

DEPARTMENT : SOME CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SUBJECT.

BY AN ARTIST.



HERE nothink's intended, nothink is meant," remarked that mythical mirror of wisdom, Mrs. Brown, to her friend when she took umbrage at some sentence from the august lady above-mentioned, which was quite innocently devoid of intention, but nevertheless touched a sore spot in the conscience of Mrs. B.'s friend.

Now I, fearing that among the vast number of readers of this popular magazine may be some to whom one of my remarks or more may appear personal, take the opportunity in this brief preface to assure one and all that "nothink's intended," consequently "nothink is meant."

This little paper, essay—call it what you will—is neither written as an attack upon the sins of deportment or misdeportment, nor has it any hopes of converting that section of the British nation who may chance to peruse it to a proper sense of the true value of so important a science; but is rather a collection of remarks and considerations founded upon careful and constant observation by one who may be right or wrong, but who considers a proper carriage as one of the parts, not least important, which help towards perfect beauty.

A favourite sauntering ground with me is the West End. There one with the faculty for observation may see and learn to distinguish each class by other indications than the clothes, particularly by the carriage—I do not mean the wheeled vehicle, but deportment, and even to make some shrewd guesses at character. It does not take long: the brain



"SHE COULD FALL BACKWARD AT A TOUCH."

acts with a rapidity far beyond the most instantaneous mechanism. The figure is observed, style and bearing noted, with other peculiarities, and in "less than no time" the label is filled in and pinned to the human parcel—mentally.

But other considerations have a place. The great pleasure anyone with the slightest appreciation for beauty gains by watching the graceful motions of a good walker, man or woman, boy or girl, is incalculable, and the impression lives and becomes a "joy for ever." The movement of a woman or girl is perhaps the more graceful, owing to the delicate lines



"AN EYESORE."

of the figure, and for that very reason faults of deportment in this sex are more noticeable and jarring; so when one sees a woman slouching along with shoulders drooping forward and arms moving at all angles, or wobbling with ungainly swayings owing to over-tight lacing, or too small boots, or high heels, one can scarcely repress a shudder, for, knowing the capabilities of the beautiful human form, one is stung to distraction by this libellous caricature. A badly deformed person does not strike you in the same way: you insensibly make allowances for the accident of birth, and are sorry; but to the being who murders his or her form by the various beauty traps of fashion, one feels much as the artist would towards the brute who should smash up the beautiful Venus of Melos.

The beauty of youth is proverbial, and in spite of the Venus one always admires the Cupid and Psyche and the young Antinous more; the limbs are finer, the movement more "airy light" and less conscious; the buoyant motions, the free elasticity of limb which makes ungainly action almost impossible in youth, are charms which many, no longer young, strive in vain to imitate, vainly, because the suppleness and unconsciousness quickly pass away, and because propriety will not allow of that abandonment in years of discretion which is the very life and soul of those years that lie the other side of the boundary

that marks boy from man and girl from woman.

"Yet, ah! that Spring should vanish with the rose,
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!"

A beautiful face will not redeem a bad form, and many spoil a good form by bad deportment. Of these persons the most irritating to look upon are, first, the woman who appears always in a violent hurry, and, hugging her umbrella or sunshade to her, strides along with body bent forward to an angle of thirty-five degrees; whilst the pad at the back of the dress—called, I believe, an "improver"—bobs up and down like a cork on a stormy pond.

Another, with an impossible waist, sways violently before you, and her dress swings to and fro like a ground-swell under the counter of a yacht, arms akimbo and a sunshade trimmed square like a yard, to rake you as she passes.

Number 2 is less of a nuisance than an eyesore. She is dressed to the waist as a man; thence, as divided skirts have not yet become fashionable, she necessarily remains a woman, at least in costume; in motion she yet strives to represent a man. This figure provokes one to laughter, calling to mind as it does that hybrid, the mermaid, which was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, nor good red herring.

Again, what is more tiring than that mincing step so many affect, and what more tiring to the walker?

One more, the 5th—the girl who carries herself too well—that is to say, who pulls her shoulders back until it appears she could fall backward at a touch; the body is perfectly rigid; all the work is done from the hips downwards, which is manifestly not right. What does a doctor tell you about walking? It is the best exercise possible because it brings into play all the muscles of the body.

The natural movement is always the more graceful, and the beauty of motion is the ripple of the whole form, the beautiful sway of a beautiful line. The wonderful construction of the human body is expressed best in walking, each muscle giving and taking its share in the work.



"WITH BODY BENT FORWARD."

Department does not, as may be premised from the fact that it is a science to be learned, teach unnatural carriage; but, on the contrary, being a science, it teaches the proper use of the limbs, and their just balance in all positions; and surely that is carrying out entirely Nature's design, which must have been for a person to advance by means put purposely at

its disposal, and not by throwing the weight entirely off its balance, and tumbling forward like a rock set loose upon the hillside.

It is more than amusing in fine or wet weather to watch the constant stream of people on the streets, and another pleasure to take note of the varied costumes, as diverse as the characters they cover. The artist, forced

by his profession to be extraordinarily observant of human nature, watches for and notices well all peculiarities, and many of the characters regarded by the inexperienced as unreal or overdrawn are actually studies from life. Since calisthenics have become so fashionable in the feminine world, grace and beauty should surely increase, and much good come of it.



