

Larner's Text Book

ON

Walking

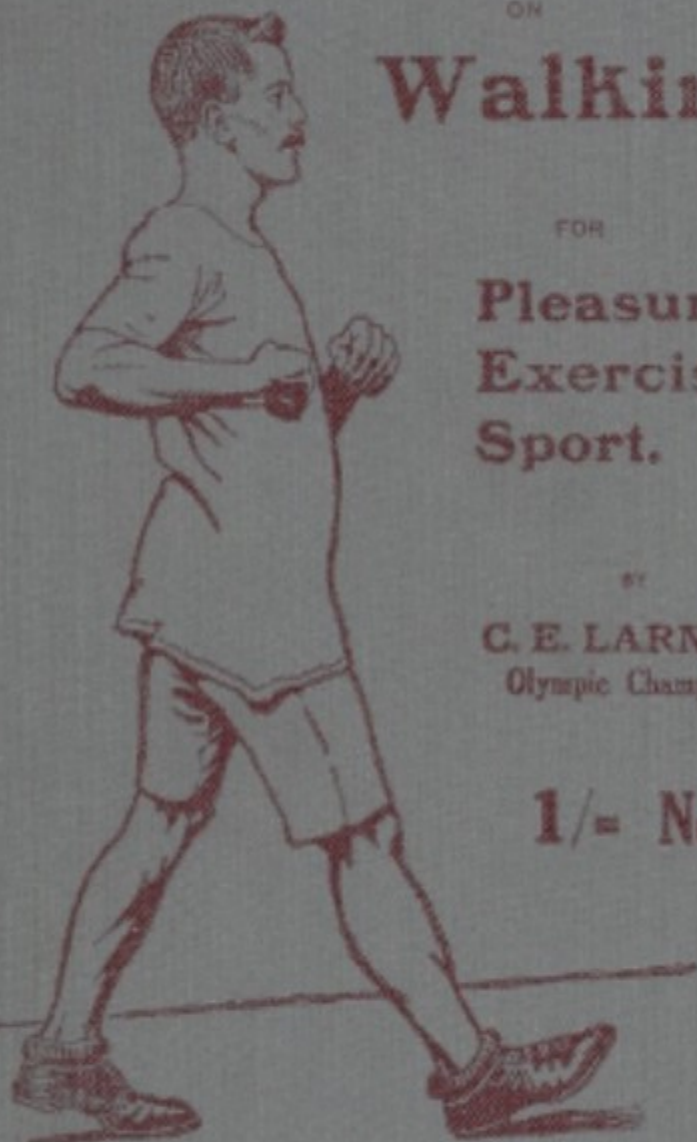
FOR

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Sport.

BY

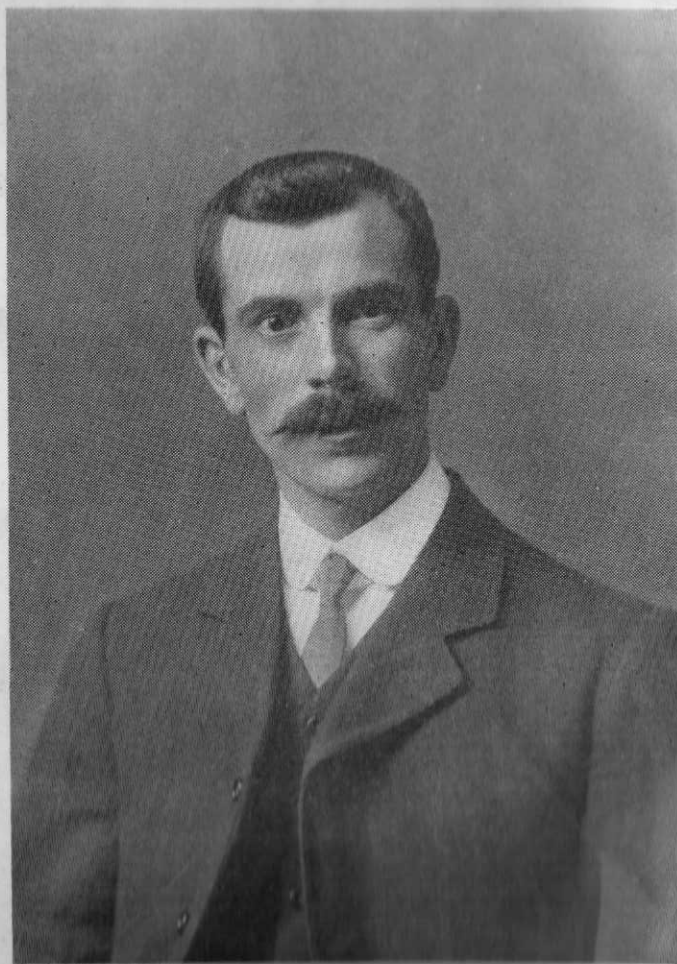
C. E. LARNER,
Olympic Champion.

1/- Net.



"HEALTH & STRENGTH" LTD.

12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.



MR. G. E. LARNER.

LARNER'S TEXT BOOK
ON
WALKING.

EXERCISE—PLEASURE—SPORT.

BY

C. E. LARNER

Amateur Walking Champion of the World.
(Olympic Champion, 1908).

“HEALTH & STRENGTH,” LIMITED,
12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND,
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CHAPTER I.

A Definition of Walking.

To define exactly of what Walking consists is by no means an easy task. It is in fact almost impossible to do so either in writing or by illustration.

The difficulty may be perhaps most clearly expressed by stating that it is far easier to WALK than to judge a walker.

The usual description of Walking as being "fair heel and toe" is by no means accurate. A man may comply with the rules of "heel and toe" Walking and yet be really running all the time; while on the other hand a man might actually cover a considerable distance without touching the ground with one of his heels at all, and yet be WALKING all the time. Try for yourself and see. A man can WALK on his toes only, for some distance, comparatively slowly it is true, but he will still be free from any accusation of running.

True that he cannot walk at any great pace unless he does adhere to the heel and toe method, but as I have sought to indicate, this is by no means a certain test.

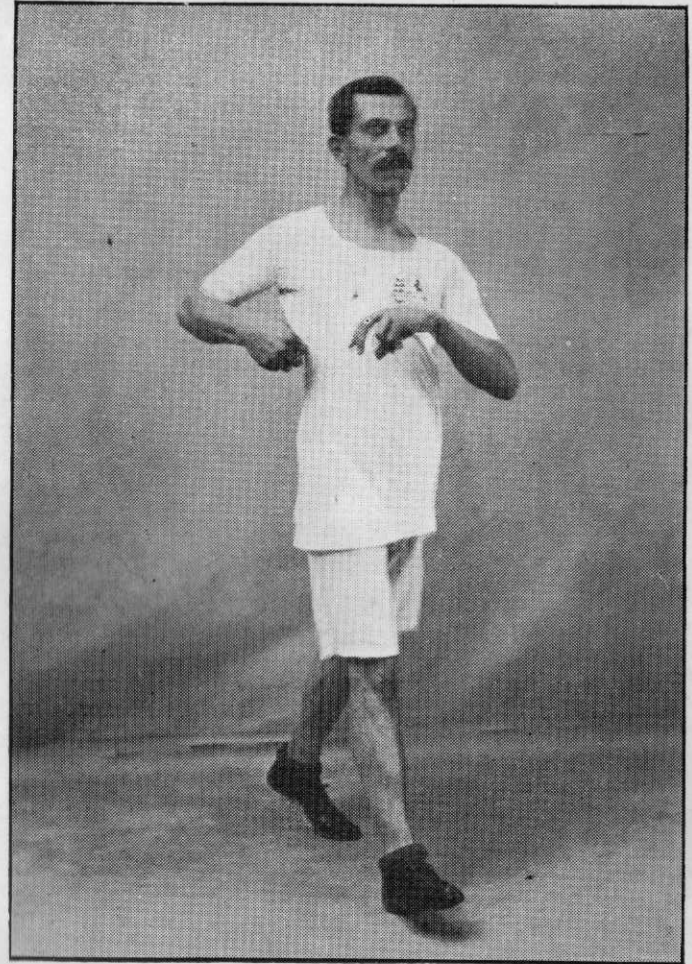
Another test which I have heard some authorities advocate is to my mind even less sound than the "heel and toe" ruling. This is, that the perfectly fair walker should always preserve a straight knee. A very fallacious test this.

For first of all a man may run, or perhaps I should say "jump" along with perfectly straight, stiff legs. I have seen some very fast work done in this manner. The walker, as he styles himself, and as some judges occasionally style him, leaping along from heel to heel, only occasionally bringing his toes to the ground.

Secondly, a man may walk with a scrupulously fair action and yet bend his front leg throughout the whole of his stride. He may also bend his front leg as he touches the ground with his heel, and straighten it in the course of the stride. Both actions are fair.

The surest and most certain method of testing a walker is to watch his feet. If one or other of these is always in contact with the ground, that is to say, if on no single occasion does he lift BOTH feet clear, then is that man walking beyond any possibility of cavil.

The period of double contact with a really fast walker is naturally almost infinitesimal. Equally, of course, the faster the walker travels the shorter still will be the duration of double contact. But this is the essential point. The hind foot must not leave the



FAIR WALKING.

A Front View.

ground until the front one touches it. The judges have to decide that, and further discussion of the subject may, I fancy, be left to the chapter in which I propose dealing with these functions.

CHAPTER II.

How to Walk, both Fast and Far.

Walkers, both amateur and professional, adopt various styles. Some lean forward, others back. Others, again, carry themselves in as upright an attitude as they possibly can. The adherents, or rather practitioners, of each style claim advantages for their several methods, but personally I fail to see how anyone can walk otherwise than perfectly upright; or as nearly upright as they can manage to carry their bodies.

The walker who leans forward, who cants his body over in that direction must unquestionably disturb his balance by so doing. His weight is wrongly distributed, and he must therefore impose an entirely unnecessary strain on his muscles, or must yield to the almost irresistible temptation to break into an occasional run.

