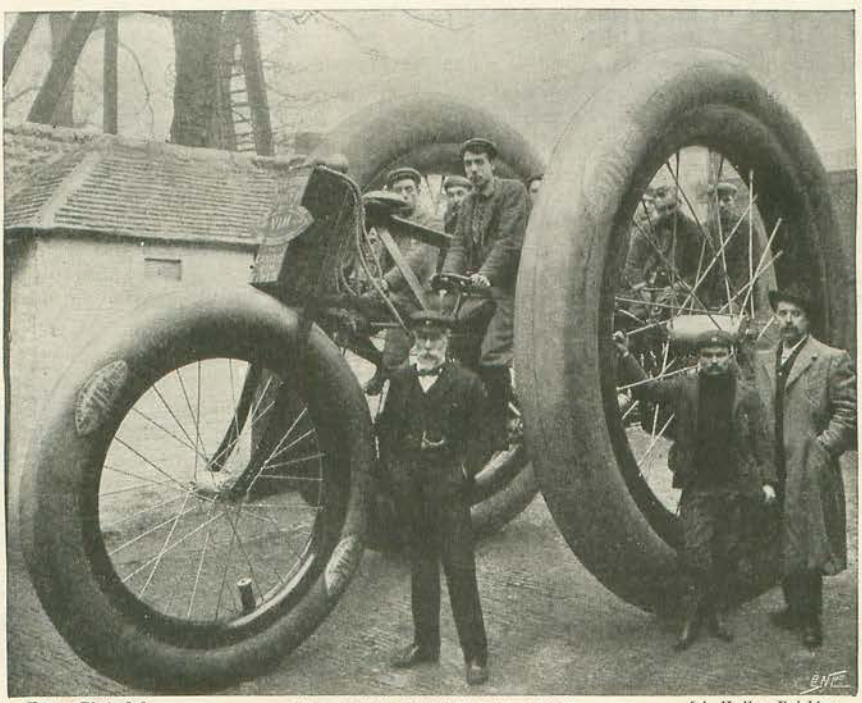
Remarkable Cycles.

By Harold J. Shepstone.

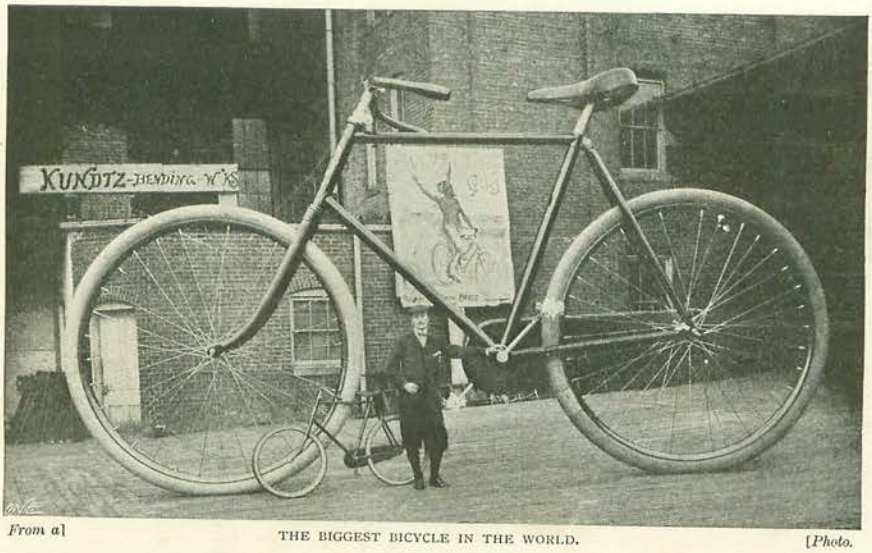
IN no industry, perhaps, have manufacturers so sought to bring their particular wares to the notice of the public by such novel and startling devices as in cycle-making. Such intense earnestness for something entirely new and attractive has been the cause of many curious creations in cycledom, and it is the intention of this article to give a description of some of the most extraordinary cycles which have been built for this purpose. And it cannot be denied that many of them must have called for much ingenuity and skill on the part of their designers and builders, while not a few have been put to very practical purposes indeed.

