

The Fun of Getting Thin

Samuel G. Blythe

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E-text prepared by Al Haines

THE FUN OF GETTING THIN

How To Be Happy and Reduce the Waist Line

by

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THE FUN OF GETTING THIN

CHAPTER I. FAT

A fat man is a joke; and a fat woman is two jokes—one on herself and the other on her husband. Half the comedy in the world is predicated on the paunch. At that, the human race is divided into but two classes—fat people who are trying to get thin and thin people who are trying to get fat.

Fat, the doctors say, is fatal. I move to amend by striking out the last two letters of the indictment. Fat is fat. It isn't any more fatal to be reasonably fat than to be reasonably thin, but it's a darned sight more uncomfortable. So far as being unreasonably thin or unreasonably fat is concerned, I suppose the thin person has the long end of it. I never was thin, so I don't know. However, I have been fat—notice that "have been"? And if there is any phase of human enjoyment, any part of life, any occupation, avocation, divertimento, pleasure or pain where the fat man has the better of it in any regard, I failed to discover it in the twenty years during which I looked like the rear end of a hack and had all the bodily characteristics of a bale of hay.

When you come to examine into the actuating motives for any line of human endeavor you will find that vanity figures about ninety per cent, directly or indirectly, in the assay. The personal equation is the ruling equation. Women want to be thinner because they will look better—and so do men. Likewise, women want to

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be plumper because they will look better—and so do men. This holds up to forty years. After that it doesn't make much difference whether either men or women look any better than they have been looking, so far as the great end and aim of all life is concerned. Consequently fat men and fat women after forty want to be thinner for reasons of health and comfort, or quit and resign themselves to their further years of obesity.

Now I am over forty. Hence my experiments in reduction may be taken at this time as grounded on a desire for comfort—not that I did not make many campaigns against my fat before I was forty. I fought it now and then, but always retreated before I won a victory. This time, instead of skirmishing valiantly for a space and then being ignominiously and fatly routed by the powerful forces of food and drink, I hung stolidly to the line of my original attack, harassed the enemy by a constant and deadly fire—and one morning discovered I had the foe on the run.

It always makes me laugh to hear people talk about losing flesh—unless, of course, the decrease in weight is due to illness. No healthy person, predisposed to fat, ever lost any flesh. If that person gets rid of any weight, or girth, or fat, it isn't lost—it is fought off, beaten off. The victim struggles with it, goes to the mat with it, and does not debonairly drop it. He eliminates it with stern effort and much travail of the spirit. It is a job of work, a grueling combat to the finish, a task that appalls and usually repels.

The theory of taking off fat is the simplest theory in the world. It is announced, in four words: Stop eating and drinking. The practice of fat reduction is the most difficult thing in the world. Its difficulties are comprehended in two words: You cannot. The flesh is willing, but the spirit is weak. The success of the undertaking lies in the triumph of the will over the appetite. There's a lovely line of cant for you! Triumph of the will over the appetite. It sounds like the preaching of a professional food faddist, who tells the people they eat too much and then slips away and wolfs down four pounds of beefsteak at a sitting. However, I suppose it is necessary to say this once in a dissertation like this—and it is said.

In writing about this successful experiment of mine in reducing weight I have no theories to advance except one, and no instructions to give. I don't know whether my method would take an ounce off any other person in the world, and I don't care. I only know it took more than fifty pounds off me. I am not advancing any argument, medicinal or otherwise, for my plan. I never talked to a doctor about it, and never shall. If there are fat men and fat women who are fat for the same reasons I was fat I suppose they can get thin the way I got thin. If they are fat for other reasons I suppose they cannot. I don't know about either proposition.

I have great respect for doctors—so much respect, in fact, that I keep diligently away from them. I know the preliminaries of their game and can take a dose of medicine myself as skillfully as they can administer it. Also, I know when I have a fever, and have a working knowledge of how my heart should beat and my other bodily functions be performed. I have frequently found that a prescription, unintelligibly written but looking very wise, is highly efficacious when folded carefully and put in the pocketbook instead of being deposited with a druggist. I suppose that comes from a sort of hereditary faith in amulets. No doubt the method would be even more efficacious if the prescription were tied on a string and hung around the neck. I shall try that some time when my wife lugs in a doctor on me.

