to him and five minutes in assimilating them—in making some sense out of them for his own life, is no more than is really fair to an author.

Of course, a cook in placing food before people, cannot help having a natural half-guilty hope that he is cooking it so well, or bringing the flavor out so much, that they will want to eat more at a time than they ought.

But after all, when all is said and done, what is really good in this book is what is going to happen or can be made to happen when the reader is taking his turn, or during the reader's five minutes. The situation be-

tween us—between author and reader as it seems to me, sums up something like this:

- (1) Food should not be blamed for being eaten too fast or too much. Why should pie on a plate be held responsible for not sinking away gracefully from before a man, just in time—back through his plate?
- (2) An author in a book obviously cannot shut himself up just in time as he can in talking.
- (3) A steel spring with an alarm-clock attachment shutting me back into this book is impracticable.

The only possible substitute I can think of is to say squarely before we go on that it seems to me that when the reader comes along and sees the author—sees me, for instance, lying in this way helpless in my own book—as helpless as pie on a plate, and when the reader knows that I should be shut up, and when the reader knows that I cannot shut myself up, won't he please shut me up for me?

PART ONE

Exercises for Lazy and Busy Men

- I. ADVENTURES IN NOT WALKING.
- II. ADVENTURES IN SITTING DOWN.
- III. LYING DOWN EFFICIENTLY.
- IV. SLEEPING FAST.

I

ADVENTURES IN NOT WALKING

I

EXERCISE FOR LAZY AND BUSY MEN

A FRIEND I met in the train the other day asked me what I was doing just now and I said I was writing of some of my adventures in sitting down.

“Tacks?” he said.

I told him tacks were safe and sane—even insipid — as compared with other things people did or let themselves in for, in sitting down.

When a man sits down on a tack he is instantly reminded what he is about and instantly does something about it.

When a man—a well man, a man who is strong enough not to notice—sits down eight hours a day in a chair at his desk in a way that begins quietly, steadily lopping years off the end of his life, while he may not get excited about it—it would do him good if he did—he would find his adventures in not doing it any more, and in sitting as he never sat before, quite as interesting and quite as much to the point as a tack.

I am introducing to people in this book

what some of these adventures are like and what they have led me to.

What I am dealing with in it, is the driving power of the busy man—the secret for the active man, of frictionless motion and of swift and efficient rest.

The great majority of people one sees about one are wasting half their strength every day, doing their walking, standing, sitting, and lying down, in ways which throw, and daily keep throwing, their bodies out of gear. The more they do, and keep doing these four rather dangerous things, the more they damage and warp the physical machine, the more friction there is in the way the machine runs, the more comfort and sense they cut out of living, and the more they limit their efficiency and shorten their lives.

The reason the average man is sick is that he does these things all day in a position of body which makes, and would be obliged to make, any sensible person sick. He is running his health on too low a gear for his health to work.

For the most part the average civilized man today is doing the same thing with his body, that he does when he throws away eighty-seven per cent of the motor-value of coal. He is using thirteen per cent of the

motor value of the body and letting eighty-seven go. He is doing this mainly by friction—by not holding the different parts of the body where they were fitted in to be and have to be, to do their work. Because of the way he holds himself, it tires him to sit. Very often it even tires him to sleep.

This book is the story of one man's experience in finding out that this statement is a true statement of what is happening to many people today.

It is not written by a man who is setting himself up as an expert in self-control, but by a man who is finding out—among other people who are finding out—a way to live. I am telling this story of what I have found out, to compare it with others. The story is the simple story of a man who thought he learned to walk when he was a baby, a man who thought he knew how to sit up, who has practiced on sitting at a desk thirty years, and who at least thought he knew how to lie down, who has found out at fifty that he didn't ever really learn how to do any of these things, and is learning how now.

As he has been going about practicing on himself and watching other people he has

come to one or two unexpected conclusions about civilized people as they are living today.

Knowing how to walk, apparently, is very rare. Very few people can even stand still. Sitting and lying down are so lazy that nobody ever tries, ever uses any brains at all to do them and thinks any old way will do. Hundreds of millions of people in the world today—people who spend twenty-five years of their lives lying in bed and probably twenty years more of their lives sitting in chairs—have never once really thought out how to do them.

As one never misses a minute in all one's life in doing one or the other of these four things it does seem as if they were worth doing rather well, and I have been studying myself, and studying other people for some little time as well as I could, and have picked out and put into daily use for myself what seems to me to be the fundamental principle of the four natural positions the human machine has to run in—the principle of sitting, standing and walking with quickness and ease, and of lying down and sleeping fast.

II

EXERCISING A LOT IN A LITTLE

I have spent as I count up the hours, some twenty-three years of my life sitting down. Sitting goes with my profession.

Walking and lying down are, with me, only a means to an end. Any walking or lying down I do, is for the purpose of sitting down better.

Many millions of other people in this country are like me in this. So far as the most important part of their lives is concerned, they live as human right-angles. The main thing they do in the world is a thing they have to do while sitting and their success in what they are doing, turns on their knowing how to sit while doing it.

My first idea in learning how to sit down, came from testing out in the course of my daily exercise, a better way to walk.

As my adventures in sitting down all turn on this—on the fundamental principle I came on while walking—I naturally begin my story of sitting down at the beginning, and I am asking my readers to do a little walking with

me—a very little, if they don't mind—before we sit.

.

I have had for a good many years the habit, during my morning's work, of breaking away at some convenient point in an idea, and taking my idea out to air.

With twenty square miles of meadow, without a house or a fence in sight and two mountains and the sky, I take a walk, and have a couple of mountains criticise me. Then when I come in and sit down again with my idea, something good—something better than I could do—usually has happened to it.

For a long time when I did this, I took what would be called a contemplative walk.

The walk grew more and more contemplative. Gradually it came over me that I would get more, probably, out of being more brisk.

I thought I would try out this idea of being more brisk for what it was worth, and for a long time every morning I made myself violently stop thinking, shot myself out of my study, and walked across the slow and peaceful meadow as if I were catching a train just around the next corn sheaf.

I did this a whole season.

The next season, after just getting back from a kind of tirade of health at Muldoon's—where I was supposed in a final orgy of self-discipline to run a mile uphill to the house at the end of a five-mile hike—I came home with the idea that the thing I really ought to do, probably, was to keep on, in my humble way, muldooning myself.

“What you need” I said to myself (with a rather lively but fool-remnant of a New England conscience), “what you need after a Spell of Thought, is shaking up and deep breathing.”

Very soon I had it all worked out neatly that for a man who earns his living in a chair, quality and not quantity was what was wanted in exercise. I ought to be more intensive. Why should I, because I had always been a tramp—had for years taken off three solid hours from every day and spread them out faithfully into a long wide dutiful hike—keep it up forever?

If a man can get as much exercise out of ten minutes' fast running as he can out of two hours of mild thoughtful meander, why meander?

After giving myself this treat of good ad-

vice I stopped walking for some weeks and began running. I liked running to begin with. I had always liked running—especially running down steep hills and mountains without breaking my neck. I was a little apt to be absent-minded in exercise and not breaking one's neck was at least interesting. And besides I had used for years as a boy one of the first of the bicycles with the little wheel behind—the old-fashioned high bicycle for taking regular headers—and I missed them.

Anyway—this was the spirit of my idea and I made out my program accordingly at once. I agreed with myself that I would take a short sharp peremptory time off, for a run of twenty minutes every morning, every afternoon, and every evening. I would get winded three times a day. My blood was too much in my head. So I began the next day, and almost any morning that season—all that season—any bleak winter morning I might have been seen, a small speck out in the great snowy meadow, hurling my blood down from my head to my feet and running for dear life.

The great meadow is a lonely place. Now and then a train away over on the edge would go by. No man I would ever see, saw

what I was doing. And I was glad Muldoon didn't!

I kept it up rigidly. I breathlessly believed my theory. If I had acquired a bad absent-minded habit of walking, the more completely I stopped my old habit, the quicker I could grip a new one.

So I never walked at all. I took my runs in town or country wherever I happened to be. Now and then, of course, if I was in a small town where people look at one another and notice one another as fellow human beings, I would slow up for looks, but in the country I could run as fast as I liked and in New York if a man is seen running, he is catching a train or a car, and he is only Number 4,378,967 anyway. The only way anyone can attract attention in New York is by looking intelligent, by looking interested, and not hurrying.

While as I look back on it now, this whole proceeding was unnecessary; it was probably, with my strenuous temperament and secret love of doing something a little too hard, the best thing I could do at the time, and it certainly gave me, at whatever unnecessary cost, better, more immediate and more reliable results in the way of keeping fit than I had ever had before.

There was at least a kind of heartiness in it, and after all, a large part of sound psychology in exercise lies in doing something one likes to do. And I could not but prefer running to walking, because I was more interested in my mind than my legs, and being an absent-minded person, I was compelled in running my legs very fast, to put my mind into them.

Slowly it occurred to me that the fact that I was practically obliged to go on the dead run to get my mind down into my legs was really not a very complimentary fact about my mind.

I began wondering if I could not get the necessary attention to my exercise in some less violent way.

This idea kept coming back to me as I ran, and still coming back, and naturally the faster I had to run to put my mind into it, the cheaper I felt about my mind.

Gradually I substituted for running rapidly, running slowly. Then still more slowly. I got interested in seeing how far I could run without being winded. I made studies while running, in effortlessness. Instead of putting my mind into running rapidly I put my mind into running perfectly and with the line of least resistance.

Slowly I was getting my mind over into what I was doing with my body.

Soon, to get my mind into what I was 'doing, I did not need to run at all.

I began walking in the same way.

Soon, to get my mind into what I was 'doing, I didn't even need to walk.

I began standing quite still and poising and balancing my body.

I had begun to guess the truth. I had begun to discover perfection or quality of exercise as a substitute for quantity of exercise.

Finally, the day came when I came into my own—a day I can never forget. On a high sunny morning I ran down out of my study to the meadow and stood quite still and found as I stood quite still, I was as good as on a dead run! Motionless, invisibly balanced, high-charged with the voltage of my own poise, of my own stillness. . . . I stood still. . . .

Then having my high-voltage to work with I came back to my study and sat down to my new chapter. I had saved my electricity for my new book—for the readers of my new book—instead of running wildly, spilling it off the ends of my feet for two miles, and warming and electrifying a meadow.

I had got down at last to what appears to me now to be the nib—the nib of the whole idea of taking exercise.

Exercise is coördination—the coördination of mind and body.

What coördinates the mind and the body the most, the most quickly and the most easily, gives the most exercise.

It is not the amount of exercise a man takes. It is the amount of coördination or balance of parts he gets out of the exercise he does take, which determines its value. The more coördination per ounce of strength, the more exercise one has taken.

This brought me to an entirely new conclusion as to the method the modern man—with the kind of busy, sedentary preoccupied desk-life he has to live, would probably find most adapted to his purpose in keeping fit.

III

THE EXERCISE OF KEEPING STILL

I have always had the habit of not letting my walks be interfered with by cold or by stormy weather, and being on the whole an extra hard person to heat and having naturally very little asbestos on, and not holding the heat I have, I have fallen into the habit, on very cold days, of walking fast to whip up my circulation.

One day when I was walking against the west wind—so cold I had to turn around every few minutes to warm my face—I came to a turn in the path (it was up on Mount Tom) heard a Boston and Maine whistle, and stopped to see the train, as I often do, small and creepy down below me, coming up the valley.

At first from where I stood, I could only hear it. Then from over the top-rock on the next summit, I could only see the steam and the smoke. Then I wished I was taller and for one minute, or possibly two minutes, I stood on tiptoe, craned my neck to look and suddenly grew warm!

Absolutely still after running, and right out in the middle of a bitter wind, I grew warm.

I did not get much of a view of the train in that two minutes but I got a view of myself, saw through my own heart, saw how my heart worked and how it kept my hands and feet warm, in a way I had never dreamed before.

Hundreds of times since that day when I could not get warm in a bitter wind by running, I have brought my run up sharp to a full stop, and of course, without the mountain and the train and all the other fittings, I have gone through the whole performance all over again, stood on tiptoe a minute and craned my neck to warm my hands and my feet. Then I would finish off by going up and down very slowly on my toes.

My first idea was that the toes had a good deal to do with it and that they were the important part of the performance, but when a week or so later instead of taking my walk on Mount Tom, I found myself walking in New York and trying to keep warm on Fifth Avenue, naturally not wanting to draw a crowd on the Avenue by the way I warmed myself, I stepped up to a show window, looked at what I liked in it, stretched my

upper back slowly, let myself be as tall as I could and before I knew it and before I had got the things in the window half done, my toes and fingers had got as warm on the Avenue as they did on the mountain.

The toes and rising on the toes did not seem to have much to do with it. The thing that got the result apparently was something in the back—in the stretching, heightening and widening of the back.

Of course, I was acting not as an expert or a scientist—just as a man trying to find something out. I did not go very far. But there was some intimate and important connection—a connection one could do a great deal with apparently, if one made the most of it—between the upper back and the extremities of the body. The upper back and the feet and the hands, judging from their intimacy—from the way they took each other personally—were under a single control and were meant to be managed together.

Probably, if one could use the principle of stretching the upper back to get warm and could increase at will the control of one's circulation in the body, one could use it to increase one's control of everything else.

All one had to do was to follow it up consciously and make the most of it, increase

by daily training one's conscious control of the back, and one had a command for instant or for constant use of what was practically a way of turning on and of keeping turned on, a new gear of power, of self-command and health in the body.

IV

A HUNDRED PEOPLE OPEN MY EYES

While I was still thinking about it—about how I warmed my feet on Mount Tom and on Fifth Avenue—and still trying to work through to some fundamental principle I could use every day all the year round, I found myself one hot July night, motoring up through the White Mountains on my way to Maine. After driving in a dense blackness all alone I came quite late in the evening to a big hotel, and with the deep subconscious beat and rhythm of my engine still going in my ears and the darkness still in my eyes, I found myself all in a minute in the glare of a big yellow ball room, standing on the edge and watching a hundred people dance.

I was sizing up the hotel, I suppose, in my mind a little—the way one does—and I liked the people very well until they sat down. Then in some way they all seemed different. One had to look into their faces to see if they were the same people; they seemed so disappointing and as if they had slipped back into some other world when they sat down.

After all the grace and lightness I had come into, they seemed rather common after all and heavy and soggy and strange.

Then after the music started up again I went to bed and early in the morning in the big white, silent hotel, in a great sunshiny dining room without a footfall, I ate my breakfast, and drove away.

Being all alone with nothing but the rhythm of my engine, and with nothing in particular in the way of a mountain in sight for twenty miles, I fell to thinking about the people and how they had all changed over into somebody else—spoiled the hotel in a minute—the night before. I wondered why it was and how they did it.

I began thinking what it was about dancing that gave it its touch of glamour and other-worldliness and that made the people so different when dancing,—not only to others apparently, but different to themselves.

Most people seem to like themselves better while dancing. Why do most people like dancing so much better than walking? Why is it that thousands of people who are too tired to take a walk around a block will dance thirty miles in a night?

The nearest I could get in twenty miles to answering this question was this: People

have to pull themselves together more to dance than they do to walk and when they find that being pulled together more, is far more comfortable and pleasurable,—they naturally like it, and naturally like anything that makes them do it.

The reason that most people one sees walking up and down the street are not in the act before all our eyes of enjoying walking as much as they enjoy dancing is, that when they are walking they are able to walk fairly well—able at least to keep from tipping over, without being particularly coördinated to do it—that is: without (as in dancing) particularly and enthusiastically connecting up their brains and their feet.

People are compelled to coördinate their minds and their bodies in order to dance at all, and naturally, having been driven by main force into discovering, while dancing, how delightful connecting up one's head with one's feet is, and having acquired the habit of being temporarily alive in a ball room, they keep going over and over again to ball rooms to be temporarily alive.

It does seem, when one thinks of it, too bad, to confine being especially alive in this way to ball rooms.

I doubt if in a week's time there would be

three people left in America who would do it, who would consent to have their especially lively time confined as severely as this, if there were any way in which everybody could stop to think next week, what it is about ball rooms that makes people so enjoy them and look forward to them.

The one thing about dancing that makes anyone ever do it, is that it is the most co-ordinating commonly-known exercise there is.

V

HOW TO LIKE WALKING AS WELL AS DANCING

Anything one has occasion to do, if one does it from one extreme to the other—does it all over and from head to foot, does it really pulling one's self together to do it, as one has to in dancing—will have the same effect as dancing.

If a thousand young women in New York who prefer dancing, who think walking is heavy and prosaic, and who haven't poetry of motion enough left over in a day to enjoy taking a walk in it, would begin next week practicing faithfully and would then start a fad of walking down Fifth Avenue in Oriental costumes with water jars on their heads, the time would not be long at hand when they would feel themselves getting as much pleasure out of their walking as they do out of their dancing now. Incidentally, they would get as much pleasure (in their new coördinated state of commanding themselves from head to foot) out of everything else they had occasion to do from day to day in which poise, and self-command and quietness count. What is more, a thousand young

women in New York who had ever walked, or been able to walk down Fifth Avenue with water jars on their heads, if they were to change their foreign costumes and leave their jars at home, would be known by all New York as they walked the street, at sight. As for dancing with one—with a girl who wore a water jar—there is not a man on earth who would not know her in the dark.

If a railroad-rail, a foot from the ground, were put down Fifth Avenue from the Park to Washington Square, and all the young men and women under thirty who get tired walking and never get tired dancing, were to walk downtown on it from the Park to Washington Square, and put their brains into their feet forty blocks a day, there wouldn't be one of them at the end of a month, who would not be getting as much pleasure—as much vivid, æsthetic pleasure and glow—out of plain walking as out of dancing before.

The necessity the typical young New York girl often seems to be under, of actually being obliged to dance, and dance hard to get her brain and her feet together, her necessity of employing an orchestra or a phonograph, and troops of able-bodied young men, to get her mind to go as far as her feet, it is to be devoutly hoped, is only temporary.

No one, for the world, would interfere with the work the able-bodied young men put in on her—on a pleasant young woman in an evening, in coördinating her, but one cannot help thinking how much more exhilarating it would be, dancing with a young woman who had learned to walk, who could even walk perhaps without having to have rubber heels, whose brains reached as far as her feet all the time, and who was in the habit of being a spirited person whenever she liked.

[I have just been thinking for a minute that perhaps it would do no harm and would be more polite to go back over this last paragraph and put in "he" instead of "she," throughout, but everybody knows how it is anyway—knows that a great deal more of the heavy work in ball rooms is put in by lively and light-footed young women on stodgy smiling young men.]

On both sides, heaven knows, they are willing enough to put in the work, and it is to be hoped they always will be, but playing is more fun. And one cannot help wondering after all, if people make work even of dancing together, what it would be like when they come to walking together or living together.

One often hears people say rather thoughtfully and as if of course, they had settled something, "Extremes meet."

But do they? If the people of this present world could make their extremities meet, could really make them work together, they would be so well they wouldn't know who they were in a week. In thirty years, doctors would be gone by. In thirty years more, even clergymen would be gone by.

This is what we would have to look forward to, if people would take a little pains to be whole—that is, to use their brains and feet as one piece.

The real point in the remark that extremes meet is that they don't.

They try to meet. What every man really wants to know for his own use in his own body, is how to make them, or more accurately, how to let them.

They are always trying to.

All one has to do to see how natural and fundamental making extremes meet, as a principle of self-control, is and how it works, is to watch the beginnings of self-control in two sets of people—in babies—people who have just been found, and in adolescents—people who are just finding themselves.

The first thing after his mother's breast, a baby shows any real interest in is toes—and in connecting up his brain with his toes. He is always waving them around, practicing his brains on his toes, coördinating them in all sorts of pleasant ways, and when he is being most blissfully coördinated of all, and comes to his real climax, and puts his brains and his toes together the most, he puts his toes in his mouth.

What it is that really keeps a baby occupied (anyone can see for himself) is putting his extremities together. When he cannot get the further ends of his legs into his mouth, he works the further ends of his arms around and puts in his fists.

It would probably be found, if the real serious statistics were collected, that the artists and artisans, the great handy men, engineers and organizers of the world who rose to the top were those who—until they found something else to do with them—sucked their thumbs the hardest.) The great motor geniuses of modern life, the steamboat and railroad men, Robert Fulton and Alexander Cassatt, sucked their toes. James J. Hill apparently did both. . . .

The same principle of making extremes

meet as a method of self-control can be seen in its later stage in young people emerging from adolescence, who are not yet quite waked up, or it can be seen in all people young or old who, for any reason at any particular time are in a half-waked up state.

What seems to be true and of special personal interest to most of us is that people enjoy doing things apparently in exact proportion as doing them wakes them up—that is: coördinates them, and the reason young people who are too tired to walk a mile, dance thirty miles in a night is that the compulsion they are under in order to dance at all, of putting their heads and their feet together, makes their whole bodies between, and everything their bodies do between, as light as a breath.

There is not the remotest reason why feeling the body as light as a breath should be a mere ball room feeling, or why thousands of young women in America and thousands of young men should have a sudden feeling of heaviness when they have merely to walk.

The different parts of a man's body feel heavy because some of the parts feel—and feel with perfect truth—that they are imposed on, and that they are lugging around the others.

The only thing that can make a man, while he is carrying his body, feel light, is single control.

The only possible way to get single control is to string up, or one might almost say tune up, the parts of the body to where they belong on the spine until they are so light and so play together, they hardly know they are there.

Make two extremes act together and everything that comes between them acts together.

If the tip or the top-piece of a man's spine—the nub way up at the end which he calls his brain, coördinates with his finger tips and his toes, everything in the man, soul and body, that comes between rests and moves as it should.

This should be the basic principle, as it seems to me, of any setting-up exercise or exercise for keeping fit a man may work out or select.

At least this is the principle I thought out as I slid down to Maine through Crawford Notch from seeing, on top of the mountains, a hundred people dance.

It was a principle I have had no occasion to stop believing since, but it was not until some time after (and after, as they seem

now, some quite unnecessary postponements and disappointments) that I found the idea could be finally worked out into a setting-up exercise in which I was really able to practice what I believed.

Any man who will take any exercise and will relax his neck to take it and stretch and lengthen his back by reducing the curve in the lower part of it, will find that a great deal of refreshment can be had out of the exercise by taking very little of it.

VI

WALKING AN HOUR IN TEN MINUTES

If a man has some hearty, tiring, orthodox, puff-and-sweat exercise he takes regularly every day, with which he is accustomed to coördinate his body in three hours, there is no reason why—if he likes it—any fault should be found with it.

But if he has some other little almost invisible setting-up exercise three minutes long he can do—like poising his body while standing for three minutes absolutely still—and if he finds he can take his uncoördinated mind and body, and by poising his mind and body in the right way together for three minutes, can really coördinate them, the plain fact is, of course, he gets no more real exercise—no more essence of exercise—in three hours, than he does in three minutes, and naturally, it is open to him to save his time or not as he likes.

It is at least open to him—to a plain busy man who cannot afford to take time off except at intervals, for the gym or the hike—to take advantage at least for every-day use, of this principle of taking the essence of exercise.

I have come into the way of taking what some people would call a setting-up exercise I suppose—a common basic exercise or drill for finding and taking the true and easiest position for all five of the great familiar practices of life—sitting down, lying down, walking and standing and sleep.

I am not going to attempt at once to describe with diagrams or words this rather innocent and simple little exercise.

Saying just what it is, just how one does it, and just how it looks and how it feels—describing it—that is, describing a new physical experience with diagrams and words, would be a good deal like trying, with a man who has never had the taste of a grape, to describe to him with diagrams and words or with pictures how a grape feels when it bursts upon the palate.

All one can do is to say enough, if possible to make him think he would like to try a grape.

There are two questions, however, about a physical experience people have not had,—about a new setting-up exercise—in response to which something can really be said, in words.

What is it for? i.e., What is its end?

What is the essential motion in it through which one secures the end?

The end of the exercise is to coördinate the body from head to foot.

