THE MIDDLEBURGH POST.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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A Denver man who whipped his daughter because she wanted to go wheel riding is now in jail. This shows that the man who tries to put any obstacle in the way of the bicycle procession is likely to get into trouble, states the Denver Times.

The 400th anniversary of the discovery of the mainland of America by John Cabot is to be celebrated at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the 24th of June, 1897. The movement is under the auspices of the Royal Society of Canada, and has the active support of Mr. Clements Markham, President of the British Royal Geographical Society; Mr. Justin Winsor, Librarian of Harvard University, and other distinguished Americans.

We are constantly assured that electricity "is in its infancy," yet to-day over $700,000,000 is invested in electric railways in the United States, with 1200 miles of roads and 25,000 trolley cars. In addition $325,000,000 is invested in electric lighting, with private lighting plants valued at $200,000,000. There are estimated to be 500,000 electric motors in the United States, and our electric investments are greater than in all other countries combined. Taken altogether, these investments foot up some $1,250,000,000, and they are increasing at the rate of $100,000,000 a year. All of this investment has grown up within twenty years, and most of it within ten years.

Among the latest great acquisitions of the Rothschilds, according to report, is the famous Anaconda copper and silver mine, the price paid being stated as $30,000,000. This purchase is chiefly noteworthy as showing the vast fortunes that spring out of the ground, as it were, in these days. The history of these mines is in itself a romance. A few adventurers began to sink a shaft for silver, only to find an almost endless wealth of copper. Now the claim for which $35,000 was held to be exorbitant twenty years ago has just been sold for $30,000,000. What may not yet be the wealth of the Rothschilds when it is remembered that this mine is said to be [illegible] in its infancy?" It already produces [illegible] fourth of the world's copper output, and its profits last year were not far from $4,000,000.

Long after meetings of protest were permissible to women in England and America, they were looked upon as shocking and utterly forbidden in Germany. Now we see over 1500 persons, mostly women, gathered in Berlin from among the most reputable families, offering speeches and resolutions in behalf of their economic independence, demanding property rights for women in their own names, repudiating, root and branch, the barbaric old Roman code as no longer belonging to modern conditions, and demanding new womanhood generally. The old school of conservatism still smiles contemptuously at these demonstrations of women, but the names of burgomasters, countesses, baronesses and duchesses already appear on the petitions, and by-and-by it will be no laughable matter. Men slip the fetters of civilizations of 2000 years ago, but leave women bound by them. This will not be tolerated much longer, however, even in conservative Germany.

United States Consul Donnelly, resident in Mexico, has published a very interesting report on the relative value of the modern languages for commercial purposes. English is, of course, the leading commercial language of the world. But, next to English, says Consul Donnelly, a knowledge of Spanish is worth more to an American commercial negotiant than of any other language. We Americans make more efforts to do business with 5,000,000 Canadians than with 30,000,000 Spanish speaking people in South America. Within a few hours' ride of our frontier are 14,000,000 Spanish speaking people. England is able to cultivate trade relations with them because her commercial travelers are all armed with a knowledge of Spanish. England has coaxed the bulk of South American trade away from us by being able to negotiate in Spanish. Sending agents into these countries who cannot speak the language is a folly peculiar to our people. Americans have no equals in the art of "talking business." But it is impossible to talk business without a knowledge of the tongue of one's solicited customer. Consul Donnelly's advice is very sensible and timely.

A PUNCTURED TIRE.

YOU can find my description in any of the little books distributed by our firm, and should you look it up, you will discover that my picture occupies the place of honor on the second page under the heading, in large, black letters, "A High Grade Ladies' Wheel," the high grade, of course, applying to me and not to the ladies. I defy any one to produce a more perfect specimen of the bicycle kind than I was when I left the manufacturers' on a beautiful May morning just two months ago.

They were proud of me at the shops; indeed, I think there was something about my graceful frame and polished enamel finish that made me stand out as one apart from the thousands of other wheels around me. The first journey I took was when I left my native city and was shipped with many companions to Washington.

I liked this beautiful Capital City of yours, and longed for a spin on the smooth asphalt pavements, but it seemed for a time that I was doomed to disappointment.

