

## HER CORSETS KILLED HER,

### LEONIE MERCIER OVERCOME WHILE DANCING AND SOON DIES.

She Wore the New Kind of Stays—A Paris Doctor's Realistic Method of Proving the Evils of Tight Lacing for Beauty's Sake—A Technical Discussion of the Case—Dancing is the Greatest Physical Exertion Women Can Undergo.

Paris has recently had a remarkable object lesson in the evils of tight lacing. Two dead women, both young and both beautiful, but in a different way, contributed to the lesson, and by their respective anatomies—one as an example of a non-corset-wearing woman, the other as a terrible example of the woman who, by using the fashionable stays, tempts nature to do her worst—afforded a text for a Paris physician at a lecture at which no men were admitted.

The woman who wore no corsets was a barmaid, and the other woman, she who had died from tight lacing, was a society girl. By some means or other this realistic physician—Dr. Henriquez, of the Rue de l'Opera—had secured their skeletons for exhibition.

The doctor had been telling his hearers, who numbered several hundred, of the celebrated beauties of ancient Greece and Rome, who wore no corsets and whose figures have been immortalized by sculptors as the highest type of female loveliness.

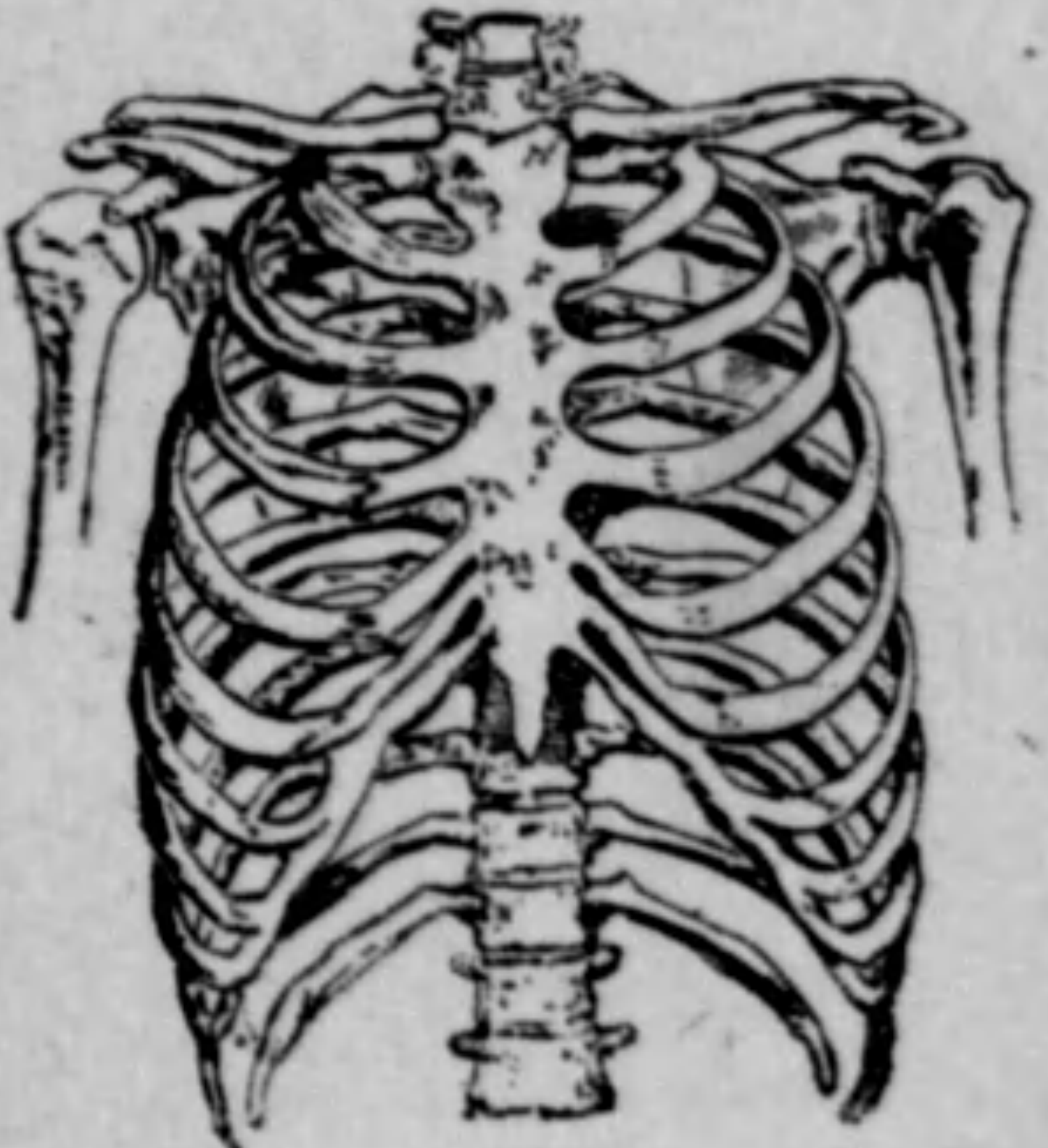
Then, drawing a curtain, he disclosed the skeleton of the barmaid, who, he said, had been as beautiful and had had as perfect a form as any of the great beauties of antiquity. The barmaid, had died at a guinette, or drinking place in the suburbs frequented by the lower classes. Fashion halts before its doors and its inmates and habitués make a point of being primitive in attire and manners.

