The Home Reading Circle

CONVERSION OF MAJOR HARRINGTON MARY C . FRANCIS

[Copywright, 1897, by Mary C. Francis.]

PART I.

"You haven't had Firefly out of the stable for almost a week in spite of this fine spring weather, Esther, I thought you were going to ride her to town yesterday afternoon, but James tells me that you walked over to Clifton Corners and took the car. I can't imagine why you care so much less for horseback riding than you used to."

Major Harrington looked with a keen eye across the table. Behind the coffee urn Esther blushed. "I think I really don't care less," she

said, with a trace of hesitation, "but the weather has been so lovely for walking lately. Don't you want another cup of coffee?"

"Yes; very fine for walking, horse back riding or bicycling. If these wheeling people keep up their external craze we shall all be run over and killed some fine day yet. Yes, give me another cup of coffee, my dear, and a little more cream, please. Here are two letters for you." The sweet, fresh air of a May morning came into the stately dining room of Scarlet Oaks through a half open window,

There was silence in the room for a few minutes while Major Harrington devoted himself to his paper and Esther read her letters, and then the major broke out in a characteristic manner: "Ah, just as I said; here's an other bicycle accident, a woman killed at a railroad crossing. Gad, I think there ought to be a law against the things; and as for women riding them. every one of them ought to be locked up. Don't you see, it's this sort of thing I'm protecting you against when wen't let you ride a wheel? Just look at that!" He handed the paper across the table.

Esther quickly took in the beadlines and then a paragraph lower down in the column.

"Why, uncle," she said, in a timidiy protesting manner, "don't you see it was all the engineer's fault. The woman was-

"The woman was an idiot to be on a wheel at all," cried the major, in his most irascible mood. "Would she have been killed if she had been at home? No, sir; let me tell you, a woman never an intelligence of its own. If she had been on horseback the horse would have known enough not to try to cross the track. Ellis, tell James to have ternoon for Miss Esther. You must take a gallop, my dear. The best cross "But I country rider in the county ought to get out oftener than you have been something. Our masquerading is at an

'Oh, yes, I will," said Esther, hurriedly, "and-wait a minute-you won't forget that you promised to take me to the Millington-Irving road race tomorrow, will you?" Major Harrington paused near the

"I'm not so sure that I promised."

"Yes-yes-you did. You promised both Mr. Bronson and myself that you would.

"And Mr. Bronson, what interest has he in this race?" "Why-I-I think he will be there

"Ah, well, if Mr. Bronson is to be there perhaps I had better be your

sight will cure you of your craze for Half an hour later Paul Bronson was closeted with the major in the library. Scarlet Oaks was heavily mortgaged to the real estate syndicate which Paul



"GAR! I THINK THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW AGAINST THE

represented, and unless the cablegram the major had expected for a month past from his London bankers should with thousands of spectators. Twentyarrive within forty-eight hours the five miles from Scarlet Oaks Paul place would be lost. Every report thus Bronson mingled with the racers who far had been of the downward trend of thronged about the starting point. his foreign securities, and now it was the 29th of May, and no word had come to save the place. A deep silence had shape today, fallen between the two.

The major broke it. "So far as I can fully, "I'm out to win today or retire see, there will be no obstacle to your taking possession on the morning of here, Tom. How is this?" the list. Unless you receive word from me in the meantime you may be

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here and we will attend to the final details."

It was late in the afternoon when two cyclists turned into the long stretch of road, three miles from Scarlet Oaks. "The funny part of it is that he riders I could never get him to lay eyes on the course,"

when two men shot over the tape at the beginning of the race, heralded by a loud cheer from the multitude that eemed to promise victory for them. What a beautiful motion Garrett has," said an enthusiastic girl in a fetching bicycle costume. "Just look at him. And with that start, too, Oh,

