‘Daring to Ride Skirtless’: Anti-Fashion and Emancipation for the British New Woman, 1880-1910

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This paper articulates the findings of a small-scale historical study that incorporates the use of fashion and material culture. The study sought to explore the role of cycling and divided skirts on the emancipation of women in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain. It was found that the donning of divided skirts by some middle class women and the wearing of such skirts while cycling did not have a direct role in women’s emancipation in the late Victorian period. However, it was found that those middle class women who cycled with divided skirts were part of an important anti-fashion movement that helped lay a foundation in Britain for the further emancipation of women. This finding is important to our understanding of this time period as it is an example of the critical role that fashion and material culture played in the evolution of women’s emancipation.

The study of fashion and material culture has a great deal to tell historians about the peoples who lived and the societies which existed before us. Thus, to reveal rich and full understandings of the past, it behooves historians to research and analyze fashion practices and signals as well as the material culture embedded within fashion systems. In an attempt to conduct a small-scale historical study that incorporates the use of fashion and material culture, I sought to explore the role of cycling and divided skirts on the emancipation of women in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain. In exploring this subject matter, I analyzed many articles, books, and *Punch* comics. Overall, the donning of divided skirts by some middle class women and the wearing of such skirts while cycling did not have a direct role in women’s emancipation in the late Victorian period. However, it was found that those middle class women who cycled with divided skirts were part of an important anti-fashion movement that helped lay a foundation in Britain for the further emancipation of women. The wearing of divided skirts while cycling were changes that challenged the status quo and opened the way for further gender role changes, dress reform, and the further mobility and incursion of women in public spaces and ultimately public life. This finding is important to our

understanding of this time period as it is an example of the critical role that fashion and material culture played in the evolution of women's emancipation.

To begin, I must articulate my conceptual understanding of fashion and anti-fashion for the purposes of this small-scale study. Admittedly, this is difficult as there appears to be no scholarly consensus with regards to the meaning and/or usage of these terms. After reviewing a number of sources, it appears that interaction, symbolism, and change are three key characteristic of fashion. First, fashion depends on the interaction of individuals within societies and between societies (McCrone 1988, 216). Second, fashion is a language of symbols with a basis in the personal, cultural, social, economic, technological, and political contexts of the time. For example, the dress and adornment of a woman in the Victorian period had much to say about society's general gender expectations and about her particular class and politics (McCrone 1988, 216). Third, fashion is about changing trends and styles. For instance, changes in clothing, adornment, recreation, consumption, and material culture may reflect changes in the larger society or within a particular group(s). Further, in defining fashion, it is necessary to position anti-fashion as a type of fashion (Beverly Lemire, personal communication; Niessen 2011, 151). Anti-fashion is about rejecting fashions for personal or political reasons. As will be demonstrated, the participation of some middle class women in cycling while wearing reformed dress was an important example of an anti-fashion in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain.

Although the acceptability of women's participation in sports is the norm today, women's participation in rigorous sport and physical activity was not always culturally acceptable. This was the case in the late Victorian period in Britain as women's participation in sport was highly controversial and generally frowned upon. Additionally, there were many social/cultural and material barriers preventing women's participation in sports and physical activities, such as cycling.With respect to social/cultural barriers, Victorian society's "male medical discourse" (Vertinsky 1990, 39) espoused a slew of biological, physiological, psychological, and sociological reasons as to why women could not and should not participate in sports (Vertinsky 1990; Phillips and Phillips 1993; Guttmann 1991; McCrone 1988). Biologically, women's frequent childbearing was seen as a 'handicap' to women's mental and physical ability to participate (Somers 1930, 13). Similarly, menstruation – considered a type of disability - was thought to sap women of their energy and thus incapacitate them from participating in physical activity (Somers 1930, 19; Vertinsky 1990, 39). Physiologically, as women's anatomical structures were believed to be designed solely to conceive, carry, and deliver babies, their bodies were believed to be incapable of performing in other strenuous physical capacities (Somers 1930, 17). Further, as is stated by Phillips and Phillips (1993), the Victorians thought women "ought not [to participate in sport] because they would irretrievably damage their

capacity to fulfill their biological destiny of bearing society's next generation" (129). Psychologically, women were considered mentally inferior, in part due to what was believed to be their excessive and irrational emotions (Somers 1930, 34-44). Finally, from a sociological point of view, sport and physical activity did not align with then-current conceptions of femininity or lady-like behavior (Marks 1990, 175; Phillips and Phillips 1993, 129; Somers 1930, 29-31). It was believed that participation in sports would change gender roles thereby disturbing family harmony and the dynamics of relationships between men and women (Phillips and Phillips 1993, 129). As is apparent, these pseudo-scientific arguments help account for Victorian society's view that women were not able to participate in sports and vigorous physical activities (outside of childbearing).

