VARIOUS

HANDBOOK OF SUMMER ATHLETIC SPORTS

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Содержание

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PEDESTRIANISM

A wonderful increase of popularity has lately attended the art of walking. The steady improvement made in speed and endurance by professional and amateur walkers and the introduction of international contests have brought this about within a few years.

When the firm of Beadle and Adams published their first Dime book of Pedestrianism, the only American walker of reputation was Edward Payson Weston. The record of professionals and amateurs had then developed nothing greater than the performances of Captain Barclay of England, who first did a thousand miles in a thousand hours. Weston's famous walk

from Portland to Chicago caused the only ripple of excitement in the sporting world on the subject of walking from the time of Barclay up to 1870.

Since that period, things have changed greatly. Weston's achievements have inspired others, and those others have not only equaled but excelled Weston on many occasions. The names of O'Leary, Rowell, Corkey, and "Blower" Brown, all men born in the British Islands, have been recorded above those of Weston at different times; but it remains to the glory of the American pedestrian that in 1879 he beat them all.

All these changes and ups and downs in pedestrianism for the last ten years have made the old books obsolete, and the publishers of the former Dime Book of Pedestrianism have determined to issue a new edition, fully up to the times in all respects.

Besides practical instructions in walking, founded on the different styles of noted professionals, we shall annex much matter never before put in a handbook, concerning the preparation of tracks, measurements, timing and scoring, for the information of that large class of people living in country towns and villages, who have plenty of walkers, but no experience in the conduct of matches, and no opportunity to see how things are done in first class matches.

Every one can walk, but not every one can become a great walker. Any young man of good health and strength can learn to walk five miles in an hour, but the number of men who can

walk twenty-five miles in five hours is very small, and will always remain so. If we take the population of any town or village we shall find that out of every hundred young men from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, there are about sixty more or less given to athletic sports, twenty who are very enthusiastic about them, and six or eight who would make *good* walkers, runners and general athletes. Of this six or eight, there is generally one who is better than his fellows, and he becomes the village champion in one sport or another.

This is about the true proportion – one per cent – of the young male community, that is capable of being taken at random and converted into good professional walkers. A general system of early physical training would soon increase this proportion, but as we are never likely to see any such system adopted we must be content with what we can get. Out of those capable of becoming great walkers and striving to become so, the proportion of second rate men is quite large.

There have been great long-distance walkers before, and probably will be again; but a man of the peculiar constitution of Edward Payson Weston is very seldom met with. Other men have, at times, beaten him; but he has outstayed them all at last in endurance. No other athlete on record has remained among contestants of the first-class for so many years, for be it remembered that Weston's career as a walker began on Thanksgiving Day, 1867, the day on which he arrived at Chicago from Portland, and that so late as 1879, twelve years after, he was

able to do 550 miles in a week against the best men of England, at a time when his latest rival, O'Leary, had utterly broken down. Ten years after his first appearance on the track, he was able to give O'Leary, in his prime, a tough battle, making 510 miles in six days, and none of his antagonists can say as much for themselves.

The average duration of a great long-distance man, whether walker or runner, seems to be about two years. It was in 1876 that O'Leary came to the top of the wave, and in 1879 he went under. Weston alone keeps on, apparently as fresh at forty as he was at twenty-six.

All this argues in Weston very great physical power and strictly temperate habits, and he possesses both in a remarkable degree.

There, however, the praise ends. As a scientific walker, Weston is inferior, not only to O'Leary, but even pitted against such amateurs as Harry Armstrong, of Harlem, C. Bruce Gillie, of the Scottish-American Club, or a dozen others we could name. When he was in his best form, about 1874-5, it was the remark of an English trainer, that Weston was "a mystery to him; that he didn't see how he could walk at all on the bad system he used, and that any other man would have broken down utterly in the attempt." Weston used to get through his tasks, and does still, but only at the cost of terrible fatigue, which he might have saved himself on a better system.

