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Contributors

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DELSARTE

ÆSTHETIC

GYMNASTICS



BY
J. Edgar Foster, M.A.
(CANTAB)

Author of "The New Elocution;"
"Ten Lessons in Elocution"; "Extempore Speaking," etc.

Second Edition = Enlarged.

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DELSARTE ÆSTHETIC GYMNASTICS

(Founded on the Systems of Delsarte and Ling),

BY

EDGAR FOSTER, M.A., Cantab.

(Pupil of Delsarte).

INTRODUCTION.

One thought will reveal to us the value of the Delsarte Æsthetic Gymnastics. According to the theory of Delsarte, Man has three natures: the vital, the mental, and the moral. Each of these manifests itself in gestures and movements which are its characteristic indications. The vital moves *from* a centre, the mental *towards* a centre, the moral *round* a centre. The two former take straight lines, the latter moves in flowing, curved lines. It is on this law that the exercises are founded. The object aimed at is the due development of the three natures in man,—to produce a symmetrical adjustment and accord between them; at the same time training the body so that it may be vigorous in health, and graceful in all its gestures, attitudes, and movements. If we cultivate the vital only, we invigorate the man physically, but also consentaneously strengthen the grosser appetites and passions of his animal nature.

If attention be directed to the culture of the mental only, the man is made intellectually powerful, but, owing to the neglect of his physical and moral natures, he will be a puny, dyspeptic creature, with a cold, unsympathetic, selfish heart.

The fault of all the systems of culture hitherto employed, has been that attention has been directed only to one side of his complex nature; the result is painfully manifested in the manifold physical and moral, as well as mental ills, which gangrene society. To rectify this evil, there must be a beautiful spirit in a beautiful body; when this end is attained men and women will live simple, beneficent, grand lives

A true system of gymnastics will develop the whole man,—not merely a part of him. It will not confine itself to the rigid straight lines, which make man physically strong and vigorous; but it will blend with them, rotatory, waving and spiral movements, which, as they express also develop the finer and more generous qualities of the human *ego*. Such a system will employ the flowing movements together with the straight ones, in just measure. In this way, the extensor muscles will be used more than the contractile, and the sensor nerves called into activity more frequently than the motor. Thus there will be an economy of force, the nervous system will be soothed, and the whole man will be developed in harmonious grace and strength. Herein is evident the value of these exercises. ‘It is a soul, not a body only which we educate,’ as says Montaigne; “it is a man of whom we must

not make two; we must not train the one without the other, but must guide and lead them like a pair of horses harnessed to one shaft." A man developed in his triple nature, will stand, for all the duties of life, and for the practice of every virtue, at an immense advantage compared with the individual who is developed only in his physical, mental, or moral nature. He will not be a giant in some things, and a dwarf in others. There will be nothing lacking either in physique or in soul. The face will be beautiful in the expression of high intelligence, and fine moral qualities; and the form will be supple and vigorous. The rhythmical and curvilinear movements acquired and practised by means of the Delsarte Gymnastics will tend, not to the waste, but to the conservation of nerve-force. The molecular vibrations will not suffer lesion from sharp, and rigid, straight and angular movements, but circulate in the human form in constant augmentation of their power. Here is the remedy for physical, mental, and moral deformity and disease; here is the panacea for health; the means of warding off the approach of old age;—the tissue so developed by slow, rhythmical movements that it protects, as it were, with an invulnerable coat the whole muscular system.

In the *Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Burke tells us that there is such a connection between the internal feeling of a passion, and the external expression of it in action, that we cannot put ourselves in the posture or attitude of any passion

without communicating a certain degree of the passion itself to the mind. In brief, emotion shows itself in certain gestures and movements; those gestures and movements will in turn produce the emotion of which they are the outward indication. Assume the attitude proper to courage, and then that of fear, with sunken chest and bent, trembling knees, and you will at once perceive what an immense power, posture and gesture exert over the soul. Delsarte has reduced to the precision of a mathematical law the outward manifestations of emotion.

Let us acquaint ourselves with the movements and posture appropriate for the delineation of each passion; and all that will be necessary in order to experience the emotion of which those gestures and attitude are the expression, will be to assume them. Thus, it is placed within our power by given bodily movements to culture the soul in generous, benign, and noble thoughts and sentiments. "In the same way as mental influences produce certain actions and movements of the body," says Dr. Roth, "so do the latter influence the former. The psychical use of gymnastics consists in the influence produced by them through the body upon the mind; and in their direct action of strengthening single faculties of the mind.'

Gymnastics act on the courage, and produce independence and presence of mind. No man can possess much courage whose chest is narrow, and whose lungs are not fully developed. The capacity of the chest is the physical limit of courage. We

find at the moment that courage awakens—at the moment, for instance of a generous impulse—a considerable widening of the chest, but on the contrary, we see the narrow-chested incapable of such sensations. With the development of real courage that of presence of mind is coincident.

Gymnastics produce cheerfulness, and restrict our fancy and imagination to reasonable limits; they diminish also that predisposition to those moral faults which undermine bodily health and moral purity. The intellectual faculties are prepared by exercise for their future development. "If you wish to develop the mind of a pupil," says Rousseau, "develop the power which that mind has to govern, exercise his body; make him healthy and strong, that you may make him prudent and reasonable."

Gymnastic exercises appear also to act by their physical influence in contributing to the development of mind. Frederick Hoffmann mentions that he made persons, naturally stupid, comparatively intelligent by prevailing on them to take gymnastic exercises.

The strengthening of the body and of the nervous system diminishes and in a high degree too, the craving and the taste for sensual pleasures. Rousseau says all sensual passions are found in effeminate bodies; the more they are roused, the less can they be satisfied. A weak body also weakens the mind.

A regard for the common good and a willingness for self-sacrifice are most developed in strong and healthy persons, who, from their bodily condition,

are least likely to be dwelling with morbid solicitude about their own feelings and circumstances.

Gymnastics by giving a man power over his own body, exercise a considerable influence on morality. Hufeland says, "Give the child daily sufficient muscular motion, so that the natural store of strength may be used and derived by the muscles of volition. A child should run, leap, etc., daily, and use his strength in the open air till fatigue follows, and I am sure he will not think of vicious practices; these are the characteristics of the sedentary education of boarding-schools, and such monastic establishments where exercise is measured by half-hours."

PHYSICAL POSE.

Head erect. Hips well backward. Chest forward. Shoulder blades nearly touching. Weight of the body on the balls of the feet, the heels but slightly touching the floor. This pose should be assumed in walking, sitting, standing, and when performing the following exercises. In this attitude all the internal organs of the body—the heart, the lungs, the liver, etc., are in their natural position, and can perform their functions perfectly. In this attitude, during exercise, the muscles sustaining those organs are strengthened; and in this way, the so-called "miraculous cures" of heart-disease, ulcerated lungs, sluggish liver, nervousness, prostration, rheumatism, etc., have been accomplished,—by giving the organs room enough and opportunity to do their work, and invigorating the muscles that sustain them.

To derive the most beneficial result from the following exercises, the student should be careful to make the movements without jerks, in a steady and regular manner.

Exercise I. To give the toes perfect freedom of movement, remove the shoes, and move the toes up and down.