A comparison may be instituted with that of running men. The sprinter or short distance runner who is anxious solely to get over the ground in the shortest possible time, throws his body forward as far

as he conveniently can, with the result that his legs shoot out in front instinctively in order to restore the balance and thus enable him to steadily quicken and lengthen his stride until the effort is expended. The STRAIN he feels is that of supporting, regaining, and again losing his balance rather than that of actually swinging his legs.

Now carrying this observation backwards over the longer distance, and consequently slower-run races, you will notice that as these increase in length and decrease in pace, the more closely does the runner's carriage approach the perpendicular; until finally the man ceases to run and has therefore no further need to disturb his equilibrium. His effort now is purely confined to the swing of his legs, assisted, as much as possible by a corresponding swing of his body, and it would therefore be absurd to add any weight-carrying feat which would hamper his progress.

He has to carry himself along, and can do this most easily if his weight be accurately poised; that is to say, if his body be upright.

His method of swinging his legs should, of course, be that which he finds to be most convenient, comfortable, and easy for himself.

He may, as already suggested, find that he gets along best if his front leg remain straight from the time it first touches the ground until it again leaves it for the next forward swing. He may walk with bent knees throughout, or he may bring his leg forward

bent, and straighten it sharply as the other comes forward.

Either style would be correct. The walker will adopt whichever suits him best. I have my own preference, but am practically convinced that this is only because I find myself best suited by my own style.

Then there is the body swing. This again differs considerably with different walkers. The action utilised consists practically in a swaying of the hips, in accordance mainly with the length of the stride taken. The action resembles a curve, the hips being both swayed and swung so as to bring the feet down in as near a straight line as possible. Some walkers stride out tremendously, others not nearly so far, but it is obvious that the longer the stride be the quicker will the ground be covered, always supposing that the exertion be kept within reasonable bounds. Attempts at over striding tend to slacken pace, and also to tire one out. Ease of action here, as in everything else associated with walking, is the great thing to aim at.

Another point is regularity of stride, both as regards length and pace.

I am inclined to fancy that walking stands really alone in this respect.

It might be claimed that a short distance runner, that is to say, a 100 yards or 200 yards man, will maintain much the same pace and length of stride throughout. Sprinters will indeed often assert that they do so, but I cannot see how this is possible. They get off with a spring, shooting their bodies forward,

and mechanically increasing the rapidity and force of their movements until the winning post is past, or rather until their momentum has evaporated. Their balance gets steadily more and more disturbed until it commences to be regained; when, of course, the speed begins to slacken, and eventually to die away; a sprint being best described as one long-sustained effort.

Long distance runners, again, will maintain that they keep up the same length of stride throughout. W. G. George claims that he always took exactly the same length of stride throughout every race, and is, I believe, fairly accurate in so claiming; but in that, as in most other respects, he was an exception to the general rule.

Reference to Alfred Shrubbs' "Running and Cross Country Running" will show how the Horsham marvel advises an initial stride of about 4 feet 10 inches, gradually lengthening to five feet or over, and then coming back to 4 feet 6 inches, until, of course, the final sprint home.

But for walking well the stride would depend on a man's own height and length of limb, and since the pace should be regular throughout, it stands to reason that the stride must also be so.

HOW PACE SHOULD BE REGULATED.

The best method of selecting one's pace can be illustrated by the following rule:—

Supposing the walker to be going for record,

for the ten mile record say, and he fancies himself capable of getting down as low as 75 min. 55 secs. Then he should set himself to do each mile in 7 min. 35½secs., the last mile in the same time as the first. A similar principle would apply to any distance and to any track—supposing, of course, the latter to be a level one, without gradients.

In any case the walker should have a pretty close acquaintance with his own powers. He must know the time he hopes to be able to cover the distance in, which should be the time he must cover it in, if he is to be returned the winner.

Then he has only to divide the time by the number of miles, and to cover each mile in its due proportion of minutes and seconds.

This is absolutely the only safe and certain rule. He should not trouble in the least about the other competitors. He should, in fact, endeavour not to notice them. They may be striding along far ahead of him or tailing off behind.

In either case, sprinting or lagging will be of no earthly use to him. If the others are going too fast and show no signs of cracking up, then he has miscalculated his chances. That is all, and he must or should abide by his miscalculation. Any attempt to quicken up, supposing him now to be travelling at his fastest (with a view to lasting the distance) will only throw him out of action, will disturb his mind, and may possibly lead him into trotting, and thereby earning disqualification.

Oh! admitted that there are exceptions to every rule. Yes, the walker we are considering may perhaps be a champion in disguise, out pot-hunting. He may in that event have underrated the opposition, and may not therefore have set off at a fast enough pace. Or he may, on the other hand, have overrated them, and may be forging ahead at too fast a bat, thereby running the risk of winning by a street or so, and of thus exposing his real form, being punished therefor by future handicappers.

In either of these events he has made a serious error of judgment, and must adapt himself to circumstances.

In the first instance he will be walking well within his powers, and should pull a fair amount of reserve force down his sleeve. It will be advisable to carefully note distances, and to then quicken up sufficiently to get closer to the leaders as soon as possible. For as he overtakes them he can again regulate his speed to theirs, leaving himself sufficient in hand to pass them comfortably before the finish.

The procedure will, of course, be reversed in the second case; but it is as well on all occasions to avoid the initial error of failing to correctly estimate the task in front of you.

Slackening down requires plenty of practice to execute correctly, while when quickening up one must always take into account the liability of one's opponents to crack-up altogether.

In championships no such mistakes are likely to occur, while in club walks and handicaps a little careful observation and calculation beforehand will prove a sufficient safeguard against accident. The novice may find himself woefully at sea just at first, but after a time he should be able to get thoroughly posted as to the real form of any probable opponents.

THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT.

The chief thing to be observed is the careful study of one's own powers. Training and trials will soon enable one to form a correct estimate of these. If the walker finds that he cannot do seven miles under 63 minutes, then he must accustom himself to walk each mile in nine minutes. He will find it easier to cut each of these a second or so than he will to cut the whole distance to an appreciable extent. He must on no account attempt covering the first mile in record time if he finds himself unable to keep the pace up. For in that event he will probably find that he is unable to complete the course.

ARM ACTION.

Before perfecting one's regularity of pace and stride, body swing, etc., it is as well to pay a fairly considerable amount of attention to the management of one's arms. These limbs come far more into play and exert a far greater influence on the best and worst style of walking than might be imagined by the casual observer.

The arm swing, if correctly managed, will pump up a lot of energy and will, or rather should, be the principal means of regulating the body swing.

Many very prominent walkers, including even those who have displayed championship form, have never succeeded in correctly managing their arms. They swing them far too vigorously, and with far too high an action, thereby not only both tiring and straining themselves, but also frequently over-swaying their hips and bodies.

I have seen walkers, really famous walkers, who throw their arms about anyhow. Up above their heads, bringing their elbows almost, if not quite, into line with their shoulders, with their clenched fists well above their heads. They will also swing their arms well behind them, but will observe little or no regularity in any of these gestures.

Now, as will be observed in the photographs illustrating this book, I rarely, if ever, raise my elbows above my waist, and though I may, and in fact, do frequently push my hand and forearm right round in front of my body, I hardly ever draw my elbow far back.

I, therefore, economise my strength, preserve a regular breathing, and preserve a steady, regular action. The arms work in advance of the legs; or, I should say, appear to do so. Their action and the assistance they lend is practically impossible to describe on paper. The walker must get into the way

of it himself, BUT he must sedulously endeavour to cultivate the correct arm swing; that is to say, a regular swaying one, without any violent or irregular action, and, above all, without any beating of the air.

CHAPTER III.

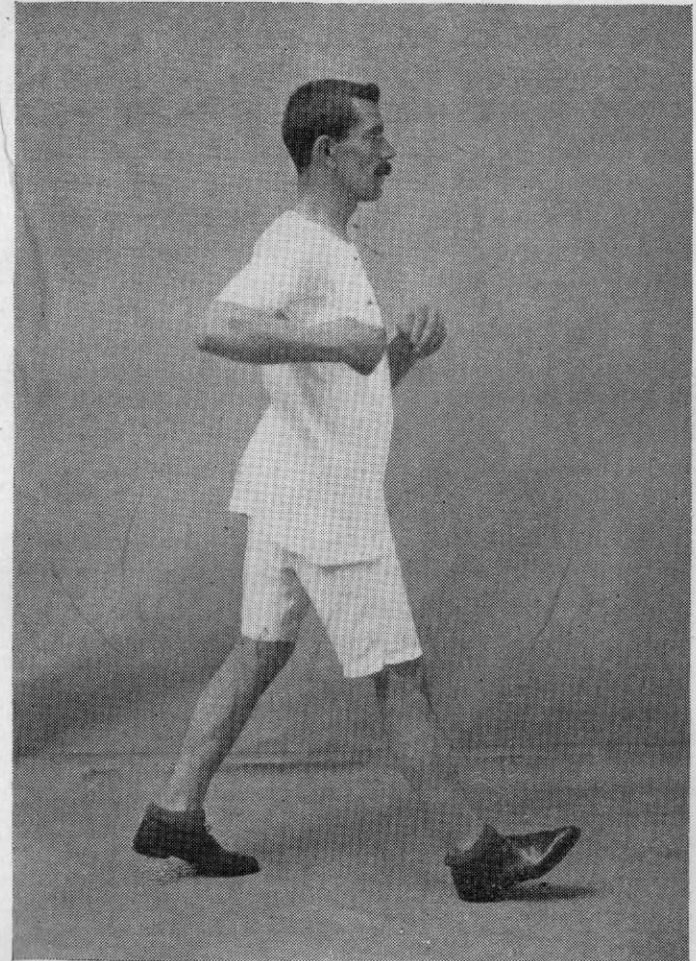
Road Walking.

It is, I think, to be regretted that there are so few road-walking contests. In fact, with the exception of London to Brighton affairs, it is rarely that one ever hears of such an event.

And in spite of difficulties (which I fully recognise) it is, I think, even more regrettable that cross-country walking contests are practically non-existent.

