

CYCLING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.*

BY CHARLES FULLER GATES.



Mausard-Collier Eng. Co

THE AUTHOR.

him who finds most delight in speed, the Southwest also becomes a Mecca ; for here are bicycle race-tracks galore in a climate that makes record breaking and the fastest speed possible.

The world of cycling is learning that "far-away California" can produce the best racing men as well as the speediest race horses and winning athletes. This is indeed the pleasure ground of the earth.

Nowhere are sunshine, flowers, atmosphere and civilized comforts so nicely combined with scenery that excites and yet rests, that delights, that inspires all ; and, over all, the bluest of serene skies.

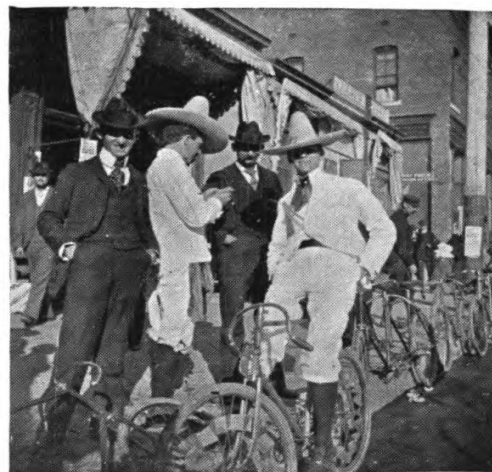
The bicycle is everywhere. The horse, our friend of ages — so dear to the traveler, the tiller and the man of family — seems to have been half superseded in this sunny land by that strange bird-like creation of rubber, wood, steel and leather. Go about the cities and you see the wheel more common than the horse. Sally out into the country, among the orange groves, the plains, the grain fields, and the bicycle is there. Follow nature among the foothills, and beside the sea — and the steed of silence is ever present.

Those grand old piles, the saintly-named Missions, our world-famous, historic ruins, are bound together and brought closer by the swift cycle.

The sun rises upon you in Los Angeles, near that chapel beside

There is a place in this big world where it is always afternoon to the lover of the cycle ; where the riding season lasts all the year ; where sea, mountain, valley, wood, river and cañon combine in picturesque allurements.

Nature's lover finds the bicycle his best friend in this land of sun-going-down ; for it is most practical, most convenient and most common. And to



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* Illustrated from photos. by the author.

the green Plaza ; and you are soon whirling along the romantic Mission Road, part of the *Camino Real*, to San Gabriel's pilastered walls and ancient chime of bells. And, like the magic carpet of the *Arabian Nights*, this air-shod steed whisks you almost in a wink to a modern hotel where breakfast is welcome. You tear yourself away from the oft-described beauties of the San Gabriel valley, and your wheel sweeps you along the foothills of the Sierra Madre, where the wide green valley of San Fernando unfolds to you with its border of a hundred mountain peaks surrounding this Eden.

Long before noonday you are inspecting the walls, colonnades, and arches of what was once San Fernando Mission. A temple, like Solomon's, made by thousands of hands ; with timber hewn in the hills full twenty miles away and brought oft-times on the shoulders of the toilers ; with stone and metal from foreign lands completed, and with gold from the mountains and the fruit of the land enriched.

You tarry here with your camera, perchance ; seek lunch in the nearby town, and then off to the next Mission in far-away San Buenaventura ; skimming along the mountain sides and over the broad, fruitful valleys, with their thousands of sheep, cattle and horses.

After the late dinner, which only a bicycle trip can make taste so well, you sink to dreamless rest, and rise the next morning early for another exhilarating ride to the quaint old Mission at far-famed Santa Barbara. On every hand new sights and wonders greet you, while by your side old ocean's organ peals.

To the user of the cycle (and who does not ride should at once learn) Southern California offers greater charms than any spot else in America. On every hand historic landmarks and ruins are found. The freedom from rain takes away worry. And exercise puts the rider in good humor with himself and the rest of the world.

"Where Nature's harps are all in tune,
A calm, or a still, on life's rough sea,
A place where is always afternoon."

Starting from Los Angeles, one can reach the orange country at Riverside in one day nicely, and stop for the noonday meal at Pomona or Ontario. From Riverside a few minutes' ride brings one to Redlands, with its wonderful mountain-top park, which can be explored perfectly with a wheel ; San Bernardino, the Mormon City, with all its curiosities and near-by mineral springs ; Colton, with its rich mountain rising out of the plain ; and other towns, each in its way inviting attention.

