

CYCLING

Dick Turpin's Weekly Gossip.

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Monday, October 21st, 1903.

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EXCELSIORITES have not yet put their bicycles away for the winter; indeed, many of them are still enjoying lengthened spins, amongst others being W. Finch, who made an attempt on the twelve hours medal ride this week, starting off in the cold grey dawn on a solitary ride to Fareham and back to begin with.

This piece—seventy-six miles—was completed inside five hours; then commenced a hard grind through Horsham to Woodhatch.

'Twas against the wind, but Finch stuck at it, and finished his first hundred miles in about seven hours, checking at Woodhatch seven hours and forty-nine minutes from the start.

Things were easier coming back, and he reached Broadwater, with a total of one hundred and forty miles, in ten hours and thirteen minutes, thus qualifying for a silver medal, with ample time to spare.

On the same day G. A. Olley, of the Vegetarian C.C., attempted to beat the Southern twelve hours record.

Several Excelsiorites were out in the "nippy" early morn, waiting for the speed man, who came along a little inside time, looking none the worse for a cold ride of fifty miles.

One of his followers was Alfred Shrubbs, the famous runner—he was not on foot on this occasion, by-the-by.

Edgar Henson "administered" some sponge cakes and a warm drink, and Olley was off again in a twinkling, with three Excelsior "boys" following.

Over the flat lower roads to Chichester and

on to Fareham, where he was checked by Durant, he lost half an hour through the hindering wind.

At Chichester, on the way back, a tyre went, but Peto was at hand with a spare machine, and no time was lost.

Sticking to his task, the plucky Vegetarian kept hammering on, now and then taking light food as he rode.

At Arundel Sam Clark was waiting with a selection of good things to sustain the rider; at Offington Edgar Henson had a variety ranging up to sponge cakes steeped in port wine!

But, though the wind was of a low velocity, it was of sufficient volume to make its presence felt strongly to the cyclist who rode through it at speed.

So G. A. Olley, when he reached Offington, felt very tempted to abandon his much postponed "twelve;" and, though he continued for a while, he threw up the ride at the Burrell Arms.

One morning recently Peto and I were four miles beyond Chichester, when we sighted an extensive chicken farm and a snug-looking cyclists' stopping place.

With one accord we pulled up and proceeded to satisfy certain inner cravings for ham and eggs, after which we had a chat with the proprietor, a Mr. Thackthwaite.

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Much to our surprise he claimed an acquaintance with Worthing, which dated back to the birth of Heene, at which time he conducted a Military School in Heene-road.

Mr. Thackthwaite left Worthing many years ago, and since then has spent some years in North America. He still has one or two ugly scars and two or three fine skins, which he collected whilst shooting bears in the Rocky Mountains.

A motorist tried to be witheringly sarcastic, but, instead thereof, made himself an object of mirth, when traversing the measured quarter-mile at Broadwater last week-end.

Espying the familiar Constabulary uniform, he switched in his low-speed gear and crawled along at seven miles an hour, beaming on the policeman whilst his fellow-passenger—a lady—amused the passers-by by holding up a doll dressed as a constable.

The real live man in blue—who was the innocent cause of so much wasted time and trouble—was not using his fatal stop-watch at all: he just looked on with a pitying and forgiving smile.

DICK TURPIN.

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ⁱ Stood at or near the junction of the Horsham road with that to Partridge Green.