Walking itself has been fairly generally recognised as the most healthful of all forms of exercise, while the unequalled benefits to be derived from it are tacitly admitted by its adoption as the most important item of every athlete's preparation.

Running men, boxers, swimmers, cyclists, wrestlers, etc., one and all of them indulge in daily walks, preferably across country, or at worst along turnpike roads. All these walks, too, are conducted at a fair pace, so that I am disposed to fancy that were sufficient opportunities afforded for eight, ten, twelve, or twenty mile road or cross-country walking



FAIR WALKING.

A Side View.

contests, the list of entrants would more than satisfy the promoters.

There would be difficulties, of course. For while it is by no means the easiest of tasks to satisfactorily judge track walking contests—where the style of each competitor can be closely and fairly easily watched—a road or cross-country walking contest presents almost insuperable difficulties in this department.

Nevertheless, by posting judges at intervals along the road, say in pairs, so that one might accompany each clump of contestants for a certain stage at least, a fairly adequate supervision could be exercised, and the rest, I should say, be left to the fair sporting spirit and honesty of the competitors themselves.

These contests would prove very interesting on account of the different style necessitated by the country to be traversed, the inequalities of surface frequently impelling the walker to break his stride, while, of course, the differentiations of soil, from hard to soft, impose a constantly changing strain on the muscles employed.

For track walking spiked shoes are best, but for road or cross-country tracks, medium-soled boots are to be preferred.

In long-distance road walks, again, the question of costume is rather important, for despite the continuous muscular exercise, or rather perhaps on account of it, the body needs protection from cold.

On a walk of fifty miles or so I would advise the

wearing of a vest and thick sweater, and of fairly thick shorts; while if the weather be cold the addition of a pair of woollen shorts under the ordinary ones.

As to the best method of procedure, the same rule should be followed as for track contests. That is to say, the same rate of speed should be adhered to throughout.

Unlike track walking, however, this cannot always be maintained mile by mile. There may be hills, soft and heavy patches of ground, etc., to traverse, which, needless to say, cannot be covered at the same pace as hard and level ground.

For these reasons it is advisable in a road-walking contest to carefully survey the course beforehand, to map it out, and to divide it into laps (if I may use the expression) not necessarily of equal length, but rather of equal difficulty; as, for instance, an uphill lap to be considerably shorter than a downhill one.

This lap division being arranged, the plan should be to allot an equal amount of time to each, so that the rate of walking should vary as little as possible.

The walker, whether on the road or track, should always endeavour to avoid spurting. Sudden bursts are most difficult to gauge. One may overhaul a leader or a rival in receipt of a start by so doing, but the consequent effort will in most cases be found to overtax one's powers. Spurting or putting on a sprint is all very well in other forms of racing. They are VARIATIONS of effort, which impose nothing like so

serious a strain as they will in walking where the exertion is continuous. I shall, however, recur to this subject in my next chapter, when I propose to quote an illustration in support of my theory.

Coming back to road walking, possibly a few hints on the necessary feeding arrangements during a long tramp may be found useful; for, of course, on a journey from London to Brighton; or from London to Brighton and back, the contestants will naturally require some nourishment on the road. This, of course, can be handed to them by attendants at various stages of the journey, and should consist of such items as bananas, new laid eggs beaten up in a little warm port wine, custards, bovril and bovril biscuits. It is inadvisable to drink much during these long journeys, but in order to allay the thirst, and moisten the mouth and throat, which are apt to become terribly dry and parched, these should be washed out from time to time. Well watered port or sherry will be found best for this purpose.

Cross-country walking contests, which I have suggested in this chapter, would be such novel events, that possibly it would be found necessary, on experiment, to devise a set of rules to govern them. But I do not know why this should be necessary. The necessary judges could be stationed or arranged as for road walking contests, but there might of course be some difficulty in selecting suitable courses for the contests. For in order to obtain the best results, the

country should be fairly uneven, and, if possible, roughish in its nature, while the presence of such obstacles as gates, hedges, water, etc., would naturally limit the field of selection. Too many obstacles of this nature would tell severely on several of the competitors.

But honestly I do not see why a few of these walking races could not be arranged. Records made at such would necessarily vary pretty considerably, according to the ground traversed, just as they do in cross-country running. One advantage at least must be universally conceded. They would give a tremendous fillip to ordinary cross-country walking. Rambling clubs would benefit considerably, and surely the general physique of the nation would be benefited thereby.

CHAPTER IV.

Track Walking.

I have already dealt with several points associated with track walking races, and fear that there is really not much more to say on the subject.

You see I have always walked in the same way. Have just set off at the pace I meant to maintain throughout, have walked fairly and squarely, and have generally managed to win. Possibly I do possess a gift for correctly estimating the rate of speed necessary to maintain in order to win, for I have always adhered to my programme, and have usually found that I had arranged it correctly.

My methods are, I am aware, not those usually recommended, and I have more than once heard them described as being beyond the capacity of the average walker. I have been told that a spectator once described me "as wearing my rivals down like slate-pencils," and that "once I had caught an opponent up I said good-bye to him."

Nevertheless, from the time I first took seriously

to walking, I have only once been passed in the track, and as this was practically the only occasion on which I ever really sprinted in a track race, it may be worth relating.

Practically the first open handicap I ever entered was at Tunbridge Wells, and they put me on the 150 yard mark. Now there was a man on the 120 yard mark, who had got "let in," and had come down on purpose to win this race.

As soon as we started, and before we seemed to have gone any distance, he went past me. You could scarcely call it a spurt, seeing how early in the race it was; but as he went by I put on speed and followed him closely. He was going his fastest, but I stuck to him. Round and round we went, passing all our rivals, until we got into the home straight or thereabouts, when he slackened-up, saying, "Go on, I'm done."

It was this race which showed me that my best policy was to walk my own pace throughout, irrespective of my rivals. I had not planned to do so on the occasion in question, but went at my chief rival's pace which happened to be my best for the time being. He, too, went at his best, but was spurting all the time. That is to say, that although he did not cover the ground appreciably faster, at any period, yet he was continually taxing his energies to keep just ahead of me—and in consequence—cracked. I found that I could stay at the pace he had set, and so thereupon set

myself to discover a yet faster pace at which I could stay.

Since that time I have worked out my best speed in ratio to the distance to be traversed, and have proved it to be as follows: One mile, 6 min. 26 secs.: two miles, 6 min. 35 4-5ths secs. per mile; three miles, 6 min. 48 3-5ths secs.; four miles, 6 min. 48½ secs.; five miles, 7 min. 8 3-5ths secs.; and so forth. My best time so far for ten miles has been 1 hour 15 min. 57 2-5ths secs., which I walked throughout at just under 7 min. 36 secs. to the mile; but I fancy I could manage to do the journey in less than 75 minutes, and mean having a try one of these days. I have covered 8¼ miles in the hour, so that I ought to be able to do the 1¾ miles in under the odd 15 minutes without any very great difficulty.

Several of my readers may possibly remind me that the Tunbridge Wells instance was not the only one in which I have been overhauled in a race, and that I got not only badly overhauled but beaten at Wembley Park. Quite so, but that was in a 21 miles road walk.

Indeed, I might perhaps have dealt with the subject in my last chapter if I had thought of it. But it is rather a melancholy reminiscence, and I didn't care to do so.

I went off then well, had my pace properly planned, and wore down my opponents until with 14

miles covered I was leading by a mile. Then I suddenly felt horribly cold and queer (it was a cold March day, and as already mentioned, one is peculiarly liable to cold fits on long road walks.) I got another sweater from an attendant and pulled it on, had a banana or so and an apple, drank a little champagne, and gradually began to come round.

I had kept on walking all the time, but naturally at a very poor pace, and had therefore been passed by one or two of the others. I did not get really fit again until the eighteenth mile, by which time J. Butler had acquired a five minutes' lead. Try as I would, and I DID spurt on this occasion, I could not reduce this lead of his. I finished second, which I don't think was a bad feat under the circumstances.

That was a trying experience if you like, but I shall always fancy that the ten mile final at the stadium in the Olympic Games was even worse. True that I won and made a new world's record, cutting the old one by almost a minute, but there were numerous occasions when I felt as though I MUST give up. My throat was like a lime-kiln, and I scarcely knew whether I had a tongue left or no. I would have given the world for a slice of lemon, and my tortures were frightfully intensified by the sight of the water in the swimming tank, which I had to pass every lap. The temptation to leave the track and to moisten my lips was almost irresistible. It would have meant disqualification, but I scarcely felt as if I should mind that at all.

WALKING.

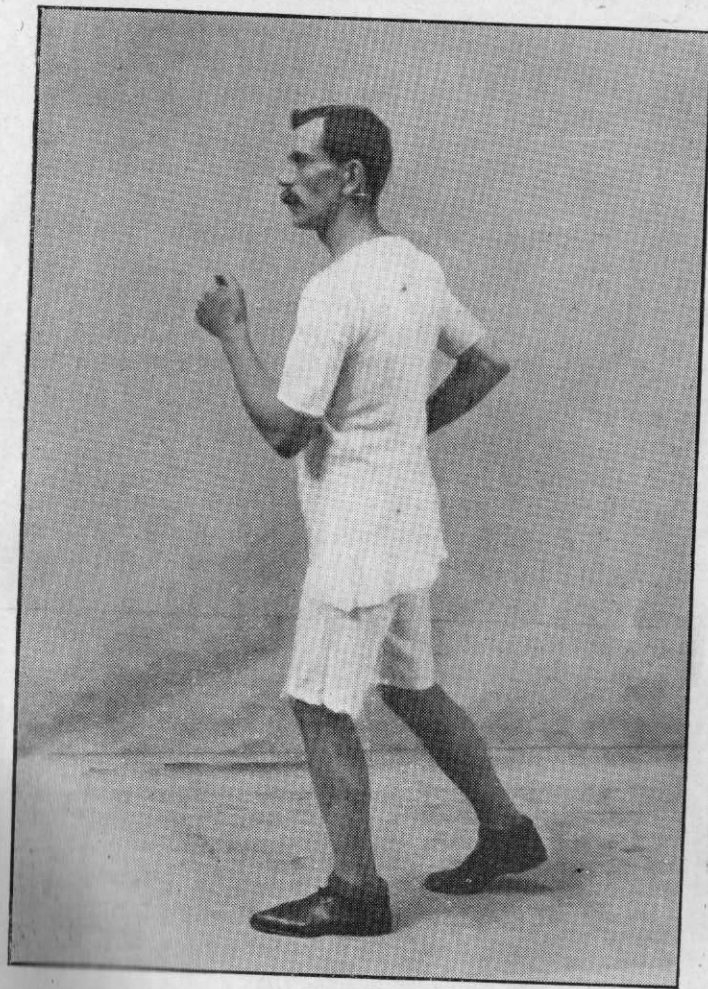
I didn't want to give in, and felt moreover that if I could manage to hold out that I should have a chance of cutting Sturgess's long-standing record, which I wanted to do badly.