It was but a few minutes after eleven

HALL STREET THE THE

I'm sure he's going to win." Her more experienced companion laughed. "Walt till you see the finish before you are so sure of that. Just keep your eye on some of those fellows who delight to elip in and cut down the time limit to nothing, and come sailing down the home stretch as if they had started out the night before. You see, the really fast men are all to start yet.' "Out of the way there!" said a mar-

shal, pushing back the too reckless on-As he uttered the warning the ten men who had followed the leaders on the seven-minute limit came down the course like the wind and disapp ared in the distance. Close behind them followed a bunch of starters who had crossed the tape a few minutes later, and who had set a rattling pace from the first. Each different set of riders seemed to create fresh enthusiasm for the crowd, and it cheered loudly as they flew past. Over ont hundred men doesn't for a minute suspect the real followed at intervals of fifteen secreason why I went to see the race. If onds, and the great race was on in he knew that you were to be one of the | earnest. Half an hour after the start a bird's eye view of the course twas enough to stir the blood. Almost one hundred and fifty men, cutlined in "And what would happen to both of perspective against a background of us if he even suspected that you and I shouting and applauding spectators, are in love with each other and that came down the road in a swift flight



THE MAJOR LOOKED AFTER THEM MUSINGLY.

you have been riding the tabooed wheel ought to mount anything that hasn't for months," said Paul. They laughed, "Matters are getting serious now," entinued Paul, "and something must be done at once. If the trust company forecloses the mortgage on the last day Firefly ready at three o'clock this af- of May and the major carries you off "But I won't go."

"You will have to go unless we do

end now, Esther, and we must face the situation.

They wheeled leisurely along.
"I do not hope for any relenting myself," said Paul, "but I put off speaking about it until after tomorrow in order that you might see the race. I must see you when I cross the tape at the finish. Everett beat me by a hair's breadth last year, but I'm in first-class condition now, and I'm going to win

"Oh, Paul, it will be the first race I ever saw, and do you know it seems to ne it will be enough to bring Uncle

Jack around to see you win it.' "Not much," said Paul, grimly, "He wedded to horseftesh. The fact is, said the major, significantly. I don't think it will do us much good "Yes, I will take you, and I hope the but it's a desperate case anyhow, and I sight will cure you of your craze for am simply determined that you shall see the race. If the worst comes to the worst you will keep your word, won't you? We won't be the first who got married and asked permission after-

wards." He circled around in the road and came nearer to her. As he did so he caught sight of a tall, military figure on horseback in their rear. "By Jove Esther," he said, quickly, "if the major isn't right behind us. Lean over a little and take the cross road to Clifton Corners-he can't tell us from Adam at this distance."

The major looked after them musing-"A bicycle courtship very likely. If I hadn't kept a strict eye on Esther he would have been gadding about the country in the same way with young Bronson. Hanged if I know what to think of women nowadays, I'll take Esther to the race tomorrow for the express purpose of keeping Bronson away from her-as if I weren't up to their little game." The major chuckled and gave the

rein to his horse. The morning of Memorial day dawned in clear and perfect brilliancy. The whole countryside was in a state of excitement due to the great annual bicycle road race over the famous Millington-Irving twenty-five mile course and the entire route was lined early

"How are you, Paul?" asked a tall young fellow. "Hope you're in good "Never was better," said Paul, cheer-

for good. I hardly expected to see you "Oh, I don't expect to win. This is merely a training exercise for me. I

say, Paul, the boys are with you, don't you know. Good luck to you, old fellow; we all hope you'll win." "Thanks, Tom, but I may have a

ough tussel. How many starters are "Oh, only a million or so-a lot of the worst-looking skates I ever saw. There are only a dozen really good men in the ot. All you have to look out for is acidents. It you get tangled up with a patch of those wretched amateurs, let the amateurs get killed-there are too nany of them in the gang anyhow." "Look out there!" Shouted a stenorian voice. An avant courier of the

race flashes by them. A cloud of yeldust filled the air, and a shout arose from the crowd that jammed perilously close to the route as the hour for the race approached. The famous race course stretched its inuous route, curving through a beautiful country now in the flush of radiant early summer, and flying over it. with every muscle as tense as steel and

forms bent over the handle bars in des-

perate endeavor, were over a hundred

varying from the kaleidoscopic whir as they passed the eye line to the dim and almost imperceptible acton as far away as the eye could reach. Hotter and hotter and more determned grew the contest as it drew to a finish: those who had survived the long and difficult test bent all their powers in a final effort to win. Many of them showed the effect of Paul hid ridden well from the first,

like a dissolving view, their motion

nd half way down th pulled away from the main bunch, and was close in the rear of the leaders, All were saving themselves as much as they dared, for the final and decisive strain.

