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MANLY HEALTH AND TRAINING, WITH OFF-HAND HINTS TOWARD THEIR CONDITIONS BY MOSE VELSOR.



TO YOU WHOSE eye is arrested by the above headlines, and whom we hope to make a companion to the end of our series—to every man, rich or poor, worker or idler—to all ages of life, from the beginning to the end of it—certainly nothing comes closer home, or is, without any intermission, a topic of more controlling interest, than this we are going to present, through a few articles, some plain and we hope sensible hints toward the furtherance of—*a sound and steady condition of manly health*. We will not make any apology for devoting a portion of our columns to the discussion of this subject; nor, indeed, do we think it much more than necessary to state our theme, to be quite certain that we shall have an eager and multitudinous audience.

Manly health! Is there not a kind of charm—a fascinating magic in the words? We fancy we see the look with which the phrase is met by many a young man, strong, alert, vigorous, whose mind has always felt, but never formed in words, the ambition to attain to the perfection of his bodily powers—has realized to himself that all other goods of existence would hardly be goods, in comparison with a perfect body, perfect blood—no morbid humors, no weakness, no impotency or deficiency or bad stuff in him; but all running over with animation and ardor, all marked by herculean strength, suppleness, a clear complexion, and the rich results (which follow such causes) of a laughing voice, a merry song morn and night, a sparkling eye, and an ever-happy soul!

To such a young man—to all who read these lines—let us, with rapid pen, sketch some of the requisites toward this condition of sound

health we talk of—a condition, we wish it distinctly understood, far easier to attain than is generally supposed; and which, even to many of those long wrenched by bad habits or by illness, must not be despaired of, but perseveringly striven for, as, in reason, probable and almost certain yet to attain.

EFFECTS OF A SOUND BODY.

Among the signs of manly health and perfect physique, internal and external, are a clear eye, a transparent and perhaps embrowned complexion (this latter not necessarily), an upright attitude, a springy step, a sweet breath, a ringing voice and little or nothing of irritability in the temper. With your choleric man, there is apt to be something wrong in the stomach, joints or blood. In nine cases out of ten, when this is obviated the disposition comes round.

We shall speak by and by of health as being the foundation of all real manly beauty. Perhaps, too, it has more to do than is generally supposed, with the capacity of being agreeable as a companion, a social visitor, always welcome—and with the divine joys of friendship. In these particulars (and they surely include a good part of the best blessings of existence), there is that subtle virtue in a sound body, with all its functions perfect, which nothing else can make up for, and which will itself make up for many other deficiencies, as of education, refinement, and the like.

We have even sometimes fancied that there was *a wonderful medicinal effect in the mere personal presence of a man who was perfectly well!* While, on the other hand, what can be more debilitating than to be continually surrounded by sickly people, and to have to do with them only?

REASON—OUR OBJECTS.

It is not too much to begin to demand of the young men, and indeed the masses of the people, (through conscientious writers for the press, speakers, &c.,) that, in this great matter of health and a manly form and soundness, *steady reason should assume the helm, and keep it.* We

know that to many this will seem advice whose accomplishment, on anything like a general scale, is out of the question. Yet we confess we are hopeful of its success, in time. For where, we repeat, is there a man, young, old, or middle-aged, who does not mainly desire to have a perfect physique?

The object we have in view is the presentation in a collected and connected form, for popular use, of the general run of facts, rules, suggestions, &c., most desirable to be understood by those who have not yet paid any earnest attention to the subject of developing a perfect and manly physique. These, indeed, the common classes, and young men, form the immense body, the audience to whom our hints are, in the main, directed. It will, therefore, be necessary for us to go over some of the grounds that may be familiar to those of our readers who have already studied out the subject. Still it will do them also no harm to go over the same statements again. Indeed, it is probable that, of three-fourths of the young and middle-aged men, not only in this city of New York, but in every portion of the United States, one of the best goods they could do for themselves would be the careful reading, once or twice every year, during the remainder of their lives, of all these paragraphs we are now writing.

Our object is, at the same time, to be attained in our own rambling and discursive way, and our writing will be without technical terms and phrases; for we are free to confess ourselves as no physician—but one who, by observation and study, has come to view the theme of health as oftentimes able to be better treated, for popular use, by an outsider, than a medical man—for who ever knew one of the latter to write a treatise, except its main direction were to the medical fraternity more than any others?

We would have gymnasia commenced, so as gradually to form part of all the public schools of America, even from Maine to Texas, and from the northern boundary of Washington Territory to the southern point of Florida. This, no doubt, sounds extravagant to the superficial reader, but by him who has investigated the subject, and is aware how, under all circumstances, *proper training trebles the natural power, endurance, and health of the body*, it will be better understood. There is even no hunter, warrior, wild Indian, or the strongest and supplest

backwoodsman of the West, but would have all his natural qualities increased far beyond what they are, by judicious training. This is art, the province of which is to take natural germs or gifts, and bring them out in the fullest and best way.