As you all know, I succeeded, but I didn't cut it deep enough. I am positive that save for that awful thirst I could have done more than a minute better.

Well, perhaps I may one of these days. I did mean to retire altogether after the Games, but would like to bring one or two of my own records down a peg or two, particularly this ten mile one, and so may follow in the footsteps of actresses and singers, and make another reappearance or so.

By the way, before leaving the subject of track walking altogether, I might mention a tip of my own which might be found useful to walkers generally. This is to have a little tip of indiarubber let into the heels of their shoes, just at the backs. They will find that this deadens the jar of the heel coming down very considerably.

I have always found this device a most useful one. But then, as my critics have frequently remarked, I am always trying to damage the tracks I walk on by bringing my heels down sharply every time. One race which I won at Stamford Bridge would never have been awarded to me if the new track had not been so soft. I had been doing a lot of walking just then, and my heels were terribly sore. I managed to keep going, but wanted to turn it up. In fact I



FAIR WALKING WITH BENT KNEES.
Making a Turn.

should have been compelled to do so if the track had not fortunately been a practically new one, and so soft that I managed to reach the tape without breaking down. Still I was never more thankful in my life as I limped away, that the business was over at last.

Then in opposition to almost universal usage, I never carry corks in my hands. Really, I fancy that this habit is more an adherence to old-established custom than one which has any intrinsic merit of its own. I certainly fail altogether to see any need for gripping one's hands tight when walking. I always hold my hands loosely, and even at times open, preferring a feeling of freedom and looseness all over. I am perfectly certain that the easier and looser one's action is, the better can the constant strain be borne. For, of course, the most serious part of a walking contest is the long-drawn out perpetual strain, which tells more in a track contest even than in a long road walk, where one does get an occasional break in the monotony in taking refreshments from one's attendants at various intervals.

CHAPTER V.

Training.

There is, as far as I am aware, only one satisfactory method of training for any kind of walking contest, and that is by walking.

When first I went to Brighton I had an idea that swimming might do me a bit of good, and so went in regularly for it. I thought that a daily dip in the sea could not fail to bring me on, but nevertheless I found that I went back in pace, and, strange to say, that my health suffered. So I gave it up.

I was sorry to do so, and even consulted my doctor before coming to an opinion, but as his advice confirmed my suspicions, I felt that I had no option.

Neither do I find cold baths agree with me. I used to go in for them since I found that the majority of athletes did so, but I have never found them to agree with my constitution. Perhaps I am peculiar in this respect, so would not like to advise my readers to avoid either swimming or cold bathing if they find them suitable. But should they go in for swimming, I should strongly advise them to avoid long

immersions or even very frequent dips, as I am sure that neither of these are conducive to speed on the track, for walkers at any rate.

I have always been fond of a set-to with the gloves from boyhood. My father taught all his sons to box, and I have never lost my early liking for the sport.

Cross-country running is another form of athletics of which I am rather fond, although through fear of its interfering with my walking I have dropped it a good deal of late years. Still, I keep up my membership in the Brighton and County Harriers, and have won a few prizes across country with them.

On one occasion we had an inter-club run with the Blackheath Harriers, and had out both fast and slow packs. Not being recognised as a star performer, they included me in the slow pack, which received three minutes start.

None of our contingent were expected to show up well, but I struck out at a pace which I fancied would get me home there or thereabouts if I could only manage to hold it, and somehow I got in first man by from 250 to 300 yards ahead of my nearest opponent, beating all competitors whether of the fast or slow packs.

I am afraid that I shall be a bit too old when my walking days are done, to anticipate any great fame at cross-country running; but there are moments when I almost wish that I had taken it up earlier. You see I started walking rather late in life as athletes go, and then only accidentally.

We had our Police Sports on, and as I was asked to compete, and did not reckon myself at all startling at any particular branch, I entered for the walking race, where I hoped that I might not disgrace myself too seriously. To my surprise I came in second, and began to imagine that with a little practice I might perhaps do a bit of good as a walker.

Well, I haven't done badly, but as I was then past 25, I felt that it would not be overwise to go in for other branches as well. The preparation for these might interfere with my walking. So that while occasionally turning out for the Brighton and County Harriers, I have never laid myself out seriously to win prizes.

But I like the cross-country work, and so should not be sorry to see a cross-country walk or so, if these could be arranged without insuperable judging difficulties.

The training routine to which I confine myself is pretty much as follows. I commence road work in January, going for a ten-mile fast tramp every other day, alternating with an easy seven or eight miles. I keep these up right through January and until the middle of February, when I get on to the Preston Park track and lay myself out trying to keep to or, if possible, to cut my various records over the different distances.

I would advise the beginner to commence with road work and to stick to it steadily until he can do

ten miles in 100 minutes. Then let him try track practice, where he ought to cover the distance in 85 minutes.

He should not find much difficulty in doing this if he has brought his ten ROAD miles down to the 100 minutes, and can then endeavour to cut his 85 minutes by setting himself to cover the first of the ten in eight minutes on the track. This should not be at all difficult, but he may find it by no means easy to keep to this eight minutes per mile right through the whole ten.

Still let him persevere until he succeeds, when if reasonably young and capable of improvement, he has made a by no means slight stride towards attaining championship form. He has only to chop thirty seconds off each mile to bring himself within record. It doesn't sound such a terrible task, does it?

The above counsel may be objected to as referring solely to ten mile walking. But then I take it that you don't want me to waste your time and my own by giving separate details for each varying distance, and in any event ten miles is not such a very terrible distance.

Anyway, let us suppose that four miles is your limit. Well, try the road four in 34 minutes. Nothing very serious in that surely. Now try your track four in 29 minutes, each of these being covered in $7\frac{1}{4}$ minutes. Well, perhaps this last is not so easy as it looks. Still it is well outside record, so should be by

no means impossible. Anyhow, there is the idea. Any would-be champion can easily note the times of local champions, and can therefore arrange his own schedule according to the class of competitors who are likely to enter for the race which he is anxious to win.

Having set himself his time for the whole course, he must try and walk it at regular pace. He may if he likes, and has sufficient energy and stamina, save a bit up his sleeve for a final spurt if such be necessary, owing to unexpected excellence on the part of his rivals, but he should not (for reasons already stated) get into the habit of relying on spurts and bursts of speed, if he aspires to championship distinction. These are only to be won by steadily walking your opponents down, by walking absolutely to schedule, and by covering your last mile in much the same time as your first, no matter how long the race may be. I am absolutely positive of this, and quite satisfied that I hit on the best method of walking a race when I first decided to adopt it.

To a certain extent, in an actual race itself, a walker will be governed by his rival's pace, just as a runner will, but certainly not to the same extent. For he will, if he is a good man, be as a rule more severely handicapped, and will have in consequence to go all out fairly early if he is going to cut down the starts he has given away. He cannot look to come along with a wet sail at the finish and overhaul the leaders as he might in a two, four, or ten-mile running race. He

must wear them down earlier, and will assuredly break their hearts sooner if they find that he is doing so.

Still, of course, the human factor does enter into walking races as it does into running ones. My record for the seven miles is 50 min. 50 1-5th secs., but when training for the hour record I covered the seven miles in 49 min. 49 secs., at Preston Park. So you see that there is plenty of room left for new record breakers if there are many desirous of being so distinguished.

By the way, I am inclined to fancy that there must be quite a fair number of prospective champions about who never dream of the powers they possess. So few men go in for walking as a path to athletic fame.

And yet everybody can walk more or less. It is the most natural accomplishment in existence. I never suspected that I possessed any powers out of the ordinary until I was practically forced to make the discovery. Any one of my readers may be in similar, very possibly in better, case. Let each and all of them therefore get out on the nearest high road and test their powers.

CHAPTER VI.

On Judging.

Certainly the most difficult task of anyone connected with a walking contest is that of the judge or rather of the judges.

An umpire at the bowler's end in a game of cricket has a sufficiently impossible task. He has to keep a close and simultaneous watch on the bowler's foot and arm, to see that the former does not cross the crease, and that the latter neither jerks nor throws the ball. He has instantly to divert his attention to the ball itself, to be ready for appeals, and he cannot, of course, perform both the first two actions at the same time.

