

THE CULTURE OF THE
ABDOMEN

THE CURE OF OBESITY
AND CONSTIPATION

BY

F. A. HORNIBROOK

TENTH EDITION

WITH A PREFACE BY

SIR W. ARBUTHNOT LANE, BART.,
C.B., M.S.

THE CULTURE OF THE ABDOMEN

STAND UP AND SLIM DOWN

(RESTORATION EXERCISES FOR WOMEN)

By

ETTIE ROUT

(MRS. ETTIE A. HORNIBROOK)

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SEVENTH EDITION

THE primary object of this book is to direct careful thought to the lower half of the body of woman, for the purpose of improving her health and appearance, and increasing her happiness.

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“It is my belief that the health of the womanhood of England would be vastly raised towards the ideal, if what you teach could be brought home to the lady who lolls on her Chesterfield as well as to the washerwoman standing at her tub. The human body becomes deformed from over-work just as much as from laziness; and if you, by a miraculous propaganda, could bring home to women, and men too, that most of us could be upright and supple at 55, if such exercises and dances as you teach were practised daily, something would be accomplished you might be proud of.”

WM. HEINEMANN (MEDICAL BOOKS) LTD.

THE CULTURE OF THE ABDOMEN

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AND CONSTIPATION

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F. A. HORNIBROOK

PREFACE BY
SIR WILLIAM ARBUTHNOT LANE, Bart.,
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Consulting Surgeon to Guy's Hospital, etc.

TENTH EDITION



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PREFACE

I BELIEVE that this book, so carefully compiled, will be of the greatest service to the public. It deals with one's most valuable asset, namely, health, without which success in any form brings no real satisfaction. Mr. Hornibrook has spent his life in the study of physical education, and he has succeeded in producing a work in which he describes, in the simplest and the clearest manner, how it is open to everybody to be vigorous and healthy. His methods are excellent in their simplicity, and are most effectual. To my own certain knowledge he has treated quite a large number of people most successfully.

W. ARBUTHNOT LANE.

LONDON, W. 1.

FOREWORD

ALTHOUGH it may be true that "there is nothing new under the sun," it frequently happens that we go through life without having seen all that the sun shines upon. When we come across some of these things they strike us as new, or different in some way. The reader will find described in simple and forceful language a system of exercise original in conception, simple in application, positive in results, and founded on the movements of the prehistoric dance. The author's lifelong devotion to bodily cultivation and all that pertains to it eminently qualifies him to speak with more than an ordinary degree of authority. I feel confident, from what I have seen of his methods, that his claims are not based on mere theory alone.

W. H. HORNIBROOK, F.R.C.S.,
D.P.H. (Irel.).

OPINIONS

R. Tait McKenzie, M.D., LL.D., Professor of Physical Education, University of Pennsylvania, author of "Exercise in Education and Medicine," etc., writes :—

"The purpose of all systems of exercise dealing with people of middle age centres around a stimulation of the abdominal muscles and the alimentary tract. Practically all our occupations become increasingly sedentary with age. The active man is driven behind the desk, and the woman of means has lost those occupations which involved bending and twisting of the trunk. For this reason Mr. Hornibrook's book comes at an opportune time, and it is interesting to see how he has been able to adapt to our use those exercises which more primitive peoples have developed spontaneously. This book should have a wide range of usefulness."

Arnold Bennett, the celebrated English author, wrote :—

"I know a middle-aged man who suffered for thirty years from ill-health. He was a regular dyspeptic. One day he bought a book by Mr. F. A. Hornibrook, 'The Culture of the Abdomen.' The book set forth a short series of exercises. The fellow began to do the exercises. They occupied but seven minutes per day. In three months he had lost thirty pounds avoirdupois. His dyspepsia had vanished. I can vouch for the case. For the man was myself."

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“In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast,
Their Virtue fix’d, ’tis fix’d as in a frost,
Contracted all, retiring to the Breast ;
But strength of mind is *Exercise*, not *Rest*.”
“Essay on Man.”—POPE.

