

THE WHEELING WORLD

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A Weekly Survey.

DICK TURPIN'S RANDOM RECORDS.

I AM writing these "Random Records" at the Red Lion, Fareham, after a run of bad luck on—and off!—the wheel. Fred Young had organised a little party of his fellow Excelsiorites to make an excursion across West Sussex and Hants into Wilts, last Saturday, and I was among the number. A lovely spin in the dark hours was somewhat marred by Howard puncturing twice and myself once. Then I lost a part of my pump, and of course wanted it badly whilst alone near Cosham. My lamp also somersaulted off the machine at another point for no apparent reason.

But the worst was to come.

Descending a hill in daylight, with brakes applied, I and one of the others collided in a quite unaccountable manner, and I croppered badly, the other rider escaping.

Medhurst and Young were as good as nurses to me. They soon found water and bathed my head, which was bleeding, after which I discovered my collar-bone to be broken; whereupon we tramped back to Fareham and had it set.

Medhurst and the local Superintendent of Police then aroused the hostelry at four a.m., and installed me in idle restlessness.

Accidents will happen; and though the other riders exonerate me from any carelessness, I mustn't grumble.

Sam Clark turned up at the Red Lion later in

the morning. He was looking out for W. de Creux Hutchinson, of the Vegetarian C.O., who was attacking the twenty-four hours' record made by Bliss last week. The Vegetarian arrived about two hours late—luck dead against him. I could sympathise!

In the night he lost his way and climbed signposts; in the day he had punctured—ten times in all!—but Sam cheered him up, and gave him a good send off on his road back through Havant and Chichester.

Last Wednesday witnessed a joint Club run, composed of the Excelsior and the Tarring Clubs, which was a run to be proud of.

The occasion was the Excelsior Honorary Secretary's run to Findon, and over one hundred members and friends availed themselves of his invitation to breathe the pure, fresh air of the Findon Downs. Advance parties reached the spot early in the afternoon, and a steady stream of merry wheelers kept trickling across the Fair Green in time to join in at the *al fresco* tea at six o'clock.

This interesting item was disposed of in a leisurely and satisfactory manner, and was followed by some impromptu sports. These provoked great mirth. The setting sun was wreathed in smiles as he beamed down upon ladies who were competing in the egg and spoon race or rivalling A. A. Shrubbs.

Or perhaps he enjoyed seeing the numerous falls experienced by the sterner sex in the sack races, and their frequent departure from the heel and toe rule in their walking (?) race.

Then the scene was changed. The moon arose, and mingled soft silvery beams with the many coloured lights from fairy lamps and Chinese lanterns with which Honorary Secretary Fibbens had bedecked his lawn; whilst the fairy-footed wheelmen and wheelwomen danced the graceful waltz, the rollicking polka, the Lancers, and the barn dance on the greensward to the strains of a piano manned by W. Botting and a violin in the hands of C. Willmer.

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There were some good songs given, too, by talented singers. Frank Rich and Frank Simpson are vocalists of real quality, and Kneller as a comedian is hard to beat.

When the evening was far spent H. Kneller's humorous song, "I'm Tired," seemed to find an echo in the breasts of the busy pleasure-seekers, and accordingly Mr. and Mrs. Fibbens were thanked and cheered, Auld Lang Syne was sung, and the happy, laughing stream rippled back to Worthing.

Quite an unusual degree of activity is being displayed at the present time amongst local wheelmen. Last week-end T. A. Durrant arose a little in advance of the lark, and scooted merrily away through Guildford, Reading, Oxford, and Banbury, finally bringing up at Stratford-on-Avon for the night.

The distance—one hundred and forty miles—is a good day's work, but he was none the worse. His run back from the home of Shakespeare was easily accomplished in less than a day.

Another early-rising Excelsiorite—F. G. Bleach—rode through Croydon and Bromley to Sidcup in time for breakfast. He spent some part of the day in sampling Kentish strawberries, and enjoyed himself generally, and on reaching home again found he had totalled about a hundred and forty miles.

Then again W. R. Paine set off last week with a motor cycling friend for a run into Warwickshire, and a scamper round for a few days. The charms of the petrol-propelled steed seem to have helped to tempt Bert off the racing track.

I have since learnt the doings of Medhurst and Young's party after my unfortunate desertion.

From Fareham they continued—after seeing me safe—through Romsey to Salisbury, where they breakfasted before the final run on to quiet little Pewsey, in Wiltshire.

Here they were welcomed with secondary breakfasts of a "full roadster" description,

after which they enjoyed a nap, and then spent a good bit of the day there, returning by the same route later.

Altogether the ride is just about two hundred miles, and it is the longest one-day run that any local riders have carried out. A week or two back Medhurst rode to Salisbury and home again in a day, a ride of one hundred and fifty-two miles.

News has just reached me that Hutchinson—for whom Sam Clark was waiting at Fareham—succeeded in beating the record for twenty-four hours on Southern Roads, made by Bliss last week when he covered two hundred and eighty-six miles. Hutchinson used practically the same route, and despite his numerous punctures and misfortunes he rode three hundred and five miles. A good performance, indeed!

I expect there will be no Club runs next week; the Excelsior boys will be busy with their Evening Race Meeting, and they are anxious that Tarring should postpone strawberry feasting a week in order to amalgamate for the purpose.

DICK TURPIN.

* * Dick Turpin's many friends will be sincerely sorry to hear that the consequences of the misadventure are really much more serious than the genial wheelman's modest account of the occurrence would seem to indicate. One gratifying circumstance is that the accident will not wholly incapacitate Mr. Turpin, who hopes to devote himself to his daily duties, but a full month must elapse before he can expect complete recovery from the effects of the fall.—*Editor, GAZETTE.*

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