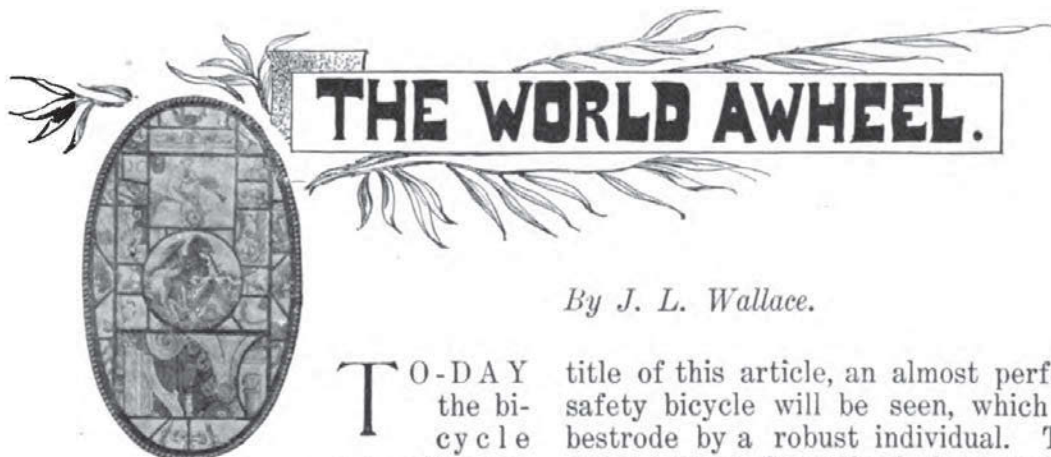


# METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE.

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*By J. L. Wallace.*

**T**O-DAY the bicycle is a well recognized factor in the social and industrial life of the world. Twenty years ago it was sneered at and the riders looked upon with a little less charity than lunatics. Seldom has a revulsion of public feeling been so complete, and seldom has an invention of such obvious merit had the good fortune to jump from general neglect into world-wide appreciation.

Though the main idea of the bicycle, in a mechanical sense, has an evolution of about a hundred years, it is not so well known that it was foreshadowed, in an art sense, more than two centuries ago. If one will look closely at the oval cut which is at the left of the

title of this article, an almost perfect safety bicycle will be seen, which is bestrode by a robust individual. The cut is a copy of a stained glass window in a little English church some half an hour's ride from London toward Windsor. The window is in the crypt, and though it is known for a certainty that the window as it stands dates from the early part of the seventeenth century, it is the opinion of experts that the glass is but a patchwork of much older fragments, the age of which may date back for several centuries previous. In view of the fact that the design is, with the exception of the pedals, almost an exact duplicate of the bicycle ridden to-day, it seems most curious that it was never brought to notice till long after the wheel, as we see it to-day, was being ridden in actuality.



A BICYCLE PARTY CROSSING THE HUDSON FOR A DAY'S OUTING ON THE JERSEY ROADS.



SHUNNING THE ROAD FOR A SHORT CUT  
OVER THE BLUFFS.

Coming back to the history of the bicycle in this country, it is instructive to remember that as late as 1877 there were hardly more than a hundred wheels in the United States; this year it is safe to say that there are a million, if not more, and the demand, instead of showing any signs of decrease, is continually augmenting.

One great and encouraging sign which insures its permanency, and upon which much of its recent rapid growth has been dependent, is the very general breaking-down of the prejudice connected with women riding it. Like most things that are inexplicable, this prejudice was most virulent among the women themselves, and those who first had the temerity to brave the criticism of

their sisters had anything but an easy time of it. It seems impossible now, as one sees the riding public made up about equally of both sexes, to conceive how either men or women should have at one time anathematized the wheel as one of the most potent devices of the archfiend to bring misery upon mankind; but nevertheless some of the most enthusiastic followers of the wheel to-day were numbered with its enemies but three years back. But one prominent example of anti-wheel agitation has attracted public attention recently, and that was the futile effort of Mrs. Charlotte Smith to stem the tide of its popularity. But the zealous detractor of the bicycle was too late in her crusade, for she asked her hearing of a public that had already tasted the delights that bicycling alone can give, and that could not be made to believe that fresh air, robust health, and communion with Nature were things of evil.

In this article most of the pictures carried have a bearing upon the purely social and pleasurable sides of the wheel. Holidays, pleasant evenings, and Sundays are the times chosen for one of the enjoyable journeys a wheel, and they vary in length, destination, and character as widely as do the individuals who go upon them. New York City is most favorably situated as a centre for cycling routes to radiate from, but the one taken for the first series of illustrations is among the most popular; it is on the Jersey side of the Hudson, along the Palisades, and a ride of more picturesqueness it would be hard to find. Taking the Fort Lee ferry, ten minutes carries one across the river, and from the rear of the boat one can see the magnificent skyline of half the city and imposing structure of Grant's Tomb on



THE ENTHUSIASTS LEAVING THE FORT LEE FERRY HOUSE.



