

LOST-A THOUGHT.
I had a thought—a thing so slight
It vanished ere I grasped it quite.
Whence hath it gone? Ah, welladay!
I can't remember now the way it
Or whence it came? That too will
I would that wisest sage might tell.

As lightning parts the cloud in twain,
And heralds thus the coming rain,
So with my thought; both swift and bright,
It promised much—now lost to sight!
I've searched to-day and yesterday;
It still eludes, is still astray.

I wonder if some greater mind
This transient thought may one day find!
My quickly seize and hold and use
That which to me elusive proves;
To me a tantalizing hint,
To him, perhaps, a golden mint.

Perchance 'tis this that draws the line
Where large souls' or the lesser shine.
The master mind hath power to see
These flashes from infinity;
Aye, more than that—to also free
The mighty truth, concealed from me.

And yet, 'twas but a thought—
A thing you'd almost count for naught.
Yet thoughts ere this have conquered
kings!
Have given steam and lightning wings!
Have sped the arrow speech, to smite
To death the wrong—to guard the right.

But as I thus my loss proclaim,
Back to that silence whence it came
Hath fled this veiling, ghostlike thing.
Where mystic shadows veiling cling;
Nor see nor sage can tell me when
I'll find that wandering thought again.
—G. M. Howard, in Chautauquan.

A TELEGRAPHER'S STORY.
The Close Shave That Came of
Sleeping on Duty.

**Predicament of a Night Operator at a
Lonely Railroad Station Who
Was Instructed to Hold a
Certain Train.**

ELEGRAPH operators are usually
reminiscent of f-lows, and the veter-
ans among them delight in telling their
experiences. Of course, some of their
stories may be a trifle exaggerat-
ed, but they generally possess at
least one unique
feature—they are based on something
that happened over a stretch of wire
perhaps 100 or 200 miles in length. Oc-
casionally one reads of an extraordinary
adventure of an operator at a small
and lonely railway station, out west, or
of perilous experiences in war times,
and the impression has become quite
common that telegraphers stationed
this side of the Rocky mountains sel-
dom have other than the most com-
monplace, routine experience, with nothing
in it of more than passing interest. As
regards the operators for railroad com-
panies, that supposition is wrong.
Within 12 hours' ride of this city there
are scores of railroad telegraph offices
where an operator is employed day and
night to look after both the telegraph
and the station. On many of the roads
in New England the night stations are
a dozen or fifteen miles apart, and some
of them are a quarter or a half of a mile
from the nearest dwelling house. At
these places a night operator is on duty
from seven in the evening till seven in
next morning. A Sun reporter chanced
to meet recently a veteran "key twist-
er" who was for several years in the em-
ploy of a railroad running through
Maine and New Hampshire and up into
the White mountains. This operator
sometimes found himself in a pretty
tight box, and his account of the ex-
perience illustrates the close shave that
railroad telegraphers have now and
then.

"Station H—, where I worked," he
said, "is a night station on a single
track railroad in New Hampshire.
G—, the nearest night telegraph sta-
tion north of it, was eight miles away,
and N—, the nearest one south, was
12. My duty in summer was solely that
of operator; in winter I also looked
after the fires in the waiting-rooms.
There was seldom much operating to do
at night, and it was always easy to keep
awake until one o'clock, when I usually
ate lunch. Even at that hour the time
didn't pass very slowly in summer, but
in cold and stormy nights in winter,
when I had to stay constantly indoors,
the greatest effort was needed to keep
from falling asleep. After nine o'clock
all the trains that passed were freight,
and there were half a dozen south-
bound and as many more north-bound
the course of the night. It was part of
my duty to note the time that each of
the trains passed my station and re-
port it at once to headquarters at A—,
the same rule applying to all the op-
erators on the line. That was one of
the customs which made it dangerous
for an operator to fall asleep, if only
for five minutes. Another thing that
annoyed him, and often made him
swear, was the roll call. This consisted
in the train dispatcher at A— office
(50 miles south of H—) calling each
office on the line every half hour, begin-
ning with the one nearest his own. The
station that failed to answer a roll call
had a black mark placed against it at
A—, with a record of the time when
the call was given. At first the roll call
made all the boys look sharp and toe
the line, but they soon found a way to
cheat it.

