

Wheelman Centres.

WOODSTOCK.

It is now some time since I had the pleasure of sending you a letter, and you may perhaps have thought that the remarks in my last about other correspondents not writing you would apply very forcibly to myself. I must, however, plead pressure of business, and hope in future to write you more regularly. And I have been fluttering myself that what I said about other towns not writing to you has had the effect of stirring them up, as every issue of THE WHEELMAN since has contained a number of letters from other clubs. There are many yet to hear from, and my mission will not be complete till they, too, are in line.

Wheeling matters, in so far as present events are concerned, are of course quiet; but the air here in our town, the cycling "hub," is full of rumors of stirring times to come, when spring arrives and thaws us out. Our Athletic Association is not of the material which sits down content with past success, but is ever up and doing, determined still to be in the van. To do this the better as regards external matters, such as race meetings, etc., we are strengthening ourselves internally by extending the attractions of our rooms in such a way as must largely increase our already large membership.

Long before we expect to welcome yourself and other brother wheelmen to the most interesting race meeting yet held in Canada, of which I will speak later, we will be settled in much larger and more commodious quarters than those at present occupied, where a billiard-room, bowling alley, etc., will be added, while the old features, reading and card-rooms and gymnasium, will be carried on with the advantage of larger space. Our officers for the ensuing year are much the same as last, the general verdict seeming to be that better ones could not be found. Some new blood was added. However, on the 24th of May next we hope to "shake" with yourself and a host of visiting wheelmen in the new rooms. On that day it is the intention of the Association to present to them, and to the public generally, the most attractive programme of sports ever offered in Canada. In addition to the interest centred in the meeting of our own riders, both known and unknown to fame, inducements will be held out which will bring here some of the leading American amateurs, and a liberal purse will be hung up, sufficient to bring some of the best professionals from the other side to compete here—an event which, from its novelty in Canada, and from its exciting nature, cannot fail to prove a great draw. So, gentlemen all—riders of all kinds—racers and slow-goers—turn over your diaries till you come to the 24th of May, and write there that you are going to Woodstock on that day for the best races ever ridden in Canada. By the way, before leaving the matter of race meetings, I wish to notice a remark in a letter from one of your correspondents re the "meet" for this year. In setting forth the attractions of his town, as a place for holding it, he says something to the effect that as, if it goes there, it will be the first large event of the kind in that vicinity, it will have a large share of local patronage, and that the fact of its being hitherto unbroken

ground will add largely to its success in a paying point of view. Now, while allowing that novelties take, our experience here is that the better the public generally know the riders and their reputation the more interest they take in seeing the question of supremacy settled amongst them, so that the interest grows instead of decreasing. Of course the matter does not affect us as regards the "meet" of '86, only in its bearing on race meetings generally. By the time you receive this we will be enjoying the king of winter sports—tobogganing. Our sad experience of last year will teach its lesson of care in the mode of conducting the slide, so that we may look for this season being one of pleasure unmarred by any terrible accident, such as cast a gloom over the closing days of the last season.

Plans of all kinds are on foot among the bicycle boys for next season, in the way of drill, fancy riding, etc., and with the additions of last year and the coming ones of this year to our racing tracks, we may look out for a season of stirring events. There should certainly be some flyers among the new material that the increased facilities for practice will create.

Let us hope that all the clubs who control tracks will work together in harmony, and avoid clashing in the matter of dates for their meetings, which can only be hurtful to all concerned.

Well, my letter has spun out to quite a length, so I will close for the present.

BICYCLE.

Jan. 22, 1886.

TORONTO.

Hooray! the days are beginning to stretch. Yesterday was at least five minutes longer than its predecessor, and before we know it the last flake of the beautiful will have disappeared; the merry frog will have emerged from his lair, and the bicyclist will have cleaned his wheel and blackened the north pole of his nose in the operation.

So much for the future. But it is a crying shame that the Canadian clubs do not imitate the English clubs by holding winter meetings. Bless your heart, Mr. Editor, just look at the *Cyclist* to see what heaps of fun they must have with their "Smokeries" and their "Cinderellas" and other high jinks! Why can't we meet in our respective headquarters and have a jig-gery, or a hop-perry, or a free lunchery, or a drunkery—on coffee? Time is flying faster than the wheel of the best record-smasher of the world, and we're missing lots of opportunities for enjoyment.

The Toronto Club will hold a meeting on Feb. 1st for the nomination of candidates for office, and the annual meeting will be held on the following Monday. I will send you an account of the meetings as soon as held. I may say to you confidentially that I am a candidate for the position of grand worthy patriarch of the club. Your vote and influence respectfully solicited.

Bennett, sprint-runner, ran 2¼ miles against 3 miles by George H. Hill on a Rudge Safety, at the Princess Rink recently. Bennett won by three laps.

PETE.

Fear not the dog that barks, but put thy leg over the handle-bar in the presence of the silent canine.—*Ft. Wayne World.*

MR. DUCKER'S LATEST SCHEME.

Few are aware of the extensive preparations being made by our local bicycle manager, President Ducker, for a trip of an American team to Europe in the spring. It is Mr. Ducker's intention to select from America's greatest wheelmen some fifty in number to make a tour through all the principal cities of Europe. The programme, as so far developed, is something like this: To leave New York city about the middle of June in the City of Rome, land at Queenstown, Ireland, and make a thorough tour through that country; next to England, where they intend to give the English battle on their own ground, and will endeavor to bring back some of the trophies, or their equivalent. They will also make a tour through France and Germany, and a romantic programme is also in view, that of making a descent of the Alps into Italy. After satisfaction has been acknowledged by our tourists, they will return to their native land, either wiser or better men. An agent of the American wheelmen in Europe has been at work for the past three months, laying out their future line of action.—*Springfield News.*

A POINTER.

Mr. W. P. Ure, one of our Scottish R. C.'s, contributes a valuable wrinkle thus: "I have recently discovered a cure for an annoyance to which I have been subject for some little time. I refer to the breaking of spokes close to the rim, and my mode of dealing with it is as follows: I cut up a spoke into small pieces, about two and a half to three inches long, and head up one end of each of these small pieces. I carry two or three of these with me in my tool-bag, and when a spoke gives way I simply insert one of them through the hole in the rim, bend round the end of it by means of a small pair of pliers, bend round the end of the broken spoke in a similar manner, hook the one into the other, and tighten up the spoke in the usual way. The plan enables me to mend a spoke on any country road in ten minutes. I have now three spokes mended in this way, and none of them show any signs of giving way, though I have ridden several hundred miles since mending the first."—*C. T. C. Gazette.*

A story comes from St. Louis to the effect that a certain young man of that city has used his bicycle in a way which suggests limitless possibilities for the cyclist. A rival engaged the wheelman's dulcinea for a drive, and unluckily let his prospective triumph reach the ears of the other lover, who, jumping on his faithful machine, followed behind the carriage, which was an open vehicle. The fellow in the carriage with the girl, seeing his adversary silently rolling behind, whipped up his horse, but could not shake off his silent pursuer, until, in despair, he left the highway and took a rough side road. But the wheelman was an expert, and kept right up with the couple, spoiling all the romance of the ride. At last the ride was given up in disgust, and the horse's head was turned homeward.

T. J. Kirkpatrick is the favorite among western men for the L.A.W. presidency.