O'Leary, on the other hand, is an example of how the best training, constitution and system may be neutralized and

overthrown by over-confidence and dissipation. As a scientific walker, O'Leary has no equal, and were he of the same temperate habits as Weston, he might still head the list as world's champion. As it is, the rows of empty champagne bottles that were taken from his tent at Gilmore's, when he broke down in the Rowell match, were the evidence and symbol of his ruin.

It was not in his case, as he said in the *Spirit of the Times*, that "runners can beat walkers." O'Leary, himself, in four or five matches, had beaten all the time ever made by runners, save that of "Blower" Brown; but the O'Leary of those days had succumbed to high living, and a poor excuse was better than none.

Yet, the man's system was, and is, magnificent, and enabled him to do respectable work against Hughes and Campana, when he really was not fit to go at all.

Had he possessed Weston's temperate habits, or had Weston possessed O'Leary's science as a walker, the result would have been a pedestrian wonder that would have lasted many years longer than O'Leary.

WALKERS vs. RUNNERS

The success of Weston and O'Leary in their long-distance walks in England surprised the Britons greatly. Up to the time of Weston's appearance in that country, Englishmen had been accustomed to consider themselves the best walkers in the world; but the two Americans – the native and the naturalized – soon took the conceit out of them. The best English long-distance walkers were Peter Crossland and Henry Vaughan, who had both done excellent work in matches of the kind then practiced in England. But the introduction of six-day contests, first started by Weston, put these professionals on unfamiliar ground, and they found that a man who could walk a hundred miles in one day was not able to cope with these American wonders, who could finish five hundred miles in six days. The Englishmen laid their defeat to the right cause – unfamiliar methods; and Sir John Astley, a rich sporting baronet, to put both parties on an equality, introduced the six-day "go-as-you-please" match, soon to supersede all others. It was thought that runners would have the advantage over walkers in this match. Their backers claimed that by going over the ground faster they would gain more time for rest, and so in the end go further. The first Astley Belt match falsified all their data. In the famous contest at Agricultural Hall, London, from March 18th to March 23d, 1878, Daniel O'Leary covered 520 1-4 miles, in 139 hours 6 minutes 10

seconds, confining himself to walking after the first fifty miles. He had against him the great English long-distance runners and the best long-distance walker, Vaughan, all of whom he defeated decisively. Vaughan stopped at 500 miles – a score he has never since equaled – "Blower" Brown retired at 477, and "Corkey," who had things all his own way for the first three days, broke down utterly on the fourth; while Hazael and Rowell were earlier satisfied that they had no chance.

In the same year O'Leary defeated with ease John Hughes and Peter Napoleon Campana, surnamed "Sport," both runners, and seemed to be secure of holding the Astley belt for life. Indeed, had he not, like most sporting men, been deceived by the exaggerated reports of Campana's prowess, he might be champion to-day.

The reason for this statement is simple. Campana's Bridgeport record, as it turned out from after investigation, was a deliberate fraud, got up by some low sporting men, who probably did not at first dare to hope for the success which it attained. They began by running their man on a short track, and when that fraud was discovered made a merit of having the course publicly remeasured by the city surveyor. The more important part of the fraud was not discovered till after "Sport's" ignominious defeat by O'Leary, and then only by the confession of his Bridgeport scorers and time-keepers. It turned out that they had been crediting him with laps never run, and that they had employed men to personate him, late at nights, when he was really asleep,

these men running for him. By means of these fraudulent representations they rolled up such a score for Campana that he was credited with 521 miles in a six-day match.

O'Leary, who, besides his Hughes match, had been giving several 400-mile walks, knew that he was no longer in condition to walk against a good man for the championship, and therefore made the match one for money alone. Had he allowed the belt to be in the stakes there is no doubt that he would have won it for the third and last time, when he would have become its absolute possessor.

In the meantime, however, the runners in England had been improving their style immensely, for in the second Astley match, beginning Oct. 28th, and closing Nov. 2d, 1878, William Gentleman, (*alias* "Corkey,") made 520 2-7 miles in 137 hours, 58 min., 20 sec.; thus beating O'Leary's distance by a trifle, and his time by more than an hour. This match it was that raised the spirits of Sir John Astley, and induced him to send over Rowell (who made 470 miles in the same match) to beat O'Leary. Sir John knew what he was about, and had kept O'Leary in view all the year.

