

KRON'S GUIDE TO ROADS AND RIDERS.

EDITOR CANADIAN WHEELMAN:

DEAR SIR,—In expressing my gratitude for the generous recommendation given in your February issue to my scheme of publishing a road-book, and for the equally kind offer of space in your columns for the personal presentation of its claims, I wish to announce that your individual subscription was the first one sent in to me by a Canadian. More than twenty others have since followed your example, however, and I confidently expect that when I really prepare for the press the "appendix of 3,000 subscribers' names, geographically arranged by clubs and localities," the Dominion will not be represented therein by less than 300. The Captain of the Belleville Club, on reading your announcement, at once sent me a half-dozen names, with a promise of others to follow; the Vice-President of the Montreal Club has assured me that he is making a successful canvass, and many other encouraging reports have accompanied the tenor of individual subscriptions. A wheelman of Halifax writes that he shall send more than a dozen names, though there were not that number of 'cyclers in the city when I toured through Nova Scotia last summer. The success of my book would be put beyond question if I could only open the eyes of the 'cycling public to the full significance of my refusal to accept any support from "advertisers," in order that I may be left free to command the support of each individual wheelman. As I shall print an edition of 5,000 copies, I have no doubt that I might sell fifty pages of "advertising space," at \$50 each; but I prefer that those fifty pages, or a greater number, shall be devoted to a "geographical directory of subscribers," recording the fact that 3,000 individuals have borne testimony to their enthusiasm for 'cycling by pledging a dollar each in support of a literary exponent of their favorite pastime. I wish to demonstrate to a scoffing outside world that there are enough of these people in existence to ensure financial success to a volume which is written solely in their general interest and which refuses the patronage of all special interests. Such a publication, supported by not a page of advertisements, and, at the same time exhibiting the names of 3,000 advance subscribers, scattered in hundreds of different towns all over the continent, would be an impressive literary phenomenon, which could not fail to set people to thinking. The most case-hardened sceptic would be forced to admit that it represented something else than a mere "advertising dodge," paid for by the various manufacturers and dealers. As I remarked in a letter to the *Wheel*, "the mission of my book is to advertise in the most impressive manner conceivable, the general advantages of 'cycling, as compared with any other sport or manner of locomotion; it is not to supply a bill-board upon which individual tradesmen may nail up their rival

announcements to attract the patronage of those who practise 'cycling.

It seems to me that everyone who has either a business interest or a sentimental interest in the spread of 'cycling ought to be willing to manifest it by contributing a dollar in support of a book whose wide circulation will necessarily give a great impetus to touring; inasmuch as every touring cyclist is the best possible advocate for the increase of wheeling. An advance subscription list naming 3,000 people who had individually pledged a dollar for the book would do more both to advertise the subsequent sale thereof and to advertise the importance of 'cycling generally than an assurance that twice that number of copies would be purchased by the book stores. Its value as a club list and "elite directory" will also be increased by the addition of every individual subscriber's name. No better device could be hit upon for giving information to the tourists concerning the clubs, and the men most devoted to wheeling, in any given locality, than this scheme of providing him with a list of owners of the road-book. A catalogue of all the cyclists in America, if it could be compiled, would be too bulky and too "miscellaneous" to be of much value for reference; but a list of those who testify to their enthusiasm by making a special pledge of a dollar must evidently be select and significant. My appendix, as first planned, promised to present "an alphabetical list of 3,000 subscribers' names, accompanied by residences, and also an alphabetical list of these residence towns, accompanied in the case of each town by the name and exact address of every subscriber living there;" but I have since decided to carry out the "directory" idea still further, by making special groups of the club men in each town, indicating the club headquarters as well as the individual address of each member, and especially designating those subscribers who are or have been officers of the club, the League, the C.W.A., or the C.T.C. Mere membership in any of these associations will also be shown. The clergymen, lawyers, and physicians on the list will be specially noted as such, and I may perhaps mention the occupations of other subscribers which may be reported to me. I certainly will mention the occupations of all who definitely request me to do so, and this mention in the case of a dealer in bicycles, will be equivalent to a "business card," worth in itself a good deal more to him than the subscription price of the book. In like manner, every hotel-keeper on the roads where there is any touring can well afford to pay me a dollar, merely to have his house mentioned in the geographical list of owners of the book. It is plain that each one of these owners, while on a tour, will be inclined, as between two possible choices whereof he has no other knowledge, to patronize the hotel or the agency where he knows he can at least find a copy of "the tourists' guide." I have taken up so much space in showing how valuable the mere appendix of the book may be made as

a "directory to riders," that I cannot venture now to say much about its vain purpose as a guide to roads. Minute descriptions of the 5,000 miles of them explored by me in the region indicated by the list of titles which you published in February, will be supplemented by summaries of the road reports which other riders have contributed to the 'cycling press; and the whole will be so thoroughly indexed as to make each fact and statement instantly accessible. The chief local index will consist of an alphabetical list of all the towns mentioned (with typographical devices distinguishing the "court house," and other important towns from the little ones), and the names will then all be repeated under an alphabetical arrangement of states and counties. There will be special lists of rivers, valleys, lakes, mountains, water-falls, battle fields, monuments, colleges, hotels, and places rendered notable for historic or sentimental reasons. One special index will contain the names of all men who are mentioned in the book; another, the desirable routes for tours; another, the "free" railroad and steamboat lines; and so on.

Inasmuch as I rode straightway through Canada for a distance of 635 miles, during a fortnight of last October, after having tried 350 miles of roadway in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton; and inasmuch as I start to-day on a voyage to the Andes, in order to write a report on the excellent road, no one can fairly scold me of applying the broad title, "American" to a road-book whose scope is limited to the United States.

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THE YOUTH'S COMPANION

As a source of profitable entertainment for the family, no paper exceeds in interest the *Youth's Companion*. Its list of writers embraces the best names in periodical literature, and it is evidently the aim of its editors to secure not only the best writers, but the best articles from their pens. It is a remarkable thing for a single paper to obtain such a succession of lively and brilliant stories and illustrated articles. While the *Companion* is in the main a story paper, the mental, moral and religious training of young people is an end kept steadily in view. Its articles on current topics are written by the most qualified pens, and present, in a clear, vivid, direct way, the fundamental facts of home and foreign politics, and all public questions. Its original anecdotes of public men are invaluable in their influence in stimulating right ambition and a high purpose in life. Every household needs the healthy amusement and high moral training of such a journal. It is published by PERRY MASON & Co., of Boston, who will send specimen copies upon application.

"The CANADIAN WHEELMAN is bound to be a success as no pains are spared to make it a valuable record of all things pertaining to the sport."—*London Echo*.