

LEARNING TO RIDE THE BIKE.

He starts.
He moves.
He seems to feel.
He's perched upon
A wriggling eel.
—Bike Ballads.

His teeth are set. His eyes are bulging. Cold beads of perspiration bespangle his pallid brow. Every muscle is tense and rigid. It is rigor mortis, the beginning of the end? No, it is only the beginning on the bike. You can see typical cases of it every night in any of the nineteen bicycle academies of this city, and there are nineteen different methods of treating the disease. Every "professor" has the only correct system in his hand, and they all effect a cure, so there is no gaining their claims.

The methods vary, from the "rough and tumble" process, which is based on the principle that experience is the best teacher, to the progressive school, in which the pupil is carefully led through every stage, from kicking the pedals on a dummy machine to cutting the figure eight in a six-foot square.

The Fat Man's Instruction.
Let us watch the hapless beginner who falls into the hands of the rough and tumble artist. This method is especially adapted for one inclined to embonpoint, and who has taken to the wheel on the advice of the family physician. The instructor is a cadaverous-looking youth, with spindle shanks and dressed in very baggy breeches. He walks the wheel out on the floor, and while the pupil stands beside it he delivers himself at length on the principle of maintaining balance, the management of the pedals and the correct method of mounting. The pupil, a stout man, whose bald head is only partially concealed by a small cap, is the observed of all observers in the academy. He is thinking how he will look on the wheel, hears little and hears less.

The instructor braces himself and supports the wheel, while the pupil gingerly climbs into the saddle. Then he of the spindle shanks clutches a handful of the slack of the rider's coat with his right hand, and with his left holds the handle-bar and pushes. The wheel wobbles, and the big man alternately leans far out to starboard and then to port, trying to balance himself, and finally discovers that he's safe as long as he rests against the instructor. So they go around the ring several times, "just to get used to the machine," the big man leaning his whole weight against the instructor, whose slender legs bend beneath the task of supporting the rider and pushing the machine at the same time.

The "professor" looks on and gives the signal when he thinks the pupil has "got the hang of things." Then with a few additional "pointers," the



Instructor on a Cycle.
Instructor, with a re-vengeful gleam in his eye, gathers up his strength and, with one vigorous push sends the pupil forth on his wild career alone.

Then the Thud.
The stout man has had, perhaps, some experience of the uncertainties of life, but never before anything equal to this. The wheel swoops first to the left, then to the right, in ever-narrowing circles. A cold chill creeps up his spine as he thinks of his utter helplessness and realizes what the end must be. He grips the handle-bars with all his might, in a frantic effort to keep the front wheel steady and straight. There lies all the trouble, so he tugs at the handle-bars until he gets red in the face, and the wheel twists, and turns and cavorts about, like some uncanny thing possessed of the devil. He kicks wildly at the pedals, catching them, on an average, once in three revolutions, and barking his shins at every miss. Then comes a series of rapid plunges, followed by a last wild swoop of the front wheel, and a "dull, sickening thud." The big man and the wheel lie intricately mixed on the floor. The alert instructor hurries to his assistance, disentangles him and straightens the handle-bar and seat of the wheel, while the professor explains to the pupil that the "dull, sickening thud" is the essential and attractive feature of his method.

"You see, every time a man falls he learns something. Now, you did pretty well for the first attempt; but you turned that front wheel the wrong way the last time, and that fact will now be impressed on your memory. I tell you, it's the only way to learn. I don't believe in nursing a beginner. Let him get right on a wheel and find out his mistakes for himself, and then he'll never forget 'em." The stout man feels a little sore, but encouraged, then remounts the wheel and boldly starts out for the second thud. He learns in five lessons.

The rough and tumble system, however, has not many devotees, and, in justice to the many excellent academies in this city, it must be said that the "lesson" described was witnessed in a small school, where the "professor," who was formerly a middle-weight pugilist, and one instructor, were able to teach all the patrons who applied during the day, and still had leisure time.

The Rational Course.
In all the large academies the beginners receive a rational course of training, progressing in each lesson to a greater degree of proficiency, but never allowed to ride alone until the in-

structor thinks they have sufficient command of the wheel to avoid hard falls and accidents.

When he enters the academy for his initial ride, he is taken into the wheel department, where an expert attendant picks out a suitable wheel and properly adjusts seat and handle-bar. He gives his ticket to one of the instructors, who turns it in at the desk, where a young man takes the number of the instructor and the time he begins the lesson.

If the pupil is a woman and is not dressed in a bicycle suit, the attendant produces a number of large safety pins with which he deftly shortens her long skirt to the suitable length by gathering and pinning it in a wide pleat around the hips. Men are supplied with trousers guards.

