

We do not deem it necessary to travel along with the indefatigable Signor through his hundred and fifty lessons: of those with the cane, suffice it to say, that they appear to be borrowed from honest Pat's flourishing a shillellah, as performed time immemorial at Irish wakes and fairs. Take one of the shortest:

"The pupil, placed with both arms extended on a line with the shoulders, must make the cane turn round the body, beginning the movement by the left side, then returning to the right, and bringing the right foot before the left; she must begin by the right, returning by the left, and bringing the right foot before the left, walk several steps, and return afterwards by the same movement to her position."

Some of these movements would, we think, bother Pat a little, even in his highest glory at Donnybrook. Balancing is another of the Calisthenic branches, and apparently must throw an elegant and modest female into some pretty attitudes!

"The stick at the height of the head, the pupil must take hold of it with both hands, drawing backward the whole length of the cords, the arms extended, and the body resting on the toes; she must then spring forward as far as possible, the arms and knees bent, descend to the ground, the heels on a line, the arms raised high, and the chest thrown out; afterwards bend the arms, and return to her place, making the same movements."

"Flying Round.—The pupil, placed at one of the extremities of the balance, the hands placed at a foot distance from each other, must move sideways, the cords extended their full length, walk in such a way as to describe a whole circle, moving the left leg to the left side, and the right leg crossing above the left; she must try to gain ground as much as possible to the left. As soon as the pupil is capable of performing this course easily, she must redouble her pace, and supporting her body by the strength of the arms, return to her first position: she must change hands, making the same movement on the opposite side; and she may then perform the high step, double step, zig-zag step, and the galloping pace, running the same circle, and using the same means as in the flying round."

It is a sad thing to confess ourselves behind the lights, the illumination, and the philosophy, of the age in which we live; but in this Journal we never conceal the truth, and we do confess that we prefer hop-skip-and jump to all Signor Voarino's Calisthenic improvements. He, indeed, in his conclusion, refers us to ancient authorities, and tells us that "Herodius, instructor of the great physician Hippocrates, was master of one of the Grecian Paæstrie, or Gymnasias, and frequently remarked, that the females under his tuition attained the enviable enjoyment of an uninterrupted flow of health and spirits." But against the obscure Herodius we would set the mighty Socrates! Will Signor Voarino contest with us, that Socrates would have liked to have had Xantippe a perfect mistress of her hands, her feet, and ears and sticks? able to employ them with every possible degree of agility and force? We presume he will not go to this extremity, even in support of his own system of Virago making. And if he quotes the ancients, why does not he urge their example, also;—that we should have our fair dames rubbed all over with oil to render them slippery to adverse grasp—why not gymnos, if we are to have perfect gymnasia? Not wishing to have matters carried to such a pitch, even by "private tuition," yea though it were made, for security's and propriety's sakes, part of the office of confessors in Roman Catholic countries, or in Protestant lands a piece of the church discipline—we are sorry that we must raise our voice against the Calisthenic amelioration of our charming countrywomen. They are so delightful as they are, that we would not for the world run any risk of spoiling, or even altering them. At any rate, let the experiment be tried elsewhere, in the master's own land, for instance, Italy. Let us see the Italian women made athletic, which they surely are not yet, or they must be far more than matches for the men—and if the process succeed with them, we will consent to its introduction among the barbarian families of Great Britain.

*A Treatise on Calisthenic Exercises, arranged for the private tuition of Ladies. By Signor Voarino, accompanied by illustrative Figures.*

When one takes up a book of this sort, it naturally raises the question—What were women intended for in civil life? To enchant mankind by feminine loveliness of person, grace society by gentleness of mind, contrast with the rougher sex their own far more exquisite fineness of spirit and divine sensibility of soul, be angels in disposition as in form, and so beautifully discharge all those duties which humanity assigns to them as the fountains, nurturers, and consolers of the race that they might seem rather beings to be adored than the mere equals and companions of men? or to box a lover, horsewhip a husband, "whop" a jarvey, and floor a charley?

To gentle and proper exercise for youthful females at school, no objection can be urged; on the contrary, the too-sedentary and moped-up system ought to be reprobated and discontinued. But when you come to teach grown up women—wives, mothers, and for aught we know grandmothers *et supra*, how to handle a pike and jump over a dinner-table—it is possible that the gymnastical part of education may be carried too far. And after all, even as it regards the juvenile portion of females, it has still to be demonstrated that it is much better to *manœuvrer* a large hoop than to drive a hoop, employ the skipping-rope, open the chest with dumb-bells, render the limbs supple by dancing, and straighten the spine by playing at

Sec-saw, Margery Daw!