The motion through which one does this is the stretching or letting out of the back.

One secures this end by stretching the back with what one would have been inclined to call at first an incredible lack of effort.

It is essentially an exercise in ease and consists in each man's studying out for himself his own balance for his own back, and following up his own line of least resistance.

Though, of course, the exercise is one which I can take in two minutes without anybody knowing I am taking it, at any time in any place, and whatever I am doing and in any position I happen to be or need to be, it is not an exercise in the ordinary sense so much as a knack one drills one's self in, of balancing the body on the spine, for whatever one has occasion to do—a basic movement—a common denominator for all exercise and for all rest.

At first the drill one gives one's self—the orders one gives to one's body in it—have to be given in certain particular positions.

Later when one has perfected one's self in

it, it can be taken in a chair or curled up in bed or standing on one foot. Whatever the thing may be one wants to do, whether walking, running, sitting or lying down, if one does it by balancing one's self a fleck taller while doing it, the result is secured.

At first one makes the motions for the new positions and the new balance consciously. Then before one knows it, one begins holding the position unconsciously, as an ingrained habit. Except for the taking of the two-minute drills as a refreshment when one likes, one begins carrying and holding one's self in the new and easier way while lying, sitting and walking without its seeming a new way at all, and without thinking of it from one end of the 'day to the other.

The thing that causes weariness in an easy thing like walking or sitting, is that a man is letting himself fall into a false balancing of the body,—is running out of true, is subordinating the back to the stomach instead of subordinating the stomach to the back.

It is possible by simple means at will, to reverse this balance.

When this balance is reversed there is immediate relief.

When it is habitually reversed there is permanent relief.

The man who stops carrying or trying to carry his own backbone like a millstone around his stomach all his days, and who makes his backbone carry him, lives with such ease, with such a new sudden strange lightness, he finds it hard to remember who he is.

Here is the conclusion and the basis of it in three sentences:

The best and most thorough test of any particular exercise is generally admitted to be the deep breathing it induces.

Experience has shown that all exercises in direct control or forced control of breathing are bad, and that the only deep breathing that is good, is the deep breathing that is induced.

A man can make himself breathe more deeply with twenty minutes' standing than he can with twenty minutes' running. And the deep breathing will be more normal and will last longer.

After working through to this truth and trying it out for a year, while I do not want to speak for others or as an authority, I naturally feel qualified to speak of what has happened to me. To make a long story short, what has happened to me is this: I get as much exercise this year out of standing, as I did last year out of running.

I still keep up my habit of taking walks, and taking runs—because I like them—

in the afternoon and evenings when convenient.

But they are for the most part luxuries and for the love of being outdoors. The determining thing I do for my health is less strenuous.

And in the morning when I have the least time, use my health the hardest and need it the most, instead of going out to take a twenty-minutes' walk during work, I go out and take a twenty-minutes' stand.

I take in as much more air, lower my diaphragm, deepen my lungs, quicken my heart-action and peristaltic action, relieve my nerves and stretch my legs and my back as much in taking a twenty-minute stand today, as I used to last year in twenty minutes running.

Of course, this is not saying I would get less exercise out of running twenty minutes than standing twenty minutes today, because I have today a new running as well as new standing technique. It is saying that twenty minutes perfect and highly coördinated standing and balancing on the toes, gives me a much greater result in physical well being—and in being fit, than twenty minutes of the old and poorly coördinated running would give.

In using the word "exercise" I mean result of exercise—having my machine in its newer gear—running in its new and unexpected degree of coördination—running as effortlessly and as smoothly as water running down hill.

Having learned in my pursuit of suitable exercise for a lazy and busy man, how to get the good of running standing still, the next thing I naturally wanted, of course, was to see if there was not some way of exercising sitting down.

II

ADVENTURES IN SITTING DOWN

I

LEARNING TO SIT DOWN: MY FIRST SIT

THE easiest and laziest way I know to learn how to sit down is on a saddle horse.

One can be as stupid, and use one's mind as little about it as one likes, but as one is practically driven when one is on a horse, to use one's mind some in sitting, and to use one's back because it bumps it so not to, almost anybody approximates, in sheer desperation, on a horse, sooner or later, to a correct idea of what sitting down is.

The practical difficulty with learning to sit down on a horse is, that there is no way of keeping up what one has learned when one gets off. One cannot be always taking a horse around with one to sit down on, and there is nothing one can really seem to do, to make one's pew in church or one's seat in a theater, or one's chair at a desk, act lively enough.

If the only way that is open to a man, of taking in the idea of sitting down, is by thumping the idea in, by fairly bumping the

idea into his seat for him, it is not apt to go much further.

One needs to take in the idea at the other end of one's spine more, and whether one likes it or not, the upshot of it always is, sooner or later, one finds one's self sternly and humbly beginning to practice at learning to sit down, in what seems (after a horse) a frightfully steady and rather insipid chair.

After all the soreness and excitement one has had to remind one, and to encourage one to sit down better, and all the rocking, sweating and panting and scenery, sitting down in a plain chair and using one's mind to balance one's body with, without making a motion, turns out to be the thing one has to face and make the most of.

At least this has been my experience.

The first thing I found when I did this was, that while the new balance I learned on the horse was a thing I could not transfer, I had really learned it once for all, whether I could transfer it or not.

I found I had learned what the correct balancing position the horse threw me into, was like, and how I felt in it when I got it.

I had something to go by and I felt that when at last without the aid of a horse to powerfully throw me into a sitting balance, I began with a plain chair to throw myself

there or rather tip myself there, I would at least know it when I got it, and I would know when I didn't get it. That would be something.

The next thing I set out to do, of course, was obvious.

I proceeded to see if there was not some way I could learn to be as comfortable on a chair as on a horse.

II

LEARNING TO SIT DOWN: MY SECOND SIT .

The first thing I discovered in this direction that was of any real help or inspiration to me was in a Madison Avenue street car. I do not claim any credit for the discovery. The credit should be given to the Company. I was practically crowded into it. There wasn't room in Madison Avenue street cars not to discover it. All I really did myself was to let myself—like some kind of human tube-paste—be squeezed out through the vestibule of the car, and deposited on the corner of the edge of the seat by the motorman.

I sat where I was squeezed to. That was all I contributed to the discovery. But being a curious person, naturally interested in facing ahead and watching people not being quite run over, I sat turned forward, did not use the back of the seat, and fell at once because there was nothing else to do, into balancing myself.

With my feet spread out and straddling a little and the car always jerking—always being suddenly pulled up by the bit as it

were—before I knew it, I began throwing myself—kept throwing myself over and over again—into a balance on my seat. Before I knew it I had discovered in the middle of Madison Avenue coming along for me every five minutes a perfect, dead-sure, inexpensive five-cent substitute for a saddle horse.

It was quite literally before I knew it. Every time I entered a car, I found myself, whether it was crowded or not, making for the seat by the motorman. I went to it instinctively. I liked it.

If I had been asked why I chose the seat, I would have said it was for the scenery.

It was some weeks before I knew enough about myself or about sitting down, to know that the real reason I chose the corner of the edge of the jiggly seat, was that it was practically the only seat on earth I knew of yet, where I could make myself sit down as comfortably as a horse could make me sit down.

All I knew at the time was that I felt injured when somebody—a small boy usually—jumped into my small Interborough saddle for me and I had to put up with sitting in the long common soggy row of other people laid up against the red Brussels carpet-back inside.

When there was nothing for it, and I had

to sit with them on the regular bench or pew inside, I made as good an imitation on it, of sitting on my small saddle—my play rocking-horse outside—as I could. I sat on the extreme edge of the seat and balanced myself.

III

I STRUGGLE WITH THE EASY CHAIR

In learning how to break up an old habit of bodily position or movement and establish a new one, the first thing one naturally seeks to do is to avoid the conditions and circumstances which are the most identified with the old habit, and which tend to make one forget the new one, and cultivate conditions and circumstances that are so altogether new and different in themselves that one can think of the new habit in connection with them almost more easily than the old.

I seemed to have had this experience in my new way of learning to sit down as I should.

There were two things I could come nearest to sitting down on properly. The best was a horse because he powerfully threw me into taking a right sitting position. The next best was a piano stool because it kept me at least from leaning—from slumping into a wrong one.

The establishing of a health habit especially of a habit of deep subtle subconscious position or movement, turns necessarily on

getting and keeping one's own attention to what one wants. One has to do something that attracts one's attention rather loudly at first.

This seems to have been the principle of psychology upon which I was unconsciously at work. After sitting six hours a day at a desk, sitting on a horse, or sitting on a glorious backless joggly seat in a street car, was so strikingly different from all I was used to in the way of sitting, that my old way not only felt awkward, but I kept being reminded of the new one because it was the one that worked.

After this stage is once reached in making a transfer in middle life from an old subconscious habit to a new one, progress becomes rapid. The pursuit of a line of least resistance, becomes a comfort, and a rational self-indulgence.

Of course, when with a powerful horse to help me, I was practically tossed, almost dislocated, into a position where I involuntarily stretched my head forward and up and lengthened and widened my back, what was really happening was that my attention was being got and being held to the way I wanted to sit down, and from that point on, of course, the whole art of sitting down con-

sisted in finding more sedate substitutes, less violent ways of keeping myself reminded of how I preferred to sit.

Later, when I got to the point where I was really preferring to sit in the better way without thinking of it one way or the other, I found myself let in for a whole new streak of parlor experiences in the houses of my friends, and strange adventures with easy chairs, which were not unilluminating.

For quite a little while when I was let into a room and suddenly exposed as I entered the door, to a whole flock of easy chairs, I made a bee-line for the piano stool. It was my isle of safety. I sat down on it and held on to it for dear life. Nothing anybody could say would budge me from it until I started to say good-bye and made for the door.

After two or three weeks I began branching out a little tentatively from a piano stool now and then. I tried some of the more Presbyterian looking chairs at first. Then I grew bolder day by day and slipped over on to the edges of easy ones.

Finally, as I was getting so that I could balance my back in almost any position—in any chair—I leaned back.

IV

REHEARSALS ON A STOOL

A certain Spanish Princess in her memoirs boasts—boasts of it as part of her royal blood—that she has not leaned back in a chair for forty years.

This general idea the Princess has had apparently of being a super-rested person in this bolt-up-right, stiffly splendid manner, may do for royalty, but to the ordinary plain man there is something a little melodramatic and showy about it. He likes to think he is more accomplished; that as a super-rested person, he is capable of being more limberly refreshed.

And while one would not want to point out to a Spanish Princess that perhaps it would be more elegant to be spirited in some more subtle way than sitting on a piano stool and being a ramrod of refreshment all the time, one still does like to believe one's spine does not need to be treated like some splendid piece of china, one has to sit just so with, never tip with, and never lean with, all one's life.

But I will say this for the Spanish Princess. The probabilities are that she has, and knows she has a more comfortable, more luxurious way of sitting—in spite of her looks—and more economical for the trouble, than most people.

She has the main idea—as far as she gets—of sitting comfortably. Nine American men and women out of ten today if they would begin tomorrow doing as she does, if they would get the first rudiments of enjoying and using a back to sit with, would soon be seen, week after week, month after month—millions of them all across this country—lining up and sitting on piano stools with her.

There wouldn't be, in time, piano stools enough to go around. The edges of chairs everywhere would be seen being used in houses every day every night, all over this country from Maine to California.

I do not say I approve of it. It seems to me rather absurd. But it would be better than nothing. It would get people started.

If people cannot believe that going into a room and sitting on the edge of a chair is a luxury after one has once learned the new substantial joy of resting one's self lightly on one's own back instead of hunting around for one from Grand Rapids, Michigan, all any-

one can say is—let them try it, try it a single month. Let them stop slumping to rest, and try sitting up to rest for four weeks. The plain brute matter of fact they would come up against is (any, dog, cat, woodchuck, squirrel or lion knows it) that the easiest way to sit down, is to sit up.

V

REHEARSALS IN A MORRIS CHAIR

The average American business man in middle life, who is naturally and legitimately tired in the evening, quite naturally says that what he sits in an easy chair for is to rest his back.

So do I. But I have found that the thing for me to do in an easy chair to rest my back the most, is to lean back in it in such a way as not to slump it but to stretch it.

I have not a word to say against leaning back. One can lean back in an easy chair as well as anywhere else. But in the first stage of learning how to sit up—when one is still learning to sit up even in a straight position—remembering to keep one's upper back where it belongs when in a leaning position, has difficulties.

In learning how to sit down, everything turns on making one's self remember, and of course, the positions which keep one reminded the most, are the ones to cultivate at first.

Until they have got the idea and the idea

has set, the only really safe place for many people is a saddle horse, or a joggly seat, a piano stool or the edge of a chair.

When I first got far enough along in sitting, to know when I succeeded and when I failed, and really enjoyed and preferred sitting as I should, I found the saddle horse more comfortable than the Morris chair, because the horse kept me reminded of what I wanted to do. If at any moment I stopped remembering, the horse took me and threw me where I would. I was practically compelled, on a saddle horse, to put my head forward and up and widen and heighten my back in order to hold on. I had to sit balanced on a horse in order to sit there at all.

In a Morris chair a man lets the chair do the balancing and the chair gets the benefit of it. He doesn't.

It was in the third stage when I had passed the horse or joggly-seat stage, and the piano-stool stage, and was beginning to enjoy sitting in the new and balanced way, that I discovered the edge of a chair.

I had never dreamed what a comfort the edge of a chair was!

At first, of course, it must be admitted, it was a mere intellectual comfort. It was not long before sitting on the edge of a chair

had become the surest and easiest way I knew of making almost any chair restful.

There is nothing to do on the edge of a chair but balance. One's very self-indulgence keeps one reminded.

Gradually one's own back in its new position becomes so much more comfortable than any mere back belonging to a mere chair can be, that one finds trying to use very much more of a chair (at least while one is learning) than the edge, seems self-sacrificing.

When it is one's back one has been sitting on—one's own balanced back—and one deliberately lets it go and with a dreadful sinking feeling slumps into the upholstery of a common American easy chair, one feels—one feels at once as if one had given up something—as if one offered one's chair to a lady.

One has let one's back go—what one knows how to sit with and enjoys sitting with—and one naturally misses it.

VI

PARLORS AND BACKS

The easy chairs are all right. The trouble is with the people. Their backs are only educated enough to sit on stools and Windsors. Until education and self-discipline set in again, one almost feels as if easy chairs, as young people enter a room, ought to have placards on them, "Hints and Helps to Spinelessness."

The first thing a man does when he is born is to insist on being born with his back, and the last thing he does when he dies is to stop his heart—let go of life with his back.

The handle of a man's soul is his back, the one place where the spirit takes hold in one thought and one act, of the whole material content of a human being.

This fact would seem to give great simplicity—an absolute, beautiful and almost terrible singleness—to the means a man may employ, if he wants to, for self-education and self-command, and the command and understanding of others.

I am sure it would be hard to overempha-

size it in its bearing upon all the problems of the human being today: The core of a man is his back.

This is why I do not mind admitting that a modern parlor, when I see certain types of young people being daily exposed to it, worries me. I catch myself going about with a kind of guilty, queer, old-uncle feeling toward all these flocks of young folks we have today, these hosts of lollers committing themselves all unsuspecting to these great yawning monsters of upholstery one sees in every home—all these huge innocent-looking back-removers, these human-apple-corers taking them up—all the dear young people—into their capacious maws, softly, slowly unconcernedly chewing their backs up for them before their own eyes—rolling them off into soft and early graves. . . .

VII

LEARNING TO LOUNGE

The best and most reasonable purpose a man can have in sitting in an easy chair, is that the easy chair is the most convenient place in most houses for learning to lie down.

The critical time in learning to lie down—the time of perfecting one's new control for unconscious use during the night—comes when one is learning to lean.

One comes home at night, has one's dinner, gears the vital forces of the body for the evening, sits down, leans back in one's easy chair, and throws the body into neutral.

When one is leaning one has the body geared to slip either way in a second, into lying down on the one hand or sitting up on the other.

If one makes a miss in one's new control in lying in bed, one can slip back where one is surer of one's self and can get righted sitting.

As in learning to run a car, the main practice in self-control comes in changing the gears, the easy chair becomes in the evening

in a certain stage of learning, the most universal means of getting hold of one's machine for the night that there is.

When one has got to the point where, without violating one's new control, one can sit down and let one's self go—lean back on a chair—lying down and leaning the whole body on a bed naturally and rapidly follows.

All that has to be looked out for in the easy chair is that while a man is leaning himself, he shall keep balancing himself besides. He does this by leaning with one part of his back while he is still balancing with the other. He uses the lower part of the back to lean with and the upper part to balance with.

The balance which he catches and enjoys when he sits erect, he continues when he leans. In other words, in a half-lying-down position, he still keeps on stretching, balancing and exhilarating his spine.

His spine, from the way he leans with it, while he is leaning, rests, stretches, and relieves itself, and thus rests, stretches, and relieves his whole body.

Leaning in an easy chair thus becomes at last an act of skill—as manly an art as running.

(I would have liked to insert at the end of this chapter the full details and directions for the sit-down exercise to which these adventures in sitting down are leading up. But it would be unfair to the reader for reasons that would be quite obvious after he had once mastered the new exercise to lay before him the full details of it at just this point. Until we have gone over together a little more of the background of the idea of the exercise, the directions would be almost surely subject to misconstruction.

If I followed my impulse and yielded to the reader's natural desire to go right on up to the front and go into action, and proceeded to give him full details, to have him before my eyes sitting down with a fierce and holy perfection in the very next chapter, all at once, I would really be arranging for him a delay, or at least a detour in getting where he wants.)

III

LYING DOWN EFFICIENTLY

I

LEARNING TO LIE DOWN

LEARNING to lie down naturally divides itself off into two parts—night practice and day practice.

Day practice consists in so carrying out the principle of correct lying, deliberately and consciously, while walking and sitting all day, that one starts up one's subconscious instinct of holding one's self right and wants to practice it unconsciously all night.

It seems a little like going out around at first, but the quick business short-cut in learning to lie down and sleep, is sitting. One strikes through to the lying down and to sleep by discovering, working out, and practicing the main idea in it while one sits. One need not wait to lie down and sleep. One need not take a minute out of one's day's work to practice consciously or unconsciously during the day, on lying down. One accumulates one's idea of lying down all day. One sits one's self to sleep.

One also walks one's self to sleep. One does not need to follow a man home to bed,

watch him lie down and fall asleep, to know how he does it.

One can tell what a man is like when he is asleep, usually, in public—almost anywhere or any time—by watching the way he walks.

II

LEARNING TO LIE DOWN: THE WIGGLE TEST

The faults people have come to have in lying down cannot be observed very readily by watching people lie down.

People who are making mistakes in lying down not only do not make their mistakes in public where one can see them, but the lying down mistakes themselves—even if they were made where one could study them—are more subtle and difficult to observe, to trace out and study than the same mistakes are, when made by people sitting or walking.

In coming to what seems to me to be the fundamental principle of lying down, I have received the most help from people who wiggle and from watching the way they sit down. They were easy to pick out. People who walk prominently sit down prominently.

People who wiggle do not ever really stop. They are merely more subtle about it in lying than they are in walking and in sitting. The facilities for wiggling when one is sitting down, are not great but the impulse hangs over, and it is always the people who have what are called sway-backs—whose backs

seem in a kind of vague way to be trying as well as they can to follow and imitate their feet—who have the most marked difficulties in learning to lie down.

People who wiggle and thump, sog when they sit, lie down inefficiently, and sleep slowly and heavily.

If I can put down in so many words just what it is people are doing wrong when they wiggle, I shall be saying what they are doing wrong when they lie down.

Perhaps the true way to state what happens and bring out the fundamental principle that is violated is this.

People who wiggle are usually people—if one studies them—who wiggle because instead of letting their backs carry them they are trying to carry their backs. They wiggle because—if one must say it—they are trying to carry their backs with their stomachs. As this is naturally a very difficult thing to do, even for a very active man, of course they wiggle. They have to.

The same people sit on their stomachs usually. They try to do everything with them. One does not know why, but there seems to be something about their stomachs apparently that interests them more.

By sitting on a stomach, one means that

the stomach, not being duly protected and held up by the back, is where it does not belong, and that being just where it is when one sits down, there is nothing else one can do with it. Not being able to sit down beside it, one sits down on it, of course. The poor thing is there.

The real problem most people have in sitting down, is what to do with the stomach. This problem of not sitting on the stomach is one which has to be met by the angular and spare people—though they are quite unconscious of it—quite as much as by the rotund and pendulous.

The difficulties which, very often, the over-accumulated man has in knowing what to do with his stomach may be more obvious. One is always seeing a fleshy man either sitting on it deliberately or sitting on the edge of a chair with it hung carefully out in front a little out of his way, so that he won't have to. As a matter of fact very lean men—the majority of lean men who suffer from dyspepsia—have much more trouble than fleshy men, though, of course, they do not have to be so confiding about it. Sitting on the stomach (or if not sitting on it, at least leaning forward on it to rest the back) has come in America to be a common national evil.

It is not that people like it—sitting on their stomachs in this way—they find it extremely uncomfortable. Most people who do it do not even know they are doing it—or if they do, they do not know what else they can do—and there are very few who do not have, at best, a very vague loose idea about a stomach anyway—how it should look, how it should feel, and where it should be kept.

One need not go into details but the gist of the truth put in a word is, that a stomach should look convex and that it should feel concave. It should feel and hourly keep feeling as if it was making itself, all the while, pleasantly and gratefully less and less convex. This constant inward insistent pressure is the pressure of life. The moment it lets up, even in a slight degree, the stomach is distended, falls into a place where it is in the way, and what with all the other disagreeable things that are happening to it inside—and being sat on besides—there is difficulty.

The way the difficulty should be met is by knowing just where a stomach should be kept and keeping it there.

By lengthening and heightening the back and increasing the room for it, it would soon

habitually be drawn in and pulled out of the way, and sitting down would cease to be, as it is for many people—for most people—an elaborate preparation all day for lying down inefficiently.

There are various substitutes people who use their stomachs to sit on, try.

Sometimes they try crowding them out of the way. Doctors in extreme cases shore them up with a brace which presses the abdomen in and up from beneath. This brace is kept in position by a strap going around the curve in the lower back. This method not only takes the power of the natural spring in the abdomen away, but by bearing down on the back in its weakest place, increases at the same time the already dangerous curve in the back, shortens the spine and the life of the patient at the same time.

Having the power of doing this—of sitting down with their own backs and of holding their abdomens in place with their own backs—deliberately taken away from them by substituting a brace, sitting down week by week and year by year becomes naturally more tiring to them, and the brace they wear, of course, being a dead thing instead of a living muscle, has to be pulled tighter and tighter.

They have to rest after sitting down,

longer and longer every day until they lie down altogether.

Other people try wearing belts. Others pretend to wear belts. Men who want to go without waistcoats, but who are sensitive and made uncomfortable and given a bearing-down sensation, compromise by wearing belts and suspenders both. But suspenders, while as far as they go, they may help in the right direction, are merely relieving and not removing the difficulty.

Other people use hymn books. These people do it usually, not as being desperate, but as being more comfortable, and as relieving them from the responsibility, of course, of having to support themselves with their backs any more than can be helped.

The hymn book by giving pressure and stimulus to the upper spine, helps it to draw in and draw up the stomach, and to pull in the curve in the back, and so gives relief. And, of course, I am not finding fault with it. One might as well get all one can out of a hymn book, and I certainly would use one when in church if I had to. But it is a mistake to have to. The only thorough way to deal with the situation—for which, of course, pew builders are partly to blame—is to take a specific back-coördinating exercise.

If before going to church one takes this drill, and gets one's back coördinated and happy, one feels like using one's hymn book to praise God with or to sing with, rather than as a support for one's less spiritual nature.

Anything that accentuates or fronts up in one's mind the conception of sitting as a pleasurable delicate balancing feat, as a balancing comfort, or even as a poise-amusement—helps one to sit. Then the sitting efficiently makes one prefer lying efficiently.