The scores of the American champion's matches with Hughes and Campana, showed that the man was failing, and if so, Rowell was good enough to beat him, as there was no other really formidable walker in America; so Astley judged, and correctly, too.

The victory of Rowell over the American walkers caused an

instantaneous revulsion of public sentiment in favor of runners, a revulsion artfully increased by O'Leary's widely-published dictum that the runners were always "bound to beat the walkers." This, however, was not by any means proven at that time. The real truth was that champagne, not Rowell, beat O'Leary; and Rowell's record in the race was twenty miles short of the champion's best walking record. The other competitors in the match were simply not first-class men.

The cause of the runners has, however, received a fresh impetus since Rowell's victory by the still more remarkable feat of "Blower" Brown (always a "good man") who in the third Astley belt match, April 22d-27th, 1879, made the amazing distance of 542 miles in 140 hours.

Finally the veteran Weston beat even Brown's record by the superlative score of 550 miles over the same track, opposed to Brown himself and Hazael.

Since that time Brown has made 553 miles over the same track, and a negro lawyer from Boston named Hart has made 565 miles in Madison Square Garden, finishing April 10, 1880.

As the record now stands, in contests where almost superhuman endurance and speed are required, ordinary runners may win, but only at the expense of a waste of physical energy that a scientific walker does not suffer. They go faster and manage to live through the contest, but that is all. The introduction of "go-as-you-please" contests, has, however, given rise to a new style of long-distance running, which is as strictly scientific as

professional walking, and to these two branches of pedestrianism let us now devote our attention.

SCIENTIFIC WALKING

Every one walks more or less, but very few understand the principles of scientific walking. The science consists in two things: 1st. How to acquire the longest stride practicable to the physique of the walker; 2d. How to distribute the weight of the body so that the greatest effort shall be made with the least possible exertion.

Many walkers acquire the first part of this science, and some understand the second division of the subject, but very few can combine the two, like O'Leary. For short-distance matches, in which contests up to twenty-five miles are included, the number of scientific walkers is reasonably large, both among professionals and so-called amateurs. They almost all walk on a correct system, similar to that of O'Leary, but inasmuch as their exertions do not last so long a time, they can afford to make them more vigorous. If their stride be no longer, proportionately, than that of O'Leary, the number of steps per minute taken by them is greater, and they cover the ground at a rate that no untrained person can equal without breaking into a trot.

The rate at which the best of them can go is shown by the marvelous feats of Perkins, the English champion, who has the record of a mile walked in *six minutes and twenty-three seconds*, and eight miles walked in *an hour, less fifty-five seconds*. Such performances show that Perkins can out-walk any ordinary road-

horse going on a trot. Even an amateur of our own country – T. H. Armstrong – has walked seven miles in fifty-six minutes. It is needless to say that no untrained person could equal this, four miles an hour being very sharp walking to most people; and it becomes a matter of interest to know how the professionals do it, and how their walk differs from that of an unskilled man.

The sight of a walking-match does a good deal toward explaining the mystery, and the foregoing cuts will show the main points of difference between the skilled and unskilled pedestrian.

The unskilled amateur, who sets out to walk fast, generally makes several grave mistakes. He leans his body forward, bends his back, lowers his head, swings his arms at full length, and allows his knees to bend. The consequence is that when he is doing his very best his attitude is very much like that in the first cut, depicting the unskilled walker.

There is no question that the poor fellow is doing his best, and very little doubt that he can not last long at the rate he is going.

Contrast with this figure that of the second cut, showing a professional in full stride. You are at full liberty to laugh at the figure, for there is no question that it has strong elements of the ludicrous; but for all that it is not exaggerated, and such attitudes may be seen in every last short-distance match.

Now it is time to note the points of difference between the two men and to show where the professional has the advantage over the other.