Still, doctors are interesting as a class. After you get beyond the let-me-feel-your-pulse-and-see-your-tongue preliminaries they are versatile and ingenious. Almost always, after you tell them what is the matter with you, they will know—not every time, but frequently. Also, they will take any sort of a chance with you in the interest of science. However, they generally send out for a specialist when they are ill themselves. When you come to think of it that is but natural. Almost any man, whether professional or not, will take a chance with somebody else that he wouldn't quite go through with on himself. Besides, doctors treat comparative strangers for the most part, and the interests of science are to be conserved.

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Almost any doctor can tell you how to get thin. To be sure, no doctor will tell you to do the same things any other doctor prescribes, but it all simmers down to the same thing: Cut out the starchy foods and sweets, and take exercise. Also: Don't drink alcohol. The variations that can be played on this simple theme by a skillful doctor are endless. When a real specialist in fat reduction gets hold of you—a real, earnest reducer—he can contrive a diet that would make a living skeleton thin—and likewise put him in his little grave. I have had diets handed to me that would starve a humming-bird, and diets that would put flesh on a bronze statue; and all to the same end—reduction. Science has been monkeying with nourishment for the past ten or fifteen years to the exclusion of many other branches of research; and about all that has happened to the nourishment is the large elimination of nutriment from it.

CHAPTER II. THE SO-CALLED CURES

Broadly speaking, the methods of fat reduction most in vogue are divided into four classes—mechanical, physical, medicinal and dietary. The first two are not worth considering by a man who has anything else to do. I do not doubt that a man who could devote his whole time to the work could, by means of some of the appliances offered—from the apparatus in a gymnasium to rubber shirts, get off fat—nor do I doubt the efficacy of exercise and its accompaniments in the way of sweating and baths and all that; but when a person has a living to make these methods are useless, not through any demerit of their own but because the man who is fat hasn't the time or opportunity and, more than all, soon fails in the inclination to use them.

If you can tell me anything more ghastly than taking a system of canned exercises in the morning or at night in one's bedroom or bathroom, or elsewhere, with no other incentive than some physical gain that, when you come to sum it up, is largely fictitious in value—or comes inevitably to be thought so—I would like to have you step forward and name it. I have been all through that phase of it, and I know; and I also know by heart the patter of the persons who recommend it. Further, I know the person round the forties doesn't live who enjoys this sort of thing—no matter what he says about it; and without enjoyment exercise is of no use or worse than useless. It can be done, of course; and lumps of muscle can be stuck on almost any part of the body—but what's the use to the person who has to make a living? Then, too, I am speaking now of methods that can be used by men and women who are no longer young. A young man can and will do stunts in physical culture that an older man cannot do, either satisfactorily or comfortably.

So far as the medicinal or drug method of fat reduction is concerned, any fat man or woman who takes drugs to reduce flesh, or to help, deserves all that he or she will get—and that will be plenty. There's no need of saying anything further on that subject. Then there remains the dietary method—the old familiar friend, diet. Starting with William Banting—maybe it didn't start with William, but before him—but, starting with Bill for present purposes, there have been more systems of diet invented and promulgated than there have been systems of religion—and that means about one in every hundred has evolved a system.

You can get them of all sorts and all sure to do the work, ranging from an exclusive diet of beefsteak and spinach to desiccated hay and creamed alfalfa. There are monodiets, duodiets, vegetable diets, fruit diets, nut diets—all kinds of diets—each guaranteed to take off flesh if you have too much or to put it on if you have too little. Basically, however, the antiflesh diets are about the same. You are told to cut out everything you want to eat and exist on triply toasted bread and the white meat of a chicken, or string beans and sawdust, or any other combination the sharps say will not produce fat, but will sustain life in a lingering form. They surround these diet talks and presentments with a lot of frills about proteins and calories and all that sort of guff, and make it as difficult as possible. Now, mark you, I am not saying diet—scientific diet—is not a good thing, a magnificent step forward in the progress of this world; but I am saying that the average fat-reducing diet is impossible to any but a man or woman of the ultimate will-power, and is a hardship that need not be endured. I have tried these diets, and I know! They may help reduce flesh, but they are not easy to follow and they do not contain things that any person wants to eat or is accustomed to eat, or will eat, to the exclusion of

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things that person does want to eat and will eat. It can be done. One of these diets can be followed if the will—power is there, and the flesh will come off; but the method does not conduce to the best results—the physical force is reduced, and there is a much easier way.