But even then, he has not such an arduous duty to perform as that of a walking referee. Say that it is a two mile race, and that there is a big field. The referee has to watch each competitor every step of the way. Taking up a single station of watching will not suffice. For walkers are smart enough to adhere strictly to the rules when passing the judges, "jumping," "lifting,"

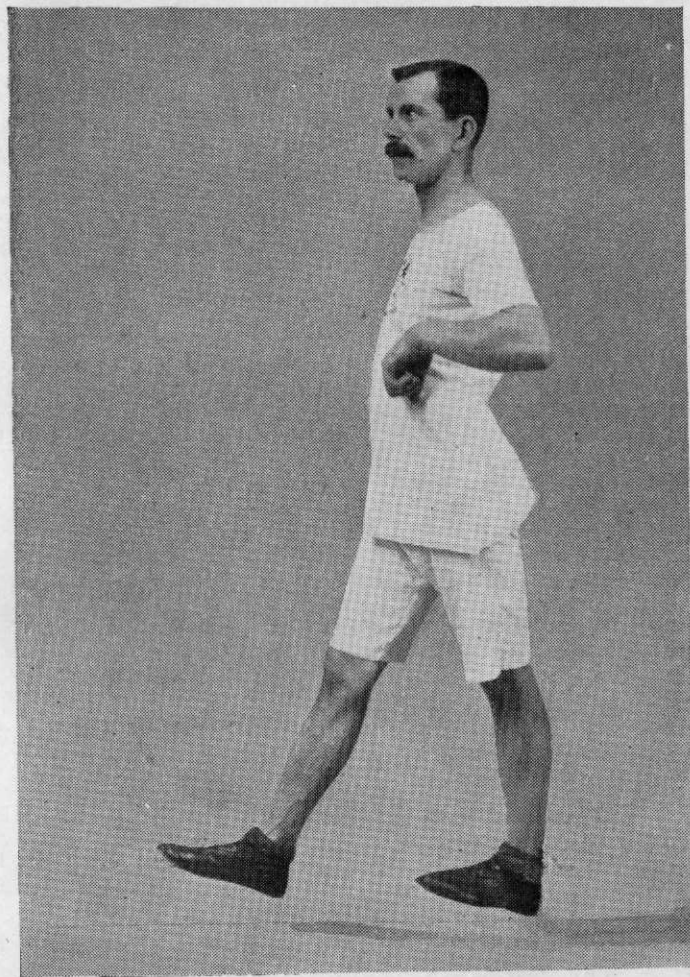
ambling or "trotting" as soon as they get out of his closer range of vision.

The competitors will probably be scattered all round the track, and there are so many things to watch that it is positively ridiculous to expect any one man to keep an eye on them all. A man may "lift" artistically every now and then, and gain quite an appreciable advantage even in a 100 yards, if he can continue to "lift" for that distance without detection.

Some judges insist that the knees should be straight throughout every stride, and to rest satisfied with that. Many frauds have been brought off in consequence. For a man who cares to practise doing so can "jump" tremendously without bending his knees at all. He springs along from heel to heel without difficulty, and as a rule keeps his body wonderfully straight when so doing, thus complying with another requisition which many judges put forward.

Once upon a time there was a man who was actually allowed to cover eight miles in the most wonderful time, in a race, without protest. He did the first mile in just over 6 min. 23 secs., covered five miles in close on 35 minutes, and beat all records for all distances. And yet he jumped all the way from start to finish—"straight-legged running" as several of the critics described it.

From my own point of view, there is only one sure and certain test. If at no single moment of the race do both feet leave the ground at the same time,



UNFAIR WALKING WITH STRAIGHT LEGS.
Jumping from the heels with knees straight.

then is a man walking and not running, jumping, "lifting" or doing any other illegal thing.

Other things do not matter. This is the one essential point which must be closely watched.

But it is absurd to expect any one judge to watch the feet of ALL the competitors closely enough. There must or should be several, say at least six, judges at every walking contest. These should scatter themselves round the ground at various points and move about, both inside and outside the track. Their identity should, as far as possible, be hidden from the contestants who might otherwise be keeping a weather eye open for the locality of inspectors and return to correct, legitimate action whenever they near them.

Even then the judges will have quite enough to do to watch the walkers' feet only. They should also watch their men both from before and behind, that is to say, as they are coming towards them and going away from them. But they should never DECIDE on impressions conveyed from these points of view.

A front or back view may give rise to suspicion that a man is walking unfairly. These can be communicated to other judges, and the man THEN carefully watched by as many as possible from a side view.

This last is the only satisfactory test. His action when viewed from front or behind MAY suggest all kinds of enormities, but the side view, face level

with the ground (if the judge so pleases) can alone prove whether BOTH feet are off the ground together.

Two or more judges can then compare notes, and if in agreement the men should be at once disqualified.

CHAPTER VII.

Which deals with Walking as a Pastime.

A FEW SUGGESTED RAMBLES.

Cycling, motoring, and excursion training to well-advertised resorts may be very pleasant and possibly healthful methods of spending a holiday, but these methods of getting about have cut seriously into the best of all methods of combining exercise and pleasure.

Let anyone in search of a really enjoyable day off, or the best of all week-ends, set off for a tramp round, with a suitable companion if possible, but singly will do almost as well. They can easily find out good, pretty, and interesting walks for themselves, and can ramble round off by-roads (as they can hardly do on bicycles), and pick up any amount of interesting information by the way.

I suggested that these walks could be discovered for themselves without difficulty, but possibly a few suggested routes might appeal to those who are not acquainted with them. They are well worth walking I can assure you.

A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TRAMP.

I propose starting with this one, because it commences from close to my own birthplace, and is therefore more or less in my own county. I propose describing it from Windsor to London; but it could, of course, be walked the other way about. As this is by no means the most direct route, it might be as well to give up a couple of days at least. There is plenty to see on the road, and one can turn off at times very profitably if one has the leisure, and make a real roundabout journey of it.

It is a roundabout way, you understand, altogether. For starting from Windsor on your way to London, you commence by going westward to Clewer, and thence to Bray, known wherever Britons congregate by the old ballad-biography of its famous Vicar.

Not that the ballad itself recounts the life of the original Vicar, any more than the earlier ballad of of "The Religious Turncoat," or "The Trimming Parson," who relates that:—

"When Royal James began his reign,
"And Mass was used in common,
"I shifted off my faith again
"And then became a Roman."

Despite the fact that at an earlier date:—

"I lov'd no king in Forty-one
"When Prelacy went down,
"A cloak and band I then put on
"And preached against the Crown."

The real original Vicar was Simon Alleyn, who flourished at Bray from 1540 to 1588, quite a century earlier. He "cured souls" at Bray with the utmost impartiality, or rather he presented them with varied samples of religion during his tenure of office, having commenced as a Roman Catholic, changed to the brand of Protestantism favoured by Henry VIII., to the less peculiar faith in fashion under Edward VI., relapsed, or saw the error of his ways under Mary (which ever the reader chooses), and finished his career in the odour of sanctity (or the errors of heresy) under Elizabeth.

His religious wanderings may have been due to a troubled conscience, or to a fondness for Bray, possibly the latter. Anyway, Bray is worth seeing, particularly by those with artistic instincts. The Jesus Hospital, which is almost the first building one comes across on entering it from Windsor, gave Frederick Walker the idea for his famous picture, "The Harbour of Refuge," now (I think) in the Tate Gallery.

Passing out of Bray and keeping to the right Maidenhead is the next place arrived at. From this point on, the best route is undoubtedly the towing path. Here one gets one of the loveliest reaches of the river, in spite of Boulter's Lock. This river path has been so often described that I need not waste space on it. But no matter what time of the year one selects for the walk, the Clieveden Woods on the opposite bank will alone

always repay the walker. Cookham, well I suppose you all know Cookham and Bourne End and the river scenery along the road.

We have been travelling west by north, crossing from Berks into Bucks so far, and we now make our first eastern slant through Wooburn and Wooburn Green to Holtspur, when the route turns direct east along the Oxford Road to Beaconsfield. Here are all the prettiness and quietude one could wish. It was from this village, or town as it calls itself, that Lord Beaconsfield took his title. So far the tramp has passed through country with which the average man is more or less acquainted, but I dare swear that few of my readers have visited Beaconsfield, and that fewer still have traversed the next stretch, at all events on foot.

How many of them, for instance, have ever heard of Jordans, about two miles north-west of Beaconsfield, by the road past Wilton Park? One has, by the way, to turn to the left almost at right angles, but Jordans of all places is worth seeing. Buried in the Quaker's graveyard there, lies the man who might have left to his descendants the greatest fortune on earth. He did not know what he possessed, and when he received it in discharge of a comparatively insignificant debt, little realised that within less than 250 years his property would be worth several thousands, if not tens of thousands, of millions sterling.

For here at Jordans, in the Quakers' burial

ground, lies William Penn, one time owner of the great State of Pennsylvania, presented to him by King Charles II. in settlement of a debt the merry monarch owed to his father, the Admiral. It was the only way Charles would ever have settled the debt. The country he handed over cost him nothing, and did not appear to be worth anything either, so that His Majesty no doubt chuckled very heartily when he got rid of his unfortunate creditor so cheaply. Jordans itself, by the way, needs some discovering. It consists almost solely of the Quakers' meeting house and graveyard, and is practically shrouded in trees. The buildings themselves are uninteresting in appearance, but if a man is really looking for solitude he can, as a rule, find it there.

In order to leave the place and get on to Chalfont St. Giles, there is a fairly steep descent down a narrow, twisting, winding, and stony but well-shaded lane to descend before John Milton's dwelling place is reached. The country round here is well worth rambling over, and a digression ought certainly to be made to Chalfont St. Peter, where there is a fine water splash made by the Misbourne as it crosses the road.

But whatever you do, don't miss the three or four miles between Chalfont St. Giles and Chenies, past the Nightingale Woods. There really isn't a prettier bit of country in England that I am acquainted with. It is worth visiting for its very stillness alone. There are a few twists and turnings to take, but the

road runs moderately straight as far as the high road to Amersham, when you turn to the right and pass Chalfont Road Station to Chenies.

I had thought of putting in a map of this walk, but am not so very clear myself, speaking from memory, as to the exact way which the road runs. I could find my way easily enough, but can't picture it to myself well enough to describe. Still, anyone who wants to tramp it, can easily consult a Cyclists' Touring Map.

Chenies is the headquarters of the great family of Russell, of whom the Duke of Bedford is the chief. The Russells originally came from Dorsetshire, I believe, or rather John Russell did, as interpreter to an Austrian Archduke, and won the favour of Henry VII., married the heiress of the Cheynes, and was created Earl of Bedford.

The village itself professes to be a model one, but beyond a splendid group of trees, with a spring in the centre, it would not have much to boast about save for its surroundings.

Turning now south-east, there is a steady descent through some very fine country and splendid parks past Chorleywood into Rickmansworth, far and away the prettiest town in Hertfordshire, and one of the prettiest in England. Unlike many other places one can think of, the town itself is worthy of its surroundings, and these are as fine as any yet passed.