CHART OF EXERCISES FOR DAILY USE

From CULTURE OF THE ABDOMEN

By F. A. HORNIBROOK

APPENDIX

NATIVE DANCES

THE following evidence is produced to show the nature and extent of native dancing among uncivilised peoples :—

Dr. A. C. Haddon, in the reports of "The Expedition to Torres Straits," says :

Page 290, Vol. IV. : "The natives have always been very fond of dancing, and as the dances are of a very energetic character they have considerable value in exercising the muscles of the body and limbs. They were important social events, and gave opportunities for the girls to judge of the activity and stamina of the young men."

Pages 22-3, Vol. V. : "It was the custom for the young women to propose marriage to the young men, but this has been interdicted by the missionaries, although there is not the least objection to it from a moral or social point of view ; indeed, this custom may have given a certain advantage to the women. . . . A young man who was a dancer would find favour in the sight of the girls. This can be readily understood by anyone who has seen the active, skilful, and fatiguing dances of these people. A young man who could acquit himself well in these dances must be possessed of no mean strength and agility, qualities which everywhere appeal to the opposite sex."

Dr. Haddon also supplies the following note (from Dr. E. Grosse) :—

"The characteristic of the dance is the rhythmical ordering of the movements. There is no dance without rhythm. The dances of savage or the hunting-folk, as Dr. Grosse prefers to call them, fall into two groups : the mimetic and the gymnastic. The mimetic dances consist of rhythmical imitation of animal and human motions, whereas the movements in gymnastic dances follow no natural original. . . . The pleasure of strong and rhythmical movements, the pleasure

of imitation, the pleasure of giving vent to the feelings—these factors give a complete and sufficient explanation of the passion which primitive folk have for dancing.”

Mr. Herman Melville, in “Typee,” thus describes the dances of the natives of the Marquesas :

Pages 190–1 (Oxford University Press Edition) : “The young girls very often danced by moonlight in front of their dwellings. There are a great variety of these dances, in which, however, I never saw the men take part. They all consist of active, romping, mischievous evolutions, in which every limb is brought into requisition. Indeed, the Marquesan girls dance all over, as it were ; not only do their feet dance, but their arms, hands, fingers, ay, their very eyes seem to dance in their heads. In good sooth they so sway their floating forms, arch their necks, toss aloft their naked arms, and glide, and swim, and whirl, that it was almost too much for a quiet, sober-minded, modest young man like myself. The damsels wear nothing but flowers and their compendious gala tunics, and when they plume themselves for the dances, they look like a band of olive-coloured Sylphides on the point of taking wing.”

Dr. C. G. Seligmann, in “The Melanesians of British New Guinea,” says :

Page 154 : “The rhythm of these dances is further exemplified by the movements of the girl dancers, which consist essentially of a slow rocking of the pelvis on the thighs, each leg being alternately slightly flexed and the heel being lifted from the ground. At the same time the muscles of the back give a rotatory movement to the pelvis, causing the petticoat to swish from side to side. When dancing in columns, the movement is usually slow and dignified, but when one or two girls dance by themselves behind, or at the side of the columns, it is customary for them to dance so violently that the component strips of the petticoat, tied over the right hip, fly up in a spray of fibres, allowing the tattoo on the buttock and thighs to be seen.”

Mons. Adolphe Louis Cureau, in “Savage Man in Central Africa,” says :

Page 260 : “Elsewhere the dance is a caress ; a song proceeds by short chromatic phrases, in a minor mode, and with

dropping inflections, while the ballet-dancers advance and retreat in turn, sometimes down the front, and again in oblique lines. Their faces and arms take no part in the action, and the mask simply shows a desire not to make any mistake. Their elbows are held against their sides, whilst their hands beat time; the whole expression and action is in the pelvic region and the legs. The waist undulates, the hips move rapidly or twist slowly, the knees flex in quick time, while the feet touch the ground with the end of the great toe, alternately in front, behind, or at the side. There is no marked gesticulation and no vivacity; all the motions are supple, cadenced, harmonious, encircling, languorous, and delicate. The coryphees adapt the figures of the dance to the amorous and plaintive melody, and move back and forth in the gleam of the dying torches like black Bacchantes."

