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No. 262

# Exercises with the Medicine Ball

BY

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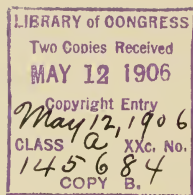


PUBLISHED BY

AMERICAN SPORTS PUBLISHING COMPANY

21 WARREN STREET, NEW YORK

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TO

MR. J. H. CREIGHTON,

IN RECOGNITION OF A CONSTANT  
FRIENDSHIP.

## INTRODUCTION.

One of the aims of physical training is to make exercise interesting and enjoyable. To be beneficial in the highest sense it must be recreative. Particularly is this true of physical exercise for business men. As a class, in their daily work they are kept on a constant mental strain. Besides they are to a large degree physically inactive. Life becomes too intense, too serious, too sordid. Exercise, therefore, for business men must be largely recreative, relaxing and restful.

Again, in physical work for business men, the large muscle groups must be called into activity rather than the finer muscle adjustments. This demands less mental application and produces the best hygienic and physiological results.

A third requisite in exercise for business men is that it must be given in concentrated and tabloid form. Exercises must be selected so that in a very short space of time the entire body is made active and all the important muscle groups are called into activity.

The medicine ball can be used in such a way as to meet all these conditions. Its use, in addition, is social, as it requires several persons to use it. It is recreative. Most

of the movements are play movements. Throwing a ball is an act common to most games, and in addition many interesting games can be played with the medicine ball. It is truly well named, for "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine," and the use of the medicine ball surely maketh merry.

Its use is also hygienic. Many body bending and twisting exercises are indulged in when using the medicine ball. It calls into activity the large muscles of the abdomen and back and stimulates respiration and circulation. The exercises are vigorous and yet without undue strain and thus in a very short space of time splendid stimulating effects can be secured.

Play, sport, exercise will do much to keep the mind clear, the figure young, the step elastic. There is no single apparatus in the gymnasium that is so completely adapted to meet the needs of business men as the "Medicine Ball." Its intelligent use will keep the eye alert, and the body vigorous.

Such a compilation of exercises as Mr. Cromie presents in this volume will be received with appreciation.

GEORGE J. FISHER, M.D.,

*Secretary International Committee Young Men's  
Christian Association (Physical Department).*

### EXPLANATION.

This booklet is by no means intended to be a technical treatise, but is simply an endeavor to present in a plain and practical way exercises with the "Medicine Ball," which are suited for boys and girls, business and professional men, in and out of gymnasiums; movements which are easy of comprehension and conducive to health and strength.

The writer has noticed that in many gymnasiums the "Medicine Ball" is used more as an ornament than an instrument of work. This should not be the case, as it is one of the most useful as well as recreative acquisitions that we have in our gymnasiums. Bending from side to side, or pulling a chest weight a certain number of times, tends toward the mechanical, and becomes monotonous, while the innumerable movements that can be indulged in with the "Medicine Ball" are both pleasing and beneficial. Mr. R. J. Roberts, the pioneer of physical work in this country, has well named it the "Medicine Ball,"

as it does in many cases all that medicine is expected to accomplish, eliminating its disastrous after effects. (Lengthy explanation and technical nomenclature have been avoided in this booklet and illustrations used to take their place.)

The Sultan once consulted his physician in regard to a troublesome malady. Believing that only fresh air and exercise were needed, and knowing how little the world values plain, simple things, the doctor said: "Here is a ball which I have stuffed with rare and precious herbs. Your Highness must beat this ball with a bat and toss it in every conceivable way each day till you perspire freely." The Sultan followed these directions, and was cured of his disease without realizing that he was only taking exercise. Probably the "Medicine Ball" would be more used if we, like the Sultan, were deceived; but of a certainty our diseases in the main will, like his, be eradicated from our system if we indulge in daily exercise.

The make up of the muscular, circulatory and nervous systems of man prove that he needs much systematic body building exercises. Our forefathers received adequate exercise by clearing the forest and tilling the soil, and if we in our "artificial occupations" cannot receive sufficient

work to satisfy our muscular needs, then the gymnasium and athletic field *must* be used. "Nature knows no pause," said Goethe, "and attaches a curse upon all inaction." Exercise is one of Nature's eternal laws. The poor man works and thus acquires an appetite while the rich man must exercise to create one. In the animal kingdom we observe the swimming of the fish, the flying of the bird and the playfulness of the kitten. Why then should man, king of all these, be inactive? Chain a dog and he becomes cross; stable a horse for a considerable time and when he is harnessed he will try to run away; most birds pine away and die when their native element is denied them; caged wild beasts, instinctively, walk back and forth for exercise; force a man to remain in a stuffy office day after day and he will deteriorate in health and vigor. If the "Medicine Ball," or any other device, serves as an incentive for exercise, let us use it and become erect, broad shouldered and deep-chested men and women.

W. J. CROMIE





**FIGURE NO. 1.**

The correct position is : chest thrown out strong, stomach drawn in, chin in, back hollowed, hips extended slightly. An excellent way for one to tell when he has the proper position is to stand with the back to the wall, with head, shoulders, hips and heels touching it. Another way is to keep the back of the neck always pressed against the collar. One should endeavor to maintain an erect position at all times. The following illustrations, in order to be more easily understood, show two figures : The one on the left illustrates the first part of the exercise, and the one on the right the second part. These exercises may be performed by two persons, or in gymnasium classes, if a number of balls are accessible. Children should use the light balls.