I have one of these diet lists before me now from the highest—priced flesh—reducing specialist in the world, who claims to have taken mountains of flesh off mountainous men. In the beginning, for example, it says: "You will understand, of course, that sugar is entirely debarred. Also, that fats, milk, cheese, cream, eggs, and so on, are cut off for the time being. Also that bread and farinaceous foods are all cut off. In place of bread or toast you must use gluten biscuits." For breakfast, in this dietary, one or two gluten biscuits are allowed and a cup of unsweetened coffee. Also, six ounces of lean grilled steak, chops or chicken, and any white fish—or the whites of two eggs.

This is about the layout for luncheon and dinner. It is all about as exciting and appetizing as that. The proposition is, of course, that you are not taking food which will make fat and you must, therefore, inevitably lose flesh. So far so good; but the difficulty is not in the system, but in the hardship of carrying it out. You can't have anything to eat that you want to eat. You torture yourself for a space and lose some flesh; then when you do go back to your normal method of eating the flesh comes galloping back—and there you are! It is the same with exercise. You can take off fat by exercise; but, once you begin, you are doomed to everlasting exercise, for the minute you stop back comes the fat—and more of it than you had before you began to reduce.

It is a tough game, anyway you play it, if you are disposed to be fat. No man living, who isn't a freak, can persist always in one diet. Nor can any man who has anything else on his mind be always exercising—especially after he has reached forty years of age, when there are so many better things to do and time is valuable, and the real idea of how to live has just begun to percolate. Also, until one is forty, if reasonably healthy, flesh is a joke, and not so much of a burden as it becomes later. I haven't a thing in the world against any or all of these methods. I have tried most of them and know most of them are bogus; but I am not trying to dissuade any person from taking off fat in any way that suits any individual fancy or the fancy of any reducer into whose hands the victim may have fallen. If you have a good method go to it—and more power to you!

My idea is this: I am setting down here a record of my own experiences, and that is all. Every person who does not like what I have to say is cheerfully advised to lump it. Any person who is as fat as I was and who wants to get thinner is at liberty to follow my method. If circumstances are similar results will be similar. If not there will be no results. I am not advising or urging or putting forth any propaganda. Here is what happened. It may suit you or it may not. Either way I am indifferent. In the words of the coon song: "I've got mine!"

I hope I make myself clear. I have no mission or message or any flubdub of that kind. I am not one of those boys who urge you to do this for your own good. I have read a ton of literature put out by persons who found something that agreed with them and immediately started out to reform the world along that line. Your reformer, anyhow, is a person who wants all the rest of the world to do as he wants the rest of the world to do, not as the rest of the world wants to do. And the reason reformers get past so numerously is because our society is so constituted that we spend every one of our brief years doing what other people want us to do and tell us to do, and never do anything we ourselves want to do. Once I got seventeen pounds of books telling that the only way to cure everything was to fast. I knew a man who tried that. The results were grand. He fasted a long time and cured himself of what ailed him. Only, unfortunately, just before the last vestige of disease was removed the fasting killed him. I contend that man might just as well have died of what ailed him originally as to cure that disease and die of the cure. It seems to me it is as broad as it is long.

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However, have at this fat-reduction process of mine! You must bear with a few personal reminiscences. I was a big, husky brute of a boy—thick-chested, broad-shouldered, country-bred and with an appetite that knew no bounds. After I got going at my business, when I was twenty-five or so, I was pinned down to a desk for about ten years. I worked hard in a most exacting place. I was so healthy it hurt. I had just as much appetite for food as I had ever had; but I didn't get a chance to bat around as I had been accustomed to do and burn up that food. The result was inevitable. I began to get fat. I had a big chest—forty-six inches—and the fat filled in underneath. That big chest, combined with my broad shoulders, concealed the size of my paunch, and I didn't realize I was accumulating that paunch until it was soldered, riveted, lashed, glued, nailed and otherwise fastened to me.