Once Everett threw back a quick "Looking out for Bronson?" cried the man behind him. "He's a mile or so

back there somewhere." TO BE CONTINUED.

RANDOM REMARKS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE

The importance of an early formed habit of complete physical self-control is urged by a writer in Leslie's Weekly. Every thoughtful person, he says, can readily understand how a habit of giving way to every trivial physical impulse is almost inevitably formed when no especial curb is placed upon the general manner. In the days when girlsand boys also-were taught to keep themselves in hand, and allow no motion that was not necessary, they were on the watch for every trifling movement and it was stopped almost before it began. At an assembly of what is supposed to be the most highly culattired, constantly turned and twisted her head and contorted her countea form of uncontrolable nervousness. More likely she was simply the vieness or embarrassment, continued through heedlessness of neglect, and and filthy, who also had contracted the culiarity almost impossible to break up. Genuine nervous twitchings of the head and face, are, perhaps, the commonest incipient forms of St. Vitus' dance, but can usually be cured if taken in childhood. Since they are often not

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had dyspepsia and neuralgia and suffered intensely. I was so bloated at times that I had to wear my dresses loose. I had treatment from many doctors with no effect. I went to the Munyon office and consulted one of the physicians and the result of the remedies he prescribed has been a complete cure of all my troubles."

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painful and sometimes amuse more than they alarm, they are too likely to run for months without any especial attempt to check them. Thus a life habit, ultimately mortifying to the owner and revolting to the spectator, is liable to be formed.

Dr. George F. Shrady, in recounting In the Forum the modern advances in medicine and surgery, says: The great improvement in the present as compared with the past methods of administering medicines deserves a passing comment. Scarcely a generation ago the threat of a dose of the nauseous drugs of the day was sufficient to suppress the worst of evil propensities in the most wicked boy. Castor oil was a punishment, rhubarb was a terror and senna an abomination. The nauserous mixtures of our grandparents are now replaced by the elegant and almost tasty compounds of modern pharmacy. The essentials of the former medicines are now given in the forms of condensed extracts and alkaloids in proportionately reduced bulk and in consistently concentrated form. Single remedies with special indications take the place of the old-fashioned shotgun mixtures. Tablets, pellets and pills no longer offend the palate; and even quinine, the bitterest enemy of taste, now sues for favor in sugar-coated armor. The irritable stomach which denies the usual approach which economy is now diplomatically checkmated by an injection under the skin, which, although a longer way round, is a surer way home.

According to Dr. William H. Pearse, the danger of catching cold is not in sudden transitions from heat to cold, but the reverse. Dr. Pearse says that he has walked at midnight from a highly heated mansion across Boston common, in his dress coat only, on a calm starry night, the temperature about zero. He suffered no inconvenience, and felt sure that the stimulus of the heat of the house gave him power of resistance to the cold. Pearse is undoubtedly correct in his observation, says the Medical Record, that one can come from a hot room into the cold outer air and run but little chance of catching cold. The danger is rather in entering a hot room from without, and especially in entering an overheated and unventilated apartment filled with excrementitions products from the lungs and skin of its inmates. A change from a hot to a cold atmosphere can be made suddenly, but that from extreme cold to indoor heat should be made gradually if one would avoid the catarrhal consequences of "catching heat."