With respect to material barriers, the clothing and adornment worn by women in this period were also barriers to their participation in sport and vigorous physical activity. However, men's and women's fashions were changing:

> On the whole men's clothes were dark, plain and loose enough to allow movement, and implied seriousness, strength and activity. Women's, on the other hand, emphasized light colours, soft contours and ornamentation to project the appearance of delicacy, submissiveness and immobility. (McCrone 1988, 216)

By today's standards, women in the late Victorian period wore a plethora of clothing that generally inhibited the free and rapid movement of their bodies. Long dresses, for instance, were the norm among women in this time period. These long dresses were usually heavy and wide with tight, long sleeves (McCrone 1988, 219) and had pounds of ruffles, lace, and bows (McCrone 1988, 217). While long dresses were considered proper and stylish, they were also worn for a variety of other reasons. For instance, long dresses kept women warm and hid varicose veins caused by numerous pregnancies (Phillips and Phillips 1993, 132-133). In addition to these garments, they also wore many layers of underclothes such as tight-laced corsets, tight-fitting bodices, bustles, and petticoats (McCrone 1988, 217-219). As articulated by McCrone (1988), it was neither safe nor comfortable for women to wear their normal clothes while cycling (217). Not surprisingly, in the early 1880s, many women cyclists got their long skirts caught in the tires of their bicycles (McCrone 1988, 238) and many accidents occurred as a result of women's clothing becoming stuck in their bicycles (Rubenstein 1977, 63). In fact, some clothing prevented women from being able to climb on a bicycle at all (McCrone 1988, 177). Clearly then, clothing was in itself a barrier to women's participation in sports.

In addition to the practical barrier women's clothing created, the value that the late Victorians attached to certain clothing did not facilitate women's active participation in

sport or physical activity. For instance, long dresses acted as a form of "moral architecture" (Beverly Lemire, personal communication) that primarily served to hide the female body from public view. Societal values at the time resulted in many women who rode bicycles experiencing verbal hostilities from men in the streets (Phillips and Phillips 1993, 130). Even worse, some men would throw their hats into the wheels of women's bicycles to prevent them from riding (McCrone 1988, 238; Rubinstein, 63). Taken together, social dynamics and women's clothing itself made it difficult and even unsafe for women to reform their dress in order to participate in sports – such as cycling.

Despite these challenges, a number of technological advances began to facilitate women's ability to participate in cycling. For instance, in 1885, the 'safety bicycle' was created and subsequently used by some middle-class women (Ewing 1978, 103; Rubinstein 1977, 48; Marks 1990, 185). This bicycle was reported to be both safer and easier for women to ride (Wånggren 2012, 123). A few years later, Dunlop created the 'pneumatic tyre' for their bicycles (Ewing 1978, 103; Rubinstein 1977, 49) and more women took to riding. This new tire, still used today, was made of rubber and filled with air. The tires' rubber and treads increased friction between the tire and the ground and therefore gave the rider better control over the bicycle. Additionally, some women began riding tricycles, which were more compatible with their clothing. By the 1890s, as a result of these technological advances, more and more middle-class women were riding bicycles of one variety or another.

While technological advancements helped increase the number of women riding bicycles, their ridership was also supported by the fact that cycling became a fashionable activity among the middle-class during what is sometimes referred to as the 1890s 'cycling craze' (McCrone, 238; Phillips and Phillips 1993, 130). Despite the popularity of the bicycle, it was not yet available to individuals from all class backgrounds. As the bicycle was quite expensive, bicycles were more difficult for those in the lower class to acquire and thus bicycling was mainly the purview of middle-class men and some middle-class women. Rubinstein (1977) states: "there is no doubt that almost everyone who could afford a bicycle and who was not physically incapacitated rode avidly during the 1895-97 boom" (51). This assertion is supported by evidence that annual bicycle production in these years was incredibly high - about 750,000 bicycles were produced annually during the craze (Rubinstein 1977, 51). As a result, the production of bicycles became an important industry in Britain. To elaborate, the industry provided thousands of individuals with employment and increased their prosperity. Due to its adoption by a significant number of people, the bicycle is often considered one of the first consumer durables produced for the mass market (Rubinstein 1977, 53). The widespread production and 'fashionability' of the bicycle enhanced women's ability to cycle in this period.