The way one would sit down with a water jar on one's head—if one could imagine one's self trying to do it—would bring one as near to getting the right conception and the right intention in sitting down, as one could probably get.

One would begin not by making an effort, but by being clear-headed.

In sitting down with a jar on one's head, the first thing one would have to do, would be not to confuse what one sits down on, with what one sits down with. What one sits down with is the upper back. What one sits down on—one reminds one's self—is the lower end of the back! And, of course, the precise thing one has to do when one sits

down with a jar, is to see that the jar is on one end and not on the other.

These are all matters, not of effort, but of clearheadedness.

The one way one can sit down accurately and without the jar on the wrong end, is by reducing the curve in the middle of the back and letting the upper part of one's back go up to where it is in a sufficiently high position to balance the whole body.

The inaccuracy of aim and calculation with which people sit down, is merely a symptom of the whole body's being thrown out of true. Nearly everything they do with the body—especially everything they do inside—is as inaccurate as their sitting.

So it is not too much to say that the most dignified, the most spiritual and intellectual thing for most people to do next in this world, is to learn how to sit down.

One hesitates at first to recommend it to people, because one feels they may think it is not interesting. But anybody can see that learning how to sit down is absorbingly interesting and entertaining to a baby, and I do not believe there is a grown man living, who when he once sees he has not really learned how to sit down—once sees that as long as he is a mere thumper, going around with his

seat thumping at things, endangering his own life as well as other peoples' furniture—will not find learning how to sit down as interesting as a baby does.

Sitting down accurately, sitting down with a fleck, aiming one's body at a chair, is quite as interesting and intelligent a feat, or game of skill and quite as much fun as aiming a tennis ball, and far more important and useful, because a man cannot aim the whole outside of his body at anything, without automatically and by the same act, aiming everything inside his body with it, and having it go just where it belongs.

III

LEARNING TO LIE DOWN: THE HANG TEST

Like learning to sit and to walk, learning to lie down consists in studying out—each man for himself, with his own kinesthesia—lying down accurately; that is, lying in the most easy, the most precisely balanced position for him for all the organs of his body.

As when one is in bed one reaches six feet across, and only reaches one foot up, it is obviously a more delicate and subtle test of one's inner sense of balancing—of one's sense of coördination—knowing whether one is plumb or not when one is being six feet wide and one foot high, as easily and as accurately as one would know, standing up six feet in the air.

Learning to balance one's self lying down therefore, necessarily turns on one's doing one's main practice when one is wide awake and when one is standing up on one's feet, getting the idea, getting the sense of it when one is in one's full senses.

The whole subject of lying down has to be treated as a wide awake subject. One has to stand up to understand it.

It would be a mistake for me to rush my reader to bed too soon.

It is an uncoördinating and tiring thing to walk until one knows how to stand, and it is dangerous to try to sit down until one knows how to sit up; and lying down—at least until one has waked up one's spine, has learned to make one's spine put one's stomach up carefully for the night just where it belongs—is the most dangerous of all.

It is true that a baby learns to lie down first. But a baby has no bad habits.

A full-grown man changing or taking back a life habit of lying down, naturally reverses the baby's order and goes backward; has to begin his new habit of balance in more active and conscious motions like sitting and walking.

Then, possibly as lying down is much harder (has to be done, that is, for the most part when one is actually asleep) he can hope to learn to lie down—even lie down asleep—without losing his balance.

One does not exactly want to say in so many words that what a man has to do in learning to lie down is to learn to aim his body at a bed. But this is what it practically amounts to. He has to get the hang of lying down. And the most direct and quick short-

cut that can be used to get the hang of lying down is to heap up in one's self such a habit of being coördinated during the day that one finds it hard to stop at night. So I am dwelling a minute longer on tests and methods, or ways one can use to get so used during the day to one's hang in walking, and to one's hang in sitting, that when night comes, one naturally goes up to one's chamber, takes off one's clothes quietly, and as a matter of course, hangs one's self up to sleep.

As before—I am telling my own story in this regard, and the tests that work with me.

The next test for accurate and efficient lying down to be considered is the test of the feet.

IV

PEOPLE WHO THUMP

I found myself being told the other day in the public prints by a prominent manufacturer that I take on the average eight thousand steps a day, and that every one of these steps is a shock to my system, and that I really ought to wear little rubber cushions on my heels.

As the prominent manufacturer (it was in the back pages of a magazine) had spent seven or eight thousand dollars that very day on it—on telling me among other people about the condition I was in—I could not but be impressed with the fact that probably, if he had spent so much money on it, he really must have looked the matter up and it must be so.

I am not saying it is or it isn't so, at this point. I am merely saying that if it is so, I am going to face it and see to it that it is not so any longer.

When it is deliberately and publicly pointed out to me at great expense in this way, that I am really at best after all, a rather weak and foolish person in getting hold of myself,

that I haven't even the brains to put my foot 'down on the ground, that I have been too lazy after fifty years' practice to learn to walk, I hate to confess to myself that I must give up—actually give up being a regular human being and be pieced out for the last twenty years of my life with slabs of gum pasted on my heels.

Other people can speak for themselves; but I must say, for one, I do hate to admit I have come to it. I have always expected to give out in places. I am reconciled in time, of course, to being obliged to admit false teeth; but, after all, as things are now, false teeth do not show and are comparatively private. I would hate to wear false teeth on my feet. I would almost rather be seen going about in public with crutches than with cushions on my heels. If one wears a crutch, anyone can see that there is some sense in it, that something has happened to one, something one could not help. But wearing rubber heels is too meek. It is like making a confession—a double public confession anyone can see walking behind one—that one has given up on one's self, given up on one's mind, that one's mind has given out before it even gets to one's feet.

I did not know it at the time, but in my

own personal process of learning to lie down the thing that really gave me my start was a kind of stupid, not particularly thoughtful, obstinacy about my feet and my brains, a kind of righteous wrath at being called names for the way I walked. I spent several months in talking back to an advertisement. If I hadn't the brains to make my feet reach the ground—reach the ground just precisely, to a hundredth of an inch of where I want them to, if I was not clever enough to walk without jarring everything inside me out of place and without shaking a house—I proposed to know why. I might not know much, perhaps, in this mortal life, but I did not propose to be cheated, before I died, out of knowing at least how to walk. I proposed to have for my life with my body a certain easy conscious habitual feeling of being the one in command. I would step as lightly as a rooster! Who should stop me? I would try, in walking, to come up to a cat.

I cut the advertisement out of the magazine, put it up where I could see it, made myself read it in every possible way, up and down, sideways, backward and forward and between the lines—but especially backward. If the man who paid out the eight thousand dollars on making me think,—who gave me

my start—could only begin to know what he has done for me,—and all for eight thousand dollars—he would be filled, like Wordsworth with the primrose at the river's brim, with thoughts too deep for words.

I need not at this time go into details and tell the entire story of what the advertisement did for me, and of my learning to lie down, but the final bottom principle of the experience may be said to be this: The more one does to make it necessary—even painfully necessary—to calculate one's step and measure and true one's body as one walks, the faster one learns to lie down.

When a grown man is actually engaged like a baby in not putting his foot down accurately, in making a vague moofy guess at where the floor is, the last thing, or most dangerous thing for him to do—is to do anything that will remove the jar, the one thing he has left that reminds him of what he is letting himself be like. The thing for a man to do when he finds that he puts his foot down with a jar is not to clap on a rubber heel and forget what is the matter with him. The thing to do is to put on a steel heel—a harder heel than ever. Then thump and think.

What the jar is doing its best to tell him,

and to keep telling him, is that he is walking out of plumb, breathing and digesting crooked, and that his lungs and stomach and his other organs, are all trying to do what they do for him, out of true.

It would be better for him, from the point of view of getting his own attention to the condition he is in, to wear little torpedoes on his heels than bits of rubber, fooling him into not knowing as he goes about, that he is only a half-awake man and that the spring in him has gone dead.

Rubber heels should be worn by people who have given up on walking, by the old, or by the contentedly decrepit of all ages, or by beginners in learning to walk.

My own personal feeling is that as by far the great majority of the American people are beginners, twenty pairs of rubber heels should be sold where one is being sold today.

If I had my way—if I had a free hand in getting a hundred million people to believe me and save words—I would have taken around and distributed tomorrow morning to every home in the country, a hundred million pairs of rubber heels.

Everybody but babies should wear them a week, just to get the idea, the bare idea, of how they ought to feel when they walk.

V

PEOPLE WITH LIGHT HEADS AND LIGHT FEET

At twelve o'clock noon every day, everybody from Maine to California should change his shoes, put on a pair without rubber heels and all the afternoon and evening try to see, as he was walking without rubber heels, how close he could come to imitating the feeling he had in the morning, when he was walking with them.

Same the next day and the next day and the next until the difference between the morning and the afternoon feeling in walking, didn't amount to anything.

This would be, perhaps, the quickest way to give a nation an idea, have a hundred million people all have a chance to have the rather wonderful and unexpected idea of what a light step is like. They could see what they are missing—have the rubber-heel feeling taught to them by paying for it all the morning, and then in the afternoon, making for nothing with their old shoes as good an imitation of it as they can, by practicing at not thumping themselves, by balancing or

aiming the body at the ground—by not allowing themselves any thump for a rubber heel to take up.

This would be, perhaps, the quickest way to give a nation an idea of what it would be really like to walk. With a national demonstration to people with rubber heels they can buy, we would soon see a whole people getting back to the free rubber heels they were born with.

In the course of a few years while many millions more rubber heels would be used than now, they would be used not as invalid supports, as reliefs, as one-inch crutches. What the rubber heels would be used for, would be to express an ideal—a new or ideal physical experience which could not possibly be expressed in words. People can get the ideal by having it pasted on their very heels, where every step reminds them of it and they cannot miss it. Then when they have once experienced the ideal—had it tipped off to them on their heels and worked up to them through their legs—they will know how they are going to feel when they take the trouble not to thump when they walk.

But, of course, the main purpose in learning to walk with a light step goes far deeper than a mere pleasure and ease in walking.

Most people only walk an hour or so a day and they sit ten and lie down and sleep eight.

If a man passes the test of carrying his head lightly and his feet lightly in walking he may then be said to be ready to learn how to do the most difficult, most accomplished and most rewarding exercise a man ever takes in this world—that of lying down to sleep.

What walking with a light step does is to pull the body together to sit and wind it up to sleep.

Walking thus becomes a kind of coördination-thermometer. At least this has been my experience. Walking lightly has given me a standard to use and depend on from day to day, and I have got into the habit of consulting my head—the degree of lightness in my head and my feet as I walk—as a register of just how much I know I am about.

And the more I know what I am about from head to foot in the day, the less I need to know in the night.

.

What I have to say about lying down efficiently and sleeping fast, may be best summed up, perhaps, in the following highly moral, but beautiful lines composed for the occasion, which I am thinking of offering to Mr. Cecil

Sharpe to be sung in chorus by the people who are dancing those old quaint, hearty, bouncing morris dances.

The idea would be to have people dance it out illustratively, singing in nice loud thumpy voices, all the while

OH! OH! OH! OH! MY!

A Warning to the Young

An Ode

Oh! Oh! Oh! My!
Walk with a wiggle!
Walk with a thump!
Sag when you sit!
Lie down with a bump!
Sleep with a slump!
Oh! Oh! Oh, my! Bye, bye!
Sleep slow, sleep long!
Sleep boringly, sleep snoringly!
Sleep heavily, not cleverly!
Like a stone in the bud!
Like a turtle in mud!
Whoever you are
Sleep with a thud!
Wake with a jar!
Out of your beds!
Motes in your eyes!
Beams in your heads!
To breakfast and business hie you!
Coffee and paper by you!
Eat like a lump!
Sit in a hump!
Then clump, clump, clump,

Take the air
 To your business chair . . .
 Clump, clump
 Ump, ump
Bump!

OH! OH! OH! MY!!

What I have wanted to do in these chapters is to take this poetry—real poetry though it is—and before I get through, one line after the other, make sense of it.

I can assure the reader that in spite of the music, it is not all in the air, and that there is stern stuffing in it.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Of course, as the reader already knows, I am doing my best in this book to dramatize if I can, and even make catching if I can, the idea of inhibition, of stopping to think, of conceiving and visualizing an action before the action as a means of hurrying it.

But I do not think it is fair for an author, just because he is in the middle of his own book, to take advantage of people, and if there happen to be any of my readers who have just a common plain every-day American hankering in their souls not to Sleep Fast and not to get the Attention of Their

Own Bodies in the next few chapters, and want to swing on to the details of the Lie-down Exercise and begin lying down efficiently at once, whether they can sleep fast or not, I might as well confide to them that they will find the Lie-Down Exercise (God helping them and at their own risk) on page 175 in the Drill Book, just after the chapters they propose to skip on Getting the Attention of the Body.

IV

SLEEPING FAST

THE TRUTH ABOUT SLEEP

THERE is a certain stage of deliciousness in sleep—a degree and kind of sleep a man would almost knock a man down for waking him up out of—a sleep a man would all but die for, go to hell for, to have ten minutes longer.

Nearly everybody gets his touch now and then of this bottomless immemorial sleep—sleep from out of the depths of childhood and eternity.

When a man gets this, he touches bottom, he gets the truth about sleep.

A man who really believes or acts as if he believed that sleep like this is not for him, who lets himself slip into the habit of looking upon sleep as a mere relief, a kind of dump of forgetfulness he puts himself out on for the night, is not only not being spirited, he is not even being matter of fact and practical. He is off on his facts about himself and about human nature and what makes human nature work and what brings things successfully to pass.

How is he going to be able in the thick of the fight of his life, to get what he wants out of a day—even know what it is he wants to get out of a day, to say nothing of getting it—if he cannot get as much out of a night as a baby does?

In a civilization in which men are racing with machines, there is nothing more business-like a man ever does, than sleep. Everything else a man does well, comes out of his sleep. He comes out of his sleep himself.

II

A RELIGION FOR GOING TO BED

I want to sleep fast. I believe that if a man works out rightly the position he sits and walks and lives in, avoids strains, waste motions, keeps the right position, runs his machine without friction all day, his machine won't need to be put up for repairs eight or nine hours every night. He will get as much sleep in six or seven hours as he does now in nine.

Why should a man take out thirty solid years in his life, and spend them in bed, when twenty will do as well?

Highly coördinated—that is highly concentrated—work in the day gives highly concentrated sleep in the night.

With two extra hours a day saved out of every night by sleeping fast, and two hours saved out of every day by doing more work in less time, I would be able, whatever kind of man my job requires me to be, to save out and to spend twelve years of my life scattered along four hours a day, in being any kind of man I like.

Hardly a day passes but I fall to thinking of it, of what it would mean to me, if I could read the books I put off and am too tired to read, if I could know the men I cannot save time to know, and who cannot save time to know me.

It would be a new kind of a world, if one could live in it like this. One could know one's children too, even.

Seventy years with two hours a day added

365

2

730 hours saved a year

730 a year

70 years

51,100 hours in a life.

With one's two hours extra a day one could add fifty-one thousand hours to one's life. One could sit up from ten to twelve—every night.

One-twelfth of seventy years would be saved.

One would save six solid years out of one's days and six solid years out of one's nights.

One could take this extra time scattered along, of course, getting one's life-job over with quicker, or one could take the whole

extra twelve years together, add it on to the end of a life just as one would have to let it go. It would be quite a spell—twelve years—put it all in a lump—all extra and at the end of a life.

Most busy men who live with their brains make a mistake in making a rule of exercising hard and sleeping long as a means of keeping fit.

A better rule to give one's self would be: Exercise softly and sleep fast. Take the essence of exercise.

The essence of exercise is a balance of motion in rest—coördination.

The essence of sleep is the balance of rest in motion—coördination.

The thing to work for is one's power of coördination, one's power of putting meaning and order into what one's mind does with one's body.

If I learn—by the way I sit and walk—to put in more meaning per hour when I am awake; if I do what I do with more accuracy, more sense, with less lost motion and friction, I will need less sleep.

Living faster must logically involve sleeping faster. If one can put nine hours' work into seven, one can put nine hours' sleep into seven.

Instead of going to bed at ten and having nine hours of soggy sleep presented to me, I propose to take seven; sit up to twelve and get up as early as I like. I always like a 'day before anybody has used it and after everybody else has got through with it. The best parts of days are the ends of them. Almost any man's house is heaven, when everybody else has gone to bed at night, and before anybody has got up.

III

JUST WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE SLEEPS FAST

In a very difficult and very strange position—what looks like an entirely horizontal position—one hangs one's self up to sleep; that is to say, one does the precise thing with one's body that one does standing up, and that one does in walking, and that one does in sitting up.

In sitting one pulls the stomach up to where one is not sitting on it. In walking one pulls it up to where one is not walking around it, and in standing, to where one is not leaning on it. In the same way by lengthening one's spine one pulls the stomach up to where one stops leaning on it and being supported by it—hangs it where it hangs easily—and lets the body rest.

As one sits accurately and steps lightly, one hangs one's self lightly up to sleep and sleeps lightly.

In sleeping lightly as in running lightly, one gets on faster.

A great many persons go through life wondering if there will ever come a time be-

fore they die when they can possibly get caught up in their sleep. They think they will have to take a year off, to want to get up in the morning.

But this is not necessary. To want to get up early tomorrow morning, step lightly to-day.

Run lightly to run fast. Lie down lightly to sleep fast.

It is obvious that if one takes a position of holding one's self for an entire night in which one has to support one's self instead of hanging one's self, one has to sleep heavily and slowly.

As one has so much more to attend to in sleeping, it naturally takes several hours longer to attend to it.

People who have to plug and thump along all day—who even when they are wide awake plug along—and who cannot keep up to themselves all 'day can hardly hope to catch up in the night.

It takes them too long, the way they do it. A good sleep is the body's lightest way of running—of *running*. And if people will walk in their sleep they must expect to take extra time for sleeping.

Sleep is the shrewdest, the most incredibly competent, the most nicely calculated feat of

sheer efficiency and economy of which a human being is capable.

A man's sleep is his climax of being, his triumph of light-running, of supreme effortlessness, perfected motion and coördination. Considered from the point of view of what he expends for what he gets, a man's great moments in this mortal life as a created being, are when he is asleep.

IV

THE ART OF STEERING ONE'S SLEEP THE ART OF LIKING TO GET UP

We had a waitress once who was with us when I was for the most part away—but I always remember her.

Two things stood out about her. One was the way she kept my breakfast waiting because she was sleepy in the morning, and the other was the way she went through a door. The sleepiness in the morning I took as an injury, her going through a door as an amusement. No alarm clock this side of a cathedral bell seemed to make any impression on ——. And when I sat down at the table and greeted her I was not cheerful. Then I would watch her trying to go through a door. I do not know what it was. It just interested me to see her begin aiming at the door eight feet away and try. That was all. And it made me feel better.

If anyone had asked me to carry my interest further in these two facts about ——, asked me if I saw any connection between her aim at a door and her getting up in the morning, I would not have seen any, at the time.

But it was not many days after I began taking my lie-down exercises when it all came over me that her hacking off the edges of a door with her hips when she went through, and her sleeping past her alarm clock, were one and the same thing, and that one logically and inevitably came out of the other.

One cannot overemphasize or overclarify this conception in one's mind, in learning the art of sleeping fast. People who lose their balance even when they are conscious and erect, lose their balance when they lie down. Their organs being clumsy, out of balance, slightly out of shape and slightly mislaid when they are awake, they are clumsy with them when they sleep.

They naturally have to lie down on their backs longer and sleep longer to get properly stretched.

Perhaps I need not say in bringing to a close this chapter on balancing and sleep, that sleeping enough longer to stretch one's back and get one's balance seems to me a very superficial and slovenly way to learn to sleep.

Merely sleeping more as a substitute for knowing how to sleep, is an evasion.

The thing one wants to do to hit off one's balance for sleep in the night, is to try aiming at floors, doors and chairs all day. Stopping

to keep one's balance—not letting the habit of losing one's balance heap up during the day to be dealt with at night—is the only way that is thorough and that really works.

The first thing that happened to me when I had really learned all over again to walk with light feet, and sit down with my own back instead of the back of a chair, and to lie down with my back balanced at night, was that I wanted to get up at four instead of seven in the morning.

Of course, I didn't. I just lay there and enjoyed feeling how fine it was to be able to, and to like to, and to not have to.

V

JUST WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE SLEEPS SLOW
DIRECTIONS FOR NOT LETTING IT
HAPPEN

There are two directions for this, the first of which the reader has just had.

First. To balance or coördinate the body when lying down unconscious and asleep all night, practice balancing the body when standing, walking or sitting, when conscious all day.

Second. Lie awake when necessary and practice balancing the body at night. A man should have an exercise he takes when he wakes up or before he falls asleep. He should take a little exercise in lying down and arranging his back, in putting his stomach where it belongs and where it is safe for him to allow it to be while he is gone off to sleep.

If I were asked to give one or two brief rules by which a man could come at an exercise of this kind and be sure it was right, they would be:

- First.* Beg, borrow or supply a baby. (One cannot refer people to a baby too often in a book like this.) Everything there is to learn about getting into position for sleeping fast can be learned from a baby lying awake on his back in his crib.
- Second.* Watch the baby for pointers, try his ideas out and keep coming back.

In taking a specific drill, when one wakes up in the night, for sleeping fast, the main thing one wants to do is to imitate in bed the light step one has when one walks down the street. One wants to come as near as one can get to a light step when one is lying down.

The best imitation, of course, of a light step lying down is the baby's.

One can be more sedate about it than the baby is. One need not be showy in carrying out the idea, perhaps, but the whole secret of getting out of lying down and sleeping every inch there is in it, is the baby's way of lying on his back and kicking in his crib.

A baby begins his walking—begins getting his leg-control—in bed. He rehearses flat on his back the way he is going to walk. And the main idea he keeps rehearsing of course—an idea grown people quite generally

overlook—is the control of the legs by the back.

The only difference in the relation of the legs to the back in walking and lying down, is that in walking one lifts the legs and feet along and in lying down one lifts them up. If one is taking the drill in winter it answers every purpose to lift them three or four inches under the bedclothes. When the control becomes perfect, one can do it invisibly. All one has to do is keep remembering that it is what one does above the hip which determines the lightness and perfection of the control below it. It is really almost, in the feeling of it, in the conception of it, as one does it, as if one were lifting the legs with Thought—with the head, with the lever that comes out of the head.

With the abdomen and the legs properly subordinated to the back—to the lever that comes out of the head—one soon finds one's self feeling the same new incredible lightness in the feet and the legs as one lifts them in bed that one felt in walking. The feet and the legs lift themselves and the bedclothes together as if neither of them were there.

With the back in full control after due practice, effort becomes not only unnecessary but impossible. One could not make an effort

if one tried. One might as well try, when one is floating, to float harder.

Of course, if one becomes effortless with one's legs, way down to one's feet, one's whole body in between becomes effortless, becomes so coördinated, so under single control, that with a flash of a single desire one falls asleep, and sleeping with everything just where it belongs, and without friction, one sleeps fast.

Effort is the attempt of Nature to overcome in a man the false position in which he makes himself do a thing. If he does a thing in a wrong position Nature makes him work.

It seems a pity to work lying down, to get one's self all tired out by the way one sleeps, but people do it—hundreds of millions of them are doing it every night—because they are not sufficiently informed about themselves to know what it means.

The minute a man finds he is making an effort in doing something as simple as sitting down or walking or going to sleep, he should face what Nature is trying to do with him. Effort in what a man is doing is Nature's way of calling him a fool to his face, of criticising him all over his body, and trying to get his attention.

If a man feels tired when he walks, has to

try to sit, scrooges himself up to sleep, he should at once feel personally accused, should make himself see just what he is about and act like a gentleman and a scholar.

What the gentleman and the scholar finds is this.

