

The Effect of the Whole

Tamar Stone © 2012 - 2015

Description List, Text Sheet and Bibliography

Outside/Cover Corset:

Antique girls' corset vest with 10 glass buttons (6 front, 2 on each side)

2 antique celluloid buttons on shoulder straps. Laced in back.

Machine stitched, cotton embroidered text.

Corset lining – digitally printed cotton sateen fabric.

Twill tape loops with antique glass buttons attached to corset.

Length: 12" (17" including buttoned shoulder straps)

Width closed: 12"

Width open: 26 1/2"

Interior Book + Pages:

Digital ink-jet prints on cotton and chiffon fabric pages with machine and hand embroidery.

Interior book attached to outside cover corset with cotton twill tape loops and 2 antique glass buttons.

Interior book binding edges:

- Facsimile of the Chicago Corset Co, Ball's Health-Preserving Corset antique tape measure.
- Ink jet images printed on *Quick Fuse* fabric sheets.

Book covers: 8" (L) x 9" (W)

Book pages: 7 1/4" (L) x 9" (W)

Pages Bound: 1 1/4" (H)

Sources (partial list)

Advertisements and Pamphlets:

P.W. Hanicke Manufacturing Co. Brace Pamphlet

Sheldon Method of Curing Spinal Curvature and Kindred Ailments (Philo Burke MFG) Advertisement

Books/Periodicals:

Beauty in Dress, Miss Oakey, 1881

Character as seen in Body and Parentage, Furneaux Jordan, 1886

Corset and Underwear Review, July, 1916

The Education of American Girls, Considered in a Series of Essays, edited by Anna C. Brackett, 1874

The Gentle Treatment of Spinal Curvature, Henry Heather Bigg, London, 1875

Harpers Bazaar, 1874

Individual Gymnastics, a Handbook of Corrective and Remedial Gymnastics, by Lillian Curtis Drew, 1922

The Ladies Guide to Perfect Beauty... Notwithstanding the Disguises of Dress, Walker Alexander, 1864

Lectures on Orthopedic Surgery And Diseases of the Joints, Lewis Albert Sayre F, 1895

Letters to Married Ladies, Hugo Smith 1827

The Moral Instructor for Schools and Families: Containing Lessons on the Duties of Life, Catherine E. Beecher, 1838

NY Journal of Medicine and the Collateral of Sciences, Vol IV, "An Essay on Curvatures and Diseases of the Spine" Mr. R.W. Bampffield (Fellow of Medical Society of London, Surgeons & more), 1845

Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families, Catherine E. Beecher, 1856

The Question of Spinal Braces in Lateral Curvature, A.B. Judson, 1901

Spinal Curvature: Compromising A Description of The Various Types of Curvature of the Spine with the Mechanical Appliances Best Suited For Their Treatment, Henry Robert Heather Bigg, London, 1882

The Well-dressed Woman: A Study in the Practical Application to Dress of the Laws of Health, Art and Moral, Helen Gilbert Ecob, 1892

Title

*Embroidered outside
corset front*

Printed Right inside
corset lining text

The Effect of the Whole

Spinal Corset for Support in the early stages of Curvature and Weakness of the Spine. This illustration represents a very successful form of corset support. It takes the place of the frequently used leather or celluloid jacket because it is more comfortable to wear and the material more flexible, giving the muscles more freedom to act. It is made of fine coutil.

Attached to this corset is a steel frame accurately fitted to the body consisting of a steel pelvic girdle embracing the body just above the trochanter and two lateral bars extending to the axillae, and on either side of the spinal column reaching to the middle of the shoulder blades.

The four uprights are rigidly connected with each other by narrow steel bands, this giving firmness to the entire frames. Shoulder straps, crossing in back and adjustable in front, add to its efficiency, especially when a condition of stooped or round shoulders prevails, when they have proven indispensable. This style of spinal corset possesses the advantage that certain changes can be made from time to time, to follow up improvements. It is light in weight, neat and comfortable.

Printed Left inside
corset lining text

Spinal Corset for Support and Correction for Antero-Posterior Curvature of the Spine.

Similarly constructed to the previous corset.

However, it has two adjustable axillary supports to relieve the affected vertebrae of the body weight, and render and adequate support of the trunk of the body by a snugly fitting corset.

Soft felt pads are inserted to exert a moderate pressure over the projecting vertebrae.

Book Cover front
embroidered

A perfect proportion is the greatest beauty...