A SPIRITED ALTERCATION IN REGARD TO THE RIGHT OF THE ROAD.  
*As cyclists are invariably polite, it follows that the horseman must be in the wrong.*

Riverside Drive. The landing is at the foot of the Palisades, upon which, after a roundabout climb of a mile, the wheelman is repaid for his troubles by roads smooth as asphalt and a view without compare.

In a purely industrial sense the bicycle has made marvellous strides, and below are described some of its advances in this respect:

A German inventor has perfected a bicycle ambulance which has been in practical use at the Royal Charité Hospital in Berlin for some time, and is

now in use in Chicago. The motive power is furnished by two men, one of whom may be the surgeon, and the expense of an ambulance stable is avoided, while there is also an appreciable saving in the time required to turn out in answer to a call. There is less



A REST BY THE WAY  
AND A GOOD STORY.



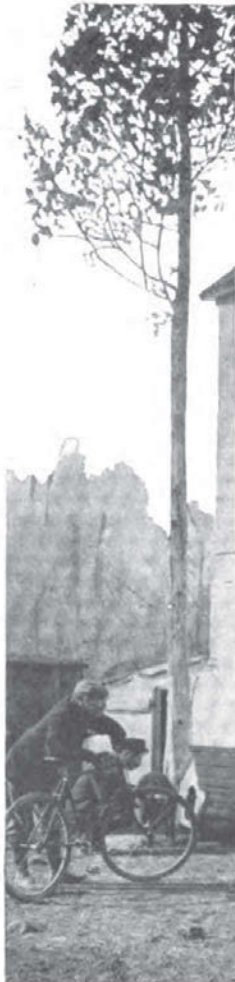
vibration than is the case with the ambulances in general use, and equal protection is afforded the patient by a waterproof cover.

Physicians and clergymen are also availing themselves of the service of the bicycle to an ever-increasing extent in making

their rounds. To the physician, especially the young practitioner to whom the expense of a horse and buggy is a serious financial strain, the machine is exceptionally useful; and in answering hurry calls at night, when the loss of a few minutes may cost a human life, the avoidance of delay at a livery stable is a matter of considerable importance.

The inspectors of our New York Street-Cleaning Department now make their rounds mounted on bicycles, when formerly they were forced to go on foot, and they perform their duties more thoroughly than under the old plan; and it has been seriously proposed that the police roundsmen also be provided with wheels, though nothing has yet been done in this direction.

The bicycle policeman is a natural development of the growth of cycling. Several important arrests made by the



A BOARDING KENNEL COMES IN FOR THE PARTY'S ATTENTION AND CRITICISM.

crack riders of the force, who impressed into their service machines belonging to bystanders, convinced the Police Board that a force of men so mounted could render invaluable service, and most of the larger cities now have regularly organized bicycle forces. Their chief duty is to regulate the speed of riders on the boulevards; but they not only serve in this capacity, but many daring stoppages of runaways are to their credit. It is but a question of time when the entire suburban police will be so mounted, as well as those who patrol the longer thoroughfares and the Park drives.

The postal service has not yet recognized the value of the bicycle officially, though each postmaster is given authority to let his men use the wheel when convenient, and rural deliveries, as well as city collections, are made awheel at many places throughout the country.

For the purposes of trade the package-delivery bicycles are generally used. These are three-wheeled affairs, much the same as the old velocipedes, with a covered receptacle or cabinet between the two rear wheels. They are now almost universally used by firms whose commodities are of sufficiently small



THE USUAL BREAKDOWN, AND A RESCUE FROM A WALK BY A CHARITABLY DISPOSED FARMER.

bulk to render such plan feasible, as well as the big dry-goods stores, where they are useful in making special deliveries.

The telegraph service is also greatly expedited by the use of bicycle messengers, and the old joke about snail-like telegraph boys is now fast being relegated to the past. In cities where the roadways will permit, the entire staff is mounted. Here the bad pavements and heavy traffic prevent their use save in the up-



ALL THESE MEN WILL SOLEMNLY AVER TO THEIR FRIENDS THAT THEY RODE THE WHOLE DISTANCE "WITHOUT A DISMOUNT."



EVERY FIVE MILES IT IS A NECESSITY THAT THEY STOP FOR LUNCH, AND EACH RECOUNTS HOW MANY CENTURIES HE HAS TO HIS CREDIT.

town districts of good roads.