Lying down for an efficient sleep, when one once analyzes it and sees precisely what one is about, consists in imitating in a full-length and horizontal fashion, one's new way of walking, leaning and sitting.

What one undertakes to do is to come as near as one can get to walking in bed, to sitting on a piano stool in bed, and to leaning back in a chair in bed. On a piano stool one sits up to rest. In an easy chair one leans up to rest and, of course, when one rests efficiently—rests one's utmost in lying down—one is lying up!

One's back is up to sleep.

The relation, that is the coördination, the perfect connecting up of the back, the abdomen and the feet, is the same in all three of the great necessary standard positions of life.

VI

THE SLEEPLESS BOGEY

I had always been profoundly impressed, when I lay awake in the night, with how important it was for me not to.

I had come to have, in common with several million other people, what I can only call as I look back on it now, a desperate and unbridled feeling about sleep and about lying awake in the night.

The first night after I had got the knack of lying down and had begun lying still, and doing my balance in lying as well as I could do it in sitting, I lay awake in sheer astonishment and delight. I looked the Sleep Bogey straight in the eye and dropped him forever. At first—for the first few nights after I got out from under my wild uncontrolled conscientiousness about lying awake—I lay awake almost on purpose for the novelty, freedom and fling of the thing.

I did not keep it up, but I lie awake now any time I like.

Being careful to stop sleeping at times is as important as to stop eating.

The idea that sleep is necessarily the most

healthful and restful exercise a man can take, appears to be a mistake. Sleeping may be, and often is, a disease in itself.

A heavy stupor or collapsed sleep in the middle of the day after eating, should often be stopped, and the cause of the sleep—probably the over-relaxed tension of the abdominal organs resulting in autointoxication and poisoning—should be removed.

Instead of going to sleep and relaxing and reducing still more, the necessary tension of the intestine, one should quietly take the proper exercise or the proper position, until the abdominal organs recover enough tension, to master their contents instead of being mastered by them. Then the sleep one has been yielding to as being healthful—like any other disease—passes away.

Being abnormally asleep is as bad as being abnormally awake.

If a man has a habit of dangerous and poisoned sleep from four in the morning on, he will find that waking himself up and waking the intestine up—even getting up at four and taking a walk—would tire him less than staying in his warm and proper bed, lying and struggling, and when the gases of imperfect combustion have pushed back even the stupendous muscle of the diaphragm it-

self, trying to push it down like the lid on a boiler head, by holding it in a little longer and a little further with breath!

Instead of holding down the lid with a breath, a man should wake up, should use his whole backbone to wake up his body enough to make it fit to sleep. This is managed best by seeing to it that one's mind is fully awake and then taking and keeping a position without necessarily leaving one's bed, which makes the backbone do its own natural mechanical work—putting the muscles and nerves concerned in place and automatically tensing the abdomen.

Then a man, having seen to it at last that his immortal soul is no longer an appendage or a sub-head under an Alimentary Canal, falls asleep.

Of course what one is really occupied in doing, in changing a habit of one's body, is changing a habit of one's mind. One is engaged in breaking through for one's self a new brain track toward the body.

The last stronghold of the subconscious which the new control has to take in a man is his eight hours of sleep.

The new control begins by inhibiting slowly the kind of sleep, that is, the kind of lying down, one has had before.

One has to begin by carrying the practice of balancing one has tried in standing, sitting and walking, all day, into bed and into the night.

After one has got along to a certain stage, one finds one's self lying awake in one's new control which one has learned. Before one knows it, one comes on the fact that lying wide awake in bed with one's new and more perfect control, rests one so much more than mere sleeping ever did, that in going off into the old complete unconsciousness one feels one is almost missing something! When one does drop into sleep at last, it is a new sleep. One modulates slowly out of the new lying awake, into the new lying asleep, and one sleeps as much in four hours as one did before in eight.

VII

THE FEELING TIRED FAKE

There are certain ideas which seem to be in good and regular standing and which most well men today seem to think they must have, which I do not feel that they or I should propose any longer—in a world as well-conceived as this—to be put off with.

The first idea is “killing time”—the idea that we must all expect mean sheepish between-times in our lives—vague purgatories in which we are supposed to wait in a kind of dull ache for something to be got over or for something to happen.

Killing time is as much a crime as killing anything, and is merely a less dignified kind of murder in which a man in a slow foolish and rather skulking way is killing himself.

The second idea, which is a close second to “killing time” is a homeopathic weak, safer-looking substitute for killing time—a kind of darn for it—called being tired.

Being tired, as originally planned by an efficient Creator, is a flawless thing, without discomfort, a deep, happy and as in children, a delicious thing.

When people say they are tired, if they are not enjoying it, they are not using correct English. They should say they are sick—that they are exhausted.

Being tired is meant to be a thing one looks forward to for itself, as one looks forward to one's meals, or as one looks forward to the feeling that follows a bath.

Being tired that goes past the point where one is enjoying it and enjoying everything about it—the way a drowsy child does—is, from the point of view of a highly organized man, a crude, gauche, uncoördinated proceeding for a real gentleman to be caught in. From the point of view of even quite plain simple people like Adam and Eve, or of any animal in good and regular standing in the Ark, being tired without enjoying it is, to tell the plain brute truth, a disreputable experience.

But the third and worst of these conventional ideas is second-rate sleep—the idea that a man of fifty cannot sleep as efficiently as a child—the idea millions of big strong serious men today seem to be willing to put up with, that deep deliciousness or luxury in sleep is a thing they are not supposed by a decently efficient Creator to have all of them, every night, all their lives—the idea

that sleep, deep penetrating and wonderful sleep, bathing every man, soul and body in infinity and swinging him back to the stars, is something that should be tucked off into a little strip of childhood or that one is supposed to get a chance at on Sunday mornings.

I cannot prove it, of course, but what I believe is this.

If for the next seven days the people of this world would sleep deliciously—would sleep fast and deep—would sleep up to the tops of their souls and down to their toes, they would get as much sleep done in an hour as they do now in a night. We would all see a new world in a week, a hundred thousand cities would wake like little children in the morning, nations would look in each other's faces. Great peoples would find themselves gazing at one another from the peak of Time with a strange surprise in their eyes. "Is that you?" Nations would say. "Where have we been?" a hundred million people will say to another hundred million people, "Why did we not know that this is what you were like?"

If Ireland could sleep for a week—wake up with a clear head in the morning saying what she wants—what is there she could not have?

The main reason that the average busy man in our civilization living under artificial conditions does not quit his three superstitions—the idea that he must expect to kill time, and must expect to put up, as a matter of course, with a second-class way of being tired, and with second-rate sleep, is that he allows the machines he lives with to make him mechanical-minded toward his physical life. He does not stop to think what he wants or what the intelligent means are, that a man who is running a race with machines can use for taking hold of himself, for knowing what the meat and bones in him are about and for getting the attention of a body.

PART TWO

Advertising One's Self to One's Self

- I. GETTING THE ATTENTION OF A BODY.
- II. FOUR DRILLS.
- III. GETTING THE ATTENTION OF A MIND.
- IV. GOING FORWARD TO NATURE.
- V. LOOKING UP THE OPEN ROAD.

I

GETTING THE ATTENTION OF A BODY

I

THE BODY AS A MACHINE WHERE TO TAKE HOLD FIRST TO GET ITS ATTENTION

HIGHLY-EDUCATED horses are not incapable of standing around on two legs.

Most of us have seen them doing it—politely and thoughtfully—on tubs, in circuses.

They can do it quite a little while, fairly well, but when they try to keep it up they find that their knees have been put on the wrong way, and that as their muscles and nerves are arranged apparently to hang from their spines instead of their abdomens, it is a tiresome strain on their stomachs.

Whatever else it is or is not, a living body is a machine. A horse is a horse machine and a man is a man machine, and mechanical laws have first to be considered.

The body of a horse would have to have all its muscles rehung and its whole nervous system rewired, to stand erect, and an erect man would have to be arranged all over, to go about on all fours. If a man is operating a machine which is built to operate in one

way and which will hurt him if he operates it in another; and if health consists in taking natural and right positions, what is the main principle, or the common principle, that runs apparently through all these right positions for a man?

The monkey and the man have the same general build, and the main difference between them is that for thousands of years the monkey, living a life in which he has to keep ready to spring, has bent his head and crouched more and more from age to age to get what he wanted, and that man, to get what he wanted from age to age, has stood more and more erect.

As it strains a monkey today to stand up straight, stretch his back, push in his stomach and hold up his head and do what a man does, it strains a man to do what a monkey does.

There is something about crouching that strains a man when he does it, and there is something when a man is letting himself strain, which makes him crouch.

It apparently works both ways.

In a day like ours in which men and women are not only competing with one another, but running every day for dear life, a race with machines, what civilization is suffering from

to the breaking point, is strain, and people are crouching to live.

The fact that most people we know—the strained people all about us—are not crouching perceptibly, have not taken more than an eighth of an inch off their spines as yet, is irrelevant. Taken as it always is off the upper end, the brain end, or determining end, an eighth of an inch taken off a man's spine is enough to throw away practically a third or a half of the good of the rest of it.

It is this last eighth of an inch—the erectness of the human spirit, the pride, the haughtiness, the quietness, the ease, the insouciance of his body—which has made man what he is. Man towers above all the animals because he keeps towering above himself. While he obviously has more faults than the animals and is always going about, like no one else in creation, sinning sins right and left, it is because he has a super-self ideal, lives with a daily lurking consciousness of something above and beyond, which keeps him fighting to be superior to himself, that he is what he is.

What a strained civilization does is to play havoc in man with his last eighth of an inch.

When the average man in the average mood today makes a little extra effort, he in-

sensibly bends or crouches to make it. The thing he sees baldly in the old man—the old man's tendency to bend—is a thing he is practicing, unless he looks out, nearly all the time himself. In the same way that a small boy with his first pen eagerly learning to write twists his tongue, the grown man when he makes a special effort of any kind, crouches both in mind and body to do it—like a cat about to spring.

He soon gets this habit and in old age he merely ossifies or statueizes it.

When the small boy is learning to write the first thing he does is to put his effort into the first inch of his fingers. Then into the whole fingers. Then into the hand. Then into the fore-arm. Then into the whole arm. Finally, if he grows up and ever learns to write at all and expresses himself in his handwriting, he writes with his whole back, and people feel the whole man behind every word.

When the boy is slaving away trying to put the whole supreme effort into the first inch of his fingers, some indefinable primeval instinct in him, makes him stick out his tongue and work his mouth. The fingers are trying to do, of course, what a whole back, backed up by a whole boy ought to do, and naturally the boy's tongue (representing nobly all his

small insides) in sheer sympathy, joins in the struggle.


This tendency the boy has, to entirely overlook the long reach and sweep of his back, cramp his fingers, screw up his mouth, brace his stomach, stick out his tongue and curl up his toes to write, makes him tired and old at forty. He curls up his toes because he is curling up his spine, shortening his body, and crouching to work his fingers. He gets over, of course, sticking out his tongue and curling up his toes to make an effort, but the curling up his spine to try—the crouching to succeed follows him.

Then everything follows. Competition and civilization see to it that it is necessary to try. The only way he knows to try is to crouch.

Then The Tired Business Man, The Twenty-Nine, Specialists, Purgatories, and Sanatariums and Muldoons.

T. B. M. Theaters. T. B. M. Books.
T. B. M. Movies. T. B. M. Country.

The small boy who sticks out his tongue, who grows up, gets dignified, holds his tongue in and cramps his back, is what is the matter with civilization. Thousands of people who are crouching their backs, are trying to save the world from other people who are crouch-



ing their backs, and are crouching their backs to do it.

Crouching is Bolshevik.

One almost comes to feel that people who are trying to save the world with their nerves instead of their backbones deserve the world they have.

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If one were to imagine a machine which has the power of pinching its own wheels—doing it very slightly, of course, so that they still go, but go hard—one would be imagining something very like the human body.

The body is a machine with a mind attached or, in many persons, semi-attached.

This mind connected with the machine has the power by its own moodiness of shortening the pistons, of slacking the leather belting, of twisting and subtly mislaying the organs and of disturbing the electric wiring, and of making the wheels in the machine, at any time the mind takes a notion, less round than they ought to be, so that the machine runs hard, and takes a third more gas to run.

If people allow their minds to shrink and warp their bodies and are practically only alive enough to go to bed at noon, because their vital organs are out of true and running

with friction, what can they do to stop it, be alive in an afternoon or possibly even an evening?

They can look up the facts about themselves in a clear-cut and simple way. The position of mechanical advantage for the organs of the body is an easily ascertainable definite fact and when ascertained can be acted on definitely at once.

There is something very substantial and satisfying about reducing health to its lowest terms, about understanding the body and dealing with the body as a machine. One avoids psychic folderol. One knows that one knows that the body—whatever else it is or is not—is at least a machine.

II

IN AND UP

There are two fundamental principles in the human body as a machine. One of those is Pinch and the other is Pull.

This chapter is about the first.

The simplest and most rudimentary principle of power in biology seems to be squeezing.

The oyster gets the power for its simple digestive apparatus in this way.


The first tentative idea Nature seems to have had in a living body, is to put the vital organs together in an elastic sac. Then to pinch them together into a position of mechanical advantage, until they do their work.

What is the matter with the average baby when he is having a stomach ache, is that the little button the dear child is supplied with, is not buttoned up tight enough. His elastic around the middle which is supposed to squeeze his food together, get the good out of it and press its chemicals into his blood, is stretched to a point where it is not at a mechanical advantage. The pull in the

baby's elastic is only good up to a certain point. Then it comparatively goes dead and pulls faintly. So he yowls.

When he grows up, though his art form for expressing what is happening to him changes, what happens is not far different.

The abdominal cavity may be practically regarded as a rubber bag—a small retort furnished with an automatic living leather spring which keeps it pulled together just the right size to do its work. Its work consists in holding together, pressing and burning out vital fluids from food and distributing them to the body.



If for any reason this resilient, self-pulled-together rubber bag stops pulling itself together enough and the bag becomes distended and the contents become so loosely placed they can not quite burn freely, gas is formed from the imperfect combustion and causes still more distention. More distention causes still more imperfect combustion, a vicious circle is set up and a man soon finds himself the victim—however unconscious he at first may be—of chronic indigestion.

What a man who has chronic indigestion has, is what might be called a sprung-stomach. He is trying to do what has to be done, with a spring that has been stretched

until it has lost its power to spring. He is going about all the while, trying to hold himself together in perfect seriousness, with a kind of human dead elastic.

The majority of the good plodding people one sees about, who would scout the idea of being ill, but who are always going about their duties without due surplus or enthusiasm, if they would take three inches off their measure in front just below the hips, and put the three inches around on their lower ribs at the back, would scarcely know themselves in six months, and certainly would not be known by their friends or by their employers.

One thing to do is to stop eating or to eat very little so that imperfect combustion and less poisonous gas will be produced by the sprung stomach. Another is to take drugs and neutralize the poison the sprung-stomach will produce. Another is to take squirming exercises and directly and violently exercise the stomach-spring and make it spring in by main strength even where it doesn't belong. The other is to stop the cause — stop the sprung-stomach's being sprung—lift the weakened stomach-spring up, put it where it belongs and where its spring has a chance to work.

There are very few men whose backs sup-

port their stomachs as they should. Entirely irrespective of being consciously ill or well, or of being lean or fat, if a man goes too far in letting his stomach curve out, it is because he is going too far in letting his back curve in. The way for a man to reduce the noble outer curve in front, is to take up the slack in his back. There are very few stomachs that are not trying to do their work in a lower position and a larger size than they can do it, and that are not steadily and increasingly weakening the spring, in this way.

The original good intention of the straight-front corset, of giving a stream-line inward to the body, if really carried out by a man himself, man-fashion, by using his own backbone, by using the one great natural main-spring of the body, and the natural stays or small springs ranged along on it for the express purpose of snapping a whole man's whole being into place, and of pinching his stomach—of taking firm hold of the poor old lackadaisical familiar formlessness he lets hang in front of him, and keeping it buttoned up tight enough to work—would make a new man out of anybody.

The idea which I have tried to express in this chapter has been summed up and expressed a great deal better, perhaps, by a

classic poet in a crooked little rhyme we were all brought up on (very much crookeder) :

Hi duddle duddle!
The Duck in the puddle
The Cow jumped over the quack
The little boy laughed to see such sport
—To see such a terrible knack.
Like a bowlful of jilly
His tummy went silly
And his belly ran away with his back!

In other words the moral of this chapter (which might have been called “Pinching In In Front”) is Pulling Up Behind.

The question is—how to do it.

III

UP AND IN

When the question was put two thousand years ago in a sermon "What man can by taking thought, add a cubit to his stature?" if a certain man I know, who has a very short but hopeful body and a very long head, had been there, he would probably have stayed afterwards a little, watched his chance for a quiet word, and would have said that while he was not sure about a cubit, or sure just how much adding a cubit by taking thought would come to, he was sure that by taking thought, he could do an inch.

Everybody does half an inch every night without thinking at all, and there are very few people who after a little practice could not manage three-eighths of an inch by taking thought, and by taking still more thought over a period of months, they could most of them manage quite a little more.

As a man, any minute he likes as he walks, is able to take a longer step, he should be able any minute he likes to take a longer back.

It is but left to consider just what taking a

longer back is, and just where one should look among the common experiences of life for one's idea of how to do it.

If by lying flat in bed and stretching themselves eight hours, people in general, already are getting up half an inch taller in the morning, it would seem to be reasonable to start out with the idea that any setting-up exercise a man may plan for stretching the lever he lives with, all day, should be modeled on what happens to him in bed. It would seem to be obvious that this night-arrangement for getting the position of mechanical advantage must be sound, and that the best possible setting-up exercise any man could hope to work out for himself for daylight use, would be a daylight imitation of it or at least of the main idea in it.

The imitation does not need to be literal.

What one wants is a daylight imitation, not of lying down, but of the result of lying down—something more salubrious than going to bed in a conversation would be—something convenient and quick—something, in fact, like the exercise in this book, by which a man can subtly rearrange or readjust at will the contents of his being, hang them all up where they belong in a minute instead of taking all night.

The all-night arrangement for getting the position of mechanical advantage is, of course, the pleasant one, and the one on which one would regularly rely, but if one is interrupted or behind in one's sleep-schedule and still has to go to the office and proposes to have some little setting-up device—some kind of cocktail of motion, by which in a few seconds, in any position one happened to be, one could promptly hang one's whole being up on its peg, make one's self feel any time of day as if one had just got up in the morning—say for the next thirty minutes, what would it be like?

If there is such a setting-up exercise as this for a man, all ready and waiting for him, perhaps my reader will forgive me for believing as I do in this book, wild horses could not drag a man away from learning it and from putting it forward as the first thing in his life.

There are two main principles upon which such a setting-up exercise for imitating on a small scale what happens in a night should be based.

First.—A man's back should be up. Even if it costs effort, the back should be up.

Second.—The less effort there is, the better it comes up and the longer it stays.

Looking at the body as a biological machine there are two main principles on which it works. It has two springs. Living consists in keeping them wound up. One spring is the spring that springs in, which belongs in the abdomen and the other is the great central mainspring, which springs out or springs up and which is located in the back.

The first thing to be remembered in any sound setting-up exercise a man may plan is that the back is a spring and that it wants to come up.

IV

HOW TO TAKE A LONGER BACK

Everyone knows how to do it, has done it thousands of times in his life. There is nothing complicated or difficult about doing it. Thousands of people are going to do it or have already done it in one way or the other many times while reading this book.

Anybody who can yawn, or who knows his own yawn, when he is having one, can do it.

One knows when one is yawning and stretching, one does not really stretch one's self. One lets one's self stretch. When a man stands up, shakes himself, rearranges himself and yawns after a long sitting, opens his mouth, opens up and spreads out his arms, and opens up and spreads out his upper back, he does not strictly pull his back up. He feels it is being done and yields to it. He frees the spring he was made with, and the spring goes up.

A man finds he is naturally refreshed by not having to hold the spring down any longer, and being released from the strain, he begins at once, now that he thinks of it, letting himself at last be as tall as he likes.

All exercise by a man in a normal state should be conceived as following up the essential spirit and method of the yawn—as an equilibrium between tension and relaxation, luxurious, effortless, and full at one and the same time, like the yawn, of pleasurable excitement and rest.

This principle of letting one's self out, of precise equilibrium between motion and rest, applies equally to walking, sitting and lying down—to all of the three positions of life in proportion as they are perfected.

The idea of walking is the yawning idea carried further, a letting out along a road of the stretch in the legs and the latent stretch in the back. The yawn proper is a mere opening formality. What one does in walking is to carry the idea—the real thought in a yawn—out. When normal men living as men do today in a held-in civilization, take a walk, what they are doing is not taking exercise, pushing their bodies around or making their bodies work. They are letting their bodies out. What it is one really likes about starting out on a hike is that—civilization or no civilization—one is letting one's spring at last, let go. One is letting one's back—the held-down main-spring of being—slip up into place.

When a man takes what is called rather inaccurately a setting-up exercise, he may have a set-up feeling at the end of it, but he should not feel so set up over it. He did not do it. A spring is a spring. The way one works it, is to release it. The commanding thing to do is to release it. This power to give quietly the command for the release in one's body is what is called coördination or health.

Whatever else a man's exercise for keeping fit may be, it should be some form of movement which will be conceived and carried out, not as an effort or as work, but like all the natural appetites—like talking, like laughing, like eating, like sex, like breathing, yawning and stretching—as relief.

What a man finally comes to in the whole matter of exercise, if he pursues and finds the position of mechanical advantage and lives with it from day to day, is not merely a new point of view about exercise itself, but a whole new outlook on life.

There is a sense in which the very word setting-up exercise, in our modern civilization, is what is the matter with us and should be dropped out of our vocabularies and our thoughts.

Taking a setting-up exercise is better than nothing, but it is a mistake.

One should take a letting-up exercise. One should stop preventing the back from coming up when it wants to. One should let one's self up.

Invisible Exercise is an exercise in not doing something, a drill in not holding the back down,

Let every man have a sign up over his desk.

STOP PREVENTING YOUR BACK FROM
COMING UP!
LET YOURSELF UP!

From the point of view of equilibrium and perfected strength and control, setting one's self up—yanking the back up commandingly where it belongs—is weak. The main thing one wants an exercise for, is the power to do the opposite—the power to let up, to free one's back from the subtle unconscious cramp or strain that goes with one's concentrated mind for the day. Then the back, like any other spring that has been waiting to let go, goes up of itself.

V

BEING AS TALL AS ONE LIKES

The way a group of men who have just risen from a dinner together, will almost as a matter of course avoid taking the easy chairs, or probably any chairs at all and will walk to the window or the fire, stretch their backs, unconsciously heighten themselves and spread their legs, is one of scores of little things men do without knowing, which reveal the naturalness of the impulse I propose people should make the most of and follow up. It is natural to everybody—the instinct to balance or rather rebalance after eating—hang the new dinner up on the backbone—put it where it belongs to digest it.

To take the spirit and the technique of what the group of men standing after dinner are unconsciously doing to themselves, and carry it further into a specific exercise or drill any man can use, when he finds he is running over the line in his work, or at his desk, and needs to recover the position of mechanical advantage, is what all exercise should be conceived to do.

When one has been giving orders to one's body in this way awhile one soon begins noticing how popular in Nature and in the world about one these orders seem to be, and how natural and instinctive they are.

The rooster when he crows, puts his head forward and up to widen and heighten his back, and says "ah!"

The baby in his crib lying on his back kicking his legs, and cooing, and looking at his pink toes in the air is taking essentially the same exercise in a lie-down position, reducing the curve in his back, and playing up his feet.

The horse—the more spirited type of horse—in the act of giving the extra arch to his neck, is doing the same thing, reducing the sag or curve in his spine, by relaxing his neck and then putting his head forward and up.

It comes upon one in many ways, one is adding to one's stature.

One knows it from the sense of being on top of one's self and of doing everything from above. One knows it partly from mirrors that seem to grow low and from looking into the faces of old friends.

