

THE BIG FOUR TOUR.

TO CANADIAN WHEELMEN.

In the forthcoming century road race of the Big Four Bicycle Tour Association, from Cobourg to Kingston, July 10th next, the Association would be glad to have a representation of the best Canadian roadsters, that the test may be made between American riders and those of Canada. The very best American roadsters are already entered for the race. Without doubt Canada can furnish their equals. The trophy of the race is a magnificent gold medal, valued at \$60, and is an appropriate souvenir of the event. The route comprises the last two days' tour of the Big Four in Canada. The tourists leave Cobourg on July 9th for Belleville; leave Belleville next day for Kingston, the racers leaving Cobourg at same time, just one day's stretch behind the tourists, who are timed to arrive at Kingston about half an hour ahead in order to form line in front of the entrance of the British American Hotel and witness the finish of the race. Refreshment points will be arranged at every five miles along the road, indicated by a purple flag over entrance. Time will be taken at each of these places. Convoys will be in waiting at entrances of large towns, to pilot through streets correctly, and also at Kingston. All Canadians know the road well, and what its quality is for fast riding. The century record is designed to be broken, and no doubt will be, and the winner of the Big Four medal will have something to be proud of. Entries confined to twelve, and must be made either with Abbot Bassett, chairman of the Century Committee, or with the manager of the tour in Canada W. Kingsley Evans, London.

Illustrated descriptive circular of the Big Four Tour mailed free to any address, showing a two-weeks' bicycle tour under systematic and experienced management, the last of a series of three, of which the famous "Canada Tour" of 1883 was the first. The wheelmen of Chicago, Boston, Buffalo and New York comprise its management—four cities of size, from whence "Big Four" is derived.

An unpleasant reminiscence of the Queen's birthday celebration is that of some of the members of the Montreal Bicycle Club. On Saturday night, before they laid over at Bout de l'Isle, and the spirits of the younger members of the company being youthlike and somewhat high, during the night a pillow-fight was indulged in. One pillow was badly wrecked in the scuffle, and other slight damage was done, for which in the early morning the Montreal bicyclists offered to pay. The hotel-keeper had more lofty designs, however, and having first taken the precaution to lock up the bicyclists, approached, shot-gun in hand, with four assistants, and demanded the sum of \$4 each to pay, as he said, for damage and accommodation, alleging that the noise made by the young fellows was likely to have a grave effect on his future business prospects. Protesting against the injustice, they at length consented to pay \$3 each, and left the place without breakfast.—Legal proceedings are talked of.—*The Mail*.

Wm. W. Crane has succeeded to the editorship of the *Bicycle South*.

FROM A FEMININE POINT OF VIEW.

Your polite note, asking for a few observations from a feminine point of view, struck consternation to my heart at first, but, on second thoughts, it occurred to me that it might not be wasted energy if I should say a word for those of the weaker sex who have found in the exhilarating exercise of the wheel a delightfully-charming manner of gaining health and strength.

American women are not much given to exercise, and pale faces and general lassitude are more prevalent than they should be. I confess myself to have been one of the weak sisters, and, until I learned to ride, I could not walk three miles without great fatigue. The wheel has brought back the roses to my cheeks, so my friends say, and I ride twenty miles without undue fatigue. The tired feeling that comes from riding is one that brings calm repose, and is radically different from the weariness that comes to me from hard work and gives me a restless night and a morning headache.

In the early days of my riding I always envied those ladies who could talk about ball-bearings, differential gears, loop frame and T frame, and give a name to every part of the machine. It was a sealed book to me then, and I confess it is not a very clear page now, but I am fast learning, and to learn is to broaden one's self, you know. I was as little interested in the wheel as my friend Mrs. Crecsus is in her carriage. She has no idea what a transum bolt is, and the mention of the running gear would convey no meaning to her. She is content to sit in her carriage, and if there is an accident the driver will adjust matters. Two or three little episodes on the road, however, showed me that it would be well for me to learn a little about my wheel, and I am now more independent.

The delightful freemasonry of the wheel has pleased me greatly. What is it they say about "one touch of nature," etc.? The cycle has supplanted the place of nature's touch, and the whole world of wheeldom is one kin. I do not believe that the world has arrived at a point of civilization where it would be safe to know and recognize every person one meets on the street, and etiquette imposes strict obligations upon the ladies, and binds them to certain rigid rules of conduct from which they cannot depart without giving offence to society.—On the wheel there is a new order of things, shall I call it the *renaissance of etiquette*? And still it is not license, and I have yet to see the first evil result to come from the cycle kinship. A wheelman passes me on the road, and respectfully lifts his hat. It is a graceful compliment, and does not imply acquaintance, nor the wish for such. If we were on foot, the same act would be an insult. I cannot draw the line and tell why this should be so, and yet I would not have it otherwise.

On several occasions I have met with accidents on the road; a squeaking wheel needed oiling, my saddle-post slipped in its socket, once my steering became disarranged, and on each occasion I was fortunate enough to meet a wheelman on the road, who gave me assistance. I was acquainted with no single one of these, and yet I found them ready to help me

out of my difficulty, and their work was done respectfully and kindly. All honor to the wheelmen, I say, for I have found none but gentlemen in their ranks.

One great difficulty in the way of ladies who ride the wheel in Boston is the matter of stabling. A man joins the Massachusetts or the Boston Club and the problem is easily solved, but we can't do this, and must needs build a shed or hire stabling at a livery, an alternative that presents two horns of a dilemma; neither of which is acceptable. I have talked with several ladies and tried to make converts of them, but the want of stabling was the ogre in their paths. It may be that one of these days we shall have a lady patroness who will give us a stable or help us to get one, and in the meantime we must wait. We don't want luxury; a shed that is clean and waterproof will do, and we will leave the social halls and the billiard-rooms to the men, if we can only get a shed. I don't think a shed will be quite up to the third which the law allows us, but it will do. DAISIE.

—*Bicycling World*.

THE BICYCLE.

The bicycle is the modern substitute for the horse. It is much swifter and a great deal stronger, as any one can see who has ever watched the bicycle when it came to a standstill and bucked. It will throw a man twice as far as a horse can, and instead of running away it jumps upon him and holds him down. This is one reason why the bicycle is driving the horse out of the market. A man doesn't like to have to hunt his horse up every time he gets thrown. It is much pleasanter to have the bicycle hunt him up.

The bicycle consists of two wheels and a backbone. The seat is sometimes on the backbone and sometimes in front. When it is in front it is called "a header." The two wheels run in the same plane, until that plane is intersected by a stone or rut. Then the wheels stop running, and the rider's nose begins. This feat is called "painting his vest red." It is not a difficult feat to learn—in fact, it is rather difficult to avoid.

When a bicycle runs down hill, it is customary for the rider to put on the brake. This is not done because he dislikes to ride fast, but because he wishes to gaze upon the scenery more intently—and especially upon that portion of the scenery which lies directly in front of the large wheel of the machine. The brake is a very cunning arrangement. It consists of a hollow spoon-shaped piece of steel, which fits over the tire of the large wheel, and is pressed down upon it by a lever. Some riders do not believe in using a brake. They prefer to take their header at the foot of the hill instead of half way up. It saves time.

Besides being swifter, stronger and more affectionate than the horse, the bicycle is also cheaper—about one hundred dollars. Its food, however, is somewhat more costly. The horse is contented with oats and hay. The bicycle must have cloth.

There is one thing which is very fortunate for those who wish to purchase bicycles—the number of second-hand machines offered for sale