

## CYCLING.

DICK TURPIN'S WEEKLY GOSSIP.

EASTER has once more come and gone. Undoubtedly the holiday which is, above all others, given up to the enjoyment of cycling was this year somewhat marred by uncertain weather. This naturally militates against organised Easter tours, but the number of riders on all roads seemed no less than in previous years. Old and young of both sexes, in various stages of proficiency in wheeling, were to be seen in all directions.

What surprised me was the small number of motor cycles and motor cars on the road. This, I suppose, was in some measure owing to the petrolites being on tour with their Clubs.

On Good Friday morning the Excelsior C.C. ran off their paper chase. About twenty members mustered at the start, and after giving the hares, Captain Young and Private Sandell, ten minutes' start, followed the scent through Broadwater and over Crocodile Hill towards Findon.

Ere Findon was reached, however, some of the speedier riders, with a zeal and skill worthy of Thornycroft himself, had succeeded in surprising and cutting off the hares and capturing them.

Being released, they again set off, but this time the furious hurricane destroyed the scent, with the result that the field became scattered. But eventually all reached Angmering, towards which I had been persistently plugging—as fast as a

refractory tyre and declining years would permit—for the whole morning.

Arrived at Angmering, we without delay proceeded to drink the health of the President of the Excelsior C.C. and after drinking it, to smoke it, whilst we spent a most enjoyable hour or so listening to the musical efforts of a few budding Sims Reeves, finally reaching home about midday with a feeling deep in our hearts that the Excelsior "boys" have got a splendid President.

Numbers of people regard the now popular free-wheel as quite a new thing in the bicycling world, seemingly never having noticed that most of the tricycles of ten years ago were fitted with the device. Now a cycle agent in Gainsborough crops up who assisted in building one of the old ordinaries, and supplying it with a clutch action similar to that now so largely used on safeties as long as 1867 or 1868.

The somewhat naive remark that "the inventor had a bad fall" is easily credible, considering what a fearsome instrument a free wheel ordinary must have been.

It is evident that the upper ten have not yet completely abandoned the cycle, as on Saturday last at Sheen House they actually condescended to evince quite a lively interest in a game of bicycle polo. Probably, however, the motor car will claim the mere case-loving among them now that the Automobile Club has its headquarters at Sheen House.

The danger of cycling when a gale is raging is exemplified in a nasty accident which took place at Ramsgate last Friday.

Philip Raymond was riding through the town when a strong gust of wind caught the rider and machine and dashed them into a public house front, and the unfortunate fellow now lies in an extremely critical condition.

W. R. Faine, the only local man who was competing on Easter Monday, was successful in winning the scratch half-mile, from a pretty warm field, at Preston Park. The five miles paced race between Mills and Di Villa was productive of some very exciting speed work, the race being won by Di Villa by inches. The one mile handicap was annexed by G. N. Charman, another Brighton man.

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