What is certainly the biggest monstrosity the cycling world has ever seen is the mammoth tricycle seen in our first photograph. It is hardly necessary to add that no one but a Yankee could have conceived the idea of constructing such a machine. It was manufactured for the Boston Woven-Hose and Rubber Company, and was built with the express purpose of advertising the Vim tyre, a tube well known on the other side of the Atlantic. Some two years ago this giant among tricycles was brought to this country, and many will probably recollect it, for it was exhibited in the windows of a well-known cycle store in Holborn Viaduct. It was so large that it was found necessary to take it to pieces to get it into the shop, and the same process had to be repeated when it was removed.

This monster was not built solely to look at, but for touring. It made many trips, and our photograph shows the machine and its eight riders on their arrival at Brighton. The two side wheels are 11ft. high, while the steering-wheel is 7ft. high. It has wooden rims, which are fitted with single-tube tyres, measuring 15in. and 18in. through for the large and small wheels respectively. The hubs on the two side wheels are 18in. in length, and are fitted with spokes of steel ½in. thick. Although the tricycle weighs nearly a ton complete it can easily be pushed along by one person on a level surface, so minutely were the bearings made. It is geared to fifty-four, and requires eight men to pedal it, and another to superintend the steering, which is effected by means of a wheel and chain. Like all modern cycles, however, it is susceptible to punctures, and sustained many of these undesirable mishaps during the course of its travels, and to locate and



From a Photo. by] THE LARGEST TRICYCLE EVER BUILT. *[A. H. Fry, Brighton,*

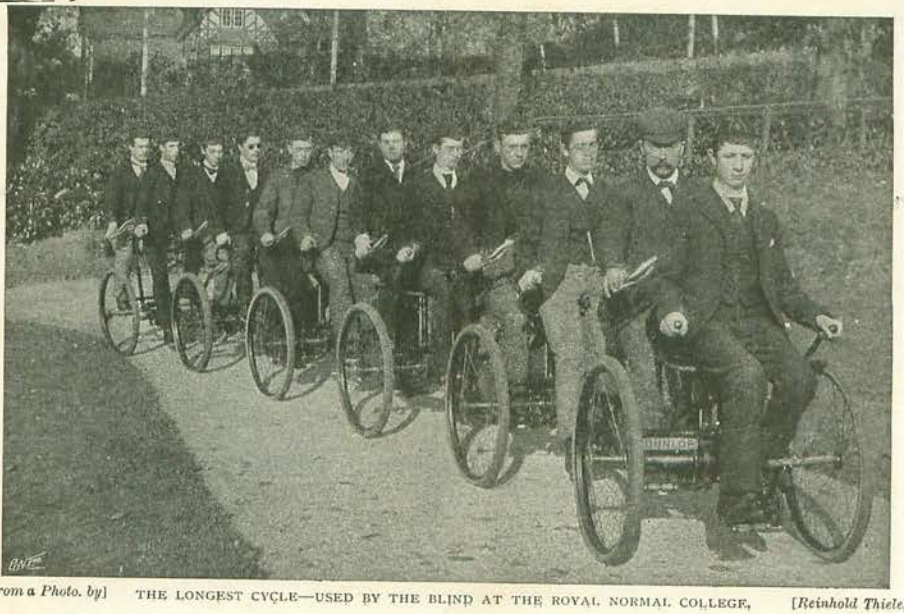


From a] THE BIGGEST BICYCLE IN THE WORLD. *[Photo.*

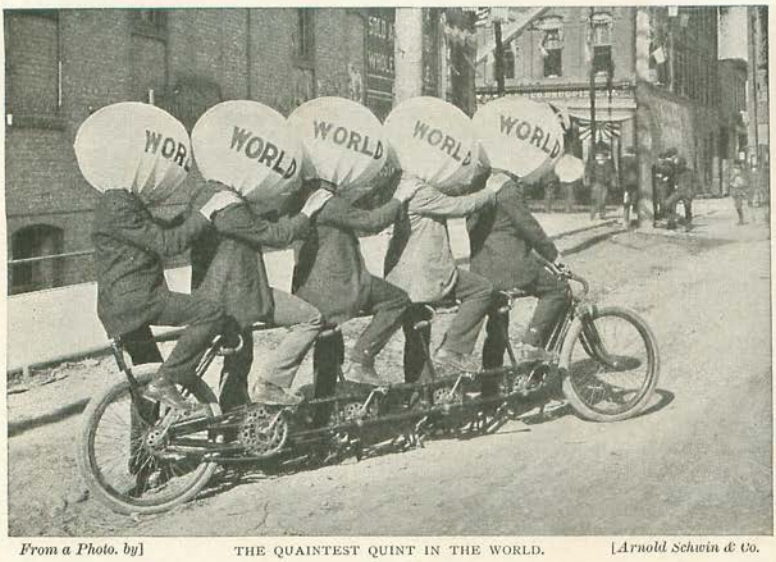
mend a puncture on this enormous cycle was no easy task, occupying anywhere from a few hours to a couple of days.