When I got my growth I weighed about one hundred and eighty-five pounds and was a pretty formidable physical proposition. When I woke up to the fact that I was getting fat I found I weighed two hundred and twenty pounds. That extra thirty-five pounds was mostly fat—excess baggage. Still, it didn't bother me any. I had the strength to tote it round and had the shoulders and the chest to conceal it. I didn't show any bay window, as most fat men do. As they used to say: "You're big all over. You carry it all right."

All this time I was eating three or four times a day and eating everything that came my way. Also, I drank some—not excessively, but some whisky and some beer, and occasionally some wine and cocktails—about the average amount of drinking the average man does. I thought I was getting too fat, and I wrestled with a bicycle all one summer, taking long rides and plugging round a good deal. I did some centuries, but continued eating like a horse—naturally because of the outdoor exercise—and drank a good deal of beer. As will be seen, all the fat I had was legitimate enough. I put it on myself. There was no hereditary nonsense about it. I was responsible for every ounce of it. The net result of that summer's bicycle campaign was a gain of five pounds in weight. I was harder—but I was fatter, too.

When I was thirty-five I began to experiment. I then weighed two hundred and twenty-five pounds. I went to the canned-exercise, the physical-torture professor, the diet, the salts, and all the rest of it, taking off a few pounds but putting it all back again—and more—as soon as I stopped.

These attempts numbered about two a year. Between times I ate as I wanted to and drank as I pleased. Things ran along until the first of January, 1911. I knew I was getting fatter, for my tailor told me so and my belts and old clothes all proved it. Still, I didn't bother much. I thought I was lingering round about two hundred and thirty-five—too much, of course; but I got away with it pretty well, except in hot weather and when I went up in the high mountains, and I was reasonably content. I was fat, all right. My waist was only two inches smaller than my chest and that meant my waist was forty-four inches in girth. As a matter of fact, being scant five feet ten and a half, I was bigger than a house; but I deluded myself with that stuff about my broad shoulders and my deep chest, and thought it didn't show. It did show, of course. I was a fat man—a big fat man—carrying forty pounds or more of excess weight.

I had dieted and quit; exercised and quit; gone on the waterwagon and fallen off; had fussed round a good deal, spending a lot of money in the attempt, and I was getting fatter all the time. I hated to admit that fact. I tried to fool myself into the conviction that I wasn't getting any larger—and all the time I knew I was. I even went so far as to stop getting on the scales; and when anybody—as almost everybody did—said, "Why, you're getting bigger, ain't you?" I always replied: "No, I think not. I stick along about two hundred and thirty-five pounds."

A year ago last summer I went up into the mountains, where I usually go for my fun. I had noticed a shortness of breath and a wheeziness in previous summers, and had felt my heart pounding pretty hard; but that summer I noticed these things acutely. I couldn't get any air to breathe. My heart pounded like a pneumatic riveter. Any little exercise tired me; and when in the lowlands in hot weather I was the perspiring marvel and the most uncomfortable as well as the sloppiest person you ever saw. It was fierce!

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I was doing a good deal of walking in those days—had to burn up the fuel I was taking into my body. Also, I noticed it was mighty hard to keep awake after dinner unless I got out into the air and kept moving. I felt well enough and the doctors said I was organically all right. I kept informed on those points—but I was fat! Also, though I lied to myself, I knew I was getting fatter.

CHAPTER III. FACING THE TISSUE

On New Year's Day, 1911, I weighed myself. I don't know why, for I hadn't been on a scale for two or three years. I set the weight at two hundred and thirty-five and it bounded up like a rubber ball; so I shoved it along to two hundred and forty and it still stayed up in the air. When I got a balance I found I weighed two hundred and forty-seven pounds. I was amazed! Also, I was scared; for it instantly occurred to me that if I had gone up to two hundred and forty-seven in two or three years from two hundred and thirty-five I should keep on going up if my manner of living didn't change—and that presently I should weigh three hundred!