Grace in walking depends largely upon the action of the joints of the toes, which often have become enlarged and disfigured by wearing shoes too narrow and too short.

Exercise II. The ankle-joint. Move the foot upward, downward, then from left to right and vice-versâ, lastly rotate it.

Exercise III. The knee-joint. Assume Normal Pose. Straighten the knee-joints, and move the knee-caps up and down.

This exercise prevents the knee-joints from protruding and becoming enlarged, which is often the case with elderly persons who stoop or lean forward when walking. And this stooping which forces the joints into their sockets causes the diminished stature of persons as they advance in years. It is one of the causes of gout and rheumatism, and accounts also for the feeble, tottering gait of the aged. The joints are forced out of place, and for lack of proper exercise synovial oil is not manufactured, and the joints become diseased.

Exercise IV. Stoop downward as low as possible, with knees together, without raising the heels from

the floor, or bending the body at the hips, then upward to to the Normal or Physical Pose

Exercise V. Assume the Physical Pose. Move the feet until they are a few inches apart, and then make an effort to bring the knees together. You can assist the effort by pressing the hands upon the thighs.

The above exercise is valuable for straightening bowed legs in children,

Exercise VI. Assume the Physical Pose. Now without moving the feet endeavour to separate the knees.

This exercise is of use in correcting the deformity known as knock-knee.

Exercise VII. Assume the Physical Pose. Raise lower leg from the knee backward as high as you can, then stretch it out. Perform from 10 to 15 times First one leg, then the other, but not alternately.

This exercise sets in active motion all the extensor and flexor muscles of the leg. It serves to render freer the joints of the knees, and is of service in cases of incipient paralysis of the spinal marrow, or of the muscles of the feet, as well as being a remedy against affluence of the blood and irritation of the nerves of the head and breast.

Exercise VIII. Imitate the pawing movement of the horse when standing. The body must remain upright, and the movement be performed on the point of the toes. The joints of the knees and ankles must be perfectly free and elastic. The degree of

the intensity of the movement may be regulated by the height to which the foot is raised.

This exercise should be used where it is desirable to produce a sleepy feeling. It promotes the circulation of the blood, and is serviceable in cases of paralyzation of the muscles of the foot, and where a disposition to having cold feet exists

Exercise IX. Raise the leg and foot upward by the hip-joint, then downward. Keep the knee perfectly straight and immovable.

Exercise X. Assume Physical Pose. Bend forward, and then backward. Let the movement proceed from the hips.

The above exercise strengthens the muscles of the back, and is a preservative against paralyzation of the same.

Exercise XI. From the same position move the torso from right to left and vice-versâ. Perform from 10 to 30 times.

In the above exercise the lower muscles of the back and those of the hips are principally employed. A straining and stretching of the fore coat of the stomach on the opposite side takes place, causing the intestines to be gently moved from one side to the other, thus promoting the action of the organs of the trunk, and serving as a preservative against a disabled state of the muscles employed, and especially what is called a paralyzation of the spinal marrow.

Exercise XII. Make a circular movement of the torso from the hips, from left to right, and from right to left. Perform from 10—30 times.

This exercise is useful in cases of dyspepsia as it gives a universal impulse to the digestive organs.

It is advisable not to execute the trunk and head movements in quick time. The head, throat, and trunk contain organs of which the anatomical construction and physiological destination make it most unadvisable to move those parts rapidly.

Exercise XIII. Raise the right leg upward by the hip-joint. Raise the left leg upward by the hip-joint. 30 times.

Exercise XIV. Move the right leg to the right. Move the left leg to the left. 30 times.

Exercise XV. Raise right leg backward. Raise left leg backward. 30 times.

Exercise XVI. Rotate right leg backward. Rotate left leg backward. 30 times.

Exercise XVII. Rotate right leg forward. Rotate left leg forward. 30 times.

These exercises not only strengthen the muscles, but they also benefit the hip-joints and reduce superfluous flesh across the abdomen.

Exercise XVIII. Assume the Physical Pose. Move the shoulders forward. 30 times. Backward, 30 times.

Exercise XIX. Raise the shoulders as high as you can, then lower them gently. 30—50 times.

The above movement is of use in cases of incipient consumption, as it enlarges upward the cavity of the chest. Of more direct service is it against paralyzation of the shoulder muscles. In cases of unequal height of the shoulders, proceeding from a partial paralysis of one of them, or from curvature of the spine, this movement should be performed with only the defective shoulder.

Exercise XX. Raise the arms upward extended. Raise the arms until they touch above the head. Extend them in front until the palms of the hands touch. Extend them backward until the backs of the hands touch, if possible. Each movement 6 times.

This exercise strengthens the muscles of the arms, and promotes respiration.

Exercise XXI. Raise the arms from the elbows upward, with hands closed and facing each other; draw the shoulder-blades back, and then move them very slowly upward, downward and circularly, without a motion of the arms except what they receive from the shoulder-blades. This exercise tends directly to the expansion of the chest.

Exercise XXII. Rotate the head from left to right, and from right to left. Keep the body motionless 30 times.

Exercise XXIII. Turn the head on its axis, making a quarter of a circle, and bringing the chin nearly over the shoulders. 10 times.

These two movements set in motion all the muscles of the neck ; and are of service in cases of stiffness. They are also of great use against nervous giddiness. The latter soon disappears because the head soon becomes accustomed to all positions. If the tendency to giddiness be very great, perform this exercise in a sitting posture.

Exercise XXIV. Move the elbow upward and then bring it down. Rotate it, bringing the hand upward or downward.

Exercise XXV. Move the wrist upward—outward—downward—inward. Rotate it.

Exercise XXVI. Move the fingers upward—downward. Rotate them.

Exercise XXVII. 1. Hold out the right arm straight in front. Spread out the fingers. Close them.

2. Do the same with the left arm.

3. Repeat with both arms.

It is an indisputable although little regarded fact, that with respect to the fingers and to their functions, as well in the occupations of every day life as in the majority of bodily exercises in the way they are usually done, the *bending force* of the fingers is almost exclusively considered and pre-eminently developed in comparison with their *stretching force*. A necessary consequence of this over-energy of the flexors of the fingers is a physiological disproportion of the vital dynamics of the muscles of the fingers and of their

nerves, a disturbance of the natural proportion of those dynamics in the flexors and extensors of the fingers. Ling very rationally recommended that, in the stretchings and other movements of the arms, a strong stretching of the hands and fingers should also take place, thus supplying the above-mentioned deficiency.

The foregoing exercises have not only a specific value in the prevention or cure of certain diseases and deformities, but they are also highly useful in affording healthy exercise for every part of the human body. And for the latter purpose, they should be practised daily. They are also most serviceable in bringing the body under the control of the will.

The pupil will do well to learn to move the trunk and limbs freely and easily, according to the above directions, before he proceeds further in the study of *Æsthetic Gymnastics*.

NORMAL POISE.

Psycho-physical culture admits of no purely mechanical movements. The mind must co-operate with the body. In the exercises for practice, instead of thinking of the physical action merely, keep the thoughts concentrated as much as possible upon some result to be obtained by the practice. Some helpful thoughts—a peaceful scene or an agreeable object—are to be held with the different exercises.

