

Woman and Her Work

Is bicycling a desirable, and healthful exercise for women, or not? That is a question. The weight of "expert testimony" seems about evenly divided, numbers of physicians pronouncing it, like Pitcher's Castoria "harmless" while others of equal reputation denounce it in unmeasured terms, and hold it responsible for most of the ills that female flesh is heir to.

"You are thoroughly out of sorts," says the high-priced physician, "your nervous system needs toning up, and unless something is done for you soon it will be a case of complete nervous prostration with you. What you need is fresh air exercise, and something to interest you and raise your spirits. Have you a bicycle? No, I thought not; then get one at once, don't overdo it, as you ladies are so apt to do, but never let a day go by without riding at least five miles, and I will venture to say that this is the last fee I shall get from you for a long time."

"Hum" says the specialist stroking his chin thoughtfully, "curvature of the spine, constant headache, pain in the eyes, shattered nervous system; it is scarcely necessary for me to ask whether you ride a bicycle, the symptoms answer the question already? Yes! I knew it. Well go home—sell the bicycle, or give it away, and then come back to me and I will do what I can for you; but until then I can do nothing for you; your case is a common one."

I am not prepared to discuss this matter "from an intelligent point of view" as the newspapers say, for the simple reason that I don't know anything about it, and I have a prejudice against giving an opinion on matters I do not understand. I never was on a bicycle but once in my life, and I did not remain upon it long enough on that occasion to be able to give a very clear account of my sensations. I know that just before I fell off, I had a feeling that my entire spinal column was being violently forced up into my skull, and "then I remembered no more." So I cannot hold forth at any length upon the evil effects of the wheel on the human constitution; but this I must say—it wheeling is such a healthful and invigorating pursuit why is it that one of the first things a physician orders an invalid to give up, is the bicycle? I have known more than one man who was just slightly out of health, and who explained casually that he was not riding his wheel now; as he had been rather under the weather lately, and the doctor had forbidden him to ride at all.

Why is it that we can seldom pick up a newspaper without finding somewhere in its columns an advertisement or two of a ladies bicycle for sale, nearly new, and to be sold at a bargain! It would almost look as if the wheel was not such an unalloyed blessing after all.

There is no doubt that we hear now of ailments hitherto unknown to medical science. We have bicycle hand, bicycle curvature of the spine, bicycle limp, bicycle nerves, bicycle defective vision, and finally bicycle face, which is not by any means the joke it is usually considered, but a real contraction of the muscles of the face which give a peculiar expression of anxiety and a look of premature age to those who indulge to excess in the pastime and which is caused, so scientists tell us by the constant watchfulness which it is necessary to exercise in cycling.

The great difference between cycling, and almost all other forms of exercise is the utter absence of rest, and the impossibility of relaxing a vigilance upon which the rider's safety depends. In driving the reins can be loosened and the horse allowed to take his own way without danger, and that most delightful of exercises, riding, the most exciting gallop may be followed by an inaction that is almost perfect rest. The reins are laid on the horse's neck and he is allowed to choose his own pace without an anxious thought; he does not need guiding, he knows his own way, and can take excellent care both of himself and his rider and there is no need of keeping a perpetual tight rein, and holding him up lest he topple over; he is a self supporting institution with four good legs to stand upon, and an intelligent brain to direct his movements. In the case of the bicycle all this is reversed; to stop means either to dismount instantly or to fall over, standing still is an impossibility, and a pleasant lazy saunter is out of the question, there is no taking it easy, no lounging restfully along and admiring the scenery, it is work, work all the time, with no eyes for anything but the bicycle, and a constant fear that a sharp stone may puncture a tire and leave one stranded and helpless miles from home; or that an unseen im-

pediment in the way may cause a complete wreck, or an unexpected collision result in the utter demolition of both bicycle and rider. It is this constant strain of every faculty, physicians say that causes so many expert riders to break down suddenly, and find it necessary to choose between their health and their wheels.

And yet I know a lady who, after suffering for years from chronic bronchitis was perfectly cured by bicycle exercise, and when the enfeebled health left after a long attack of grippe obliged her to give up her wheel, the old trouble returned almost immediately. So, as I said before, it is really very difficult to give an opinion on the subject, and as far as I know the question has never been satisfactorily answered yet.

The fashions for children this season are almost as varied as those for grown people, but the chief feature they aim at seems to be the picturesque, and a very sensible difference, that is being made between the small and the large costume is the very general use of inexpensive materials for children's dresses. For the best, or party dresses China and pongee silks, are frequently used. Accordion plaited India silk with a white ground and Persian pattern is soft delicate colors is a pretty choice for these little dresses which are made with a short low necked blouse finished around the shoulders with a lace trimmed bertha of white batiste, or frills of the silk edged with narrow velvet ribbon, and worn over a white guimpe. Such dresses are worn by girls between six and twelve years of age. White China silk is another favorite dress for girls just entering their teens, and it is made up very plainly, the skirts either perfectly plain, or with a trimming of lace edged trills or rows of insertion. The waists have a lace yoke with a lace trimmed ruffle as a finish, and the pongs dresses generally have a deep collar of embroidery.

