

### More about Cement.

We have not as yet heard that the English visitors to Arnheim and the Vélodrome Buffalo have improved fifty yards or so on their home times, which would only need a forty-five yards per mile superiority as regards the track surface, seeing that being measured 18 in. from the edge the five-lap path would be five yards per mile short, according to our method of measurement. The recent successes of the geared ordinary and of Zimmerman have apparently upset the writer who fills a column in the *Evening News and Post*, as he broke out the other day on the subject of cement, and solemnly announced that if it proved faster it would be laid at Herne Hill, "in spite of Mr. Hillier." We wonder whether this is the *mot d'ordre* of the cementists? It is very much in their style, but it is a miserable misrepresentation of our position, which is a simple one. Sundry records, nothing marvellous, have been done on cement—29 4-5s. for a quarter, 32s. for an ordinary quarter, and so on—good times, but nothing wonderful. On the other hand, Englishmen don't show, as we said above, any marvellous improvement. If one of our men, good over here for, say, 1m. 10s. for the half, did 1m. 5s. on cement, that would be something, but the quality of Fokema, Protin and others is unknown.

Let us suppose that Zimmerman had gone to Holland to train and race. We should have credited his feats in some part to cement, just as to-day they are credited in some part to Herne Hill surface. Now we say this—and nothing more. When cement is proved to be the fastest surface, then it will be laid at Herne Hill, not "in spite of Mr. Hillier," but because Mr. Hillier and other persons interested in the track will have satisfied themselves, and of course the proprietary body, by actual observation, and not by theorizing on paper, that cement is faster. In the meanwhile, can any person point to any record which incontestably establishes the superiority of cement? There is not a single amateur record made on cement at the time of writing which is not at the mercy of one or more men properly handled at Herne Hill, with a fair day, including Protin's 29 4-5s. Our advice to track proprietors at present is to wait, and let those who will make the costly experiment before there is one tittle of evidence that cement, with its many disadvantages, is six yards per mile faster than Herne Hill. It must be six yards, because, according to foreign method

of measurement, the mile is five yards short of our standard.

When cement tracks are used our learned pundit does not think the air tyre will have any advantage over a small solid. De—ar me! Whilst the still more aged "wheeze" about thin steel on marble is galvanized into life once more. The trio ought now to be completed by the gentleman who swears by a tubular steel rim and an inch thick sheet of indiarubber all over the track. Ah! by the way, why not a pneumatic track!!! Air beds 500 yards by 10, in sections, of course, to admit of repair in case of puncture? Of course no records have as yet been done on air beds, but the aunt of the mother of the lad who saw the postman's brother three weeks back told a man we met that this was sure to be a faster surface than Herne Hill.

Dr. Turner saw Vater after his complicated cropper at Arnheim. Vater knocked all the corners off himself, and the wounds were big and bad, but they were quite clean—a distinct merit.

"A cement surface is *probably* faster than ashes or cinders."

The italics are ours. What are "ashes" as defined from "cinders" in track construction, and where is there a first-class cycle path of to-day laid with cinders? We should replace "probably" with "undoubtedly." Herne Hill, by the way, is neither "ashes," nor "cinders," nor "gravel!"

G. L. H.

The flyers are all up at Rosedale these days getting into condition for the Wanderers' meet on the 24th.

The Chatham Fields Company, of Chicago, which was arranging accommodation and track for the cyclists, at the World's Fair, has withdrawn its tender because the World's Fair people would not grant transportation facilities.

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