THE SECRET OF ROUGEMONT.

BY LADY MARGARET MAJENDIE.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE Adrien de Riancourt lay fighting for life with fever in the old farm at Rougemont, the clouds of sorrow and suffering that were closing round his fair young betrothed in Paris grew daily more dark, more impenetrable.

Though but a few weeks had passed since their parting, Valentine had changed greatly. The rounded softness of her cheek was gone; there was a strained look in her lovely blue eyes; her little hands had grown very thin, and they clasped and unclasped themselves nervously. The condition of affairs preyed on stronger nerves than those of a tender girl—the daily, ceaseless anxiety.

Monsieur de Lemprière's life was never safe. Beginning as a moderate Liberal, he had attached himself to Robespierre after a time; then, disgusted with the excesses that followed, he tried to draw back, and by doing so forfeited the confidence of one party without gaining confidence elsewhere. His next effort was to efface himself, to extinguish all interest in his proceedings, to be allowed to live quietly and unnoticed in a corner of his once hospitable house. But again his nerve failed him, and secretly one night he caused his packages and a few favourite articles of furniture to be moved to an obscure lodging on the opposite side of the Seine, and thither he and his daughter removed themselves.

But his efforts to obtain absolute obscurity were frustrated by an unforeseen circumstance. One of the party in power, a young man of the name of Alcibiade Leforêt, chanced to come across Valentine, and at first sight of the modest, tender beauty, now so rare in Paris as to be practically unknown, fell desperately in love with her.

This was a complication full of untold danger, and the courage of the unhappy de Lemprière utterly failed him. Alcibiade was all-powerful. He was handsome, with the kind of animal beauty then most admired; he had rich colouring, thick, well-curved lips, large rolling eyes, broad shoulders, and as fine a figure as a man could have,

disguised in the costume of the dandies of the day. He was all-powerful and merciless.

After his first declaration of his love, the unhappy father could only shake and shiver, and even weep the tears of anguish which scorch rather than relieve.

De Lemprière did not dare to tell his daughter of the new suitor for her hand. Valentine had noticed him more than once, noticed him with a shudder, for he represented to her the very impersonation of young France, the mushroom growth of a hideous corruption. His bold bad eyes caused her cheeks to burn, as she escaped from so hateful a presence.

De Lemprière in his despair determined to seek out Leforêt, and endeavour to persuade him to give up his pretensions, though he knew in his heart that it would prove a fruitless errand.

"I cannot give you my daughter," he said, "because she is betrothed to another, and she loves him."

"Give me his name," said Alcibiade, a curious light coming into his eyes. "I will then consider how best the obstacle can be removed."

"His name!" faltered the old man. "No, no, my friend. I will not tell you his name."

"Doubtless some aristocrat," said Alcibiade, bending his eyes sternly on the trembling old man. "She belongs to the dainty powdered race herself. It is of no use attempting to deceive me. Hist! citizen Lemprière, you had better make me your friend. You are not too popular at headquarters. *Hein?*"

He shivered. "You say you love my daughter," he whined; "and you treat her father thus!"

"I love your daughter so well that I would do you good against your will. There! She shall be my wife and I will protect you. Bah! I will save your life, which is not worth a sou!"

"But, friend, good worthy friend, only listen! My daughter loves this man, and, moreover, she will never consent to wed without a priest."

"Ah! bah! that is easily settled. So her affections are deeply engaged? The old betrothal; have I not heard some-

thing about it? Quite enough to ruin you."

"Oh, no, no!" cried de Lemprière. "Do you forget all I have done? All I have given up for the cause?"

"The man's name!" cried Alcibiade, fiercely clutching his shoulder.

"Do not ask me."

"Was it Adrien de Riancourt? Answer, or you shall suffer for it, I swear."

Trembling under that strong grasp, in which he felt helpless as a reed, the old man faltered out, "You are too clever—I can deny nothing."

He stopped, for Alcibiade threw him off, put his hands together, and burst into a tremendous laugh.

"Ha, ha!" he exclaimed, with one of the hideous oaths of the day. "Ha, ha! I have it! Adrien de Riancourt! So, so!—de St. Eustache he would say, for there is no doubt that the father perished in the ruins of Riancourt. Good Triponnet! brave Triponnet! The man is worth his weight in gold!"

"Triponnet!" faltered de Lemprière. "You speak in riddles. What has that scoundrel Triponnet to do with my daughter's affairs?"

"Go, go, now," said Alcibiade, heavily patting his shoulder. "You will know all in good time; meanwhile, thank your lucky stars that I am powerful. Yesterday you were denounced, my good friend."

"Ah, me!"

"Be at ease; it did not suit me that it should be so. A man should protect his family—his father-in-law, eh?"

De Lemprière shrank from the coarse voice and foul words of the man—shrank like a beaten hound.

"Is your protection to be so dearly bought?" he faltered.

"Bah! you must yourself judge of its value. I have a new plan in view. You shall not sell me your daughter, for I see a way of managing the affair myself. Have I *finesse*? Have I not? Wait till you see."

"My daughter is all I have in the world," cried de Lemprière. "And see, can I not also denounce? If it comes to the question of one man's word against