

Ah! those many-times-repeated tales of hair-breadth escapes, chain-entangled skirts, harrowing collisions, which were the result of a combination of street, studio, general imbecility of costume and ignorance of the eternal fitness of things; they have happily fallen into disuse since the evolution of the bicycle school (a curious inversion of the proper order of things), and the accomplishment of a properly cut and designed riding habit.

Before the proper and conventional garb was invented, evolved, or what you will, we struggled through a maze of short skirts, long skirts, divided skirts, strapped skirts, into which we were hobbled by bands of elastic, like cows; heavy skirts, with leaden sinkers in the hem, which bruised our already sombre tinted ankles; light skirts which caused us modest agonies whenever the stormy winds did blow, and led to letters being written by proper minded old ladies of both sexes to the daily papers. We had skirts that crept up in rolls on our beseeching knees, and skirts that bunched on one side, and poked up in the back, and caught on the saddle or the pedal, as the case might be; every make and material and crude monstrosity of costume was ours to wear amid the joy of small bifurcated fiends, the averted faces of our scandalized intimates, and the jeers and disapproval of an unfeeling world.

Never since Father Noah built his ark has humanity so relentlessly arrayed itself against intrepid navigators; never since Columbus discovered America has such a road been broken for posterity.

It required the nerve of a lightning rod peddler, and the second sight of a physic expert to announce in a first-class magazine five years ago, as was done by the writer of this article, "The bicycle has come to stay," but time has justified the statement.

Speaking of roads reminds me that asphalt pavements and the lady's bicycle struck Canada almost simultaneously; (there had been a few smooth spots of roadway where there are now miles and miles of it), and the pneumatic tire came bouncing along after the asphalt with commendable rapidity, to be received at

first with mistrust and foreboding, but after the first rapturous ride, to be accepted as man's best gift to woman. I sometimes pity the cyclists of to-day who have not evolved from hard to cushioned tires, and onward and upward to the buoyant pneumatic. I can vividly recall the way my wheel ran away from me, and the exhilaration that possessed me, as I went "scooting" down the asphalted street like mad, and finally landed on the curbstone. After the advent of the pneumatic tire, things began to brighten for bruised and scarred but indomitable lady cyclists. By the way, I was touring Ireland in 1892, and met the man who invented the pneumatic tire, or rather evolved it from a length of hose-pipe. Down in the south-east, at the little town of Enniscorthy where are Strongbow's Castle and Vinegar Hill, as you doubtless remember, I was talked to steadily for four hours by the father of the modern bicycle, a veteran cyclist, who showed me many lovely rides thereabouts. For the Irish roads are perfect, and the charming precincts of Wicklow, the level stretches around Kilkenny, the romantic and adorable region round Killarney, Bantry Bay and Glengariff are the veritable cyclist's paradise. Holiday after holiday flits before my retrospective eye, but none of them approaches the cycling tour, whether in the land of the shamrock, the ruddy-tinted dust of that insular Garden of Eden, Prince Edward Island, the flat reaches of Western Ontario, the bosky elegance of Central Park, the new and happy-go-lucky circuit of forty-five miles of the parks and boulevards of Chicago, or the rocky cottage-dotted roads of the Eastern townships where Jean Baptiste is *chez lui*. Rides remain in golden memory; that sweet little jaunt from Quebec to Montmorency Falls, with its hard uphill going and glorious descent returning; with its half-way house, and the brewery where one is given something cold and malty, without money and without price, by a delightful French dame, who loves to see one, with parched throat and dusty garments, drain her glasses of foaming lager, and waves away recompense with *debonnaire* enjoyment. That grand coast down the