First note that a perpendicular line dropped from the center

of each man's chest between the shoulders to the ground, and continued upward through his head would represent the line in which his weight falls. Draw such a line and you will find that in the case of the unskilled walker it strikes the ground close to his forward heel, while his head is in advance of it. Consequently he has to support the weight of his head, with all the disadvantage of leverage, by muscular exertion, and the strain must fall on his back.

In the professional, on the other hand, the weight falls on a nearly perpendicular column through the body, which is in balance, striking the ground midway between the points of support – the feet. If the man were to stop just where he is, he is in a position to resist a shove either forward or back. A smart push from behind would infallibly send our unskilled friend on his nose.

Note also that the professional's body, if anything, inclines backward, and think of the reason. Remember that when in rapid motion there is always a strong tendency to fall forward with the upper part of the body, a consequence of its weight and momentum. The balance of the body can therefore be sent a little back of the line which would be proper when standing still, to counteract the force of this momentum.

So much for distribution of weight.

Next note that the professional has both legs straight, and can therefore take a greater stride than any one with bent knees. Note, moreover, that he plants his heel first at the very extremity of his

stride, and thus gains on every step the whole length of his foot, for after the heel is planted the toe comes down in advance by its own weight without labor. If he were to point his toe downward, as in the military "goose-step," he would lose all this advantage as soon as the foot was planted.

Our next remark is that whereas the tyro swings his arms full length with open hands the professional clenches his fists and bends his arms double.

With this same action of the arms comes another of the shoulders, which is of great importance. The working of the shoulders in fast walking is a natural and almost ineradicable habit. A fast walker *will* swing his arms, no matter how he is cautioned. We have seen many a drill master driven to despair by the swinging of arms of a marching squad, after all his cautions. The fact is, the swing is right and the drill master wrong. The faster a man walks, the more his shoulders swing, by an effort of nature to lift the weight of his body from the rear foot and to let it down on the front heel as lightly as possible. The usual way of accomplishing this result is to swing the arm at full length, but this fatigues the walker in two ways: first, by the resistance of the air to the arm, cutting it; second, by the leverage of the hand at the end of the arm, which has to be counteracted by the shoulder muscles. Both these effects are obviated by the simple expedient of bending the arm in proportion to the speed, and clenching the hand. When at top speed, the forearm of the advanced shoulder should be perpendicular, that of the rear

shoulder horizontal, and as the speed decreases so should the angle of the arms become less acute. The difference in speed and ease of movement between a walker who holds up his arms and one who lets them swing full length is very striking, and our readers can try for themselves the experiment of walking in both ways, noting the advantage given by holding up the arms. In a race, it is a point that soon tells.

Lastly we must give one special caution with regard to taking the cut for an exactly accurate representation of what a man should do in order to become a fast walker. As the artist has finished the figure, many people might imagine that he had just made a *spring from the toes of the left foot*, which is in rear. This should not be done, as any weight sent on the toes soon tires out the walker, and although the foot is bent as in the cut, the weight is taken off the toes by working the shoulders. In fact as an English writer has well said, modern professional walking is a series of springs from heel to heel.

There are some other points in scientific walking which require the assistance of diagrams to explain them, and these concern the position of the feet best calculated to secure a long stride at the least expense of physical exertion.

If there is anything in scientific walking that is puzzling to a civilized beginner, it is the things taught him in childhood which he is now compelled to unlearn. A young savage who has never had any lessons in "deportment," walks correctly enough, though he does not generally care to exert himself sufficiently to make

good time at that pace, preferring the "dog-trot." But so far as he walks, he always walks correctly, with a hollow back, stepping from heel to heel, his arms bent, his head thrown back, his toes turned in. The civilized boy, on the other hand, has a bad lesson given to him as soon as he can talk. He is told to "turn his toes out."

Now it so happens that if you take two men, equally good walkers, and let one turn his toes out, the other in, the "parrot-toed" man is sure to beat the other in the long run.

The reason for this statement will be made plain by looking at the following cut and reflecting on a few facts in connection therewith.