Overall then, as a result of a number of technological and social changes, more middle-class women were able to participate in cycling. However, the majority of female cyclists did so wearing culturally acceptable garb (McCrone 1988, 239; Rubinstein 1977, 66). As some women viewed their attire as an unnecessary obstacle to their participation in cycling, a number of these women actively sought to reform their clothing to make it increasingly safe, comfortable, and functional as well as fashionable and feminine (McCrone 1988, 237). These women sought ways to reduce "the amplitude of skirts for the sake of safety yet not so much as to jeopardise respectability by exposing to a curious public too much ankle or leg" (McCrone 1988, 237). Interestingly, some of the women who wished to alter their clothing formed societies to discuss dress reform. Women involved in societies such as these were often called 'rational dressers' or 'rationals' (Cumming et al. 2010, 170; McCrone 1988, 220). A famous example of such as an organization is the 'Rational Dress Society', which was founded by Lady Harberton in 1880 (McCrone 1988, 220). Societies, such as the Rational Dress Society, condemned certain types of female dress and provided recommendations as to which types of clothing women should wear in various situations (McCrone 1988, 221). The Rational Dress Society condemned garments that inhibited women from moving their bodies and recommended that the overall weight of women's undergarments be no more than seven pounds (McCrone 1988, 93)! In addition to providing these recommendations, women in these societies reformed their own dress. Many of these women began to wear garments such as bloomers, knickerbockers, and knickers. Bloomers, devised by an American woman named Mrs. Amelia Bloomer (Cumming et al. 2010, 23; Phillips and Phillips 1993, 134), were a form of modified trousers that cinched below the knee (Cumming et al. 2010, 23). Similar to bloomers, knickerbockers were loose breeches that were gathered below the knee (Cumming et al. 2010, 117) and knickers were undergarments worn instead of drawers and petticoats (Cumming et al. 2010, 117). These garments allowed the women who wore them to bicycle with ease and comfort. As could be expected, garments such as the bloomer and knickerbocker were not well received by the general public because these garments were considered unbecoming to traditional notions of femininity and lady-like dress and were thus considered radical. Ultimately, reformed dress was an "out-right anti-fashion" (Ewing 1978, 94) and did not become a component of mainstream fashion among women in Britain during this period.

In attempt to maintain their status as ladies, some rationals compromised by adopting the divided skirt – "which allowed freedom of movement but kept the figure gracefully and modestly shrouded" (McCrone 1988, 238). The divided skirt – as shown in Appendix 1 (Punch 1895) – fell just below the knee and looked like a skirt when not in motion. However, the 'skirt' actually had a slit down the center of the garment (like pants) so that the woman wearing it could put a foot in each side of the 'pant' leg and in turn put one leg on each side of her bicycle thereby reducing the risk of it getting caught in the wheels.

Overall, the divided skirt allowed women to appear as though they were wearing a skirt when they were not on a bicycle. Despite this compromise, the divided skirt was still too much - too radical - for most women. Consequently, it never became fashionable during this period (Rubinstein 1977, 65); it was an anti-fashion only worn by a few. As a result, "those who dared to ride skirtless were mainly adventurous women of the middle class who were ready to demand a wide measure of [personal] emancipation" (Rubinstein 1977, 65).

At first glance, it is tempting to associate the rational dress movement - including the divided skirt - with the women's movement. However, these movements were not highly interrelated, as many of those involved in the women's movement did not want their dress to minimize British society's ability to consider their important arguments (McCrone 1988, 222). Thus, long skirts/dresses and their associated undergarments continued to be worn by the majority of women – regardless of their politics or whether they bicycled.

While rational dress was not adopted by the women's movement, reformed dress and changes in women's activities such as their cycling did not go unnoticed. The visual and print media of the time contributed to society's discourse on these subjects. *Punch* was such a publication. *Punch*, a British satire and comic publication begun in 1841, produced cartoons which provided political and social/cultural commentary on societal events and trends (Punch 2016). Via cartoons with visual imagery and text, *Punch* noted the changes occurring among some of the female population. In their cartoons, *Punch* provided social and political reaction to what became known as the 'New Woman'. The New Woman was "young, middle-class, single [and]…financially independent…[woman who] exhibited behaviors such as smoking, riding a bicycle, and taking the bus or train unescorted" (Collins 2010, 310). *Punch* portrayed the New Woman in a variety of ways including as unwomanly, manly, large, unladylike, wild, independent, defiant, strong, fit, athletic, conspicuous, aggressive, competitive, and dangerous (Collins 2010). They were depicted in rational dress and in addition to be shown engaged in activities such as smoking and bicycling, they were shown avoiding home and family duties (Collins 2010, 321; Rubinstein, 62). Some of these depictions are seen in Appendix 2 (Punch 1894) and Appendix 3 (Punch 1885). In Appendix 2, a woman wearing a divided skirt is shown smoking a cigarette while bicycling. The text of a dialogue between the woman and a man is written beside the image. The dialogue makes a few things clear. First, the man actually thinks that the female cyclist is male because of her manly dress and behavior (Collins 2010, 328). Second, the man does not find the woman attractive because of her manly dress and behavior. The message in the image is stark - women wearing rational clothing and engaging in manly behaviors, like smoking and bicycling, are unattractive and not prospective partners (Collins 2010, 328). Similarly, in Appendix 3, we see a man