No for beauty, I doubt if this walk of mine can be beaten anywhere in England.

There is now a stiff and longish climb to face over the canal and river bridges to Batchworth Heath. The road winds a good deal, and the gradients vary. The road passes Moor Park, a house which about 200 years ago belonged to a Mr. Styles, a gentleman who made a fortune out of the South Sea Bubble. The story goes that he gave £130,000 for the east wind. That is to say, he cut through the hills round the house so that he might have vistas, or long views, from his windows, but that Admiral Lord Anson, who next owned the house, objected to the east wind which blew down those vistas, and laid out £80,000 more in sheltering the place.

This was the Lord Anson who circumnavigated and brought back such tremendous plunder to this country. If all the accounts are true as to the rotten condition of his ships, the decaying stores and provisions, and the decrepit and crippled crews with which he sailed, the wonder is that he ever got out of the Channel.

Many of the poor devils who sailed under him had to be carried on board. Others came on crutches. They were old men and boys, scurvy-ridden and crippled. And yet he accomplished one of the most marvellous voyages in history. The story is well worth reading if only as evidence that Napoleon was right when he said that there was no such word as "impossible."

Down hill again into Middlesex for half a mile or so, and then a longish climb up over a rather stony and dusty ascent to Ducks' Hill, where you cross a species of common and get a decent view of the surrounding country. Now comes a steady descent to Ruislip, past the Regents Canal Reservoir. This last is really a fine spot surrounded by trees and wild flowers, which make it look like a natural lake. There are rushes and water lilies growing in the water, and since there are boats for hire and the reservoir is about a mile long, quite a pleasant break can be made in the journey.

Arrived at Ruislip itself, one has several choices of road into London. There is the "Marathon" course to Shepnerds Bush, probably familiar to my readers. Or one can bear to the left, and then turning sharply to the right, visit Ickenham, a little village which seems absurdly out of place so close to London. It might indeed have been transplanted direct from the eighteenth century. There is a village green, a pump, and a village pond, while a stranger would appear to be regarded as a distinct rarity.

From Ickenham one can steer due south, and either turn off to the right to Uxbridge or follow the road to Hillingdon Heath, Hayes End, and Southall, and by either road back to London.

Call the whole journey from Windsor a tramp of thirty to forty miles, less or more according to the digressions made. It is well worth spending a couple

of days over if one is going to cover the whole course, though it can be broken at various places and converted into a series of short jaunts spread over several days.

IN MY OWN COUNTRY.

I don't suppose that many of my readers will be acquainted with Langley or the Langley district, so would suggest that for the walk about to be described, the reader should start off from Hounslow or Longford, as being nearer town.

The route I have mapped out on the present occasion is a fairly roundabout one, with infinite possible deviations.

Most Londoners know Burnham Beeches, though I am inclined to fancy that few have thoroughly explored them. The average visitor contents himself with strolling round the outskirts, or else keeps to the drives which have been cut through the wood. In short he goes to look at Burnham Beeches, and is content to do that, without troubling to see them.

And yet a lover of nature might spend a week or so there without having seen it all. It is well worth seeing, this, the finest wooded expanse in the whole of England. Those in search of solitude can find it as readily here as they can in the depths of the New Forest, especially in late autumn or in winter, when the Beeches possess a peculiar beauty of their own. If you don't know the place, visit it soon, and lose yourself there. Wander about at will and see what you can discover. Better still, go again, visit the Beeches at all seasons of the year. As a rule, the only people you will come across are a few painters here and there who have used its beauty spots for innumerable pictures, with which you may, or may not be familiar ;

but you will find that the original landscapes are vastly superior to the painted reproductions.

Walking out to Burnham along the Bath Road from Hounslow, you will find the country rather flat for several miles, but will pass through several pretty little villages, clusters of houses, etc. The country side improves as you near Longford. Passing through there and Colnbrook, there is a longish stretch to cover till you reach Langley. I don't want to say too much about my own native place, because either one fails to appreciate the familiar beauties of one's home or is strongly suspected of overstating them. I may, however, quote somebody else, who has described Langley, Marshy Langley, or Langley Marish, as being "the most beautiful village near London."

It lies just off the main road, but is worth turning aside to visit, being a very interesting old place. Don't get frightened at the name. "Marshy" comes from "Marish," and the last from "Maries," the old name of the place having been "Langley Maries," in honour of the Virgin Mary, to whom the church is dedicated. At the church, by the way, is kept the old parish library, which was left to it by a Sir John Kederminster, in 1631. I don't know whether these old books (of which there are about 600) are worth reading, as I have never studied any of them. They are all in very old type, and are, I have been told, all or nearly all, concerned with religious subjects. Nevertheless, we at Langley are very proud of our library, even if we don't patronise it much. We believe that no other parish in the country has got anything to compare with it.

You will find all the country round to be as pretty as you could wish for. There are Langley Park and Black

Park, with a right of way through the former, and numerous opportunities for wandering off it, if you have no objection to trespassing. Black Park you certainly must visit. Days can be spent there exploring, in which you will learn what solitude really is, if you have a fancy for experiencing it. The chief impression gathered in Black Park, is that this little island is by no means so overcrowded as it is made out to be. The breaking of a dry stick under your foot is the only sound that breaks the silence, and the dim, religious light, in which you move, cannot, I should imagine, be matched nearer than the Great African forests. Within twenty miles of the roar of the London traffic you can almost feel as though you had been suddenly wafted to another planet, of which you were the sole inhabitant.

The trees are planted so thickly that even the wind is hushed into a gentle murmur, and the shafts of sunlight which break through the foliage here and there, make bright patches on the soft carpet of pine needles and dry leaves beneath your feet.

Wandering on through the pines, you come suddenly on a still, gloomy looking, expanse of water, which might form a fitting background to any wild scene of adventure. Here is Nature unadorned, if you like. The scene might have been taken straight from the backwoods of America, in the Old Colony days. You would not feel in the least surprised if a Red Indian were to emerge with stealthy footsteps from the gloomy woods, or if a scalping party in canoes were to cross the water.

A beast of prey, slinking across the sandy beach to slake his thirst, would not astonish you in the least. You have only to allow your imagination to run riot in Black

Park, and you will need no wild tales of adventure to stir your blood.

Skirt round the lake, which covers some thirty acres in all, until you come to where it borders the high road, and then turning to the right, follow it for about half-a-mile into Wexham Street, which consists only of a few houses. Turning to the left, again to the right, and then bearing to the left you reach the broad high road to Farnham Royal, from which you can enter Burnham Beeches.

By turning to the right, and then again to the left, you can visit Stoke Poges, famed the world over as having provided the scene for Gray's famous "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

The poet lived at Stoke with his mother, and is buried in the churchyard he immortalised. A very dismal, if not absurd monument has been erected to his memory, a few yards from the churchyard gate, at the side of a meadow bordering the lane which leads to it.

The honour of having been the scene of the Elegy is also claimed for the neighbouring churchyard of Upton, a mile or so away, beyond Slough, but the Upton claim is distinctly a shadowy one. Any unbiassed person comparing the two, can scarcely fail to decide in favour of Stoke Poges.

And Upton Church is worth visiting, if only for the sake of the famous epitaph, which records that "Sarah Bramstone, of Eton, Spinster," was "a person who dared to be just in the Reign of George the Second."

Whether his lamented Majesty was responsible for the implied needful association of great courage with justice, I am unable to say, but the testimonial to his character in the old jingle, would seem to convey the idea.

Do you remember the lines :—

“George the First, vile was reckoned,
 “Viler still was George the Second,
 “And what mortal ever heard
 “Any good of George the Third,
 “When to hell George Fourth descended,
 “Praise to God the Georges ended.”

Fordham, the famous jockey, also lies at Upton, Where we are reminded, on his tombstone, of his aphorism ‘Tis not the distance, but the pace that kills.’

It is a strange phrase to associate with Fordham, although he is credited with having coined it. For George was, according to all accounts, one of the mildest mannered men outside his profession, who ever lived. Reckless and daring as a horseman, he was almost timid in ordinary life. Which reminds me of a story.

Blondin, the rope walker, and the jockey were great friends, and Fordham frequently gave the Frenchman some very useful tips, which the latter profited by until he felt himself to be under an obligation, which he simply must repay. At his wit's end how to recompense George, his cup of gratitude at last overflowed. Fordham had given him a very special tip, had ridden the horse himself, and having landed quite a handsome sum for his friend, had called round at the Alhambra, where Blondin was performing the same evening. At that time, the great sensation of Blondin's act was when he, blindfold, carried an assistant across the rope, and about midway, always pretended to miss his footing, thereby causing the spectators to scream and thrill in a most satisfactory manner.

So that Blondin at last saw his chance. He would,



C. E. LARNER AND E. J. WEBB.
 (Both of England). The first pair to finish in the 3,500 metres,
 and in the ten mile walking contests at the Olympic Games.

honour Fordham in a singularly appropriate manner. He would do for him what he would not do for any man breathing, save his trusted assistant. He would put a sack over his head and carry Fordham across the rope, and having communicated his resolution, expected the jockey to be overwhelmed at his generous offer.

Fordham was overwhelmed, so overwhelmed indeed, that he could scarcely summon up sufficient strength to bolt from the building.

Here at Upton you are close to Langley again, which lies between that village and Slough, although the latter town is in Upton parish. So that in order to visit Upton, you can go there direct from Langley, or preferably take it on your return from Burnham Beeches, which I have suggested as the goal of your walk.

I take it, however, that you will prefer to come home by another road, and this can be done by returning to Farnham Royal, after the Beeches have been fully explored, and following the road by Salt Hill and Slough to Upton. On your way you will cross the spot where you turned off for George Green, Black Park, etc., so that the ground can be covered in various ways. The full length of the journey, supposing that you go on from Upton to Datchet and Windsor by way of Old Windsor, will be about thirty miles, but you can prolong or shorten this indefinitely.