That two hundred and forty-seven pounds was a facer. I was forced to admit to myself that I was fat, disgustingly fat—too fat; and that I should get fatter! So I sat down and looked the situation in the eye. I recounted all my former efforts to get thin and discarded them one by one. I knew myself, and knew the ordinary diet proposition and the ordinary exercise proposition were not for me. I knew I was wheezy and that my heart was getting choked with fat; that there were great folds of it on me, and that it was up to me to get rid of it or quit and wait for the inevitable end. If it kept on I knew I should blow up some fine day. Besides, I was uric-acidy, rheumatic and stertorous and clumsy. I had about fifty or sixty pounds of poisonous junk wrapped round me, and I knew I should suffer for it in the end, though I didn't feel it much and carried it with a fair assumption of lightness.

I was not an amateur at the game. I had been through the mill. I spent several days in going over the whole matter. It was reasonably simple, too, and needn't have taken so much of my time; but I was protecting myself, you see, gold-bricking myself—trying to find a way out that would not deprive me of things I liked to do, of pleasures I wanted to enjoy. It was pure selfishness that dominated me and made me do so much figuring on a proposition I knew was contained in a sentence; but I did fight to hang on to the old way of living.

After each session of false logic and selfish hypothesis I invariably came back to the same proposition, which is the only proposition—and that was: What makes fat? Food and drink. How can you reduce fat? By reducing the amount of food and drink—that is all there is or was to it. The only way to get rid of the effects of overeating and overdrinking is to stop overeating and overdrinking.

I went over my food habit. I was accustomed to eating a big hired-man's breakfast—fruit, coffee, eggs, waffles, hot bread, sausage, anything that came along; and I heaved in a lot of it—not a little—a lot! I didn't eat so much at luncheon, but I ate plenty; and at night I simply cleaned up the table. I wasn't so strong on sweets and pastry, because I usually drank a few highballs during the day, and highballs and cocktails and sweets do not go well together—that is, the man who takes alcohol into his system usually does not care for sweets. Beer was one of my long suits too—Pilsner beer. I did like that!

I looked this food habit squarely in the face. I impaled the drink habit with my glittering eye. I knew I was eating about sixty per cent more than I needed or could use, and that I was drinking a hundred per cent more. I knew that nothing makes fat but food and drink. I knew excess of food will make any animal fat and I saw I had been eating freely of the most fattening kinds of food. I knew beer and liquor were made of grain, and that grain is used to fatten steers and cows and pigs. I refused to adopt a diet like any of those unpalatable ones I had experimented with, but the remedy was as plain as the cause. It was simple enough if I had the nerve to go through with it.

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Inasmuch as an excess of food and drink make an excess of fat, it follows that the reduction in the amount of food will stop that fat-forming and give the body a chance to burn up the excess fat already formed. That was my conclusion. Mind you, I reached that conclusion before I made any of my arguments; but I didn't want to admit it as reasonable or logical, for I hated to give up the pleasures of the table and the sociability that came with the sort of drinking I did. I was trying to find a way out that would be easy and comfortable. And all the time I was getting fatter! The scales told me that.

This backing and filling and argument with myself lasted all through January and part of February. It took me six weeks to get myself into the frame of mind where I admitted the truth of my conclusion. I was no hero. I didn't want to do it. I loved it all too well. I was as rank a coward in the beginning as you ever saw! It appalled me to think of restricting myself in any way, for I liked the pleasures that I knew I must forego. However, when I got up to two hundred and fifty pounds I sat down and had it out with myself.

"Here!" I said to myself. "You big stuff, you now weigh two hundred and fifty pounds! In another year or two you will weigh two hundred and seventy-five pounds! You are uncomfortable and heavy on your feet, and you are gouty and wheezy; and it's a cinch you'll die in a few years if you keep on this way. You know all this fat is caused by an excess of food and drink, and you know it can be taken off by a reduction in those fatmakers. Are you going to stick round here so fat you are a joke, uncomfortable, miserable when it's hot, in your own way and in the way of everybody else, when, if you've got the will-power of a chickadee, you can get back to reasonable proportions and comfort merely by denying yourself things you do not need?"

All the old arguments obtruded. See what I should lose! Life would be a dull and dreary affair—a dun, dismal proposition. I admitted that. On the other hand, however, life would not be a wheezy, sweaty, choked-heart, uncomfortable proposition. I finally decided I would go to it. And I did.

