



Going Back to the Cave Age for Health and Beauty

Marion Morgan Explains Just How It Benefits Girls to Dance Barefooted in Winter's Snows and Why the Coming Race Needs Mothers Who Have Returned, in Part, to the Primitive

By Marion Morgan.

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WHEN in New York my six pupils went into Central Park in mid-Winter and played and danced in the snow it was thought that this was done for effect. On the contrary, it was done through necessity. Play is a necessity. If it cannot be taken on the sand of the seashore or in the grass of the lawn or of the fields it must be taken amid snow and ice. If the health be normal there will be none but good results from such exercise. Which is a sign of the return of the overcivilized woman of to-day to the state of the cave woman.

I see a marked trend toward the primitive manner of living. I welcome and aid it. It is the salvation of the neurotic, hypersensitive product of civilization. Our women have fineness, acuteness, tenderness, but they have not stability and equanimity. To acquire these they must return to simple living. To give sons that shall be strong men they must return, in a measure, to the lives of their progenitors, the cave women. I plead for a harder life, for normal living. The more is this needed in a time of the possible imminence of war. Women may need to arm for national defense.

Did I hear the objection that cave women were themselves weak creatures, else they would not have permitted themselves to be wooed by a club? To be knocked senseless by a love tap with a limb of a tree? To have loved the conqueror who dragged her by the hair to his subterranean dwelling?

I answer that I have always had

doubts about the weight of those clubs and the terror and abject submission of the women thus won. The prints of our ancestresses, with caves for addresses, strengthen my doubts. Apparently artists shared my doubts. The hairy creatures of sparse clothing were of stature and weight almost equal to their lords. In a test of strength they might have been victors or at least the battle might have been a draw.

A woman may be judged by her children. The immediate descendants of the cave, women were creatures of great strength and appalling ferocity. It is related of them that they joined the males in tribal battles and that they were more ferocious than their brothers and husbands, more feared by opposing tribes.

Woman has moved far up in the arc of civilization since the time of the cave woman. She has developed intellectually and spiritually far beyond her forbear. But her strength has been in inverse ratio. She has become highly individualized, but excessively nervous. She has put her shoulder to the wheel of progress, but she has often to lie in bed all day, a victim of nervous headaches. She suffers from depleted vitality. There are many palliatives. There is but one remedy.

That is a back-to-the-cave-woman movement by the physical path.

The chief means to this necessary end is play. Out of doors play. That is the reason the six pupils I selected from my classes in physical culture in the Los Angeles High School are the flawless young examples of physical perfection

they have become. I have encouraged in them the spirit of play.

The cave woman is, in many respects, worthy to emulate. It is known that she did not suffer from that mark of physical deterioration, the packed spine. Let me make it clear.

Are you a housewife and are you considering at this house-renovating time your mattresses? They are good mattresses but several years old. They have had fairly good care. But it is noticeable that they have settled into a too solid condition. If you are a good housewife I assume you will take off the cover. The filling, be it felt or hair, will be taken out and be shaken out of its too solid condition. Obviously we cannot use such drastic measures for the spine. But we can stretch and soften its packing, not waiting for the annual housecleaning but doing a little day by day. The healthy person is buoyant of body and spirit. There is no lasting buoyancy without an elastic spine.

In the new Roman dance that I am preparing, with sixteen girls, I shall insist upon an activity of the arms as great as that of the legs. Arms are, indeed, more wieldy than the legs and more eloquent. It is a great pity that they are permitted to become ugly and inexpressive through lack of activity.

Stretch, stretch, stretch. Stretch the arms upward and you will give the cartilage cushions, between the vertebrae, the stretching they so much require and without which no one can have health comparable to that of her great-great-grandmother cave-woman. Continue the stretching and the spine will slowly yield to the pull of adjacent muscles. It will change from the packed condition of its cartilage cushions to an easily manipu-

Above is a Group of Miss Morgan's Pupils Dancing Rhythmically, Barefoot and in Modified Corsage Attire in the Snow of Central Park, New York—While on the Right Others Are Pursuing Their Studies in the Primitive.

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A Rhythmic Snow Dance in Slightest Dress for Health and Beauty.

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lated one. A cult has recognized that so many ill spring from the packed spinal cartilage that it professes to trace every disease to some spot in the spine. That road-tested health will be restored according to those practitioners. There is some logic in their position.

I assert that a woman is as old as her spine. Whoever stretch it not with violence, but with persistence. Natural play out of doors, if regular, will sooner or later bring about this desired change. Vigorous play produces the elastic spine. The elastic spine causes buoyancy which is the expression of youth.

This is the message which I shall impress upon my pupils when I open my out-of-door school and organize classes of women.

Exercise, which is admirable for stretching the body, so stretching the

spine, is the running jump. Run, and while running lift the head. With the arms hanging loosely at the sides run twelve or more steps. Then fling your arms high above your head and leap into the air with the same abandon as you would jump into the water for a swim. At signs of fatigue of the heart stop.

Another exercise in this air swimming is what corresponds to the overhand stroke in the water. Run, and springing into the air let the arms alternate in their up and down strokes.

The law of gravitation pulls us toward the earth. The spirit draws us upward. Leap into the air. Let the spirit combat for the swift seconds of that leap the downward pull of gravity. For so did your physically worthy ancestor, the cave woman.