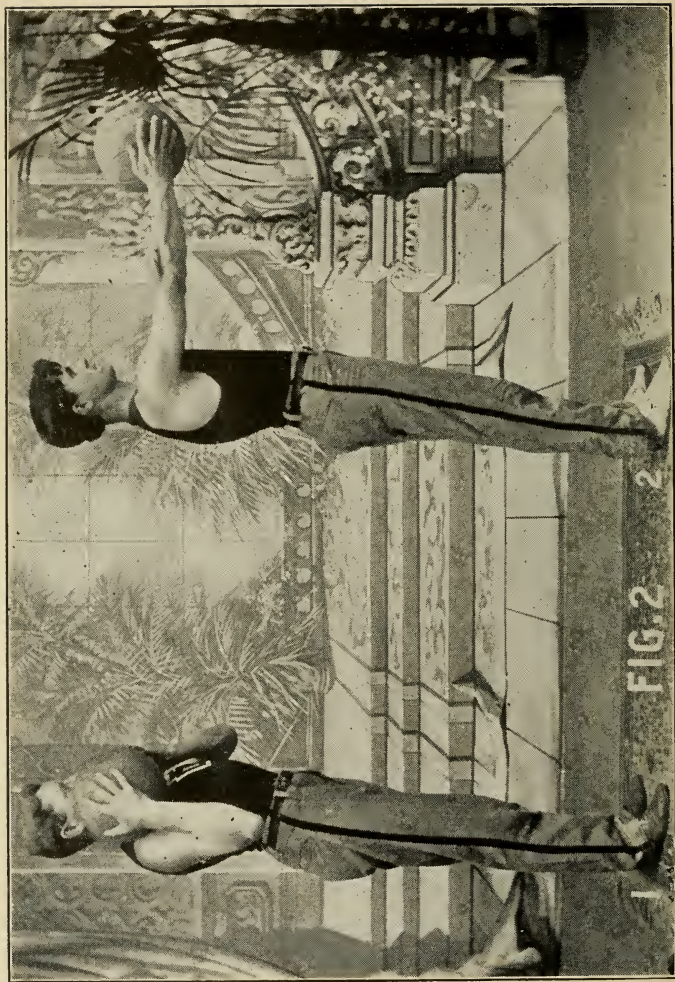


FIG. 2

**FIGURE NO. 2.**

Bend both arms, ball against right shoulder, push ball away with force.

- Same exercise from the left side.

*Position.*—Chest out strong, stomach drawn in, heels together and do not bend knees or step either forward or backward after throwing ball.

NOTE.—Exercises under all figures except No. 15 and part of No. 14 are performed by two persons; one throws the ball and the other catches it. On gymnasium floors two columns of men may use any number of balls; one column to throw, and the other to catch it.



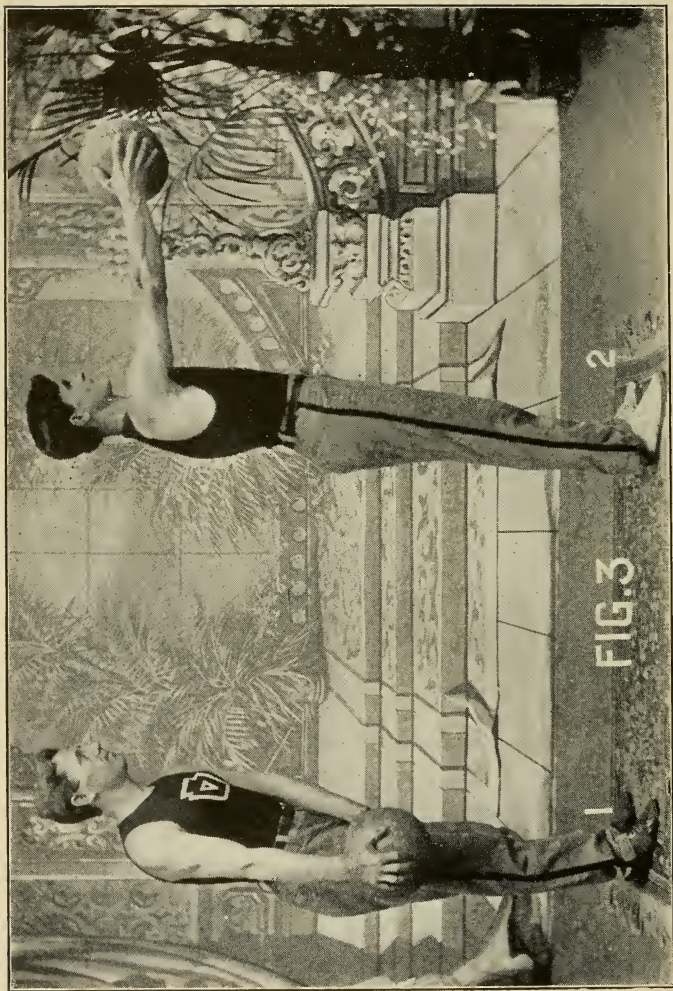


FIG. 3

**FIGURE NO. 3.**

Arms extended down at right side; pitch ball forward.  
Same exercise left side.

*Position.*—Heels together, chest out strong. Stomach  
and chin in and do not step forward after tossing  
ball.

Keep the arms extended throughout the exercise.

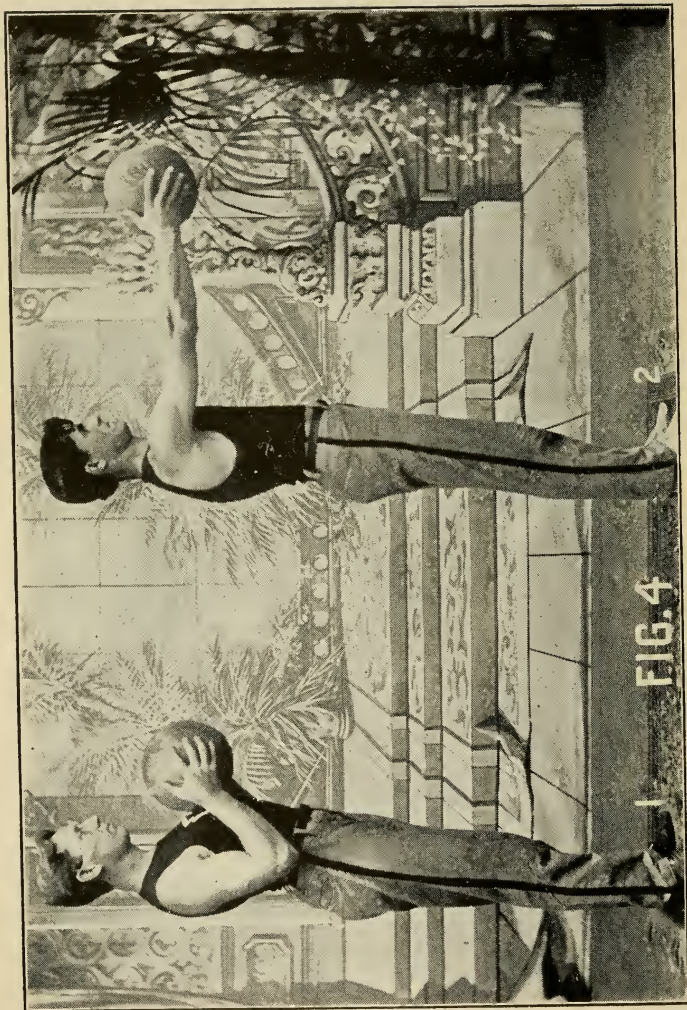


FIG. 4

**FIGURE NO. 4.**

Flex arms, ball on chest; throw ball by extending arms forward.