Exercise I. Standing on both feet, the knees straight, the arms relaxed, bend the body slowly forward. Note the movement of the hips; they recede

as the torso goes forward. Keeping the hips as nearly stationary as possible, raise the torso to an upright position and push the crown of the head upward. Repeat 5—10 times.

In raising the torso the tendency will be to let it pass the vertical line; this must be prevented, otherwise the effect of the exercise will be to foster instead of to overcome a bad attitude. One can easily detect when the upper torso begins to tip backward, for as soon as it passes the vertical line—where the shoulders are in a line with the hips—there will be a perceptible forward movement of the hips.

It is important to appreciate the action of the backbone and the chest in this exercise. The movement for raising the torso begins in the hip-joints and is successively imparted to each vertebra; the natural curves in the backbone assert themselves, the chest is lifted into a position of self-respect, and the waist-muscles resume active duty.

Exercise II. Assume a careless standing position, the hips being forward, the knees slightly relaxed, the chest sunken and the head weakly inclined forward. Place the hands upon the hip-joints and keeping the shoulders perfectly passive, by a movement of the hip-joints bring the whole body into an attitude to correspond with the thought being held; viz, quiet, self-respect. Repeat 5—10 times.

The position at the commencement of this exercise represents the attitude of the body to express disease,

weakness, cowardice, despair, failure, hate, discouragement, grief, slavery, and all unpleasant and disagreeable thoughts, and feelings, or the attitude of the body uncontrolled by the soul. The posture afterwards assumed is the attitude of the body to express health, strength, courage, hope, success, love enthusiasm, joy, freedom, and all pleasant, agreeable or beautiful thoughts and feelings, or, in other words, the attitude of the body controlled by the soul.

Hence, from the pose of the body in sitting, standing, or walking, the thoughts, feelings, and often the character of the person may be read.

“For of the soul the body form doth take;
For soul is form, and doth the body make.”

Some patience may be necessary in perfecting this movement, although it is simple in itself; we are unaccustomed to call any particular part of the body into action and at the same time to command all other parts to be passive; our muscles are not well trained and often blunder in their work.

There is not any other single exercise that is so effective in producing a harmonious adjustment of the three main divisions of the body; the final result we seek—health, grace, and natural expression—are impossible without such adjustment.

When this movement is made correctly, the abdomen recedes, the chest and the entire torso rise and the double-curved line of beauty appears in the back. Nor can there be any mistaking the pronounced motion of the hip-joints under the hands; when this

motion is felt and the shoulders are kept passive, the effects mentioned will always follow.

Exercise III. Take a standing position with the weight equally on both feet. This is a breach of the rule of grace, allowed only for the purpose of performing certain exercises. While sustaining the weight rise very slowly and smoothly until the body is left standing on the extremities of the toes, and remain standing long enough to count ten without haste.

Exercise IV. Take a standing position with the weight entirely on the left foot, and slowly rise until the body has been lifted to the highest possible position, and remain standing while you slowly count five. Very slowly come down to the position originally assumed.

Take a standing position with the weight on the right foot, and rise and fall in the manner just described.

Exercise V. Take a standing position with the weight on both feet, without allowing the heels to touch the floor, and slowly cause the body to descend towards the heels, as though about to sit upon the heels. There must be no bending or leaning of the upper half of the body, the head and shoulders being as erect as when standing. This descent of the body is called a dipping exercise. The heels at this part of the exercise must not touch the floor, although there will be a strong desire to balance the body by resting upon the heels. Rise slowly until the body

has been lifted to the position assumed in the third exercise. Repeat 8 times.

Exercise VI. Take a standing position with the weight entirely on the left foot and cause the body to descend in the manner last described, and to rise in the same way. Under no circumstances must the heels touch the floor. This will be found exceedingly difficult, owing to the fact that very few persons possess sufficient strength in the limbs. A test of the correctness of the work will be found when the attempt is made to raise the body slowly and to lower it slowly. Reverse by performing the same exercise on the right foot.

Exercise VII. There is quite a distinction between a position on the balls of the feet and on the toes. In the latter the weight of the body is much farther forward than in the former. Exercise 5 is to be repeated exactly in the manner there described, excepting that during the entire exercise the weight must be kept altogether upon the front portions of the feet.

Exercise VIII. This will be a repetition of the 6th exercise, excepting that during its entire performance the weight is forward on the extreme front part of the foot. Not one person in a thousand will be able to do this well without a great deal of practice; and yet its acquirement is one of the greatest aids to a graceful carriage of the body. All these dipping exercises are beneficial, not only in the

acquirement of grace, but also in strengthening the entire body and especially the lower half.

Exercise IX. Take the position acquired by exercise 2; the weight being upon both feet which remain flat upon the ground. Keeping the knee, hip, and shoulder-joints stationary and moving the body as one member from the ankles to the crown of the head, sway slowly forward until the centre of gravity is directly over the balls of the feet; then sway backward until it is over the heels. Repeat 30 times, making the movement more slowly each time. Always discontinue the exercise with the body in the position obtained by swaying forward. This is the Normal Poise of the body. This poise is one of the best illustrations of conservation of energy. It is expressive of physical buoyancy; no light, springing movement can be made when the centre of gravity is over the heels. If we habitually kept the centre of gravity over the balls of the feet, we should at all times be ready for any movement, and the abdominal muscles would keep their physical tone much longer than they otherwise would, even if no special exercises were taken for strengthening them. All our sufferings and sins are due to lack of poise—physical, mental, or spiritual.

Exercise X. Standing in the Normal Poise, rise slowly on the balls of the feet; hold this position steadily for a moment, then, keeping the body from the hips up, bend the knees as far as possible.

From this position rise on the balls of the feet and repeat the exercise.

By concentrating the thoughts upon control and precision, marked results will be obtained in even a few days' practice; but only after months of practice will precision of movement be approached. Some may wonder how so simple an exercise can be so long practised with continued improvement. A nicer direction of the nerve-force will be acquired, the movement will be made with less and less effort until, finally, buoyancy of mind and body will result from its practice. This exercise establishes the centre of gravity over the balls of the feet, it develops control, strengthens the leg and ankle muscles and gives flexibility to the feet.

Exercise XI. Advance one foot as in a step; transfer the weight to the advanced foot and rise on the ball of that foot, letting the toe of the back foot lightly rest upon the ground. Slowly come down upon the forward foot, keeping the centre of gravity over the ball, and then rise again. Advance the other foot and repeat the exercise.

If this exercise be practised sufficiently to enable one to hold the poise on the ball of one foot with ease and steadiness, while he reads or repeats a page from a favourite author, it will give an appreciable gain in controlling the nerve-force. These poising exercises are also an important aid in intellectual

pursuits. Giving earnest thought to accomplishing these exercises trains the mind so that it more readily grasps any other subject.

Exercise XII. Take any standing position and walk forward a few steps and suddenly stop with the weight of the body entirely on the ball of the advanced foot, the toe of the retired foot simply touching the floor. This stop must be sudden, and yet the balance of the body must be perfectly preserved without any movement or effort to seek an equilibrium. Repeat the exercise by walking a little more rapidly, and stopping as before. Both feet should be used in turn, so that poise may be acquired as well on one as on the other. This exercise is very advantageous to all persons who wish to walk, dance, or make any movement gracefully. If the body is too far forward in the act of walking, this defect will show itself by leaning forward and bending the body in the attempt to preserve the balance. If the body in ordinary walking be carried too far backward, this defect, likewise will show itself by a similar attempt to preserve the balance in some quick backward movement. This floundering about is very awkward, and may be overcome by the faithful practice of this exercise.

