

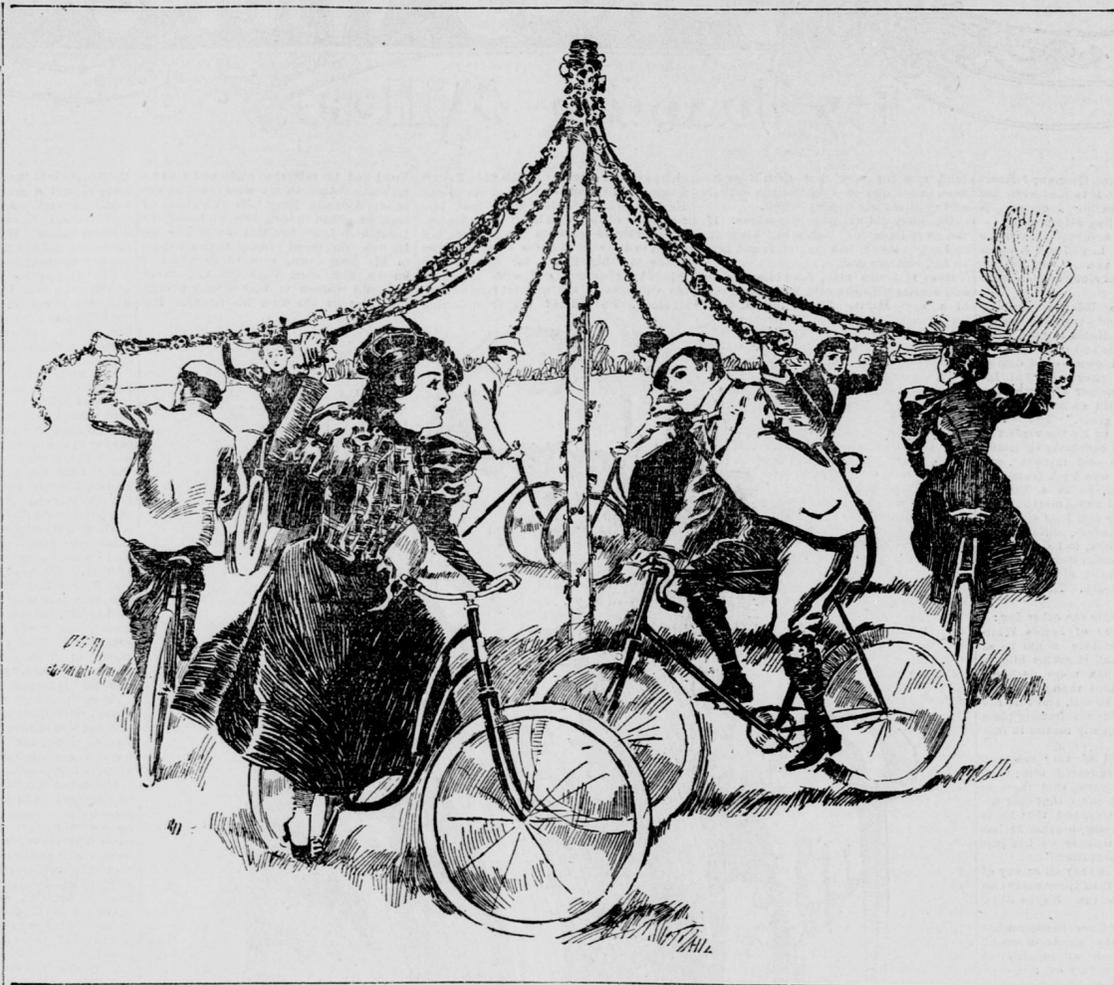
May 1, 1897, will witness a series of the oldest celebrations of the day history records. The bicycle, which has invaded almost everything else, is now scorching toward Mayday. Instead of a circle of young people holding garlanded ribbons, one end of which is attached to the Maypole, we shall see bicyclists performing the action, though, of course, they are likely to be young people, too. Heretofore, the participants in the Mayday festival have danced about the pole in weaving fashion, thus twining the ribbons until the gay sections are united in a gorgeous whole. This time the bicyclists will weave in and out, accomplishing a similar result.