Mr. George T. Basden, in his book "*Among the Ibos of Nigeria*," says :

Pages 131-4: "Dancing is the great national pastime, and it is practised by everybody capable of movement. There are many forms—for boys, for girls, for men, and for women, and for mixed companies, the last being especially associated with religious observances and festivals. It is the religious element which distinguishes the set forms of dancing from those which are the outcome of the emotions.

"The stereotyped set dances are all performed by professional men, and they are very elaborate and extraordinarily difficult and exhausting. The movements are perfectly rhythmic, and the time is set by music. . . . The instrumentalists squat on the ground in no prescribed order, with neither programme nor conductor. Presently one of the musicians sounds a few desultory notes, which gradually evolve into a recognised melody, the others join in, and time and tune are thus established. The dancers range themselves and begin slow rhythmic movements, unconsciously swaying their heads in time with the music. As the dance proceeds, they appear intoxicated with the motion and the music, the speed increases, and the movements become more and more intricate and bewildering. The dancers work themselves into a veritable frenzy and the spectators keep silence from sheer excitement. The twistings, turnings, contortions, and springing movements executed in perfect time, are wonderful to behold. Movement succeeds movement in rapid succession, speed and force increasing, until the grand finale is reached.

By this time the onlookers, as well as the dancers, are almost breathless. Then, in a flash, music and dance cease abruptly, the performers remaining rigid in their last pose. For a second absolute silence prevails, followed by an outburst of applause. The effect of the sudden arrest of music and motion cannot be described; it breaks upon one with such an unexpected shock. The dancers are streaming with perspiration and quite exhausted with their efforts. The sign for the dance to end is given by the chief drummer, the dancers themselves, naturally, having a pretty clear idea when to expect it. For these set dances, *e.g.*, those executed by the 'Guinea-fowl Dancers,' the physical strength required is tremendous. . . . The practice of such dancing leads to a wonderful development of the back and abdominal muscles. Moreover, the movements are free, there is nothing rigid about them, and they produce no sign of 'physical exercise' stiffness. Every movement is clean, sure and decided, showing absolute control of the muscles. . . . In all native dances each man (and woman) acts independently of his fellows and yet fits into his proper place in the general scheme. When men and women are dancing in company they do not even touch hands. It is contrary to etiquette for a man to touch a woman, and any infringement of the rule may meet with stern rebuke. As a matter of fact, each person becomes so completely absorbed in the dance that any interference would give rise to emphatic protest. . . . Some of the movements are peculiar, as when the lower limbs are kept perfectly rigid the feet are not lifted from the ground, but all progression is made by swaying the body only, and by sinuous movements."

Mr. P. Amaury Talbot, in his book "In the Shadow of the Bush," says:

Pages 293-5: "All other pastimes pale before the attractions of the dance, which to the Ekoi (natives of Nigeria) is one of the main occupations of life, and, as with the Greeks of old, provides an outlet for the dramatic instinct and religious fervour of the race. It affords one of the means of expressing as perfectly as possible that otherwise inarticulate sense of the mystery of existence, the power of supernatural influences which enfold them, the ecstasy of joy in life—of youth and strength and love—of the deeper and more poignant feelings so far beyond expression by mere words. . . . Every atom of the body dances, but the point which distinguishes an

accomplished dancer from others is the never-ceasing wave-like ripple which runs down the muscles of the back and along the arms to the finger-tips. . . . Whatever may be the difference of opinion as to the merit of Ekoi dances from an æsthetic standpoint, there can be none as to their interest from an anthropological one."²