Without receiving any instruction about mounting, the pupil is assisted into the saddle and told to let the ball of the foot rest upon the pedals and then push down with her toes, following with the heel. Sitting upright and grasping the handle-bars lightly, he is led around the ring until the ankle-motion is acquired, which usually takes



It Would Wobble.
about five minutes. Then the instructor informs the pupil concerning the use of the front wheel, telling him to refrain from clutching the handle-bars, to sit easily, with the muscles of the body relaxed, and to turn the front wheel in the direction in which he is falling.

The instructor then places his right hand on the right side of the waist, to keep the pupil steady, and with his left hand on the handle-bar, lightly follows its movements, only controlling it when necessary to avoid a collision or a fall. By the end of the first lesson the pupil has generally mastered the first great principle of the bicycle, that of balancing by manipulating the front wheel.

Learning the Handle-Bar.
The second lesson finds the pupil managing the handle-bar alone, while the instructor runs alongside, steadying him with one hand on the back and cautioning him to sit straight and easily in the saddle. By the end of this lesson an ordinary pupil can ride with a fairly-steady front wheel, and only needs practice and confidence. To secure these two essentials, the instructor mounts a wheel, and with one hand on the shoulder or waist of the pupil, rides around the academy with him. This practice takes away the irresistible desire that all new riders have to run into any wheel that comes near, and teaches them to ride freely and without fear. The fourth and fifth lessons are usually devoted to practice in the academy and in learning to mount. Then the pupil is ready to try the road, accompanied by an instructor, who teaches him to take car-tracks, "back-pedal," and turn quickly and skilfully to avoid collisions.

This is the general system, as followed in most academies, but individual professors vary it according to their own ideas and the necessities of the pupil, some of whom are so exceedingly awkward that it requires several hours' practice on a dummy machine before they can properly use the pedals. Others again require to be put on a very heavy machine for several lessons before they can properly balance themselves.

Wheeling to Hand Music.
In the large academies, open to the general public, where many patrons resort for practice, various schemes have been devised to afford diversion for the experienced riders. A military band is the most enjoyable adjunct, and when the music starts the wheels begin to fly at a lively rate. Even the new rider puts on steam and generally manages to furnish a few thuds for the edification of the spectator before he gets around the circle.

The see-saw is one of the newest diversions. This consists of a platform about three feet wide, pivoted on a semi-circular support, about a foot high. One end of the platform is made a little heavier than the other, so that



Guiding the Wayward Wheel.
it will always rest on the floor. The rider goes on at that end, mounts to the center, and is sent down the incline with a rush as the platform changes its position.

Catching the rings is also a favorite sport for the wheelmen. A long metal slot, in which a number of steel rings and one brass one are placed, is suspended at an angle over the side of the academy, and the riders, as they pass, try to pick out the ring at the end of the slot. The one lucky enough to get the brass ring is entitled to another hour's ride free.

In addition to those sports, exhibitions of trick riding and games of bil-

cycle polo, are introduced during the day and evening, all of which add to the social attractions which bring the riders to the academies, when fine weather would otherwise tempt them on the road.

The nineteen academies in this city teach, on an average, 1,400 pupils per day at this season of the year, and one academy has a record of 90,000 lessons in fourteen months.—New York Herald.

PIERRE AND JEANNE.

A Story of a Devoted Friendship Between a Cat and a Bird.

Some time ago, in a quiet little corner down on Rue Royale, I chanced upon a queer little Creole creature, whom the neighbors called "Mam'zelle." If there was ever any name attached, it must have been in prehistoric times, for now there is not even a sign upon the door of the little bakery shop where Mam'zelle sells bread and cakes to the neighborhood. Very good bread and cakes they are, too, as I can testify, for recently I have found Mam'zelle's cozy shop for a very comfortable resting place for a morning tramp in quest of news. In this way I have come to be pretty well acquainted with Mam'zelle and Pierre, the cat, and Jeanne, the bird.

Pierre is a handsome black and white fellow, with a noble head, and he and the little canary, Jeanne, were about the same age. Mam'zelle told me, in her pretty patois, how devoted the two pets were to each other, and I myself saw frequent evidences of their kindly relationship. In a quiet corner of the little shop I had seen Pierre and Jeanne taking their breakfast together, from the same plate, and by and by, when the cat would be dozing in the sunshine, the bird would hop about him, or cuddle up, snug and comfortable, between his outstretched paws. When Mam'zelle was busy so that she could not keep an eye on the little bird's safety she would swing the cage in the doorway, while Pierre would stretch himself on the floor beneath, keeping guard over his friend. And woe betide the strange cat that wandered that way. Pierre was always on the alert for squalls, and if the cat came too near to suit him he would send Jeanne hustling into her cage while he chased the offending feline off the street.

