

THE WHEELING WORLD

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THE WHEELING WORLD.

A Weekly Survey.

DICK TURPIN'S RANDOM RECORDS.

I RECENTLY found from my almanac that Spring has commenced, and subsequently verified the information by sundry cycling excursions into the country, where there is ample evidence of its truth. Armed with this great secret, I lost no time in bearding the Editor in his den, before the advent of the tame Spring poet, and urging my plea for permission to resume my Gossip anent the doings of the wheel whirled—world, I should say. For the wheelman is busy now that roads and weather favour his pursuit to the uttermost.

Some of the more stout-hearted Excelsiorites have already put in a good deal of riding, Fred Young having seven hundred and odd miles to his credit, and Medhurst about nine hundred.

Both of them have twice ridden up Bury Hill since the close of last season, by the way, and whilst most of us were thinking twenty miles a long ride, the pair cycled to Portsmouth and back.

Roads were good, but the air was nippy, and a little snow fell during the run home.

A few weeks later Medhurst rode to London, aided by a favouring breeze which helped him to Croydon inside three hours.

On the return the same breeze caused him to seek shelter behind a friendly motor at Redhill. This took the Brighton road at Crawley, and, rather than sacrifice his pace-maker, Medhurst followed suit.

Eventually, after a couple of punctures, he finally separated from the motor near Cuckfield, and rode homewards through Brighton. His cyclometer said one hundred and twenty-two miles. A good ride, more especially so in the early months.

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The form of cycling which the off-season rider usually extracts least enjoyment from is the exploring of country by-lanes. Several Excelsiorites have been bitten over this.

On a recent Saturday afternoon the Irrepressible and I were out between Small Dole and Partridge Green. Tempted by the balmy air, the green fields, and the general air of innocence on the face of Nature, we decided to take a cross-country ramble on to the Ashington road.

Across a few meadows we wheeled our bicycles, admiring a rustic bridge which carried us over a rippling brooklet as we went.

But anon the scene was changed!

Our route took us away from the last vestiges of civilisation, and soon we found ourselves in what the natives term green lanes. These are, apparently, roads belonging to some prehistoric period, which have been going from bad to worse right down through the ages.

I have seen some mud at times, but never had I even dreamt so much of the undesirable commodity could be viewed at one time as we saw on that unfortunate afternoon.

After a mile or so of alternately tramping recklessly through the slime with our machines on our shoulders, and trespassing across meadows which promised better going, we bitterly repented the balmy green innocence which had tempted us off the beaten track, and imposed upon our own supply of the same characteristics.

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I used to be sceptical of the old legend which relates that a coach and horses were lost in the mire of a Sussex road. Now I shrewdly have discovered its burial ground in those green lanes. At any rate, I believe the farm tracks which venture along them are counted with care.

Our progress was very slow, but by scrambling through a few hedges in the meadows, back again into the lanes and over a ditch or two, we came to better ground. With the aid of much grass we made a hasty track for persons and machines; then, as soon as we could recognise each other, we swore a solemn oath on the hilts of our inflators never again to explore green lanes!

Then a bit of rough riding on farm roads brought us out near Ashington, and so home to a much-needed clean-up, and an even more needed tea.

The Easter Race Meetings are a little too early for the speed men of the Excelsior Club Cycling section, and I understand none of them are competing. E. Baruch Blaker has entered the motor-cycle races at the Preston Park Sports run by the Brighton C.C. on Easter Monday.

A two miles walk at the same meeting should receive the attention of some of our pedestrians. The prizes are good enough to command entries from men of class—the first being five guineas—and a fine field should turn out.

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