Another thing one knows it by, is that one enjoys digesting a dinner instead of merely

enjoying eating it. One is keen for one's work right after luncheon because one's whole body is having a lark with the luncheon. And one sits up late with scorn. One gets up early for breakfast with joy.

All sorts of queer things happen when a man, day after day, is letting himself be as tall as he likes.

But best of all, perhaps, is the conscious and immediate sense of power, the sense all day that all the factors of health are in one's own hands and under the control of one motion of one's own mind and body.

It is a serene matter-of-fact orderly idea, taking the position of mechanical advantage. One does not need to keep looking one's self up in an encyclopedia or on page 769 in a Diet Book or to be sure to consult just the right psycho-analyst for one's complexes for the day. One can believe in and come to understand, perhaps, all these grave wise-sounding depths of knowledge, but one can take one's time for it, and in the meantime, with one's own backbone located conveniently not an inch away—the very spigot of being—one turns one's health on at will.

VI

SUMMARY

I have expressed, in this book in the form of the story of how I came to see and believe them, the main principles of my conception of the human body as a machine.

I would like, before giving the drill, to sum these principles up and place them together in their order as one comes out of the other.

First.—The human body looked at simply and clearly and reduced to its lowest terms is a machine.

Second.—It is a machine so delicately constructed and constructed of such materials that the man who lives with it can pinch its wheels.

The mind connected with the machine has the power by its own moodiness, of shortening the pistons, of overheating or warping the wheels in the machine and at any time it takes a notion, making the wheels less round than they ought to be so that the machine runs hard and takes a third more gas to run.

Third.—If the man that lives in the ma-

chine keeps from letting his mind overheat it or warp it, the machine turns out for him his utmost volume of vitality. If he lets his mind overheat or warp the wheels and then expects the wheels he is keeping from being round, to run smoothly, he must expect trouble soon. He finds that his vitality instead of being turned on for him is being turned off for him before his own eyes, by the very machine that was created to produce it.

Fourth.—The first thing a man, therefore, has to look out for in the matter of health control, is to see to it that his mind understands just what kind of a machine it is being allowed to live with, and just where it likes to be taken hold of and have its attention got, if it is to work naturally and easily—that is, if it is to work in what is known among machines as the position of mechanical advantage.

Fifth.—The back is the place for the mind to take hold of, to get all at once the attention of the whole body and to give every organ in the body its position of mechanical advantage.

Sixth.—The more of its full length a man can be persuaded, in spite of civilization and chairs, to allow his back to have, the more

coördinated or super-coördinated he can become and the more invisibly and frictionlessly his machine will run.

Seventh.—The back is a natural spring and wants to be long and the main thing a man has to learn to do is to stop his mind in time and keep it from cramping and straining his neck so that his back can get up, where it wants to.

Eighth.—The way for a man to control his vitality and to live all the while with the organs of his body in the habitual position of power and mechanical advantage, is to learn to make his mind give specific orders to the neck to relax,—get itself out of the way—so that the head can go forward and up and the back spring back into place.

Ninth.—The way to learn to give these orders is to train one's mind in inhibition, in the power to stop giving the old and wrong orders and then give the right ones.

Tenth.—One should take a specific order-drill to do this—a conscious setting-up exercise for one's mind in learning to give orders to the body. One should drill one's mind in the power to stop giving the wrong orders and to substitute the right ones until one has done them so often and likes them so much that they become a habit.

If the reader wants a little bird's-eye view of what is supposed to have happened to him so far in this book he will find it in these ten points.

II

FOUR DRILLS

I

INTRODUCING THE DRILLS

THE average busy man who wants to learn to hit off his own balance or line of least resistance, and have it to live with every day, would like to arrange if he could, a program something like this:

(1) Take a special drill in which promptly and efficiently and once for all, one coaches one's self in balancing.

(2) Pass the balancing in the drill on into balancing in everything.

(3) Drop the drill as a drill altogether.

The object of this preliminary or temporary drill should be to bring out and accentuate in a man's mind the essential spiritual and mechanical principle that underlies and makes effective any and all exercise, if only the exercise of sitting up in a chair or lying down in a bed. Any exercise a man may choose or have occasion to take, from golf and medicine ball and calisthenics to walking upstairs, should be conceived while it is being taken on the principle of hitting off a balance, of finding the line of least resistance.

The kind of drill that one does not have to keep up forever or which is of such a nature that it modulates naturally into one's daily life so that without taking any time off and without knowing it, one is practically drilling all the time, would seem to be the best.

In the pages that follow I am bringing forward a few directions for the particular form of setting-up exercise I have used in coaching myself and in hitting off my own balance. In one modified form or another it's main principle may prove useful to others.

But every man, of course, must be his own coach.

The art of finding one's own control, of freeing the neck and learning to balance one's body on itself as one learns to balance it on a bicycle, is obviously an intimate and personal achievement. No one in a book like this or otherwise, can teach another man's self-control for him any more than he can keep his balance on his bicycle for him.

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The reader will notice that the great main principle that runs through each of the following drills is the heaping up of the power of inhibition in it—the main practical means

of all self-control. One has to keep saying **No** in it with each motion one orders from the body, to keep the body effortless and keep it along the line of least resistance. And, yet, with all its effortlessness the physical or mechanical change in the body and in the position of the organs of the body is very great.

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At first until the habit of giving the fundamental orders in Invisible Exercise was established and perfected I took the exercises that follow, twenty minutes at a time—possibly an hour in all during a day—and in the rudimentary and visible form which follows, but I practice the ideas in the drills now and get my results with them now, in two minutes—practice them invisibly and without anyone's knowing it, and in any position, sitting, walking, standing or lying down, and without interrupting work. One practices any time one happens to think of it—in a street car or walking in the street, or waiting for a train, or sitting at one's desk—any time one has the impulse or the thought, one yields to it naturally and gratefully, as one would to a yawn or a smoke.

After one's first success in one's drills in

conscious control, there is a stage in which one finds one's self liking to take them in short bits of time many times a day. Then a few. Finally, one begins taking them as a position, a balance of tension. They become subconscious and one is taking them without knowing it, all the while, even in one's sleep.

II

THE LIE-DOWN DRILL

Before one has learned to make one's Invisible Exercise invisible, one takes the exercise quite visibly and begins with the Lie-Down exercise, the directions for which I give in this chapter. The others—sitting down, standing and walking follow.

THE LIE-DOWN DRILL

Take two newspapers for a mattress and spread them on the floor.

Take two books for a pillow and put them under your head.

Lie flat on your back full length with the undersides of your knees resting (as nearly as possible) against the floor.

Notice as you lie in this supposedly flat position of your body, the little low arch your lower back makes above the floor. See if you feel the floor at all at any point with your lower back and at what points and about how far apart. See if you can get your whole hand underneath this curve. See if—

right next to it—you can get two. Then you know how long your curve is.

See how high it is. See if it is half an inch high by putting one finger in under. Then two if you can, one on top of the other. Have a friend try putting his fingers in as he can do it at better advantage.

Object of the lie-down drill—a few minutes a day every day, which you are about to take—is to reduce this low arch, this quite useless and rather dangerous fancy bridge your back makes above the floor.

Having once put it into your mind that what your exercise is for is to reduce this curve in your back to what it ought to be so that you can make your back longer and wider, take the exercise without bothering about your back any more. (The reduction of the curve will come in due time slowly, inevitably, automatically and by a mechanical process of itself, if you take the exercise.) Except in young people the actual change in the height of the bridge will be slight, of course, but the change in the man himself in due time—in the way he pulls his body together in front and pulls it up behind—in the way he holds himself, carries himself and in the way he feels will be great.

Having determined the object of your

orders you go on to your orders. You say these orders over at first slowly, without doing anything about them. What you are supposed to be doing in saying them, is to commit them to memory, know what you mean by them, and aim your mind with them.

WHEN I AM READY I RELAX MY NECK IN ORDER TO LET MY HEAD GO UP AND IN ORDER TO LET MY BACK WIDEN AND LENGTHEN.

Having said this as you lie on the floor with your head on the pillow of books, roll your head with as great lightness as possible from right to left and from left to right on the books. Before you begin ordering yourself to relax your neck, you want to be sure you know what relaxing a neck is like. You want to know when you are thinking it is being relaxed, if it is really being relaxed. To make sure of this, after rolling your head yourself, have a friend take your head in his hands and lift it off the books for you (some friend you trust who won't try to be funny and take advantage of you), resign your head to your friend as if it were not your head at all, and let him turn it up and turn it down and from side to side—let him even give your head a gentle little toss, now in one way

and now in another, catching the head as it falls—until the neck you hold it with becomes a genuine honest relaxed neck.

If he keeps holding it and keeps moving it in a way which you cannot possibly guess, and therefore a way in which you cannot possibly stiffen up and help him, there is soon nothing left you can make out to do, except to give up helping him and let him place your head for you. As there is no way in which you can fool your friend about its being relaxed when it is not, you really relax it. Every time you are trying to fool yourself about its being relaxed when it is not, and stiffen your neck to help your friend, he catches you at it. He knows you know. You know he knows. So you soon let him do with your head as he will. You relax your neck for him to do it until at last you discover in your neck itself, what a relaxed neck is, and how much better—when you really get it—you like it than the other kind. You know when you get one—at least you know yours—and you have something to go by. In other words you have a definite working base for the ordering exercise you are about to take.

Having this base and knowing when you are on it and when you are off, you pass on

from giving yourself orders in the future tense. You begin giving orders in the present, begin giving the orders and filling the orders you give at the same time. You say to yourself I RELAX MY NECK, and then in response to your order, you give yourself as good an imitation as you can, of the lightness and ease you have just been having in it when you were rolling it or it was being rolled for you. Then you say your order over slowly once more, four times responding to it each time, by removing strain from the neck during a slight motion.

The slight motion is not necessary but it seems to help at first.

I RELAX MY NECK

I RELAX MY NECK

I RELAX MY NECK

I RELAX MY NECK

WITH MY NECK RELAXED I LET MY HEAD
GO UP

WITH MY NECK RELAXED I LET MY BACK
WIDEN AND LENGTHEN

One sees to it each time that one stops and inhibits, that one takes time to say No before one gives each order or makes a motion. What the No is for is to remind one—to give one a chance to put the ease into one's neck—before one gives the order to put the head up. Then one passes the ease on into the head

before one puts it up. Then one passes the ease on into the back and along the back into the whole body as one orders the stretching, the widening and the lengthening of the back.*

This is the first stage of the lie-down exercise. You repeat the order as just given four times, each time acting on the order with the utmost effortlessness, studying out new degrees each time of effortlessness, of frictionless motion, ferreting out and using your line of least resistance.

After you have given a group of four orders like the above once, wait half a minute and give it a second time. Then a third and a fourth.

This brings you to the end of your first stage of the Lie-Down Drill.

Then as you still lie on your back you go into the second stage. You say to yourself

* In "letting the head go up" the "up" in this lie-down position of course is not a vertical up, but a horizontal up. If one were standing or sitting the up would mean lengthening vertically, but in the horizontal position it means a horizontal lengthening of the body by seeing to it that the head is out of the way—by letting the head rest freely on the books, so that it stops interfering and does its part in letting the body be longer on the floor.

As you are reducing the curve in the back by letting it lie free on the floor and of its own weight reduce itself, you free your head. You let your head as it were lie up the books.

that you are going to use the new ease and lightness you feel in your neck and the new strength it gives you in your back, to lift your right leg from the floor. You start to do it and for a flash of a second say:

I RELAX MY NECK IN ORDER TO LET MY
HEAD GO FORWARD AND UP.

IN ORDER TO LENGTHEN AND WIDEN MY
BACK.

IN ORDER TO MAKE MY BACK HELP ME
LIFT MY LEG FROM THE FLOOR.

With this order going through your mind as the definite means of lifting your leg—of making your back help you lift it the way any baby's would—you begin very slowly moving the leg up, starting the motion at the knee, studying your line of least resistance with your knee relaxed, relaxing your neck and lengthening your back and letting your right leg be lifted by your back until your foot is up—until it is up any pleasant-feeling distance—any easy distance you like, from five to twenty inches from the floor.

Then crooking your knee and bringing your foot as far toward you as it naturally comes (with your leg in a wedge-shaped position) let your foot rest on the floor a second.

Then with your knee relaxed and with

your neck still more relaxed and with your back still more widening and lengthening, let your leg down to full length on the floor again.*

Repeat these motions with each leg four times—four orders each time each order delayed by a flash of relaxing your neck—and you have come to the end of the first lie-down exercise.

The end of the exercise consists in rising from flat on your back on the floor to standing erect on your feet without helping yourself to get up, without as much as putting a finger on the floor.†

* In starting the motion at the knee and in having your back do its part you are supposed—when you finally perfect the exercise—to be letting your knee float up—pulled up as it were by the ceiling—a quite new physical experience when the pupil gets relaxed and in command enough to let it come. Then as your knee comes up of itself you draw it slowly toward your head letting the foot hang and take care of itself.

† The reason for ending this exercise in this way is that if you sincerely use the nice new little stretch in you that comes from the exercise on the floor you will soon find in a rather unexpected way that you are able to stand up without the help of a finger.

On the other hand if you try to leave the nice new little stretch in you on the floor—if you propose to waste it—propose not to take it up with you where you can use it to sit with and walk with and stand with—so that you get the good of it all day, you will have to put your hands on the floor to help you up.

You will anyway probably at first, but from day to day as you take your drill and succeed with your relaxed stretch in unkrinkling the cramp in your neck and taking up the tuck in your back, the nearer you feel yourself to getting up without touching a finger—the nearer

When you begin trying to do this, you find that the best way to stretch yourself to your full height standing up, is to begin it by stretching yourself to your full height lying down.

To this end when you want to get up from the floor as a gentleman should or as any real lady should, without touching your hands, you lie still a second longer on the floor and give this order once more to yourself as you lie:

I RELAX MY NECK IN ORDER TO LET THE
CRAMP IN IT GET OUT OF THE WAY.
IN ORDER TO LET MY HEAD GO UP.
IN ORDER TO LET MY BACK WIDEN AND
LENGTHEN—IN ORDER TO HAVE MY
BACK TAKE HOLD OF MY LEGS AND
STAND ME UP.*

you will get to using your lie-down stretch to stand up with—that is the nearer you will get to standing up as easily as you lie down.

A man who cannot stand stretched as easily and gratefully as he lies down stretched, is not yet a grown-up man—cannot be said to be a self-controlled frictionless, coördinated man living his life on ball bearings—living his life as a well-bred man is supposed to live it, with a song or surplus in his blood that comes from having every day, a maximum of work, a feather-edge of effort.

* This getting up from the floor without the help of the hands may be regarded as optional. Many pupils who are enjoying the best benefits of Invisible Exercise fail to get it until long after everything else. The essential part of The Lie-Down Drill ends at the top of page 182.

III

THE SIT-DOWN DRILL

Before going on to give the orders for the Sit-Down Drill, there is one point on which it might save time to have an understanding.

Obviously if one is stopping a wrong unconscious habit one's mind has, of giving an order to the body, and substituting a right conscious habit of giving the order, one wants to begin one's exercise each time by making a clearing in one's mind, by seeing to it one knows just what it is, one is trying to do.

It is the growing consciousness of just what it is one is trying to do, while one is doing it, that makes one do it better.

A little experience I had one day, of my own, in the days when I was learning the sit-down exercise, may illustrate just what it is for. At least—it did for me—and it may for other people.

These Drill Notes are being written in my fish-house study on the rocks by my house on

a little island in Maine, twenty miles out to sea. I am sitting on three huge pulleys—block-pulleys taken from a wreck and my typewriter desk, taken from where it has tossed on the roof of the ocean many years, is a white buoy-keg.

Last summer before I moved for the season to my home in Maine, I sprained my arm and my morning's work—my usual amount of work on my typewriter—was being got through from day to day with much difficulty.

I made up my mind one Wednesday night when I went to bed that I would quit at the end of the week and Thursday morning (after a night on the boat) I found myself sitting on my pulley in Maine with my typewriter on my white buoy-keg, sailing away with words—sentences floating off the tips of my fingers on to the keys—as if my arms were not there!

My right arm was still a sprained and anxious arm, but in some mysterious way the whole responsibility my arms had felt the day before, for that typewriter had disappeared.

If the learner wants to know the object and gain the object quickly of the following sit-down exercise there is no better way to start than by seeing, following up and applying the significance of this single little experience—

namely: One morning I find myself thumping out pains and words on a machine and thinking I must give up and stop trying to run the machine at all and the next morning I find myself running the same machine as if a wire from the ceiling had been attached to me at the top of my back—as if some motor I was supposed to be connected up with had got hold of me, at least got hold of my arms and got hold of my legs and my fingers—made a kind of lever of my whole being and was running my typewriter for me.

Of course, all that had happened was that by sheer circumstance—by sheer inconvenience—I had been compelled by some pulleys and a white buoy-keg to sit in a suitable or strategic position to do my work.

My balance did my work for me. The pulleys I sat on, put me up so high and the keg spread my legs so far apart to get them around both sides of it, that my whole balance was changed and with my typewriter lying low before me, I attacked it at a great advantage and in a position of power from above.

I have merely stated the fact, so far, of what happened to me on the white buoy keg.

If I were to state the truth about it—the significance of the fact—what the fact means

to me, it would be this: I do not want to carry around with me all my life three pulleys and a white buoy-keg to make me sit as I should.

What I want—and this is what is being brought forward in this next exercise, is a substitute, a conscious unnoticeable convenient substitute—some way in which, by giving a simple order, any time I like, without turning a hair and without anybody's knowing it, I can do to myself and do for myself what was done to me and done for me one day in Maine by three pulleys and a white buoy-keg.

This is what a civilization—a sitting down civilization wants too.

There are three things in the way of self-control, a man does not want.

As a substitute for these three things I am proposing to him conscious control.


The three things he does not want are these.

He does not want bad unconscious control—the habit of giving without knowing it, wrong orders to the body.

He does not want good unconscious control. Good, unconscious control which one merely has the good luck to inherit, which one does not understand the details or the

means of, which one gets without knowing how one gets it, is an unsafe kind of control for a man to have as his sole dependence. Not knowing how he gets it, he does not have at command when he loses it, any conscious deliberate or sure way to get it back. Millions of the men who break down in middle life are worse off than even some chronic invalids, because good unconscious control is all they have.

The third kind of control a man does not want—for which conscious control should be substituted—is the control a man has by sitting in a special kind of chair or by using some guide or support, or wearing a brace.



What every man wants instead of these is some way of being sure of himself, some method by which he can so give conscious orders to his body that in anything he has to do, in any position he has to do it, in any time and any place, he can search out for himself his own line of least resistance.

This is what each man is supposed to be doing in studying for his own use the following directions for a practice-drill in sitting down. He is taking a short-cut to his own comfort, by studying his conscious orders for control. That is to say, he is getting the mastery once for all, of his means of health,

of his conscious orders for control, and then by sheer habit (except for emergencies) putting forever all thought of the means out of the way.

IV

SITTING ORDERS

Take a medium-height chair and sit on it as if it were a pivot. The most favoring thing to do usually is to sit on the edge of the chair. In any case see to it that neither the bottom of the chair nor the back gives you any guiding support. Sit in such a way that you have nothing but the balance you are giving your body yourself, to make you comfortable or to keep you from falling.

Take another chair, one that has a horizontal piece across the middle of the back which can be taken hold of from above by the hands.

Place this chair two feet in front of the other one.

Then sit quite still, delay a little and give yourself some reminding before you go on, remind yourself just where you are, precisely what you are there for, and precisely what you are going to do, and how you are going to do it. In other words recall yourself to yourself—see to it (as the suggestive old expression goes) that instead of being beside

yourself, you make a collection of yourself—before you proceed to go on. There is rather more of this collecting necessary and desirable and even agreeable—when one once learns how to do it—than a man would quite suppose at first.

What I used to put myself through at first, before I let myself begin my orders to my back was something like this. I give it merely as a sample. Usually a man comes to know himself best and can make up privately for his own use, some order of self-collecting and self-reminding, worded to suit his own case, but here is what might be called the spirit of what it would be like, in mine:

I sit on this chair.

I balance my body.

I even balance my mind.

I decide once for all—no matter how long it takes—I am not going to be prevented in what I am about to do, by my mind—by any little unconscious habit my mind may have toward my body—which it is going to try of course, if it can, to put over on me now—slide in in front of the new habit I prefer.

No fear.

No hurry.

No effort.

No mooning.

No tummy-tumming.

No mere rescuing or recovering.

Then I give the orders in the larger type lock-stitch fashion, one unfolding out of the other progressively.

I RELAX MY NECK (I make my mind stop cramping my neck).

I LET MY HEAD GO UP AND FORWARD * (That is to say, having got my neck unlocked and out of the way, my head which belongs further up and wants to go further up, is allowed to go). I do not make my head go up. I let it. I stop preventing it.

I LET MY BACK WIDEN AND LENGTHEN. (I free the spring in it that makes it want to stretch its natural length and its full strength. A back naturally prefers doing what it has to do, as a long lever rather than a short one. The second it is allowed to, it relieves itself. I do not make it lengthen. I let it. I stop preventing it.)

As you sit in your chair, lean forward when you have given these three orders. Lean forward as slightly as you can—invisibly. Then repeat the orders four times like this: I RELAX MY NECK IN ORDER TO LET MY HEAD GO UP AND FORWARD IN ORDER TO LET MY BACK WIDEN AND LENGTHEN IN ORDER TO LEAN FORWARD A QUARTER OF AN INCH. As you repeat this order each time poise forward the whole body a quarter of an inch. After giving this order the first time, give it three times with your body a quarter of an inch further forward each time until at the end of the four orders you are poised forward an inch.

* Invisibly forward—poised a shade of a line further than vertical.

Then give the four orders a second time—taking up a quarter of an inch each time—until you are poised forward two inches.

Then three inches.

Then four.

In your new position of leaning forward about four inches in your chair (your arms relaxed and your hands in your lap) lift your arms up and out as you would in yawning and stretching until they are above the top of the chair ahead.

Still giving orders to relax the neck and to let the head go forward and up, and the back widen and lengthen, swing the hands down slowly and let them alight on the top of the horizontal cross-piece in the middle of the back of the chair ahead. Take hold of the cross-piece lightly with fingers in front and the thumbs behind. See that your elbows are free and that your hands are precisely parallel, and holding on to the chair with your fingers just hard enough to keep the fingers from slipping, and still ordering your neck to relax and your head to go forward and up and your back to widen and lengthen, pull your hands apart and widen your back yourself. By pulling your hands apart you soon feel your back widening behind you, while you pull.

Repeat this poising forward quarter of an inch and pulling four times. Before the motion each time give the order "Quarter forward" and after you have relaxed your neck and made it, give yourself a receipt for it saying "First Quarter." Repeat in the same way.

Quarter forward.....Second Quarter

Quarter forward.....Third Quarter

Quarter forward.....Fourth Quarter.

Pull with incredible slightness—that is with a slightness you would not believe you are capable of—until you learn. This exercise in widening the back is an exercise in learning an ease. It is in learning the new ease that the new strength comes of itself. Do not indulge in the weakness which your mind will probably try to trick you into, if it can, the weakness of trying to be strong; keep giving the order to this end all the while, over and over to yourself. I RELAX MY NECK IN ORDER TO LET MY HEAD GO UP AND FORWARD (LET IT, NOT MAKE IT) and IN ORDER TO LET MY BACK WIDEN AND LENGTHEN.

After pulling your hands apart, as you lean forward to the chair in front, widening your back four times, spread your knees to rise. Then relax your neck to let your head go forward and up and widen and lengthen your back, and with your hips moving slowly forward and your knees slowly backward, rise and stand on your feet.

You have finished the sitting-down exercise. One of the best tests by which you can know you are right in it, is that in any position you are in, you are in neutral, you feel yourself in balance, forward and backward, up and down and can reverse in a flash at any time.