and a woman walking from a tennis court – both with tennis rackets in hand. The woman asks, "Would you mind putting my lawn-tennis shoes in your pockets, Mr. Green?" (Punch 1885). Mr. Green replies, "I'm afraid my pockets are hardly big enough, Miss Gladys; but I shall be delighted to carry them for you!" (Punch 1885). Despite the woman in the cartoon being petite, this cartoon correlates unpleasant female bodily size with athleticism. In carrying these messages in their political cartoons, *Punch* both reflected British society's distaste with the New Woman and ultimately shaped British society's conceptualization of the New Woman.

Although some images in Punch cartoons depicted the New Woman in uncomplimentary ways, some of the images also depicted her as natural, independent, fit, and strong (Collins 2010, 313). However, the positive visual images depicting the New Woman appear alongside text that undermines the positive imagery (Collins 2010, 311). Likely, these conflicting representations of the New Woman in *Punch* mirrored British society's concern that the New Woman might significantly disrupt the comfortable status quo. Appendix 4 is an example of concern being raised with the change. In the image, a grim looking man approaches two women who are standing outdoors with their bicycles. Sarcastically, the man says, "What a charming surprise it is, to a man who has looked to his bicycle for two hours' peace and liberty a day, to come down on his birthday and find that his wife and mother-in-law have taken lessons in secret, and will henceforth go with him always and everywhere!" (Punch 1885). Obviously, this cartoon expresses male distaste with women's participation in cycling and their ability to encroach on male time and space. In the cartoon, the women's dress also makes a statement. The women sport reformed dress. The cartoon is thus expressing dissatisfaction with women's new behaviors and the dress that goes with them. Appendix 5 (Punch 1896) conveys similar sentiments. In this cartoon, two women and a man are depicted in front of a church. While the women are clearly female, they are wearing 'male' hats, bloomers/knickerbockers with pockets, ties/cravats, and jackets. The man says to the women, "It is customary for men, I will not say gentleman, to remove their hats on entering a church!" (Punch 1896). This cartoon shows that based on their dress, the man thinks the two women are men (Collins 2010, 330). The body language of the women in this cartoon is particularly interesting as one woman has her hips slung back and her hands in her pockets. She is clearly defiant. Thus, this cartoon seems to associate reformed dress with defiant attitude and posture and highlights general concern with changes in the status quo .

Further, *Punch* cartoons expressed concern that changes in women's dress and behavior would result in changes to then-current gender roles and that traditional female roles would fall to men to perform. This concern is exhibited in Appendix 6 (Punch 1896). This *Punch* cartoon shows two women talking while one of them holds a bicycle. One

asks the other, “Oh, did you see a gentleman on a bicycle as you came up?” (Punch 1896). The woman with the bicycle replies, “No; but I saw a man sitting at the bottom of the hill mending an old umbrella!” (Punch 1896). This source appears to speak to British society’s anxiety over gender roles going topsy-turvy (mending was traditionally a female activity and physical effort – bicycling uphill – was traditionally a male activity). Appendix 7 (Punch 1894) goes further and conveys that while some women may be engaging in male pursuits, they are unable to master them. This *Punch* cartoon shows two women talking. One woman is regally dressed in gloves and a floor length dress and the other woman is holding a gun and wearing a ‘manly’ hat, a jacket with pockets, and a shortened skirt. The woman in the long dress asks, “And have you had a good sport, Miss Goldenburg?” (Punch 1894). Miss Goldenburg replies, “Oh, rippin’! I have only shot one rabbit, but I managed to injure a dozen more!” (Punch 1894). The outfits in this cartoon contrast a woman who is conforming to societal expectations and one who is not. Further, the cartoon depicts the woman engaged in a male gender role as inept in that she is an unsuccessful hunter (Collins 2010, 328). Generally speaking then, the cartoons in this source articulate British society’s anxiety over changing gender roles associated with the New Woman, her dress and behavior, and their belief that women are not able to satisfactorily perform in traditionally male gender roles.