In the upper figure we have the foot tracks of a man walking with his toes turned out; in the lower one the same foot takes the same stride "parrot-toed." Note that both start with heels on the same line, and that before a step is taken, the man who turns out his toes has lost nearly an inch of forward progress, his toes not touching the same line as that reached by the other, who carries his feet straight. With the close of the first step the difference increases, *both parties taking the same stride, measured from toe to toe*. The parrot-toed man sets his heel down in advance of the other's heel, and gains a further advantage by the greater reach of his toe at every step.

The gain of the parrot-toed man is thus shown to be constant when both parties use the same exertion, and must always give him the race, other things being equal.

But there is another loss in turning the toes out, which is not less important, and which is shown by the position of the large black spots in the cut. These spots represent the point on which the weight of the body falls in the middle of each stride, and a very important difference will be noted in their position. In the case of the man who turns his toes out, this spot comes under the joint of the great toe, while in the other foot it lies between the second and third toes.

In other words, when a man turns out his toes he places *all his weight on a single joint*; when he walks parrot-toed it is *distributed among five joints*. This difference in strain is sure to tell in a long race. It is the experience of many a tramp in moccasins and bare feet that makes the Indians and other wild tribes walk parrot-toed, because any other way would soon lame them. Our civilized stiff-soled boots, by distributing the weight of the body over a large surface, permit us to go on walking in a vicious fashion, as long as we do not have to use much exertion, but when we come to serious pedestrianism, we must return to savage *i. e.* natural ways, or the strain will tell in lameness, inside of twenty-four hours' work.

The celebrated Indian-painter, George Catlin, gives in his "Travels" a striking instance of the difference of the two systems. He was a large, powerful man, and counted himself a good walker in the old times. Therefore, when, in company with a number of trappers, fur-traders and Indian employes of the Fur Company, he set out for a hundred-and-fifty-mile tramp over the

prairie in moccasins, he made up his mind to lead the caravan and outwalk every one.

For the first day he did so, but then found himself lame; and next day, in spite of all he could do, he fell behind inferior men and became a straggler. At the evening camp-fire, the second day, an old trapper noticed his condition and told him the secret of his non-success.

"You are walking in moccasins," said the hunter, "and you must learn *to turn in your toes, as the Indians do*."

Catlin took the advice, went to the head of the line next day, and had no more trouble in keeping his place.

The moral of the story is obvious. If you wish to last to the end of a match, *turn your toes in*.

SCIENTIFIC RUNNING

If there is anything which the records of modern pedestrianism settles, it is that we have yet a good deal to learn from savages. Here we have been walking matches and running other matches for the last fifty years, only to settle down into the regular Indian lope, or dog-trot, for long distance traveling, as faster and less exhausting than the fastest walk.

This pace, introduced for the first time into civilized contests by "Blower" Brown, Hazael, Corkey and Rowell, is the very same which the Indian runners of the forest tribes have used from time immemorial. It is the same with which the Hindoo palkee-bearers swing through the jungle for mile after mile under a tropic sun without apparent distress, and the universal method adopted by savage and semi-barbarous people whenever they wish to journey fast on foot. The civilized untrained man when he tries the same pace commonly makes a mess of it. "Old Sport," *alias* Campana, was a good exemplar of the civilized idea of a dog-trot – that of the old volunteer fire-brigade of New York city. It was a fair trot, but it would not last forever. Campana put up both arms, working his shoulders as in a walk, and lifted his feet high before and behind, with a weary-looking, lagging step. It entailed about the same exertion as a fast walk and got over the ground no faster. Too much work was *wasted in perpendicular motion*.

A model of truly scientific long-distance running is found in little Charley Rowell, whose style is an exact imitation of Brown, Corkey and Hazael. All four are men of about the same size and weight, standing five feet six inches, and weighing from 130 to 140 lbs. The probable reason for their taking to running was their small size, which debarred them from success as walkers against men with six inches more stride. As runners they have all glided into the same system, which is fairly represented in the cut above, taken from the attitude of Rowell.