Although the largest tricycle that the brain of the cycle-maker could create was capable of being ridden, such is not the case with the biggest ordinary two-wheel safety. This machine was built entirely for show purposes, and is the property of Messrs. H. A. Lozier and Co., the makers of the well-known Cleveland bicycles. Our photograph will convey a fair idea of the size of the giant wheel, which is shown so distinctly with an ordinary bicycle and rider by the side of it. The tubing used in its construction had a diameter of 6in., while the wheels have a diameter of 15ft., and, like all American bicycles, are fitted with single-tube tyres, which are 18in. in width. The machine is made to proportion throughout, even the saddle, on which half-a-dozen men could easily find standing room. The spokes are ¾in. thick, while the gear is no less than 360in. Given a giant to bestride it, all existing records, we imagine, would soon be broken.

Having described the largest of cycles it is only natural that we should mention the



From a Photo. by] THE LONGEST CYCLE—USED BY THE BLIND AT THE ROYAL NORMAL COLLEGE, *[Reinhold Thiele.*



From a Photo. by] THE QUAINTEST QUINT IN THE WORLD. *[Arnold Schwin & Co.*

longest, a machine designed to carry twelve riders. It is used in the grounds of the Royal Normal College for the Blind at Upper Norwood, and by the aid of this remarkable "iron steed" many a sightless individual has enjoyed exhilarating spins awheel in the college grounds. It is necessary, of course, for one of the crew to be exempt from this terrible affliction—loss of sight—and the second rider on the machine is the one responsible for the steering—not an easy task, as anyone who has tried to negotiate corners on machines that carry four riders and more very well knows.

Our next illustration shows a quint, a machine designed to carry five riders, and represents the work of Messrs. Arnold Schwin and Co., of Chicago, who claim that it is the only successful multi-cycle ever built. It has certainly done some good work as a pacing-machine at most of the great cycling contests, having been used at various races in Paris, Bordeaux, Brussels, Berlin, London, and in America, and has no doubt done not a little to establish many a cycling "record." It is interesting, however, on account of the novel use to which its owners have since put it, namely, to advertise the "World" bicycle, the name by which their machines are known. As will be seen in the photograph, all the five riders have their heads concealed in globes, inscribed with the word "World." These globes are constructed of light wire and cloth, having a small aperture in front for seeing and breathing. Such a bicycle with such a unique crew careering about the streets could hardly fail to attract even the attention and admiration of the busy, go-ahead American citizen.

The distinction of being the youngest cyclist in the world undoubtedly belongs to Master Clarence House, age seventeen months, who is seen in the photograph reproduced herewith riding his diminutive wheel, which rejoices in the name of the *Tit-Bits* cycle. He caused much attraction at the last Bradford cycle show, where he disported himself on his machine, with evident satisfaction to himself as well as to the visitors. The total length of the little bicycle is but 26in.; when the rider is seated on his machine, the distance from the floor to the top of his head is 2ft. 7½in. The diameter of the wheels is 10in., length

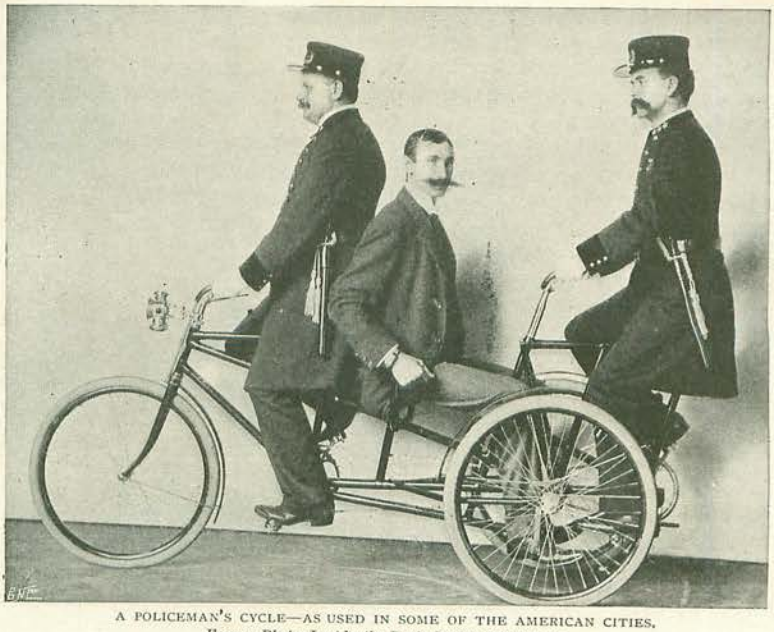
THE YOUNGEST CYCLIST IN THE WORLD.
From a Photo. by Messrs. Fox, Bradford,

