

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.
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CYCLING.

DICK TURPIN'S WEEKLY GOSSIP.

THE annual general meeting of the Excelsior C.C. last Wednesday goes to show that the members take at least some fair amount of interest in the working of their Club.

At times the discussion of various points grew quite animated, and it was plain that the speakers had devoted considerable thought to their subjects.

The Committee were re-elected practically to a man, though one or two of the most hard-working hands did not receive the number of votes their past work had entitled them to, although they secured seats on the new Committee.

The proposal to invest in the new Recreation Ground was thoroughly discussed, the consideration of the *pros* and *cons* occupying a great deal of time. Much was said on both sides, and eventually the Club, looking at the matter from a sportsman's rather than a speculator's point of view, decided almost unanimously upon putting the money into the concern.

I notice a suggestion to Worthing riders, which comes from a well-known local wheelman, that we should one and all turn out with illuminated machines upon the day *Mafeking* is relieved.

I consider this an admirable idea, as, apart from the fact that we should lose no opportunity of showing our patriotism as cyclists, we have something in sympathy with the little beleaguered town.

Colonel Baden-Powell is reported to be an ardent cyclist, though I fear he has had little chance of a good run lately. Also the inhabitants here, we must recollect, inaugurated one or two cycle race meetings on Sunday afternoons, when freed to some slight extent from the anxiety entailed upon them by dodging casual shells.

I hardly think the times made during the races can have been very fast, seeing that for some time the chief food has been hor-e-fresh soup, which, as a training diet, must leave a very great deal to be desired.

I hope to see a big muster of wheelers procession the town on *Mafeking* Day. What we all say is, "Let it be soon!"

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Whilst on warlike topics I must mention that the Secretary of State for War has sanctioned and approved of the formation of a Company of Cyclists in connection with every Battalion of Rifle Volunteers whose strength exceeds 600, and that special allowance will be made for the upkeep of the Volunteer cyclist's machine.

Evidently the War Office is recognising the utility of the cycle in war at last. Well, it's nearly time, I'm sure!

Men like H. J. Swinley and C. E. Liles, who could command a knowledge both of the requirements of the military and the possibilities of the cycle, have harped on this string for years, and have laboured long and painfully with drills, tests, and competitions, and it must gratify them to see their work bearing fruit at last.

Some time back there was a movement started to get a Cyclists' Volunteer Section in Worthing, but the matter fell through because at that time a section only was, I believe, allowed to a Battalion, and the section for this Battalion was already formed at Chichester.

It seems, therefore, to me that there is good possibility of taking the matter up again now. I see no obstacle. All that is wanted is someone to set the thing going. Perhaps the Excelsior C.C. will consider it; cycle Volunteers come in handy for variety at race meetings.

A big crowd of Brighton riders visited Bramber on Saturday last. The various Clubs had organised a muster, which drew hundreds to that pretty little village.

I see that most of the Sussex Clubs have now commenced their run season. I wonder whether the Excelsior C.C. will manage better in this respect than they did last year. What is wanted, in my opinion, is a shorter run, say five miles out, with a little conviviality at the other end. This would appeal to a great number of riders. Perhaps the idea will be tried.

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