Just this very thing happened yesterday, for the thousandth time, probably, but, for the first time on record, grief followed the move. Pierre and Jeanne were taking their usual morning game in the sunshine of the little shop door, when a brindled stranger appeared on the banquet without. Straight as a die Jeanne was in her cage and Pierre had gone in hot pursuit of the brindle. The chase was a hard one, and Mam'zelle says Pierre must have been gone a long time, but she was busy serving customers, and by and by noticed Jeanne hopping about the counter. Thinking, of course, that Pierre had returned, she took no further notice of the bird. A little later, however, hearing a dreadful commotion out on the banquet, she ran out to witness the sad little tragedy which I, too, arrived just in time to see, but too late to prevent. Taking advantage of Pierre's protracted absence, an ugly tortoise-shell from the next block strolled up to the little shop in search of Jeanne. Finding her out hopping about and unprotected, he began siege at once, no doubt. Mam'zelle and I arrived just in time to see the tortoise-shell pounce on poor Jeanne, as she sat perched on the top of the swinging cage, and bear her with him to the pavement. Before either of us could interpose the deed was done, and then in a moment there came Pierre rushing around the corner, and as quick as a flash had taken in the situation. With one fierce bound he sprang upon the tortoise-shell and swept poor Jeanne from his clutches. For a brief moment he sat guarding her, but that moment was long enough to tell him he was too late.

Then, letting Mam'zelle take the little corpse from under his paw, he swooped down upon the tortoise-shell. It was only for a little while, but when the battle was over both cats lay dead upon the pavement. Pierre had lain down his life to avenge Jeanne's death, and the little Mam'zelle mourns both pets.

"THE NEUSTRETTER."

She is Again in Evidence in Paris and Rumor Connects Her With a Millionaire.

"The Neustretter," who stirred the Bois and Champs Elysee loungers with envy of her clothes and turnouts what time the Vanderbilt divorce was on the tapis, is again in evidence with equipages of the newest and finest, and another New York millionaire has set the tongues of tout Paris wagging. The funny part of the affair is that the millionaire accredited with the present episode is well past the half century, and up to the present time has lived with the regularity of an old-time New England deacon, without a suspicion of wild oats about him. In his youth and early manhood, when fredaines are to be expected, he lived in the odor of respectability, although a man of great wealth, wide travel and yachting propensities, and now—Ichabod! Well, humanity is a curious compound and men make queer breaks. In this present case a number of cognate and conversely several aristocratic families, whose names are synonymous with the straight and narrow path, are plunged into the depths of gloom.

An Eccentric Pianist.

After an interval of fourteen years London has again heard the pianist T. Albert, whose nationality is so great a puzzle. He has a French name and was born in Scotland. His mother was English, and his father, a well known dancing master, was the son of a captain of French artillery and of a German mother, whose ancestors were Russians. Though educated in England he adopted Germany as his country, and wrote savage remarks about the "British barbarians." At his reappearance in London there was "little or no applause" when he first came on the stage, but matters mended gradually, and his greatest success was won with Liszt's "Don Juan" fantasia, to the great disgust of the critics, who cannot understand why educated audiences, the world over, and great pianists like Liszt, should be so fond of Liszt. One of the critics says that save for a full-grown moustache D'Albert is much the same boyish figure which he presented in 1882.—New York Post.

BICYCLE GIRL ALL RIGHT.

Knows a Heap More About Things Than She Who Doesn't Ride.

The girl who thinks that the greatest joy in life is a gallop over the brown roads of the park in the early morning when the trees are trickling with diamond dewdrops, the dozy birds twittering over their coffee and rolls, and the squirrels rollicking about on the dew-drenched emerald sward, has absolutely no sympathy with the maiden who is content to ride along the boulevard astride a wheel, her nether limbs incased in bloomers and leggings, her chin decidedly "set" and her eagle eye fixed on some object before her, with a determination to win or die.

All the same the bicycle maid is happy. She knows she is only one of many, and that her steed is cheap and cheerful, rather than costly, and easily tamed; that she does not have blacksmith's bills and other proofs of aristocratic indebtedness, and that she has to do all the work if she is to get the exercise; but nevertheless she is happy. The bicycle girl knows a great deal more about the country than does the ordinary city girl who does not ride. She knows how green the grass is, and how pretty the sky looks as seen through a veil of interlacing leaves and branches. She becomes acquainted with the feathery little people who live in cozy nests and who have very well trained voices, although they don't seem to think it necessary to ruin an impresario in order to let the world hear them. She knows that the green velvet sward is brocaded with white star flowers in day, and that after that come the pink hawthorn and the fragrant trailing arbutus and the hooded violets. She can tell you if it is going to be a fine day by merely looking at the clouds in the west, and she can guide you home in the evening by looking at the stars. She learns a good deal besides the proper sort of garters to wear, and the right make of wheel to ride; but, then, some girls prefer horses.