THE HEAVIEST CYCLIST ALIVE.
From a Photo. by J. H. Faber, Norfolk, Va.

of crank 3in., and gear 22. Every part of the machine was specially made, and it is a perfect cycle in every detail. It is so small that it can be put upright under an ordinary chair, while its rider has often taken cycling excursions under the dining-room table. Little Clarence is a fine big baby-boy, and bicycle and baby together turn the scale at 30½lb. Already he has received recognition as an able cyclist, for he is an honorary member of the Bradford and County Cycling Club, and his father, Mr. Albert House, who is manager of the Bradford Cycle and Motor Company, has just written us to the effect that Mr. Ernest Flower, M.P., has presented our cycling prodigy with a gold medal.

Our next "baby" is a full-grown one in the person of "Baby" Grimes, who declares that he is the heaviest cyclist in the world, a claim which we do not intend to dispute. Our photograph depicts the big "baby" in racing costume, and naturally his plump limbs are very noticeable. Grimes has done a great deal of cycling during the last five years, and has felt no ill-effects through his indulgence in the pastime; on the contrary, he declares that the exercise has been the means of keeping him in health. He turns the scale at about 570lb. He is 6ft. 4in. high, has a chest measurement of 62in., and his calves are 22in. round. His flesh, too, is as hard and firm as that of a well-trained athlete.

Turning for a moment to the more utilitarian purposes to which cycles are now being put, we might mention the Police Patrol Tricycle, which was manufactured by the Davis Sewing Machine Co., of Dayton, Ohio, about a year ago. As will be seen in our photograph, the front and rear seats are occupied by policemen, while the prisoner is seated in the centre, and is unable to give any annoyance by moving, as both his hands and his feet are strapped. This machine,



A POLICEMAN'S CYCLE—AS USED IN SOME OF THE AMERICAN CITIES.
From a Photo, Lent by the Davis Sewing Machine Co.

From a Photo. by] A FIREMAN'S CYCLE. *[A. H. Fry, Brighton.*

the company inform us, is the only cycle ever constructed for such a purpose, and is unique, having been in practical use by various police departments in several of the American cities.

Our next photograph is also interesting, as it represents a quadricycle fire engine. The machine has the appearance of two tandems joined together, and the four riders are mounted two abreast. In the illustration we see the pumps are being worked by the pedals, the back wheels being thrown off the ground. It is believed that in outlying districts and country towns such a device as this is invaluable for getting to the fire quickly, and that it has a great future before it.

Then there is also the railway-track bicycle, another of Uncle Sam's creations, though, so far as the writer can learn, it is not very extensively used on the large American railways. It would appear, too, that it is made exclusively by one firm, the Kalamazoo Railway Supply Company. In most respects it is similar to an ordinary bicycle, with the exception that it has a third wheel of 11in. diameter, while the conventional pneumatic tyres are dispensed with, though the tread of the flat surface of the wheels, which enables it to run smoothly on the steel rails, has a continuous rubber band. These bands enable the bicycle to adhere more closely to the rails, and so lessen the danger of slipping when the rails are wet. Given a clear course, the speed which can be attained on these machines is astonishing, and to get to the scene of an accident, or to reach a far-distant signal station, is a matter which requires little preparation provided one of these bicycles is forthcoming. With a comparatively low gear a speed of twenty miles an hour is easily