Not only is the representation of the New Woman in *Punch* cartoons compelling, it may have contributed to shaping how the British conceived of the New Woman. On the one hand, as many women did not wish to devalue their womanhood, representations such as those found in *Punch* may have caused some women to refrain from participating in behaviors such as cycling, smoking, and hunting. On the other hand, *Punch* cartoons may have served as a form of consciousness raising for some (McCrone 1988, 183). As mentioned earlier, many of the women shown in cartoons were visually represented as fit, strong, athletic, confident, independent, and defiant. These same women were simultaneously portrayed as cyclists, smokers, hunters, and rational dressers and therefore were not depicted as doing something truly dangerous, huge, wild, and conspicuous (Collins 2010, 310). Thus, *Punch* may well have communicated a somewhat liberating image of the New Woman (Collins 2010, 310).

All said, while the divided skirt and other reformed dress and the increase in women’s participation in cycling did not directly result in women’s emancipation in the political sense, they may have helped lay the groundwork so that other positive changes for women could take place. Middle class women who cycled with divided skirts may have opened the door a crack by challenging rigid gender role activities and expectations, expanding dress reform, and further normalizing women’s participation in the public domain.

Punch comics make it abundantly clear that dress reform (such as divided skirts) combined with the activity of cycling was vexing to people in the late Victorian period. Given that conceptions of masculinity and femininity were highly interconnected with dress codes, reformed clothing signaled to the community that some women were willing to challenge these traditional gender roles. In other words, "when the New Woman adopted a radical fashion change in the form of a practical and loose-fitting sporting costume, it meant not only change in fashion but also a potentially threatening change in the way women perceived their gender roles" (Collins 2010, 317). Although most women did not participate in dress reform, the women who did likely helped to till a political landscape in which the seeds of further gender role change could be sown. Thus, the New Woman's dress and behaviors seems to have played a key role in formulating a new order in Britain (Marks 1990, 3).

Similarly, female cyclists' reformed dress "provided a catalyst for [even] further dress reforms" (McCrone 1988, 240). In subsequent years, Britain would see seismic changes in women's clothing. For instance, the incorporation of elastics into female undergarments increased women's ability to participate in physical activities with ease (Phillips and Phillips, 1993). Other 20th century changes with respect to undergarments such as the decreasing popularity of the corset and the invention and adoption of the brassiere caused major upheaval (Fields 2007, 83; McCrone 1988, 216). Thus, the small group of women who celebrated anti-fashion such as the divided skirt while riding their bicycles may have helped prepared Britain for the massive dress reforms of the next hundred years.

In conjunction with these repercussions, some women's adoption of a divided skirt for cycling may have also contributed to altering society's conceptions of the propriety of women's active participation in public spaces. According to Nead (2000), middle and upper class women in the Victorian period typically did not leave their homes unattended (62); societal expectations were such that women were to be attended by a chaperone when in the public domain (Nead 2000, 62). Further, when in public with a companion, women were expected to be subdued in both their dress and behavior (Nead 2000, 63). From the perspective of Victorian society, riding bicycles without a companion and dressing in a non-conforming manner would certainly not have been considered respectable. Thus, it has been claimed that, "by enabling women to escape the chaperons and physical bounds of home...[cycling] brought the sexes on equal terms more completely than any other sport or pastime" (McCrone 1988, 183). In providing women with greater physical freedom and spatial mobility (Guttmann 1991, 131), the bicycle gave women greater public presence and access to public spaces (McCrone 1988, 216; Marks 1990, 174; Rubinstein 1977, 61). In fact, these changes may have given British society some preparation for the demands of the women's movement in the years to

come; demands to be fully included in all aspects of public life.

Between 1880 and 1910, many middle class British women were cycling either in traditional or reformed dress. A small yet important group of women participated in cycling in divided skirts and other reformed dress. In a variety of ways, these 'new' women who cycled while wearing divided skirts may have contributed to the numerous positive changes experienced by British women in the hundred years hence. This is because the middle class women who bicycled with divided skirts seemed to challenge rigid gender role activities and expectations, expand dress reform, and further normalize women's participation in public space. Thus, "in loosening her stays and dividing her skirts, the New Woman took possession of her movements and achieved a measure of self-confidence that carried her into the twentieth-century" (McCrone 1988, 201). These historical dynamics are important to consider as fashion and anti-fashion appear to have made interesting contributions to the advancement of women's equality in Britain.

Reference List

Appendix 1. “DIVIDED SKIRTS: Hearth and Home,” *Punch Historical Archive*, 11 Apr. 1895, 816.

Appendix 2. “The Man and the Maid, ” *Punch Historical Archive*, 8 Sept. 1894, III.

Appendix 3. “Things One Would Rather Have Left Unsaid,” *Punch Historical Archive*, 18 July 1895, 30.

Appendix 4. “What a Charming Surprise It Is, to a Man who Has Looked to his Bicycle for Two Hours' Peace and Liberty a Day, to Come ....,” *Punch Historical Archive*, 15 June 1885, 279.

