

CHAPTER VIII

CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING

OF all forms of pedestrianism—and, indeed, of all branches of athletics, there can be nothing superior to cross-country running for either pleasure or health. By cross-country is not meant running round town and finishing with mile spins over a track, but real cross-country or point to point running. The sport itself is ideal, whether a race be contested in fine or muddy weather. Track or road running is apt to grow monotonous, however exciting it may be, but there is nothing monotonous in an open country run, even the training itself is almost as enjoyable as the race.

The varying nature of the ground covered, moreover, assists enormously in building up one's physique and bringing into play every individual group of muscles, so that the long-distance track-runner will be well advised to devote a fair portion of his attention to field races, as they will materially assist his progress.

CROSS-COUNTRY TRAINING

The track must naturally be abandoned altogether for cross-country preparation, and one's practice carried out pretty religiously over country as closely resembling that on which the actual race will be contested as can be found within easy distance.

Work your spins up in length from about five miles, then eight miles to ten miles, and vary backwards and forwards. Run in company wherever possible, and pick out as much bad and heavy ground as you can, but run