Exercise XIII. Take a standing position with the weight on both feet, both heels together and the toes bending out as in a military position. Throw all the weight now on the left foot, the heel being

slightly lifted from the floor, and cross the right foot in front of the left leg, the toe of the right foot touching the floor. Now place the weight somewhat upon the toe of the right foot, but most of it resting on the ball of the left. While the weight is thus being sustained in good poise, turn the body entirely round without allowing the heels to touch the floor. To do this well, the pupil should face the side of the room squarely. Before commencing to turn and making the revolution he should find himself facing the side of the room just as before. The weight will now be found to be chiefly on the ball of the right foot, and the left leg will be crossed in front of the right, the toe of the left just touching the floor. In the turn just made the pupil swung around in a circle towards the left. To make another turn from the position just reached, he must move the body in a circle towards the right. This should be done in a single continuous sweep. If done correctly, the pupil will find himself exactly in the position first taken, the weight on the left foot and the right leg crossed in front of it. Perform this exercise 20 times.

DELSARTE DECOMPOSING EXERCISES.

Decomposing or devitalising is used to signify a temporary suspension of action. An illustration of the devitalized state is seen when we are in the act of falling asleep. All day long the muscles of the

neck are supporting the comparatively heavy weight of the head; if it were not so, the head would always incline at one side or in front of the neck, unless the centre of gravity falls backward, in which case the head is thrown in that direction. When we are awake the muscles are in a state of activity, and by long practice support the head without producing a sense of fatigue. Whenever consciousness leaves the brain, will-power ceases to be exerted, and the muscles become relaxed. This condition of inactivity is a devitalised state of the head and neck. This is the principle we are to carry out in the following exercises.

The value of the decomposing exercises will be apparent if we bear in mind that the re-enforcement of nerve power is always available if we only place ourselves in a condition favourable to its reception. When mind and body act without tension this force repairs the waste that attends activity. Tension is an obstruction to the entrance of this force. Assuredly, it is of the first importance to disable this foe to health—even to life itself. How is this to be accomplished? By performing the decomposing exercises—that is, by relaxation. Relaxation puts the organism in the state of receptivity;—recuperation follows. Relaxation is more than diversion, more than an occasional holiday, an evening of pleasure, a summer's outing. Relaxation means the release of the organs and the tissues from tension; it means a husbanding of nerve-force; it means the habitual, muscular repose of any part, or of the whole, of the body when it

is not in action for some definite purpose; it means a letting go of one's self at will. This is the only remedy for exhaustion; when relaxation is secured, nature takes care of restoration. By tension the nerve-centres are depleted; by means of relaxation they are re-charged with force.

It is worthy of notice here, that it is customary with the Arab Merchants when travelling across the desert to halt at every oasis. They throw themselves under the grateful shade, and relax completely every nerve and muscle in the body. Although well-nigh worn out with exhaustion, this rest which seldom continues beyond an hour, and frequently takes up much less time thoroughly re-invigorates their spent powers. The immense physical exertion of which this nomad people, as well as the gypsies that roam Spain and Bohemia are capable, lies in the knowledge of the art of relaxing the system, which enables them to restore exhausted nature by an exercise of the will. We observe the same principle at work in the Turkish bath. After the operation of shampooing, there is a season of perfect relaxation and repose. It regalanises the nerve-centres, collects the scatted forces, and in this way recuperates the frame.

Exercise I. Let the fingers fall from the knuckles as if dead; shake them. The vital force should be withdrawn from the fingers, stopping at the knuckles.

Repeat 40 times with the right hand, and then with the left.

Exercise II. Hold out the arm at full length. Devitalize the hand; it drops from the wrist as if dead. Shake it upward and downward, backward and forward, sideways, and then rotate it. Repeat with each hand 40 times. Do not use the muscles.

Exercise III. Hold the elbows at the sides, the thumb lightly touching the chest near the shoulders, and withdraw the nerve-force from the muscles at the elbows. The forearm and the hand are relaxed, and will fall to the sides.

Exercise IV. The arms hanging at the sides relax the hands, and then, keeping the elbows unbent, raise the arms as high as you can. Hold this position for two seconds, then relax the arms. No force must be used; the dead weight of the devitalized arms must bring them down.

Exercise V. The arms hanging at the sides, vitalize only the upper arms and raise them until they are level with the shoulders. Next energise the fore-arms, then the hands, and lastly the fingers. Now reverse the action, devitalise the fingers first, next the hands, then the fore-arms, and last of all, the upper arms.

This exercise is beneficial in two ways: it empowers one to control the direction of the nerve-force; and it also tends to impart grace to all movements of the arms.

Exercise VI. Devitalise the head; it will fall to one side, and then, impelled by its own weight, make a semi-circular movement, such as is to be seen in persons sleeping in a chair.

Exercise VII. Decompose the torso. Begin with the head; let it fall to one side; the head will draw the shoulder; and without an effort the torso will slowly droop.

Exercise VIII. "Hold the head in its normal poise. Look attentively at a picture in the room. Fully inflate the lungs three or four times, allowing the diaphragm to descend and the abdomen to rise; then let the eyelids slowly close, and the lower jaw droop and fall.

In persons having weak wills, the lower jaw is often unintentionally relaxed; in imbeciles it is habitually relaxed. In persons of hard, cruel natures, or of positive convictions, the jaw is firmly set. In poets, artists, lovers, combined strength and tenderness are revealed in closed lips and jaw."

If the eyelids are perfectly relaxed, there will not be the slightest tremor in them. Nervous persons, brain workers, and people "sight seeing," would be much less fatigued at the close of the day if they would occasionally relax the eyelids for a minute or two; over-straining the optic nerve affects the entire nervous system, injuriously. Moreover, seeing or listening under a physical strain robs one of some of his power of perception and of retention.

Exercise IX. Raise the foot from the floor, and shake it as you do the hand. The foot must fall from the ankle devitalised. Perform this exercise seated in a chair.

Exercise X. Devitalise the lower leg from the knee; shake it.

Exercise XI. Stand on one leg and swing the free leg by a motion of the body. Devitalise it.

Raise the leg with the movement of a horse pawing the ground; then let it fall devitalised.

Exercise XII. The muscles that support the shoulders and that keep them well apart, as well as hold the chest well forward, may be easily devitalised by what is called a collapse of the chest. This devitalised position is used in humility, sorrow, and kindred moods. It is very important in dramatic work. Repeat 20 times.

Exercise XIII. This is simply a combination of the foregoing exercises. Seat yourself in a chair, and by a mental effort take out all the strength from the waist-muscles. The head and torso will fall forward in a partially lateral position. Next devitalise the legs. The result will be that the body must fall.

The ability to devitalise the whole body has saved many persons from serious injury. A lady who had mastered the devitalising exercises slipped upon an icy step. Seeing that she must fall some distance, she instantly devitalised the entire body, and before she was able to regain her feet, she had fallen and slid

over ten yards, but had suffered no injury whatever, not even a bruise. It is often wondered why an intoxicated person may fall great distances without harm, and the explanation is, that a person under the influence of liquor is pretty thoroughly devitalised.