*Position.*—Do not step forward after throwing ball. Chest out strong, stomach in and chin drawn in slightly toward chest.



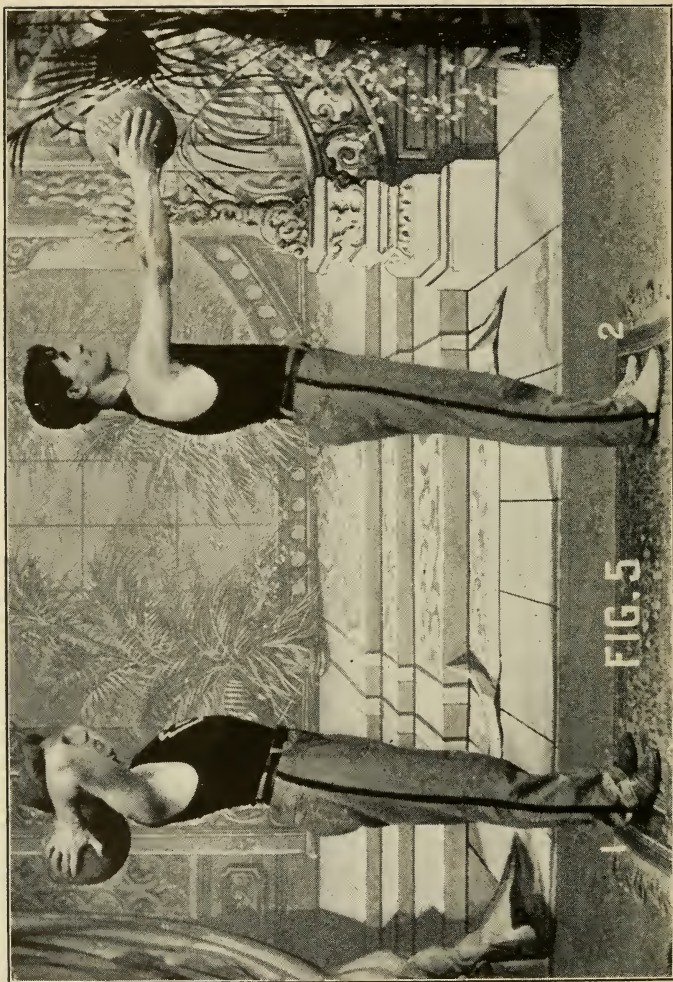


FIG. 5

**FIGURE NO. 5.**

Flex arms, ball behind head; throw ball forward.

*Position.*—Body erect and hold position after throwing ball.

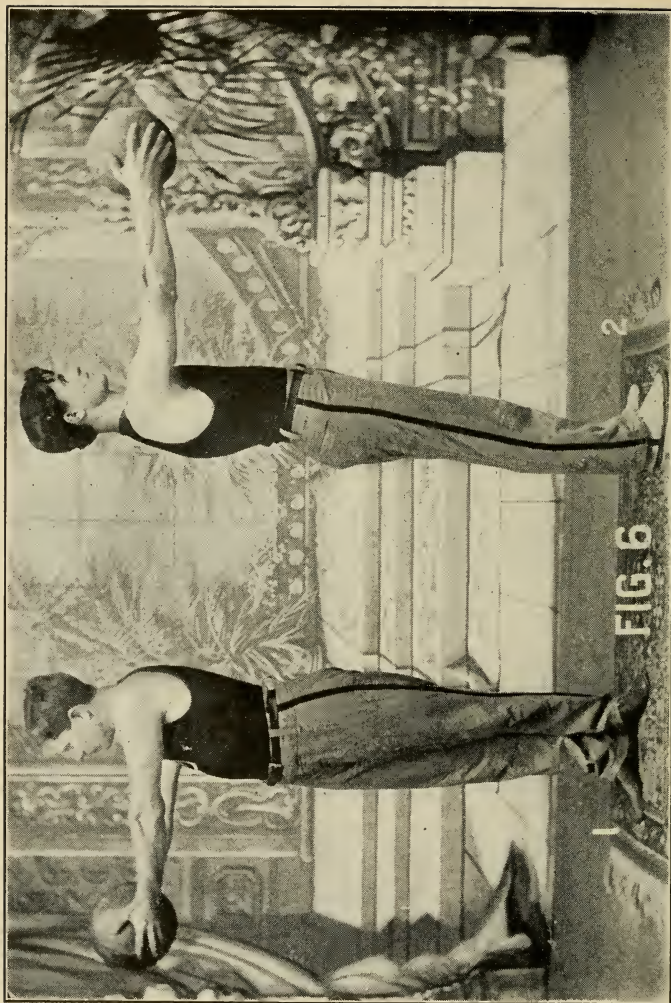


FIG. 6

**FIGURE NO. 6.**

Arms extended front, rotate body to right side, and throw ball as body returns to front.

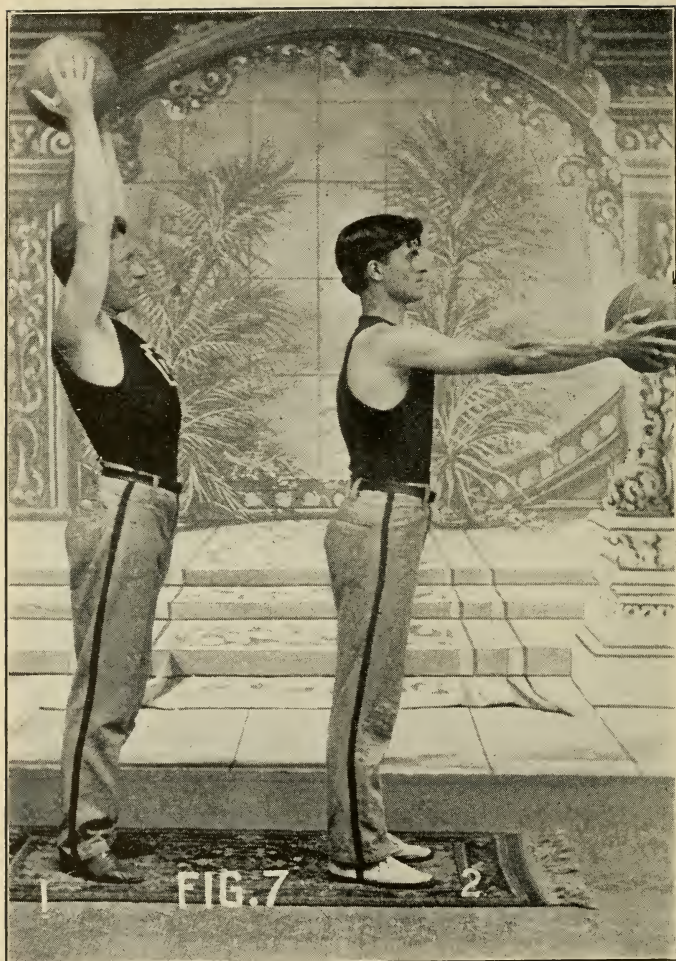
The same exercise, left side.

