

ferre with the poise of the head nor compress the great blood-vessels, have already become popular. Otherwise the ordinary attire of men has no specially objectionable features, though breeches are certainly more comfortable than trousers during hot weather, for bicycling or any other purpose. The wheeling-costumes thus far devised for women have shown a realization of the unfitness of ordinary dress rather than an appreciation of the changes needed. The one hygienic result that has been achieved by all efforts in this direction is the elimination of the long skirt which sweeps the filth and infection of the highway into the homes of civilized man, and doubtless is the cause of many an inexplicable case of contagious disease. If the fashion would only extend to other street dress, we could forgive the many offenses of wheeling-costumes against modesty, good taste, and comfort.

If the bicycle were responsible simply for distracting the attention of thousands of young men and women from artificial fashions in dress, and for creating an honest though sometimes mistaken effort at dress-reform, a great good would have been accomplished. But it is doing much more than this. It is establishing an ideal of physical health, and making deservedly unpopular the sickly heroine of less than a generation ago. The wheel is affording a wholesome outlet for energies that would otherwise be wasted in frivolity or actual dissipation, and in elevating the physical is also raising the moral tone of the youth of our land. The half-grown boy who formerly thought it manly to fuddle his brain with liquor or weaken his heart with tobacco, has changed his ideal to the not very lofty but certainly more innocent one of maintaining a reputation for speed or endurance, and while in training he proudly foregoes bad habits that he would be ashamed to abandon as a mere matter of principle. The use of strong liquors among the class of young men from whom cyclists are largely drawn is on the wane, and even "soft drinks" are used with increasing discretion.

All of this means not that the bicycle is to be used by everybody, nor that it is to be the physical and moral salvation of the age, but that it is aiding in a tangible manner in the solution of many problems, social, economic, moral, and hygienic.

A. L. Benedict, M. D.

#### How Napoleon Impressed a Foe at St. Helena.

THE letter which follows, from Rear-Admiral Sir George Cockburn to Sir Alexander Campbell, comes to us from H. A. Wetherall, Esq., of Hill Crest, Addlestone, Surrey, England, who found it among the papers of his grandfather, Sir George Wetherall, who was military secretary to Sir Alexander, and his executor, in which latter capacity he is supposed to have come into possession of the letter. Sir George Wetherall, who died in 1868, was also at one time adjutant-general of the English army. It is believed that this letter, which is here printed from the original manuscript, has never before appeared. In THE CENTURY for October and November, 1893, will be found an account by John R. Glover, secretary to the admiral, of the voyage with Napoleon to St. Helena. Sir George was relieved by Sir Hudson Lowe the day after this letter was written.

EDITOR.

ST. HELENA, 14th April, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR ALEXANDER Accept I pray you my best thanks for your very friendly Letter of the 20 Jan<sup>y</sup> last and for the good things of Mauritius which accompanied it. Major Fluker was so obliging as to deliver them to me safe and I was sorry his stay here was so short as to put it out of my Power to shew him any other attention than merely giving him a Passport to see our *great Lion*, the which in fact almost cost him his Passage as his Ship was only here a few Hours & was under way waiting for him before he returned from Long Wood.

I should indeed feel very much Interest as well as Pleasure in visiting you at the Isle of France but under the existing Circumstances there is little or no chance of my having such gratification, as I am very particularly enjoined to continue at this place for the better insuring the Security of Bonaparte until the Admiral destined to remain upon this Station *during Peace*, & Sir Hudson Lowe destined to take charge of Bonaparte shall arrive, when of course I am to return straight to England as I only consented to bring the arch-Fiend of Europe to this Place & to keep charge of him here until the ulterior arrangements for the Island and the Peace Establishments for the Station should be fixed & completed, and indeed I have already been here much longer than I expected when I sailed, as I was given to understand in London that I might look for being relieved about the Middle of Jan<sup>y</sup> last, *our Friends* the present Ministers however, as you probably know, are not given to hurry themselves much where they do not feel themselves much interested & therefore here I am still & without any positive Information as to Sir H. Lowe or my relieving Admiral but of course living in daily or I may say hourly hopes of seeing them, a long Sojourn here not being very enviable. After this Explanation you will not be surprised to learn that I never for a moment thought of bringing Lady Cockburn with me, but I am sure she will feel much flattered & pleased by Lady Campbell's & your kind Recollection & Invitation, of which I shall inform her in my next Letters, she was very well by my last accounts which were to the end of December and gave me Reason to hope that long ere this my Family may have been increased.

I perfectly agree with you with respect to the Indian naval Command & have not the most distant Idea of taking it or any other whilst Peace continues or is likely to continue.