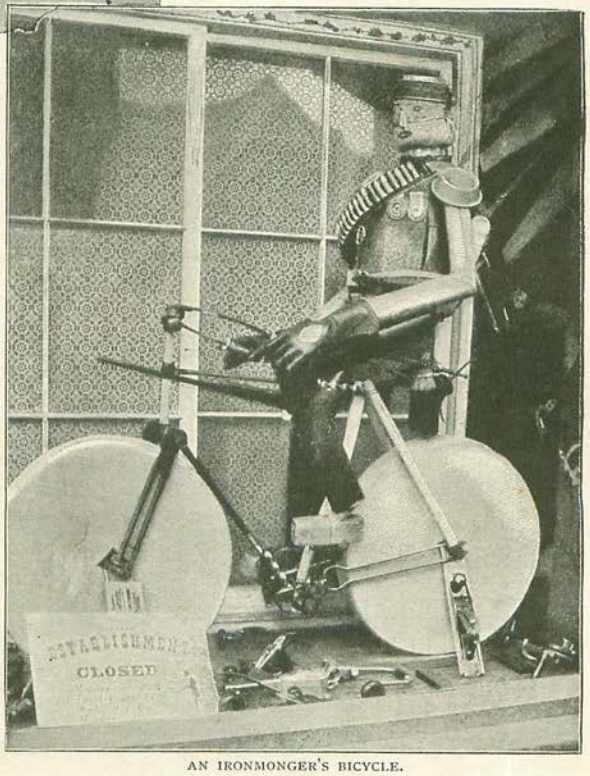
From a] A RAILWAY CYCLE. *[Photo.*

From a] JATHO'S GIANT SOCIABLE. *[Photo.*

obtainable on the level, for, naturally, riding on a modern railway track is smooth and easy running.

One of the most novel bicycles we have ever seen adaptable for two riders is the Jatho Giant Sociable. The large wheel of this unique machine is 8ft. 6in. in height, and covers a distance of 315in. in one revolution. The little steering-wheel, which is under the control of the male rider, is 16in. in height. The machine is driven by chains running from the right-hand and left-hand bottom bracket to the hub of the large wheel. Mr. Karl Jatho, the builder and designer of this remarkable cycle, is seated on the farther side of the machine, while the other seat is occupied by his sister. They have taken part in many cycling festivals in the principal towns of Germany on this curious "steed," which has never failed to attract particular attention. The machine weighs nearly a hundredweight, and cost £50 to build.

For variety and novelty in its composition, it is doubtful if the "ironmonger's bicycle" can be beaten. The photograph of this curious machine has been sent to us by Mr. J. Nevil Moore, of Semaphore, South Australia, where it was recently exhibited in the windows of an enterprising firm of ironmongers. Every article that finds a place in its make-up can be purchased at the store in question, and this statement alone will give a fair idea of the immense business of this establishment. Two large grindstones do service as wheels, and a couple of reaping-hooks make an excellent imitation of a handle-bar. A pair of gas-tongs form the fork of the "machine," while a truck-wheel and dog-chain combine to supply the propelling mechanism. The pneumatic principle is to be found in the seat, which consists of a pair of bellows, while rat-traps constitute quite the approved pattern of pedals. Fire-irons, bevels, augers, adze and hammer handles, and many other familiar articles find a place in



AN IRONMONGER'S BICYCLE.
From a Photo. by Sanders & Begg, Port Adelaide.

A BICYCLE YACHT.
From a Photo. by L. E. Hudson, Ellisburg, N.Y.

this novel bicycle. The rider is, if possible, more curiously and wonderfully made. His head is nothing more than a ball of binder-twine, surmounted with a cake-tin to represent a cap. The body is represented by a dish-cover, while stove-pipes make excellent representations of legs and arms.

Sailing on dry land has now become a possibility, or at least Mr. L. E. Hudson, of Ellisburg, N.Y., has demonstrated his ability to rig his bicycle with a sail, and so convert it into a "bicycle yacht." The mast is some 10ft. high, and is rigidly secured to the frame of the bicycle about 4in. behind the handle-bar. The sail is made of heavy cotton cloth, and is under the control of the rider by means of a cord which passes along the boom at the bottom of the mast to the handle-bar, and can be kept in check without interfering with the steering of the wheel. Mr. Hudson assures us that it is a very enjoyable sport on a breezy or windy day, and enthusiastically recommends it to wheelmen "who are fond of excitement with just a dash of danger."

