

A WONDERFUL HILL.

I have heard some strange stories about hill-coasting lately, which, for their veracity and facts connected with them, would never be right to doubt.

In relating the following little experience, I hope none of its readers will for an instant doubt my statements, as they could not, under the circumstances, be otherwise than correct.

It came about this way: Myself and a friend were touring in the northern part of Ontario, and were in a region probably never before pedalled over by a bicyclist. It was on a Sunday morning, and everything was still and quiet. For the past three days we had been continually climbing or walking up hill, never down; and although for the first day or so we wondered where we were ascending to, yet we soon forgot that in the luxury of the roads, which were of such good quality as to make hill-climbing almost imperceptible.

Well, on this day, towards noon, we perceived at last we were approaching the top of this long stretch, and meeting a native, asked him about the roads further on. His answer was the one calculated to make a bicyclist elated, and we were about to proceed when he stopped us, and, after turning our pedals around once or twice, said, "I guess yous boys had better not try ter ride down Jacob's hill on them scissors-grinders." Of course we asked about the hill, and were informed that it was a mile further on, and was so steep and long that waggons had to go down with weights trailing behind, and that the gravel was put on with shingle nails to keep it in place! After assuring the man of our ability to coast any hill, we mounted and very soon reached the top.

After riding about half a mile along a level road, we came to a summit of a hill, which, although it seemed long, did not strike us as being too steep to coast.

Sitting well back, we threw our legs over the handles and started down the hill. At first we did not go at any great speed, but soon I felt my wheel start.

Bones, my friend, had just the same machine, in size and weight, as my own, and his weight was also about the same as myself, so that in coasting our machines run with about equal speed. On this occasion he was about a length in advance of me.

By the time we had descended a quarter of a mile our speed increased to such a rate that the telegraph poles appeared like a picket fence. I commenced to feel uneasy, and gradually put on my brake. Finding no perceptible difference in the speed, I cast my eyes on it and found that it was melted into liquid metal from the friction on the rubber. I was still intent on this when a cry from Bones diverted my attention. I now perceived that my tire was detaching itself in small pieces, and was being sent with terrific force against the back of my friend, who was directly in front of me. He was soon covered with rubber. The last piece of my tire had scarcely left the wheel when Bones' front wheel tire, parting in the centre, flew off. Being directly behind him, I rode right on to it, and, strange to relate, it fitted into my empty felloe exactly, and the cement

being hot, it stuck fast, so that now I commence to gain on Bones.

Suddenly my companion uttered a cry, which drew my attention down the road in front of us. About a mile down was an old woman crossing the road. Scarcely had the cry been uttered than we were there, just grazing the old lady by an eighth of an inch. I turned around slightly in my saddle, and looking back I perceived the female, now some miles up the road, turning rapidly round and round in the eddies of wind caused by our bodies in passing her.

As I have mentioned before, I was steadily gaining on Bones, owing to the loss of his tire, when, owing to the friction, the cones of his back wheel gave way, and gradually the wheel slipped out of the forks. Being lightened by this, my friend quickly drew ahead, and soon disappeared in the distance ahead of me. I soon passed his back wheel, which continued on its course, and shortly arrived at the bottom of the hill. Still coasting, I was carried up a very steep hill about a mile long before I could with safety return my feet to the pedals. It was here I was on the point of dismounting, when a voice further on attracted my attention. I therefore proceeded towards the direction of the sound, and found Bones, my friend, calmly smoking a cigarette, and regretting the loss of his back wheel and tire.

We were arguing over the ownership of the tire, when a slight noise drew our attention down the road: here we perceived the little wheel referred to roll up and fall on its side. On being examined, it was found perfectly sound, with the exception of the cones, which were speedily replaced with extra ones carried by us.

Strange to relate, with the exception of the loss of a tire, our machines were solid, and after a good rest we proceeded on our way, having introduced a rubber hose into Bones' felloes in place of his lost tire.

Now, if anybody could for an instant doubt this little experience of road-riding, I am prepared to show them the boots I wore on the occasion, and also the monkey wrench that we used on Bones' wheel, which ought to convince the most doubtful mind.

Toronto.

GEORGIUS.

The following note from the Overman Wheel Company hails the advent of a new bicycle: "The Victor bicycle, at which we have been grinding for three or four years, is now being made in our works, and will be on the market in full dress March 1. It will be made throughout of interchangeable machinery, and be in everyway as good a bicycle as can be found in all England. We do not propose to save one cent in its making. We do propose that the advent of the Victor bicycle shall mark a new era in the bicycle business in the United States. This in more ways than one. In a general way, the machine will contain Brown's ball-bearings to both wheels and pedals, Warwick hollow rims, tangent spokes and compressed tires, and be finished in Harrington's enamel and nickel. Later on we will give you a bill of particulars as to all details."

The results of the Springfield tournament races were cabled to the *Cyclist*, London, England, at a cost to the proprietors solely of nearly \$150.

ART AND THE BICYCLE.

One remarkable feature of the career of the bicycle is the prominent place it has taken in connection with art. Illustrations of this are found in two interesting paintings in the fine exhibition of American art at this year's fair of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics' Association. One of these paintings is by Mr. Henry Sandham, who is known to our readers as one of the most startling of our artist contributors, and the other is by Mr. R. Donaho. Mr. Sandham's picture shows a merry party of cyclers speeding down the slope of a picturesque New England road. It is most effective in grouping, and illustrates a delightful phase of the pleasures of the wheel. Mr. Donaho's picture is called "The Start." It represents a street in what appears to be a small European town, probably French, with two bicyclers setting out on their day's journey. One is just under way and the other is mounting. This, too, is an excellent painting, both in subject and in treatment.

The bicycle was the occasion for the establishment of the first artistic magazine devoted to outdoor recreation, and our own pages testify to endless opportunities which it offers for illustrations of the most attractive kind. One is disposed to ask how it is that a mere machine should be honored with such artistic favor. The contrary has hitherto been the case with most mechanical inventions, and the bicycle, in itself, varies so little in form that the fact seems doubly remarkable.

No artist would think, for instance, of a threshing machine or a telephone as a subject for picturesque treatment. But a little reflection will show good reason why the cycle should be an exception. In the first place, the bicycle has added a new grace to human movement. The action of a rider of the wheel is so aerial, his flight so birdlike, that, although the bicycle is now as common upon our highways as carriages are, people almost invariably turn to enjoy the sight. The highest form of depictive art consists of the representation of the human figure. And the bicyclist, in the exercise of his sport, has largely enriched the field of study in this respect. His costume displays the figure to the best advantage, and affords a welcome relief to the prosaic character of modern everyday male attire. The well-trained wheelman in action cannot fail to please the artist eye. His poise is admirable, and his motion brings all the muscles gently into play. While the general effect of his movements varies little, there is, however, a constant change which affords a highly interesting study for those who, like artists, have trained themselves to observe subtle gradations of action. The environment, too, of life on the wheel is rich in variety, taking one at will among strong contrasts of life and scenery, spreading unceasing feasts of picturesque pleasures, food for fancy and thought, before the rider of the silent steed. For these reasons, artists themselves have been attracted to the pleasures of the bicycle and the tricycle as to no other form of outdoor recreation. By no other means are picturesque subjects so readily attainable, and therefore numbers of the best artists are enrolled among the wheelmen's fraternity.—*Outing*.

Springfield boasts of 700 riders; Hartford has 500.