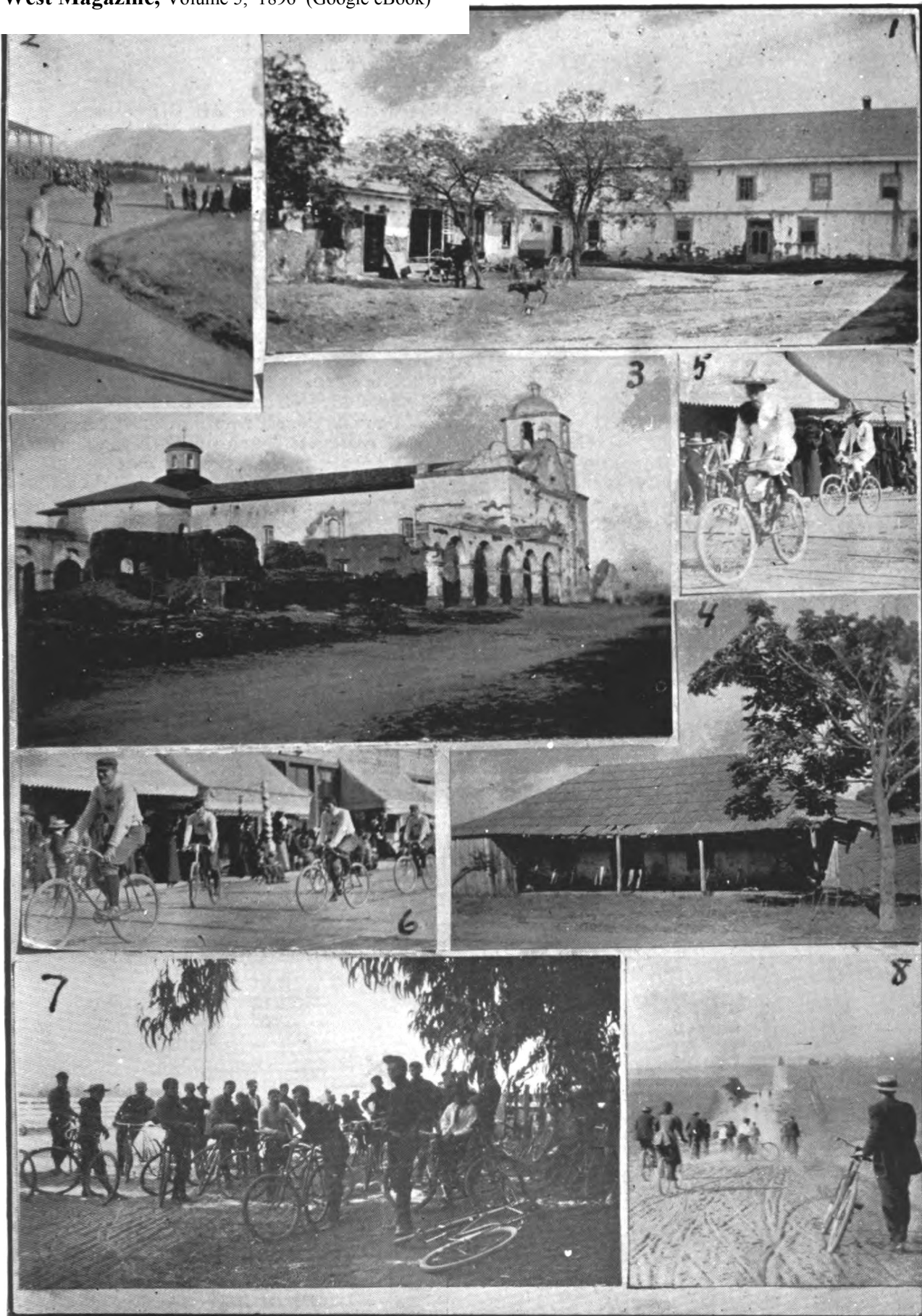
Pasadena, crown of San Gabriel valley, is less than an hour's ride from Los Angeles by several routes, and in all directions from the Crown City are cañons, natural parks, vineyards, beautiful boulevards and scenery that cannot be exhausted in a summer.

On the ocean side, Los Angeles offers Santa Monica, Redondo, San Pedro, Long Beach — all with sea bathing and the usual coast delights, and all within easy and quick reach. Half way between are old ranchos with historic haciendas, and other queer sights well worth investigating.

To the lover of long wheel tours, San Diego and the Mexican border find favor ; and from Los Angeles by a three days' run, Whittier, Santa Ana, San Juan Capistrano Mission, San Luis Rey Mission, San Antonio de Pala Mission, Oceanside, San Diego Mission, Old Town, Coronado Beach, and San Diego city, as well as scores of other interesting points, can be visited. Returning, Escondido, Temecula, Elsinore Lake, Perris and the mines, as well as the orange country, can be touched.

As for cycle racing, Southern California leads the world in third-of-a-mile tracks ; for there are seven within a radius of forty miles from Pomona, as well as many quarter-mile and mile tracks of good quality.

The third-of-a-mile modern bicycle track is found in all its various forms at Pasadena, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, Riverside, Redlands, San Bernardino and South Riverside ; while the quarter-mile tracks at Los



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CYCLING SNAPSHOTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

Photos. by C. F. Gates.

1 : The Cerritos ranch-house. 2 : A handicap at Riverside. 3 : San Luis Rey Mission. 4 : An adobe near Rincon. 5 : Crown City Club members. 6 : From the Times Club. 7 : A wayside halt. 8 : On the road to the Cahuenga.

Angeles, Duarte, Ontario, Pomona and Santa Barbara are all different. Over in Arizona there is a third-of-a-mile track at Tucson, and a quarter-mile at Phoenix. Frequent tournaments are held at all these points.

These tracks offer exceptional advantages for training for future races, and many of them are used for record-breaking — notably the mile Coronado track at San Diego, and the Pasadena and Santa Ana ovals. Lately a team made up of riders from a dozen different States has been breaking records at Coronado, after trying in vain elsewhere, while a few months ago the whole world was wondering at the record-breaking at this same track by an entirely different team, which had come across the continent for the purpose.

The highways of the Southwest have not, as a whole, been improved, yet many of them have never needed to be worked by man. Nature, notably in Riverside County, has made excellent roads that need no care. But this is a big country, and as yet thinly settled, so there are thousands of miles of highway that is little used. Naturally, such roads are not as good as they should be. But there are still other leagues of highways and byways that are equal to any traveled by man. Therefore it can be said that there are many perfect roads in the Southwest, and these roads are being constantly lengthened and added to, until not many years hence Southern California will have nothing to desire in roadways, whether for wagon or cycle.

Los Angeles, Cal.



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