HARMONIC POISE.

“Dynamic wealth,” said Delsarte, “depends on the number of articulations brought into play: and when two parts follow the same direction, they cannot be simultaneous without an injury to the law of opposition.”

The opposition of the three parts of the body is one of the most beautiful things I know of. Hour after hour has flown by me unheeded as I examined one after another the exquisite forms of gods and heroes in the great museum of the Louvre; and no matter what the character the marble god portrayed, no matter what incident,—battle or peace, pleasure or grief, anger or sorrow,—the god or hero showed his race by the divine lines of opposition. Those lines are ideal, and, of course, only in the ideal are they truth. They indicate a moral poise which should always be, but alas! in our fallen human nature, is not always found. So some emotions, having in them no elements of the sublime, cannot be represented by the body in opposition.

Delsarte himself tells us that he studied the poses of the statues of antiquity for fifteen years. It was in consequence of this period of study that the master

condemned the parallel movements of the limbs in gesture, and recommend attitudes which he called inverse.

The human figure consists of two symmetrical sides, as they are opposite to us in situation, so are they in the actions which they perform. In gesture the extremities of opposite sides are opposed. When the arm of one side is advanced, the arm of the other is to be withdrawn; when the arm of one side is elevated, that of the other is to be depressed; nor are the leg and arm of opposite sides to be advanced or withdrawn together, for that, instead of contrast, would be correspondence, and instead of graceful attitude would be contortion. The simple principle of elegant contrast in attitude and motion is, that while either of the extremities of one side is advanced, both those of the other must be withdrawn, and when either of the extremities of one side is elevated, the corresponding one of the other must be depressed. When the arm of one side is raised, the leg of the other is to be correspondingly elevated; and when the arm of one side is carried before the head, the leg of the opposite side is to be thrown behind its fellow; and although the movement in one is forward, and in the other backward, yet they perfectly correspond, because the greater number of the articulations of the upper extremity have an anterior aspect, and those of the lower a posterior one—the one extremity as naturally bends backward as the other forward, and therefore, though the names of these motions differ, yet they

are perfectly suitable to the consentaneous elevation of the opposite arm and leg, and their corresponding extension is perfectly suitable to their consentaneous depression. Thus the consentaneous elevation and inflexion, and the depression and extension of the opposite arm and leg, afford a principle of harmonic attitude and movement.

The simple principle, then, of harmony in attitude and motion is that the upper extremity of one side and the lower of the other must be elevated and inflected, depressed and extended together.

First take your weight on both feet, toes turned out, heels near together. A normal form will have the curves of a line of beauty, viz : two convex curves separated and joined by a concave one. The head and leg form the convex curves, the torso forms the concave one, the head and the leg sympathizing. Now, when by an act of will we change the weight so that it no longer rests equally on both feet, we must always bear in mind the fact that the head sympathises with the strong leg, that is, the head should incline to the side of the leg that bears the weight; while as we observed above, the torso has an opposite curve from head and leg, and so should incline from the strong leg, thus always presenting nature's line of beauty.

Perform the following exercises slowly and with accuracy.

Exercise I. Stand erect, with the weight of the body on the right leg. Incline the head to the right and the body to the left.

Exercise II. Standing as before, let the weight fall on the left leg. Incline the head to the left and the body to the right.

Exercise III. Change from left to right, observing the harmonic balance of the head and of the torso.

Exercise IV. Advance the right leg, let the weight be upon it. The head must incline forward, the torso backward.

Exercise V. Place the weight on the rear leg. Lean the head backward, and the body forward.

VI. Sway forward until the weight falls on the fore leg. The head must incline forward and the body backward.

Exercise VII. Sway forward until the weight is on the balls of the feet. The heels must not be raised from the ground. The head must incline forward, and the body slightly backward.

Exercise VIII. Sway backward until the weight is upon the heels, reversing the positions of the head and of the torso.

Exercise IX. Sway backward and forward.

Exercise X. Standing with the weight on both feet, turn the torso to the right, and the head to the left. Then reverse the position.

SITTING EXERCISES.

Exercise I. Incline the torso forward, the head backward. Reverse the position.

Exercise II. Sitting as before, incline the torso to the right, and at the same time incline the head to the left. Reverse the position.

Exercise III. Incline the torso forward and to the right, and simultaneously incline the head backward and to the left. Reverse the position.

Exercise IV. With torso forward to the right move from the waist the torso and the head to the left. Reverse the position.

Exercise V. With torso backward to the left, move from waist, the torso and the head to the right. Reverse the position.

Exercise VI. Lean to the left and then to the right as far as you can, with the head and the torso moving in opposition.

Exercise VII. Lean backward and then forward, moving the head and the torso in opposition.

PARALLELISMS.

Movements are said to be parallel when they are made in the same direction. Suppose, I am pointing out an object to your notice; the first thing I do is to turn my head towards it and to look at it, and also by a movement of my hand to direct your attention to it. But the one movement must precede

the other: as I remove my head from it, the hand must move towards it. In all such movements, as the head moves in one direction, the arm should move in the other. The one movement should follow the other; they should be successive. Suppose I greet a friend in the street, both hand and body are inclined towards him. They should not, however, be simultaneous; the movement of the hand should follow that of the body. This is called the law of sequence.

Should the movements be in opposition, that is, made in opposite directions—the head moved, say, to the right and the arm to the left—then, the movements should not follow each other; they must be simultaneous. In oratory and in acting, the order of sequence is, first facial expression, next gesture, and lastly speech.

In issuing a command both the head and the hand are advanced; they should not, however, move forward at the same time. Should it be necessary to raise the head and the hand, both must not be elevated together. In bowing to a friend, when the hand has been lifted to the breast, the head and the hand ought not to be brought down together.

The exercises in harmonic poise may be made parallel by reversing the direction of the head or of the arms in each exercise.

If such movements ever become necessary—and they often do—they should be successive, that is one

should follow and not accompany the other. There are hundreds of movements that occur in oratorical and elocutionary gesture which are both parallelisms and in opposition, according to their diversified meanings.

“The opposition of the agents is the harmony of gesture. Harmony is born of contrasts. From opposition, equilibrium is born in turn. Equilibrium is the great law of gesture, and condemns parallelisms; and these are the laws of equilibrium :

I. The forward inclination of the torso corresponds to the movement of the leg in the opposite direction.

II. When one arm is added to the weight of the already inclined torso, the other arm must rise to form a counterpoise.

III. In gazing into a well, the two arms must be drawn backward if the body is equally supported by the two legs; in like manner the two arms may be carried in front if the torso bends backward. This is allowable only in the first attitude of the base,* or in a similar attitude.

The harmonic law of gesture is the static law *par excellence*. It is of childlike simplicity. We employ it in walking. Also when we carry a weight in one hand, the other rises. The law consists in placing the acting levers in opposition, and thus

* An equal balance of the body upon its two legs.

realising equilibrium. All that is in equilibrium is harmonized. All ancient art is based upon this opposition of levers. Modern art, with but few exceptions, is quite the contrary.