I was taken to the bicycle school, where I spent most of my days watching the strange antics of beginners, the earnest efforts of those who had taken several lessons, and the lofty, though sometimes uncertain, air of the ones almost ready to ride in the street.

In all of this I had no part, I was a new wheel, and must wait quietly until purchased. Sometimes my indignation would be aroused by the rough treatment bestowed upon the poor old machines, on which the beginners were taught, by their inexperienced riders. How they slammed those wheels around! Why, often I have seen the ground strewn with riders with the overturned wheels underneath them. Sometimes, though, the wheel got on top, and then the rider usually was hurt a little. Then again, some few of the wheels who had not quite lost all their spirit would get tired of the endless jerking and clutching, and spin around the track until the scholar became paralyzed and helpless with fear, and then plunge through an open gate or up a brick wall, with the rider screaming: "Instructor! Instructor! Help!" Those were risky tricks, though, for you stood an even chance of getting hurt yourself.

Day after day I watched these sights until I was weary of it all, and beyond making a firm resolution to throw myself down a precipice before descending to such work, I did nothing for several weeks. At last one beautiful morning—I remember well it was May 19—the manager of the place came in the park, accompanied by a very pretty girl and an older lady whom I took to be the girl's mother.

They came over to the rack in which I stood, and drawing me out he said: "Here is exactly what you want, miss; there is not a finer wheel in the city. Look at that frame, good and strong, beautifully finished. Light weight, just lift it, not twenty-five pounds, all the bearings turned from tool steel—" The girl's pretty face was a study as she looked up and down in an anxious effort to find the different parts to which the manager referred so glibly.

"I like it," she said at length, "don't you, mother? You see," turning to the man, "I have been about a month trying to buy a wheel. I thought it would be quite easy, but we have had a dreadful time. Besides having gone to about twenty places ourselves we have had at least thirty agents, who heard we wanted a wheel, come after us, and the most puzzling part of it all is that each one says all the others are perfectly worthless. So mother and I made up our minds to give them all the slip, and that is why we came here this morning. Let us take this wheel, mother."

The mother approached me, tried to look critical, gave me a gentle shake, and said:

"Well, it seems to be a good strong one. I do hope you won't have any accidents."

That very afternoon I was sent to my new home, a magnificent brownstone on Connecticut avenue, and in a few days I knew all about the family, for gossip is rife in the servants' hall, in a little room adjoining which I was kept.

My young mistress was named Bessie Bainbridge, she was the only—and needless to say overindulged—child of wealthy parents, and just now, of course, she was suffering from a bad case of bicycle fever.

Almost every evening after dark the devoted father and mother would sit out on the porch and watch Bessie and me struggle up and down the street. A young friend of hers was teaching her to ride, and of all patient and devoted instructors that handsome man took the lead. He was a nice fellow, too, and never seemed too hot or tired to invent suitable answers to the parents' endless questions as to why Bessie couldn't ride along like the other girls did, and what made the wheel wobble so, wasn't something the matter, and hadn't they better go back to the man and complain, and was he sure there was no danger. The last time Bessie had run into the tree box it looked from where they sat as though she might have had a serious fall if he hadn't caught her in time.

As I say, he was wonderfully patient, for Bessie, to tell the truth, was very stupid and had a silly little way of grabbing one of my handle bars tightly and throwing all her weight on that same side, which was enough to make any self-respecting wheel turn her over in the gutter. I must confess I did this numberless times, and also played a few other little tricks on her, one of which—turning into the pavement when the rider is trying to mount and turn you out—is a great favorite among the ladies' wheels.

Later on, however, I got to like Bessie, who was as clever off a wheel as she was stupid on, and Bob, as they called the young man, was my friend from the first.

So in about a week we began to make a most harmonicus trio, and then Bob would bring his own wheel around, and that made pleasant company for me.

One thing I objected to from the first, and Bob agreed with me I think, was a friend of Bessie's who came to the house almost every night and sat with her parents calmly sipping some cool drink, and encouraging us by calling out from time to time how such and such a thing might be avoided, or how to act under certain circumstances. Then he would add to the comfort of the parents by a low remark to the effect that "Bob Richards didn't know a thing about a wheel," and sometimes he would keep Bessie's courage up by promising to take her for some long rides as soon as she had mastered the wary bicycle.