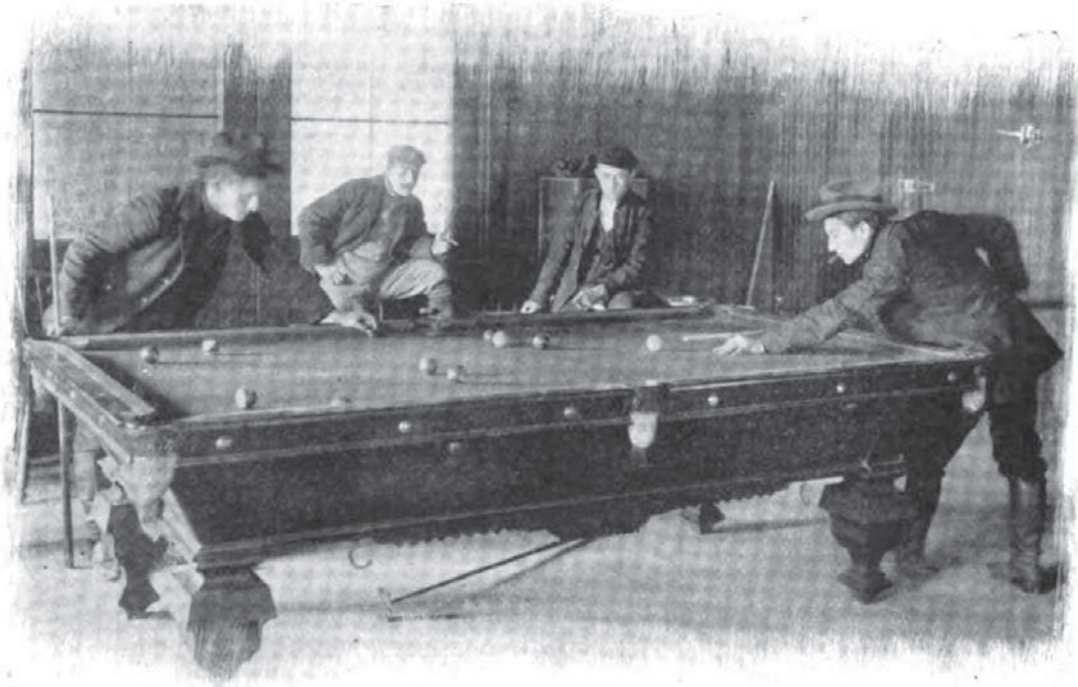
The fire department is considering the adoption of a chemical engine of the bicycle type, several of which have been brought out, and in time the chiefs will attend the fires in their districts awheel instead of driving as at present.

Inspectors on the street car lines also are



AN ACCIDENT TO THE REARGUARD.

making use of the bicycle on their tours. One official on a New Jersey road formerly required two horses to take him over the one hundred and ten miles of track owned by the syndicate employing him, but now a wheel enables him to cover the same ground with greater speed and convenience; in fact, all men whose duties



THIS LITTLE EPISODE WILL APPEAR AS "WE WERE REELING OFF MILES IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES" IN THE VERACIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE TRIP.

require them to cover considerable ground early discovered the advantages of the cycle.

In the army the bicycle has been found useful in many capacities. For the use of military scouts it is often

more serviceable than a horse, and picket duty may also be performed at times more advantageously while a wheel. For preserving communication between two bodies of troops and performing general courier duty, it is far superior



THE GREAT KNOWLEDGE OF TECHNICAL MECHANICS DISPLAYED BY THE PARTY WHEN AN ACCIDENT HAPPENS IS SOMETHING APPALLING.



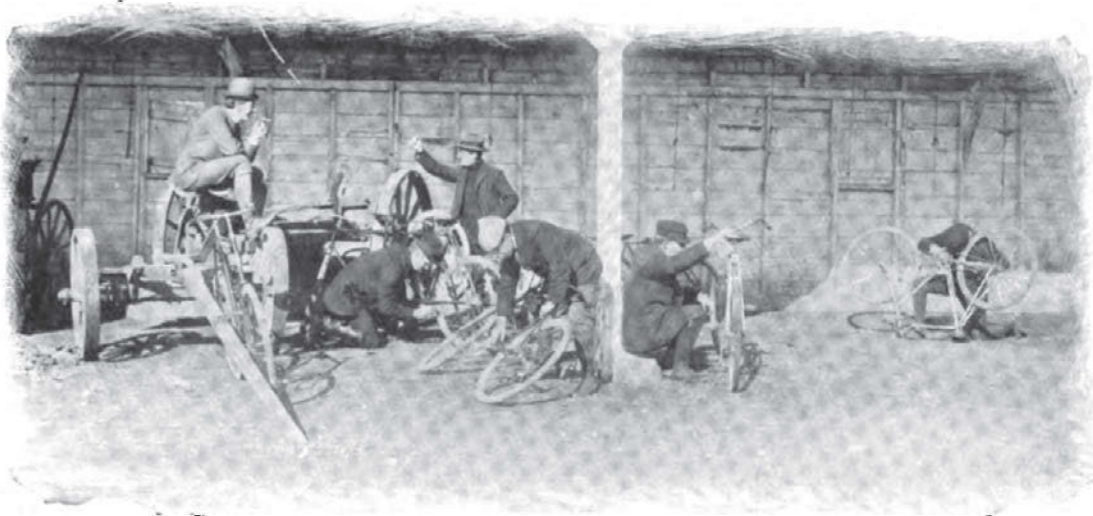
to the horse, being noiseless, tireless, more swift, and easier to handle.