Here is an example of the observance of this rule: If the head and arms are in action, the head must move in opposition to the arms and the hand. If both move in the same direction, there is a defect in equilibrium, and awkwardness results.

When the arm rises to the head, the head bends forward and meets it half-way. The reverse is true. Every movement in the hand has its responsive movement in the head. If the head advances, the hand withdraws. The movements must balance, so that the body may be in equilibrium and remain balanced.

Here is the difference between ancient and modern art. Let us suppose a statue of Corneille reading his works. To-day we should pose it with one arm and leg advanced. This is parallelism. Formerly the leg would have been opposed to this movement of the arm, because there should be here the expansion of the author toward his work, and this expansion results precisely from an opposition of levers.

We know the ancient gladiator; we do exactly opposite from him in fencing.

Modern art makes the man walk with the leg and arm parallel. Ancient art would have the leg opposed to the arm.

It is through opposition that the smile expresses moral sadness. This law of opposition must be observed in the same member. For example, the hand should be opposed to the arm. Thus we have magnificent spheroidal movements which are graceful and also have considerable force. Thus all the harmonies occur in one same whole, in one same truth. In a word, all truths interpenetrate, and when a thing is true from one point of view, it is so from all."

WALKING.

Exercise I. Advance one foot and stand with the weight on it. From the thigh raise the upper part of the free leg straight out in front, until it is at a right angle to the trunk; at the same time, bend the fore leg back, making an acute angle at the knee. Hold this position steadily for a moment and then relax the fore leg, letting it fall like a dead weight from the knee. Hold this position as before; lift the heel of the foot which sustains the weight, and for a moment stand steadily poised on the ball of that foot; after which, bring the ball of the free foot lightly to the ground in a forward step, at the same time transferring the weight to it. Lift the back leg as before and repeat the movement.

This exercise is often done imperfectly; the upper leg being lifted only a trifle or the heel of the back foot not being raised until the ball of the other foot is on the ground. The benefits of the exercise are in proportion to the thoroughness of its execution.

The head should be naturally poised and the eyes fixed on some point a little above their own level, if the head droops or is thrust forward, it will cost an effort to preserve the balance.

The above exercise develops lightness and elasticity of step; these are due to the sweep of motion from the hip-joint, and to the relaxed fore leg that gives a light, caressing impact to the foot as it touches the ground. The fore leg must not be placed in the required position, but in each step it must be wholly freed as the fore leg of a greyhound is, and the motion in stepping must be allowed to flow successively from the thigh to the toes.

This exercise strengthens the muscles, aids in preserving the equilibrium, and develops the ability to energise and to relax a particular part of the body at will.

Exercise II. Stand erect, weight on the right foot; with the motor power in the thigh, easily swing the left leg backward letting only the tip of the toe touch the ground. Slowly transfer the weight to this leg and gradually yield the entire foot to the ground. As the back foot is pressed to the ground, raise the heel of the forward foot and swing that leg back, thus making a continuous backward walk.

When taken slowly this walk produces a soothing effect and has often dispelled headache—pain in the temples or the forehead. By reversing the usual

order of locomotion, going backward instead of forward, the pressure on the cerebrum seems to be lessened and the entire nervous system is tranquillised in consequence.

Flexibility of the feet is also developed by this exercise; sometimes, there is no more spring in these members, than there would be if each foot had but one bone in it, instead of being the wonderful complicated arch that it is. The structure of this arch is indicative of the elastic movement that the foot should make in stepping.

If one walks gently backward across the room several times and then without interrupting the motion, changes the direction and walks forward, in the first few forward steps the rhythmical motion induced by the backward walk will be preserved. By continual practice a light buoyant step will become habitual.

Exercise III. Put a short rounded stick straight across the back under the arms, which are thrown backward and bent at right angles. In this manner the pupil walks up and down the room for from ten to fifteen minutes, preserving as much as possible the upright position of the body. One principal point is the drawing of the shoulders back and down at the same time. A good carriage is thus promoted, and that position and bearing of the arms and shoulders which it is always difficult to preserve if the exercise be not performed with something to hold. The attention is to be directed exclusively to the upright bearing of the body while thus in motion.

The above movement contributes to the strengthening of the muscles of the shoulders, back, and foot, and also promotes and confirms a habitually noble and healthy carriage. It is therefore designed as a remedy against a one-sided, loose, and unsteady carriage of the back, and in general of the whole body. This bad habit often shows itself in young people who are growing fast, and its effects are then most prejudicial (defective growth, faulty formation of the chest, &c), extending their influence over the whole after life. Bearing burdens on the head results in an erect spine and an elastic gait. Observing persons who have visited Switzerland, Italy, or the Gulf States, have observed a thousand verifications of this physiological law.

Exercise IV. Place a heavy weight upon the head. Hold the body erect, hips and shoulders thrown far back. For from five to fifteen minutes walk up and down your room: turn the toes, first, inward as far as possible; second, outward; third walk on the tips of the toes; fourth, on the heels; fifth, on the right heel and left toe; sixth, on the left heel and right toe; seventh, walk without bending the knees; eighth, bend the knees, so that you are nearly sitting on the heels while walking; ninth, walk with the right leg bent at the knee, rising at each step on the straight left leg; tenth, walk with the left leg bent, rising at each step on the straight right leg.

With these ten different modes of walking, the

various muscles of the back will receive the most invigorating exercise.

SITTING DOWN.

The body should be perfectly in front of the chair, with the back towards it. The weight of the body should fall entirely upon the hind foot. As you descend, the body should be supported by the leg nearest to the chair, the bending of the knee must not interfere with the weight.

SITTING.

Let the pupil sit down upon a chair, and while doing so let him remember the definition I have given of Parallelism. Draw both feet as far back as you can. Let both heels touch as it were, the same imaginary line, and turn outward in the same direction. It will be found on examination that there are three parallelisms here. They make the body appear very stiff and awkward. To avoid them, advance both feet forward, keeping them near together. Put one foot a little in advance of the other, and turn the right foot slightly to the right, and the left a little to the left hand. Do not sit erect, as though an iron bar were running down your body, but incline a little forward, not allowing the back of the body to touch the back of the chair.

RISING FROM THE CHAIR.

When you rise from a sitting position, let the weight rest entirely upon the rear foot. As the weight

of the body is behind this foot, you must, as you rise, sway forward in order to obtain a perfect equilibrium.

BOWING.

Stand easily erect. Take two or three steps forward, then stop, allowing the weight to rest entirely on the advanced foot. It is of little consequence which foot is in advance. The poise of the body should be easy and graceful. Before attempting the bow, I am about to describe, it will be good practice for the pupil to transfer the weight from the forward to the retired foot and vice versa. This should be practised until it can be done with perfect ease. It is not possible to make a graceful bow unless the body be in perfect equilibrium. Stand as directed, with the weight on the forward foot, bend the neck and incline the body from the waist forward, and move the shoulders slightly in the same direction. The chest will be slightly drawn inward. Keep your eyes fixed upon the person to whom the bow is directed. Now bend the head. During the progress of the movements transfer the weight to the hind foot. The action should begin at the waist, and then before the former movement ceases that of the shoulders should commence, lastly incline the head downward by bending the neck. In this action, is to be observed a fine illustration of the law of Sequence. 1. The waist is moved. 2. The shoulders. 3. The neck and head. The three movements make an opposition with the backward movement of the body as the weight is

transferred from the one foot to the other. This exercise should be perseveringly practised until it can be perfectly performed. The result will be a graceful carriage. Remember that as the waist bends, the removal of the weight from the advanced foot commences; as the shoulders are brought forward the weight rests equally upon both feet; and that as the head inclines the weight is planted firmly on the rear foot.

