AMUSEMENT AND EXERCISE FOR THE OLD.

Social stimulus is always a great quickener, but if nature desires to recreate itself in genuine freedom, it must be in the society of its equals. If you could bring a dozen very old people together, to play and be merry, and could make them all cordially believe in this as right and proper, and eminently to be desired, and as the only wholesome tonic for dignified and respectable men and women of three-score and-ten, you would inaugurate a new era. Christmas play, with all the young folks present, can never have a tithe of the relish which these old people's carnivals, freely dedicated to health and merriment, might easily command. A whittling club for the dear old Yankee octogenarians, would be no bad idea. They could hardly play cricket or base ball; but it would do my soul good to see an old people's gymnasium established—nobody admitted under seventy-five. I can see how quickened pride would straighten crooked backs—how good fellowship would lubricate dry joints—and how jovial laughter would fatten thin ribs. Generous emulation would make the old people swing on their parallel bars, climb dizzying ladders, dance Virginia reels, and almost stand on their heads and turn somersets, as they used to seventy years ago. In these days, when "muscle is looking up," the gymnast should certainly turn his attention to the aches and rheumatisms of the suffering grandparents. He can do them more good than all the doctors, if he will prescribe wisely and in moderation. His cures would be little short of miraculous; but, before some dear old conservatives of our acquaintance follow his advice, I suppose we shall all be in the millenium. Exercise is all very well for growing boys and sturdy men; but is absolutely indispensable to the health and happiness of all old people and invalids. Graduate it with the nicest skill and discretion; but, in the name of humanity, do not insist that every old person shall keep the free use of his muscles, and be able to war successfully against gout and palsy.

"Don't know about it—I am getting to be very stiff already," says a stout gentleman of fifty.

To be sure you are, my dear sir; but if you will wear soft flannel next your heart, and fall in love anew with vigorous measures, I warrant you renewed youth, to return with all the suppleness of five-and-twenty. Exercise will exercise stiffness, and leave you a serviceable backbone still, morally and physically. You are ageing already: but many a circus rider, at your years, despite his reckless disposition, can rival M. Blondin in agility; and many an Indian brave, ten years your senior, can run ten miles without resting. No wonder! he has been practicing for threescore years. Western hunters and English squires enjoy the chase at seventy. Lord Brougham, at eighty-three, delighted in a horseback ride of a dozen miles before breakfast. His mind, too, which of course sympathized, was as young as his body; he was as active in the great British ship-of-state as the youngest man of them all.

If we lay down our weapons, we shall forget how to use them. Run, my dear sir—run, jump, ride' skate, and be active. If you will keep yourself in practice, you can do the same thing at seventy. The young gymnast is gaining new power daily; the aged one should cling to what he already has, as pertinaciously as he clings to life. Exercise is as indispensible to him as food, if he would retain his vigor and elasticity but little impaired. They will gradually forsake him, beyond question, slipping away with the slow sands of life; but let them depart together. This is no calamity; the hour-glass is only turned afresh in the other world. It is the living death of mere oblivion, "*sans everything*," which is fearful.—*Atlantic Monthly for April.*

KICKING AND RUNAWAY HORSES.—Rarey's method of dealing with a kicking horse, is to place around his neck a band like that used for the martingale. Then take two light straps, buckle them to the bit on either side, pass them through the neck-band and thence inside the girth, and strap them securely to each fetlock of the hind feet, taking care to have them of the proper length. When a horse is rigged thus if he attempts to "kick up behind," each effort will bring his head down in such a manner as to astonish him, and perhaps throw him over on his head. He will make but a few attempts to kick, when he finds that his head is tied to his heels, and two or three lessons will cure him altogether.

To reform a runaway horse is equally simple and effectual. First of all, fasten some thick pads upon your horse's knees; then buckle a strap, about the size of a rein, upon each fetlock forward, and pass the straps through the hame-rings, and lead the straps back to the driver's hand, as he sits in the buggy. He has thus four reins; now start the animal without fear; talk to him friendly. When he attempts to run, he must of course bend his fore-legs. Now pull sharply on one of the foot reins, and the effect will be to raise one of his forward feet to his shoulder. He is a three legged horse now, and when he has gone on in that way a little distance, drop the constrained foot and jerk up the other. He can't run faster on three legs than you can drive, and when you have tried him on both sides pretty thoroughly, or if he refuse to trot kindly and to obey your voice and a moderate pull on the bit, you can raise both his feet and drop him upon his knees, and let him make a few bounds in that position. The animal will soon find that he can't runaway; that he is completely in your power; and by soothing words you will be able to convince him that you are his friend. The experiments are such as can be made by any person at all accustomed to managing horses, and we hope it may prove serviceable to some of your readers. —*Ex.*

THE ITALIAN PEASANTRY.—You meet what looks like an opera chorus at every depot—men and women dressed, may be, in rags, but it is sure to be in colors, and worn with a picturesque grace that is peculiar to Italy. The Italian peasant is a natural gentleman. He tumbles into graceful attitudes as naturally as the workmen of most countries fall into awkwardness. He knows how to wear his jacket as jauntily as an Italian beggar wears his capote. And when he flings his darned, and patched, and tattered cloak about him, it falls into statuesque folds. If he leans against the walls, he poses himself like Massaniello, and stands like a model, as fixed and [illegible] been arranged for an hour's study. His hat is a curious sugar loaf, that looks like an Italian volcano dwarfed into fit proportions, but retaining all its picturesque features. The Roman *contadini* beat all the peasants in the world in natural beauty and native costumes. The Sun deepens their complexion without coarsening their features. Their blood is as dark as Burgundy. They are improved by the boldest colors, and their dress is as rich as a parrot's plumage.—*Rev. Dr. Bellows,*

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