"The main wire running through H—
was considerably more than 100 miles
long; and on a wire of that length it is
quite impossible for an operator at its
terminus to tell by the sound which of
two or more offices not more than 25
miles apart is doing the telegraphing
unless the sending operator signs his
station call. Knowing this, several of
the 'owls' on the line arranged to take
turns with each other in answering the
roll. For example, the operator at G—
would answer my calls between the
hours of one and three, and I would at-
tend to his from three to five. What a
cracking good way this was to baffle the
train dispatcher, we thought, and the
exchange of duty between us was kept
up for a long time; in fact, almost too
long, so far as my own case was con-

cerned. I refer to an incident that took
place during the winter of '85, which
for a few hours nearly froze the nar-
row in my bones. It happened like this:
"Through freight No. 241, north
bound, was due at my station at 1:35,
and was scheduled to meet south-bound
freight No. 254 at P—, 15 miles further
up the road. No. 241 was scarcely ever
behind time, and the two trains usually
met at P— without requiring tele-
graphic orders. The night in question
was very cold and stormy; fully three
feet of snow had fallen and it was still
coming down very fast, while a high
wind was piling it in big drifts across
the track. On a night like that the in-
cessant humming of the wires outside
of the station is enough, of itself, to put
a sentinel to sleep, and that, coupled
with the hour, 1:15, and an office tem-
perature of 80 degrees, was more than
my weary frame could resist. I fell
asleep, knowing, of course, that G—
would, according to our arrangement,
look after my roll calls. After what
seemed to me about like 20 minutes,
but what was really more than two
hours, I was awakened by the sharp
clicking of the telegraph instrument
near my head.

"'Qk 12,' was being made with great
rapidity, the call of my office preceding
it. I knew it was the train dispatcher,
the abbreviation meaning 'Quick! we
want you to hold a train!'
"I answered the call, and the com-
mand came back quick and sharp:
"'Hold No. 241 for orders.'
"'O. K.," said I, and immediately hung
the proper signal, a red lantern, outside
the door.
"Then I came to my senses and looked
at my watch.
"'Twenty-five minutes past three!
And I had heard no train in almost
three hours. Had No. 241 got past? I
wondered. I found that it had left N—
at 12:40, and the run from N— to H—
usually took about 50 minutes. I knew
the storm would probably delay the
train somewhat, but two whole hours?
It wasn't likely. Then I heard No. 254
reported from P—, and knew she had
received orders to meet No. 241 some-
where between P— and H—.
"What if No. 241 had got by me and
was trying to reach P— for the down
freight? In that case the two trains
were bound to crash together in the
storm; there was no help for it. My
excitement was increased by the re-
peated calls of the train dispatcher to
ask if No. 241 was in sight.
"'Not yet,' I answered, trembling lest
my hopes were in vain.
"Three thirty-five, and no train. I
went out on the platform and listened.
Not a sound could be heard above that
of the wind, and an engine's headlight
wouldn't have been visible ten rods
away.
"I went back, 'grounded' one of the
wires, so as to cut out an office, and
called G, hoping to find whether No.
241 had reached there. No answer.
Then I remembered that from three to
five was G's time to 'bunk off,' and
knew it was useless trying to get him.
"Ten minutes more, and the freight
had not arrived.
"'Sure it hasn't gone?' asked the train
dispatcher, excitedly, as though doubt-
ing me.
"'Sure,' said I.
"'For God's sake, don't let it get
by you!' he urged.
"Well, four o'clock came, and my
courage was giving way. I could see
how two hours or so might be needed
for a freight to go 12 miles on such a



I HEARD A GREAT PUFFING AND
GRATING.