The bad habit of wetting lead pencil points in the mouth is thus touched upon by the Medical Review: Recently a woman of fine bearing and elegantly tivated class in a great city, a gentle- dressed stepped into the counting-room man was recently annoyed during the of one of the local papers of a large entire evening, because a woman in city to insert an advertisement. Havfront of him, handsome and elegantly ing no pencil of her own, she picked up a pencil which was tied with a string to a pad used for writing. At once she nance. Possibly she was afflicted with moistened the lead with her tongue and began to write. An elderly woman who was standing by reminded her tim of a habit, begun in self-onescious- that the pencil had just been used by an old man, ragged and dirty, greasy finally culminating in a personal pe- same habit of wetting the pencil on his tongue every time he wrote a word. The disgusted woman flung the pencil away and scolded the young man behind the counter until he sharpened a brand new pencil for her use and benefit. The habit is a foolish one. Instead of making the pencil write more freely and easily, it hardens it and makes it write blurred and irregular.

.The fact that the wearing of wells is productive of weak eyesight, says a medical journal, headaches and some times vertigo and nausea, is within the experience of every ophthalmologist, Not only are these effects produced by the eye strain consequent upon the added efforts made by one or both eyes to see through or around an obstruction, but the irregular figuring on the veil itself is in some instances a source of annoyance to the wearer. other cases of abuse, the burden rests heaviest upon the weakest eyes, and probably the reason why one encounters so comparatively few instances of asthenopia directly due to veil wearing is that the embarrassed eyes are able to overcome the additional strain when the vision is normal, the oculo-muscular system in proper equilibrium, and

There are too many young mechanics who are dosing themselves continually, three times a day, with all sorts of sarsaparillas, iron tonics, and other compounds, in the hope of working up a little pure blood, a good appe tite and a cheerful spirit, when, if the truth was known, the same amount of rain water would be equally as good, if not more beneficial. What is wanted to wake up the drooping spirits of an always-catching-cold mechanic is Readers sending for this book will a cold-water bath. The life of many a mechanic is such as to rebel against press packages, nor be otherwise imany such treatment unless in the mechanic is such as to rebel against warmest weather, and in a bath of

about the same temperature, for fear of bringing on a chill that they could never get over, when, in fact, it is the very thing that is needed to keep from catching any disease. It is "true that but a few of the every-day laborers have the luxury of a bath room, but a tin basin is always in the reach of all, and with only two quarts of cold water and a common crash towel such a scrubbing down can be given that will equal the finest bath. Try this

now, and keep it up frequently, and

the cold wenther won't be noticed when

It begins to come in.

The hygienic systematic care of the feet will do more to relieve the suffer er from afflictions of the feet than any eccentricity in the way of foot-wear. The feet should be systematically bathed as often as are the hands and a daily footbath is essential to the health of the members. When the feet are apt to swell (which is due to weakness in the general health), a hot footbath at night is desirable; in this a few tablespoonfuls of salt should be dissolved. This prevents the enervating effects that come from the fre-quent use of the hot bath. The daily footbath should be simply warmed enough to take the chill off the water, The feet should be thoroughly dried after bathing them with a soft absorb ent towel, then rubbed vigorously with a rough friction towel. A spirit bath is excellent to seep the feet in good condition. After bathing them rub the soles and between the toes with a little alcohol, which may be perfumed with a small quantity of lavender or violet water or cologne to make it more agreeable. A systematic bathing of the feet. putting on fresh stockings or freshlyaired stockings each day, allowing the shoes to rest and air at least 24 hours after wearing before they are worn again-all this conduces to the health of the members. There is scarcely anything that is so restful after a fatiguing walk or household employment as a footbath, followed by a change of stockings and shoes. It is astonishing to one who has never tried this simple method of treating the feet how often corns and even bunions will vanish before such care.-New York



appeals to the sympathy of even the most callous-hearted life, deprived of the stay and support upon which she had every right to depend, and her future overshad of the one man in all the world upon whom she

her love and affection. A man has no right to sacrifice his life in the mad race for money, by neglecting his bodily health. A man owes it to himself and to his wife and chilowes it to himself and to his wife and children to live a long and helpful life. If a man would live he must keep health.

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