I didn't like him and Bob didn't, and Bessie—well, we couldn't tell about her. I only know after we had put in an hour's exhausting labor she would get off to rest, and, leaving Bob to see to me, would run up the steps to ask if Mr. Meredith didn't think she was doing better, and wasn't it entirely Bob's fault that she fell over that last time; she thought he had hold of the wheel, and when she found he hadn't, of course she fell off, and it was a mean trick to play her! And then the whole party berated poor Bob, whose sole offence seemed to be a desire to hasten her progress.

Bob never would say a word in his own behalf, but I used to even up matters by going very carefully when I felt him let go, until Bessie would cry out in delight, "Oh, look at me! I am riding beautifully!" and Mr. Meredith would say languidly, "Bravo! Now remember what I told you about the pedals." And then I would lose my temper and stop suddenly in a bit of mud, and off would go Bessie before you could say Jack Robinson.

She didn't know a thing about making herself mistress of a wheel. All she wanted was to sit on and ride. She was one of those girls who will never manage anything unless, may be, a husband.

"All things come to him who waits!" And so at length Mr. Meredith, who had been doing the waiting to perfection, had Bessie come to him with the glad news that she could ride splendidly now, and couldn't they make up some parties and go out on the road. Then we had several very pleasant rides. Occasionally there would be quite a crowd, but very often we went only four, Bessie with Mr. Meredith and Bob relegated to her chum, a Miss Grey, who really was a beautiful rider.

I did not like this arrangement, as Mr. Meredith rode one of those gaudy, conspicuous affairs that no really nice wheel would wish to be seen with in the street, but Bessie and I were quite friendly about that time, and I was trying to please her by giving as little trouble as possible.

Before long Bessie became convinced of the idea that she was a famous rider, and suggested that we all take a trip to Cabin John Bridge. I heard Bob advise her to try a shorter run first, but then Mr. Meredith came up and said it would be delightful, and of course Miss Bessie could do it easily; there wasn't a better rider in the city, and he fixed on the next day for the trip.

The next day dawned clear and warm, and we set out about 4.30 o'clock. I must admit that Bessie looked as pretty as a picture in her dainty suit, with its many buttons and jaunty cap. Before we started Bob came up to me, as he always did, to see that all my parts were secure and firm, and that no pebbles or bits of dirt were scratching against my chain. He did not look particularly pleased over the trip, and indeed I fully agreed with him that it was far too long for Bessie to attempt.

At length we were spinning merrily along. I was determined to act my best, so took the lead, with that circus wheel of Mr. Meredith's, leaving Bob and Miss Grey to follow. All went well for about four miles, and then Bessie began to weaken. She was tired, very tired, as I could easily tell by the feeble way she pushed on my pedals, but she was determined not to give up before Mr. Meredith, and own Bob right, oh, no.

Suddenly she gave a cry, something between a gasp and a scream. "Oh, look—in front of us—see that drove of cows!"

"They won't hurt you," said Mr. Meredith, in a superior way. "Come on."

"But my wheel -it always—always shies at cows," gasped poor Bessie.

Mr. Meredith's lip curled. "I really can't face those cows," said Bessie again, between gasps. "Lelia come and ride in front—then you and Mr. Meredith can run into them first!"

I gladly slowed up in pursuance of this idea, for Bessie was too tired to have the slightest control over me, and dropped behind with Bob.

"Bessie, you are tired to death," he exclaimed injudiciously.

"I'm not," replied Bessie, furious at once. "But I'm afraid of those cows; wait till you see how this wheel shies!"

"Keep it pointed straight and I believe it will go by all right," said Bob soothingly. "Let us get off and rest, I am as tired as—"

"No, I won't get off; I'm not a bit tired."

"Take the centre of the road then," said Bob, as we neared the meek-looking cows. "They can't hurt you, I'm on their side; don't go up on that path or you'll get a puncture sure."

That gave me an idea. Bessie was tired out and too proud to own it. She would certainly fall off if she did not get down in a few minutes. A puncture would be an excellent excuse for resting. Then, again, she had said twice that I shied at cows—well, I would make her words true.

Without further hesitation I ran down a little incline in the road and made for the by path Bob had warned us of.

Crunch, crunch, biff! A slivery feeling along my tire, an agonizing cry from Bessie. "Oh, Bob! Bob! Look; I told you!"