"The deceased barmaid," said the physician, "was an extremely healthy specimen of humanity. Too bad that one of her admirers shot her in

#### THE FRENZY OF JEALOUSY!

But what I desire you to know and to consider is that she never wore a corset in her life, and like many people of her class, affected suspenders, man-like, thus making her shoulders carry the weight of her skirts. I learned this by personal inquiry among her female relatives and friends, whom I visited after making the autopsy on the body. The very perfectness of her figure, its graceful and classical outlines, prompted me to this departure from ordinary customs."

Three-fourths of the attendants at the lecture looked disgusted. A barmaid and a perfect beauty! It could not be! M.



THE SKELETON OF A WOMAN WHO NEVER WORE CORSETS.

Henriquez went on: "As I said, the dead woman's form was as perfect as that of the Greek sculptor's immortal model. The various organs in her chest were all in their proper places and the healthful performance of their functions was not impaired in the least by want of room. Poor Victoire, she would have been the mother of healthy children, such as our country needs, and would have lived to a ripe old age but for that scoundrel's bullet."

"But I see from your faces that I was right when I surmised that a Phryne, even if she be sanctified and of correct morals, would not be appreciated nowadays, except perhaps, by the patrons of a guinette. So I beg to draw your attention to the skeleton of a lady of fashion such as you are, mesdames—a woman devoted to the requirements of polite society and subservient to the standards of art set up by tailors and milliners of high degree."

Another curtain was drawn aside and the upper part of a female skeleton rolled forward on a nickel plated frame.

"Mlle. Leonie Mercier," said the doctor, by way of introduction. "She was the belle of Boulogne-sur-Mer two seasons ago, twenty three years of age and of excellent family. She became the leader of society and naturally devoted most of her time to dressmakers and milliners. Coming from healthy stock, this girl leaned somewhat to embonpoint, and as her physicians failed to arrest the course of nature,

#### THE CORSET ARTIST

was commissioned to do so with the tailor to assist.

"I calculate that this young lady's waist measured twenty-three to twenty-five inches. It was not the breadth she would have had if her mother and grandmother had not been the victims of the corset habit—victims to the extent of deforming, from a medical standpoint, the shape of their breast bones."

"Now I venture to say that a young woman of comely face, having a waist of twenty-three to twenty-five inches and a well-rounded figure, is a beautiful object to look upon. In classic times girls so favored were the delight of artists and the Greek masters immortalized their enchanting forms. Indeed, even you, mesdames and mademoiselles, admire them—in the Louvre, poised on a block of granite or marble. But Mlle. Leonie had read of an

English girl with a waist of fifteen inches, and she decided that she must bring hers down to eighteen. Mademoiselle had worn corsets almost from infancy.

"Now, being twenty-three years old, she had to think of marriage, and, to make a rich catch, it was deemed necessary that she should still more 'improve' her figure. The corset-maker decided that it could be done by the 'compressor stays,' the side-bones of which are warranted not to break. The compressor, I believe, is a sister to the 'small waist corset,' which is warranted to hold any young woman's waist in a murderous fifteen-inch grasp.