STANDING ORDERS

Take the lie-down exercise as given before, which you end standing on your feet.

Take the sit-down exercise as before, which you end standing on your feet.

Then proceed to give yourself the stand-up orders as follows;

I stand on my feet.

I balance my body.

I balance my mind.

No fear.

No hurry.

No effort.

No mooning.

No tummy-tumming.

No mere recovering.

(The Six Nos are to be used or omitted or partly omitted according to one's need or mood at the moment. After one finds oneself acting on them, of course, the acting on them alone is itself an order.)

I start and gather and aim my body to lean forward half an inch.

I say No; I stop to aim my body over again before I lean forward half an inch.

I relax my neck, let my head go up and

forward and let my back lengthen and widen to lean forward half an inch.

Now in this better position and holding the position lightly, effortlessly, I lean forward not half an inch but an eighth of an inch.

End of my first eighth of an inch forward.

Holding my eighth of an inch forward; I start and aim my body to lean forward a second eighth of an inch.

I say No; I stop to aim my body over again before I lean forward. Relaxing my neck and letting my head go up and forward and my back lengthen, I lean forward my second eighth of an inch.

End of second eighth.

Holding my two eighths of an inch forward I go through the same order for the third eighth.

End of third eighth.

I repeat the same orders for the fourth eighth.

End of half inch.

Standing and balancing this half inch forward I start and aim to rise on my toes. I say No, and before I go up on my toes, I relax my neck and put my head forward and up and lengthen my back to rise on my toes.

Holding this position of the neck and the head and the back and still leaning forward my half inch, I rise on my toes invisibly, inside my shoes and without the heels of my shoes leaving the floor.

I return to the floor and aim and start my body to rise on my toes again. I stop and say No, and relax my neck and put my head forward and up and lengthen my back to have my

lengthened back help me; I rise on my toes and stop, so that a sheet of blotting paper would barely go under my heels.

I return to the floor. I repeat the above orders to rise on my toes, making each rise with my neck and my back and checking each rise at eighth of an inch until, one-eighth of an inch at a time, with my neck relaxed and my back lengthened, and leaning forward my half inch, I am standing on tip-toe at last a little less high than I can, less high than I want to, and with a sense of power in reserve. I return to the floor and still leaning forward my half inch and still relaxing my neck and putting my head forward and up and still lengthening my back, I walk away.

The spirit or conception of this exercise—the way one feels as one takes it—is the feeling of yawning and stretching, the balance of tension and relaxation described in the Practice Notes later, in the chapter dealing with *The Tiptoe Yawn*.

On the technical side, of course, the gist of the exercise is the obduracy with which one says No before one fills the order for each motion, stops and makes it all over again with the neck relaxed still more, and the head forward and up still more, but taking one's new position with the No in the lead, with the inhibition in full control—taking it always a very little more than one has—and always very much less than one can, and usually much less than one wants to.

Standing on tiptoe like this, with the back lightly doing it for one, with toes effortless and with feet as if they were not there, and

apparently—so far as one can feel—no legs to speak of, is the quintessence of exercise.

This exercise alone taken five, ten or fifteen minutes in all in a day, puts all the gathering and coördinating forces of all other exercises combined, into one single colossal, almost motionless motion.

VI

INTRODUCING THE WALKING ORDERS

One of the things a man should arrange for first in any good walking exercise is the humbling of the hips, the placing before the mind of a very clear vivid conception of just what it is that is happening to him when he wiggles.

It needs to be remembered and reiterated by every man many times in getting his new control that the main difficulty that any setting-up exercise, whether it is for standing, sitting, walking or lying in bed, should be planned to meet, is the common tendency many men have all the time—and most men have now and then—to regard the stomach and put forward the stomach as the center of being.

If a man wiggles in walking it is because he is trying, as it were, to walk around his stomach.

The abdomen remains in charge of the whole undertaking—keeps complacently the center-front stage—and any little thing the back or the legs may do, or want to do about

one's walking, has to be done in any little ways that can be worked in around it. The back is curved in to accommodate it, to give it more overhang, and the hips, shoulders and feet sway around, of course, as best they can, in any way that is left over to them after the abdomen is through. Of course, a man who is going down the street trying to walk out around his stomach—generally both sides at once, or trying now on one side and now another—naturally lurches, loses his balance and has a heavy step. His stomach having been, instead of his spine, set up as his center of being, makes him go out around. This is the secret at one and the same time of his thump when he walks and of his sog when he sits.

The same person sleeps with a thud.

.

To sum up, one sees that the four common mistakes the average man makes whether in walking, standing, sitting or lying down, are one and the same mistake.

Walking around one's stomach.

Standing and leaning on it.

Sitting on it.

Lying down with it in the way—that is: going to bed and forgetting when one goes

to sleep to put it carefully up for the night—having the backbone draw it up high enough to work, draw it in, and draw it back where it will not be over-relaxed and distended and try to do its work out of place.

But it is while walking that this tendency of the abdomen to take charge of an immortal soul and calmly, publicly and with everybody looking on, walk off with it, is the most discoverable, likely to be of the most concern to a man and therefore, the most likely to be corrected.

VII

WALKING ORDERS

Take the lie-down exercise and sit.

Take the sitting exercise and stand.

Take the standing exercise and walk four steps.

Take the standing exercise four times and walk four steps after it each time.

Do the stepping precisely as you do the standing — poised invisibly forward — giving the order to your neck to relax and your head to go up and forward and your back to lengthen and widen.

After taking the exercise ending it with four steps, end it with eight. Then with sixteen.

Then gradually increase until you can balance yourself along sixteen hundred steps as perfectly as you can sixteen and can walk the length of a street as easily and as perfectly as you can walk across it.

If possible, in your first practicing, walk toward a full length mirror down a room and judge and revise your balancing by the way it looks as well as by the way it feels.

Each time as you do the four-step or eight-step balance toward the glass, balance your four or eight steps backward from the glass, taking your stand-up exercise at both ends of the trip.

In so far as practicable during the time

you are learning your new back-control and breaking in your new habit in walking, it is best not to walk at all except in very small allowances and when you do, do what you do perfectly. You will soon begin to enjoy your new coördination so much that it will take care of itself. You will come to look upon walking as a more active and congenial lying down—a yawning or stretching up of the back adapted to street use—a way, a rather polite and decorous way, of sleeping in public. A man I know who used to retire to his inner office in the middle of the day every day, and take a ten-minute siesta flat on his back, daily looks forward to his little nip of a walk after luncheon now, as to a noon-day nap.

A good thing to do when you are perfecting your control and find yourself slipping into the old habit and letting your coördination in the back run down, is to stop every block or half block before a show window, release your neck and wind up your back. Then balance yourself along another block. Then try two, then four, always keeping the back wound up ahead.

Many other simple, but conclusive ways of training one's new brain-track toward a coördinated walk—toward making a fixed habit

of walking as a quicker way to rest—might be mentioned, but I leave them to be dealt with at better advantage in the Handbook of Practice Notes.

But whatever form one's practice may take, the first thing and the important thing to arrange for and to keep in the forefront of one's mind is an accurate and conclusive conception as to just what walking is like.

What one comes to, when one looks into it and tries it out, is this:

Walking is not primarily a leg exercise.

One's walking is a falling along as it were, and what one's legs are for is to be there in time, of course, to catch one. Not much more. The main pleasure in walking lies above the hips and comes in freeing and stretching the back. One naturally and incidentally flourishes the legs in walking and even the arms, but the place to be tired first and most and the place to be refreshed first and most is the back.

A good many times a 'day during the first week I was practicing for my new and more perfect alignment in walking, in order to keep myself reminded I would stop in the middle of a block full head-on, catch myself up out of my old habitual superficial ener-

getic gait and before I took another step, hold myself to the point like this:

Walking is a balancing exercise toward somewhere. What I am attempting in this next block is a falling forward with delicacy and precision. What I have to do now for this next block is to remember that walking is as easy as falling down hill and catching myself—catching myself just the right thousandth of a second.

Of course, when a man gets so that he can remember an actual fact like this about himself—remember who he is and what he is like for one block, when he gets so that he can do one block of being his real self he soon finds he can do two more easily, three still more easily, and so on and so on, until he can be a real man a mile.

He comes to have and to expect to have a sense in walking, of being propelled, of being floated or wafted forward from behind.

This last statement is not an exaggeration. If the average machine-coddled, civilized, auto-ized, demotorized lift-lazy man wants to think that this way of saying what walking is like, is rhetorical, let him try it. All he has to do is to quit—say for four weeks—walking with dim distant difficult awkward

arrangements like legs and begin swinging himself off down the street with his back and his brains—the twenty-six brains in his back—and before his four weeks are up, I venture to say he will be accusing me of understatement.

No man who does this, who uses his top-brain to walk with and the twenty-six brains, or control-finders—the twenty-six adjusters and spirit-levels strung down his back—no man who makes himself remember—makes his twenty-six vertabræ remember who he is, will wonder at the statement that true walking consists in the feeling of being propelled.

The feeling of being propelled one has when one is walking like one's real self—the sense of upness and forwardness, of feeling taller and further forward than one can believe one really is—almost seems to come at first as from some mysterious force outside. All one has to do is to guide the thing and keep from flying.

When a man first has his new control in hand, comes down to New York, begins walking up The Avenue as if he owned it, he finds himself walking with a slight slanting sensation. He turns back to where he has been walking to see if The Avenue can really be as level as it looked. It's as if sidewalks

in New York when He came along tilted a little.

Streets bow before him.

He carries down-hill about with him wherever he goes.

VIII

SLIDING SCALE OF ORDERS

These four drills are not to be looked upon as permanent, as they stand. They are for the first stages of practice.

Gradually as one dramatizes each order, puts it into the motion, one grows more curt with it—sums it all up in a word—strips it almost down to the motion itself.

There are different degrees of stripping down the orders according to the precise condition, the momentary stage of needing to be reminded, a man is in.

If a man catches himself hurrying he needs to give the specific order not to hurry. And, of course, this is true of all the others.

For some of us when we are going through the series in an exercise, a good way to do is to give the orders in full panoply the first time. The rest of the four times as we repeat the motions, we include the orders in them without specifying them.

Of course, all the orders when one has once learned Invisible Exercise, funnel down into three.

Whether it is aiming one's body at a chair to sit down, or aiming one's body to give just the right swing to a bat to hit the ball, or to a billiard cue to hit the ball, or to a fountain pen to hit an idea,—whatever it is one is doing—one does it all over, gathers, focuses, funnels and aims all the forces of one's mind and body and gives these three orders:

I aim my body to do this.

I say No and relax my neck, let my head go up and forward and lengthen my back to aim to do it.

I do it.

And these three orders funnel into one.

I (with relaxed neck, head forward and up and back lengthened and widened) DO IT.

The subject, the verb and the object.

The parenthesis of inhibition, of delay with two hundred pages of this book whisked into it, is the Adverb.

IX

FIFTH DRILL

I have confided to the reader four drills—the orders for lying down, for sitting down, and the standing orders and walking orders.

The Fifth Drill consists in the reader's holding in for a little longer and not taking the others.

I have put the directions for learning the Exercises at this point in my book because I have wanted to be concrete and human in expressing my idea and have my reader feel I am placing before him something to do to understand it, as well as something to read.

Except for a few innocent illustrative flourishes by which the reader goes through the exercises as he turns the leaves—makes a kind of diagram as he reads, out of his own body—it is only fair to say that the drills as I have just traced them out are only intended to be taken as a bird's-eye view of the idea at this point, and that, of course, when the reader gets down to details, begins to learn the drills and really get the benefit of them, he is supposed to do it after reading

the rest of the book, and with the Practice Notes and the necessary illustrative and explanatory comments that should go with drills of this kind at hand.

The motions brought forward in these four exercises are brought forward as practical and definite means each man's mind can employ for getting a new control of his body.

But it is his mind that must employ these means.

So the one really important thing in taking these four drills is the reader's mind.

And if he will allow me to say it, I think he ought to exercise it more—a little more with this book—before he begins off-hand taking the drill in it.

It would not be fair to the reader if, instead of coming to the exercise as he should have a chance to, as I did, through the idea in it, he should be plumped into it without its meaning anything to him.

In any honest and effective idea one tries to carry out for the body the conception—what one is seeing and feeling when one is embodying it, what one means by it—is the main practical means one has for embodying it.

The most superficial and injurious aspect of exercise today is the way trainers and

other faithful and dutiful people and writers of exercise books have, of waving people's minds away and giving people the idea that if they make certain motions—motions they have not even conceived—the motions will somehow mysteriously and in due time, be delivered of new bodies for them.

Men who are always using their brains in everything else, stop them when they take an exercise. They start their precious members going and go off and leave them. They seem to think they can roll their eyes at the heavens, work their arms and legs like wooden handles of health, and pump themselves into bliss.

I do not like to publish these four drills without a warning to some of my readers. It is not the amount of time or the amount of effort, but the amount of conception—the amount of cross-fertilization between the body and the mind—which determines in a setting-up exercise its permanence, quality, material power and value.

Each man's self-control when he is aiming a ball has to be conceived in his own mind, and each man's self-control in each motion of these drills is for him to originate. It would be cheating my reader in this book if I hurried him through to the exercise itself past the


idea it is made of, or if I tried to present to him some self-control outright instead of letting him have the fun of pursuing and conceiving it himself. It would be like doing a man's eating for him, handing over to him—if there were such a thing—cheap ready-made self-control done up neatly with a blue ribbon on it, in an exercise.

Of course, many of my readers do not need perhaps these cautions in their behalf. But there are others.

If I could, I would have the fifteen pages of the book containing the drills printed with adjustably invisible ink.

The pages would go blank to people as fast as they had read them. The minute people stopped reading them, stood up before them and began practicing them, they would fade away.

But the ink would instantly recognize, like litmus paper, the difference between one mind and another. All any man who had read his way all through the book as he should, and properly dipped his mind in it, would have to do when he turned back to the blank pages, would be to warm the paper with his mind a minute, and the four drills would at once blossom out for him—blossom out just for him—privately.



'As his mind would be there, the 'drills would do for him what they are expected to.

Of course, if what one is doing is changing a habit of one's mind with one's body—recoördinating one's mind with one's body—they must both be there.

The next section deals with getting the attention of a mind.

III

GETTING THE ATTENTION OF A MIND

I

A WORKING CONCEPTION OF SELF-CONTROL: THE SELF-CONTROL OF ANIMALS

I HAVE got more of an idea of what the real basis of self-control is, and of how to get the attention of my own mind, from my dog than from anybody.

Tomtom is a fox terrier and, of course, as one is apt to be with a fox terrier, I did not take him very seriously at first and thought he was merely an amusing cuss. I named him naturally after Mount Tom—the biggest thing in sight—because he was so serious about himself and went about with the air of being in a small way at the very least a mountain—a mountain who, to be accommodating and convenient, just for us—had taken the form of a little dog.

The first time I took him seriously—as seriously as he did, and was really considerably impressed—was one day out under the maple tree when I watched him thinking out how he was going to lie down on the ground.

When Tomtom lies down, like the Chinese with Tea, he makes a regular ceremonial of

it. He really has an idea. He does what he does through the idea. No plump or superficial lazy lunge about it—about lying down on the ground—for Tomtom. He circles around slowly and thoughtfully, says No to himself, gives a dramatic pause, sees just what his idea is. Then he dramatizes it.

Tomtom lies down as if he were laying the foundations of a cathedral. Then when he has got his foundations all in, deliberately, solemnly he places his nose—rereplaces his nose—as the corner stone of sleep.

When he gets up he is equally intellectual about it, seems equally determined in getting at what he is doing through the idea in it. He opens his eyes, takes a wink at the idea of getting up, says No to it, and so as not to be superficial and meaningless in a deep precipitous thing like coming back into a world, he closes his eyes again. No use in lunging back into a world like this, without meaning anything by it or without anticipating it!

Then he gets up, stretches out his forepaws blissfully, stretches out his back long and slow, practically counting off his vertebrae, stringing out his idea of getting up along on them one at a time. Then gradually having in one detail after the other, pulled his mind and body together from his forepaws to

his hind ones, from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail, he is ready for business.

It is because a dog not only has the letter of the idea of exercise, but the spirit of it—the very soul of the idea of it—that he gets so much out of his setting-up exercises.

His whole life becomes a setting-up exercise. If a man would keep studying his position, studying his coördination—if a man would be as intellectual, as spiritual about his coördination as a dog is—his whole life instead of being something he has to rest or recover from, or set himself up from, would be a setting-up exercise in itself.

This is why instead of putting a diagram at the end of this chapter I am just referring everybody to the nearest dog. This is my idea of what I would want to do, in a book on exercise or on health. When people come to the conventional lazy place in a book where an author is supposed to put a diagram in and when they feel their old craving for a diagram coming on and they feel as if they positively must have one, all I can do is to ask them to lay the book down and to refer them to the nearest dog, the nearest baby, or any plain standard cat.

Living diagrams everybody has at hand or within reach are not only more pictorial, more

lively, more fetching, but they are harder to misunderstand than squeegees of ink with A's, B's and C's and arrows on them.

Another important point, too, is that a dog or a baby or a cat—any self-respecting little brute—when putting over an idea, can always be trusted to give the soul of the thing.

And he makes it catching.

Any fairly well-regulated sympathetic man yawns when his dog does.

And the main thing after all in a book on health like this should be to make it catching. "Damn diagrams!" Tomtom says as he looks me earnestly in the eyes; and I will say that one nice little sensible brute always going around with a man, who will be nice to the man, and encourage him—let the man share his feelings with him—will uplift the ordinary civilized human creature as much—do as much real good to him, in starting him on the right way—as a hundred diagrams.

It was a considerable understatement of Solomon's, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard."

Many other bugs might have been given honorable mention by Solomon. Almost any animal—once really known down through—would be an inspiration.

II

OUR DOGS AND US

Why is it a dog eats a bone as coolly as a girl eats a marshmallow?

Why is it there is nothing bewildering or insoluble about a bone to a dog?

Why is it he assimilates it—makes it over into perfectly good dog—while he is asleep?

Why is it that the man right beside the dog—the man who owns the dog—does not even own himself? Why is it that the man puts up with predigested baby foods, puts up with having his insides practically abandoned, by himself, by his doctor—puts up with actually having things steered away from his mouth for him and steered into his mouth for him—by Eugene Christian, or by Vance Thompson?

Because a man has a lower standard of self-control than a dog.

A dog never has for a single minute in his life a low immoral way of looking upon self-control as a duty.

A dog's self-control is deeper and more

subliminal than a man's. The average civilized man when he eats, is a superficial palatemonger. He controls his choice of food by the way it strikes him first, by his mere first impressions located around the entrance of his alimentary canal. The dog chooses his food twenty feet deep. He eats all over and all through. The pleasure of peristaltic action is much greater to a dog than the pleasure of eating. (He gets over eating as fast as he can.) Then he makes blissful motions and takes blissful positions that make him keep enjoying what he eats all the time. The essence of the quietness, the implacableness, the dignity, the finality of a dog's self-control is that a dog has an appetite as anyone can see—an almost ungovernable appetite—for taking pleasant positions and making comfortable motions. His self-control consists in devoting his attention to habits of making himself comfortable. He studies posture so profoundly, so unintermittently and while he is going about his regular duties, that he never needs to moon over a cook book. Does one ever see a dog hanging around Vance Thompson or yearning over Mahdah Menus? Does one catch a dog going to forty doctors to be examined, to the Life Extension Institute twice a year with his eternal

little urine in a bottle? Why is it one does not see a dog having spells—what can only be called tantrums of health—as we do?

Because he is heaping up health in himself all the while, without thinking of how he ought to be well at all—by just thinking as he goes about his regular business, of comfortable positions—positions he looks up and likes.

The time never comes when he stops thinking and thinking hard, subconsciously or consciously, of the nice comfortable little things he likes to do and when he thinks of them he does them. Every lamp post he sees, makes him think of a little something and instead of dreaming about it he does it.

And this is not diabetes but consistency—a kind of moral dignity. It is this habit of instant suiting of the action to the thought, carried faithfully into the higher reaches of his being in his intercourse with man, which makes the dog what he is, to everyone who knows him—a gentleman and a scholar and in no need of being a Christian—as a man is—in order to be put up with.

Anyone can see how it is. A man lets himself get obsessed by his work or by his play. Then he has a beautiful noble-looking time of feeling religious and of putting on spiritual

airs and feeling very superior to the poor worldly little dog beside him who never thinks of his sins. The man sits down with his head between his hands and wonders about himself, putters and whines and yearns and thinks how he is missing what he really wants.

The dog never putters nor whines nor thinks of his sins. He thinks what he wants and gets it.

A dog is straight, simple and pure and absolutely self-controlled. As he never stops thinking what he really wants; he never has any sins to think of.

The reason a man loses his self-control is that he has less power than a dog, apparently, to make himself stop and think what he really wants.

Any boy or girl, or man or woman who will follow a little while the principle the dog does, who will consider being comfortable with the same amount of brains, will have the most important possession and the most fundamental education any human being can have for this mortal life. A boy who is properly educated may be said to be a boy who is trained to get the attention of his body to what he wants, to handle his body in the most perfect and therefore the easiest way.

He has at command an almost automatic principle for self-control. His mere comfort, his pleasure itself, his very self-indulgence, becomes his guide philosopher and friend. Health with a man as with an alligator instead of being a duty becomes a self-indulgence.

The basic fact in a man's joy in life, is the conscious sense of power, the feeling of one's power when one is using it, of heaping up still more while one is using it. A man soon finds that self-control with his body is the utmost fun he can have with it.

An alligator eats a pair of pantaloons just as so much pie-crust on a man—digests a suit of clothes, an Ingersoll watch, a bunch of keys and all without a sigh—because he has a habit of furious joy in self-control. He can put through anything. If an alligator for a flash of a second ever gets to the point where he looks upon self-control as a duty instead of a passion, he is sick.

And all that the plain rather simple-minded alligator's self-control amounts to, is his homely direct lifelong study of what the whole alligator prefers. No going by the palate. No gullet judgment for him. He lives in a perfect orgy of knowing what he wants all through—of keeping it looked up

and put down—every *i* of comfort dotted and every *t* crossed. His life is one long splendid lark of self-control.

I have confided to the reader in this chapter the gist of the idea to which I have come through as my own personal, every-day working conception of self-control.

What this conception of self-control has led me to do when I came to apply it practically to taking my exercise in lying down, no one need be long in guessing.

I watched my dog circling to lie down and saw how he usually decided to do it, and I then proposed to myself (of course allowing for the differences between his figure and mine) as good an imitation of Tomtom's circling to lie down as I could make.

A dog not only studies lying down in general, but he stops to study once more, each new time he tries.

My idea was to get the principle—the spirit of the thing—from Tomtom and then work out the details as applied to a two-legged problem like myself.

III

WHAT ANY MAN CAN LEARN FROM A DOG

When I began imitating my dog the first thing I came on was that I did not really care about being comfortable in lying down as fiercely as Tomtom did. When I circled to lie down, I slurred over details.

Obviously, as this was the hub of the whole thing, and as everything would have to start out from my facing this fact first, I began seeing if there was not some way I could corner myself, mind and body, into noticing just how uncomfortable and just how comfortable I was. What could I do in lying down to put myself in some position where I would be compelled to be really thoughtful—really intellectual—about lying down, like a dog?

I made several useful discoveries to this end.

My first discovery was the floor. One morning up in my study I took two copies of *The Springfield Republican*, spread them on the floor for my body to rest on and two books (one of them was Browne's *Mystery*

of Space) to rest my head and began my study of lying down. I let myself take turns, lying first on one side on the floor. Then the other side. Then on my back. I added a pillow to the books when I was on my side.

Perhaps I need not say that the act of lying down which had always bored me before, became at once a very thoughtful, intellectually absorbing and almost thrilling occupation.

As I had to study how not to ache or how not to wear through in spots, I found myself every time I took the exercise, after the first second or so, thinking hard as well as lying hard. I began quite eagerly working out positions I would rather be in.