light, but three hours and over. So
slow a run had never been known on the
road.
"What was to be done? To admit
my uncertainty meant the loss of my
job, and to brave it out any longer
seemed almost criminal. In my despair
I finally decided to tell the train dis-
patcher the plain truth—that I had
been asleep at my post, and that No.
241 probably went by more than an
hour ago. The fact would be known in
a few hours, anyway, I argued, and I
would then be arrested for causing
death, convicted of criminal negligence
and sent to prison.
"It was then 4:15. I drew a long
breath and went over to the telegraph
desk. Headquarters was again calling
to ask if the train had arrived, and I
broke in abruptly:
"'You may' as well know that'—but
the sentence was never finished. I
heard a faint puffing and grating, and
looking out, saw the engine of the be-
lated train opposite my office window.
My heart leaped up about a foot, and
taking a firm grasp on the key of my
instrument, I announced:
"'No. 241 h-r-r-r!'"
"Deep snow, a terrific wind and the
blowing out of the cylinder head on
the engine had caused the delay.
"Maybe all's well that ends well, but
that experience put an end to my
roll. For example, the operator at G—
would answer my calls between the
hours of one and three, and I would at-
tend to his from three to five. What a
cracking good way this was to baffle the
train dispatcher, we thought, and the
exchange of duty between us was kept
up for a long time; in fact, almost too
long, so far as my own case was con-

LETTERS AND ART.
The Hungarian Academy of Science has
lately taken up Ruskin's "The
Stones of Venice" and is publishing a
translation.
Some years ago Rev. Dr. Crane, the
father of Stephen Crane, the novelist,
wrote a tract on popular amusements,
in which he condemned novel reading as
one of the vices of the age.
The Russian imperial academy is pre-
paring a national biographical dictionary
of Russian men of letters and
scientists. M. Venguerov, who has writ-
ten already the bulk of the work, has
accumulated no less than 400,000 pages
of manuscript.
The latest contribution to the sym-
posium on a suitable memorial to
Robert Louis Stevenson has at least the merit
of originality. Some one wants to erect
a gas lamp to him, because he has in
more than one place written of lamps
and lamp posts!
An Englishman with more money
than education recently sent the fol-
lowing order to a bookseller: "I have
60 feet of shelving. I want ten feet
of poetry, ten feet of history, ten feet
of science, ten feet of religion, the same
of novels, and fill up the rest with any
kind of books."

JUST BEFORE THE BREAK.
Doctor—How is the patient this morn-
ing?
Nurse—Well, he has been wandering
a good deal in his mind. Early this
morning I heard him say: "What an
old woman that doctor is!" And I think
that was about the last really rational
remark he made.—Leslie's Popular
Monthly.

TABLE DELICACIES.
Nut Cookies.—Two cupsful of sugar,
two eggs, one-half cupful of melted
butter, six tablespoonfuls of milk, a tea-
spoonful of cream tartar, half a tea-
spoonful of soda, one cupful of hickory
nut meats, enough flour to make rather
a stiff dough.
Chicken Pillaui.—One pint of cold
boiled rice; one boiled chicken, the
meat chopped fine; one can of tomatoes,
strained. Let the liquor in which the
chicken is boiled jelly. A piece of but-
ter the size of an egg, salt and pepper
to taste. Mix together and serve hot.
A Good Pudding.—One-quarter of a
cupful of butter, one cupful of New Or-
leans molasses, two cupfuls of sifted
flour, one cupful of sweet milk, one tea-
spoonful of soda in milk, one teaspoon-
ful each of cloves and cinnamon, a
pinch of salt. Steam in a mold for two
hours.
Potato Puff.—Two cupfuls of mashed
potatoes, two tablespoonfuls of melted
butter. Stir these, with a seasoning of
salt, to a light, fine, creamy consistency.
Beat two eggs separately and add six
tablespoonfuls of cream. Beat all to-
gether, well and lightly. Pile in an in-
regular form in a dish. Bake in a quick
oven until nicely colored. —N. Y.
Ledge.