My method may be utterly unscientific. I suppose it hasn't a scientific leg to stand on. Still, it did the business. And I maintain that results are what we are looking for. The end justifies the means. I didn't figure out a diet. I had a dozen of them at home that had cost me all the way from two dollars to two hundred and fifty dollars each. I didn't buy a system of exercise. I read no books and consulted no doctors. What I did was this: I cut down the amount of food I ate sixty per cent and I cut out alcohol altogether! I carried out my argument to its logical conclusion so far as it concerned myself. I didn't give a hoot whether it would help or hurt or concern any other person in the world. It was my body I was experimenting on, and I did what I dad-blamed pleased and asked no advice—nor took any.

Instead of a hot-bread—I have the greatest hot-bread artist in the world at my house, bar none!—waffle, sausage, kidney-stew, lamb-chop, fried-egg and so forth sort of breakfast, I cut that meal down to some fruit, a couple of pieces of dry, hard toast, two boiled eggs and coffee. I cut out the luncheon altogether. No more luncheon for me! I cut down my dinners to about forty per cent of what I had been eating. I diminished the quantity, but not the variety. I ate everything that came along, but I didn't eat so much or half so much. Instead of two slices of roast beef, for example, I ate only one small slice. Instead of two baked or browned potatoes, I ate only half of one. Instead of three or four slices of bread, I ate only one. I didn't deprive myself of a single thing I liked, but I cut the quantity away down. And I quit drinking alcohol absolutely.

What happened? This is what happened: Eating food is just as much a habit as breathing or any other physical function. I had got myself into the habit of eating large quantities of food. Also, I had accustomed my system to certain amounts of alcohol. I was organized on that basis—fatly and flabbily organized, to be sure, but organized just the same. Now, then, when I arbitrarily cut down the amount of food and drink for which my system was organized that entire system rose up in active revolt and yelled for what it had been accustomed to get. There wasn't a minute for more than three months when I wasn't hungry, actually hungry for food; when the sight of food did not excite me and when I did not have a physical longing and appetite for food; when my stomach did not seem to demand it and my palate howl for it. It was different with the drinking. I got over that

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desire rather promptly, but with a struggle, at that; but the food-yearn was there for weeks and weeks, and it was a fight—a bitter, bitter fight!

When I went to the table and saw the good things on it, and knew I intended only to eat small portions of them, especially of my favorite desserts and my beloved hot-bread, I simply had to grip the sides of my chair and use all the will-power I had to keep from reaching out and grabbing something and stuffing it into my mouth! My friends used to think it was all a joke. It was farther from being a joke than anything you ever heard about. It was a tragedy—a grim, relentless tragedy! It was acute physical suffering. My body cried out for that same amount of food I had been giving it all those years. I wanted to give it that same amount. I have had to leave the table time and time again to get hold of myself and go back to the smaller portions I had allotted to myself. I liked to eat, you know.

Nothing much happened for a few weeks, though the waistband of my trousers grew looser. Then a lot of excess baggage seemed to drop away all at once. I weighed myself and found I had taken off twenty-five pounds. Friends told me to quit—that I should overdo it. I laughed at them. I knew I was still twenty-five pounds too heavy and I was just getting into my stride. It is strange how men, and especially fat men, who haven't the nerve to reduce themselves, think a man must be sick if he takes off flesh. I knew I wasn't sick. Indeed, I was just beginning to get well.

By the end of three months I had taken off thirty-five pounds. It was coming off well, too. My face wasn't haggard or wrinkled. I looked fit. My eye was clear and my double chin had disappeared. Also, I had conquered my fight with my appetite. I had won out. I was satisfied with the smaller quantities of food and I felt better than I had in twenty years—stronger, fitter—and was better, mentally and physically. After that it was a cinch. I kept along, eating everything on the bill-of-fare, but in small quantities. I didn't vary my diet a bit, except for the eggs at breakfast. If I wanted pie I ate a small piece. If I wanted ice cream I ate a small dish. If I wanted pudding I ate some of that. I ate fat meat and lean meat and spaghetti, and everything else interdicted by the reduction dietists—only in small quantities! And I kept on getting smaller and smaller.