When the bicycle is used for corps equipment its advantages, from a military standpoint, become decidedly promising. In a recent march of the 25th United States Infantry Bicycle Corps over all sorts and conditions of roads in the West, it was found that the men could cover double the distance of ordinary infantry, and where the roads permitted it they outstripped cavalry.

It would almost seem that the bicycle, so far as its mechanism is concerned, has reached its perfectedness; but there is at least one great improvement over existing models which will be presented for public approval in the near future, and this is the chainless wheel. True, the idea is not entirely new, but the successful

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED.





CLEANING UP WHEELS WHILE WAITING FOR DINNER.

constructional difficulties have not been overcome until this year. The device is simple, consisting merely of bevel gears meshing into similar gears on the front and rear sprockets, and connected by a rod which runs parallel to the lines of the frame. Enthusiasts who have ridden on the chainless

machine prophesy that it will soon supplant the chain, and if all that is asserted concerning the new invention be true, it does not seem that their forecast is too sanguine. Otherwise than in doing away with the chain, it is hard to conjecture of any radical improvement in the bicycle of to-day, and no one need



"LET GOOD DIGESTION WAIT ON APPETITE, AND HEALTH ON BOTH."



DINNER OVER, THE PARTY STARTS OUT IN EARNEST TO INCREASE CYCLOMETER RECORDS.

hold aloof from the army of wheelmen for fear that his purchased bicycle may suddenly be reckoned among the back numbers.

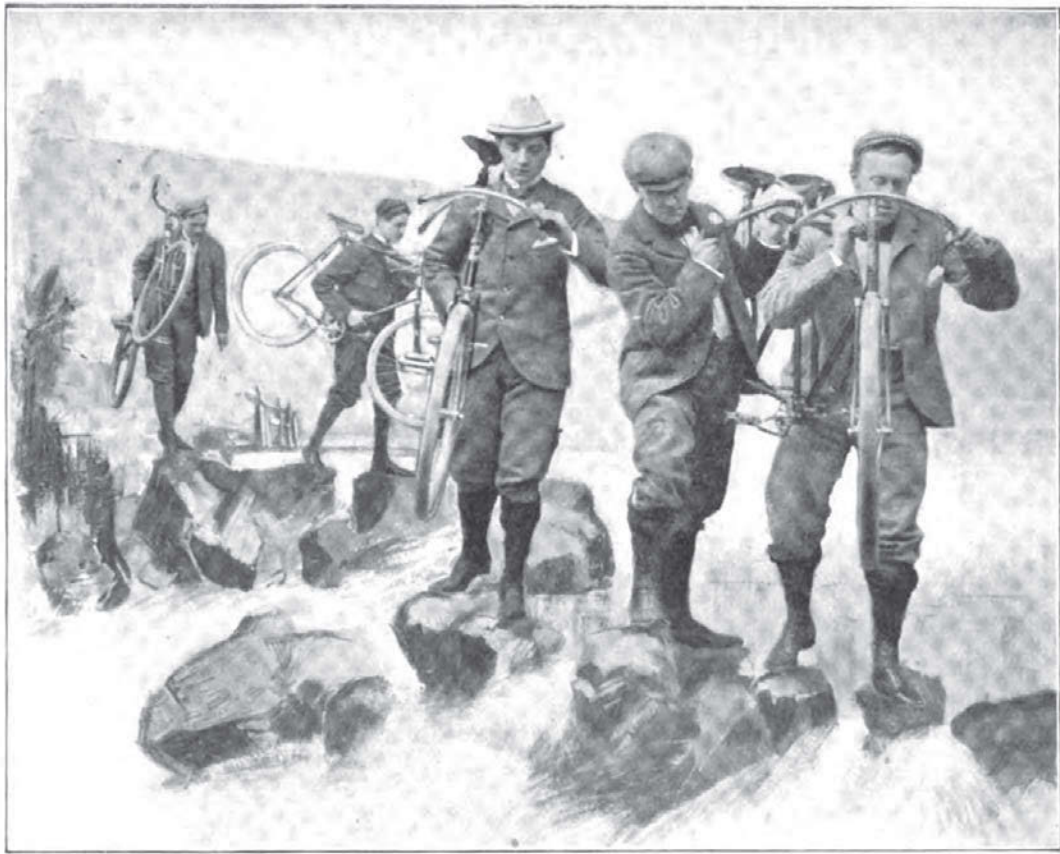
From a purely public view the bicycle has, since its adoption, done more to improve the roads than all the efforts made since the country was settled; this may appear to many as a mild statement, but the facts justify it. By the bicycle in this connection is meant the League of American Wheelmen, which, from a small beginning in the early eighties, has now a total membership of nearly 100,000. All persons possessing a good character are eligible to its ranks, and the organization has for its object the