*Inside front cover
(backside)*

... whenever the spine, otherwise well-formed, manifests either temporary or permanent deflection, an interference with muscular equilibrium has taken place. To neutralize this disturbing force ought to be the primary object treatment, and should be accomplished with as little discomfort and interference with the ordinary avocations of the patient as possible.

It is irrational, to the say the least, to make and growing girl, the subject of spinal curvature, bear the discomfort of a heavy apparatus when she can hardly sustain the weight of her own body, whilst it is questionable whether the employment of such means tends to diminish the deformity for which it is called into requisition.

Yet, notwithstanding the palpable objections to overburdening an already enfeebled frame with cumbrous apparatus, its practical adoption has for a considerable period been the sheet anchor of modern orthopaedist, who in conjunction with their

mechanicians, have vied with each other in proposing complicated and ingenious applications of the one general principle – namely, compelling the vertebral deflection to yield before an application of great external force, instead of re-establishing the natural equilibrium by calling into action the restorative power available through the medium of an altered base.

Page 1 front

Scoliosis or *lateral curvature of the spine*, is defined... as “*a condition in which any series of vertebral spinous processes shows a constant deviation from the median line of the body, a deviation always accompanied by an element of twisting.*”

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“Thus the spinal muscles of young females are doomed to inaction by the trunks of their bodies being imprisoned in stiff stays, or their movements abridged and confined by the use of collars, braces, back boards, or by being stretched motionless on reclining boards or school room floors; or they are subjected to long continue exertion, and the use of one posture, which all of our muscles abhor, and soon become weary of; being placed in education chairs or stools... and menaces of punishment if they stoop or bend in the least, but the muscles...when fatigued or weary in the erect posture must seek... repose by allowing the body to sink into an inclination to one side or the other, and, by laying the basis of lateral curvature, produce the reverse of what human wisdom intended.”
R.W. Bampffield, 1845

Page 2 front

By “Spinal Curvature” is meant a state of the vertebrae column in which a departure from the median line established by Nature has become either variable or permanent* and this may occur in an anterior direction, as in lordosis; posterior, as in cyphosis; laterally, as in scoliosis, and horizontally as in rotary displacement.

These are the simple external distinguishing features met with in ordinary cases of spinal deformity; but there is one important condition common to all – viz, an alteration in the natural position of the spine and pelvis. ...in lateral curvature there is a combination of horizontal obliquity, with an advance of the hip-axis in its relation to the median line of the body.

**The terms “variable” and “permanent” are used to distinguished between a deflection, which when accidentally assumed can be readily corrected by an exercise of voluntary muscular effort, and one in which the spine retains its altered position, and cannot be restored to its normal place without the aid of external force.*

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Half of these deformities are the result of want of energy, want of life enough to sit up straight; consequently are most commonly seen among that careless, lifeless class of persons who are in the habit of sitting the greater share of the time with their backs and bent in a half curved position.

Indulgence in such careless habits of sitting not infrequently develops a curve in the spinal column at some point, which is sufficient to establish the deformity; and then in a very short time a second curve will be developed, which is compensatory.

Lewis Albert Sayre, 1895

Page 3	front	<p>All mechanical appliances are passive or active. The <i>passive</i> impart through a diffused hold their own properties to the parts to which they are applied. They exercise no definite motor force.</p> <p>An excellent example of a passive appliance is a splint moulded of leather or plaster, or any other similar substance; it gives quiescence to the parts to which it is adapted, and with the greatest generality and spread of hold combines the absolute minimum of actively exerted power; the intrinsic immobility of the splint resisting the instability of the parts so protected.</p>
	back	<p>The <i>active</i> mechanical appliances, on the other hand, are constructed with the express purpose of exercising some definite motor force.</p> <p>They do not take a very diffused hold of the parts to which they are applied; and there is always embodied in their construction some active agent exercising some power, such as elastic power, spring power, or rack power.</p>

Page 4	front	<p>Fig. 1 Diagram of Normal Figure The Legs of the Perfect Woman Should Meet at Four Points</p> <p>It appears that the eye is pleased by the exactness of corresponding parts; and that symmetry is the first Character of Beauty in thinking beings.</p> <p>Occasional irregularity makes us better appreciate the Importance of Symmetry. The oblique direction of the eyes... unequal magnitude of the hemispheres of the bosom, or unequal length of the limbs, disfigure the most beautiful person.</p>
	back	<p>External Indications, as to Beauty...</p> <p>Even with regard to the parts of the figure which are more exposed to observation by the closer adoption of dress, much deception occurs. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the arts employed for this purpose, at least by skillful women.</p>

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Figs. 2 and 3 are diagrams intended to represent the changes that take place in the curves of balance of the body when the system becomes atonic.