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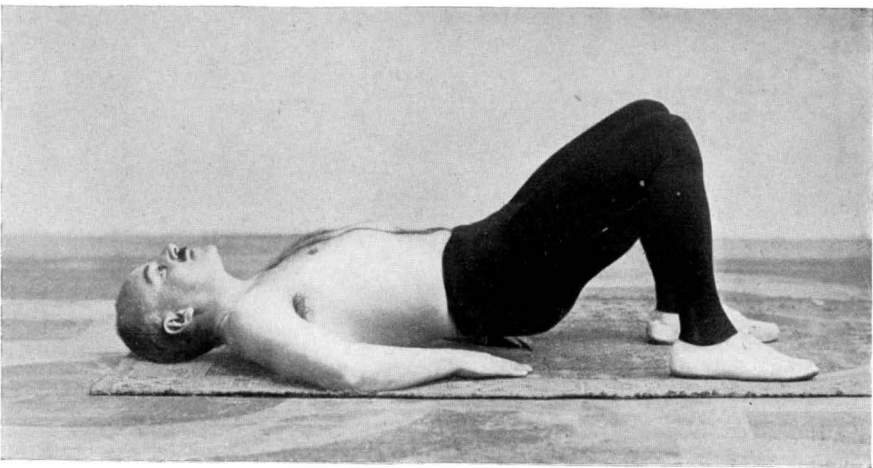
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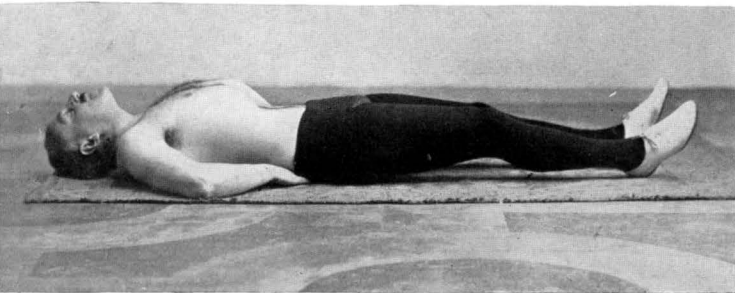
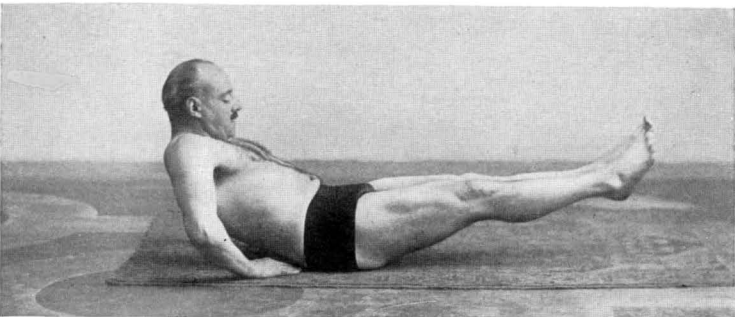
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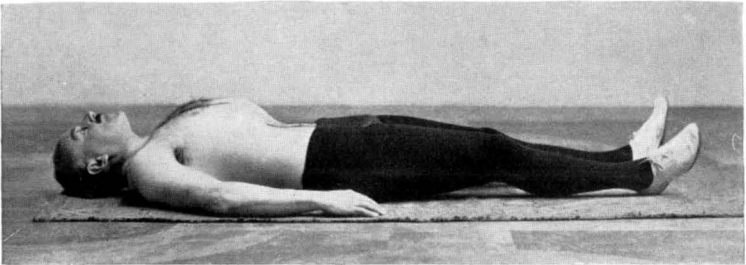
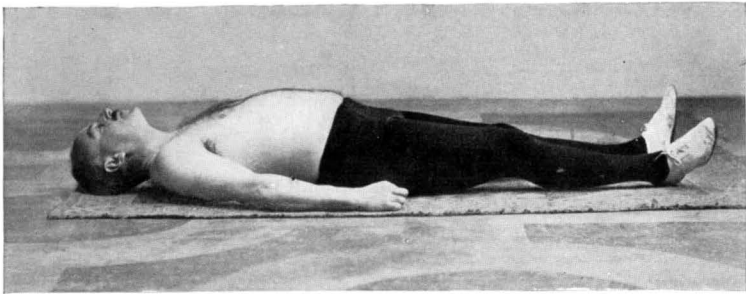
EXERCISE I.—THE HAMMOCK SWING

The great advantage of this exercise is that, the abdomen being held loosely, the movement has a very deep and rolling action on the intestines, thereby being of great utility in remedying constipation.