The trouble with a bed is that a man gets into a routine of being comfortable in a bed.

In the beginning stage when one is beginning to teach one's self to be as fiercely interested in lying down as a dog, lying on a hundred-dollar mattress or bed of down muffles one's lying down wrong, and obscures one's being out of shape, makes one suppose one is resting more than one is. The sleep one gets is heavy and superficial because the back is not obliged to coördinate the body, and the parts of the body that need to be tensed—

to be held together to make the right electric or nerve connections for sleep—are not held together by the back, and the parts that should be relaxed are too tense.

If one is lying on the floor, one learns quickly, not because one ought to, but because one likes to. There is no fooling one's self, no idle foolish preferring to lie in a less coordinated, i.e., a less comfortable position—because one has the habit of it.

My next discovery after the floor was a board. I nailed two wide boards together with cross pieces at the ends, and made as it were, a kind of human ironing board, and put it under the cover of the couch in my study. Then I began ironing out my back on that.

Having already found that I was enjoying the floor in my study quite as much as the view—that it was becoming such a frequent pastime and relief to lie on it—(I felt on the floor quite like lolling in an easy chair) I had begun to feel that perhaps some more permanent and dignified arrangement than *The Springfield Republican* for having all the comforts of a floor, was called for.

But, of course, I am not saying I am in favor of sleeping on a board any more than I am in favor of not sitting in easy chairs. I

am always lying down on as soft a bed as I like now, just as I am always sitting in easy chairs, but from the point of view of learning and establishing a new habit—a new accurately comfortable position for the back in lying down—a mattress, at first at least, cannot seem to get one's attention. On a board, one soon gets the attention of one's mind. One soon gets more solid comfort out of lying down right on a board, than out of lying down wrong on a feather bed.

Then the crisis is passed. The more one's comfort comes from one's self, the deeper it strikes into one's nature and the more implacably it stands by one, all one's life.

On the same principle that at Battle Creek the doctors will almost parboil a man's back one minute and then put ice on it the next, to get the attention of his mind to his body and start the vital forces up; and on the same principle that Muldoon crucifies a man's flesh and excoriates his soul—leans him or makes him think he is being leaned over the mouth of hell—all to give him the psychological shock that will start his attention up, focus him and make him really study what he is about—on this same principle, when I wanted to get myself to study as hard as a dog does, how to lie down, I used the floor of my

study and a *Springfield Republican* for a mattress.

I have 'dwelt a little longer than I meant to in this chapter on the floor or on the board as a device for learning promptly to lie down, but I have wanted to bring out the point, which seems to be quite incredibly overlooked, that lying 'down comfortably is at bottom a matter of brains—a matter of getting the people who think they have them, to take lying down seriously—to get them to see they must use their brains and use them a good 'deal if they are going to lie 'down as well as a 'dog 'does.

IV

GOING FORWARD TO NATURE

I

FOLKS AND MACHINES


A LIST of machines today would be a list of heaped up indictments as to the things human beings are no longer alive enough to love to do. One looks about and sees all these huge stupid crowds of people in a kind of madhouse of getting out of things people used to have the gusto, the gifts of body and mind to enjoy, things they used to make expressive of their own personalities, and of their delight in their own lives and the lives of others.

When one thinks of it, it is a greater and more real value to feel all over like walking upstairs in the Equitable Building than not to feel chipper enough to, and take the elevator.

What seems to be wanted to live a civilized life is to feel chipper just enough and take elevators just enough. I find I can keep up my sympathy with my English friend, who never takes elevators in New York, for the first four stories. Then I push the button and let the elevator do the other thirty-six.

After four stories or so—the first minute I feel like a stair-machine—I quit.

I prefer to feel more lively about some other things, or I would rather save myself for The Matterhorn where the scenery is less monotonous.



There seem to be several ways of being saved from drudgery or from feeling one is being made a machine of. One way is by working less—by putting it off on a machine. The other is by actually working more, by making the work harder and more interesting—making a game or a feat of it—linking the work up with people we like to do it for, or like to do it with, or with ideas and desires that make us delight in it while we do it.

Miss —— according to my morning paper, gives up a mansion on The Avenue, marries a poor man and washes her own dishes.

And he helps wipe.

But not everybody has the courage to elope from being a machine, take a deep-sea plunge—fling off from the hopeless round of labor-saving, and the treadmill of teas, and parties and servants.

Still it is at least an honest and real way to do, which some people try.

Another way that many people—in fact, most people who hate themselves for feeling

like machines—try, is gasoline. One sees them motoring every afternoon—shot out of shops, offices, factories and parlors, racing away from themselves forty miles an hour—saving themselves from being machines with more machines.

The trouble with this way seems to be that, by the time many people in stores, offices and factories have made machines of their bodies and machines of their souls long enough to earn their automobiles, they are dead. Not a dent or thrill can be made in them no matter how fast they go. They get to be india-rubber people. They are too mechanical when they go out riding in an automobile to see more than an automobile does. They take a ride the way a tire would.

Still other poor prosperous mortals, labor-saved within an inch of their lives.....handless.....footless.....who realize they are getting like their machines, but who cannot or who will not change the daily tumtum of their lives, take what they consider very vigorous means to make up for the ravages being made upon the powers of the body by their machines. When they feel their machines at work on them disembodying them before their own eyes, they hit back. They go back to Nature hard. They make elabo-

rate and costly arrangements for pounding their abdominal muscles. One sees them in the numerous schools that are springing up today—Squirm Schools, I call them—going back to Nature, fairly writhing back to Nature.....doggedly, faithfully making little Samsons of their stomachs.

II

PEOPLE WHO MAKE NATURE HUM: EXERCISE ADDICTS

I spent a day or so with a friend a while ago, who was spending a few weeks at a Squirm School. As the people who were there were all there for the same purpose; they had all become as one might say, quite physiologically confidential. You would be in the room with three or four of them and be having a general pleasant sociable time and every now and then, before you knew it, right in the middle of a sentence, they would kick up their heels and walk across the room and back on their hands so as to keep their bodies interested in the conversation. Instead of doing mere slovenly futile little things other people do—changing a position, crossing or uncrossing a leg, or possibly taking another chair, or walking to a window and back, or yawning, or possibly taking a little familiar confiding stretch—the man who is talking with you incidentally does a hand spring, gesturing at you with his feet, or he grabs up a convenient baby perhaps, gives himself and

the baby both a real treat of going back to Nature, using the baby as a dumbbell or swinging him over his head like an Indian Club, or suddenly you will begin to see a few gentlemen in sober dignified looking khaki getting down and crawling on their stomachs, or they begin in a lull in conversation beating their stomachs like tomtoms or if they are walking through a field with you they step one side thoughtfully, and hang themselves up by the abdomen on a rail fence.

The theory is that civilization and machinery by doing everything for us physically and not letting us exercise the muscles around our vital organs are gradually disembodimenting us. All these things the people do in the Squirm School are done by way of being in real earnest about being an animal. They are done to save time and to hurry their bodies right back to Nature. To avoid nervous indigestion, to correct metabolism, and to keep up the correct chemical synthesis of the body every day, take a few hours off a day for it and squirm it,—twirl it—twirl the poor neglected thing from a tree like a monkey. . . .

All I have to say about this is that I believe in going back to Nature, or rather as I would prefer to put it, going forward to Nature and catching up with it, as much as any-

body, and I especially believe, as anybody can see from this book, that the way to catch up with Nature, to get control, is by taking a masterful hold upon the position of mechanical advantage in the body.

The only quarrel I have with people on this point is their being so violent about it, and their taking so much trouble and time.

When Mrs. ——, a social and intellectual leader in ——, spends four days a week, eight hours a day, on her own estate as a farm hand and raises her own vegetables for her week-end parties all with her own hands, and when she tells me she keeps in what she calls glorious health by doing it, while I have a certain admiration for her character, I must say—to put it mildly—her health leaves me cold. I find myself being critical of it as an investment. Being a farm-hand—slaving away at hard physical labor eight hours a day, four days a week—seems to me a good deal of an undertaking, just to distribute around on just one woman what little food she can eat, and it does not seem to me what she is getting can fairly be said to be glorious health.

It is a merely arrested ill health to have to work eight hours a day to digest one's food. If what she had could fairly be called glori-

ous health, all she would need to do for a rather plain humble thing like that could be done in a few minutes.

It is romantic and not matter of fact to take much time to be well.

As much time as a man devotes to brushing his teeth in a day devoted to intensive exercise, to taking an exercise in coördinating his back will keep him well; as much time as a man devotes to shaving or a woman devotes to brushing her hair.

It is low-class, physically insensible, underbred and uncouth to have to exercise a great deal to be well.

People who go to Squirm schools and who wrench themselves—use ear trumpets as it were to get the attention of their bodies instead of training the adjustment of the body as a fine and delicate instrument responding to the single fleck of a thought—have no real peace.

As drug-addicts have to take more and more drugs to get their effect, exercise-addicts, people who are working on this principle of using much effort and much time to get the attention of their bodies, break down the minute they stop taking the time off and keeping the effort up.

The more one gets into the way of taking

special time off and entreating the body not to be stupid, the more dependent the body gets on being treated in this way and the more stupid it gets and the more puffing and sweating it takes to get an idea into it.

As I have said before, all one has to do to see how true this is, is to watch for a few days any standard dog.

III

LETTING NATURE BE NATURAL

I had a visit last week with a friend—a well-known man of great gifts and opportunities—who has let everything go, resigned or suspended himself from his position for a year, to correct his metabolism or chemical synthesis. As long as he plays golf six hours a day he says he has glorious health. If he writes one morning or if he speaks in public one hour his health is used up for a week.

So he is subtracting himself from the world—all the powers and desires of his life—for a year, and is being valet to a golf ball six hours a day to keep well.

The first thing I thought of was, how I hated to have him do it. I thought how a nation would hate to have Hoover do it.


It seems to me that correcting coördination in this way and then getting a coördination one can merely use to play golf with, is not only an extreme and violent way to get well, but that it is a superficial conception of nature. It is romantic and not matter of fact about nature.

The most plain and simple fact about nature seems to be that nature is an extraordinary scheme for adapting very slight means to great ends, a stupendous conspiracy of the soul and the body of man to heap up, along an almost miraculous line of least resistance, a maximum of achievement.

The last thing that is natural is a man's playing golf six hours a day to make his stomach—a happy and delectable institution like a stomach—wake up enough and be kind enough to admit (after six hours) that it is willing to drudge away at it once more and digest one more dinner for him.

Every man who has studied his own control finds there are certain uncoördinating things he does, and that if he stops doing one of these uncoördinating things which he has to do, and picks out and begins doing some other particular thing which he has the power to do naturally and quietly and in a coördinated way, he coördinates in five minutes. Sometimes he gets hold of himself by not stopping his work altogether and by merely taking it up in a less uncoördinated place. He finds that practically anything which he can do in a coördinated way at once, rests him at once.

This fact is the main fact about a man and



the fact from which everything he can do should start. All he has to do is to follow it to its logical conclusion.

My friend is well in a minute, he says, if he slips away from his desk and plays golf. Precisely the same man when he stops aiming wildly with a fountain pen—begins aiming a golf stick—begins aiming it straight, is well in a minute.

If sitting at his desk he aimed his ideas as well as he aims his golf stick, his ideas would do him as much good as his golf stick does. The particular ideas he has now which are well aimed, do him good now. The ideas he has always aimed well and that he has become distinguished for, have always done him as much good as his golf. The only trouble with him is that under the pressure of his ambition and his opportunity he has let himself of late years get into the habit when aiming ideas of not stopping long enough or often enough to keep his aim in good form and be a good shot. He has found himself making an astounding number of poor shots and has been told he must give himself up to rest.

But a do-nothing rest—an unaimed and collapsed rest—he finds is not only a most tiring, but a most disastrous self-indulgence.

So now he is taking six hours of aiming a golf stick a day. He is taking six hours of doing something he perfectly coördinates to do, and knows he coördinates to do, to get him back to his standard of coördination and to where he will dare try to see once more, if he can aim an idea.

What it all comes to for my friend is this: In sitting at his desk he holds himself wrong and in standing up to play golf he holds himself right.

If he would learn to sit so that it would not tire him—so that he could be resting and stretching his back all day at his desk—he would not have to spend his time as he does now—six hours out of every twenty-four—one-third of his walking time every day, in being valet to a golf ball.

What my friend is suffering from is the extreme effort he keeps making. This extreme effort he keeps making is because he is running himself, mind and body on the ties instead of on the rails. Very little effort would be needed on the rails. In other words a comparatively delicate, highly organized man is making an effort which would give Samson himself nervous prostration.

When he is sitting at his desk aiming at an

idea he loses his aim with his back and when he is aiming a golf stick he doesn't.

If he aims his back when he thinks, it won't hurt him to think.

.

Every man has his favorite unkrinklers—certain things he knows to do which he likes to do and which the moment he begins them, proceed to take out the wrinkles both in his mind and in his body—things that induce coordinated positions and suddenly soothe his nerves.

With me it is puttering about with a saw and a nail or so, preparing some little handy surprise in the house while the others are away, or I play with the pruning shears or an axe and cut out pictures of Mount Tom through the trees. Walking is the best unkrinkler for many people.

Every man has his own set of activities which when he is way down, he can use to pull himself out with, things which unconsciously swing him into a right rhythm—that is into a right position of mind and body and get his mind and body started.

Certain men and women are unkrinklers. They seem to put sometimes, just with a passing word, one's whole world about one into

happy relations. They have the electric or coördinating touch and fill one's world about one for hours after they are gone with richness, meaning and expectation.

But all these things are inconvenient and cumbersome as compared with playing a little invisible tune on one's backbone.

What is it that is good about our favorite unkrinklers? We have good old habits of position in them. From sheer inertia the moment we take them up we have stopped the bad or cramped habits associated with our overwork, and we are well.

Of course, it is to be admitted that in an invalid condition one must select the most coördinating thing to 'do, whatever it is, and do it.

But all these easy unkrinkling occupations are really for, is to act as mere pointers to the way—if one would coördinate in it—one could do what one is doing already.

It is a slave's life to be always obliged to hold up what one is doing and pick out some other more coördinating thing to do instead.

The natural substitute would seem to be for a man to take a drill which will give him the habit of good position for his back, which will give him when he sits at his desk and 'does what he wants to do and is inspired to

do, as much headway in a good habit as he has now in a bad one.

Health apparently consists in seeing the point, in making one's body take in an idea; that is, take in its own relation, or coördination. It is as stupid for a body to use up two, four or six hours to take in a ten-minute idea, as it is for a mind. One's body should be made aware.

IV

A BRIDGE, SOME STAIRS AND A MORAL

(*The Bridge*)

The other day when I was walking all alone across a steel bridge I heard out of a dead silence, a soft and mysterious clanking in the strips of steel above my head and when I looked around to see what could be doing such a thing, there wasn't a single blessed thing in sight but a little yellow dog.

After he had gone and the soft vast delicate echoing clank he had made in the cross pieces over my head had ceased, I stood on the bridge alone.

I could not bear to be outdone by a little yellow dog. I could not bear to have my nation, my civilization, my world outdone by a little yellow dog!

I stood alone and thought.

When a little yellow dog shakes a huge iron bridge by merely running across the great helpless thing in a perfectly coördinated and therefore absolutely rhythmical way; when a little yellow dog by merely piling up little soft fluffs of his feet, one upon the other, until the

bridge can't stand it any longer—makes it tremble all over, he illustrates what the highly-coördinated stroke—that is to say, the extraordinary light stroke of force thoughtfully and perfectly placed—can do and is intended to do in Nature.

(*The Stairs*)

The same law that gives the little yellow dog, by sheer poetry of motion—by sheer mathematically accurate coördination of his back and his legs—the power to play like this on a thousand tons of steel, stands by a man who puts all his organs politely in place, coördinates lightly his legs and his back and proceeds to fleck himself up four flights of stairs.

The sense of levitation which takes place in a hundred-and-fifty-pound man when he has once learned the knack, has once learned the position of mechanical advantage and has come to have by practice a super-coördinated back, is not only a stupendous physical, but a stupendous intellectual and spiritual experience. Going upstairs like this the first time one discovers the thing can be done—it is not too much to say—is an act of worship and exaltation.

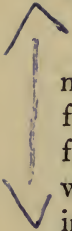
I daresay it sounds a little extreme to say

this. I am not saying that it is an experience I am recommending right and left to everybody. I am saying what happened to one man the first day he found he had learned to go upstairs. One feels in touch with the Creator when He first had the idea of the body of a man—first thought out on creation morning, how easily it could be made to work. It is a fine thing, one thinks as one flecks up the stairs, this having all the practical advantages of being an angel and without looking ridiculous too and without bothering with wings. . . . All I can say about it is that for me, at least, it is an essentially religious experience—this unbelievable lightness—this poetry—this brutal ease of the human body.

For quite a time when I had got over the 'drill stage and was having my first real fling of enjoying the habit of ordering myself about, I had regular little orgies of walking upstairs.

I would go into an office building, skip the elevator the first four stories, or I would get off four stories early.

I often fall to thinking when I do it, of what it would be like if everybody in New York took up with this little idea and made a fad of it.



If people all began in New York every morning, taking the elevator two or three or four stories late or getting off of it three or four stories early, get out of it a tenth of what I got out of it, the stairs in office buildings in New York would soon be so crowded, people would have to take turns in being allowed the privilege of skipping the elevators.

My general idea of a quick, convenient stairway setting-up exercise—a balancing exercise for the day—is this:

Take an elevator one week, two stories late, and the next week three and the next four. Stop on the landings long enough to say No, to the legs, to make the legs wait for the back; give the back orders to lift the legs and the neck orders to relax. Then let the head go forward and up and your back widen and lengthen to take your step (you get so that you give these orders invisibly and in a flash) before each step, then take your step. Float up three flights. Let your back slip you up the last six steps of each flight as if your legs were not there.

A man who does this—does it as many floors as it takes to get him into position for the day—when he finally reaches his floor feels like capering down the corridor, fairly soaring into his office and alighting in his

chair. He feels like capering at his work. And, while I would not recommend that any man should make a splurge in New York, of capering at his work, I must say that a sobered-up caper—a man's having everybody who does business with him feel that he would caper if he could, having everybody just see he is just holding his caper in while he works—is not what could be called bad for one's business.

There is but one thing to remember—if anybody asks my advice. Remember to feel like the little yellow dog on the bridge. Whatever you do or however long it takes on the stairs, keep your back coördinated. Take each step one by one with your back wound up ahead. Take each landing and each flight with your back wound up ahead. Feel like going eight. Go four. Then step into your office, take up the four extra flights of stairs you feel all curled up inside you, and put them in your business for the day.

(The Moral)

One spends all one's time in this mortal life in either standing, walking, lying down or sitting. One never misses a minute. If one learns how to do these four things there is not a minute until the day one dies, when

one cannot be practicing and practicing unconsciously on one's health.

No matter what it is one does or has to do, if one knows how to do these four things with the line of least resistance, with smoothness, with joyous perfection, the very position one does one's work with becomes itself a recreation. The whole weight and brunt of one's daily habit of life, fights for one's health.

If one does not know how to do these four things one lives in, everything one does fights against one's health. One cannot even lie down without its being bad for one's health.

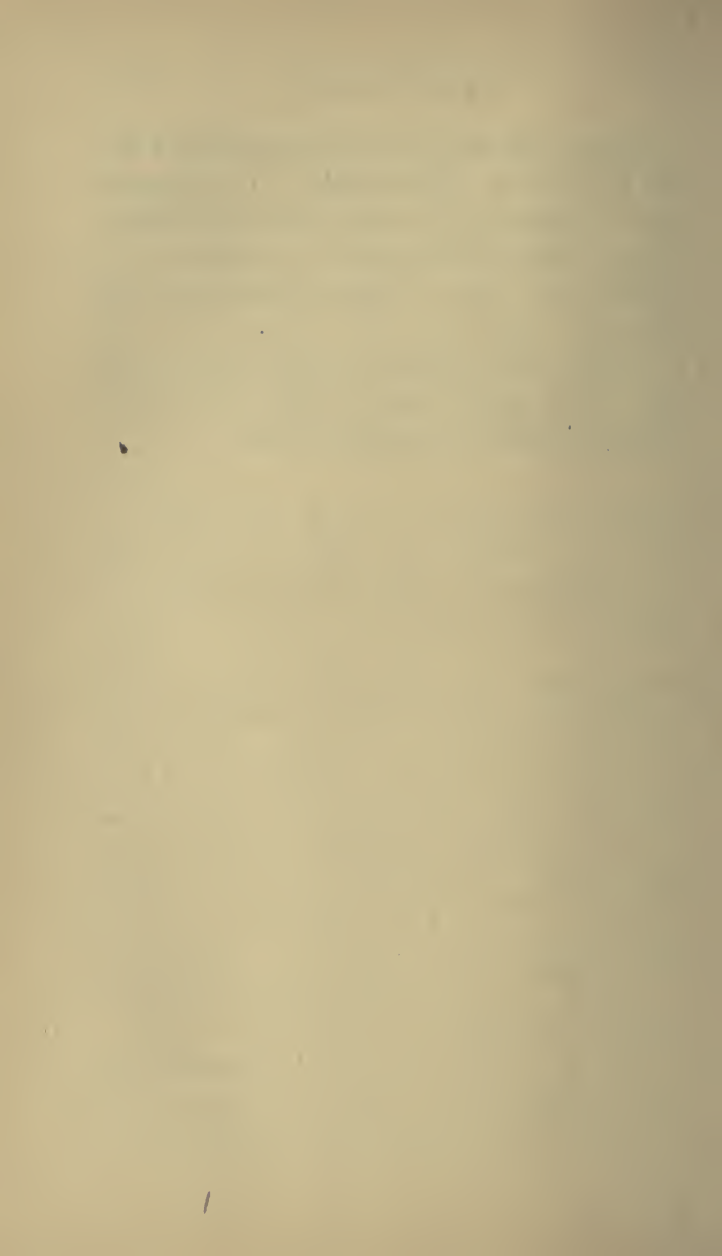
If thousands of people every night waste their strength even while they sleep, what they do while they work can only be imagined.

If I were asked by a man who is careless about keeping well, what he could do to be sure to make himself think to take care of his health, I would say that the best thing for him to do, would be to arrange to set the whole subject of health one side, dispose of it by not having to think of it at all.

This is why I believe so much in a man's using the simple mechanical device of ironing out the curve in his back, getting back-control or single control of his whole body.

He will not need to keep reminding himself to take care of his health. By knowing the one thing—by knowing how to take himself up kindly, but firmly by his own back—he will know how to walk, to sit down, lie down and stand up.

And the way he walks, lies down, sits down and stands up all day, all night, all his life will take care of his health for him.



V

LOOKING UP THE OPEN ROAD

I

THE CONSENT TO LIVE

ONE day not long ago when I was taking a vacation in a North Carolina village up in the mountains where people go from every state in the Union, I looked out of a window up the crooked little street and saw a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of —— walking placidly up the road eating chocolates out of a bag.

Suddenly, when his wife appeared coming out of a store two doors away he whisked the bag into his pocket, made a big swallow, looked at the scenery hard and walked on looking as much like an angel as he could.

He had nearly died six months ago from having to tote around permanently—laid way on him here and there—a hundred-and-thirty pounds of sugar he never really used and by virtue of being put under guard to eat, and making a solemn promise not to eat except in his wife's presence, it had been 'duly decided at last by the authorities that he should be allowed to live.

I happened to know this fact and as I

looked out of my window and saw him—that great hulk of Awe, of Impressiveness, Fortress of Justice in my native land—acting suddenly like a nice guilty slinking six-year-old boy driven to eating his chocolates in the streets so mamma wouldn't see him, I enjoyed his chocolates as much as he did.

Then I stood in the window and thought. There must be something about it I did not understand.