Fig. 2 on the contrary, shows the atonic stooping position of the body (*temporary in the first stage, and permanent in the second*) the curve pervading which has but two convexities, while the arches of the foot are flattened.

Fig. 3 exhibits the upright, tonic, and healthy position of the body, which is pervaded by a curve with six convexities while the arches of the feet are well set up.

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Fig. 3

One authority in art states that in a well-formed woman a plumb-line dropped from the tip of the nose should fall in front of the toes.

A marked cervical or neck curve, although it involves a slight stoop, gives a greater fullness to the front of the neck, which artists consider to enhance a woman's beauty. *Strong curvature of the neck bones (vertebrae) shortens the neck and also throws the head forward; marked obesity gives the appearance of a short neck.*

Page 6 front

The secret of grace is to teach every joint of the body to bend all that it can. Vitalize every fibre, *...and the body will play into grace itself.*

The most sensitive test, however, both for lateral deviation and for the rotation of the ribs which invariably accompanies, is effected by making the patient bend over forwards with her hands together as if to touch the ground with them, and then slowly rise while the examiner looks up along the back.

By these means each pair of ribs will be successively thrown into profile... and the slightest rotation back on the one side, or forwards on the other will be appreciable with the greatest refinement, while the throwing forwards of the arms withdraws the shoulder-blades from the ribs and exposes the latter to the greatest extent.

Fig. 4 is intended to explain the position in which lateral curvature and rotation are most easily recognized.

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The true pathology, therefore, of rotary-lateral curvature of the spine is abnormal muscular contraction.

This contraction produces at least two curves, which occur most commonly in the lumbar and dorsal regions. The secondary curve, whichever it may be, is called compensatory.

The deviations, which occur in the framework of the body, will produce certain changes in the outline of the figure, such as an asymmetry of the two halves of the body, alteration in the position of the shoulders and scapulae, displacement of the trunk over the pelvis, and an apparent inequality of the hips.

These, and other slight abnormal variations of the body are usually the first things noticed and are regarded by the observer as original conditions rather than the results of underlying causes.

Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 show how the pairs of ribs come into profile as the patient rises from the bent posture, any rotation being thus easily detected with great delicacy.

Page 7 front

“Spinal distortion is one of the ordinary consequences of lacing. No one who laces habitually can have a straight or strong back. The muscles being unbalanced become flabby or contracted, unable to support the trunk of the body erect, and a curvature, usually a double curvature, of the spine is the consequence.”

Dr. Russell Thacher Trall, M.D. (c. 1850)

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Usually the Problem of Dress is to bring into relief one or two fine points, and conceal the many deficiencies.

{That woman who acknowledges to herself her own deficiencies, and bases her dress upon her finest points, will make the most pleasing impression.}

The reason that a larger number of girls appear to be affected by this deformity, is because attention is more frequently drawn to *asymmetry of the figure in girls from the esthetic standpoint* and consequently they are brought more often to the notice of physicians and teachers of physical education for correction.

Page 8 front

“A corset may be considered elementary as consisting of two planes, an anterior and posterior, which are approximated by the action of laces.

Considering the corset as a part of the figure of a woman, and constructed to follow as closely as possible that mechanical features of the human frame, it will be apparent that there must be a rigid, intact portion corresponding to the practically immovable dorsal spine, which gives support to all the structures in front through muscles, ligaments, and peritoneum attached to it.

Thus the dorsal portion of the corset must serve as the point from which the necessary support is given to the front of the garment.”

Fisk Wood, 1910

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Braces are worn sometimes but are not advisable in the majority of cases. The individual sinks into the brace and relies on it to do the work of the muscles, which consequently become weakened and still less able to hold the body upright. If a brace is worn it should be merely supplementary to the gymnastic treatment and be used only at such times as it is probably that poor positions will be assumed, as in school.

Braces are difficult of adjustment and many of the ready made ones sold in stores and advertised in glowing terms, do more harm than good and should be avoided. They may correct one fault while producing another which is as bad, if not worse than the first. Many of them cause lordosis. In case a brace is thought necessary it should be made to individual measurement by an expert, preferably under the direction of an orthopaedic surgeon.

Fig. 7

Female figure with corset to alleviate visceroptosis – a condition brought about by the loss of muscular tone, particularly of the abdominal muscles.

Page 9 Sheer

Observe, first, the beautiful curves of the chest and spine of the perfect form, as viewed sidewise at *Fig. 8*, and then compare it with the distorted ones at *Fig. 9*.

