

Some years ago, while engaged in some anthropometric studies among Chinese women and the women of the primitive Indian tribes of Arizona and New Mexico, I was forcibly struck with the marked difference in physical proportion between the savage and the civilised woman. I have made personally, and secured through others, a large number of measurements which place upon a mathematical basis certain points of difference that are exceedingly pronounced, particularly the larger waist of the savage or semi-civilised woman when compared with the highly civilised woman. I have since extended my studies of the subject to the peasant women of various nationalities, particularly French, German and Italian women, and a single race of East Indian women. Early in the course of my studies the thought occurred to me that there might be a positive and constant relation between the external configuration of the body and the mal-position of various internal organs. I accordingly devised a simple apparatus for the purpose of making outline traces of the figure at any desired angle. With this instrument I have made a large number of tracings (several hundred in all), and have made a careful study of the position of the abdominal and pelvic viscera in each case.

The following is a tabulated statement of some facts which I have collected, and which bear especially upon the matter of waist proportion :—

	Average height.	Average of waist waist.	Average percentage of waist to height.
American women	61'64 in.	24'44 in.	39'6
Telugu women of India	60'49 in.	24'65 in.	40'6
English women (brickmakers who wear heavy skirts)	60'04 in.	25'00 in.	41'3
French Women	61'06 in.	28'00 in.	45'4
Chinese women	57'85 in.	26'27 in.	45'4
Yuma women	66'56 in.	36'84 in.	55'2
Civilised men—American	67'06 in.	29'46 in.	43'3
Mrs. Langtry	67'00 in.	26'00 in.	38'8
Venus de Milo	47'6

	Height.	Waist.	Percentage of waist to height.
Average of 43 women, from 18 to 25 years old	60'7 in.	27'1 in.	44'64
Average of 25 women, from 18 to 30 years old wearing corsets or tight bands	62'5 in.	23'3 in.	37'3
Average of the same 25 women a few months after reforming their mode of dress	62'5 in.	27'15 in.	43'4
Average of 10 girls, from 9 to 12 years old	23'5 in.	..
Average of 2,000 men, from 18 to 27 years, measured by Dr. Seager of Yale.. .. .	68'6 in.	29'3 in.	42'7

A few remarks upon the above figures will render them more significant. Of the 100 American women whose average proportions are given in the table, the majority were upwards of 30 years of age.

Dr. M. Anna Wood, of Wellesley College, has measured 1,100 women between the ages of 19 and 21 years. Her measurements make the height of the average American woman to be 63 inches, waist 24'6 inches; percentage of waist to height 39.

The Telugu women of India, as I am informed by Miss Cummings, who kindly made a large number of measurements for me, sustain the skirt, which forms almost their only clothing, by means of a cord tied around the waist and drawn as tightly as possible. This is doubtless the reason for the small waists of these women as compared with those of the women of other savage or semi-civilised tribes.

English working women doubtless often do themselves great harm by wearing many heavy skirts attached to waistbands. I once found a young English woman engaged in the very laborious occupation of

making brick, kneading the clay with her fist as a baker kneads dough, and beating it into the moulds with her fist, who was at the same time carrying upon her waist the weight of six heavy quilted skirts, with no other support than bands. The average waist measure of a dozen English women brick-makers was 25 inches, and the proportion to height 43'7 per cent.

The German peasant woman, unless she has the misfortune to live sufficiently near some large city to be somewhat influenced by the example of her fashionable sisters, discards waistbands altogether, and wears her garments suspended from the shoulders by means of a waist, which gives her a more vigorous figure than the English peasant woman.

French women are in the last-named respect also more fortunate than their English sisters, by reason of which they enjoy the advantage of a waist proportion of 45'4 per cent. of the height.

Chinese women, of whom I have made a large number of measurements, and received much more data through the kindness of Miss Culbertson, of the Home for Chinese Women, San Francisco, and also from a lady medical missionary in China, although considerably below the average height of American women, have two inches greater waist circumference, which is doubtless attributable to the fact that their mode of dress is such as to allow the most perfect freedom of movement and room for development at the middle portion of the trunk.

But the primitive Yuma Indian women of Arizona and New Mexico excel all others whose waist measure I have taken, the average waist proportion being 55'2 of the height.

The famous English beauty, Mrs. Langtry, has recently had published a detailed account of her physical proportions, by which it appears that her height is 67 inches, and her waist measure only 26 inches. Mrs. Langtry takes evident pride in the fact that many of her measurements correspond very closely with those of some ancient Grecian models, but she omitted to call attention to the fact that her waist measure is only 38'8 per cent. of her height, while that of the queen of all the ancient statues of women which have been discovered, the famous Venus de Milo, is 47'6 per cent. of the height. Mrs. Langtry's waist measure, to be in the same proportion as that of the Greek beauty, should be 32 inches. I have taken the pains to make measurements of a considerable number of male statues, the work of eminent ancient artists preserved in various European galleries, and find the average proportion of the waist to height of seven famous models to be 46'4, or a little less than that of the Venus de Milo.

I have recently made measurements of 43 working women between the ages of 18 and 25 years. These young women were all wearing loose garments, having been induced to do so by a representation of the evils resulting from waist constriction. Some had but recently adopted a healthful style of clothing, while others had enjoyed the advantage of ample waist room for several months or years. In a few instances corsets and tight waistbands had never been worn. I found the average waist measure of 43 young women, who were selected only with reference to age, to be 27'15 inches, or 44'64 per cent. of the height, nearly 3 inches in excess of the average feminine American waist. The waist of a young woman with this proportion, and of the same height as Mrs. Langtry, would measure 30 inches instead of 26.

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