The fat came off from everywhere. I had been incased with it apparently. My waist decreased seven inches. A big layer of fat came off my chest and abdomen. My legs and arms grew smaller but harder. Even my fingers grew smaller. My excess of chin evaporated. And at the end of the fifth month I had taken off fifty-five pounds. I weighed then one hundred and ninety-five pounds, which is what I weigh today.

Every person, I take it, has a normal weight; and if that person gives his body a chance, and ill health does not intervene, the body will find that normal and stay there. I take it that my normal weight, on account of my big frame and bones, is about one hundred and ninety-five pounds, at the age of forty-three. At any rate, it has stayed at a hundred and ninety-five since the first of last July, and in that time I have loafed for two months and ridden on Pullman cars for two other months, and have not taken any exercise to speak of; but I have maintained my schedule of eating and I have not taken any alcohol. I figure I can stay where I am indefinitely on that program—and that is my program indefinitely.

There are certain economic phases of a campaign of this kind that should be mentioned. It is expensive. Not one item of clothing, save my hat, socks and shoes, which fitted me last January is of the slightest use to me now. I didn't get to cutting down clothes until I was sure I would stick. Since that time the tailors have had a picnic at my expense. My shirts were too big. Instead of wearing a seventeen-and-three-quarters collar, I now wear a sixteen-and-three-quarters. My waist is seven inches smaller. I even had to have a seal ring I wear cut down so it would not slip off my finger. While in the transition stage I looked like a scarecrow. My clothes hung on me like bags.

Since I have had my clothes re-made and new ones constructed I am an object of continual comment among my friends. They all marvel at my changed appearance. They are all solicitous about my health. They do not

The Fun of Getting Thin

see how a man can take off more than fifty pounds and not hurt himself. I do not see how he can keep it on and not kill himself. They tell me I look like a boy—and I feel like one. I'm as active as I was twenty years ago. When I was in the mountains this summer, at an altitude of seventy-five hundred feet, I could climb slopes with no exhaustion that I couldn't have gone fifteen feet up the year before. My mind is clearer; my body is better. I figure I have added a good many years to my life.

And all this time I have had everything I wanted to eat, but not all I wanted to eat until I got myself readjusted to the new system. I missed the alcohol at first, but that is all over now. It was a part of the game and I used to think a necessary part. I have cured myself of that delusion. If there is a thing on earth the matter with me the ablest doctors in this country can't find out what it is. I am a rejuvenated, reconstructed person, no longer fat, aged forty-three—and the White Man's Hope!

As to the exercise end of it, there wasn't any exercise end. It happened that I met a man last March, when I was in the first throes of this campaign, who had made some study of the human body. I liked him because he was modest about what he knew, and not a faddist. We talked about exercise. He told me one thing that stuck. He said: "Walk a little every day. If you have half an hour walk a mile. If you have an hour walk two miles. Don't try to see how many miles you can walk in the half-hour or the hour, but take your time. Look at things as you go along. Be leisurely about it. When a man goes out for a walk and walks as hard as he can or does anything else in the shape of exercise as hard as he can he is subjecting himself to just as much nerve strain as he can subject himself to in any other way. Be calm about your walking, or whatever else you do."

Formerly it had been my custom to plug out after breakfast and gallop three or four miles as hard as I could and then go to work. I cut that out. I walked an easy, leisurely mile or two miles, looking at the trees and flowers and watching the people and looking into shop windows, and I got a lot of good out of it. Then it grew hot, and I cut my walking to half a mile or so down to my office in the morning and back at night. Occasionally, after dinner, I would walk a couple of miles. This summer I went fishing and tramped about some, but not much. In reality, I had no scheme of exercise, and I took little. I didn't need it. I didn't have masses of food and drink in me to be burned up. I was normal.

As I said, I suppose all this is absurdly unscientific—and I don't give a hoot if it is. It worked for me. I don't know whether it will work for any other person on this earth. Nor do I care. If you want to try it on, provided you are fat, here are the specifications: I assume it is an axiom that we all eat too much. I know I did—about sixty per cent too much. Still, I guarantee nothing. I make no claims. I have set down the facts; and the only warning, advice or admonition I have to give is that any person who makes up his mind to try this method and thinks he isn't in for the hardest struggle of his life would do well not to try. This isn't a frolic. It's a fight.