In the perfect form, at *Fig. 8*, it is seen that the diaphragm curves, and the heart rests on it, while the stomach is supported by the intestines below it.

{Notice also the beautiful curve of the chest and spine.}

Fisk Wood, 1910

Page 10 front

[Fig. 8 – 9 images]

embroidered

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To understand the internal as well as external evils will be needful to notice in the two drawings the *packing* of the internal organs.

Compare the two figures with both the perpendicular and the horizontal lines, and notice the difference. *The distortion is caused by debility and tight dresses.*

The evils that result will now be indicated.

In the distorted form it is seen that the diaphragm has sunk to a nearly straight line, so that the heart is unsupported, while the stomach has lost its support by the falling of the abdominal viscera.

Fig. 9 is a distorted form, in which the internal organs have sunk downward;

h is the heart,

d is the diaphragm,

S the stomach.

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For, the moment the pelvis changes in level, the direction in which the spine rises from it is altered, and the whole body above the pelvis is tilted into an unnatural direction, while the centre of gravity of the body is thrown into a false position with respect to the legs. The spine immediately commences to attempt to bring the centre of gravity of the body into a truer position, and in order to do this, it becomes curved, and the body in consequence deformed.

Fig. 10 shows the restituent lateral curve instantly formed by causing the natural body to stand on an uneven surface, a block having been placed beneath one foot.

The curve in the spine thus formed is due to an extrinsic cause.

back

The patient should have her boots removed, the body should be bared as low as the great trochanters... The floor on which she stands should be level, the heels should be together, and the legs straight, care be taken that the knees are not bent; she should then be instructed to hold herself loosely upright, but without any stiffness or constraint, and to let the arms hang freely at her side.

Fig. 11 is a diagram to show the position in which an examination for musculo-nervous curvature should be made, and there are indicated by transverse lines those parts that should be recognized as level in the true figure, namely, the iliac crests, the folds of the buttock, the lower angles of the scapulæ, and the upper borders of the shoulders.

Page 12 front

Sheldon Method of Curing Spinal Curvature and Kindred Ailments
(by Philo Burke MFG)

Burke invented a spinal appliance which enabled him to assume and maintain a natural, upright position.

It gives even, continuous, comfortable, durable, pliable support, and capable of easy and accurate adjustment.

It is the only safe and humane appliance to place on a young child, because its elasticity and ease of adjustment permit full growth and development.

Causes no inconvenience in working or exercising, and is not noticeable under clothing.

With it is furnished a marvelous absorbent application which takes all pain and soreness out of the back, makes the stiffened muscles relax and assists in the straightening of the spine.

By this remarkably successful method, you can be treated and cured in your home of any form of spinal trouble.

Inside back brace

Such parts as are in contact with the body are softly padded.

The lower or pelvic straps are to be tightly adjusted to form a sound basis of support.

back

Corsets do cause that distressing, that once rare, but now common complaint, *Distortion of the Spine.*

It is uncommon now to see a girl perfectly straight, as it was to see one crooked before this appendage to female dress was revised...

Nothing contributes more to form a crooked spine, than a torpid, or inactive state of the muscles connected to it.

Page 13 front

These pernicious customs of dress have been carried... by the miserable fashion-plates in our literature, that set forth the distortions of deformity and disease as models of taste and fashion.

... one half of the body is subjected to extreme changes from heat to cold, while the other portion is compressed by tight girding, heated by accumulated garments, pressed downward by whalebones, and by heavy skirts resting over the most delicate organs.

Catherine E. Beecher, 1856

Fig. 12

The addition to these parts of lacings which envelope the trunk, and of such accessory steel bands as may be required in particular cases to give them special direction and power to these lacing pieces constitutes this appliance as less active but more general in its action on the body.

back

The only test for girl's clothing, as to tightness, should be, "*Can you take a good, full breath, and not feel your clothes?*" If so, they are loose enough; if not, let them out, and keep on letting them out till you can. Nor is there the slightest need that this kind of dressing involve "dowdiness," or "slouchiness," a characteristic abhorrent to every true woman.

Anna C. Brackett, 1874

Fig. 13

Holds the pelvis. Each shoulder has a shoulder-plate dedicated to it for control, and the arm-pieces are further stayed by lateral uprights (if necessary) passing from them to the pelvic springs.

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Wherever any portion of the body is compressed by tight clothing the blood can not run freely into the muscles of that part. The consequence is, these muscles are reduced in size and strength.

The muscles that sustain the spine should especially be protected from any such pressure. Tight articles of dress around the neck, or legs, or arms, interfere, with the full health and strength of the muscles.