In a moment Bob was beside us and had lifted her to the ground.

"Your tire is punctured," he said briefly. "Wait a minute, let me think what to do."

I felt a personal interest in the affair, so let my breath go out as slowly as possible, until at length Bob said: "I have it!" and pulling out his knife he ripped a puncture in his own tire that put mine to shame. Then he shouted to Meredith and Miss Grey, who came flying back.

"What is the matter?" they cried.

"We both got in a bad bit here," said Bob, "and have punctures in consequence. Will you two ride on to Cabin John and send something after us?"

"Yes. I guess we had better go on. No use of our losing the ride, you know," said Mr. Meredith, but Miss Grey would not agree to that, so they finally decided to ride back to Bessie's home and send the carriage after her.

And then off they went, and Bessie, who was utterly exhausted, began to cry a little, and Bob found a cooling place under the trees and was trying to comfort her, much to my interest, when I suddenly discovered that I was slipping from where Bessie had insecurely stood me up beside a tree.

Down, down I went, until seeing a nice, soft spot I fell over on my side and lay there contentedly for about an hour.

I was aroused by Bob's voice hailing a farmer driving by in a wagon. After some talk the farmer agreed to take them in town.

"Why, where is your wheel?" I heard Bob say.

"Isn't it against that big tree? I put it there about ten minutes ago," said Bessie, and her voice sounded strangely happy. Then Bob went looking round until he found me, and having ascertained that beyond the deflated tire I had no injuries, he packed me with his own wheel in the cart and then he and Bessie climbed in by us.

As we drove slowly toward town I heard Bob say in a low voice:

"We will have to get a tandem, now, Bessie, dear," and she answered:

"Yes, Bob, but do you know I like this wheel of mine and want to keep it always even—with a smile—if it does shy at cows."

And Bob laughed happily and said, "We will always keep it and it shall have a brand new tire to-morrow."

"How about your own?" asked Bessie, with a twinkle in her eye.

"Mine shall have a new tire, too," said Bob. "I feel like giving presents to everything and everybody, I am so perfectly happy, Bess."

Then in the early twilight of a summer's evening we all drove into Washington together.—Washington Post.

Cure for Scandal.

Here is a cure for a terrible disorder of the mouth, commonly called "scandal:" "Take of 'good nature' one ounce; of a herb, called by the Indians 'mind your business,' one ounce; mix these with a little 'charity for others,' and two or three sprigs of 'keep your tongue between your teeth.' Application: The symptoms are a violent itching of the tongue and of the mouth, which invaribly takes place while you are in company of a species of animals called gossips; when you feel a fit of it coming on take a spoonful of the mixture, hold it in your mouth, which you will keep closely shut till you get home, and you will find a complete cure. Should you apprehend a relapse, keep a small bottleful about you, and on the slightest symptoms repeat the dose."

A Famous Hand.

It is computed by a statistician of the curious that Queen Victoria's hand, which is said to be a handsome one, has signed more important state papers and been kissed by more important men than the hand of any other Queen that ever lived.

WAVE OF DEATH.

EXPLANATION OF THE AWFUL DISASTER IN JAPAN.

A Submarine Earthquake Was Followed by an Overwhelming Rush of Water—30,000 People Drowned.

ENOUGH details of the terrible disaster in Japan have now been received to give an approximately accurate idea of its extent and causes. The tragedy occurred on the evening of June 15, while the people were still celebrating "The Boys' Festival," one of their time-honored fete days. In a few minutes a wave twenty to forty feet in height, resulting from a submarine earthquake, swept over about two hundred miles of the northeast coast of Hondo, the largest island of the Japanese archipelago, destroying all the towns and hamlets, and drowning or crushing to death over 30,000 persons. The scene of the disaster may be easily recognized on the map, from the fact that the devastated coast line swells out into the eastern ocean in a long, symmetrical curve, like a bent bow. The part of the wave that struck the portion of the coast apparently swept a little east of north in its journey from the place of origin, and it barely touched a promontory of the more northerly island of Jesso.

