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All the Rage

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All the Rage

by Barb Lundy

The Met fashion retrospective
features brass collar bands
piled high to stretch necks
power point bras
and a Mr. Pearl who
provides testimonial to
his rib crushing corsets
by winnowing his own waist
to a grotesque seventeen inches.

Skirts bustled and hooped force
contortionist drills
men sport padded calves
and gray black x-rays
chronicle the torture
of the three inch lotus slipper.
In every century
chic refinement renders
daily confinement.



Photo (detail) by Joel Kendall