STYLES IN THE STORES.
Cloth collets or tiny capes trimmed
with small, fancy buttons down the
front.
Moire brocade in black to make skirts
to wear with low evening chiffon
waists.
Plain and braided black and light
cloth jackets, the colors running to the
two extremes.
Imported costumes trimmed with a
silk collar edged with silk braid headed
with small braid-covered buttons.
Black gowns, silk or wool, made up
with a small cape to match, which is
lined with the bright color usually seen
in the vest.
Pansies, girdles, separate ornaments,
boleros and vests of black and white
silk braid bordered with pieces of fine
gift souches.
Black satin waists made with a box
plait fastened with gold buttons, cuffs
on bishop sleeves held together by sim-
ilar buttons, belt of satin fastened with
buttons and a red satin stock and tiny
linen collar.—Dry Goods Economist.

HOME ECONOMIES
A sawey inserted in the top of a
broom or mop handle is far more con-
venient and lasting than a cord.
If paraffine that has been used over
jelly is carefully washed and dried it
can be used over and over again.
An iron frying pan with a close-fitting
tin basin turned over the top makes a
good substitute for a covered roasting
pan.
Tie the beeswax used for smoothing
saddons in a piece of cheesecloth or
muslin, and it will last longer and be
more convenient.
A covered tin pail, suspended in a ket-
tle of boiling water by a stick or metal
rod laid across the top of the kettle is
just as good as an expensive farina
boiler for many purposes.
Stove cloths about 20 inches square,
made of coarse crash, denim, ticking or
colored shirting, are by far more con-
venient than clumsy holders to use
about the kitchen stove.—Housekeeper.

BREAKFAST DON'TS.
Don't serve a breakfast on any but a
fresh tablecloth.
Don't expect fresh coffee if you are
half an hour late.
Don't comment on the bills you re-
ceive in the morning's mail.
Don't ask the man of the house what
he would like for dinner.
Don't ask your husband how much
money he intends to allow you for the
day's expenses. After dinner is a bet-
ter time to settle the financial question.
Don't become so engrossed in the
newspaper that you can't address a re-
mark to anyone.

Has an Easy Time.
They had been discussing what they
would like to be when they became
men and women, and the little fellow
with the red hair had listened scorn-
fully to the various views expressed.
"You all don't know nothin' about
'avin' a good, easy time," he said when
it came his turn to speak. "If we want
to get along 'thout workin' or doin' any-
thing except just takin' the best there
is there ain't nothin' like bein' a
kleptomaniac."—Chicago Post.

A Profound Mystery.
Johnnie Chaffie—Mamma, didn't you
tell me that the poor heathen in Africa
didn't wear any clothes?
Mrs. Chaffie—Yes, my son.
Johnnie Chaffie—Well, then, if the
heathen in Africa don't wear any
clothes, why, when the collection was
taken up for them, did papa put a sus-
pender button in the plate?—Tammany
Times.

New Way of Putting It.
Yes, we're engaged! He called last night,
And stayed till after ten,
And in the softened parlor light
This bashful of men
Blushed sweetly, as he hung his head,
(Shy boys! I understand them.)
"And don't you think, my dear," he said,
"We'd better ride a tandem?"
—L. A. W. Bulletin.



The Difference.
He paused, the Impetuous, and sighed:
"The night is clear and fine,
The moon is in its first quarter,
While I am just out mine!"
—Cincinnati Tribune.

Theory and Fact.
Teacher—Johnny Jones is ten years
old, and his sister is 15 years older than
Johnny. Now, how old is Johnny's sister?
Pupil—Nineteen.
Teacher—How can you be so stupid?
Pupil—Guess I know what my sister
says, and she's fifteen years older than
me.—Boston Transcript.

Obituary.
"Madam," said Meandering Mike
"he've got my cold coffee."
"No," replied young Mrs. Torkins in
a tone of sympathy, "but you wait a
few minutes and I'll put some on the
refrigerator and cool it for you."—
Washington Star.

A Mourning Color.
Winebiddle—Why are you dyeing
your hair such a youthful black, Gilder-
leeve?
Gildersleeve—Out of respect for the
memory of my dear dead wife, Wine-
biddle.—Up-to-Date.