EXERCISE II.—TENSING AND RETRACTING

This exercise is of great importance in developing all the muscles that cover the front of the abdomen. Firm and vigorous abdominal muscles form the best "girdle against obesity."



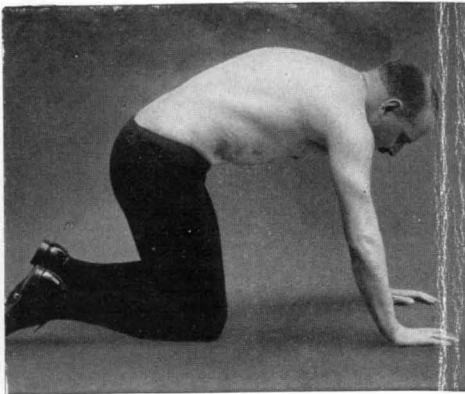
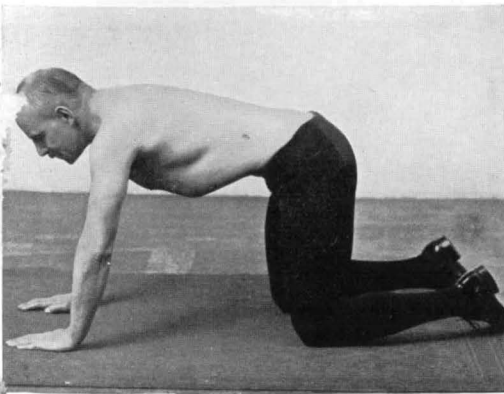
EXERCISE III.—PUMPING

The object of this exercise is to increase the peristaltic action of the bowels. It can be done by the most delicate men and women. It gives a large amount of internal massage with a comparatively small amount of muscular effort.



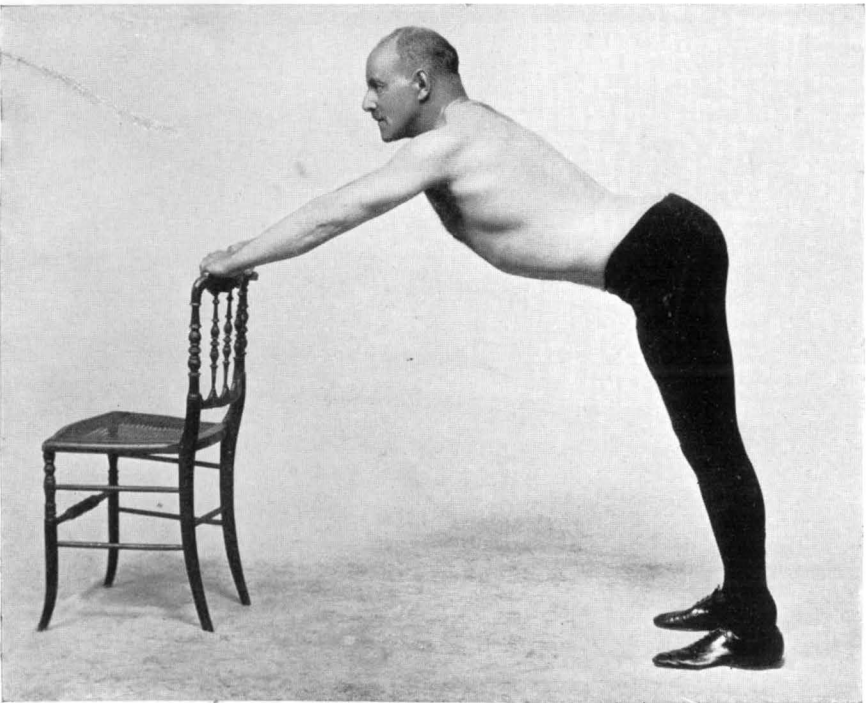
EXERCISE IV.—LATERAL PRESS

For the oblique and transversalis abdominal muscles—two very important muscles which compress the viscera and flex the thorax. It is most beneficial to the liver, alternately squeezing and releasing this organ.