Signor Voarino apologises, as a foreigner, for an imperfect acquaintance with our language—perhaps he was not aware (as few travellers speak of them,) that we had diversions like these just mentioned, and many others of the same kind—such, for example (for our critical knowledge is limited,) as hunt the slipper, which gives dexterity of hand and ham; leap-frog, which strengthens the back (only occasionally indulged in, we believe, by merry girls;) romps, which quicken all the faculties; tig, a rare game for universal corporeal agility; base-ball, a nonsuch for eyes and arms; ladies' toilet, for vivacity and apprehension; spinning the plate, for neatness and rapidity; grass-hopping (alias shu-cock,) for improving the physical powers; puss in the corner, and snap-tongs, for muscularity and fearlessness;—all these, and hundreds more, not so well known nor so much practised in London, perhaps, as in the country, we have had for ages; so that it looks ridiculous to bring out as a grand philosophical discovery, the art of instructing women how to have canes or sticks laid on their backs. We would wager the value of one of our Literary Gazettes to its price (a heavy and fearful odds,) that Betty the housemaid, uninstructed in Calisthenic exercises, will beat the ablest pupil Signor Voarino can produce, in the twirl of a mop, the lavations of a broom, and all the forces and elasticities of action, in the superior as well as inferior extremities. Is it a bet? done!

The exercise prescribed by the Signor, and illustrated by the plates, consists chiefly of various evolutions of the arms and limbs, something like those of opera dancers and figurantes, only, we suppose, slower. *Ex gratia*: "Ninth exercise.—The pupil, without changing her position, must bring the right hand forward towards the middle of the body, then raise it in a straight line above and behind the head, keeping the elbow at the height of the shoulder, and lower the arm sideways, so as to replace it on the breast; she must perform the same movement with the left arm, as well as with the right and left alternately, and lastly with both together.—See Plate III. fig. 9.

Now, who would like to see their grown-up daughter or sister, and far less their beloved sweetheart or wife, cutting such a figure as this "figure 9?" For our parts, we would rather that their "muscular powers" were never brought into "full action," than that they should be cultivated by such lessons. But we find it still worse, when we come "to the exercises of the lower extremities," the very first of which, though called "Simple Pace," is not at all simple to our apprehension.

"Simple Pace.—The pupils being placed on a line, and in the position described for the performance of the exercises of the superior extremities, at the words *simple pace*, they must place their hands on their hips, the fingers forward, and the thumb backwards; at the word *march*, the movements are to be made by bending the right knee, and raising it as high as the hip, the toes pointing down, the instep stretched; they must then set down the foot, and do the same with the left, repeating the same exercise several times, without changing the position of the body."

The only comment upon which, that occurs to us, is, that it is lucky they are not obliged to use both legs together at the same time, as in the former exercise of both arms; because in that case, it strikes us they could not stand to their arms, but must fall prone on the ground.

As we advance, we discover motions, in our ignorant opinion still more objectionable, and rather obnoxious to our island notions of propriety. Only so far as the Calisthenic mystery as lesson 2, it is thus appointed—

"The pupil placed with her hands on her hips, the shoulders thrown back, and the chest out, must perform this exercise by raising the right leg extended forward as high as possible, the instep stretched, the upper part of the body held back; she must then set it down, raising at the same time the left leg, and repeat the exercise several times without resting the heels on the ground."

In the next lesson, the body is to be thrown back, and the legs are to be bent backwards, "raising them as high as possible;" then follow instructions for crossing legs "as far as possible," first the right over the left, and then the left over the right, the hip stretched, and the toes touching the ground. In another lesson, how to put the arms *a kimbo* is taught; and at length we have a performance which quite staggers us:

"High step complicated.—The pupil placed in the same manner as in the preceding exercise, must execute this by hopping twice on the toes of the left foot, raising the right leg sideways as high as possible; then hopping twice on the right foot, raising the left leg in the same manner, she must bring the heels on a line; the same is to be done by raising the right leg forward and the left behind; and by a double hop change legs, bringing the left behind and the right behind; then return to the walking pace. This exercise is to be performed without stopping."