*Position.*—Heels together and body erect.

These may be performed in the stride-stand position (feet about 30 inches apart).

NOTE.—No. 2 of the opposite illustration should be facing front, with arms front horizontal.





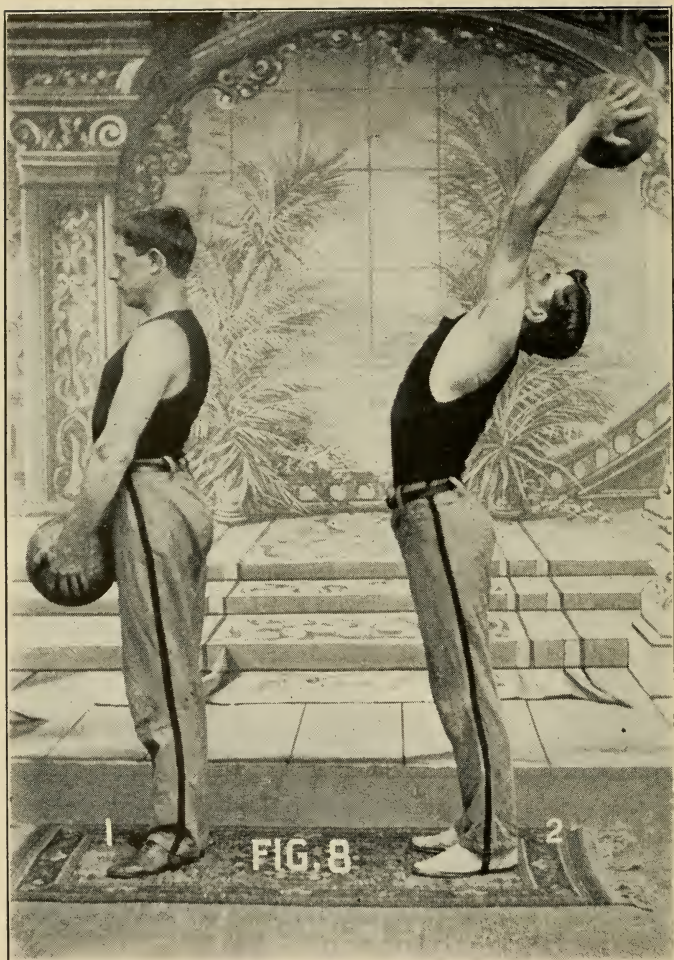
1 FIG. 7 2

**FIGURE NO. 7.**

Arms extended vertical; throw ball forward from that position.

*Position.*—Do not bend arms or knees.

These may be performed in the walk-stand position (one foot about 30 inches in advance of the other).



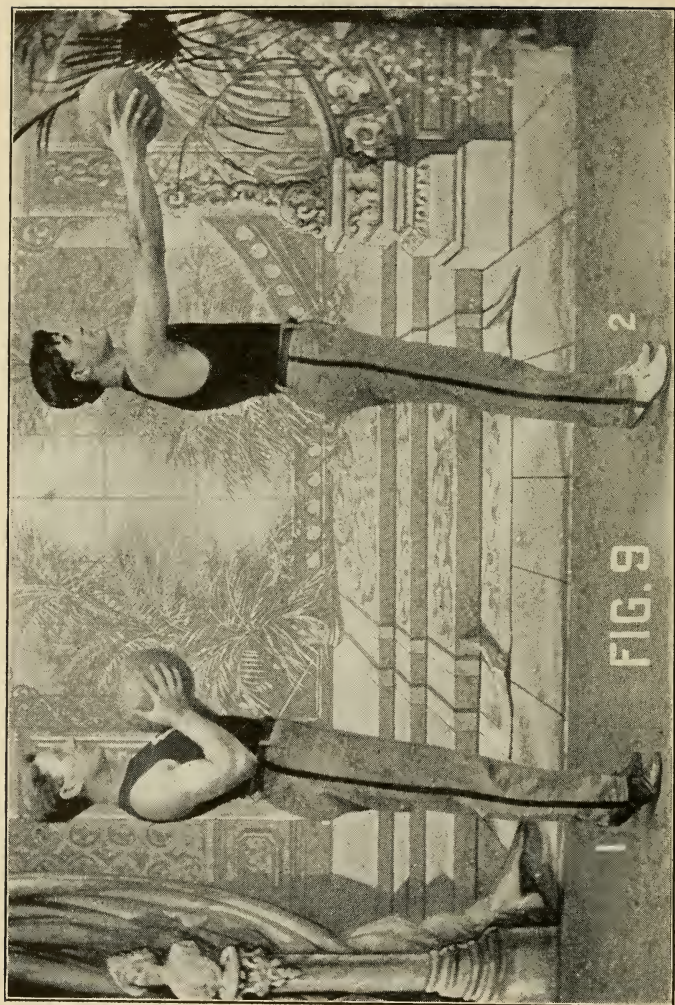
**FIGURE NO. 8.**

Throw the ball to the rear, over the head.

*Position.*—Arch the back as the ball is thrown backward.

NOTE.—The exercises beginning with Fig. 9 mostly combine the first eight figures.





**FIGURE NO. 9.**

*Rise on toes and—*

(a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)

Throw ball from left shoulder.

(b) Arms extended down at right side, throw ball.  
(Fig. No. 3.)

Arms extended down at left side, throw ball.

(c) Throw ball from the chest. (Fig. No. 4.)

(d) Throw ball from behind head. (Fig. No. 5.)

(e) Rotate body and arms to right and throw ball.  
(Fig. No. 6.)

Rotate body and arms to left and throw ball.

(f) Throw ball from arms extended vertical. (Fig.  
No. 7.) (Do not bend arms.)

(g) Throw the ball to the rear over the head. (Fig.  
No. 8.)

*Position.*—Up on toes as high as possible, and hold that position till after the ball is thrown.



FIG. 10

**FIGURE NO. 10.**

*Full squat and—*

(a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)

Throw ball from left shoulder.

