



Cycling: The Craze of the Hour (The London Library)

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The first bicycle was invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it wasn't until the 1890s that the craze really took off. This brought with it the fears, scaremongering, worries and uncertainties that inevitably accompany any new fashion. Women (often unchaperoned and oddly dressed) taking to "velocipedes"; overexertion; the possibility of heart disease - these are just some of the fears that haunted the establishment in the late nineteenth century... But with it, of course, came the joy and wonder of "the easy and agreeable motion" of this thoroughly modern means of locomotion.

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From essays on dieting in the 1860s to instructions for gentlewomen on trout-fishing, from advice on the ill health caused by the "modern" craze of bicycling to travelogues from Norway, they are as readable and relevant today as they were more than a century ago - even if the cardiovascular dangers of cycling have now been disproved!

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