

fact that the seven years which have increased the gold product 75 per cent. have also witnessed a decline in general prices. If these two coincident developments show anything, it is that the decline in prices was in no way due to the supply of gold, but was the natural result of human progress in the art of living. Prices are lower because human ingenuity and invention have made it possible to buy more with a dollar than was ever bought before. The dollar remains the same, but the world has more to give in exchange for it.

#### The Reign of the Bicycle.

WHAT may be called, not improperly, the bicycle passion has full possession of several leading countries of the world. England and France, notably those parts of them in and about London and Paris, have been so given over to it for some time that a large portion of their population come and go on their errands of business or pleasure "on a wheel." Americans who have recently traveled abroad have been astonished at the general use of the bicycle there, and have been still more astonished, on returning to their own country during the last year, to discover what headway the passion has made here. It is said to be a conservative estimate by competent authorities that during the year now closing a quarter of a million bicycles have been sold in this country, and that the number of riders approaches a million. There are said to be over fifty thousand in New York and its neighborhood, and fully half that number in and about Boston. The latter city caught the passion from Europe some time before New York did, and has a larger proportion of its population, male and female, regularly devoted to it.

Observers of the phenomenon are wondering whether it is merely a passing whim, or whether it "has come to stay"; whether those who have taken it up will continue it after the novelty has worn off, or whether they will drop it for the next new fad that shall come along. There are many reasons for thinking that its stay will be permanent. Undoubtedly many of those who take it up because of its vogue will tire of it after a while, but these will not constitute a large proportion of the whole number. The great body of riders find in the bicycle a new pleasure in life, a means for seeing more of the world, a source of better health through open-air exercise, a bond of comradeship, a method of rapid locomotion either for business or pleasure, and many other enjoyments and advantages which they will not relinquish. The bicycle has, in fact, become a necessary part of modern life, and could not be abandoned without turning the social progress of the world backward. Few who have used it for a tour through the country would think for a moment of giving it up and returning to pedestrianism instead. Aside from the exhilarating joy of riding, which every bicycle devotee will assure you is the nearest approach to flying at present possible to man, there is the opportunity of seeing a constantly changing landscape.

The bicycle-rider journeys, too, virtually unencumbered with luggage; for the weight of his kit, which would be constantly growing more and more perceptible were it strapped upon his back while he was walking, has no appreciable effect upon the speed of the wheel or the amount of energy required to propel it. The rider slips past farm and cottage, through woods and along the banks of streams, with almost the ease and freedom of

a bird. At the same time he travels with wonderful cheapness, covering double and even treble the number of miles a day that a horse could regularly travel, and doing it all without a dollar of expense for food or shelter for his "beast of burden."

The bicycle is indeed the great leveler. It puts the poor man on a level with the rich, enabling him to "sing the song of the open road" as freely as the millionaire, and to widen his knowledge by visiting the regions near to or far from his home, observing how other men live. He could not afford a railway journey and sojourn in these places, and he could not walk through them without tiring sufficiently to destroy in a measure the pleasure which he sought. But he can ride through twenty, thirty, fifty, even seventy miles of country in a day without serious fatigue, and with no expense save his board and lodging. To thousands of men and women the longing of years to travel a little as soon as they could afford it is thus gratified, virtually without limit; for a "little journey in the world" can be made on every recurring holiday or vacation.

But it is not only as a means of enjoyment and healthful exercise that the bicycle has a strong hold on popular favor. In smaller cities, and in towns and villages, it has become a necessity of every-day life. The tradesmen solicit and deliver orders upon it; messenger boys use it in carrying their despatches; doctors in visiting their patients; clergymen in making their pastoral calls; mail-carriers in delivering letters; and policemen in pursuing offenders against the laws. Insurance and other agents travel from town to town upon it, and in every community it is the ever-ready vehicle for countless errands of every description.

At a recent election in Alabama, the Birmingham Bicycle Club, composed of thirty members, collected the returns from remote sections of the State, and brought them to Birmingham before the city votes had been counted, traveling, in order to accomplish this, over one thousand miles of rough and sandy mountain roads. All the returns were in hand by midnight, and for almost the first time in its history the verdict of the entire State was known on the day of the election. This was a use of the bicycle which is certain to be imitated in many States in the future. Somewhat similar is the use which is made of it in the armies of the world for the sending of despatches between both adjacent and widely separated points. Not long ago a message was sent from Washington to Denver by relays of bicycle-riders. The distance, nearly two thousand miles, was covered in six days. A recent trial in Great Britain was scarcely less striking in its results. A plan was arranged to carry a message from London to Edinburgh and to bring back an answer. Relays of riders, in pairs to avoid delay in case of accident, were stationed along the route. Through a portion of the journey rain descended in torrents, the roads were in bad condition, and there was a strong head wind; yet in spite of these disadvantageous circumstances the round trip of eight hundred miles was made in fifty hours and twenty-seven minutes. The best time ever made when fast coaching was at its height was forty-two hours and twenty-three minutes for half the journey. Demonstrations like these show that the bicycle occupies a field of human activity which is both new and capable of such expansion as to make it a necessity henceforth.