(b) Arms extended down at right side, throw ball.

(Fig. 3.)

Arms extended down at left side and throw ball.

(c) Throw ball from the chest. (Fig. No. 4.)

(d) Throw ball from behind head. (Fig. No. 5.)

(e) Rotate body and arms and throw ball right.

(Fig. No. 6.)

Rotate body and arms and throw ball left.

(f) Throw ball from arms extended vertical. (Fig.

No. 7.) (Do not bend arms.)

(g) Throw the ball to the rear over the head. (Fig.

No. 8.)

*Position.*—Throw the ball while in the squat-rest position.

These exercises are designed in the main for two persons, for instance: Two persons face each other, one in the normal position and the other in the squat-rest. The one in the squat-rest throws the ball while in that position and then assumes the normal, etc.





FIG. 11

**FIGURE NO. 11.**

*Arch back and—*

(a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)

Throw ball from left shoulder.

(b) Arms extended down at right side and throw ball. (Fig. No. 3.)

Arms extended down at left side and throw ball.

(c) Throw ball from the chest. (Fig. 4.)

(d) Throw ball from behind head. (Fig. No. 5.)

(e) Rotate body and throw ball to the right. (Fig. No. 6.)

Rotate body and throw ball to the left.

*Position.*—Arch the back to its fullest extent before throwing ball. Raise on toes, also, while in the arch-flexion position.

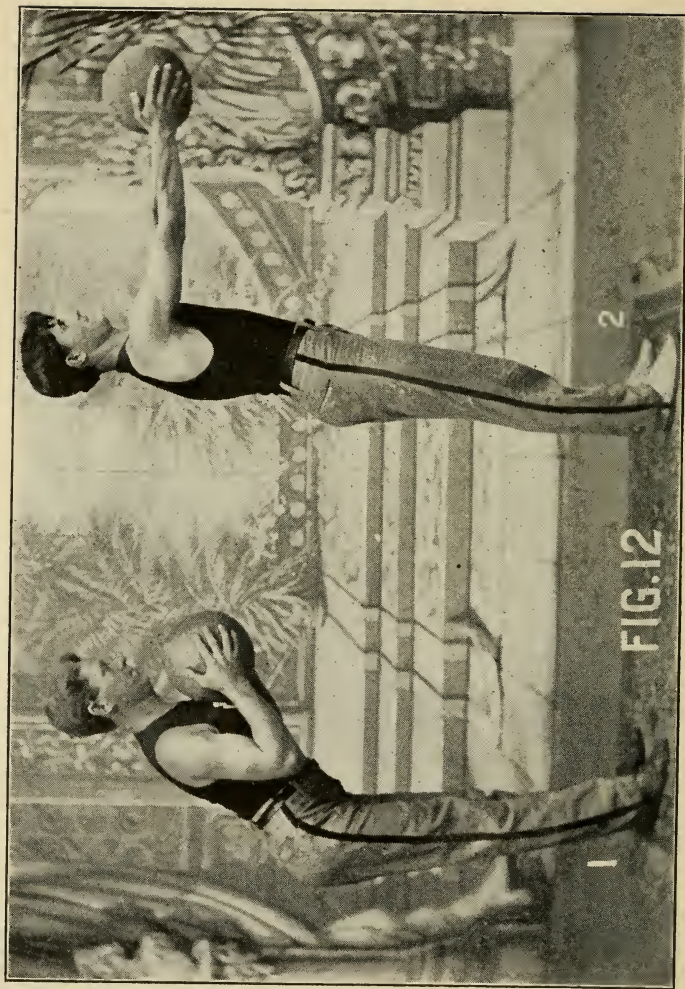


FIG.12

**FIGURE NO. 12.**

*Stoop, stand, and—*

- (a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)
- (b) Arms extended down at right side and throw ball. (Fig. No. 3.)

Arms extended down at left side and throw ball.

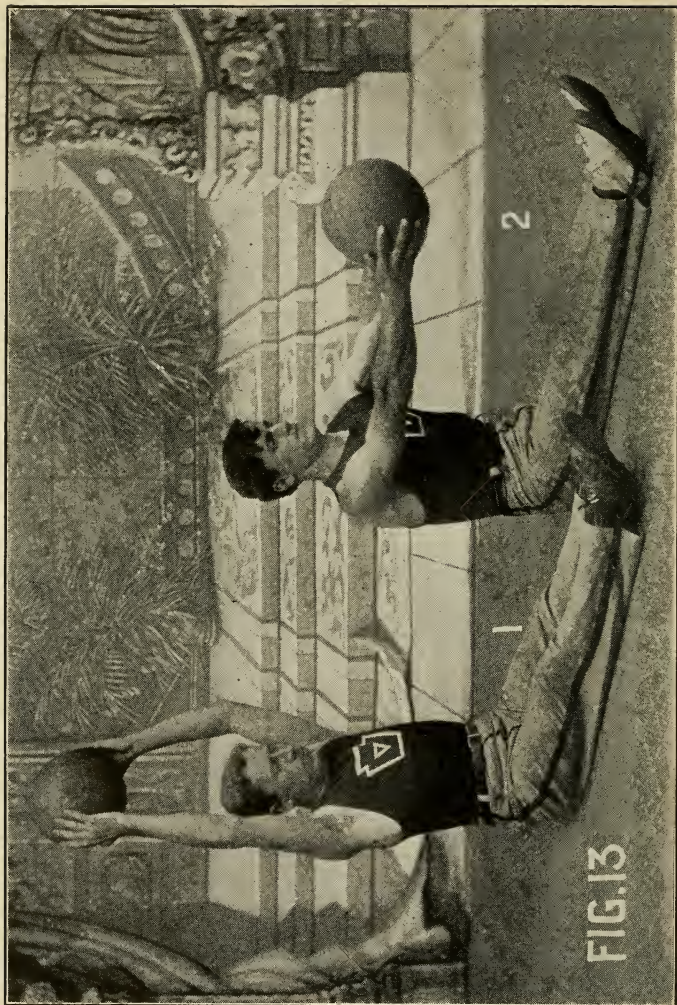
- (c) Throw ball from the chest. (Fig. No. 4.)
- (d) Throw ball from behind head. (Fig. No. 5.)
- (e) Rotate body and arms to right side and throw ball to left. (Fig. No. 6.)

Rotate body and arms to left side and throw ball to right.

- (f) Throw ball from arms extended vertical. (Fig. No. 7.)
- (g) Throw ball to the rear, over the head. (Fig. No. 8.)