Appendix 5. “Rational Costume,” *Punch Historical Archive*, 13 June 1896, 282.

Appendix 6. “Oh, Did You See a Gentleman on a Bicycle as You Came Up?” *Punch Historical Archive*, 16 May 1896, 229.

Appendix 7. “A ‘New Woman’” *Punch Historical Archive*, 8 Sept. 1894, 111.

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Appendix 1

"DIVIDED SKIRTS: Hearth and Home," *Punch Historical Archive*, 11 Apr. 1895, 816.

DIVIDED SKIRTS.

INCONSEQUENCE, thy name is woman! And is any there be who doubt this statement, go let them study the inconsistent career of the great two-legged garment question. For centuries, it appears, woman has groaned under the burden of her petticoats, and while groaning she has wilfully added flounce and furbelow innumerable to her load. Then up rose that good and worthy lady, Mrs. Bloomer, to be greeted with horror-stricken cries from the very sex she had hoped to benefit; and as the years went on woman sighed, whispered, and at last spoke outright, and then the shrieking sisterhood and the New Woman and the pioneers of rational dress took her sad case in hand, and their voices rang throughout the land: from platforms they cried to their sisters to revolt; through the medium of the daily press they uttered evil things of man, who had, so they said, been ever and always to blame for the woes of woman; and merrily raged the war against man and the petticoat, the former by this time having become inextricably entangled in the latter (as scandal indeed inferred has been known to occur before), so like the "Bandar Log" people of the Kipling jungle, they chattered and ran, and ran and chattered, and cried aloud that they would set up a leader and frame a code of laws for themselves. Not only would they be two-legged creatures, but the fact that they were so should be plainly demonstrated to a prejudiced public. Clad in unbecoming rational costume they would wend their way unabashed, occasionally—if a journalistic *on dit* is to be believed—upon a tricycle, accompanied by a two-legged nurse and a baby. History does not relate if the said baby is a rational baby—if so it should certainly be exhibited as the first of the kind, for anything more utterly irrational than an ordinary infant it would be hard to imagine. And at last, after years of agitation, meetings, and lectures innumerable, the generality of women have come to the conclusion that they will wear divided skirts or knickerbockers instead of under petticoats, which needless to say they might have done, and indeed have done for years, without the outside world being a whit the wiser; and now, with true inconsequence

they are setting to work to garnish their dual garments with such a wealth of frillings, laces, and ribbons, that all the use of the said garments is lost in the abuse of them. The fashionable divided skirt is in every way as inconvenient as the fashionable petticoat; in fact, more so, for the one can be held up in company with the dress, the other cannot, unless indeed ladies take to hitching up their underwear after the manner of chronicler of fashion to show them as they are, and not as he or she would have them be—hence these sketches, which give portraits of the knickerbocker, the divided skirt, which being divided against itself, will probably before long fall into disuse, and the truly feminine petticoat. The upholders of rational dress are certainly to be thanked for bringing serge and cloth knickerbockers into general use, for clad in combinations, well cut knickerbockers, and a serge skirt of sensible dimensions, a woman is both rationally and becomingly equipped. For say what one will, and wish as one will, the female figure is not suited to the severity of masculine attire. The ideal knickerbocker for country wear is made of the same material as the dress skirt, which should, of course, be tweed serge or a light cloth, and should be provided with an easily-removed washable lining of fine calico or nun's cloth. The knickerbockers are, I think, better if they are not mounted into a band, but cut very low on the

legs, carefully fitted by means of darts and bound along the top and down either side where they button. The leg pieces should be cut very wide and pleated into the cuff-banded knee band, or into a deep buttoned band such as men have on their riding breeches. Two and a-half yards of double-width material and a pattern supplied by Madame Myra, of 95, Regent Street, are all that is required for the successful fabrication of a pair of knickerbockers. For betterment wear black satin is often used, and the leg pieces are gathered into bands of wide elastic encased in a second band of fluted satin ribbon fastened at either side with a neat rosette. Divided skirts are made in any and every material, but nun's cloth, silk or satin, or thin cashmere have the best effect. These skirts are either mounted into deep saddle-bands which must be very carefully fitted or they are cut in the same manner as the knickerbockers already described. They are generally about the same length as a petticoat and trimmed from