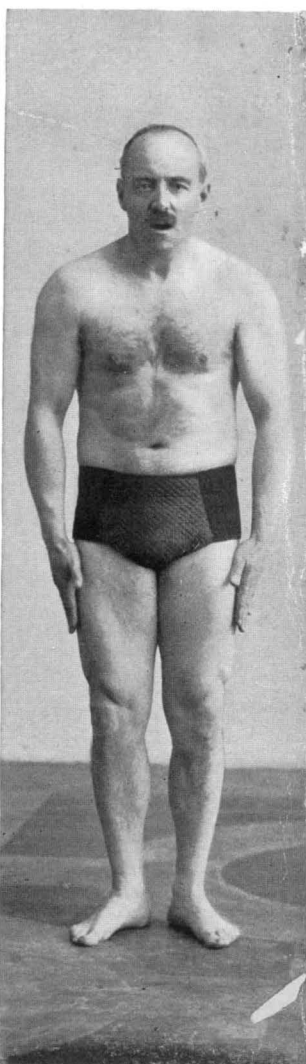
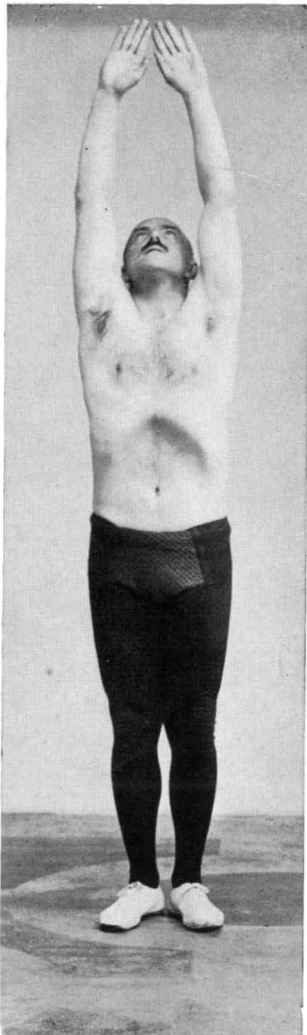
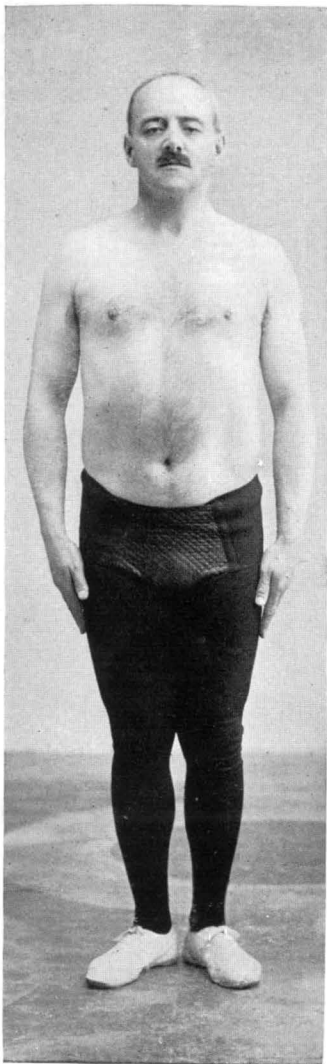
EXERCISE V.—RETRACTION AND RECOIL

A full extension and retraction movement, bringing into play all the abdominal muscles. It has a very beneficial effect in imparting pliability to the spine. If done in front of a mirror it will be seen that a continuous undulatory movement passes up and down the spine.



EXERCISE VI.—HIP ROLL

This exercise is effective not only in promoting abdominal activity but also in reducing loose, sagging tissue, increasing the mobility of the vertebrae and improving the muscles of the lumbar region.



EXERCISE VII.—BREATHING EXERCISE

This exercise is one of the most effective in insuring a supply of oxygen to the tissues. Together with the preceding trunk exercises it facilitates the flow of blood through the large muscles, lessens the blood pressure and induces a feeling of exhilaration and buoyancy.