The evidence indicates unmistakably the causes that produced this great calamity. If we pour water into a tin dish and then strike the bottom of the dish a sharp upward blow we shall see the water rise above the point of impact and roll away in a circular wave. Some time before the arrival of the wave earthquake shocks were felt along the coast. It is more than probably that these shocks, originating under a track of the sea floor, caused the great disturbance of the sea. The mighty subterranean impulse, communicated to the surrounding rocks, would reach the coast some time before the arrival of the sea wave, for an earth wave travels far more rapidly than a wave of the ocean. It was found that the great earth wave, originating a little west of Charleston, and which was felt in our streets a little later, traveled at the rate of about 17,000 feet a second.

Other eastern coasts of Japan did not share in the great calamity, though doubtless some of them were just as near the epicentral tract, or place of origin of the disturbance, because, fortunately, they do not so completely fill the conditions that rendered possible the piling up of the mountainous wave. The convex shore that was devastated pushes out far toward the edge of the submarine plateau on which Japan rests. The shore line is much nearer than any other part of Japan's coast to the precipitous Tuscarora depths where, until last year, the deepest ocean soundings had been made. Lines of soundings show that the submarine slope from this convex shore line to deep water is far steeper than among the more southerly coast. Now, where this wave was formed it may have been miles in width, but it was not high. This has been so in other instances, and there is direct proof in this case, for fishermen a few miles from the shore, under whose boats the waves certainly passed, observed nothing unusual. An enormous mass of water was lifted by a mighty impulse two or three feet above the general level, and the wave movement thus induced spread rapidly from the centre, but without increase in height, until it encountered a steeply sloping bottom. But upon entering this rapidly shoaling water near the land the wave was crowded into less space, piled up and grew constantly higher until it dashed upon the shore a towering and irresistible mass.

Similar waves have been known to rise as high as 200 feet, and submarine earthquake waves that are believed to have crossed the Pacific, meeting just such conditions on the western coast of South Africa, have inflicted enormous damage. It is probable that along the more southerly coasts of Japan there were two or three waves of more than ordinary height, but the more gently sloping sea bottom gave opportunity to retard the onward rush of the water mass, and no damage was done.—New York Sun.

Butter in Plaster of Paris.

There seems to be no limit to the ingenuity bestowed upon the devising of means for accomplishing the transport of the perishable produce of distant climes to the English market. A new method, described in the Australasian, is that of packing butter in a box made of six sheets of ordinary glass, all the edges being covered over with gummed paper. The glass box is enveloped in a layer of plaster of Paris, a quarter of an inch thick, and this is covered with specially prepared paper. The plaster being a bad conductor of heat, the temperature inside the hermetically sealed receptacle remains constant, being unaffected by external changes. The cost of packing is about two cents per pound. Butter packed in the way described at Melbourne has been sent across the sea to South Africa, and when the case was opened at Kimberley, 700 miles from Cape Town, the butter was found to be as sound as when it left the factory at Victoria. Cases are now made to hold as much as two hundred weight of butter, and forty hands, mostly boys and girls, are occupied in making the glass receptacles and covering them with plaster. The top, or lid, however, is put on by a simple mechanical arrangement, and is removed by the purchaser equally easily. A saving of twenty-five per cent. on freight and packing is claimed in comparison with the cost of frozen butter carried in the usual way.—Scientific American.

Our Consular Service

"The consular service is the practical and business side of our foreign intercourse," writes ex-President Harrison in the Ladies' Home Journal. "There are more than twelve hundred persons in the consular service of the United States. These are located in the important commercial cities and towns of the world, and are designated generally as Consuls General, Consuls, commercial agents, interpreters, vice-consuls and clerks. The duties of a Consul are various and multifarious. He is the protector and guardian of American commerce; provides for destitute American sailors and sends them home; he takes charge of the estates of American citizens dying in his district, having no legal representative; he receives the declaration or protest of our citizens in any matter affecting their rights; he keeps a record of the arrival and departure of American ships and of their cargoes, and of shipwrecks and wrecks; he reports new inventions or improvements in manufacturing processes that he may observe, and all useful information relating to manufactures, population, scientific discoveries, or progress in the useful arts, and all events or facts which may affect the trade of the United States, and authenticates invoices and statements of the market value of merchandise to be shipped to the United States. Every Consulate is a commercial outpost; and if the service were to be given permanence of tenure, and a corps of men of competent attainment, it would become a powerful agency in extending our commerce."