*Position.*—Chest out strong, stomach in, back hollowed, chin in and hips extended.





**FIGURE NO. 13.**

*Sit on the floor and—*

(a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)

Throw ball from left shoulder.

(b) Arms extended down at right side and throw ball. (Fig. No. 3.)

Arms extended down at left side and throw ball.

(c) Throw ball from the chest. (Fig. No. 4.)

(d) Throw ball from behind the head. (Fig. No. 5.)

(e) Throw ball to the rear, over the head. (Fig. No. 6.)

(f) Touch toes with the ball; throw to rear, over head.

*Position.*—Sit up erect; do not lean forward. If the exercise is too difficult with feet together, spread them apart.

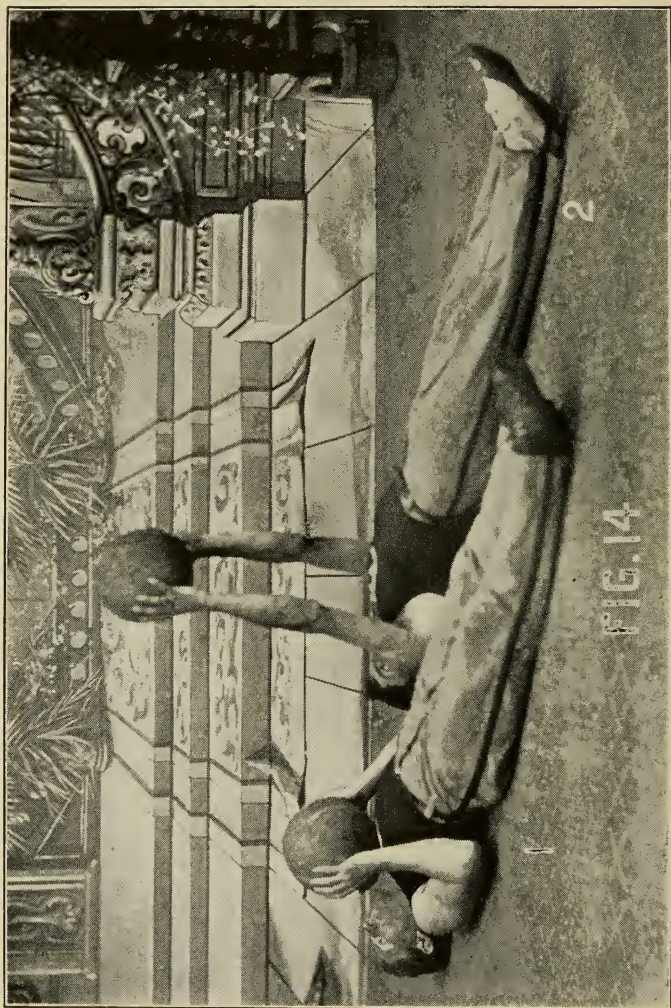


FIG. 14

2

**FIGURE NO. 14.**

*Lie on back and—*

- (a) Throw ball from right shoulder. (Fig. No. 2.)  
Throw ball from left shoulder.
- (b) Arms extended down at side and throw ball right. (Fig. No. 3.)  
Arms extended down at left side and throw ball.
- (c) Throw ball from chest. (Fig. No. 4.)
- (d) Throw ball from behind head. (Fig. No. 5.)
- (e) Arms vertical; throw ball. (Fig. 7.)
- (f) Hold ball, arms extended on floor; raise legs ten to twenty times (knees straight).
- (g) Hold ball between the feet and raise the body to a sitting position ten to twenty times. (If troubled with hernia do not attempt this exercise.)
- (h) (Place the feet under something.) Arms extended, raise body to sitting position, holding the arms vertical.
- (i) The same exercise as above, and throw the ball forward when sitting position is reached.

*Position.*—Keep the legs straight.

If troubled with hernia do not attempt the last three exercises.



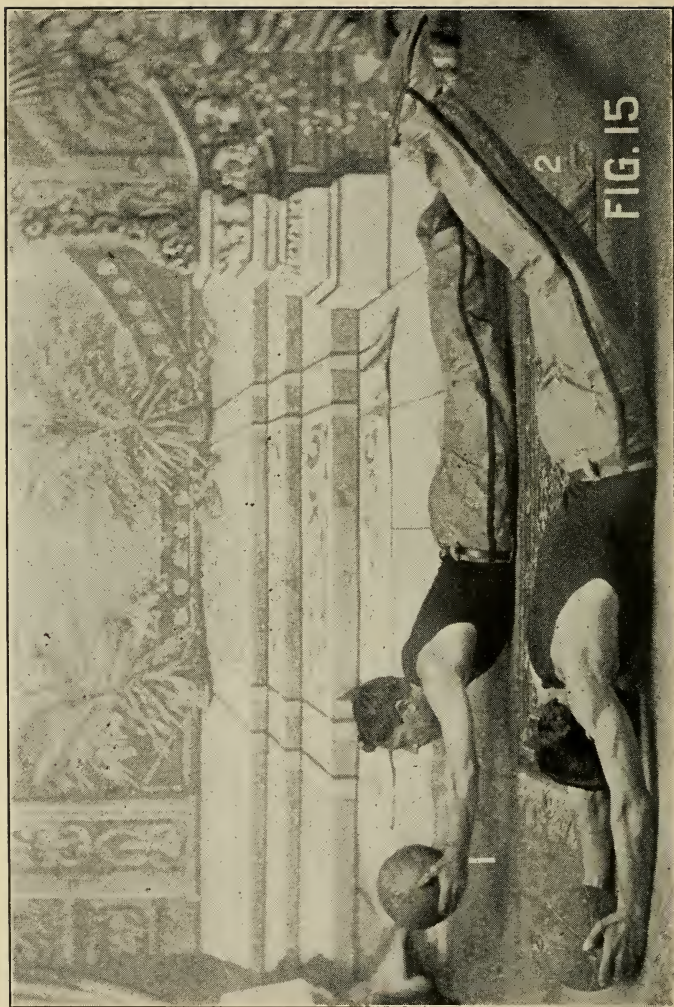


FIG. 15

2



**FIGURE NO. 15.**

*Lie on stomach and—*

- (a) Raise both legs. (Fig. 15, No. 2.)
- (b) Raise the ball.
- (c) Raise ball and legs together. (Fig. 15, No. 1.)
- (d) Raise ball and legs together; hold this position  
and stretch for about five or six seconds.

These exercises are for one person.

*Position.*—Raise arms and legs as high as possible; lie on the stomach and throw the ball to the rear, over the head.