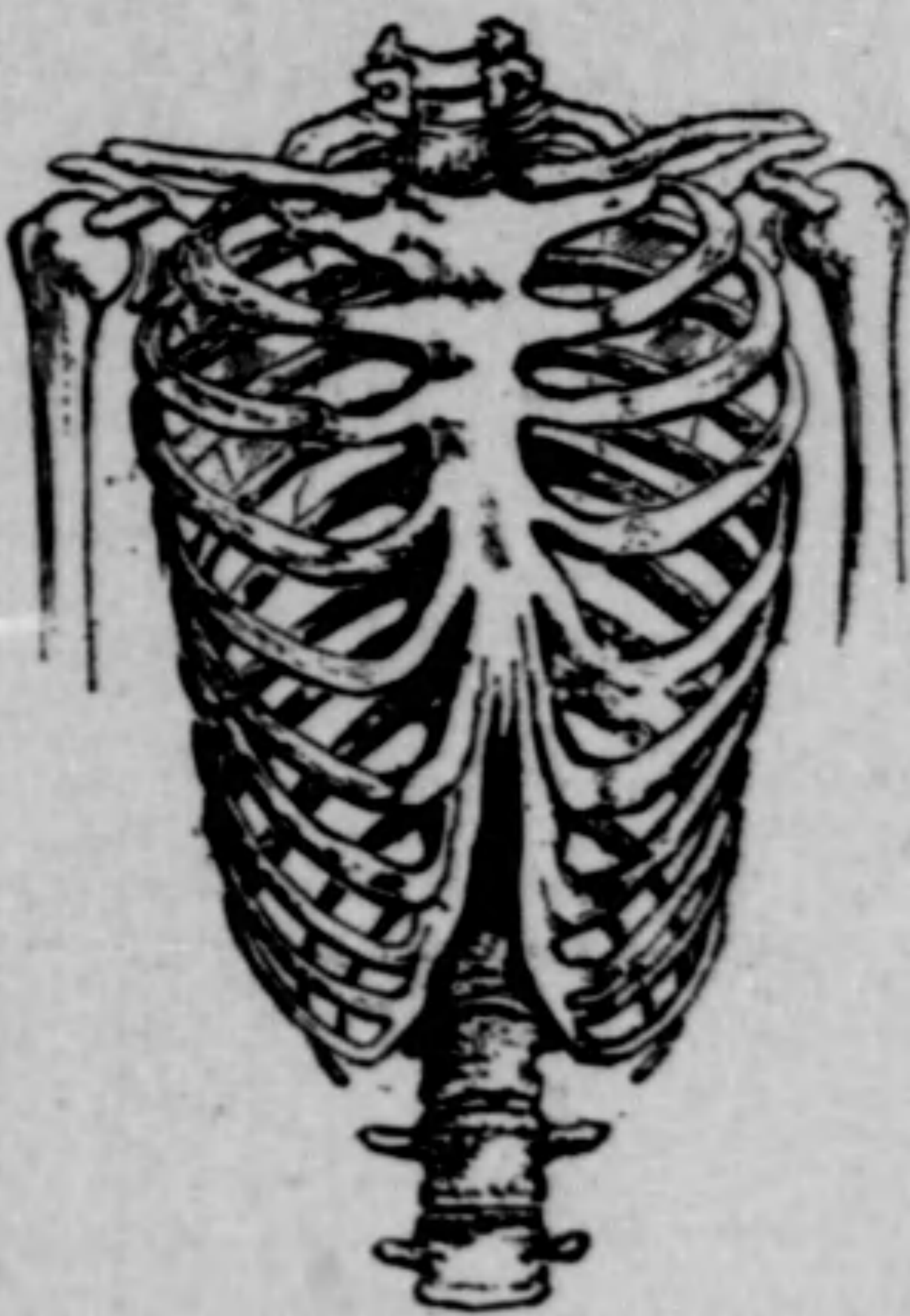
"Leonie looked divine when she entered the ballroom, incased in 'the compressor.' All eyes were upon her. The slope of her neck, her sylphlike waist were admired by all. But at the same time, her friends noticed that she was indisposed; she complained of cold hands and feet. The dancers who had the honor of whirling mademoiselle around, observed that their partner was

#### SHORT OF BREATH

and danced with less spirit than usual. After an hour or so Leonie told her mother that she would have to stop round dances, as the quick motion made her feel dizzy.

"It was during a few waltz steps, following a quadrille, that the catastrophe occurred. The young lady, without a breath of warning fell heavily upon her partner's arm, who was scarcely able to support her.