The railway is crossed at numerous spots, so that you can break your journey, and return to town almost whenever you will, while on the other hand, there are plenty of out-of-the-way places to visit down side roads, lanes, and alleys; particularly if it is proposed to thoroughly explore Burnham Beeches, Black Park, etc.

BRIGHTON AND DISTRICT.

I suppose that I ought to apologise for having occupied so much space over rambles in my native district, but in extenuation of my offence, may I be allowed a natural regard for early associations. Such of my readers as may reside within fairly easy reach of these Buckinghamshire lanes, and to whom my, alas, lame description may appeal, will, I am sure fully exonerate, if indeed, they do not thank me gratefully, for having sent them on such an errand. To these, I need not apologise for my lack of eloquence, as they will find that the reality infinitely surpasses my feeble description.

But since it is perhaps unlikely that everybody will go wandering in Buckinghamshire, despite my recommendation, I may, perhaps, be a little more successful in despatching people to Brighton, by a road that is not usually patronised.

The Brighton road is perhaps the most popular in the world. I should say that more walking contests have been decided over it than over any other stretch of earth anywhere. People are always walking or cycling, or motoring to Brighton, but only a comparatively small number go via Caterham, Godstone, Uckfield, etc. And yet this is by far the prettier road, say three or four miles longer, but what of that. Surely a mile or so over fifty doesn't matter so very much. Say that you are in no particular hurry, and make a two-days tramp of it.

In fact, the distance can be shortened if desired, by training it to Croydon, for the route to be followed is the usual one as far as Purley, whence, however you

branch off to the left and climb up hill on to the North Downs, and keep on past Kenley and Warlingham, mounting steadily till you get to Caterham, and so up to the very crest of the North Downs, 777 feet above sea level.

It is well worth while calling a longish halt here. The panorama which lies spread out all round will more than repay you for the labour of your climb. Down below lies Caterham valley, where the Guards' shooting ranges are, and of course, the barracks where the young Guardsmen are licked into shape

It was at Caterham range, I fancy, that a certain Volunteer Major, who was Musketry Instructor to his regiment, distinguished himself, rather unfavourably, as it happened, somewhere about the time when the last Boer War broke out.

He was very keen on certain matters connected with soldiering, rifle-shooting (by others), transport matters, and — whisky. At least so it is said. He had invented a new range-finder, which he was endeavouring to get adopted, and for some reason or other connected with this, was present at range practice. He had been talking to the officer in charge about his range-finder, when the latter, whose attention had been drawn elsewhere for a short time, suddenly missed his companion. No one had seen him walk off, nor indeed did his departure arouse any interest, until a sergeant in charge of one of the squads observed a peculiar excrescence on the butt, between the targets at which his own and another section were engaged in volley practice. A glass was brought to bear on the suspicious looking lump, and the "cease fire" being sounded, a party went out to reconnoitre.

This discovered the Volunteer Major calmly seated between the targets, smoking a cigarette. An explanation being demanded, he explained that he was anxious to go to the front, and in anticipation of his application being accepted, he wished to experience the sensation of being under fire. He had actually crawled in front of one of the targets while a full section were blazing away at it, so that his miraculous escape from death practically passes belief.

The matter was hushed up, but the authorities did NOT see their way to accept his volunteered services. Even his own regiment suggested that he had served his country long enough, and accepted his resignation, on the grounds that an undue curiosity is out of place, where military affairs are concerned.

From several spots along these North Downs, though best of all perhaps, from Banstead Common, the Londoner can gather a really adequate impression of St. Paul's.

Seen from the streets or bridges, or even from Parliament Hill, it is impossible to fully appreciate the full measure of Wren's glorious achievement. From the Northern heights, which the Londoner and the visitor to London are usually recommended to visit, in order to get a full view of the great Cathedral, the giant is usually seen wreathed in smoke and huddled in by a mass of buildings, which dwarf its grandeur. But from the Southern Hills, only the tallest London buildings stand out sharp and clear, and towering above them all, Wren's mighty triumph. What a triumph too, and above all, what a romance! How many of the hundreds of millions of people who have

gazed at St. Paul's, of the tens of thousands even, who have been able to appreciate its splendour, know anything of the wonderful story of its building?

How Wren planned an edifice which should surpass even its predecessor in size, how he planned to clear away the buildings which crowd it in, so that his masterpiece should be free from the suffocating influence of shops and warehouses, which crowd it in and seek, but fail, to deny its right to challenge pre-eminence with every other edifice of man. How adequate funds were provided to fulfil all these aims. And how his majesty the Merry Monarch sequestered these to his own use and pleasure.

How, when a fresh appeal was made, the response was so meagre that those in authority rejected Wren's scheme on account of the expense, and insisted on his erecting a mean and insignificant church.

The great architect faced the difficulty manfully and ingeniously. He accepted a salary of £200 per annum, as architect and master builder, and managed to keep the subscription list open. He delayed the building operation by every means in his power, engineered strikes among his workmen, lost his plans, was as dilatory as he could be, facing unmoved the storm of abuse showered on him, because of his obvious desire to go on drawing that £200 as long as he could.

But the money trickled in slowly and steadily, the public interest being kept alive by the periodical announcement of mysterious anonymous donations, and as the years went by, Wren gradually reverted to his old design, suppressing the ugly one which found favour with the authorities, and finally, well past four-score years, enjoyed

the triumph of himself placing the last stone on the cross which surmounts his glorious creation. He had not done all that he could have wished, but at least he had succeeded in doing something which was worthy even of him, and far too good for the age in which he lived. It was not till after his death, that the identity of the mysterious donor was discovered. His doles, which had proved such splendid stimulants to a people slow usually to respond to great artistic ideas, had far exceeded the £200 per year for which it had been alleged that he had striven so unworthily.

The road has been chiefly up-hill from Purley, and a good portion of it, fairly stiff climbing, but it now slopes down through Marden Park into the old-world village of Godstone, where King Richard II is said to have once dwelt.

Leaving Godstone, there is a choice of two routes, a steep climb up Tilburston Hill, or if you have had enough hill work, you can make a detour past Godstone Station, across Blindley Heath and Copthorne Common. This detour will add three miles to the length of your journey, but it is nevertheless worth making. There are old associations clinging to Copthorne Common for instance, which was the scene of many a prize fight in the days of the Regency. The mention of fisticuffs in connection with heaths and commons recalls that splendid passage, the finest I think, that George Borrow, the psalmist of the open road, ever wrote. Do you remember it?

"What is your opinion of death, Mr. Petulengro?" said I, as I sat down beside him.

"My opinion of death, brother, is much the same

as that in the old song of Pharaoh, which I have heard my grandam sing.

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“When a man dies, he is cast into the earth, and his wife and child sorrow over him. If he has neither wife nor child, then his father and mother, I suppose; and if he is quite alone in the world, why then, he is cast into the earth and there is an end of the matter.”

“And do you think that is the end of man?”

“There’s an end of him, brother, more’s the pity.”

“Do you think so?”

“Think so! There’s night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon and stars, brother, all sweet things; there’s likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?”

“I would wish to die. —”

“You talk like a gorgio—which is the same as talking like a fool—were you a Rommany chal, you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Rommany chal would wish to live for ever.”

“In sickness, Jasper?”

“There’s the sun and stars, brother.”

“In blindness, Jasper?”

“There’s the wind on the heath, brother. If I could only feel that, I would gladly live forever. Dosta; well now, go to the tents and put on the gloves, and I’ll try to make you feel what a sweet thing it is to be alive, brother.”

But we must get on along the road past Blindley

and New Chapel to East Grinstead, and so out of Surrey into Sussex, which by some fairly competent critics has been accorded the honour of being the most beautiful of all the English counties.

We have Ashdown Forest to get through, although you wouldn’t know that it was a forest if you had not been told. Here and there a clump of trees, an occasional thin and scanty plantation, a few oak and fir trees in little groups, or straggling out in thin files amid stretches of gorse and heather. I suppose that in the old days there was a forest here, and in many ways one can see that Sussex was once thickly wooded, before the trees were cut down to serve as fuel for the smelting furnaces, in the days when this was the great ironfield of England.

We have fourteen miles to cover between East Grinstead and Uckfield, passing through Forest Row and Wych Cross. Pleasant country this, and a pleasant old town Uckfield, once famous as a very fashionable resort, before Brighton had sprung into being. But Uckfield’s glories departed with the 17th century, and nothing but the shell remains. The houses are there, sole relics of the revels which the early Georgian bucks once held in them, a writing on the wall which Brighton itself should read, when it feasts as it does to-day.

Leaving Uckfield, the houses seem to disappear, and during the next eight miles on to Lewes, it seems impossible to realise that England is reckoned to be a thickly populated country. Little Horsted is the only village along the lonely road to Lewes, when we turn westward right on to Brighton, which is entered past the old cavalry barracks.

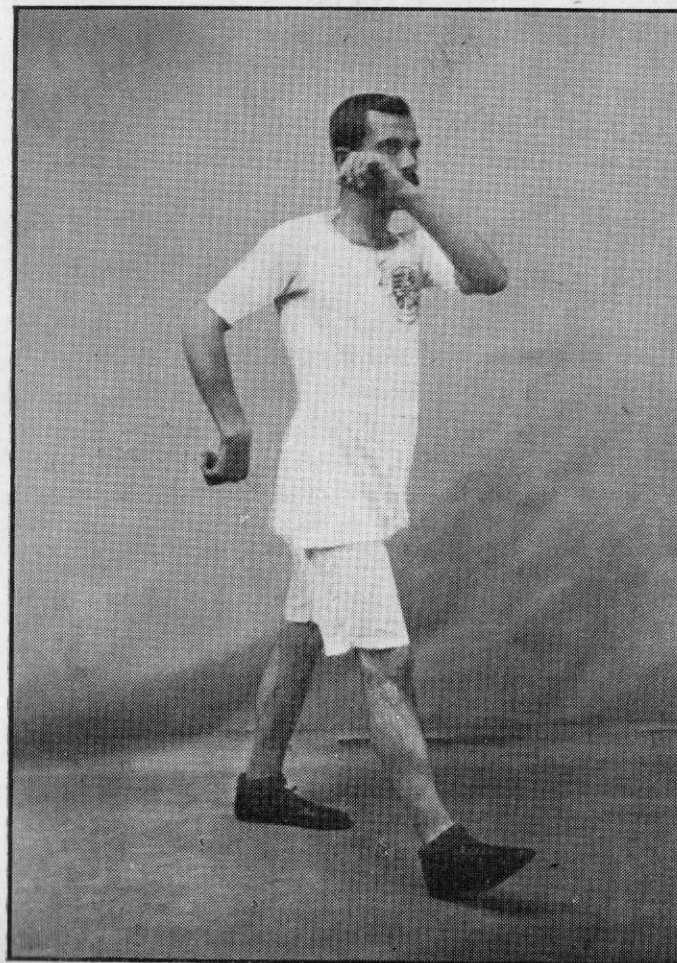
CHAPTER VIII.