maintaining of the rights of wheelmen, such as park privileges, the doing away with trivial or unjust riding, restrictions, and above all the improvement of the roads whether in town or country. So far-reaching is it in its scope for the interests of wheelmen that every cyclist who becomes aware of its purposes generally becomes a member, and thus it bids fair to become the most powerful organized body of its kind in the world.

Metropolitan riders should remember that the privileges of Central and other parks, the long stretches of asphalt and macadam, are the gifts of the League to enhance his pleasures, and what is so of New York is true the country



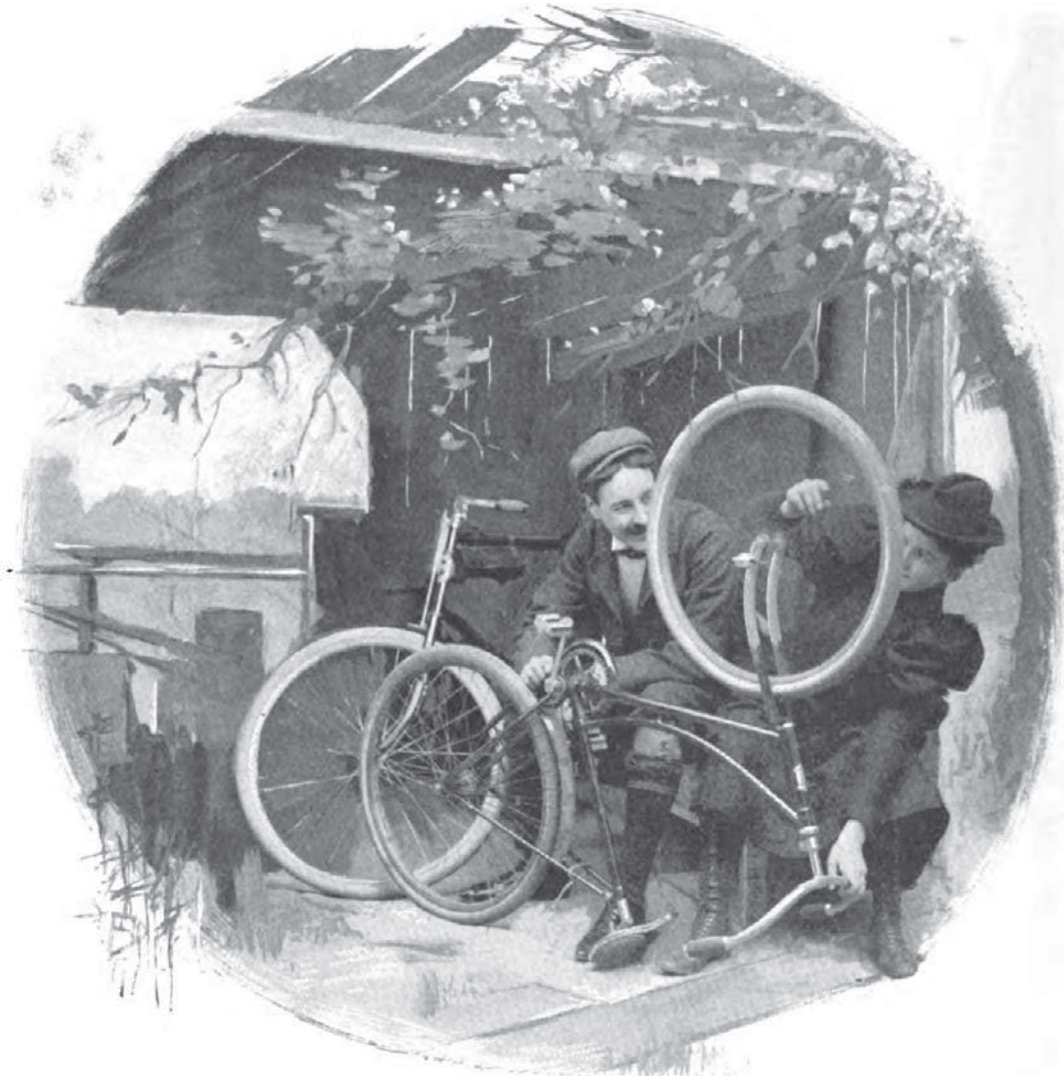
PLEASURABLE IDLING.