Here was a man making himself endlessly amusing to everybody, making a perfect guy of himself on the edge of the grave, with his wife, four daughters and fifteen doctors slaving away on him night and day, trying to get him to consent to live, and he did not want to live—I watched him as he rolled up the hill. He would rather have his chocolates and die.

I watched him out of sight.

Then I drew back from my window and sat down and wrote this next chapter.

How should a man be made to feel about his health?

He should feel wild about it. He should be swept before it as he is swept before chocolates.

Anything less or different from this—anything that does not proceed upon the principle

in dealing with health, of tempting people with it, the principle of having health eloped with—is not worth trying for.

How can this be brought to pass ?

I saw Briney's Alderney heifer yesterday rubbing her head on her iron stake and tipping it half over. She had an idea that she could stop an itch under her ear with the stake, but if she had pushed it an inch-and-a-half further she would have been in clover. All she had to do was to say No a second, stop accepting her conception of herself, as a cow tied to a stake, try to push her stake way over instead of half over. But she had a fixed notion, an obsession, a conception of herself as being a cow that couldn't. So she 'didn't. If Briney's cow could have been exposed to another cow who had had the conception that if you could tip a stake half over you could tip it all over, she would not only have been in clover yesterday, but the clover would have been in her.

The same principle holds good for the sugary judge.

He has a fixed conception of himself that he cannot help eating too much sugar.

It is a mere convention—a habit of his mind—an obsession imposed upon him, the way the cow's is, from the outside.

Sugar hypnotizes him. He is seized bodily by little lumps of chocolate. He has chills of sweets.

He has all the traits of a person suffering from an epidemic.

It is just as possible to have him catch self-control, to have the epidemic run the other way if he is once started right, if society will expose him to self-control as well as it exposes him to chocolate.

Having a new self begins first with a new conception. This new conception a man has of himself is a germ cell which takes effect implacably, imperiously. The acme of practical power, when one analyzes it, is nothing more nor less than what is called an ideal. The word ideal—a kind of nickname in most people's minds for beautiful and wistful inefficiency—thus comes to stand for the one determining force in making a man over in middle life. He must have a concept of his new self—that is to say of his real or possible self—which overshadows, possesses and re-fertilizes his whole inner being, soul and body.

The first determining thing in what a man is, is what a man believes—what his imagination of himself is possessed by.

The second determining thing is his con-

ception of the means by which this conception can be embodied.

He finds that the best way of clearing and perfecting his conception is with action. If one really does the thing, one sees plainly where one is. One knows whether one wants it. One precipitates decisions—rapid-fire decisions and rapid-fire opportunities and inspirations. One knows one's conception, one knows where it is, why it is, how one wants it different and corrects it.

I have precipitated these two conceptions in this book—the conception of the end of what a man can be and wants to be, and the conception of the means—of the mechanical clinch by which, inch by inch, he makes himself be it.

II

THE USE OF FADS AND TABOOS

If I were an employment manager and had to pick out in a long line of people which were the quickwitted ones, in a few minutes, I could tell more by watching their feet than by looking at their faces. At least their faces and their feet should be used to check each other up and make sure of results. Light-footedness and quick-mindedness go together. Lightfootedness is based on a preciseness of preserving the balance. If people sit down heavily or prefer slumping positions or jar in walking it is because the balance of the back is not precise and easy.

My observations as an employment manager, of such people, would be that they never wear. They would wear themselves out and they would wear me out.

The same principle of test that applies to people to be employed in stores and factories, should be applied in picking out and giving special opportunities to boys and girls, in schools.

I have noticed for thirty years that the

most fit people, the people I have taken to best, are the people one has the most fun with in taking a walk,—the people who like to walk off the beaten track and who prefer hills, mountains and uneven ground—who have light feet and who characteristically enjoy putting themselves where they have constant occasion for using them.

The man who has the light step, who is ready for anything whether in mind or body, is apt to be—whether he is a college man or not, the most educated man.

One of the first things I would arrange for if I were going to start a school for boys—a school which I wanted to have get quick prestige—would be to have admission possible only by competition. The first ten boys out of a hundred who were the lightest on their feet—other things being equal—would be the boys my school would pick out to educate, to make its wager on, and establish its prestige before the world.

In this way the twenty best and most-coveted schools for boys—the schools boys try to get into in this country—could at once start the swing of our nation over into a national epidemic of soundness, of health and coördination.

Whatever a boy's class, position or origin

may be, a boy's step—if he wants to get into a school, a high-grade school for high-class pupils—is the thing that should be insisted on first.

For the purpose of testing, of rating men for their eventual opportunities in life, one need not care so much at first, whether people are learned or what is ordinarily called educated, or not. If they can pass examinations for their feet, their heads will take care of themselves.

The same principle could be made a fad or a popular motive of emulation for other special advantages in intellectual training, like the colleges and the graduate schools.

A boy who has not a light step, who jars and who is being frankly contentedly underwitted with his body, is not a good college risk. What is the use of sending him to college to be a light to civilization—educating the other end of him to understand, to connect him up with everything, to connect him up with the ends of the earth—when he does not even connect up with his own feet? When he cannot even balance himself, cannot even hang himself on his own back, why should he undertake a League of Nations, run a bank or invest other people's money?

III

MAKING HEALTH CATCHING

During the early days of the war when it still seemed incredible that the Germans could be doing what they were doing, a man said to me one day, as if it settled the thing—“One German can be crazy, but fifty-nine million Germans cannot be crazy.”

“It works just the other way around,” I said.

It was a great deal easier for one German to be crazy with fifty-nine million others all around him to help.

Taking psychology and human nature as it is, there does not seem to be any reason to doubt that the one thing to make an outline for and plan for in the matter of national health, is nothing less than an epidemic. People like to do things together. Anything less than this or different, will be expensive and will be slow, and will not come off in time for those of us who conceive it and who want the benefit of it ourselves, and who want to live in a health-epidemic now. Starting a health epidemic for the unborn—for poster-

ity—has its points, of course, but the practical working difficulty with it is that the best people, that is the people who want to do things and enjoy things in this world, are the people who want to live in a health-epidemic now, who want a decent world in which to do things, and pleasant and lively people to live with before they die.

In most of our colleges for men and women an epidemic has recently swept the country of flopping overshoes—of wopsy feet trailing down the public way. The women's colleges have been seized with earlessness. Women throughout the country at large have had an epidemic of wearing their heels higher. What if there were started an epidemic of wearing their backs longer? The conception of wearing a back longer, of balancing one's self, of walking instead of hunching, is as easily caught from being with people who have it as highheelitis is. The governing thing, the germ cell of what happens and has got to happen in this world, is always found to be the conception people have of what they are like and would like to be like, that seizes their minds.

Of course, I need not try to conceal it, even if I would: This book wants to be an epidemic—wants to see twenty million people exposed

to the idea in it as only a book could expose them—because in a book everybody can be exposed to it simultaneously, can get the same impulse at the same time and can act on the same impulse at the same time—which, of course, is the first principle of epidemics.

Then having searched out and rounded up with a book in a hundred thousand cities, twenty million people scattered about that the book expresses to themselves, we will hear these people expressing the book and dramatizing the book to others up and down the streets, and everywhere and all in one piece, our epidemic will begin.

At all events, when it comes, it is in some such way as this—catching like a world war—that health will come to the people.

The way to bring national health to pass is going to be in due time, whoever does it, by the nature-method or epidemic method, the method of geometrical progression and contagion.

To cure the people of their obsessions, of weakness and illness, truth shall be organic, shall have integrity, shall breed its way through the customs, the daily conceptions and working ideals of the people—through places like saloons on every corner, pubs of well-being exposing people to temptations

to be well, cigar shops, so'da fountains and tea-rooms and candy stores of goodness, and people going about everywhere exposed to health the way they are now to things to wear and things to eat, and show-windows and movies.

CLOSING INTRODUCTION

WHY THERE IS ONE

AN introduction should really be placed at the serious or working end of a book, the end where the author drops introducing the idea to the reader and the reader begins introducing the idea to himself.

And people who are going to read about an idea are not as interesting to say things to as those who have.

And if a book is really an experience with an idea and the reader remembers himself as being in one place toward an idea at the beginning and finds himself in another at the end, it is possible to say things at the end in a paragraph which at the beginning would have taken a hundred pages or could not have been said at all.

§ i. *Putting the First Thing First*

Question: Why do men live shorter lives in proportion than the animals? Judging the proper length of men's lives as the lives of all animals are judged—by the time they spend in the womb—a man should die in his hundred and fiftieth year.

And why should a woman—instead of having children by proxy, being dismissed into a grandmother in the forties—not be still rejoicing and still having children—if she wants to on her ninety-ninth birthday?

Because human beings do not study in the way animals do, their own personal line of least resistance or comfort.

Human beings die at seventy—and many of them wish they were dead at sixty—because they live in slight but constant friction and run their lives off their balance. Men who have only half-learned to lie down and only half-learned to sit up, who can only half-walk, stagger along subtly and elegantly seventy years. Then they tip over into their graves.

If there is anything worth a man's doing in the way of education in this world—even if he stops everything else to do it—it would seem to be studying his own line of least resistance, studying his own not making an effort.

And it is not even necessary, in order to study it, to stop doing anything.

All he has to do is to go on doing whatever he has to do, and balance to do it.

The first thing for this nation to do, before it tries to balance other nations, is to begin

by having the people in it balance themselves. Then they can branch out. We must begin by taking the people we want to see doing certain things and balancing them so that they can do them.

So I bring forward in this book, in the life of each man and in the life of the nation, a program of having the first thing put first.

§ ii. *Still Putting the First Thing First*

It is not possible for any power on earth to get in privately behind the sexual life of a nation and control, in behalf of a nation, the producing of children in it that shall be as perfect and as fit to live, as the animals the nation is producing at the same time, but it is possible to get in behind the lives of children when once they have been produced and by the third or fourth year see to it that every child in America is properly set up, holds himself as well in hand when he is practicing on sitting down, and when he is learning to walk, as he does when he is practicing on lying on his back in his crib.

His crib-standard can be kept up. He can be made immune to children's digestive troubles. False positions and false habits and tendencies which it would take weeks or

years to cure when he is grown up, in his sixth year can be made right for life in a few hours.

It may be decreed, and probably will be for some time, that cows and pigs and hens in America shall be better born, shall be more perfect for eating purposes than men and women in it are allowed to be for living purposes, but it does not follow that we shall not, after we are born, take as good care of the flesh and blood we live in, as we do of the flesh and blood we kill and eat.

It is not an uncommon experience for a man who worships his Creator—that is for a man who has a religious or biological mind, to stand and look at a stock farm a little longingly. When a man first begins studying the people he is having to live with, and that his children will have to live with—and sees how much wiser deeper and more conclusive arrangements are being made for unborn pigs to be happy in this world than are being made for the people in it, he strikes through into some very honest and thorough thinking.

The first thing a man thinks of who is religiously biological, who is as straightforward and enthusiastic about his kind as The New Testament, is that, of course, now that society

knows the facts it will proceed from now on to sterilize the extremely unfit—pull the world together in two generations.

Then he comes up against the fact in human nature that standing up for the rights of the unborn—now that you are born yourself—does not seem to arouse any great interest and that probably it will be a long time before we can hope that society in dealing with sex will be as straightforward and fine and honest, as sex is in dealing with us.

He realizes that it is going to continue to be assumed within the lifetime of most of us that nothing can really be done, that society has no right to defend itself from venereal diseases, that for generation after generation there is nothing to do but to go on making a vast sewage system out of human nature itself, making out of the innocent and unborn children in each new generation the sewers of what was evil in the last.

The best thing left to do seems to be, therefore, to take the people when they are born and teach them in their early years how to have such an ingrained habit of self-control, of intimacy and balance between the mind and the body, that by the time they are fifteen, their habits of posture and of movement and subconscious acts of every day will

be so set and under such headway that degeneracy and uncoördination will be uncongenial and irksome to them and will have a comparatively small chance at them and soon be thrown off.

§ iii. *This Book and Education*

Self-control may be defined as the power of giving orders to one's own mind, of determining in a comparatively high degree at any time the content and the direction of the content of the brain.

A man may be said to be educated in proportion as he is trained in the science of self-reminder, in the persistent, consecutive culminating power of keeping his mind and body reminded who he is.

The education that makes a man do a thing with his mind and body together or not at all—the education that very little children and men of genius have—in the next thirty years or so, is going to be thrown open to everybody.

Education is going to be no longer defined in a superficial and discouraged way as the power to do things.

Education is going to consist not in our power to do things—a superficial and dis-

couraged thing—but in our power to make ourselves want to do the things; the power in every man of waking up the swing and the rhythm of his mind and his body and making them do the things for him.

The technique I have brought forward in this book, the trained power in a man to give orders to the neck and the back and through the back, to make the whole body a brain, to make the body translucent, a visible spirit, is the quintessence of education. As people's faces light up, the whole figure of a man should light up. The animals that live with us go about with lighted-up bodies all the time. They never miss a minute, as machine-led human beings do, in not being eloquent and convincing. Everybody believes them. What they say goes. And what they do is done.

§ iv. *This Book and the Practical Teacher*

Everything I have had to say about connecting up the conscious with the subconscious powers of the mind and body—sending a telegram down through a man to the depths of his being—is true and is going to come to pass as a practical program in our schools the moment it is recognized by teachers and

others that the one fundamental thing education is for is the waking up of the self-starter in people.

This self-starter, as most people know who have had much to do with very young children, has been originally put into everybody. Every man in the course of his life has touched, or had touched, the button in him that flashes his mind and his body together, turns on his subconscious powers, lends him for a few minutes twenty thousand years.

But the touching of the button is accidental. Nobody seems to have bothered to see how he could do it again.

The facts about these subconscious powers are already admitted by all of us. Every man has his happy times a few minutes long, of supercoördination, when he feels the twenty thousand years in him working for him. The immediate next thing each man who is interested in educating himself or in educating others wants now is to see why, and see how, these minutes come. Then drill the minutes into habits and into hours.

This is why it has seemed to me supremely important that some regular system of self-reminder such as I have brought forward in this book should be within the reach of every-

body. What we seem to demand in our present civilization both for ourselves and for all the people with whom we try to deal, is not more knowledge about coördination, but a technique which sums our knowledge up, some definite, simple, commanding act of coördination to which we can turn habitually when we need it, some psycho-mechanical act at once spiritual and physical, by which one frees and projects one's self from the obsession of the moment, consciously connects up with the accumulated subconscious automatic powers of the mind and the body—an exercise by which with one invisible motion one switches on the eternal, the infinite race-consciousness — the twenty-thousand-years-a-minute power that lies in all of us.

To sum up the gist of this book and put it in five sentences before the practical teacher.

I. The practical teacher knows that the quintessence of power in a real education, lies in the power, not to do things, but to make one's self want to do things.

II. The art of making one's self want to do things turns on the art of integrity—upon a man's being able to get his conscious or creative mind and his unconscious or body-mind, to do things for him together.

III. Making the connection between these

two worlds in a human being—the connection between the powers of his higher and his lower mind, is education.

IV. The isthmus between these two worlds in a man, connecting up each of them with all that the other has, is the neck.

V. The neck from now on is to have the basic right of way, in all sincere or honest education.

The fact that all our education and our civilization must face next and must put first next, is that a man does not have any more brains than his command of his neck will let him have.

We have already guessed this truth—though as yet vaguely and weakly, in our recognition of manual training.

We are now going to take this central spinal idea, carry it through to its logical conclusion in our schools, apply it or apply the principle of it to waking up all knowledge, to waking up the great deeps of being in people, to making every man's education at once the most solid, most spiritual, most penetrating and honest thing in his life.

§ v. *This Book and the Reader*

If there are two things put before a Typical American in a book—the first a thing he is to read about before doing, and the second a thing he is to do—nine Americans out of ten will turn over the leaves in reading about the thing to do and cut across lots to it and begin doing it. They interrupt what you are saying to them, skip two hundred pages right past you and without so much as saying “by your leave” they begin doing it!

Doubtless if there were some way an author could prowl around a country with a printed page and pick people out, he would see that the particular reader whose particular eye is this minute on this page is a very rare type of American—a type which does not cut across lots—but the majority of Americans for whom this book is written are not like this. When we want a thing we cut across lots to it so quick we go by it altogether. And this book, like the author, belongs with the majority.

Not being an exception myself and having repeatedly, when learning my own lessons, jumped at conclusions and leaped prematurely ahead at my exercise myself, I have wanted to be thoughtful of others.

I have wanted to save my reader if I could, from being delayed by his own impatience, from the mistake of attempting to embody the exercise before he has conceived it.

For this reason "Invisible Exercise" has been conceived and published, not as a book, but as a series of seven lessons in the principles and practice of self-command, each lesson to be mailed to the pupil after he has had the last one.

In the case of the people who take the lessons by mail this cutting across lots situation is met by sending the lessons one by one a few days apart.

For people who prefer their lessons in regular book form the first seven lessons are published in this one volume which the reader can buy in the bookshops and take home and read as a reader reads a book. I do not deny that what I have written hopes it is pleasant reading, and should be properly published as a book and read like any creative interpretation of a great common human experience, as literature—as a work of creative imagination, but there is something in it all for me, that goes further than this. And while I know that a man's self control is the most deadly earnest, deep-seated and char-

acteristic thing in his life—while I know that I have no right except at last I am forgiven and thanked, what I really desire with a reader in this book is to invade—is to be allowed—to be invited to invade the sacred precincts of personality—invade his very life alone with himself—slip in like a spirit between him and himself or what he puts up with as himself, and haunt him with who he is. . . .

“After you are through with me,” this book says, “I am not through with you!”

In dealing with habit, whether one's own or other people's, being highhanded and cutting down through into people's subconscious experiences is the only way of being polite.

I can only ask to be forgiven now in the hope of being thanked at last, if my reader finds he is not being taken as a reader at all, but as a fellow human being, one with whom I am looking for practical results, with whom I want to keep in close personal touch if I can when he is taking these drills.

At the same time I do not wish to intrude upon him this closer touch, and it has seemed to me fitting that the reader from now on should be the one to take the initiative.

For this reason, *The How-Book—The*

Practice Notes, pointers, reminders and follow-ups that are supposed to be especially revealing or useful to those who take the exercises—will be in a separate little volume by themselves. The more practical and immediate directions for use from day to day following the idea up, are not thrust upon the man who is merely reading about it.

§ vi. *Forecast*

It is hoped that as rapidly as possible schools will be multiplied for the purpose of coaching adults and adolescents in the mechanics of poise and coördination, and for the purpose of selecting and preparing especially fitted and promising persons to conduct classes in coördination for children.

Of course, while a book like this will serve its purpose as a general introduction of the truer and more effortless idea of self-control, and while very satisfactory and valuable results may be gained by the man who is teaching himself from a book, it goes without saying (considering how most people will be apt to practice) that the new control is likely to be learned more readily and with its more penetrating and profound benefits, with the help of a teacher.

By opening up the idea to everybody however, in this way and having a nation working on it, it is felt that both a demand and a supply of teachers will soon be instituted, that there will follow a general national movement toward the art of personal integrity, of creative control—the art of personal re-coördination and the eventual establishing everywhere of what is going to be—called perhaps—in its effect on our civilization, the newest and the greatest of the professions.

APPENDIX

INVISIBLE EXERCISE AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

We have been passing through two great reactions apparently. The first was a reaction from the idea that disease lay entirely in the body. We carried this rather far. Disease was driven into people's heads and stuck there. Now we are having quite as natural and healthy a reaction against the idea that disease is entirely in the mind.

What I have been trying to do in *Invisible Exercise* is to see the truth in the round as the average man of common sense and observation sees it, and express both of these reactions together.

Invisible Exercise hopes to be useful to people who, like the author, have a real belief and a real experience in the power of the spirit over the body, but who want to know why and how, who find themselves more successful when they do know why and how.

What we seem to want is a definite psycho-mechanical technique to be applied at a definite point which we know just why we undertake, and which we know just how we carry through.

It has seemed to me that not only as a matter of fairness but as a matter of common national gratitude, the people of this country should universally recognize today as they certainly are going to later, the incalculable service that has been rendered by the Christian Scientists and the related groups, in starting and maintaining the now implacable drift of modern thought and practice toward a more powerful rational and spiritual control of the body.

But after all is said and done, the fact remains that there are a great many people in plain sight to-day who would like to believe in the power of the spirit over the body, who have either had, or watched others having, experiences that seem to prove it, who, when they come to try to apply what they think they know to themselves, do not get results.

Millions of men and women in America—probably the overwhelming majority of us—daily face the fact that we do not seem to have a Christian Science Temperament. It does not seem to be natural to us to meet our physical needs and limitations in the Christian Science way. It may be our fault, but we want something which is more detailed and technical—something which, however slight it may be, is at least mechanical enough and material enough to make us feel that we know and know substantially what it is that is happening to us.

In addition to the millions of people who have not the Christian Science Temperament there are among the Christian Scientists themselves many men and women who are troubled with “flaws” and who fail to rise at inconvenient times to their practical belief. I am hoping that they are going to find this book, with its more physical, more pedestrian, more detailed belief in the spirit, a step-ladder to serenity and to faith.

Personally, I do not think that *Invisible Exercise* should be regarded as a mere step-ladder. People may decide for themselves. I like to think that the fundamental principle I am expressing in these pages, promises in the end a more robust, rosy, lovable and human religion for my fellow human beings than Christian Science, still in its beginning stages of course, has shown itself to be.

In the meantime, we are all—Christian Scientists

and all of us, crowding and being crowded together day by day, into a more practical, a more colossal truth.

The truth we are being crowded toward together as I see it, instead of being a less believing is a more believing experience than for the present at least, most Christian Scientists I know, seem to like.

It is not necessarily incompatible with being a true Christian Scientist, that one should know and should enjoy knowing just where and just why and just how it is, the spirit works its will upon the body.

To some people it seems a more religious and more believing thing not to know just why and just how and just where the spirit takes its hold of the body.

To others it is not only a useful but an exalting and even worshipping experience, finding out just why it is and knowing just how it is that the spirit is, must be and always will be the supreme factor in a human being—the power that has the casting vote in him, for good or evil, all his life.

It seems to us a greater, more exact, more religious and exalting thing to believe that we have a God who is capable of creating a man who can follow up the idea of power as God has thought it out—a man who is exercising this power over his own body, consciously and knowing just how he does it—a man who is doing what he does with his body in a small far off way, with conscious and creative joy, just as a God would.

I should think God would prefer us to believe that He is a God who would be able to make a man like this.

Invisible Exercise—the act of consciously relaxing one's neck and pulling one's self soul and body together before one's God, becomes in its significance, in a very practical form, a religious rite, an act of

worship, of response, of entering into closer communion with one's Maker.

I do not suppose that judging from the contents of this book I could be called either in fairness to myself or to the Christian Scientists, a Christian Scientist, but I would not mind if people called what is in this book a kind of Super-Christian Science.

The Super-Christian Scientist when he appears is going to take these two noble words—the word Christian and the word Science—and work each through into the full power of the other. He is going to let his religion work down through into its details and worship God by appreciating and by consciously employing the mechanical facts—the psycho-mechanical facts in which He has chosen to express Himself intimately and constantly to each man in his own body.

OTHERS

I had intended in *Invisible Exercise* (as stated at the bottom of the tenth page) to end this introductory account of my experiences and ideas on self-control with a chapter in the Appendix relating my experiences in this book to the experiences and ideas and books of others, but at the last moment as the book goes to press I am postponing to the second volume some of the comparisons and distinctions and acknowledgments I would like to make.

I have expressed after a fashion in these last three pages the relation of my idea to *The Christian Scientists* and I find that if I am to go on and deal with others with due courtesy to them and fairness to myself there are so many complications of agreement and disagreement that it seems better not to let my book end in a mist of controversy and distinction. I can only let it stand by itself and speak for itself and wait.

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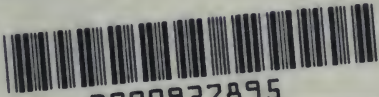
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