the knee downwards with an enormously full frill, more or less adorned with lace. Sometimes the material is gathered into a knee band and the flounce attached to it—sometimes it is cut in the form of a loose pair of trousers; the former plan is the better of the two. About four and a-half to four and three-quarter yards of silk or satin will be required for the knickerbockers, and quite three yards for an ample frill, so that no saving of material is effected—a petticoat taking just the same amount, and being considerably easier to cut and make. The fashionable petticoat is more elaborate than ever, and quite beyond the reach of the young girl who is possessed of but a small allowance, unless she buys the silk from Messrs. Allison or Peter Robinson who have both lovely silks at very low prices—and make and trim her jupe for herself. A charming but inexpensive petticoat can be made partly of alpaca, this forming the upper portion, completed by a deep frill of black brocade, striped in a slanting alternate rows of pink, mauve, and
Another pretty design, and one whi
itself to the remnant, is a skirt of white
at the hem to the width of nine or twel
tiny gathered flounces of yellow silk,
by a Vandyked overskirt of white silk
with a frilling of lace or a ruche of pin
silk. For petticoats to wear on the sta

dresses, or for skirt dancing, pretty
e covered with multitudinous frills
muslin. For evening wear, when
afforded, Liberty cotton crepe trimm
has an excellent effect—so excellent,
spite of all the attractions of ratio
will still remain women so deluded as
to freedom. Do

RHYMES FOR REC

ONE of the most trying features
recitation is the difficulty of
to recite. To the majority of
as are gathered together at an aft
village entertainment, the long-winde
thunder" reciter, or the unduly ha
equally unwelcome. The charm lies
telling piece, which, like a certain
soap, "leaves an impression behind."
sad, thrilling, sentimental, or gay—
plenty in a delightful little volume fr
the versatile Mrs. Power O'Donog
known writer on equestrian subjec
"Irish letter" in the *Lady's Pictorial*
quarter of the globe. What an eff
recital is "My Idol," with its strain
chantment. How touching "The
"Marley," while "Warfare" will ean
chord in many an elderly heart to r
how refreshing is the brisk commons
1½." How appropriate for Yule ti
"Lost Hours," or "Vigils." Then,
"Roses," "The Map," have all ma
could be brought out in recitatio
Extreme of Politeness" and other h
prove this talented little Irishwoma
native wit. The book—which costs bu
and is published at 2s., Bachelor's
concludes with "Verses for Thou
many of which show an undercurre
and feeling. It is not surprising tha
leading professional reciters have wa
this little book. Indeed, even recitati
volume which would be an acqui
bookshelf.

Appendix 2

"The Man and the Maid, " *Punch Historical Archive*, 8 Sept. 1894, III.

THE MAN AND THE MAID.

(Up-to-date "Biking" Version.)

"WHERE are you going, young Man?" cried the Maid.
"I'm going a cycling, Miss!" he said.
"May I come with you, young Man?" asked the Maid.
"Why, ye-e-es, if you feel like it, Miss!" he said.
"But—why do I find you like Man arrayed?"
"Oh, knickers are cumfy, young Man!" she said.
"But the boys will chevvy you, Miss, I'm afraid!"
"What does *that* matter, young Man?" she said.
"Are you a Scorcher, young Man?" asked the Maid.
"Nothing so vulgar, fair Miss!" he said.
"Then I don't think much of you!" mocked the Maid.
"Neither does 'ARRY, sweet Miss!" he said.
"What is your ideal, young Man?" said the Maid.
"A womanly Woman, fair Miss" he said.
"Then *I* can't marry you, Sir!" cried the Maid.
"Thank heaven for *that*, manly Miss!" he said.

Appendix 3

"Things One Would Rather Have Left Unsaid," *Punch Historical Archive*, 18 July, 1895, 30.

THINGS ONE WOULD RATHER HAVE LEFT UNSAID.

She. "WOULD YOU MIND PUTTING MY LAWN-TENNIS SHOES IN YOUR POCKETS, MR. GREEN?"
He. "I'M AFRAID MY POCKETS ARE HARDLY BIG ENOUGH, MISS GLADYS; BUT I SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO *CARRY* THEM FOR YOU!"