It is an entirely new idea. When first suggested, many cyclists thought it impossible, but for several weeks experiments have been quietly in progress here, which demonstrated that the idea was thoroughly practicable. It is necessary for the young men and women who take part in Mayday events of this sort to be able to control a wheel with great ease. It is the short turn with a bicycle that throws the novice. The Maypole riding is practically a series of short turns and the utmost skill is necessary to avoid collisions.

In winding the ribbons of a Maypole, as the practice is called, it is necessary that almost as much rhythm be preserved as in the music of a dance. A false move by a rider may tangle the whole combination so thoroughly as to necessitate an entire unwinding and thus a new beginning. It is oftentimes necessary for the rider to let go of the handle bars entirely, and never is it possible to keep more than one hand upon them. To make the game interesting it is advisable that there should be very little distance between the wheels of the riders. This being the case it can easily be seen that the cyclist must not lose control of the wheel for a moment.

Again, it is often necessary to reverse and weave in a new direction. Hence one almost needs eyes in the back of his head. Anywhere from six to fifteen riders can take part in this up-to-date Maypole gathering, according to the height of the pole and the number of garlanded ribbons. It is customary, at least so far as experiment has demonstrated, to have eight persons attempt the feat with wheels. At the start all move in the same direction. The ribbons are allowed to, as the sailors say, take three turns around the pole. Then the process of weaving begins. Four of the riders reverse front, and, while little or no progress is made in the change of position, the ribbons become more and more entwined. Then another change of front is made, and four of the riders keep their machines as near stationary as possible, never losing hold for a moment of the garlanded ribbons.

Then three turns more are taken around the pole, the riders moving in procession. This programme is repeated as long as the length of the ribbons will permit, and when at last the end is well nigh reached the procession of riders is formed very close to the pole. Around they go until, as the end ribbons near the pole, the riders are supposed to fasten them there without slackening speed. At this point from the pocket of each rider is drawn a



little hammer and a double-headed brass tack, from which depends a tiny streamer. With almost lightning-like rapidity the cyclist pins the end of the ribbon to the pole with the tack and a smart blow from the hammer instantly following fastens the end securely.

While at first thought this programme may seem an almost impossible array of effort experiment has proved that it is entirely feasible. A prettier sight than a Maypole adorned in this fashion or a more clever exhibition of cycling powers than the riders give under these circumstances would be difficult to conceive. Fashionable persons who know say that the bicycle Maypole party will surely be a fad the first of next month and that many look for a general turnout of the riders of various ages to take part in the festivities that have latterly been left to the children.

Inasmuch as the pastime is to be a fashionable fad, the matter of costume at once becomes an important item. It is declared that it will be very proper for the children, or the young men and women, or their mothers and fathers if they choose to take part, to attire themselves in costumes of bright stuffs that will harmonize with the garlanded adornments of the Maypole. There has been just one party, and this was indoors and for practice, which has tried this sort of costuming. The effect is declared to have been beyond compare, and it is said this incipient pageant was fully as charming to the eye as the attractive features of the spectacular performances at the theaters.

The advent of the bicycle into the Mayday festivities is likely to cause a partial return to the customs of a century ago, when all persons who were physically able to do so took part in the Maypole dance. As a rule, the younger children, to whom Mayday is a period of elysium, will be compelled to forego the delights of the bicycle feature, and in this way it will devolve upon that portion of the cycling contingent which considers itself sufficiently skillful to enter the lists, regardless of age.

This calling the attention of the adults to the celebration of the 1st of May promises to make the observance of the day far more general than in many years. It has not been infrequent to invite the elders to the juvenile parties, which took place on the evening of May 1. This custom will be improved upon this year, for it has been decided that the elders will form cutting parties for a trip to the parks or some suburb during the day, the evening to be spent at the homes of the host and hostess. Thus, if there is not a Maypole dance in the daytime, there surely will be a Mayday hop in the evening, and so, in one fashion or another, young and old will dance in the fullness of their joy that the springtime is really here.