I have got on here better upon the whole than I expected, My *Prisoner Extraordinary* is most securely lodged, *at last*, and with the Regulations now established here I do not hesitate in saying it is quite impossible for him to escape, he & I are not quite such good Friends as we have been, he having lately made some Requests which I did not deem it prudent or proper to acquiesce in, and unaccustomed as he has so long been to have his Wishes or his Whims controuled in any manner this made him mighty angry, & he has since shewn very distant & sulky with me, but as you may suppose his Sulks or his Smiles have equally little avail with my Determinations. I have given him as much Latitude as I think consistent with his safety, & you may rest assured he will obtain no more, until I hand him over to those destined to have the future charge of him. Were I to attempt to give you my opinion of him, it

would I fear appear too much like trampling upon a fallen foe but in a few Words I will say to you, the more I see of him & know of him the less do I like or admire him, his conduct is far more like that of a spoiled child thwarted than of a Great Man under Misfortune, and (what will perhaps surprise you as much as it has me) his Manners are particularly low & bad and nothing can exceed the apparent capriciousness & overbearing ill nature with which he treats those French Persons who have shewn their attachment to him by accompanying him hither & who continue to flatter him & cringe to him in a way that is neither to be understood nor seen without feelings of disgust & contempt by Englishmen.

Adieu My dear Sir Alexander. I am sorry to say this Miserable Rock offers nothing likely to prove acceptable to you but if I can serve you in aught when I return to *Cavendish Square* pray believe the Pleasure I should have in executing your Commands.

I beg my best Respects & Regards to Lady Campbell and that you will believe the real Esteem with which I ever am, My dear General

Most faithfully & truly yours

G. COCKBURN.

This will be conveyed to you by the *Icarus* Brig of War, which Vessel I send to remain with you until a better Vessel may arrive from England to take your part of the Station—the Commander of the *Icarus* has (certainly very improperly) brought his Wife with him from England & she cruizes with him in the Brig as however the fault is not hers poor Woman, and she appears to be very quiet and respectable I venture to ask of Lady Campbell & yourself to shew her any Countenance or Civilities which may be in your power without inconvenience.

#### General Grant's Veto of the «Inflation Bill.»

THE brief note by EX-Minister John A. Kasson, in the April CENTURY, touching General Grant's veto of the «Inflation Bill,» has called to my mind a statement of some importance made to me upon the same subject by the Hon. John A. J. Creswell of Maryland. I had not supposed that the incident referred to was unfamiliar to historical students. If it is, General Creswell's statement will certainly throw some additional light upon it. It will be remembered that General Creswell was Postmaster-General at the time, and it may be added that among his many high gifts marked ability as a lawyer and strength as a financier were included. I chanced to come into familiar acquaintance with him through the fact that he was the general counsel for the government before the court of Alabama claims, of which I was a member. His statement, which I think must be taken as altogether reliable, is somewhat at variance, but not strangely so, with Mr. Kasson's statement of what General Grant said.

General Creswell informed me that while President Grant did not submit the «Inflation Bill» to the consideration of the cabinet as a body, he did talk with the different members about it. At the close of one of the meetings the President requested General Creswell to remain. When they were alone the bill was discussed, the President saying that although he had thought much upon the subject, he had been unable to come to

a conclusion as to the true line of his duty. General Creswell urged him to veto the bill. The President replied that he was inclined to do so, but the pressure for approval of the measure, on the ground of party necessity, was greater than he had ever before experienced. He said that all but two members of his cabinet advised him to find reasons for signing the bill, and urged that a veto would imperil the prosperity of the country and perhaps wreck the party which had twice elected him. After considerable discussion the President said that his disposition of the measure would doubtless be the most important act of his administration; that in the midst of all the various contentions it was apparent that he must decide the matter for himself; that his judgment was opposed to the bill, and he thought he would veto it, although the weight of official recommendation was in its favor. He said he would have to see what he could do in the way of writing a message before the next cabinet meeting, and requested the Postmaster-General to come to him an hour in advance of the next meeting to see what he should produce.

When General Creswell called prior to the next meeting, the President took from his desk and read a very carefully written memorandum setting forth the considerations which had led him reluctantly to determine to sign the bill, and asked the cabinet officer how he liked it, and if he did not think that, all things considered, he had reached the wisest conclusion. Upon being met with expressions of surprise and regret, he took from his desk another paper and read it. It was the since famous veto message. General Creswell said with enthusiasm: «Mr. President, if you will use that, it will put the substantial sense of the country under lasting obligations to you.» «No matter what it does,» was the reply, «it is the only thing I can write upon the subject and satisfy my judgment and conscience, and I shall adhere to it.» He then explained that he had sometimes found that he could come to the safest conclusions by writing for himself the strongest possible paper on each side of controverted questions, and that he had worked until late into the previous night applying that test to the «Inflation Bill.» He said that at first he had given himself up to the thought that he would sign the bill and file with it an explanatory memorandum. He had made this as strong and logical as he could. Then he turned to the other side, and set to work to write the most convincing veto message of which he was capable. The result left no doubt in his mind as to which side had the weight of reason and argument. He felt sure of the right course, and, regardless of clamor and abuse, he would have pleasure in pursuing it.

This doubtless shows the operation of General Grant's mind, and the facts as to what he did in this connection, more fully than his statement to Mr. Kasson. It also shows that Mr. Kasson is in error in supposing that he destroyed the one document before preparing the other, and that he prepared and kept them *for comparison*, which seems to me to be the point of the whole matter, and that he showed both to at least one person. Indeed, both documents may yet be in existence. The difference between the two statements is not great, however, and is easily explained.