

# "I Didn't Raise My Girl to be A Trilby"

This Little Margaret Edwards in One of the Special Creeping Exercises That Gives Her Perfect Poise and Balance.



PHOTO BY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE.

A mother raised her pretty daughter up  
Till she'd made her a perfect girl;  
She took first prize at all the beauty shows,  
And sent each head away awlirl;  
The movies took her far from mother's side,  
And mother took one look, and then she cried:

CHORUS.  
"I didn't raise my girl to be a Trilby—  
I taught her to be natural, it's true,  
But there are times when covers are a comfort,  
And daughter really ought to have a few,  
A Venus has no business in the movies;  
That airy pose looks very cool to me.  
My girl may be a queen,  
But not upon a screen—  
I didn't raise my girl to be a Trilby."

## Distressing Experiences of "America's Perfect Girl" and of Her Devoted Mother Who Brought Her Up to Be Natural—but Not as Innocently Natural as She Made Herself in the "Movies."

In some such words as these would the bard who wrote that immortal anti-war lyric, "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier," have embalmed, perhaps, the distressing situation of which little Margaret Andrews, "America's Perfect Girl," is the centre. Perfection, alas! has its perils. It shares the fierce white light that beats on thrones and it walks the way perilous wherein the least stumble is comparable only to the worst kind of a fall for the imperfect and those whose peregrinations are not accompanied by the spotlight.

At the same time little Miss Margaret cannot be blamed, even by those who have the most decided ideas upon the subject, because, as she says, she was taught to be natural, that nothing wholesomely natural could have any harm in it, and because, quite naturally, she always looked upon clothes simply as things to slip on or off as the case might be. This being so, she is only to be sympathized with when she suddenly discovers that there are a number of people in the world, not taught just that way, who believe that it is possible to be too natural, and that there is a time and place for all things, even to the taking on and off of clothes.

Nor can Mrs. Andrews, the devoted mother, who brought little Miss Margaret up to be perfect, be blamed. As she says, she was ill and in a hospital when the annoying matter occurred, and while she thinks a great fuss is being made about nothing, still if she had not been ill it would never, never have happened.

But why "Trilby"? Why, Trilby, it will be remembered, caused a lot of conservative persons much worry because she posed in what is known as "the altogether." And, yes—little Miss Margaret did the same thing. That is what all the trouble is about, you see. Not only that, but there were a number of copies made of the allegory of which she was the most conspicuous figure, and when it got running little Miss Margaret walked innocently and naturally and in the altogether in half a hundred different cities every night—across the screen, that is, of course, for it was a moving picture.

That was much worse than poor Trilby, who also posed innocently, because there weren't more than half a dozen pictures of her that way, perhaps. Then when the allegory reached Los Angeles, where the Andrews live, the first thing Mrs. Andrews saw after she had recovered was her daughter's picture ambling around just as though she were in Eden, while half the people who looked on with her thought it was beautiful, and the other half thought it oughtn't to be allowed. Then Los Angeles, feeling a more or less proprietary interest in the Perfect Girl, took up the matter with just about the same division of sentiment. And in the meantime the Board of Censors ordered the pictures stopped and arrested the theatre proprietors who were showing them. And it almost made Mrs. Andrews ill again.

Little Margaret Andrews has been known to newspaper readers for a number of years. She is not so little now—just about seventeen. From babyhood her mother trained her on a system of her own, a system designed to make her an absolutely healthy and physically perfect girl. A woman of great intelligence, her system worked out and has since been copied by schools and mothers all over the country. Little Miss Margaret was a wonder at seven, a classic model at fourteen and now gives promise in figure of being a Diana, an Atlanta and a Helen of Troy all in one. The system, however, did not follow the conventional lines as to the purposes of

And This Is the Perfect Girl in a Leaping Exercise That Perfects the Legs and Keeps Down Fat.



