

THE WHEELING WORLD

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THE WHEELING WORLD.

A WEEKLY SURVEY.

Dick Turpin's Cycling Gossip.

Might Have Been Worse!

WHITSUNTIDE weather was hardly ideal for the cyclist, but, despite cloudy skies and a chilly nor'-easter, the roads were lively with wheelers. And though the sun scarce showed himself, the roads were in excellent trim and very free from dust. At Easter we had both sun and dust; hedges and roadside greenery were smothered in white, and Washington Bostel, I remember, looked like a snow-clad mountain pass. Yes; Whitsuntide weather might have been much worse.

The rueful ruminations of "A Brighton Cyclist" in last week's GAZETTE anent the layer of sand in Brighton-road were so humorously phrased that the sympathy his experience evoked was equalled by the smiles which resulted from his relation thereof.

There is danger by night in a patch of deeply laid sand, and wheelers will rejoice to know that the cause of our friend's downfall is now removed.

Tarred Road Surfaces.

Which reminds me: Sompting is one of the latest converts to tarred road surface. True, the experiment is being hardly so well carried out as it might be, but it is a step in the right direction.

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C. T. Wells—an old Excelsiorite—noticed extensive tarring operations at Leatherhead last week. The specially treated roads at Godalming and Milford, and also in and near Henfield, I found to be keeping in grand order when over them recently.

Henfield is the chosen venue for the Excelsior Club's President's run this year. A deputation of Clubmen, in the President's car, made a prospecting trip last week, and wisely allowed themselves to be overcome by the beauties of Henfield.

'Twould be hard to beat. I am anxiously awaiting the 16th of June, this being the date for which Captain Duffield tells me the popular outing is arranged.

Theories That Agreed.

Pedalling gently along the Shoreham-road the other day, I heard the swish of another rider's wheels as he rapidly overtook me. Some old page in my cycling life seemed to have opened again as I found myself once more "hanging on." A mile passed; I hastened ahead, and took my turn at making the pace.

I felt as frisky as Sawkins or Cowan, or some other of the speed boys, to whom this sort of thing is a daily occurrence.

The stranger and I, having thus introduced ourselves in strict accordance with the traditions of the road, fell into conversation. He was not a speed merchant, yet to my joy he was no believer in free wheels or speed gears.

His theory, like my own, is that idle pedalling downhill serves to keep the riders' joints free and in good working order. For just a thousand miles, one year, I used a free wheel, but had then to conclude it was of no service to me; I got lazier than ever!

An Unknown Joy.

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Except for racing purposes, the free wheel is now universal; even many racing men use the device. It was quite comforting, therefore, to meet a fellow disciple of the fixed wheel for ordinary cycling.

Ah! you freewheelists; for you the mad, headlong rush down hill at a speed you never realise. But you know not the exhilarating joy which is for the fixed wheel rider behind you, with the pedals carrying his feet round to a tune which would infuse life into an Egyptian mummy!

Taste it, my free-wheeling pleasure-seeker! You will want more. Then farewell to the clumsy speed gear, with its levers and rods, its pinions and ratchets, and its occasional lapses into uselessness.

For pedalling down hill will teach quick pedalling; then you can with comfort ride a single gear low enough to climb hills with comfort.

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