

WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

If we keep our eyes and our ears open, life can be a most engrossing business. Take all the human contacts we make in our daily life. We are constantly meeting new people; seeing new faces, and there is something to be learned and gained from nearly all of them.

Here is a case in point. I attended a function (rather a dull one) the other day. There I met a man, a mild-looking, harmless individual who seemed just about as bored as I was feeling. We began to talk, and I discovered that he was a student of physical culture—the more refined side of it. Our conversation turned to walking.

Now, like countless others of my sex, I have always taken walking for granted. In other words, I have never bothered about it. Beyond being thankful for a good pair of feet and the energy to propel them, I'm afraid my interest has stopped at that.

My physical culture expert informed me, by way of introduction, that the moa and kiwi, through not exercising their wings, lost the use of them for ever, and that, in his opinion, the human race, with the aid of locomotives, motor-cars and the like, were in danger of doing the same with their legs.

I agreed with him that legs were made to be walked on—or with. But that is not enough. To gain the full benefit of walking, you must walk the right way.

I tried to memorise all the different modes of walking; the waddlers, the knock-kneed, the pigeon-toed—wondering all the time in what category my own extremities belonged.

My friend told me that bad walking is a definite drawback to us, both physically and socially. Correct walking he said, is allied to a good carriage.

He proceeded to give me a verbal sketch of how the body should be poised. It appears we have three different sections to our bodies. One of these is our skull, the next the cage made by our ribs and backbone, and the third the ring made by our hip bones and backbone. These parts are joined together by the neck and the lower part of the spine.

The secret of good carriage is to hold oneself so that the skull is directly above the centre of the rib cage, and the rib cage directly above the hip ring. If any one of these sections is carried askew, by hanging head, round shoulders, or incorrectly poised hips, our skeleton frame slowly but surely slips out of the line, and with not only an ungraceful effect, but with ill results to our internal organs.

He gave me an interesting illustration.

Imagine our bodies as representing three cotton reels, set one on top of the other, and then picture them linked together by a thin stick going down through all three in a perfectly straight line. In the same way the three sections of our body, held in the same position, are in perfect balance and with no disturbing drag on our muscles.

Now move the cotton reels so that the top one rests more than half-way across the second one, and you will find that, unless the second one is pushed back a little, it will overbalance. Thus we find the two top ones out of alignment with the bottom reel.

That, he said, is what happens to our bodies when we walk or stand with the head jutting forward. Because the head hangs forward, the ribs have to go back—and the lower part of the back has to curve forward too. The result is a backbone like a question mark. In the same way, if the middle reel of cotton is pushed forward and the top one back to balance it, the result is seen in hollowed back and protruding bust and abdomen.

All the way home, I imagined myself as the three cotton reels, and, believe me, I got quite a lot of fun out of keeping them properly balanced. Perhaps, too, I walked correctly for the first time in my life.

Yours Cordially,

Cynthia

Popular in London

Colonials in London have privileges that seldom come to the Londoners themselves. An enterprising Australian girl, who went adventuring to London, took a job as a cook in London. While there she was invited to the Royal Garden Party. Her employers had to give her the day off, and to hear all about it when she came back.

Zebra-Wise

Stripes are fashionable again, and what a blessing they are, when worn properly. They can slim a figure and they can give an impression of weight to a thin person. They can add height to the short, and, when used diagonally, can make a tall person look shorter. But, remember, there

is a wrong and a right way to wear them for each individual, and if you are not sure consult your dressmaker.

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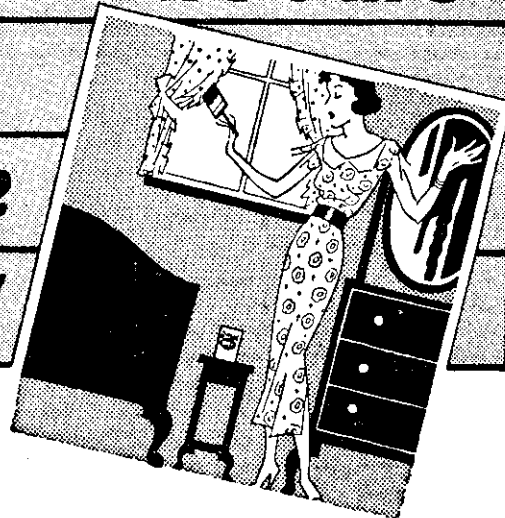
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