"She has fainted—water, air!" These cries arose on all sides. "Quick, remove her to the conservatory!" There the door was opened to admit the fresh night air. The patient was laid flat on her back, her head lower than her limbs. Everything was done to make her comfortable. But as meanwhile a deadly pallor had overspread her face, her mother, becoming alarmed, tore open Leonie's dress in front, while some friends loosened the strings and hooks of her skirts.



THIS IS THE SKELETON OF A WOMAN DEFORMED BY TIGHT-LACING.

"A minute later a physician took charge of the case and ordered the stays unhooked. But the compressor was a good stayer. All attempts to get a finger under the steel and satin cuirass proved unavailable. So the doctor called for his instrument case, and with a quick dash of the knife cut open the corset. At that moment a last respiratory motion seemed to vibrate through poor Leonie's body, the diaphragm rose perceptibly and the breath was expelled with

#### A LITTLE CRY,

or at least a sound that was interpreted as an exclamation of relief.

"Whether the witnesses to this tragedy were correct or incorrect in their surmises—at any rate it was the last manifestation of departing life. The physician saw at once that his offices would avail nothing—the 'compressor' had done its work."

Dr. Henriquez entered upon a technical discussion of the case. Leonie Mercier, he said, had died of heart failure, induced by compression of the breathing organs. The heart had failed to send up the proper supply of blood to her brain and that ended it. The autopsy proved that the lungs of the unfortunate young woman had been thrust upward, whereby the motions of the diaphragm had been obstructed. The liver, stomach and vascular glands were crowded out of shape and much further to the rear than their functions called for. Other internal organs were pressed out of position in a downward direction, all of which had a tendency to prevent the normal and equitable circulation of the blood.

"The compressor stays worn by this lady diminished the area occupied by some of the most important vital organs by five to eight inches," continued the physician, "squeezing them together, rendering them immobile and compelling great structural changes not only in the position but also in the shape of her organs of respiration, circulation and digestion."

"If Mlle. Mercier had not died as she did, and as any woman trying to squeeze twenty-five inches of her flesh and bone into eighteen or thereabouts may do at any moment, she would surely have become a victim of

#### VARIOUS CHRONIC DISEASES."

For hundreds of women, the doctor declared, dancing is the greatest physical exertion they undergo. The ordinary ballroom dress, or under dress, with its tight corsets, impairs the heart's ability to send blood into the arteries. The heart is the pumping station of the human body. In its natural state it should keep up such a pressure within the arterial section as will suffice for the maintenance of the circulation and the organic functions of the body depending on it. Excessive action of the heart is, in nervous and susceptible women, often induced by moderate exertion; it may even occur while its possessor is at perfect rest. It has been demonstrated that the heart, during a waltz, contracts twice as often as in a condition of comparative repose; that is, it sends twice the quantity of blood to the lungs.

A medical authority has reckoned that the extra pumping imposed upon the heart by this exertion in an evening's dancing amounts to lifting one metre high 14,496 kilograms of blood; that is, a weight of nearly thirty-two thousand pounds. These astonishing figures easily explain why so many society girls have fainted in the ballroom. A superheated atmosphere is

not the correct, though it is the usual explanation.

The first principle of ballroom hygiene, therefore, is to dance with a loose corset, or no corset at all. It is also important to keep the mouth shut when dancing. At the slightest symptom of weakness or numbness the dancer should retire.

#### LONDON CLOCKS.

One on the Royal Exchange is Said to be the Best in the World.

In these later years some very wonderful clocks have been constructed, but the useful rather than the curious have been the guiding principle in their construction. London boasts of two very wonderful clocks. The one is on the Royal Exchange, and is said to be the best public clock in the world. The pendulum, which is compensated, weighs nearly four hundred weight. It has what is known as a remon-tour escapement, its pallets are jeweled with large sapphires and it has a chime of fifteen bells, which cost £500.

Another famous modern clock adorns the Palace of Westminster. The dial is 22 feet in diameter, the largest in the world, with a minute hand. The great wheel is 27 inches in diameter; the pendulum is 15 feet long and weighs 890 pounds, while the escape wheel, which is driven by the musical box spring, weighs about one-half ounce. It has seen the end of two great bells.