A SITUATION WHEREIN FEET ARE OF MORE VALUE THAN THE WHEEL.



A WAIT WHILE THE PACERS ON THE TANDEM APPROPRIATE SOME COUNTRY AIR FOR THE REAR TIRE.



CUPID'S WAY OF VANQUISHING DISTANCE WITHOUT RIDING.

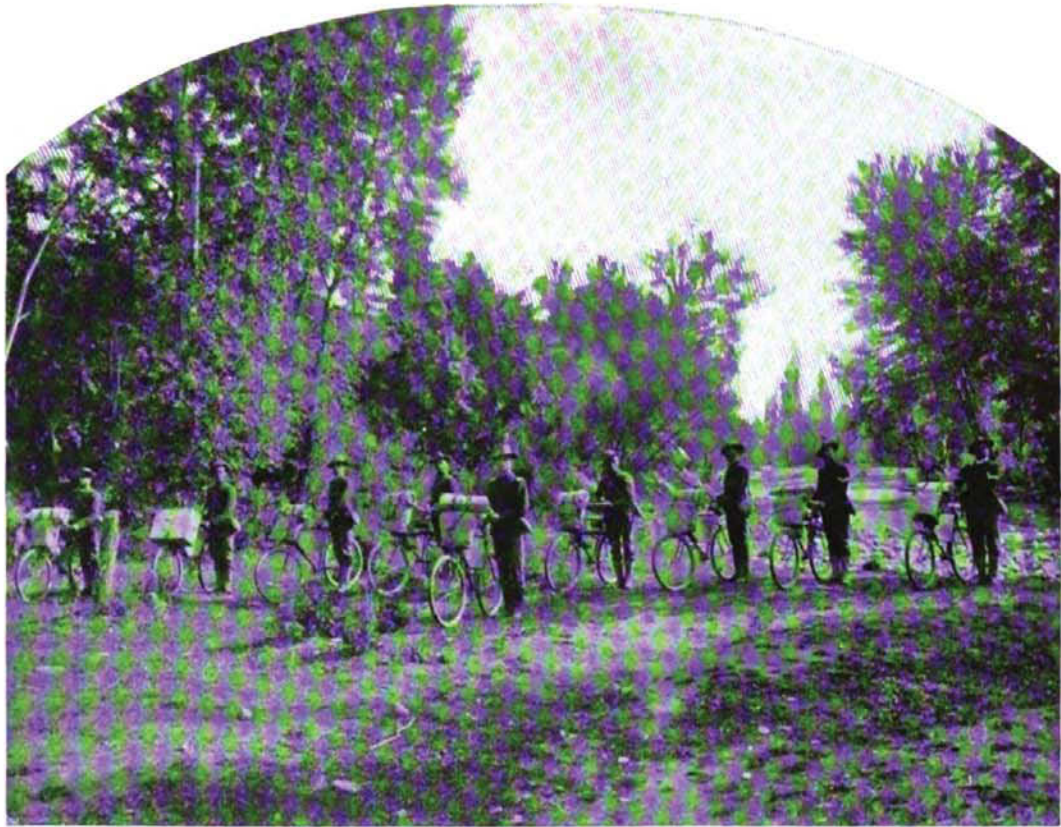
in its widest sense.

In the agitation for better roads, for which cyclists and the L. A. W. are responsible, there are one or two general misconceptions which should be corrected; one is that many, espe-



A TANDEM RIDE THAT HAS MORE OF ROMANCE THAN OF LABOR.

cially the farmers, are able to see nothing in the movement except a selfish desire on the part of wheelmen to increase road taxes, and another is that no benefits accrue to any outside of the wheeling body.



**THE BICYCLE IN THE ARMY.**

*The upper picture shows the 25th U. S. Infantry Bicycle Corps, and the lower, Co. B, 2d Regiment Massachusetts Militia, ready for road riding.*



THE AMERICAN DISTRICT TELEGRAPH COMPANY'S BICYCLE CORPS.