The Care of the Feet.

It would, I think, be safe to say that no single portion of our anatomy is treated so badly as the average man treats his feet.

Not only does he shamefully neglect their health, but he will readily submit them to positive torture, in obedience either to the senseless dictates of fashion, or of financial considerations.

Have you ever considered that you thump your feet down between 900 and 1,600 times in every mile of ground you cover, and that each time these come in contact with the ground, they are driven against it with the force of your full bodily weight multiplied by the pace at which you are travelling—so that if walking, the weight will be the important factor, and if running the energy expended. Isn't it remarkable that your feet are able to stand the strain, and don't you fancy that such valuable and hard-worked servants are entitled to the most careful attention and consideration, instead of the casual soothing and consistent ill-treatment which falls to their lot.



HOW THE ARM SWING IS OFTEN OVERDONE.
Avoid this as it is absolutely useless, is liable to disturb the balance, and, in any event, must be more or less exhausting.

They are ill-treated from the cradle to the grave. Absurdly so, for where (in this case) fortunate poverty compels parents to let their children run about unshod, a misplaced sentiment arouses expressions of sympathy, and a blundering, mistaken charity frequently proceeds to cripple the poor little wretches long before their time.

Under modern social conditions, it is, I suppose, impossible for all of us to dispense with foot coverings, but at least we need not afflict our children with them within doors.

They themselves would far rather be without them. They find them uncomfortable and are always glad to throw them off and to run about barefoot. It is a natural instinct on their part and I often wonder why so few people have recognised it.

In the streets, where the regard for appearances will, I suppose, in spite of all my preaching, impel parents to squeeze their children's feet into some form of foot wear, this should in every case be confined to sandals, which will allow the light and air to come into direct contact with the skin.

HOW TO HARDEN THE FEET.

As already stated, Walking possesses the very strongest claim to be considered the very finest of all forms of physical exercise, but of all its advantages, perhaps the chief is that it positively compels the walker to devote adequate attention to his feet. He MUST care for these members or his walking days will soon be over.

Not that the feet require any very arduous or excessive consideration. Simple care and consideration

will keep them fit and well, even in cases where they have been seriously ill-used in infancy.

In the East, men bare their feet as a mark of respect, as we here in the West uncover our heads, and from a hygienic point of view, we must confess that the Oriental method is distinctly preferable. Exposure to the air and the frequent application of water, are the chief needs of the feet, and are in the majority of cases, the very ones which are most infrequently gratified.

Adults of all classes should practise the habit of walking barefoot whenever they can find opportunities for so doing. From five to fifteen minutes night and morning, for instance, can be profitably spent in walking about barefoot in one's bedroom. The feet should be warm before these walks are commenced, either naturally so, or else warmed by rubbing or bathing in warm water. They should then be soaked in cold water for a minute or so and walked dry.

Walking barefoot over wet grass is a most excellent method of hardening and strengthening the feet, and it might be as well to mention here, that when circumstances permit, ALL clothing should be removed for a run round a secluded garden, especially if it be raining at the time.

Many readers will probably be totally unable to take advantage of this last advice, but they can at least, when on their summer holidays, seek a secluded part of the coast and after taking a dip, trot up and down the sand until they are dry, before dressing again. The benefits to the body from sun and air baths cannot be overstated.

To return to the feet ; as a substitute for walking on wet grass, an excellent method is to walk barefoot over wet stones. There is a large or small piece of stone paving attached to every house, and if this be watered, a brisk walk over the wet stones will strengthen and harden the feet wonderfully, particularly if the exercise be undertaken fairly regularly.

It is highly inadvisable, however, to STAND still on wet stone, so that if the paving be too short to admit of a brisk walk or trot, W. G. George's 100 UP exercise, as set forth in "Training for Athletics," should be substituted.

THE PREVENTION AND CURE OF BLISTERS.

Blisters are the walker's bugbear, and those unfortunate enough to suffer from soft skins which perspire rather freely, find it extremely difficult to escape the infliction.

Still, if the feet be carefully hardened as much as possible by the methods set forth above, if one makes a practice of wearing suitable and well-fitting socks and boots, and takes due care to keep the feet as cool as possible, then should he be enabled to enter into any average walking tour with comparative equanimity.

Walkers, who suffer naturally from tender feet would be well advised to make a liberal use of foot powder in their shoes or stockings, and to, above all, make certain that these last fit thoroughly.

Stockings are better for walking purposes than are socks, and neither should ever be worn new. Natural wool is the best material, and all pairs should first be thoroughly washed, as a safeguard against the dye (if there be any) working into the pores of the skin.

The thickness of the wool is entirely a matter of taste. Some walkers find that they get along better in thick hose, others in thin. Each must decide for himself in this matter. But I may mention that for country walks I have personally found seamless stockings, with a special stall for the big toe, far and away the most comfortable.

If, however, the walker prefers socks, I may be able to give him a useful tip. This is the wearing of a garter just above the ankle, which will prevent either sock or stocking working down into the boot and thereby causing a sore heel.

It is a good plan to smear the feet well with Russian tallow, but be sure that this is absolutely pure, and that there has been no admixture of lime, as this is seriously injurious.

In spite of all the above precautions, however, blisters will still make their appearance, particularly on the feet of a man who is training for a hard race. His preparation is, and must naturally be, pretty severe, and he will not wish it to be unduly interfered with, for the length of time usually occupied in treating a blister.

The most efficacious method is to prick your blister with a needle, threaded with white worsted. After which, the water should all be squeezed out, but this should be done carefully and without any interference with the distended and now loose skin which must be retained as a protection to the new skin forming underneath.

Then since the skin may very possibly have been slightly torn, treat your foot as you would if it had been scratched or torn in any way. Soak it well in a disinfectant, (the best and simplest perhaps, being obtained by dissolving

a few crystals of permanganate of potash), and then paint it over with a little collodion, which will form a water and air-proof covering.

Corns should on no account be neglected. Soak the feet well in hot water and remove the corn at once, if possible. Obstinate corns may be softened by means of a wet pad bound in oil-silk, round the toe and worn all night. Should they still prove refractory, pay a visit to a chiropodist. Spare no pains to get rid of them as soon as they appear.

BOOTS AND SHOES.

I have left this item to the last, although it is actually of the very first importance, but possibly as a final word on the whole subject of walking, it may be accorded the attention which I should wish to see directed to it.

In a track walking race and for track walking, a man will naturally wear shoes, but for ordinary road walking he will probably wear boots, since these last support his ankles, even though they deprive the foot of much needed ventilation.

But whether the walker is buying a pair of boots or a pair of shoes, let him on no account buy these ready made. An absolutely normal foot is the rarest thing in the world. Practically every man or woman has some little personal peculiarity in his or her feet, and these must be accommodated, or the feet will suffer.

Unfortunately, it becomes more difficult every day to get really good boots or shoes. You may have them made to fit you, but you can't get them made of good leather.

Formerly, all hides were tanned with oak bark, a process which occupied from fifteen months to two years. The tanners won't lay their money out for so long nowadays. They consequently prefer to tan with mineral salts, a process which will convert even buffalo hide into leather in about a week, or cowhide in 24 hours.

Excellent, no doubt, from a business point of view, but terribly crippling from the wearer's standpoint. Footgear is much cheaper than it used to be, no doubt, but then the percentage of "hobblers" increases every day.

Fortunately, so far, the tanners have not yet discovered how to make sole leather out of mineral-acid tanned material. When they do, scarcely anybody will be able to walk at all. But, although it is only the uppers which are now acid-tanned, even these exert a sufficiently malign influence. In summer, the acid irritates the flesh, in winter it exudes and renders the feet damp and uncomfortable. These are only the least of the attendant evils, the results of which may be noted by anyone who can carry his mind back and mark the difference between the number of foot ailments to-day as compared with those of forty years ago.

It is, as I have hinted, extremely difficult nowadays, to obtain boots made of oak-tanned leather, but they are still to be purchased by those who take the trouble to seek for them. But failing these, it is by no means difficult to secure boots, the leather of which has been tanned by vegetable extracts, the only substance, by the way, which is allowed in Army boots.

Wherefore the first point on which to insist when ordering your boots, is that they shall not contain any

"Chrome" (the name by which the acid-tanned leather is known). Secondly, have your boots or shoes made to fit your feet. See that the sole leather is so cut that the big toe is in no way crowded, but is allowed to lie in a straight line, and that the free movement of all the toes is in no way impeded at any portion of a step. Let the toe of the boot or shoe curve upwards slightly to allow of the toes bending, and see that the fit does not admit of the foot sliding about inside the boot.

The heel should be low, say not more than three-quarters of an inch deep at the outside, while for speed walking, it is not a bad plan to have a strip of cork let in between a lower and upper leather sole of the boot. This will give a thick, but light sole, impervious to stones and about five-eighths of an inch thick.

For country and heavy road walking, wear a special pair of boots, made according to taste for stoutness, but at least, sound and watertight. When not in use, keep the boots on trees (in order to preserve their shape), and rub the uppers from time to time with neat's-foot oil. An occasional application of dubbin will preserve the leather from cracking.

First, last, and always, remember that the chief consideration of any and every walker, must and should be, the covering he is going to wear on his feet.

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