While in This She Is Maintaining the Beauty Lines of Her Torso

clothes. Instead it was more Grecian and certainly hygienic. More and more people in the years Miss Margaret has been growing up have come to have the same idea. Therefore it was that in her innocence, when Mamma Andrews was very, very ill and the offer came to little Miss Margaret to pose in this particular allegory, that she saw no harm in it at all. She couldn't consult with mamma because she was too sick to be bothered, but it certainly never crossed her mind that there could have been any objection. Any thought of refusal would have seemed as absurd to her as the classic admonition of the mother to her water-loving daughter must have seemed to the maiden of whom it is written:

"Mother, may I go in to swim?"  
"Yes, my darling daughter;  
But hang your clothes on a hickory limb,  
And don't go near the water."  
"Of course, the allegorical figure you will represent is—ah—undraped," they told her.  
"Well, what of that?" quoth she.  
"Oh, nothing, nothing," they said.  
And so the pictures were made. Little Miss Margaret went wandering through thousands of feet of the allegory just as innocently as possible.

"Aren't they pretty?" she said—and went back to Los Angeles.

Now as to what happened later there are two stories. One is that when Mrs. Andrews was getting better she heard about the affair, questioned Margaret, hadn't the heart to disturb her daughter's very natural point of view on the matter and waited anxiously for the pictures to come in range so she could see them.

The other is that she was very rudely shocked by the sight of posters that carried to her mind familiar lines of a figure she herself had modelled, and was considerably more distressed when she went into the picture show and saw the whole allegory. She was not distressed because she thought there was anything wrong about it. Only, being a woman of experience and intelligence, she foresaw the criticism which was inevitable. However, the mischief, if mischief there was, was done.

The Los Angeles Board of Censors took exception to the allegory and caused the arrest of the proprietors of the theatre where the picture was being displayed. They charged them with having "photographed, delineated and produced the picture of a nude woman," adding that the picture "shows the figure in such detail as to offend public morality and decency."

This was even more distressing, and immediately almost every one took sides either for or against little Miss Margaret's achievement. Some of the opinions are interesting.

can find it, and then it is only in their own minds. The man or woman whose primal emotions are so gross, whose mentality is so abnormal, that they can see evil in this picture are not to be taken into consideration. As a mother, as a teacher in the public schools for years, as a worker for the uplifting of the human race, I say unreservedly that every man, woman and child should see this picture."

Which certainly leaves no uncertainty as to Mrs. Andrews' feelings.

This is what Mrs. Andrews herself has to say about it:  
"I am so sorry Margaret has had to meet with criticism and be misunderstood. Had I not been ill, delirious and in the hospital, it would not have occurred. However, I am proud she is such a sweet, good child and possessed of such a true perspective of physical and artistic expression that the criticisms have not meant as much to her as they might to one older and having more understanding of the world."

Clearly she indicates that it was not for a spectacle of this sort that she had raised her daughter.

And as for little Miss Margaret, this is what she had to say:  
"Always a beautiful body, a perfect physical condition, has seemed to be but the expression of spirit. To be well, to be happy, to be good—that is surely what nature meant for children. When we bring evil thought to the expression of nature's handiwork we are harming our own progress."

"The idea of the allegory may perhaps have been taken from a very beautiful painting. I wonder if the model who posed for that has been criticized as I have been."

"Don't you think, after all the pity is that there are some people so evil-minded that they find enjoyment in transposing all good, all beauty, all truth into wrong?"  
"All my life I have been part of Nature's moods. I was so ill when a baby my mother would keep me hours in the sunlight, unclad. As I grew older and lived far up in the mountains of our Napa ranch, my great joy was to ride or tramp or fish, absolutely without clothing, the winds, the sun, the mists all bringing strength and peace."

"Physical exercise, music and the study of art; these have always been the things I most loved. To slip from my room at the ranch and dance in the moonlight under the great trees, like one of the nymphs of which I had read, that was beautiful."

"Mother has always taught me that a perfect body must be revered, as the temple of Nature. Whenever I have visited art galleries, or studied great statues and pictures from reproductions, ever the human body has seemed to me the beautiful expression of all that is highest and best."

"So it was when, finally I was told how I was to pose I thought it not strange; all were so kind, so considerate."  
"It was not until I heard what people were saying, that I appreciated what others might think."  
Soon a jury trial will decide whether the theatre proprietors were right or wrong in disobeying the censoring board and in going ahead showing the allegory. It all shows, however, that there are certain unpleasant complications that can occur to people brought up to be natural that can't occur to others reared with an unnatural and artificial reverence for clothes.



And in Another That Develops the Whole Body from Neck to Ankles.

