

**HANDBOOK OF SCHOOL-GYMNASTICS
OF THE SWEDISH SYSTEM. WITH ONE
HUNDRED CONSECUTIVE TABLES OF
EXERCISES AND APPENDIX OF
CLASSIFIED LISTS OF MOVEMENTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649005161

Handbook of school-gymnastics of the Swedish system. With one hundred consecutive tables of exercises and appendix of classified lists of movements by Nils Posse

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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Books by Baron Nils Posse

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NEW REVISED EDITION

BOSTON:
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.

417485

GV
467
P75
1902

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HANDBOOK OF SCHOOL-GYMNASTICS, SWEDISH SYSTEM.

Norwood Press:
Barwick & Smith, Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

PREFACE

THE history of Swedish gymnastics in America may be said to have begun with the work of Dr. George H. Taylor, who, after studying in Sweden, introduced the "movement cure" into this country, and who for years was the only American writer on this subject. He was soon followed by stray medical gymnasts who located in the larger cities of the East. Yet their work seems to have been confined to a small area, for as late as seven years ago very little was known of medical gymnastics even among physicians; and as for the educational branch, no one seemed to have heard of it. The author of this book was surprised to find his profession looked upon as one of the lowest. That a masseur or gymnast needed to possess not only a good general education, but a professional one as well, was known to but few. During the last five years, however, gymnastics have been slowly, but surely, advancing towards a place among the sciences, and it will not be long before we shall begin to see a marked change in the national characteristics.

In 1887 the author published a little pamphlet entitled "Medical Gymnastics," which chanced to fall into the hands of a noted philanthropist. Her attention having been thus called to the subject, in 1888

she secured the services of the author to demonstrate Swedish gymnastics to a class of teachers from the Boston public schools; and the experiment proved so successful that another class composed of masters of Boston schools was placed under the same instruction, and from this beginning was developed a school of gymnastics, of which the author became director. The next year one hundred teachers were given free instruction in this school, the masters' class was continued, and various practice classes were formed. Besides being the sole instructor for all these classes, the author was given the work of introducing Swedish gymnastics into the Boston Normal School, where daily all the pupils came under his instruction. Moreover, during all this time the author was giving various public lectures on the subject, and was called before the school committee of Boston to explain the system, and present arguments in its favor. After much discussion, and notwithstanding great opposition, Swedish gymnastics became officially authorized in the Boston schools in June, 1890; but it is to be remembered that in many of the schools the system had already been taught for over a year. Previous to this start in Boston, attempts had been made by untrained teachers in one or two other cities to bring the system to the front, but no prominence had been given to their efforts.

With this began a new era, and now a curious thing occurs. Everybody attempts teaching Swedish gymnastics, and one has only to be a Scandinavian to be considered competent to teach this subject. That the system has survived in this country under such cir-

circumstances stands greatly to its credit. We have witnessed the strange spectacle of city after city adopting the system, and (with one or two exceptions) securing poorly trained teachers to introduce it, and afterwards wondering at the bad results attained. The arrogance of some teachers has even gone so far that they deny all authority but their own. Even the word of the late Prof. Hj. Ling (the son of P. H. Ling), whom the Swedes rank foremost, has no weight with them, and the laws of the human body they regard as being of no consequence whatever.

Since severing his connection with the Boston School of Gymnastics, the author has been enabled to propagate the system on a larger scale from a school of his own; and, at the urgent solicitation of his pupils, has decided to publish what he had been saving for riper times, — a manual which is the result of five years' work, and a much longer period of investigation.

The author objects most sincerely to making teachers into machines, and desires that this book be merely a guide for those who are already familiar with the subject, and who can couple their individuality to that of another, and who are teachers, not imitators. The tables have been arranged so as to suit all the conditions of a school; and with the progressive lists at the end of the book, a teacher of gymnastics can easily expand the tables so as to make them correspond to any conditions under which he is teaching. Those who desire to learn more about the rationale of the system are referred to "The Swedish System of Educational Gymnastics" (published by Lee & Shepard),

and "The Scientific Aspect of Swedish Gymnastics" (Posse Gymnasium, Boston), by the same author.

Although this book is in a measure a new departure, it is based upon the writings of Hj. Ling (who was professor of educational gymnastics at the R. G. C. I. when the author took his first year's course there) and upon the teaching of the present faculty of the Royal Gym. Cent. Inst. of Stockholm, the only recognized authorities on this subject.

THE AUTHOR.

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