No one can study this subject and not reach the conviction that, instead of declining, the use of the bicycle is destined to increase. Fifteen years ago the total sale of bicycles in this country in twelve months was only ninety-two. It was not till 1886, when the perfected modern "safety" made its appearance abroad (it appeared in this country a year later), that the marvelous modern development of the passion began. It grew slowly for a few years; but within the last three years its progress has carried all before it, till now the man who does not ride is an exception whose life is a burden under the weight of advice which the devotees of the sport pour upon him. That the effect upon us as a people of such healthful exercise in the open air will be most beneficial cannot be questioned, and from that point of view alone the practice should be encouraged. Many a boy will start in life with a more vigorous constitution because of his bicycle, and many a man who was growing old too fast by neglect of active exercise will find himself rejuvenated by the same agency.

A direct and salutary effect of the great popularity of bicycle-riding will be to spread abroad the gospel of good roads. Every bicycle-rider is a natural and eloquent missionary of scientific road construction, and every cyclist club is perforce a good-road club as well. There is thus growing up, in all parts of the land, an organized body of road reformers who will, before many years have passed, be powerful enough to make their wishes law in many States.

#### No Backward Step in Copyright!

It was not to be expected that the International Copyright Bill of March 3, 1891, would be entirely satisfactory to all of its friends—much less to its enemies. When it is remembered that in the conferences between the House of Representatives and the Senate in the last hours of an exciting session it was virtually pulled to pieces and put together again, it would be astonishing if its language did not present ambiguities, or if its workings should be altogether smooth. These are objections, however, which concern all legislation, and it is remarkable how little actual friction has characterized the operation of this law; it is indicative, also, of the growth among us of the sense of justice toward literary property that nearly all the criticism of the act has been on the ground that it does not go far enough in the protection of authors' rights.

The first tangible evidence of organized hostility was the introduction in Congress by Mr. Hicks of Pennsylvania, in the closing days of the last session, of a bill to limit copyright in etchings and engravings to such as are manufactured in this country, and in fact to remove from the security of the law all such articles so far as their publication in a daily or weekly newspaper is concerned. The absurdity of the first provision is as transparent as the effort to obtain by the second provision the support of the daily and weekly press.

This bill is not rightly named. It should be called "An Act for the Forcible Importation of Foreign Artists." Not only is the deprivation of existing property rights to extend to foreign etchers and engravers,—to great artists such as Gravesende, Hamerton, or Flameng,—but to any American artist working abroad. If these gentlemen wish to have their property secured

in this country, they can easily do so by taking up their residence in the land of the free! If Mr. Whistler wishes to etch a view of the Grand Canal, by all means let him come to the United States to do it! If Mr. Pennell wishes to make etchings of French cathedrals, what better point of view than, let us say, the suburbs of Philadelphia! If Mr. Cole wishes to continue his matchless series of engravings from the old masters, what more convenient spot for his work than the mountain region of middle Pennsylvania! It is too absurd for serious consideration. *To offer copyright to an artist on impossible terms is to offer him no copyright at all.* This whole question was fought out in the Senate in 1891, and Mr. Hicks's bill is not more likely to find favor in a Congress which has lately honored itself by removing the barbarous duty on paintings and sculpture.

Another obstacle to the withdrawal of the security given by the United States law, is that such action would be in the nature of a breach of existing understanding with other countries. The present law is the basis of reciprocal arrangements with Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Italy, and Portugal, according to which our engravers and etchers are among those whose rights are secure in those countries. Is the American artist to be prevented from accepting the remuneration which foreigners offer for his work, because somebody in the United States does not wish to pay for the use of foreign art? Certainly the art-producing countries of Europe are not likely to sit idly by while we recant any part of the honorable professions of the Copyright Bill.

Nor is this new form of piracy likely to obtain support from the American press, which won such credit by its advocacy of justice to intellectual property, and made possible the passage of the present law. Even the piratical classes soon discovered that the bill conferred benefits upon them by giving them security in purchased rights, when before they had only the instability of a general scramble. Honest journals do not need to be convinced of the wisdom of the policy of paying for what they print, and there is no reason whatever why a monthly magazine, a weekly illustrated journal, or a daily newspaper, should be exempted from the obligation of paying for the use of illustrative material. To do them justice, we know of none that advocates the exemption. Such a policy would be bad enough, but if, in addition, weeklies and dailies are not to be permitted to acquire property rights for which they are eager to pay, then is chaos come again, and the reversion to the old days of piracy but a question of time.

It is incredible that Congress can be induced to pass a measure so objectionable from the points of view of morality and the public interest, and so injurious to literature and art.

#### The Growth of Civil-Service Reform.

IN a large sense all progress toward good government by the selection of able and honest men is a triumph of the principles of civil-service reform; but the past year has been productive of other and striking evidences that the people realize the value of the merit system as an indispensable means to good govern-