NEW BICYCLE CATAMARAN.

Latest Invention is in the Way of a Serviceable Boat.

The latest invention in the way of a bicycle novelty of practical service is the bicycle boat. It is different from any other boat, because it is driven by what may be called a water bicycle, but for the reason that it consists of two boats and is really a bicycle catamaran. The new boat is the invention of a man in Detroit, and he says that it is going to be the biggest success of the year. The boat consists of two canoes arranged side by side with a frame similar to a diamond frame of a bicycle between them. The frame is pivoted to the boats and is equipped with an ordinary bicycle seat, a pair of pedals, sprocket wheels and chain. In place of the ordinary tired wheels are two miniature paddle wheels, which propel the boat through the water. The inventor is able to use one or more paddle wheels at the same time. The outfit is further equipped with steering gear and a rudder that works quickly and surely, both of which are operated by the handle bars. The bicycle boat is of such light construction and so low on the water that it cannot be used where the water is apt to be rough. It has been tried at Detroit in smooth water and worked very successfully. The inventor seated himself just as would a bicycle rider who was about to indulge in a spin on the road. With the same motion and effort expended in driving a bicycle the boat was forced through the water at a fair speed.

The Dish Was Not Served.

A business man of Paris has just lost a large sum of money under strange circumstances. He was supping with a party of friends at a restaurant. Desiring to create a sensation, he visited the kitchen of the establishment, and, handing a number of gold coins to one of the attendants, told him to serve them at the table under the guise of a dish of gold. Time passed and the meal began to draw to a close, but still the expected course did not appear. Eventually the originator of the idea returned to the kitchen, but discovered to his horror that the bottle washer had vanished. It appears that he was only an extra hand engaged for the busy season, and left without demanding his wages, taking the money with him.

A Financier.

Gaggs—"Gorkins lives by his wits."
Baggs—"I didn't know he was such an able financier." Gaggs—"Why?"
Baggs—"To make a living on so small a capital."—Washington Times.

DEAN SWIFT'S CYNICISMS.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

I have known men of great valor towards their wives.

It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the life of a spider.

Most sorts of diversion in men, children and other animals is an imitation of fighting.

If a man makes me keep my distance, the comfort is that he keeps his at the same time.

We have just enough religion to make us hate but not enough to make us love one another.

Some men, under the notion of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honesty and religion.

The chameleon, who is said to feed upon nothing but air, bath, of all animals, the nimblest tongue.

The stoucal scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires is like lopping off our feet when we want shoes.

The claim is made that out of 78,000 troops in India, 38,000 are total abstainers and enrolled in the Indian Army Temperance association.

Not as a Jim Dandy.

A young man in Rhode Island writes us that he is going to take in the great west this summer and that this town is on his list, providing we think it safe for him to show-up here in a plug hat, red necktie and russet shoes. If that is the rig he intends to don when he visits us, he'd better not come. This is a growing town—a healthy town—a town which is bound to boom and become a second Chicago, but it is no place for Jim Dandies—not yet. Fifty years hence a man can put on link cuff buttons and yellow kid gloves and stalk up and down and swing a gold-headed cane, but such a thing now—well! Pass our town by, young man. Don't come within fifty miles of it!

Cole's Cough Balsam.
Is the oldest and best. It will break up a cold quickly or tussle anything else. It is always reliable. Try it.

Educational.

Attention of the reader is called to the announcement of Notre Dame university in another column of this paper. This noted institution of learning enters upon its fifth-third year with the next session, commencing Sept. 8, 1896. Parents and guardians contemplating sending their boys and young men away from home to school would do well to write for particulars to the University of Norte Dame Indiana, before making arrangements for their education elsewhere. Nowhere in this broad land are there to be found better facilities for cultivating the mind and heart than are offered at Notre Dame University.

The Elopement.

She paused a moment.
"The die is cast," she murmured.
"There is no retreat."
Hastily gathering the most necessary part of her wardrobe into twenty-seven trunks, she dropped them softly from the window.
Then she descended by the rope ladder and fell into the arms of her lover, who in the gloom of the shrubbery had patiently awaited her.—Detroit Tribune.

The Woman, The Man, And The Pill.

She was a good woman. He loved her. She was his wife. The pie was good; his wife made it; he ate it. But the pie disagreed with him, and he disagreed with his wife. Now he takes a pill after pie and is happy. So is his wife. The pill he takes is Ayer's.

Moral: Avoid dyspepsia by using

Ayer's Cathartic Pills.



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