Much More.
Smith—No, I do not like jokes which
make fun in any way of religion. It
seems to me we are liable to be called up
for them in the next world.
Smythe—We're more likely to be
called down.—Philadelphia Press.

True to the Last.
Seldom Fed—So poor old Slobby is
dead?
Ragged Haggard—Yes, but he died
true to tenets of deep depression.
"How was dat?"
"Without a struggle."—N. Y. Journal.

Economy in Kissing.
Mrs. Crimsonbeak—I can't imagine
why a man should prefer kissing his
dog to kissing his wife.
Mr. Crimsonbeak—A dog doesn't want
a new hat every time he's kissed.—Yon-
kers Statesman.

A Contentious Visitor.
Judge—If you were only going to pay
the man a visit, why were you creeping
in so stealthily?
Prisoner—Your honor, I was afraid
of waking the baby.—N. Y. Journal.

Not Surprising.
He—I love you better than my life.
She—Considering the life you lead, I
cannot say that I am surprised.—In-
dianapolis Journal.

A Song of Hope.
What though the day be dark and storms
rage over the seas?
What though the fields are brown, and
the daisies lie flat as the grass?
What though the birds are flown, and skies
overhead are gray?
What though the sun goes down so soon
on a winter's day?
Spring will come with her joy and glory
of bud and flower,
Spring will bring her song of hope in every
brightening hour,
Spring will bring her dress of green em-
brodery with woodland bloom,
Spring will bring her April tears and sunlight
after the gloom.
Deep in the earth's warm breast
the flowers are living still,
Till the spring shall come, proclaiming
her royal will;
Let the sleeping flowers, and bloom
on the earth once more,
Wake! for the spring has come and the
winter time is o'er!
—Golden Days.

THE SEASON'S VERSE.
An Old Secker's Reminiscence.
In the simple days of childhood, quite the
saddest thing in life
Was sitting patiently and still to watch the
gleams, too small to see,
As it curved the tempting pastry which
must serve for one and all
To widely varying sections, most of them,
alas, too small to see,
'Twas hard to see a favored guest helped to
the largest slice,
Nor murmur when I got none, as such con-
duct "was nice."
For hurt brings indignation through the
years that hasten by,
When we'd company for dinner and my
father passed the pie.
And history repeats itself. That shock of
agonizing
Returns in new disguises, like a sullen,
haunting foe
It is after an election that you'll see the
old-time look
On the faces of the men whom Fortune, at
the last, forsook.
I've seen the thing I labored for and
watched with eager eyes
Go past me, and another, less deserving,
get the prize,
And I haven't felt so much as if I'd really
like to cry
Since we're company to dinner and my fa-
ther passed the pie.
—Washington Star.

The New Woman.
She warbled the soprano with dramatic
sensitivity,
And dilled with the organ when the or-
ganist was sick,
She got up for variety a brand-new church
society,
And spoke with great facility about the
new church brick.
She shed tears of sorrow for the
heathen immorality,
And organized a system that would oper-
up their eyes;
In culinary charity she won great popu-
larity,
And showed her personality in lecturing
on pies.
For real unvarnished culture she betrayed
great propensity;
Her Tuesday talks were famous, and her
Friday glimmers great;
She grasped at electricity with mental
elasticity,
And lectured with intensity about the
marriage state.
But with the calm assurance of her won-
derful capacity,
She couldn't wash the dishes, but she'd
take all day on one set,
And while she dwelt on density, or space
and its immensity,
With such refined audacity, her mother
darned the socks! —Spare Moments.

