

CYCLING

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<p style="text-align: center;">CYCLING.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.</p> <p>ONCE or twice a year I like to take an all-night ride of moderate length. It is a splendid antidote to the round of work and worry which we call Life, and as a nerve-soothing agent is hard to beat.</p> <p>Some few days ago a fellow Excelsiorite and I took a dose of this tonic by gently tooling up to Town in the darkness.</p> <p>'Twas dark too, there being no moon, so we had to "gang warily" to dodge belated foot-passengers; but the roads were good and the air was nice and fresh as we pedalled to Horsham in an hour and a half.</p> <p>We saw quite a number of glow-worms in places, and very pretty were the effects of the little clusters of phosphorescent lights by the roadside.</p> <p>At Crawley a triplet crew was awaiting friends on the road; a little further on we overtook the mail coach from Brighton, making good pace behind four fine horses.</p> <p>Through Redhill and on to Croydon we went, now meeting a continuous stream of lamps—a stream which had its source in London, and was trickling through Surrey and Sussex to the silver sea.</p> <p>As it flowed past us we could dimly discern</p>	<p>As it flowed past us we could dimly discern the forms of cyclists; we exchanged "Good-night's" and satisfactorily answered sundry anxious inquiries as to the condition of "the road further down."</p> <p>From Croydon to Norbury we had easy riding over new wood paving; then a tour over various surfaces through Suburbia; and soon we were bumping over the cobbles and on to London Bridge, which was quite deserted, and hardly seemed to be London Bridge.</p> <p>It was half-past three in the early Sunday morning, and the Bridge was resting a few hours before beginning a new week's work.</p> <p>By appointment we met a brother of the wheel, and set off to retrace our steps without delay, for there was a drizzling rain in the City.</p> <p>This developed into a heavy downpour ere we reached open country, so we had to shelter and endeavour to admire either a very sickly looking dawn or the shadowy outline of the Crystal Palace as seen by sleepy-eyed cyclists through a vista of rain.</p> <p>Neither fascinated us!</p> <p>Things were better when a night policeman happened along and regaled us with some beautiful efforts of his imagination. These mainly ran on his doings as a speed cyclist,</p>	<p>upon a machine weighing seventeen pounds, with which he used to finish second to "Broad, the one to ten miles Champion of England."</p> <p>He was not on his oath, and we did not cross-examine him, but all the same we wondered when his friend Broad won those Championships.</p> <p>The weather cleared up, we cleared off, and breakfasted near Croydon; after which we joined the stream which was still pouring South, leaving it again at Crawley to take the road through Horsham homewards, and finishing up our jaunt with two or three hours of morning in hand.</p> <p>Some fine sport should be witnessed on Wednesday next at the Excelsior Club's Annual Race Meeting. The programme is a really good one, comprising two open handicaps and a five miles' scratch race for cyclists; three running races open to outside athletes, and a selection of walking, running, and cycling events for Club men.</p> <p>Several cracks will compete; among others, C. B. Kingsbury, of Portsmouth, having entered already.</p> <p>About thirty members of the Tarring Club joined in the run on Wednesday last to Shoreham, where they were the guests of Mr. H. Head, who kindly placed his grounds at their disposal, and made the Figleaves welcome.</p> <p>During this week and next the thousand miles reliability trials for motor cycles will be in full swing, the motorists putting in a long ride almost daily. To-morrow and on Friday of next week they visit Worthing.</p> <p>Our man, E. Baruch Blaker, has entered, upon his spring-framed Bat, and enjoys the distinction of driving one of the three highest-priced bicycles in the trials. I hope to see him successful in the long and severe test.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">DICK TURPIN.</p>
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