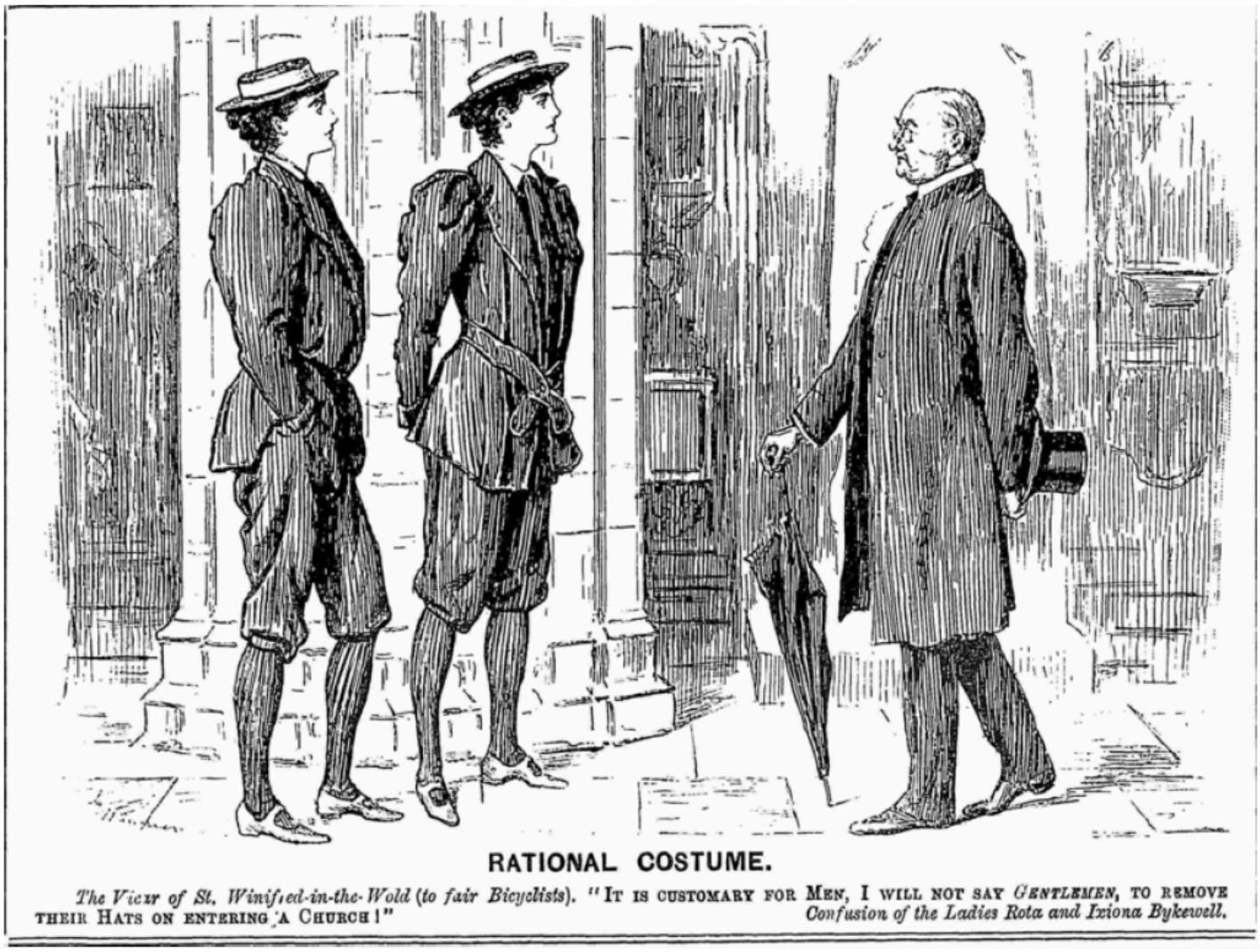
Appendix 4

"What a Charming Surprise It Is, to a Man who Has Looked to his Bicycle for Two Hours' Peace and Liberty a Day, to Come ....," *Punch Historical Archive*, 15 June, 1885, 279.

'WHAT A CHARMING SURPRISE IT IS, TO A MAN WHO HAS LOOKED TO HIS BICYCLE FOR TWO HOURS' PEACE AND LIBERTY A DAY, TO COME DOWN ON HIS BIRTHDAY AND FIND THAT HIS WIFE AND HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW HAVE TAKEN LESSONS IN SECRET, AND WILL HENCEFORTH GO WITH HIM ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE!

Appendix 5

"Rational Costume," *Punch Historical Archive*, 13 June, 1896, 282.



RATIONAL COSTUME.

The Vicar of St. Winifred-in-the-Wold (to fair Bicyclists). "IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR MEN, I WILL NOT SAY *GENTLEMEN*, TO REMOVE THEIR HATS ON ENTERING A CHURCH!"

Confusion of the Ladies Rota and Ixiona Bykewell.

"Oh, Did You See a Gentleman on a Bicycle as You Came Up?" *Punch Historical Archive*, 16 May, 1896, 229.

"OH, DID YOU SEE A GENTLEMAN ON A BICYCLE AS YOU CAME UP?"

'NO; BUT I SAW A MAN SITTING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL MENDING AN OLD UMBRELLA!"

Appendix 7

"A 'New Woman'" *Punch Historical Archive*, 8 Sept. 1894, 111.

A "NEW WOMAN."

The Vicar's Wife. "AND HAVE YOU HAD GOOD SPORT, MISS GOLDENBERG?"