All this is due to the bicycle. Thus the wheel has not only given to many of us health and strength, but it is bringing about the return of one of the good old customs that the older ones used to observe so long ago as the days when Queen Elizabeth smiled over her ruff at the merry-makers, and bluff King Hal did not disdain joining the dance around the Maypole.

## MAYDAY AMID THE WILD FLOWERS

May day will witness the opening of the flower season. All nature seems glad in anticipation. Over the hills the warm wind sings and sets the buds and grasses to dancing merrily. The sun fills the atmosphere with a quivering light that mingles with the happy notes of bright-plumaged choristers. 'Tis May day in California.

And what a day of joy it is! In no land in the world does nature show to better advantage at this time than she does in the Golden State. From the snowy peaks of the high Sierras, where the tiny alpine flowers are just beginning to peep from under the ice crystals of last winter, to the shores of the Pacific, where sea birds scream, the great voice of nature is singing. It is springtime.

Not the springtime of England nor of the East, when buds are just commencing to open, but a springtime fully developed, when the wild flowers are at their best and the fruit trees are aglow with bloom. After the dreary winter just passed May day comes, if anything, a little more brilliantly clothed than usual. The winter rains soaked the earth deeply and the cool days of last month held back vegetation. Then came the warm days of April and the sunshine sent the sap hurriedly tingling to the end of every twig. Almost as if by magic the hillsides burst into bloom, red, yellow, blue, green, pink, purple and violet—all the colors of the spectrum and all the hues of science.

The plains of the San Joaquin Valley are literally ablaze with color. On the wild lands the poppy reigns in all her glory and on the cultivated lands the fruit tree rules the day. Wherever a house can be found there are roses in profusion.

The country within a few miles of San Francisco is, perhaps, the most beautiful in all California. The hills are more varied in their outlines and the forest depths are more picturesque than elsewhere.

There are certainly more birds. The soil of Marin County has been found to be the most prolific in the State for its growth of wild flowers. On a single square yard on the hill just north of Mill Valley thirty-two different kinds have been found. Of course, they were not all of the gorgeousness of the poppy, but all were beautiful.

May day is, of course, the beginning of the picnic season. There may be picnics before that time, but there is always something lacking, even though the skies are blue and the fields green, and the forest echo with the songs of birds. It does not seem natural to have a picnic before Mayday. When the April showers have brought forth the May flowers, oh, then is the time for picnics.

Of course all who can will go to some sort of a picnic on Mayday. It may be to some distant point with a trainload of others on the same errand bent. It may be only a small party of three or four, or you may go alone with some lunch in your pocket. But it matters little how you go so long as you go.

No city in all the world offers such opportunities for Mayday outings as San Francisco. For a few cents you can board a boat or train and be carried to a beautiful spot as exist anywhere. A short walk from the station will take you into the depths of nature, where there is nothing to suggest modern civilization.

There is no day like Mayday for the real lover of nature. And, after all, how the real lover of nature is to be envied! Nature is always willing to give if you will only take.

The real nature-lover is an early riser on Mayday, and almost as soon as the sun is up will be far on his way to the wilderness; over the hills and through the valley, across the brook and through the forest, shade and sunshine attending.

Perhaps he will wander to some unfrequented spot where no human foot has trod for many months. Into the depths of some canyon, where the only sound that breaks the stillness is the murmur of waterfalls splashing over moss-covered stones. There nature is in her glory. How soothing is the influence. How beautiful the sunlight comes aslant through the rustling branches of the giant redwoods. How comfortable and happy every living thing within sight. See the wild flowers nod in that patch of light when a soft breeze penetrates to the solitude.

As the sun gradually descends to the western horizon, each moment seems to increase in beauty. The shadows grow longer and longer and the lights grow dimmer and dimmer, and in the distance a soft purple haze comes, as if from fairy land. Lower passes the orb of day until the distant hills are only a shadow and the western sky is a blaze of light. Gradually this fades away and the day is done. But even night has its glories. What mystery there is in the shadowy clump of oaks, how dark and gloomy, and yet how soothing.

