

AESTHETICAL SANITATION

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Æsthetical sanitation by William White

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WILLIAM WHITE

**AESTHETICAL
SANITATION**

ÆSTHETICAL SANITATION.

BY

WILLIAM WHITE,

FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES,
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS,
MEMBER OF THE SANITARY INSTITUTE.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever :
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness."—*Keats.*

FOR REVIEW,

With The Publisher's Compliments.

SHOULD THIS WORK BE REVIEWED, A
COPY OF THE NOTICE WILL MUCH OBLIGE

EDWARD STANFORD,

55, CHARING CROSS, LONDON, S.W.

EDWARD STANFORD, 55, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

1883.

151.

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706.

TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
PRINCESS MARY ADELAIDE DUCHESS OF TECK
Is Dedicated,

WITH SPECIAL AND GRACIOUS PERMISSION,
THIS EARNEST ENDEAVOUR
TO PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF DOMESTIC WEAL,
AND OF NATIONAL HEALTH,
IN THEIR INTIMATE ASSOCIATION WITH ACADEMIC ART,
BY H.R.H.'S LOYAL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT

WILLIAM WHITE.

P R E F A C E.

THESE papers, which have now received a few revisions and additions, were contributed in the first instance to the 'British Architect' in a series called "Friends in Council," a series which was initiated by the editor for the purpose of affording to architects a free and friendly interchange of opinion on the very many varying matters which relate to art, and other professional subjects. It has been suggested that I should reprint and publish them in a form suitable for general circulation. I cannot do this without gratefully acknowledging the compliment paid by that journal to my treatment of the subject, and at the same time expressing a hope that the friends of Education, of Art, and of Sanitation, will not fail to give to the whole question the consideration which its importance deserves, and indeed demands, at the hands of all who can lay any claim to intelligence or refinement.

W. W.

30A, WIMPOLE STREET, W.

Art's highest aim—
The human form divine.

New adage.

ÆSTHETICAL SANITATION.

No. I.

“ What’s a fine person or a beauteous face,
Unless deportment gives them decent grace ?
Blest with all other requisites to please,
Some want the striking grace of ease ;
The curious eye their awkward movement tires,
They seem like puppets let about by wires.”

Churchill.

THE absorbing topics of the present day are High Art and Sanitation. Sinks and sewage, light and air, colour and form, tender tones and graceful bends, are freely discussed, without a thought that there may be a branch of sanitation which has such intimate relations with high art that the one is naturally and materially dependent on the other for its successful development. The consideration of this subject may be of service to “friends,” whilst its discussion will be specially suited to the columns of a journal which has devoted so much energy and ability to the cognate subject of costume in relation to the drama. The human form divine has been

rightly regarded as the highest subject of high art; and by many sensible persons, such as are not the mere dupes of whimsey or of fashion, pinched waists and cramped toes are, perhaps, to some extent recognised as incompatible with its healthy expansion, or with its perfect expression. But any one walking for a short distance behind the outpourings of a morning suburban train may see how frightful is the following which folly and fashion obtain in these respects.

The bearing of health on true beauty, and of true beauty upon health, has not met with the recognition which, in these days of art and science, its investigation might be supposed to deserve. My attention has been the more drawn to this lately from facts which have fallen under my observation, through members of my own family having taken up the scientific study of Ling's system of gymnastics, and from the great benefit which they have derived, and are enabled to impart to others by their use.

Figure, and carriage or gait, may be said to comprise all that upon which beauty in form and in grace depends, in so far as these are related to physical form and development. It is curious to see their subversion by ignorance and bad

taste. A waspish figure, unlike a waspish disposition, is considered "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." Even the picturesque quaintness of the Mediæval, or the flowing grace of the ancient Greek costume, when imitated now, cannot be made to adorn the natural form, but the natural form must first be reduced to a state of artificial beauty by tight bodices and other careful contrivances, to keep the whole in place, lest the falling folds, the tucks or pleats, should be displaced or creased. The delicate form beneath has to be transformed into a dummy before the genuine ware can be set forth to due advantage. An artistic stoop, a Grecian bend, or as some would say, an æsthetic attitude, a gait which is sufficiently marked or peculiar to be the reverse of natural, passes for distinguished, or stylish bearing. And men who ought to know better foster the unreality.

The injuries arising from ill-shaped, or tight, or high-heeled boots and shoes, are very serious to the figure and gait, but still more so to the general health, through the manner in which the distortion of the foot, and of its position, acts upon the muscles of the hips and spine.

Most of the cases in the Orthopædic hospitals