In Silentia.
O'er Intel low rays moses creep,
They hide the names of those that sleep—
Sweet household names of long ago,
Dim shadows waver to and fro,
And sunbeams flit with noiseless feet
Along the silent, grass-grown street.
Tell us, O sleeper, which is best—
To be called waking or your rest?
Mute sleepers, who can never wake
For sorrow's call, or love's dear sake.
What storms have beat upon your roof,
What trestled friends have stood aloof,
What tempests hurried their shafts of ire,
What hate hath lit the martyr pyre,
Whose torturing flames from day to day
Their lives consumed, no tongue can say.
And yet, we know the birds above
To them sometimes have sung of love;
The fair flowers breathing faith and trust
Each spring-time wafted from the dust.
The glad earth smiled with joy so sweet,
Heaven seemed afar, this life complete.
They dreamed the dreams we dream to-
day;
They saw their hopes flit swift away,
As ours do now—till lo, at last,
Earth, held so long and held so fast,
Had faded slowly out of sight,
Lost in eternity's clear light.
And still we wonder which is best—
Our troubled waking or their rest.
—Ellen E. Chase, in Woman's Journal.

Hold Your Tongue.
Don't start your tongue a-goin' in a care-
less sort of way
And thoughtlessly forget it till it runs a
half a day
The pleasant art of talking is what the
people need
Don't think that you can multiply our
meager stock of joys
By latching every quiet space chock full
of talk and noise
If you've a big two-busht thought, why
sift it to a cup
Of plain, terse words, but otherwise shut
up! SHUT UP!!!
The men who have their words engraved
on monuments to-day
Are not the ones who always tried to have
the most to say.
Ah, no! they thought for years to get one
sentence new and bright
For us to put in copy books and have our
children write.
And so if you would render glad the ones
who have to hear,
Why, find some real good quiet place and
think about a year,
And get a thought so deep and broad and
true and great and wise
That it will hit this dull old world right
square between the eyes.
—Nixon Waterman, in L. A. W. Bulletin.

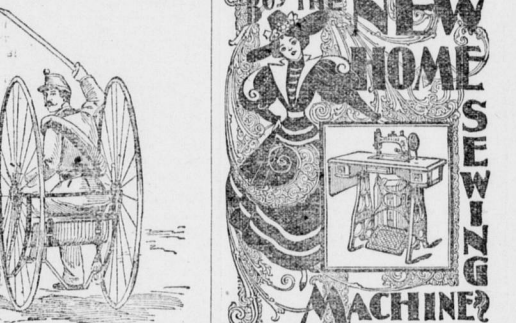
The Paucity of Spring.
There came from Heaven one happy day
A sunbeam, bearing on its way
A message to the earth:
It called the north wind from his home
And whispered, softly: "Northward roam,
G'z, hail the violets' birth."
It touched the blade and leafless tree,
And said: "Awake! spring waits for thee.
Put on thy dress of green!"
It kissed the rosebud and the vine,
And said: "Come forth! thy blossoms en-
wine
The arbor ways between."
The bluejay and the robin heard
The music of its magic word,
Burst forth in sweetest song:
The daisies in a grassy bed
Arose to greet it as it said:
"Come, join the merry throng."
It passed o'er hill and meadow land,
And soon appeared on every hand
A wondrous marshaling:
From ocean shore to inland plain,
Let wild a host of song of strain,
The pagentry of Spring.
—Alexander P. Huston, in Ohio Farmer.

A Song of Hope.
What though the day be dark and storms
rage over the seas?
What though the fields are brown, and
the daisies lie flat as the grass?
What though the birds are flown, and skies
overhead are gray?
What though the sun goes down so soon
on a winter's day?
Spring will come with her joy and glory
of bud and flower,
Spring will bring her song of hope in every
brightening hour,
Spring will bring her dress of green em-
brodery with woodland bloom,
Spring will bring her April tears and sunlight
after the gloom.
Deep in the earth's warm breast
the flowers are living still,
Till the spring shall come, proclaiming
her royal will;
Let the sleeping flowers, and bloom
on the earth once more,
Wake! for the spring has come and the
winter time is o'er!
—Golden Days.