Truly Mayday is a glorious day, and he or she who spends it properly will be amply repaid. Life will look brighter. The mind, long shut up in the business house, will open and expand like the blossoms of spring. The day will be one of pleasure, and when night comes there will be a peace that could be obtained in no other way.

## MAYDAY BESIDE FOREST STREAMS

There are different kinds of lovers of nature as there are different kinds of men in the varied walks of life. There is the one who is content to roam over the hills or through the forest simply for the love of nature, and there is the one who to enjoy nature must sit on a mossy bank watching a cork fastened to a fishing-line. Both will be given an opportunity to enjoy Mayday, the latter particularly, because on that day the trout season really opens.

For the trout-fisher this year there are only a few new things in the way of tackle. No real innovations, however. And, by the way, there have been many real improvements over the methods of the fisherman's saint, Isaac Walton?

The principal difference in this year's tackle compared to last year's is that everything that can be made of aluminum can be obtained in that metal. The advantages of this are obvious to any sportsman. Tackle can be obtained cheaper this year than last. There are a few improvements in reels, all of which are very high priced. Jointed poles are lighter and prettier than ever.

Hooks and lines are of the same old style. There are a few new flies out, which, however, do not look any more "tempting" than the old kinds and would have to be tried before their advantages can become known.

But judging by the amount of new tackle that has been sold during the past week Mayday will be a bad one for the trout. Hundreds of devoted anglers will leave here next Saturday morning and in a few hours be scattered along the streams within a hundred miles of San Francisco.

Just where they will all go it is hard to say, but of course the old favorite fishing grounds in Marin, Sonoma and Santa Cruz counties will come in for their share. There are a number of old anglers who have little "private" pools of their own staked out, but as well ask them for one of their eyes as for the location of the place. That is their secret.

Of course the first day's fishing of the year is really the most enjoyable—even though none of the finny tribe are lured from their hiding places under the rocks.

A good fisherman gets on Mayday the advantages of the beauties of nature and the advantages, if any, of the excitement of the sport.

What pleasurable anticipation there is in the walk to the trout stream in the early morning hours. A well-stocked lunch basket and a box of tackle are your only companions. Down the road under the trees to the path that leads to the fishing place. There were lots of fish there last year.

What's that? Somebody else there. Well, no matter, there are other places. This is a better place anyhow. Hear the water roaring over the rapids and the wind whistling through the redwoods. Inspiration enough for a work of art. How dark that pool looks. Surely there are several big fellows in its depths.

Get out your tackle. That bright red fly is a good one to begin with. If he will rise to that he will rise to anything. Swish, r-r-r-r, and your first cast of the season is made on Mayday. But what's the matter? The fly is getting water-soaked. It has been offered with no takers. Try again. No better. Maybe there are no trout in the hole.

Try the yellow and green fly. There, that's better. My! but he is a big fellow. How he makes the reel hum. Now he has stopped. Wind him in. Slowly. Now he's off again.

Of course your first fish of the season makes a game fight. Half an hour slips by like a minute before you manage to get him beneath the lid of your basket. But what a pleasurable half hour it was. And such a successful one. The first is a beauty. Now for some lunch. How good it tastes. Ah, if you could only have that appetite every day in the week.

And as the day wears on, the sun rises higher and higher, and it gets warmer and warmer. You have a basketful of fish and are healthily tired out. Now for a rest until train time. And perhaps a smoke and a pull at the—but that is another story.

Perhaps as you lie half asleep, half awake, and you surely know this is the ideal repose, you may dream. Most likely you will dream of catching the largest trout that ever was caught. You will in vision cast your fly and, after the gamest possible fight, land the fish. Then you will wake up and feel for your basket of beauties. They will be there and you will be as happy as you ever were in your life. If you are not—well, there is no poetry in you. Of course, you may say there was never any poetry in you, which only goes to show how little you know about it.

The ride back to the City is a long one. Much longer than the ride to the fishing grounds. But you are glad that you went, and on the ferry-boat across the bay will have the pleasure of comparing your catch with your friends. What joy it is if you have made the largest catch of the day.

But no matter if you have not. You may have some other time, and you will at least have the satisfaction of feeling that your Mayday was enjoyable.