With the application of the spring to the clock it became apparent that the timepiece could be made portable. Watches were but little known, if known at all, before the sixteenth century. Francis I. gave the master clockmaker of Paris in 1544 the exclusive privilege of making clocks and watches within that city. Henry VIII. seems to have spent much money on watches. Edward VI. had at his Palace of Westminster "one, larum or watch 'of iron, the case iron gilt, with two plumets of lead." Elizabeth was fond of watches, of which she had a large collection. She had "a clocke of gold, garnished with dyemondes, rubyes, emeralds and peries."

"One armet or shakell of gold, all over fairly garnished with rubyes, and dyemondes, having on the closing the air of a clocke," was a gift to her in 1571-72 by the Earl of Leicester, master of the horse.

Mary of Scotland had her watches. In those days there was great variety in the shape of the watch. A favorite shape was that of a skull, another was that of a coffin. Descriptions exist of several of Mary's watches. There was one coffin-shaped in a crystal case. There was another in which catgut supplied the place of the interior chain in the modern watch. One very marvelous piece of workmanship in the form of a skull is the property of the Dick Lauder family. It was originally the property of Mary Queen of Scots, and was bequeathed to Mary Setoun, her maid of honor, February 7, 1587. On the forehead of the skull are the symbols of death, the scythe and the hour-glass. At the back of the skull is Time, and at the top of the head are the gardens of Eden and the crucifixion. The watch is opened by reversing the skull. Inside are the holy family, angels and shepherds with their flocks. The works form the brains. The dial-plate is the palate. Another skull-shaped watch which belonged to Mary was the gift of her husband, Francis II.

Arnold of the strand presented George III. in 1764, a watch of his own manufacture set in a ring. Later, in 1770, he presented the King with a small repeating watch, also set in a ring, the cylinder of which was made of an oriental ruby. The Czar of Russia, when he heard of these mites of watches, offered Arnold 1000 guineas if he would make one for him, but the artist would not consent.

#### RAINY LAKE GOLD.

Locations Being Rapidly Taken Up—A Chat With Mr. Wm. Campbell—Stamp Mills Being Erected.

Some later news in regard to the Rainy Lake gold country has been received from Mr. Wm. Campbell, a well-known explorer, who was in Toronto a short time ago. He says that numerous locations are being taken up in the Seine River valley and in the Atik-Okan region, about 50 miles from Rainy Lake. North of Shoal Lake is situated a granite belt some two miles wide by four miles long, in which some very rich gold-bearing veins of quartz have been discovered. Surveyors are busily employed surveying mining locations. Three stamp mills of five stamp power each are in the course of erection, one of which is expected to begin operations in a short time. The others will start early in the spring, and there is talk of several others to be built this season. To the north of Wild Potato Lake, a widening of the Seine River, many good locations have been taken up, and there are said to be some rich indications of gold, north of where the prospectors are now at work.

Mr. Campbell said that the statement made in several of the papers that seven prospectors had been frozen to death was not true. The weather has been cold, but the fall of snow exceptionally light for that country, so enabling explorers to work with greater freedom and success than in former years. In regard to himself, he said matters were booming. He had recently sold one location to the Northern Pacific Railway for \$20,000 and expected to dispose of two others to the same company in a short time.

Officials in the Crown Lands Department say that from ten to twenty applications are being filed every day for properties in that vicinity.

#### Did the Best She Could.

Mother—What is that you are drawing? Little Daughter—That's a picture of Adam and Eve, an' the apple tree, an' the serpent.

But you have given Eve a hoop skirt, and dressed Adam in knee breeches.

Well, they was the oldest fashions I could think of.

## Household.

#### Little Things That Count.

A good-by kiss is a little thing.  
With your hand on the door to go.  
But it takes the venom out of the stung  
Of a thoughtless word or a cruel frown.  
That you made an hour ago.

A kiss of greeting is sweet and rare  
After the toil of day.  
And it smooths the furrows plowed by care.  
The lines on the forehead you once called fair,  
In the years that have flown away.

'Tis a little thing to say: "You are kind.  
I love you, my dear" each night.  
But it sends a thrill through your heart, I find,  
For love is tender, love is blind,  
As we climb life's rugged height.

We starve each other for love's caress.  
We take, but we do not give:  
It seems so easy some soul to bless.  
But we dole the love-grudgingly less and less.  
Till 'tis bitter and hard to live.