Bicycles Driven by Wind.
No less than three attempts to cause
the wind to add the bicycle rider in
driving his machine have recently been
made by inventors, one American and
two French. In the case of the Ameri-
can, an apparatus constructed on the plan
of a toy windmill is attached to the ma-
chine, and geared to the front wheel
in such a manner that the force of the
wind can be utilized in turning the
wheel. The third contrivance also acts
on the principle of the windmill, but
its motor, instead of having fans all
facing one way, is shaped like an empty
pumpkin shell, with the segments
slightly separated and inclined inward.
The practical usefulness of these de-
vices remains to be demonstrated.

Chloral and Alcohol Users.
The Rhode Island legislature at its re-
cent session enacted a law which pro-
vides that persons addicted to the use
of chloral or alcohol may be committed
to an asylum for the insane until their
normal condition has been restored.

IN FREEDOM.
HUMBRECHT'S DICYCLE.
A Somewhat Striking Novelty in the
Velocepede Line.
Humbrecht's dicycle, patented No-
vember 10, 1896, is a striking novelty in
the velocipede line. Two wheels are
mounted on a V-shaped axle, between
which the rider sits. A crank-shaft
having foot-pedals is suspended from
the axle convenient for the rider to op-
erate. Sprocket wheels are mounted at
either end of the crank-shaft, and con-
nect by drive-chains with loose sprocket
wheels on the axle. The last named
sprockets are loosely connected to the
hubs of the supporting wheels, and suit-
able clutches are mounted on the axle
adjacent to the sprocket, whereby the
latter are coupled to the wheel-hubs,
and the machine driven or propelled



CAVALRY OF THE FUTURE.
either forward or backward. Handles
are provided on the clutches to readily
throw them into and out of gear when
it is desired to slacken up or to turn the
machine. The rider's seat is swung be-
low the bearings, so that he can't upset.
The dicycle will doubtless become
popular, as it is especially adapted to
those who do not care to go to the
trouble of learning to ride a bicycle, and
it is easily ridden, and old and young are
equally suited to it. As there is no
straddling necessary, the modesty due
to the ladies is always present in the
dicycle, as seen in one of the accom-
panying cuts, and no unbecoming
blouses or short skirts are necessary.
The wheel can be used advantageously
by soldiers and messengers in time of
war, as it cannot be injured to any great
extent by a few bullets, or disabled, as
can a horse, whose life is always at
stake, even by a single missile. Baggage
and equipments can be carried to quite
a large extent, and the cavalry of the
future will doubtless be mounted, as
shown in the cut.

NEW ENGLISH TIRE.
Its Inventor Claims That It Readily
Inflates Itself.
A self-inflating tire has been invent-
ed, so it is claimed, by an Englishman.
It is self-inflating, inasmuch as the air
comes in automatically, and also self-
deflating, because the air escapes al-
most on the same plan in which it comes
in. Strictly speaking, the invention is
an alternating inflating and deflating
tire, working automatically. Instead
of the usual endless tube, which is com-
mon to all or most detachable tires,
a piece of tubing of about half the di-
ameter and twice the length is em-
ployed. This tube is coiled twice
around the wheel in a direction opposite
to that of its rotation, and each of the
two ends taper, where it is sealed.
These ends overlap one another to the
extent of the tapering, and so fill up
the space. A valve of the ordinary kind
is fitted near one end of the inner tube,
and the first coil occupies a position
in the hollow of the rim. This part
of the tube is thinner and of smaller di-
ameter than the other half, which is
coiled outside of it, and is situated im-
mediately beneath the tread of the tire.
An outer cover of ordinary character
and attachment is used.
The automatic inflating is performed
as follows: If the tire is empty or has
little air in it, the weight of the rider
and the machine compresses the tube,
more especially the bore of the thinner
part lying in the rim, to the end of
which the valve is attached. This part
is flattened under the pressure, and as
the wheel goes around the pressure
travels along it, leaving behind a vacu-
um into which the air flows through
the valve. This operation goes on until
the tire is fully inflated, being renewed
at every revolution of the wheel. The
ingress of air follows the flattening of
the tire, making the inflation of the
tire an automatic process. The tire
works, whether there is a puncture or
not, and the claim can also be made
that it is non-puncturable.

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