The sweetest little gowns of all, the flowered organdies dimities and lawns which cost so little and may be made up so simply. Dimity under dresses of some plain color are a great improvement to the organdies, and do not add greatly to their expense, while bright ribbons for sash, and bows are essential to the success of the dress. The skirts are often plainly finished with a deep hem for younger children, and the waists have a guimpe yoke of lace insertion with a frill of lawn around the edge. For older girls the skirts are gored, and trimmed with ruffles. A pretty model is of white organdie covered with a design of pink rosebuds. The belt is of white muslin through which pink ribbon is run coming out in front to form a rosette. Accordion plaited lace edged frills of the muslin fall over the close sleeves, and a lace edged ruffi trims the skirt. A pretty, and very easily laundered trimming for these little gowns consists of rows of lace insertion around both the skirt and full blouse bodice, and fine tucks above the hem is another simple and pretty decoration. White dotted muslins made up over colored lawns and trimmed with lace makes dainty dresses for very small girls, and as the lining is separate from the dress they are very easy to do up, the lining needing to be washed much less often than the overdress.

Very serviceable summer dresses for young girls of all ages are made of both white and colored pique, and cut in the coat and skirt style. They are sometimes trimmed with braid, embroidered insertion but are quite as often perfectly plain. Other pique dresses have a guimpe yoke of embroidery or finely tucked white batiste with rows of insertion between the tucks, a frill of embroidery finishing the edge, and rows of embroidery on the skirt.

The softly draping cashmeres which are so fashionable this year make ideal dresses for young girls, and when light colors are chosen they are very dressy. Tucks are very much used in trimmings and narrow velvet ribbon is very effective on cashmere. A pretty little party dress of India silk has a groundwork of pale pink with white, green and black pattern on it. The skirt is perfectly plain finished with a deep hem and shirred with several cords run in around, and below the waist. Plaid ribbon showing all the colors of the silk forms braces belt and collar, and embroidered muslin frills fall over the shoulders. Canvas, is quite as popular a material for older girls as it is for the gowns of grown people and one very simple and pretty canvas dress was of tan color trimmed with bands of white satin covered with cream guimpe lace. Embroidered ecru batiste, and colored pique are both used as trimmings for these canvas dresses. Of course these are only the best dresses in the little wardrobes, and there is an almost endless variety of pretty cambrics and prints to choose from. These are made up in the simplest style with yokes, full bodices, and plain deeply trimmed skirts, for older girls, while for very small tots, frills of embroidery, feather stitched braid, and all-over embroidery,

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are used with lavish hand. But while the older ones may have two or three pretty print dresses, the really standard gown for every day wear is the skirt of serge, or some thick dark material, and the ever convenient shirt waist. This costume keeps the laundry bills down, and is always both serviceable and comfortable.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the sailor hat is the accepted headgear for all ordinary occasions, nothing has yet been found to take its place, and I do not imagine anything ever will. The mixed raws are more worn this year than the plain ones, they keep clean longer than white, and are less heavy looking than either black or navy blue. For best there are the prettier picture hats of white lghorn, shirred India silk, and lace; trimmed with wide thick satin ribbon in either cream or white, and loaded with the daintiest of flowers; or else looking rich and plain with loops of satin ribbon, and a profusion of ostrich tips. Altogether, the children's lines have fallen in pleasant places this summer, as far as dress is concerned.

ASTRA.

WHY THEY DIDN'T LAUGH.

The Story Fell Flat Because It Was so Properly Told.

"Suit the action to the word, the word to the action," says Hamlet, instructing the players, and his advice should be heeded by all public speakers. Once upon a time a stump orator, who is now a United States Senator, told a story and it fell flat, because his action suited not his word. The Hon. W. E. Morris of Chicago describes the warning incident in the Times-Herald:

Another of the stories that has made an occasional hit, said Mr. Mason, was one about my friend Scharlau, who was running for office in one of the north side districts. We arranged a meeting for him in the fourteenth ward.

There was a decorated dry-goods box for Scharlau to stand upon in front of the wigwam. The building itself was festooned from floor to rafters with bunting and flags. Love of his adopted country and enthusiasm for the stars and stripes bubbled in Scharlau's soul, and found fervent expression in his speech.

Before he began his address a large American flag was swinging over his head. It was held by ropes passed through pulleys. The crowd was so enormous there was insufficient room in the house, and the speech making took place in the open air. The flag was swung from a building across the street to the apex of the roof of the wigwam. The rigging had fouled, and just before Scharlau climbed upon the box the flag was hauled over to the building across the street for rearrangement.