#### A Winter Night at Home.

When does the person of domestic tastes enjoy home more than on a stormy winter night? You reach the dearest place on earth after dark, with the cheerful light shining out upon the fast falling snow, and at once are compensated for all the discomforts you have undergone. Let it storm now as furiously as it will, you do not care except as you think of those who are exposed to the weather, and especially of the poor wretches to whom the word "home" is nothing but a memory. Here you are again, safe and sound, with pleasant faces and voices to greet you; every one is glad to see you; even the cat as he lazily rises up behind the stove and humps his back, seems to wish you to understand that your presence has been the only thing wanting to make the happiness of the scene complete. You kiss the wife and the "chickens," eat your supper with an appetite that only a mile's walk through deepening drifts can develop, and are ready for a half hour with the children. Then the children snugly tucked up in bed, you sit down with the woman of your love and surrender yourself to the unalloyed pleasure of a winter evening at home. The time passes only too swiftly. You give a little time to your paper perhaps, after which you take down your Whittier and, while the wife repairs a rent in Billy's coat, read aloud from "Snow Bound," occasionally laying down the book to make a comment or to ask a question relating to the family history of the day. At length the clock on the mantelpiece strikes ten, and you are reminded by that, as well as by the drowsy feeling that steals over you, that it is time to retire. Oh, the luxury of that thought! there is not the slightest reason, as far as you know, why you should not have a perfect night's rest.

#### House Furnishing.

People are a good deal inclined to run to showiness in their home furnishing, and where there is money and leisure, to over-elaborateness. It is almost the only means that most have of expressing their aspiration toward the beautiful. They have reached only a half-way stage of culture, and they make an uninstructed attempt at display. Display itself is a false motive. A chair is made to sit in, not to look at. Get comfort first, and then make it look as well as it can, and still be in keeping with the house and the rest of the room.

It is always worth while to make or buy that which is substantial and lasting. It is for this reason, also, that one should buy that which is good in form, because graceful shapes are always gratifying regardless of the changes in fashion. How often does one look at a piece of furniture and mourn the quantity of good wood in it and the hours spent in fashioning it into an object so ugly.

#### Recipes.

Graham Loaves.—To each pint of lukewarm wetting, composed of equal portions of water and sweet milk, add a tablespoonful of sugar, half a tablespoonful of salt, and a small cake of compressed yeast, dissolved in about two tablespoonfuls of the wetting. Then stir in with a spoon a heaping quart of graham flour, or as much more as may be found necessary to form a dough sufficiently stiff to be taken from the mixing bowl in a mass. Turn this dough on a moulding board well sprinkled with white flour, and knead, adding white flour until the dough ceases to stick to the fingers or moulding board. Put in a well-greased earthen bowl, brush lightly with melted butter or drippings, cover with bread towel and blanket, and set it to rise at a temperature of 75 degrees, and let it stand three hours. At the end of that time form gently into loaves, put into greased pans, brush, cover, and set it to rise as before. In an hour from the time it is formed into loaves it will be ready to bake.

Stuffed Beefsteak.—Take a thick and tender slice of rump of about two pounds weight. Make two gills of stuffing of bread crumbs, pepper, salt, and powdered cloves, or sweet marjoram, as you please. Roll the dressing up in the steak, wind a piece of twine around it, taking care to secure the ends. Have ready a saucepan, with a slice or two of pork fried crisp. Take out the pork and lay in the steak, brown it thoroughly on every side. Add two gills of the stock, or of water in which meat has been boiled; sprinkle in a little salt, cover close, and stew slowly an hour and a half. Add more water after awhile, if it becomes too dry. Some persons like the addition of chopped onion. There should, however, be only a very little; half a small one is enough. When nearly done add half a gill of catsup. When you take up the meat unwind the string carefully so as not to unravel it. Lay it on a hot dish, thicken the gravy, if not already thick enough, and pour over the roll. Cut the meat in slices through the roll.

Gingerbread.—Work a cupful of butter until creamy, then mix with it a cupful of brown sugar. Separate the whites and yolks of four eggs, and beat both until light, frothing the whites. Stir the eggs

with the butter and sugar, and add a cupful of sour cream, mixed with a cupful of molasses; or, before putting the molasses and cream together add to the cream two teaspoonfuls of soda dissolved in a little warm water. Measure four cupfuls of flour, and mix with it a teaspoonful of salt and a tablespoonful of yellow ginger. Add this to the batter. Do all the mixing as quickly and lightly as possible. Bake thirty minutes with a moderate heat.

#### LOVE AND SUICIDE.

Prof. Lombroso Shows That Woman Sacrifices Herself Oftener Than Man.