In bowing to an equal the eyes are level; to a superior, lowered; to an inferior, raised, or look down in kindly condescension. In bowing before an audience, a slight inclination of the head and shoulders, slowly performed, is quite sufficient. After the bow has been performed, raise the head and shoulders, and direct the eyes forward.

A lady, on the platform, should curtsey, not bow, to her audience. It should be performed quietly and gracefully, and ought not to be too low.

Exercise II. Bow to the right, turning the body a little in that direction (only the eighth part of a circle) In the last moments of the turning the bow begins.

Exercise III. Turn and bow to the left.

Exercise IV. Bow while walking. Place the right foot forward in a curve, with an easy and moderately quick swing, while the heel is raised forward in such a way that when set down, it is

one length of the foot distant from the toes of the left foot. The weight of the body is thus thrown on the forward foot, and the heel of the back foot is a little raised. In the last moments of this movement, the bow begins. The knee of the anterior foot is a little bent; the right arm hangs down, while the other is slightly raised and the hand brought near the chest, or it may press easily against it. During the raising of the body, bring backwards the forward foot.

Exercise V. Perform the above exercise with the left foot in advance.

When you salute a person passing you in the street, the arm used should be the one more distant from that person.

EQUILIBRIUM POISE MOVEMENTS.

The exercises under this head will, as the word equilibrium implies, impart elasticity to the whole body, and place its movements under the control of the mind. In the performance of them, every joint and muscle is exercised and invigorated; and not only is health promoted and vigour increased, but a graceful and dignified bearing is also secured.

Exercise I.

1. Assume Physical Pose; right foot forward, arms in harmony with the attitude—the right raised above the head with a graceful curve; the left bent at the elbow and with the hand close to the left breast, eyes looking upward. Sway the body forward very

slowly, until it rests on the ball of the right foot and on the toes of the left.

2. Slowly move backward, moving the right foot back, changing the position of the hands, and then sway forward on the left foot.

3. Move the left foot backward, turn the right foot to the right, and sway to the right.

4. Left foot to the left, and sway to the left.

5. Bring the right foot backward, and poise backward.

6. Left foot backward and sway backward.

7. Walk forward three steps with bent knees, and then backward three steps inclining the whole body slightly forward.

Each of these poises should glide so easily and naturally into the succeeding one that the six should have the appearance of but one exercise. In the above exercises every joint and muscle of the body is brought into play.

Exercise II. Poise as in the last exercise. Raise the free foot entirely from the floor for a second, and then slowly bend backward until the weight falls upon both feet in the first position.* Move the arms according to the directions already given under the head of opposition.

* The heels close together, and the feet turned out equally, so as to form more than a right angle.

1. Sway forward, with the right foot in advance, raise the left foot from the floor, and allow the body to rest upon the ball of the right foot.

2. Sway forward with the left foot in advance, raise the right foot from the floor, let the body rest upon the ball of the left foot.

3. Sway to the right, raise the left foot from the floor, and let the weight fall upon the ball of the right foot.

4. Sway to the left, raise the right foot from the floor, let the weight fall upon the ball of the left foot.

5. Sway backward on the right foot, raising the left from the floor.

6. Sway backward on the left foot, raising the right from the floor.

7. Walk forward three steps with bent knees, and then backward three steps, inclining the whole body slightly forward.

Exercise III. 1. Assume Physical Pose; right foot forward; hands upon the hips. Sway the body very slowly forward, bending the knee of the forward leg, until the body rests on the ball of the right foot and on the toes of the left.

2. Sway the body slowly back, moving the right leg backward, and bending the knee of that leg, sway forward on the left leg.

3. Move left foot backward, turn right foot to the right, and bending the knee of the right leg sway the body to the right.

4. Turn the left foot to the left, and bending the knee of the left leg sway backward.

5. Bring the right foot backward, and bending the knee of the right leg sway backward.

6. Bring the left foot backward, and bending the knee of the left leg, sway backward.

Exercise I. KNEELING.

Walk forward three steps; pause for a moment with the right foot in advance, bring the right foot backward then kneel slowly on the right knee, slowly inclining the body forward. Rise, bring the left foot slowly backward, and bend the upper part of the body forward.

2. Kneel on left knee.

3. Kneel on both knees. To arise, bring first the right knee upward, resting the body lightly on the ball of the foot; and then with a slight inclination of the body forward, raise the left knee, and arise, bowing the head.

4. The same as 3rd, employing left knee first.

Exercise. GRAND SALAAM.

1. Walk forward three steps; pause for a moment with the right foot in advance, bring the right foot

backward, then kneel on the right knee. Before rising incline the body forward very slowly, three times, until the forehead touches the floor, thus giving the Grand Salaam.

2. Same as the foregoing except that the pupil kneels on the left knee.

Exercise FALLING.

Kneel rapidly, then allow the body to fall over to the right or left; arise rapidly to kneeling position again, then to erect position as quickly as possible.

A PREVENTIVE OF CONSUMPTION.

With persons labouring under dyspepsia, torpid liver, constipation, and of consumptive tendency, the special indications are to keep the lungs expanded, and to promote the action of the digestive organs.

Persons of sedentary habits, or whose occupations debar them from much out-door exercise might maintain their health by devoting twenty minutes twice a day to the following exercises.

Exercise I. Let the pupil purify the air in the lungs thoroughly, by drawing in the abdominal muscles upon the diaphragm, throwing the chest forward, and expiring all the air out of the lungs possible; then inhale slowly till the lungs are filled to their utmost capacity, retain the whole volume of air in the lungs for an *instant*, and then expire or blow it out as completely as possible. This may be repeated from

half a dozen to a dozen times, which will serve, in most cases, to decarbonise the lungs effectually.

Some persons not accustomed to gymnastic respiratory movements may experience, at first, some degree of vertigo or dizziness, but this will soon wear off. Such persons should, however, be gentle in their first exercises.

Exercise II. Very slowly raise the arms as high as you can, and then bring them down quickly and forcibly, as in the act of chopping of wood. Inspire as the arms rise, and exhale as they descend. Fully inflate the lungs. Practise for five minutes.

Exercise III. Move the arms as in mowing. Bring the right hand and the right foot forward at the same time. The left foot forward as the scythe is brought backward. Inspire as the arms move to the right and exhale with the return movement.

2. Extend the movement so as to bring the points of the fingers as near to the floor as you are able. Inhale and exhale as in the previous exercise.

Exercise IV. Throw one arm forward as you draw the other back, precisely as though you were striking at an object with one hand, and drawing it towards you with the other.

Exercise V. The joints of the lower extremities should lastly be specially brought into play, by performing the dipping exercise a few times.

Exercise VI. The exercises may be concluded with any familiar dancing step, or with the *trotting movement*, which consists of hopping on the points of the toes, first with one foot, and then with the other. This movement may be easy or severe, as it is prolonged on one foot, and according to the height of the hop. In moderation, it is an excellent sleep-promoting and soothing exercise for nervous invalids. Perform 40 times.