Never was there a more thorough misunderstanding of matters; of all ways to determine the goodness or badness of a road, none is more efficacious than to go over it on a bicycle, and it is because of the unanimity of wheelmen on this subject of highway remodelling that the error has gone abroad of their sole interest in so broad a question. Good roads, pure and



THE BICYCLE CORPS OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

simple, are among the greatest things to develop and preserve the prosperity of any country, for they lie at the root of wealth, which is dependent upon ease of communication and the transportation and exchange of products. Railroads, canals, and water-ways are the main arteries of commerce, but back of them all, and upon which they are all dependent,



ISAAC B. POTTER, PRESIDENT OF THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WHEELMEN

is the plain wagon road or city street. Products must be hauled to depots, wharves, and other collecting points, and carried away from distributing ones in vehicles dependent upon roads.

Over an ordinary country road, which is practically impassable in spring and fall, and difficult of travel even at its best, six horses can do no more than one horse on an asphalt roadway or two on a thoroughfare of macadam. If there is any system of mathematics whereby it can be figured that it is more profitable to feed a quadruple number of horses the year round than to stand a small tax for bettering the highways, it must be constructed on the lines of the theory that a man can

lift himself by his bootstraps, for to the average mind it is about as philosophically absurd. And all this does not take into account the thousand-and-one minor inconveniences that poor roads bring to the community, such as the wear and tear on vehicles, enforced hermetism, during their impassability, and many instances where crops and products spoil simply because they cannot be hauled to a market. Instead of abusing the wheelmen and asserting that they are simply in pursuit of their own pleasure, the whole country should second their efforts and endeavor to bring about a realization of the results strived for.

However, one should not infer from



A QUIET DINNER IN THE WOODS BY THREE NA'ADS OF THE WHEEL.

this arraignment that there has not been a marked interest displayed within the last few years in this question outside of special insisters for good roads—the wheelmen; nearly every legislature and town throughout the country has at least done something, and many of them have done much, to make the highways under their control things of pleasure to man and beast. But the honor for the starting of the movement, and the successful keeping it alive till its importance became patent to all, must be credited to the L. A. W.,

which, in the face of obstacles has consistently held to it through prejudice and unthinking opposition.

Coming back to the industrial side of the wheel which has been adverted to, its use is nowhere more noticeable than in connection with the army. As



THE BICYCLE G'RL LEARNS TO COPE WITH EVERY EMERGENCY ON THE ROAD.