Passing on to the more fascinating subject of costly bicycles, it may come as a surprise to many to learn that occasionally cycles have been manufactured which have been nothing else than a blaze of gold and silver and precious stones. One instance which we may mention is that of a lady's ordinary diamond dropped-frame bicycle richly and profusely decorated in silver, the ornamentations suggesting the rococo and Louis XV. styles. The handles are of carved and stained ivory, decorated with silver and jade knobs at the ends. The wheel is equipped with silver brake, solid silver cyclometer and silver bell, while the saddle and tool-bag are also ornamented with this metal. Perhaps the most beautiful accessory of the wheel is the solid silver lamp attached to the handle-bar. It is made after the most approved fashion, with a high-power reflector, and ruby and emerald coloured cut-crystal side-lights. The mudguard is nickel-plated, ornamented with silver and strung with the finest silk, while the whole frame of the machine is most lavishly decorated with specimens of the jeweller's art. This bicycle was exhibited in the windows of Messrs. Tiffany and Co., well-known New York jewellers, and is a specimen of their work. The machine, however, was not on view very long, for it was purchased the first day it was put on exhibition, and, strange to say, by a titled gentleman of this country.

The most costly bicycle ever manufactured, however, was a tandem cycle built by the Elgin Cycle Co., of which a photograph is

From a] THE FINEST CYCLE IN THE WORLD. *[Photo.*

here reproduced. This one machine represents a small fortune, having cost £2,000 to build. When it is stated that 2,000dwts., or 8⅓lb., of fine gold, and 176 genuine diamonds, ranging in size from one to eight carats each, several hundred rubies, pearls, emeralds, and other precious stones are mounted in conspicuous places on the frame, one begins to see where its value comes in. To photograph a machine of this kind with a view to displaying its costly ornamentations is somewhat difficult, but a glance at our illustration, which is from a photograph in colours, will give a fair idea of the numerous massive gold bands which decorate various parts of the frame. These bands are of solid gold and beautifully chased. Several of the most popular outdoor sports are prominently portrayed carved in solid gold. On the top bar we may notice a bicycle race-track, showing several riders finishing a race in front of a well-filled grand stand. On the lower rear fork a boating scene may be detected, while other racing scenes are depicted on other parts of the machine. The front fork deserves special comment. The decorations are marvellous creations of the goldsmith's art, consisting of floral wreaths, each leaf and flower carved and coloured true to Nature out of solid gold. The sides are finished with two massive gold bands, mounted with twenty-five diamonds, forming a cluster for two diamonds weighing 8cts. each. The Elgin King Crown, which is set with many beautiful gems, is noticeable, while the name "Elgin King" on the drop-bar immediately above may also be discerned. The name is made out of heavy gold letters, the entire design serving as a setting for a large number of precious stones. The tandem is rideable, and the whole idea of loading the machine with such costly gems was purely a device for advertising. A worm gear takes the place of the front tandem chain, and the steering is under the control of the rear rider, but, of course, we can hardly imagine such a machine on the road.

Another beautifully decorated bicycle so far as costly ornamentation is concerned is the "Rambler," which was made by the Messrs. Gormully and Jeffery Manufacturing Company. It was built at a cost of £200. All the enamelled parts of this machine are embellished with silver embossing in the most artistic fashion. The handle-bars, pedals, cranks, sprockets, and hubs are all silver-plated. The brake is covered with gold. The spoke nipples also are of gold, and glisten through rims of highly polished mahogany. Reference may also be made to the saddle, which is of highly polished leather, hand-carved in fanciful designs with gold mountings. The handles are of solid ivory, turned in neat spiral design, and are tipped with jewelled gold ends. The head is crowned with a circlet of pearls, surrounding an immense amethyst, while in every handle-tip are set similar specimens of the violet-blue gem. Turquoise gems may be found set at the end of either rear fork diagonal tube, and also in the head.

In concluding this article on quaint and curious bicycles we may allude to the tiniest of them all, a most interesting mechanical curio, constructed by Joseph Figarotta. This diminutive wheel weighs but two ounces, but is none the less perfect in all its parts; and, what is more, is in perfect running order. No part or appurtenance of the completely equipped wheel is lacking. A dainty lamp, with microscopic coloured lens, rests on its accustomed bracket. Although so small the wheels are fitted with pneumatic tyres, and it is in every respect an up-to-date machine. The height of the frame is but ⅞in., wheel base 1½in., diameter of wheel 1in. The building of this liliputian wheel occupied its owner most of his spare time for two years.

A COMPLETE BICYCLE WHICH WEIGHS TWO OUNCES.
From a Photograph.