

WALKING AND ITS USES.

Exercise is absolutely indispensable to the physical well being of man, and walking is one of the most useful of the various modes of exercise. As a people we ride too much and walk too little. If we are in the country, and have a mile or two to go, we wait—perhaps long enough to walk the entire distance—for a horse to get ready, and then sit lazily in our seats while this noble animal carries us to our destination. If we are in the city, and have a few blocks to go, we get on an omnibus, or horse-car and sit our journey out just as though we were not created with legs the same as horses are. The nation's legs are rapidly diminishing in size for the want of exercise, and hence the demand for false calves, and for easier modes of locomotion is on the increase; so, also, is dyspepsia, liver complaint, general debility, and other physical derangements which result, in great part at least, from a lack of muscular action.

The special advantages of walking, as an exercise are many. Perhaps the most important is that it takes us out of doors and keeps us there in the pure air and the sunshine. The exercise which is gentle and prolonged, increases not only the frequency, but the fulness of respiration, thus bringing a much larger quantity of oxygen into the lungs, and through them to the blood, thereby giving the finishing touch to the process of digestion and vitalizing "the red current of life." Another advantage to respiration is this: when a person is sitting or standing still, the exhaled air from the lungs, which is unfit to be breathed again, fills the space about the face, and a portion of it is taken into the lungs at the next breath. Especially is this the case if the head is bent forward; but when a person is walking, and expels the air from his lungs his head is carried past the expired air before he draws in another breath, and thus he gets a supply of pure air, with its full proportion of oxygen, at every inspiration, and thus is the vigor and vivacity which results from exercise in the open air partially accounted for. Walking is very beneficial to the digestive organs, by the constant and gentle motion which it imparts to them, and which is essential to their long continued healthful action. It brings into action and properly develops more muscles than any other mode of exercise. It tends to equalize the circulation of the blood. Pedestrians, ropedancers, those who exercise their legs a great deal, are not troubled with that almost universal complaint—cold feet. The simple reason is that exercise calls the blood to the parts exercised, and the blood feeds and warms.

One great objection to walking is that it takes too much time. True, it takes sometime; more as a general thing than it does to ride; but so does the accomplishment of anything that is desirable; and is not good health desirable? In the end, however, it results in the saving of time, by preserving the health and increasing the vigor of all the physical and mental functions. In no way is there so much time wasted, to say nothing of vitality, as in being sick, and yet people are unwilling to give a little time in keeping well. To obtain the greatest amount of good from walking, it must, like everything else, be done right. In the first place, it is always best to have some definite object in view when going out to walk, some particular object or place of interest to see, some purpose to accomplish, or some friend to visit, and not walk merely for the purpose of walking, if any other object can be attained at the same time. But better walk without any other object than not walk at all. The position of the body while walking is of great importance. The body should incline slightly forward from the hips, if walking slowly, and the inclination should increase according to the rapidity of the walk. The head should be kept on a line with the body, the shoulders and hips held back, and the chest unimpeded in its action by tight clothing or otherwise. The arms should be allowed to swing freely at the side. The respiration should be carried on entirely through the nostrils, and not through the mouth. In commencing a long walk, walk slowly at first, and gradually increase the speed. Invalids, and persons who are unaccustomed to walking, should begin with short walks, being careful not to overdo, and increase the distance as their strength and endurance increase. Any one who will practice this precept—never ride when you can just as well walk—will not only be more vigorous and healthy, but can accomplish more than he or she otherwise would.—[E.]

THE WISDOM OF INSTINCT.

Our summer birds, the cuckoo and swallow, and many besides, migrate southward, not at, but before the approach of winter. Ere its earliest heralds appear—meadows are hoary and hill tops powdered with snow—the swallows gather from crags and house-eaves, and guided by their pathless skies by Hine who guards a sparrow's life, they wing their way to lands where snow never falls nor frost binds the streams in chains of ice. Not dallying with danger, nor delaying till its too near approach, they, if the expression might be applied to them, take time by the forelock. Equally wise and provident are those insects which, not seeking another country, stoop up to give against the rigors of our own; provision the garrison to be prepared for the siege. So soon as the swarm hiving off has taken possession of its new abode, they proceed to furnish it with range on range of storehouses; each formed of a beautiful and delicate material, and constructed—though built in darkness, and the work of an humble insect—with the skill of an expert mathematician. Not less admirable the wisdom with which, laboring without ceasing, they prepare for the approach of winter. Long ere autumn tints the woods, in the very height and heat of summer, when nature, arrayed in her gayest attire, is robed in flowers, and food abounds, and they might pass the livelong day in a round of revels, they work and toil. No busier, or more instructive sight than the doer of a bee-hive—where, teaching us not to forget the cares of the future in the enjoyment of present pleasures, its tenants may be seen from early morn till dewy eve, providing for a time when the flowers shall all be dead, and the earth, as if self dead, lies cold and stiff, wrapped in

a shroud of snow. Though in this the bees are directed by divine wisdom, such tools and such a profusion of flowers and food would probably appear to a little child, were it to think of the matter, very useless; yet here, as in other and higher matters, experience teaches us that, to use the words of St. Paul applies to that preaching of the gospel which—for so the world goes round—many now, as in his time, affect to despise "the foolishness of God is wiser than man."—Sunday Magazine.

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