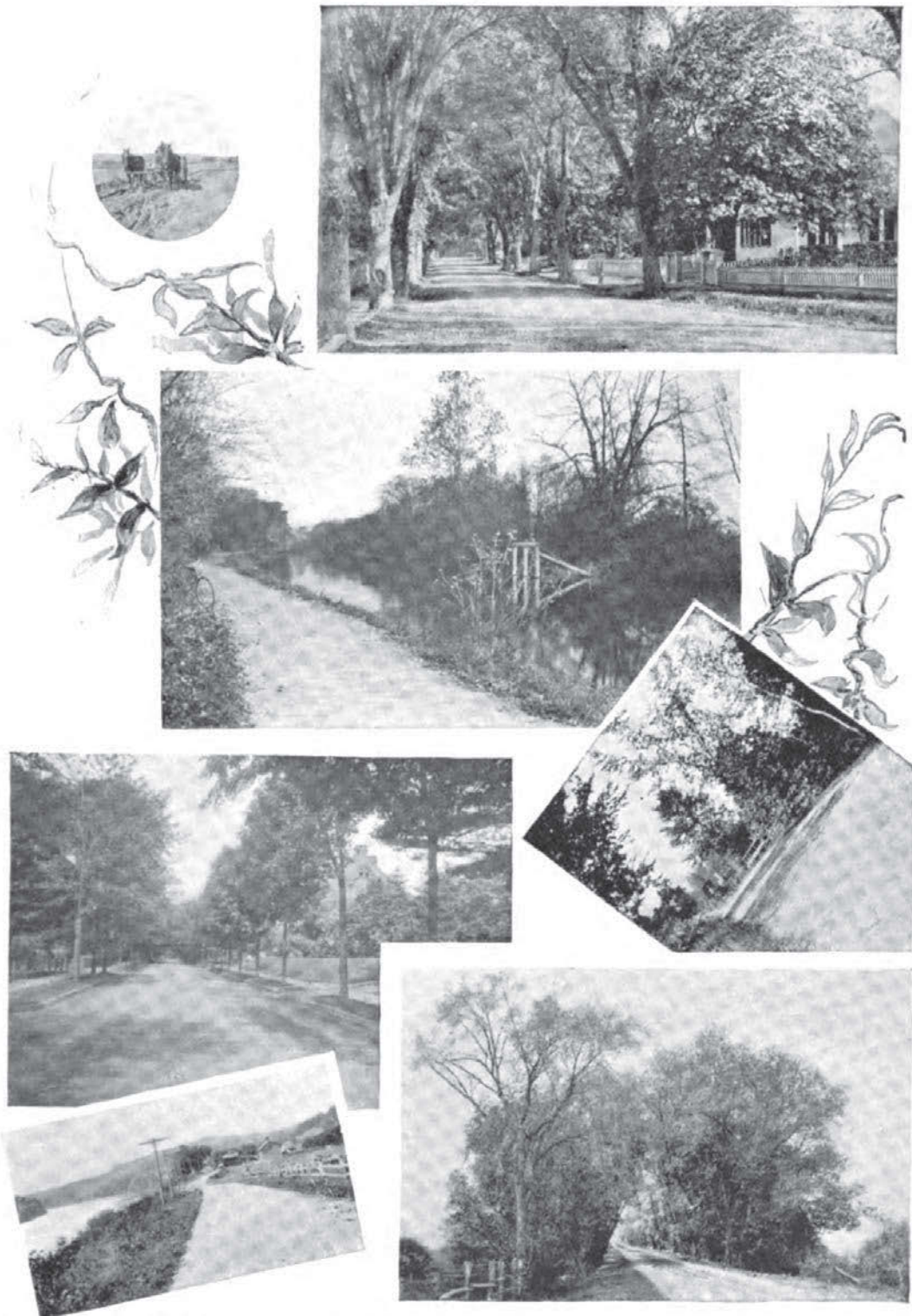


A REAR COLLISION AVERTED BY AGILITY.

an adjunct to the infantry of an army, a well-trained body of cyclists can render services of the utmost value in cases where speed rather than number is required, such as taking possession of strong places along the road, cutting off small bodies of the enemy's cavalry or infantry, capturing pickets, etc. In such cases a hundred men, moving at great speed and quietly, might accomplish results that 10,000 could not a few minutes later.

Take the case of a strong patrol of





By the courtesy of "L. A. W. Bulletin and Good Roads."

SOME EXAMPLES TAKEN AT RANDOM, SHOWING WHAT THE L. A. W. HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN THE WAY OF BETTER ROADS.

*Their contrast to the one in the upper left-hand corner is one of the strongest recommendations of the work accomplished by the League.*



NOT TO TUMBLE SOMETIMES BETOKENS A RIDER WITHOUT SPIRIT.

the enemy's cavalry reconnoitring the front of the army. A body of cyclists might easily be despatched by a side road without attracting attention, and get in rear without their presence being suspected. Dropping the wheels in a convenient place out of sight, the men can be placed in ambush and take the retreating patrol entirely by surprise.

No horse-holders need be detached from the strength of the command, and no horses are near to betray its presence and indicate its strength. This is only one of the many instances of the use to be made of this class of mounted infantrymen—for that is what these cyclists would really be, carrying rifles and all other necessary means of offence and defence on the wheel. In an emergency this corps could make a forced march of ninety or even a hun-

dred miles in a day to accomplish some important end, and still reach the objective point in good condition for hard fighting. Of course this presupposes at least a fair class of roads, such as are met with throughout Europe, but, unfortunately, very rarely on this side of the water. During ordinary marches over poor roads the cyclists could be metamorphosed into plain infantrymen, the wheels being carried on wagons especially constructed for that object, such as are even now used in some European armies for that very purpose.

In England nearly every volunteer battalion has attached to it a cycling section, forming a total of several thousand available for offensive and defensive

field manœuvring, as well as for



INDEPENDENT OF THE REPAIRER.

purposes of security and information.

General Miles favors the wheel as a military machine, and has done all in his power to advance its use as such. It is understood that he wishes to have a certain number of wheels supplied to each post for the instruction and drill of the men.

But the social side of the bicycle must ever be the surest test of its popularity; even its most sanguine admirer would not have dared to assert in its beginning that the day was coming when



THE LAST STAGE OF EVOLUTION IN THE EXPERT RIDER.

the non-rider was the exception rather than the rule. Nevertheless such is the fact, for there is hardly a hamlet in this or any other country wherein there will not be found confirmed adherents to the wheel.

And there is little fear that the bicycle will be dethroned from its pinnacle of popularity until flying machines are a reality, and such a contingency is rather dimly remote. Meantime, the wheelman is content not to wait for the precarious joys of the air.



AWHEEL IN CENTRAL PARK WHEN SPRING HERALDS ITS APPROACH.