The first thing that one notices about this figure is its ease, and the absence of all appearance of effort. The professional walker, in the cut in preceding chapter, looks as if he was walking hard, but this fellow seems trying to run as slow as he can. The fact is that, while not actually trying to go *slow*, he is trying to *save himself* as much exertion as is compatible with getting over the ground a little faster than the fastest walk. Such a pace is from six to eight miles an hour, and such a pace can be maintained by a well-trained man like Rowell after he is unable to walk over three miles an hour.

There are several points to notice about the attitude, especially the position of the head and the way the nose is elevated in the air. When Rowell started after O'Leary on his dog-trot with his nose in the air, people laughed at him and thought he was playing monkey tricks; but when Rowell kept his nose in the air for six days it began to be seen that he had a reason for so doing.

If any of our readers will try the experiment of running for a

distance with the head down and then change to Rowell's plan, nose in air and teeth tightly clenched, they will be surprised at the difference in ease of respiration. Throwing up the head makes the passage from nose to windpipe nearly straight, and the air has no corners to turn before reaching the lungs. In fast running, or any long-continued exertion, it is necessary to keep the mouth closed, to prevent the rapid evaporation that takes place when the air comes in through the open mouth, parching up the throat. But if we try to breathe *through the nose alone*, with the head bent down, we find that the air does not come freely enough, and distress soon compels us to open the mouth, after which we are speedily at the end of our tether – and wind. Holding up the head in the fashion depicted in the cut renders a two hours' run a matter of comparative ease to a well-trained man, and enables one like Hazael to run his 137 miles in 26 hours.

The next point to notice about our long-distance friend is the position of his arms, which are slightly bent and held rigid by the sides, to steady the walls of the lungs and thus let the chest be kept fully dilated as long as possible. If the man in the cut were running a "sprint race" – that is for any distance inside of a furlong – his arms would go up to the same angles as those of the professional walker, because then he would be at top speed. As it is he is going *as easily as he can*, and does not run fast enough to be able to keep his arms up, *without a conscious muscular exertion, which would tell in a race*.

The art of long-distance running is one of real value to any

one who wishes to increase the size of his legs to shapeliness, and to be able to go long steps rapidly with the least fatigue. This pace, alternated with walking whenever the breath fails, can be adopted by any person with advantage to health. The strain comes on the muscles of the front of the thigh and calf of the leg, and a return to walking rests these more completely than actual standing still. The combination of the two forms the "go-as-you-please" contest.

We have thus fully noticed long-distance running before treating of "sprint" races and other short dashes, because it is a more important branch of athletics. The correct system is one that can be readily acquired by all, old and young, and will be found of great value whenever one is in a hurry to go to a certain place. The regular long-distance trot will take a person further and faster than any other known method of unaided progression.

A few words about sprint running will appropriately close this chapter.

By the term "sprint" races are meant all those dashes at full speed which are not over a furlong in length. Seventy-five and one-hundred-yard dashes are the most common, and the question of excellence as a sprint racer, or "sprinter," depends on single seconds or fractions thereof in time, while the benefits derived from the practice are nothing like those of the mile or ten-mile runner. The form required, however, merits observation.

Sprint running is only an exaggeration of the system displayed in long-distance work. The arms rise as in fast walking, and for

the same reasons, till they are doubled up. The work, being fast, requires that the lungs be kept expanded, therefore the arms are kept stiff and rigid to aid the chest muscles in holding out the walls of the thorax to give room to the lungs. The distribution of weight, on account of the rapid motion, comes to be much the same as in fast walking, but the knees are bent of necessity; because in running the progression is made by springs from toe to toe, instead of heel to heel. The same cause admits of the upper part of the body falling forward, though the elevation of nose and hollowing of back is even more important than in long-distance work, inasmuch as the exertion is more severe while it lasts. The cut on preceding page will illustrate the difference between the sprint runner and the long-distance man.

Having thus treated of scientific walking and running simply with regard to their mechanical action, we can next turn to the subject of the proper dress to be adopted to make both easy for the pedestrian.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.