Scharlau did not remark the absence of Old Glory. Looking his audience squarely in the eyes, as a successful orator should do, and pointing up to where the flag had been flying, he said in his most impressive manner:

"Fellow-citizens, I love dot flag; I gannod help id. In der land von vance I vas geborn der brinicalities of dot flag—again pointing to it, but not looking up—'are not respected; I gannod help lofing id just der same.' Then, looking upward and still pointing, he said, 'See dot emblem of liber—vare der tuyfel ish dot flag gone?'"

The value of this incident depends on the position of the eyes of the speaker. He must keep them fixed on his audience, and point up, not cast his eyes that way. If Scharlau had looked up, it is evident he never would have referred to the flag. I was making a tour to the Eastern States a few campaigns ago with a man who is now a United States Senator. "Do you know, Mason," he said, when we were going over to an New Jersey city to address a meeting, "do you know I believe that story-telling, conversational style of yours is a winner. I think I'll tell 'em some myself. That flag story of yours is a good one; if you don't object, I'll use it tonight. You've a lot more and don't need it. I'm a poor man with no stories, and I'll just borrow it."

Of course I told him to go on and tell



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the story, and he did. He ranged the good men of the town up in front of him, and led properly up to the story.

"I love dot flag," he said, following his upward pointed finger with his eyes. "I love dot flag. In der goundry I gome from ids brinicals, der ids glorious brinicals are nod respected"—again pointing and looking up in the air. "See dot emblem of liberly waving"—looking up for the last time—"vare ish dot flag gone?"

Naturally the story fell flat. He had told all about the removal of the flag, but which he personated Scharlau he kept elevating his eyes as often as he lifted his finger. He didn't raise a laugh.

Going home, discussing the meeting and the lack of enthusiasm in the reception of the flag story, he said, "I believe more than ever, Mason, the success of a story depends on the sense of the hearers. Now that crowd we had was a set of cold, unappreciative, unmagnetic clams."

ONE MILLIONAIRE'S STORY.

Peniless, He went Right Over to the Bank and Got the Money.

A young German immigrant, who had not a dollar in the world and no relatives friends, or acquaintances in America worked his way westward from New York until he reached a small town in Ohio, where he secured a position as clerk in a flour and feed store and went to work. In almost an incredibly short time he learned the English language and had mastered the few details of the business he was in.

One day he walked into another feed store a few blocks away, said that he had heard that the proprietor of the place desired to sell out and inquired the price. The feed dealer wanted \$1,500. After a few inquiries the caller said:

"All right. I will call tomorrow at 10 and you'll go over to the bank and get the money."

No one knew anything about the young German. The feed store man who wanted to sell jumped to the conclusion that the prospective purchaser must have brought considerable money from Germany. The next day promptly on time, the German called to take possession.

"Come on," he said, "we'll go right over to the bank now and get the money."

Together they entered the bank. The German approached the cashier's window, introduced himself and said:

"Dis is Mr. Jones, who keeps the feed store on Main street. I haf bought out his place for \$1,500, and va hai called to get the money."

"I beg your pardon," replied the cashier, "you have no account here, have you?" "You don't understand," earnestly remarked the German. "I don't want an account at all; I want only the money."

"But you have no money in this bank, explained the official.



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"Of course not," assented the caller. If I had money I would pay dis man myself. But I haven't any money at all, so I must come to you to get it."

"But we can't let you have money unless you first give it to us."

"Then why is a bank?" excitedly demanded this would-be borrower.

The colloquy which ensued waxed so loud that the President of the bank came out of his private office to see what was the matter. He took the young German in hand personally. The latter told the banker all about himself and his aims, and in less than a half hour the bank had loaned him \$1,500 and held a first mortgage on a feed store owned by the happiest young foreigner in America.

That occurred many years ago, it is true, but that young German today is the head of a corporation capitalized at \$4,000,000, and his name if I were to give it here, would be recognized instantly as one of the leading business men of this country.—Times Herald.

Nice Girls.

Of Matthew Arnold as a school-examiner the author of "Pages from a private Diary" has this to say:

Arnold's reports are very good reading, but his methods of examination were sometimes highly poetical. I remember a tale told by a fellow-inspector of a class of girl-pupil teachers that he asked Arnold to examine for him. Arnold gave them all the "excellent" mark.

"But," said the other inspector, "surely they are not all as good as they can be; some must be better than others."

"Perhaps that is so," replied Arnold, "but then, you see, they are all such very nice girls."

"Papa, are we descended from monks?" asked a small boy, who had heard some one expounding certain scientific opinions. "No, my son, not on this side of the house," was the father's very improper answer.—Exchange.

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