**FIGURE NO. 16.**

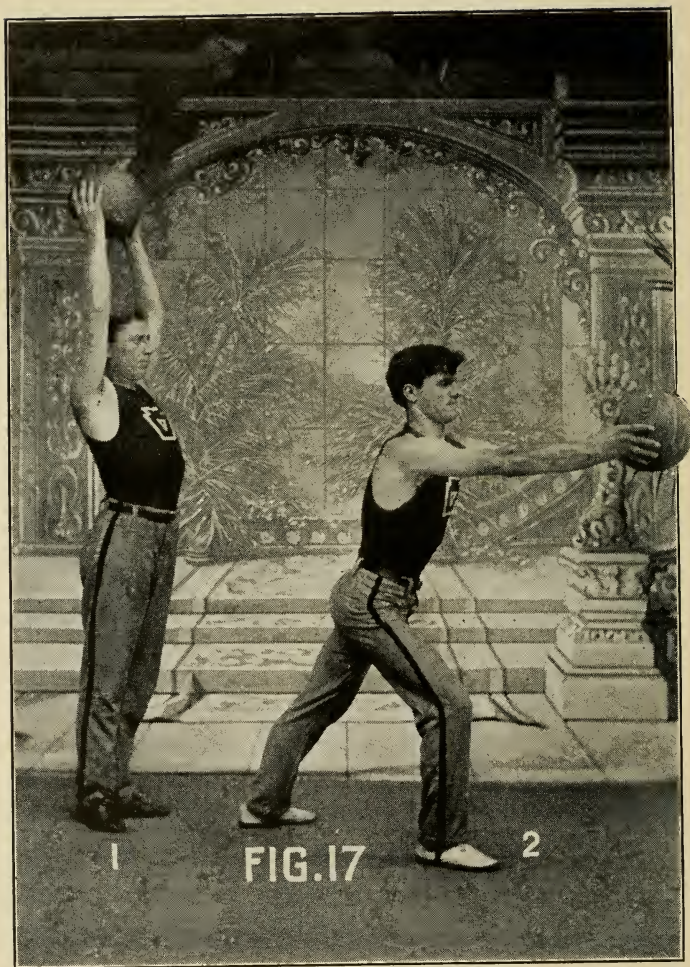
*Throw ball backward between legs—*

- (a) From chest, throw ball backward between legs.
- (b) From behind head, throw ball backward between legs.
- (c) From arms vertical, throw ball backward between legs.

*Position.*—Throw the ball forcibly and straighten the body after each throw. Throw the ball as high in the air as possible.

*From No. 2 position in the illustration—*

- (a) Assume the normal position and throw ball front.
- (b) Assume the normal position and throw ball to the right as the body rotates; same left.
- (c) From No. 2 position, arch the back and throw the ball to the rear.



**FIGURE NO. 17.***Charge Forward—*

- (a) Charge forward on right foot and throw ball forward from chest.

Charge forward on left foot and throw ball forward from chest.

- (b) Arms down at right side; charge on right foot and throw ball.

Arms down at left side; charge on left foot and throw ball.

- (c) Charge on right foot and throw ball from behind head.

Charge on left foot and throw ball from behind head.

- (d) Charge on right foot and throw ball from arms extended vertical.

Charge on left foot and throw ball from arms extended vertical.

*Position.*—Flex the leg on which you charge; keep the other straight; feet firmly on floor.

The above exercises can be performed at the side, rear, right and left front oblique, and right and left rear oblique.





FIG. 18

2

1

**FIGURE NO. 18.**

*Legs extended to rear, flex other knee a little and—*

- (a) Right leg extended to rear and throw ball from right shoulder.

Left leg extended to rear and throw ball from left shoulder.

- (b) Right leg extended to rear, throw ball from chest.

Left leg extended to rear, throw ball from chest.

- (c) Right leg extended to rear; arms down at right side, throw ball.

Left leg extended to rear; arms down at left side, throw ball.

- (d) Right leg extended to rear, throw ball from behind head.

Left leg extended to rear, throw ball from behind head.

*Position.*—After the ball leaves the hands, come to the normal position.

These exercises can be performed with the legs extended, side and front.



**FIGURE NO. 19.**

*Throw ball vertical.*

(a) Throw ball vertical from chest ; look up.

(b) Throw ball from right side to vertical.

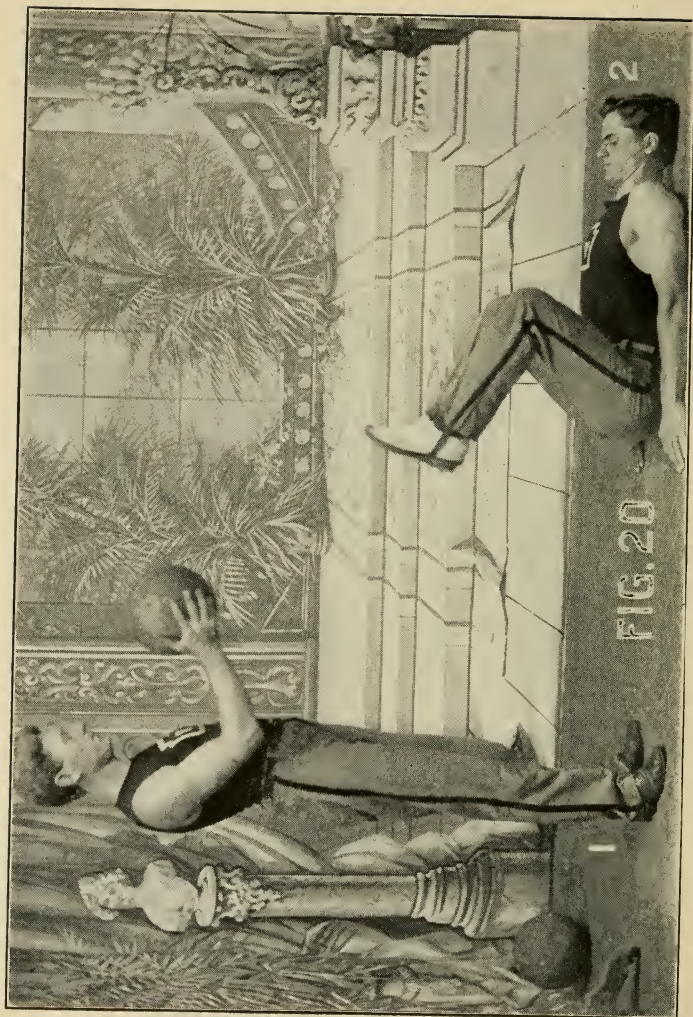
Throw ball from left side to vertical.

