

Learning to Ride a Bicycle.

(A FICTITIOUS YAKS).

I did not think that it could be very difficult to learn to ride a bicycle. Other fellows appeared to pedal with ease and grace; fellows no stronger than myself, and not more clever, as far as I could judge. I wished very much that I could ride, riding being productive of so much enjoyment and good spirits, to say nothing of its hygienic advantages. Also the fact that "everybody" rode made it more essential that I should too. So I determined to see what could be done in that direction.

For several weeks previous to this final decision I had intently perused the advertisement columns of the various newspapers to get some idea of the prices of second hand machines. When my mind was made up I fairly devoured the papers.

One day to my satisfaction I saw—

FOR SALE.—Nearly new Rudge Safety, cushion tires, balls throughout, £7. 15. 0. Owner going abroad. Apply Box 6763.

I thought this would be just the thing; better not learn on a new machine, you know; so I wrote about it and received an answer arranging an interview the next night.

Well, I purchased the machine, and waited anxiously for a more than ordinarily dark night. Nor had I long to wait. That very night was dark enough to have satisfied the most exacting of burglars, and I appeared to be such an one as I cautiously crept out, by the back way, into the quiet street at the rear of our garden. Having made quite sure that there was no one within a quarter of a mile, I essayed to mount.

Now, it does not seem a very difficult task to raise one's left foot about a foot from the ground and put it on a small bar of iron termed a rest (quite a misnomer I assure you). To my mind the fifth proposition, *"ponas asinorum,"* you know, is nothing to it.

Upon my first try, the front wheel gave a vicious lurch to the left, and I, after several frantic hops, lost my balance and a modicum of my patience, and sat down, while the "bike" described circles round me, apparently enjoying my discomfort. Just then I heard foot-steps, so I seized the machine and vanished behind the garden wall. After five minutes of anxious waiting and breathless silence I again emerged to do battle with the steed. I saw that my failure before was due to my not starting with sufficient momentum. Keeping this well in mind I gave a vigorous push with my one available foot (by the bye, I managed to get the other on the rest the second time of trying), and managed to get considerable way on, being in close proximity to the saddle, but not on it though. Having proved by several ineffectual efforts that the goal (saddle) was not to be reached that time, I thought me to look around. Objects seemed to be going by at a rapid rate; and it suddenly flashed through my mind that I was going down a steep hill. With that peculiar power of more than ordinarily rapid thinking, vouchsafed to people in dire extremity, I remembered that some navvies had been at work at the bottom of the hill mending the road, and using for the purpose, that for a wheelman, cobble-stone. Cold drops of perspiration bedewed my face. I tried to think of what was best to do, but could not. I seemed cemented to the machine, which was gathering speed rapidly. Just at this juncture my

foot slipped and I fell forward onto the saddle. In my new position I must have resembled John Gilpin to a very great extent. But the end was near. I could see the red lamp denoting danger, but could no more steer clear of it than I could have gracefully regained terra firma. The next minute the machine struck a coil of rope. I turned a double somersault and brought up on a heap of sand, in a sitting posture. Things would not have been so bad, only the machine went through the same gymnastic feat, alighting on my chest and rolling away into the gutter. It gutter breaking and I gutter shaking. Oh, yes. I can joke now: I have been out of the hospital three weeks.

FOR SALE.—Nearly new Rugby Safety, cushion tires, balls throughout. What offers? Owner giving up riding for good reasons.

This happened years ago. I did have another try, but this time I went out in broad daylight, and had six men and a boy holding me on. I now do my mile in 2:10, and my "digs" are simply crowded with cups, medals, &c., mementoes of my achievements at the various meets.

The learning was somewhat uphill, or rather downhill work, but I have been amply repaid.

P. ROWZ.

N. B.—These experiences are not the writer's own.

Thoughts from the College World.

Conquest of circumstances is, in a measure, adapting one's self to them, and making them serve us.

—O—

The student rubs,
He pulls and tugs,
And with a dash
Comes the moustache.

—O—

Chicago University has just completed a new science hall, probably the finest and best equipped in the United States.

—O—

I met the girl of the
And took her by the leg
I thought I'd pop the
But I didn't have the st.

—O—

The tendency to persevere, to persist in spite of hindrances, discouragements and impossibilities, is this, that in all things, direction is given by the strong from the weak.—CARLYLE.

—O—

I'm so glad 'tis near vacation,
When each trial and vexation
Which doth attend examination
Will be forgot in recreation.

SIXPENTHINE ALUMNI.

J. F. C.