NERVOUSNESS.

Not only does the mind help to form the body, but pantomimic expression affects the mind or soul. If you remain for a little time in an attitude expressive of deep dejection, you will feel, in a greater or less degree, a corresponding mental condition, while a buoyant, strong attitude will often act as a tonic to the mind as well as to the body.

Cultivate the habit of completely relaxing for two or three minutes even in the busiest hour of a busy day. Let the head hang heavily upon the chest; close the eyes, and make the mind as nearly blank as possible. Re-enforcement will follow.

2. Practise the relaxing exercises, every day. In this way the nerve-force will be conserved by withdrawing it from the extremities and the surface of the body, and husbanding it at the centres. Relaxation is the sluice for the relief of the over pressure on the nerve-dams. The soothing motions of the

Delsarte gymnastics produce an effect both restful and recuperative upon the nervous system.

3. Avoid all restless, fidgetty movements of the body, learn to keep it in repose.

4. Take a standing position, with the hands at the sides, the weight entirely upon one foot, and look steadily at some part of the wall of the room, which is on the same height as the eyes, and directly in front of the body. The eyes must not be allowed to wink for three minutes. The hands must receive careful attention, for a nervous person first shows lack of ease by the twitching of the hands, or a constant movement of the fingers, and then by a constant desire to wink. This position should be maintained for three minutes, and the body should not be allowed to sway, the elbow should not be allowed to move, nor should any other indication of restlessness be permitted during that time. This should be practised four times a day devoting each time three minutes to it. It may be difficult to perform, and no person will find it easy.

INSOMNIA.

1. When in bed, relax the whole body, until you experience a sensation of its heaviness.

2. Banish from the mind all anxious and worrying thoughts. Concentrate all your thoughts upon one subject. The value of this lies in the fact that it is not difficult to break from this single hold upon consciousness; and when that is done, sleep will supervene.

3. Assume a standing position, take a deep breath. Stretch out the arms laterally, at the same time rising on the balls of the feet. Maintain the position for some seconds, relax arms, and exhale.

4. Perform the same exercise with the arms out horizontally in front.

5. Perform the same exercise with the arms upward as high as you can carry.

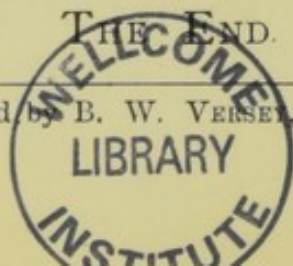
6. Repeat the three movements as though they were but one. Be careful to inspire and exhale as directed above.

7. Sit erect with the feet resting lightly upon the floor. Look steadily at some object on the wall, making at the same time six deep inspirations. Let the eyelids droop, and stoop the head; gradually relax the body down to the hips; the torso will sway forward until it reaches the lap. In returning to the original position, begin by vitalising the hip-joints, next the vertebræ then the head, and lastly open the eyes.

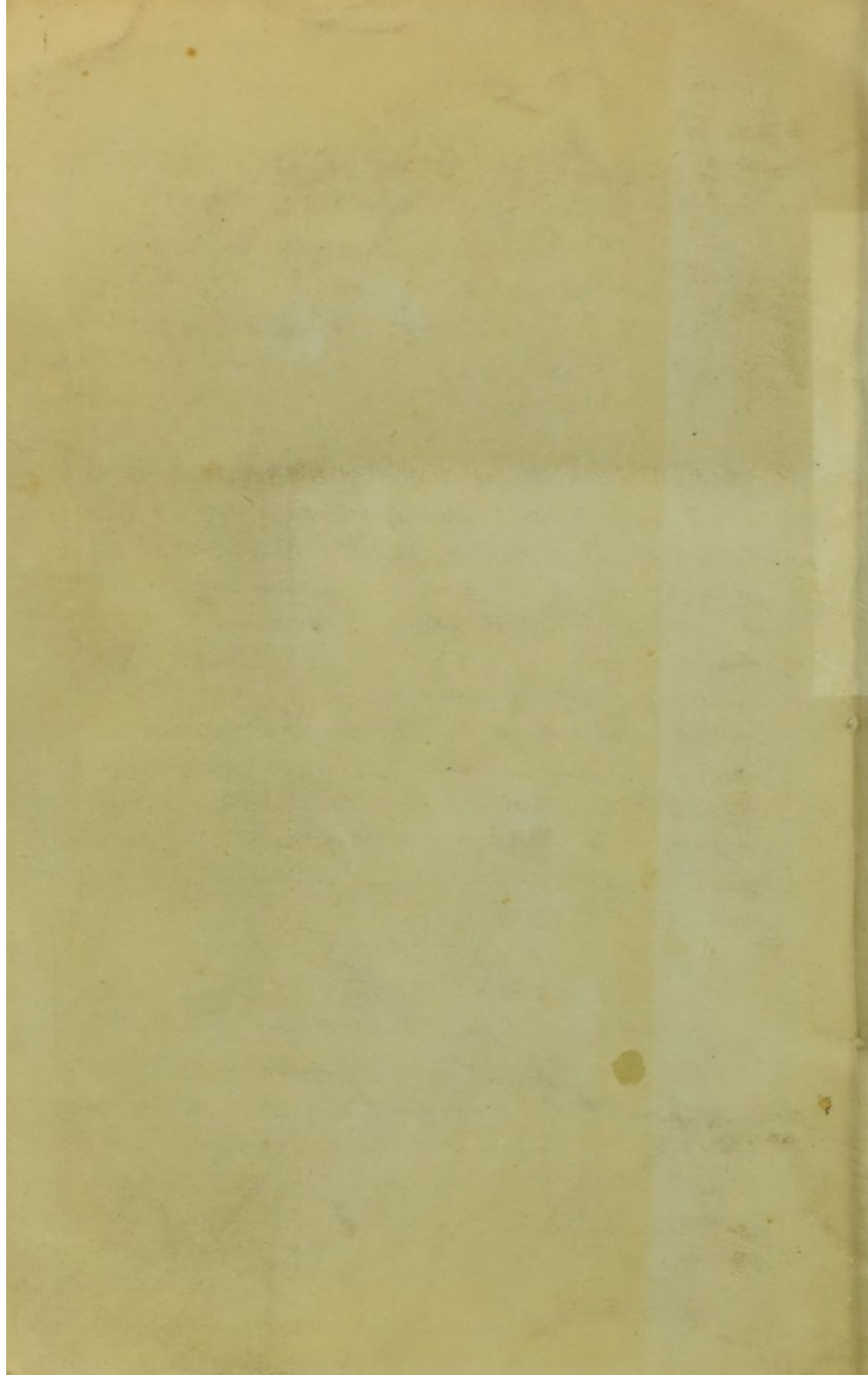
8. Lie down. Very slowly raise the arms as high as you can carry them, the hands being relaxed. Slowly lower the arms, letting the fingers first touch the coverlet, then relax the hand, the fore-arm, the upper-arm. Perform this exercise several times. At each repetition more slowly.

9. Swing in a suspended couch. This exercise is very useful in alleviating pain and in producing sleep.

THE END.







I.R.M. Jan/26