In Italy, according to Lombroso's figures gleaned from the official records, the number of suicides that were committed for causes of all kinds among both sexes in that kingdom during the last four years reached a total of 3,085, of which only 569 were of females, against 2,516 of males. In France a record of 25,941 cases of self-slaughter, collected by him from equally reliable sources, makes man the victim 19,982 and woman only 5,959 times. The great preponderance here shown of suicides among males is ascribed in part to woman's instinctive repugnance to violence and personal disfigurement—in part to the less harassing and responsible role played by her in the struggle for existence, and in part to her mode of life, which is infinitely less tinctured with self-indulgence and vice than that of man. At only one stage of life does the suicide rate among women equal that of males. This period is between the age of fifteen and that of twenty, when the suicidal impulse is accentuated by the great constitutional change, and, as Lombroso contends, by the acute and all-controlling passion of love with its reverses, which female adolescents then experience. During all the rest of life, from childhood to the grave,

#### THE MALE RATE OF SUICIDES

is much higher than the female, and steadily increases with advancing years. This ascendancy undergoes but an insignificant remission during all the disturbances and dangers of the female climacteric decade, from the forty-fifth to the fifty-fifth year of age.

The foregoing statistics exhibiting the marked predominance of cases of suicide from general causes among men, over those occurring among women, are introduced by Lombroso to emphasize the equally great preponderance of female over male suicides when committed for love. While the male suicides from miscellaneous causes of every kind quadruple or quintuple in number the female, those which are motivated by love alone are four or five times greater in the female than in the male sex. In Italy, he says, 75 per cent. of the suicides among women during the last four years were for love, and only 20 per cent. for the same cause among men. In France for the same period the figures showed 28 per cent. of love suicides among the former and only 7 per cent. among the latter. Mme. de Stael had noted a similar disparity in the two sexes long before Lombroso, and had given a partial explanation of it by saying that whereas in men love is usually only an incident, an unimportant episode in their busy careers, on the other hand, in women it is the supreme event, often the entire history of their lives. That "men die, but not for love," had not escaped the notice of an earlier and infinitely higher authority; and Brierre de Boismont ("Le Suicide," second edition, 1865) offered as an apology for this male characteristic that in men the roots of friendship strike deeper than those of love, and he asked for instances in history where women have ended life by suicide for others of their own sex, as did Volunius, Petronius and Antonius for their male friends.

Leaving the field of statistics, Prof. Lombroso traverses a wide range of time and space in his industrious search for examples of

#### WOMAN'S SELF-INFLECTED DEATH

for love. He calls up from the slumber of history the Non dolet of the wife of Paetus, the fatal swallowing of live coals by Portia in order to shorten the supposed period of separation from her dead husband, Brutus, and the suicides of the married mates of Poliorcetes, Socrates and Laeas, all far too. He has learned in a recent book (Twain, 1894), called "Suicide Among the Savage Peoples," that to the untutored aborigines of North America self-murder was almost unknown, the only suicides to be found in any tribe (Dakotah) being females, who occasionally committed the act under the despair and desperation of disappointed love. He relates that in New Zealand a daughter of the conqueror Hengi, upon learning that her husband had been slain in battle, killed with her own hands sixteen prisoners and then put an end to her life by suicide. Lombroso reviews the strange mode of self-destruction practised by the widows of Hindostan and Malabar, who cast themselves upon the burning pyres of their deceased husbands. These suicides, he contends, proceed from love rather than from religious fanaticism, although the teachings of Brahminism powerful favor the practice of sutteeism, as well as all other kinds of self-immolation. Two English officers once essayed to deter a widow from this barbarous usage by asking her first to try the horrible effect of exposing one of her fingers to fire. With a smile of disdain the young woman plunged her whole hand into ignited oil, stoically watched the member burn, and, just before casting herself into the flames, said: "You may argue as you please, but I know that I belong to no one but my dead husband—not even to myself. Him only did I ever love, and after him I can live no man else."

#### A Fad Follower.

Burglar Bill—W'at's become o' Slicking-er's sister?  
Sneaky Sam—S'ervin' time for followin' a fashionable fad.  
Wot fad?  
Kleptomaniar!

#### Two Views.

Little Son—A boy broke through the ice to-day, and was pulled out by his dog.  
Mother—That shows how dangerous thin ice is.  
Little Son—I thought it showed how safe a boy with a dog is.