(c) From behind head push ball to vertical.

(d) Touch floor with ball ; pitch it vertical.

Position.—Throw ball as high as possible and catch it as it falls, or have someone catch it.





2

FIG. 20



**FIGURE NO. 20.**

Lie on back, bring knees up to chest, and when ball is tossed to feet, vigorously kick it away ; continue till tired.

This exercise is excellent for exciting peristaltic activity of the intestines.

## GAMES.

### *Medicine Ball.*

Form a circle of men, with one man in the center. Object.—The men who compose the circle try to keep the ball from the one in the circle, by different passes, etc.; to make it more exciting, two men may get in the center.

### *Babylonian.*

(From Era; 1893; page 311.)

Played with the big medicine ball. Team composed of eight or twelve men each; eight seems to be the better number. The teams are placed in line sideward, facing each other. The men clasp one another around the waist, and in no case must the hold be broken. At the word "Go," each team rushes toward the center, using the feet only in working the ball toward the center, each team endeavoring to get the ball across the opposite goal. Should a hold be broken, or the men fall down, the whistle is blown, lines formed over again, and the team breaking or fouling loses a point, three fouls making a goal. Best two in three, or three in five, goals constitute the

game. The ends are the men who must do the best work, preventing the ball from going out at the sides, also keeping the lines closed up. If the ball goes out of bounds, it must be placed in the center again; then the game continues. Tripping, breaking hold or unnecessarily rough play constitute fouls, at the discretion of the referee.

Form a circle with men sitting on the floor, different passes, etc., with legs spread apart, to keep from falling backward.

Throw ball with force.

### **MEDICINE BALL PASSING.**

(From Physical Education, Vol. IV., page 90.)

Great sport can be attained by adding several articles, for instance, Basket Ball, Base Ball, Tennis Ball, Indian Club, Dumb Bell, etc., if the class is large. This combination keeps one in a state of excitement, and perhaps, in some instances, too much; but, still, is a very practical game for the gymnasium. A penalty may be attached to the person dropping or failing to pass accurately. It may be to withdraw from the circle after making two or more such errors.

Four men in a circle keep three balls going the same way as fast as possible, then change and pass the balls as fast as possible the other way; then the same four men keep four balls going.

Use Indian Clubs and Bowl, where no bowling alleys are accessible.

### *Passing Ball Between Legs.*

Two or more columns of men, or boys, can play this game. The line of men pass the ball between the legs as quickly as possible. The man in the rear takes the ball and runs front to where the ball started and passes it back between his legs. It is again passed back to the rear. When the person who first took hold of the ball gets to front again the game is won.

## **INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES.**

### *Extend Arms.*

1. Ball on chest, extend arms front.
2. Ball on chest, extend arms right side, left.
3. Ball on chest, extend arms vertical.

### *Circles.*

1. Describe a circle with ball, arms extended from right to left in front of chest.

2. The same from left to right.
3. Describe the figure 8 in front of chest.

*Raise Shoulders.*

1. Arms extended down in front, raise shoulders.
2. Arms extended forward, raise shoulders.

*Raise on Toes.*

1. Raise on toes and extend arms front.
2. Raise on toes and extend arms to right side, left.
3. Raise on toes and extend arms vertical.
4. The above three exercises with raising the toes.

*Squat.*

1. Full squat as the arms are extended front.
2. Full squat as the arms are extended vertical.

*Stoop-Stand.*

1. To stoop-stand position, arms front.
2. To stoop-stand position, arms vertical.
3. From ball held vertical to stoop-stand.

*Flexions—Front.*

- 1.—Bend forward and touch floor with ball.
2. Stride-stand (feet apart about 30 inches) and bend forward, pass ball between legs to the rear as far as possible and touch floor.



3. Ball vertical, bend and touch ball on floor near right foot.
4. Ball vertical, bend and touch ball on floor near left foot; combine both.
5. Ball on chest, touch floor, then chest, extend ball front.
6. Ball on chest, touch floor, then chest, extend ball right side.
7. Ball on chest, touch floor, then chest, extend ball left side.
8. Ball on chest, touch floor, then chest, extend ball vertical.
9. Walk-stand (one foot placed in front of the other about 30 inches), right foot forward, arms vertical, touch floor in front.
10. Left foot forward, arms vertical, touch floor in front; combine.

*Flexions—Arch.*

1. Ball held vertical, arch back.
2. Bend forward, touch floor with ball, arch back.
3. Hold arch-flexion—walk-stand—ball on chest, extend ball front.

Hold arch-flexion—walk-stand—ball on chest, extend ball vertical.

(Right leg rear, then left, on last two exercises.)

*Side Bends.*

1. Ball vertical, bend from side to side.
2. Ball vertical, bend from side to side (stride-stand).
3. Ball vertical, bend from side to right, abduct right leg.
4. Ball vertical, bend from side to left, abduct right leg.

*Rotate.*

1. Ball held front, rotate from left to right.
2. Ball held front, rotate from left to right (stride-stand).

*Miscellaneous.*

1. Bring right knee up to chest, arms extended vertical; left.
2. Extend right leg front, ball to vertical.
3. Extend left leg front, ball to vertical.
4. Hold ball on chest, stationary run, bring knees up to chest.
5. Stationary run, bring heels up in rear, extend ball forward while running.
6. Ball held vertical, jump on toes, leg straight.

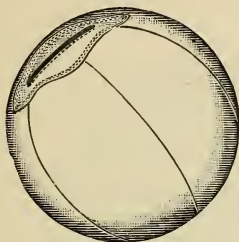
7. Ball on chest, jump to stride-stand, arms extended forward.
8. Ball on chest, jump to stride-stand, touch floor with ball while jumping.
9. Ball on chest, bend forward, touch floor, extend right leg to rear, return to forward bend then to normal (four counts) ; same, left leg.
10. Ball on chest, bend forward, touch floor—front leaning-rest—(both legs to rear), back to forward bend, then to starting position (four counts).

*Stretching Exercises.*

1. Up on toes, arms vertical, hold and stretch for about five seconds ; repeat.
2. Arch back, arms vertical, hold and stretch.
3. Right leg to rear, arms vertical, hold and stretch.
4. Left leg to rear, arms vertical, hold and stretch.
5. Arms vertical, bend to right, abduct left leg, hold and stretch.
6. Arms vertical, bend to left, abduct right leg, hold and stretch.



## Spalding Improved Medicine Balls



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