This shows the reason of the eighth rule; *Take care that the muscles, especially those of the trunk, be not weakened by any kind of tight dress.*

Catherine E. Beecher, 1856

Fig. 14 is an appliance for maintaining the shape of the trunk, regulating at the same time the level of the hips and shoulders, and relieving the spine of its burden.

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Fig. 14 exhibits a pair of well fitted and stiffened stays, to which are attached lateral uprights, which, while securing a hold on both the arms and hips, have slid in the course of their upright portions, and by this means can be made to regulate the distance and relationship between the arms and hips, in addition to transferring the weight of the body directly to the hips, and so relieving the spine of a large portion of its burden. The stays per se are, of course, purely passive; it is the uprights which constitute an alternative element in the whole arrangement.

This shows the folly of attempting to cure crookedness or round shoulders by corsets or bracers.

Any thing that compresses the muscles weakens them.

The grand remedy for any such deformities, is a proper training of the muscles in pure air.

Catherine E. Beecher, 1856

Page 15 front

Every woman expresses her character in her dress; and where “*slouchiness*” exists, it means something more than comfortable dressing. It means a lack of neatness and order, a want in the ideas of suitability. It is sure to manifest itself in other ways, and will not be prevented by dresses never so tightly fitting.

Anna C. Brackett, 1874

When the lateral curve has only just shown itself then the apparatus will be of the form shown in *Fig. 15*, and, as will be observed identical with that used in the second stage, but with the addition of a special plate to press on the rotated ribs. This plate is fastened to the backboards of the appliance by a spring pedicle, and it is this spring pedicle which gives to the plate its spiral direction and power.

back

It will be seen, then, since the parts of the patient’s body and the parts of the appliance have tendencies in different directions, that when the appliance is adapted to the body of the patient there will be a constant battle between the two and antagonism which, although gentle, can, if properly directed, be made to terminate in favour of the appliance, which will gradually and gently force the body into its proper shape.

When the lateral curve is greater still there is a more potent appliance that can be used, which although carrying out in a similar way the two great principles of buoying and of actively rotating the trunk, differs entirely in structure from the previous appliances.

Page 16 Sheer

Fig. 16 represents the brace on the body, and will be seen to consist of a light metal band taking a base hold around the pelvis, and kept securely in that position by a gusseted webbing band, which is accurately moulded to the hips.

The active agent itself is a coiled spring. It arises on the one side of the front of the steel pelvic band opposite the anterior iliac spinous processes, and thus, as it were, indirectly from the body pelvis itself; it passes round the back of the body to the prominent ribs of the other side, and terminates in a plate which overlies these ribs and distributes its force to them in a such a combined spiral, lateral, and elevating manner as has previously been shown to be requisite.

When the appliance is in *in situ* on the body, the spring fits with almost close accuracy, and its powerful force is comfortably exerted in directing the ribs in the directions already mentioned.

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It may be that the inconvenience of wearing such a brace is too great in a disease which carries with it no menace to the patient’s life and but little to her health and comeliness.

It might be argued but not too seriously, that lateral curvature of the spine is an attractive feature, falling in the same category as a light cast or squint, which has been thought to add piquancy to the beauty of a pretty face.

It cannot be denied that the typical sigmoid curvature reproduces the technical curved line of beauty, or that the accompanying rotation carries with it an expression of serpentine or sinuous grace.

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External Indications of the Mind.

External indications as to mind may be derived from figure, from gait, and from dress.

As to figure, a certain symmetry or disproportion of parts (*either of which depends*

immediately upon the locomotive system) —or a certain softness or hardness of form (*which belongs exclusively to the vital system*) —or a certain delicacy or coarseness of outline (*which belongs exclusively to the mental system*) —these reciprocally denote a locomotive symmetry or disproportion—or a vital softness or hardness—or a mental delicacy *or coarseness*, which will be found also indicated by the features of the face.

Page 18 front
(*inside back cover*)

Whilst discouraging the employment of *force*, it is not intended to discountenance the judicious use of *support* in cases where the deformity is due to muscular weakness, or ligamentous relaxation; indeed, in most cases the greatest comfort and permanent benefit result from the adoption of a properly adjusted spinal support.

Especially in this the case in the young, for during the period of adolescence the recuperative powers are so active, and the frame so yielding to external influences, that the restoration of perfect symmetry may be hoped for even in bad cases of spinal deformity.

Henry Heather Bigg, 1875

Book Cover
outside back
Embroidered

...but it also the rarest.

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