A FINE ANIMAL MAN.

Do not be startled at the words, excellent reader. It is, in our view, indispensably necessary that a man should be *a fine animal*—sound and vigorous. This, to be candid with you, is the text and germ of most of our remarks—which arise out of it, and seek to promulge and explain how it can be fully accomplished. It being the specialty of these articles, makes it necessary to consider all that belongs to you, reader, and to your body, structure, &c., mostly from that point of view alone. And why should we not? Almost everything else is attended to but the animal part of a man—as if that were something to be ashamed of and repressed. Indeed, this is avowedly the theory of many very good people, who proceed upon it in the bringing up of their children.

That such is not our theory is of course evident, or will be, in every line of these articles. We, at the same time, know with the rest that a man has a moral, affectional, and mental nature which must also be developed; but we say that, at present, the whole tendency of things is to *over-develop* those parts, while the physical is cramped and dwindled away.

Yes, reader, we teach that man must be perfect in his body first—we start with that as our premises, our foundation. We would throw into something like regular form a few principal hints and suggestions. Now this is to be done. Would that other writers, and that teachers also, would follow up in the same train of influence with ourselves—until there should be no man, especially any young man, through the length and breadth of the land, who should any longer be allowed to plead ignorance of these simple laws as a reason for his impaired constitution and loss of man's physique.

Gratified indeed should we be if we thought these hints were the means of arresting the attention of this younger part of the American

people, and recalling them to a sense of that, which, once having it, is not at all difficult to restrain, but once thoroughly lost, may be mourned and sought for long afterward in vain—and even when restored must be watched over with double the former care. But yet we will not discourage any of those who having injured their health, seek to regain it. We would rather impress upon them the probability, almost certainty, under prudent management, of attaining their sound condition again.

*FOR STUDENTS, CLERKS, AND THOSE IN
SEDENTARY OR MENTAL EMPLOYMENTS.*

Can there then be no such thing as hard study going on without detriment to health—for study is mental exercise? We have elsewhere hinted that there not only can, but that study may go on favorably to health. Only *all study, and no developed physique, is death*. Our readers must take a broad and deep view of our arguments, from our own points of observation; for we have not time to fill up the gaps, and connect one item with another as we would, if we had nothing else to do. At present, a few suggestive points must answer, and we are confident we are talking to people of intelligent minds and who know something of this subject already.

We say to the young man not only that mental development may well go on at the same time with physical development, but that indeed is the only way in which they should go on—both together, which is much to the advantage of each. If you are a student, be also a student of the body, a practiser [*sic*] of manly exercises, realizing that a broad chest, a muscular pair of arms, and two sinewy legs, will be just as much credit to you, and stand you in hand through your future life, equally with your geometry, your history, your classics, your law, medicine, or divinity. Let nothing divert you from your duty to your body. Up in the morning early! Habituate yourself to the brisk walk in the fresh air—to the exercise of pulling the oar—and to the loud declamation upon the hills, or along the shore. Such are the means by which you can seize with treble gripe upon all the puzzles and difficulties of your student life—whatever problems are presented to you

in your books, or by your professors. Guard your manly power, your health and strength, from all hurts and violations—this is the most sacred charge you will ever have in your keeping.

To you, clerk, literary man, sedentary person, man of fortune, idler, the same advice. Up! The world (perhaps you now look upon it with pallid and disgusted eyes) is full of zest and beauty for you, if you approach it in the right spirit! Out in the morning! If in the city, even there you will find ample sources of amusement and interest in its myriad varieties of character and occupation—in the scenes of its awakening and adjusting itself to its daily labors—in the crowds around its ferries, and all through its main thoroughfares, and at its great depots and markets. Do not be discouraged soon. Give our advice a thorough trial—not for a few days or weeks, but for months. Early rising, early to bed, exercise, plain food, thorough and persevering continuance in gently-commenced training, the cultivation with resolute will of a cheerful temper, the society of friends and a certain number of hours spent every day in regular employment—these, we say, simple as they are, are enough to revolutionize life, and change it from a scene of gloom, feebleness, and irresolution, into *life indeed*, as becomes such a universe as this, full of all the essential means of happiness, full of well-intentioned and affectionate men and women, with the beneficent processes of nature always at work, the sun shining, the flowers blooming, the crops growing, the waters running, with all else that is wanted, only that man should be *rightly toned* to partake of the universal strength and joy. This he must do through reason, knowledge and exercise—in short, through *training*; for that is the sum of all.