

in the pattern of bicycles for '97 there would have been a great many more purchases of new machines. At present, what inducement is there for anybody to part with his old machine for a new one, unless the former is a bad one or absolutely worn out? None at all that I can see. In fact, in one or two respects I really fancy the machines of two or three years back were better than those built in the present year of grace. If cycle manufacturers wish to introduce one or two changes in construction to make next year's bicycles different to those of '96 and '97, here are a couple of suggestions. First, let them revert to the sloping top tube, which mechanically was a far better idea than the present horizontal tube. The use of the perfectly horizontal tube has led to the adoption of very short steering heads, which mean loss of rigidity, and when very tall men use machines so built the evil is, of course, greatly increased. Then the backward slope of the pillar leading from saddle to pedals can with advantage be made less acute in these days when everyone who is not a faddist rides in a more or less vertical position over the pedals. So great is the backward slope of many seat pillars that we see scores and scores of riders every day using L pins which point forwards in order to place the saddle sufficiently over the pedals. This slight alteration would give us a more compact and altogether natter bicycle than the present elongated style of building the rear part of the frame.

The result of the world's mile at the recent world's championship meeting at Glasgow is the greatest event of the year. All the great riders were gathered together for it, and C. F. Barden, who is now reported to be on his way to Australia, was the English favourite for the event. Bourillon, the famous French sprinter, and probably the fastest finishing jumper that the world has ever seen, was the holder of the honour, and he was among the competitors. He easily won his heat from Gascoyne, a fast Englishman. In the second round Bourillon was opposed by Barden, who had beaten Macferon and Chain. When these great riders came out for the second round the excitement was intense. The ride was a crawl to the last lap, when Chain shot away, but down the back stretch Barden came out, as did the Frenchman on seeing him, passed Chain, and took the lead. Then ensued one of the most desperate struggles which has ever been witnessed. Barden gradually but surely wore the Frenchman down, and passed over the tape a winner by inches only. Bourillon, on hearing of the decision of the judges, behaved like a maniac, and could not be persuaded to leave the enclosure until the next heat started. The final eventually brought together Barden, Willi Arend, Germany's crack sprinter, and Nossam, a Frenchman who recently has jumped into the first rank, and who has created a tremendous sensation by his sprinting prowess. Willi Arend was, before the running of his heat, not thought much of, but the manner in which he rode in the preliminary called to mind some very fine work he did in the French capital last year against Jacquelin and Morin. Barden was a hot favourite in the final, and at the last lap Arend came through with a great rush. Barden foolishly let him go, thinking his great trouble was going to be with Nossam. But the German rode like a world's champion, and when the trio swung into the straight Barden made desperate efforts to bring him back, but Arend held his own, and passed over the tape a three-quarters of a length winner, gaining the title of world's champion over the heads of the best men England and Europe could produce. Good judges were of the opinion that Barden had not quite recovered from the terrible finish he had to ride with Bourillon shortly before the final.

Of course with the bicycle, like every other new habit or fad taken up by the Americans, there comes the inevitable slang and technical talk (remarks the *Cincinnati Tribune*). The girl who wears bloomers or knickerbockers picks it all up in about a minute or two. If you stop a little while on Race-street almost any evening you will hear enough to puzzle the understanding, and in some cases plenty to shock the moral side of your nature. With the girls' 'darn' is the expressive oath, and every now and then it floats out on the breeze in connection with some defective part of a wheel that has probably been rented for an hour or two. 'Say,' said one of them the other evening, 'this darned old pedal is slipping every minute, and I can't scorch fast enough to keep away from that guy in the crash suit. Think he owns the street, I guess. But, say, I can't get a stare from that piece of sweetness that's ridin' the Columbia. He's not on the mash, I guess. I think I'll tell him out the way a piece and then dismount and examine the tyre. Maybe he'll stop and give me a lift. Look at the wheel that guy is ridin'. She hasn't given it a bath since it was in short clothes. If I was fixed like her I don't think I'd be quite so skimping with the goods I put in my skirt.' But whether this reference was to the form of the young lady in question or to her financial condition could only be guessed. More than likely the former was under consideration. 'Oh, I nearly died a-laughing up there near Seventh just now. See that feller with the hair on his lip. What d'ye think? Some thin, scrawny woman was scorching along up there, at least she thought she was, and some fellow spoke about her crank pins bein' too straight and too thin. They did look that way for a fac'.' And thus the chaff, slang and technique goes on hour after hour.

SPORTS & PASTIMES.

GOLF.

One more honour has fallen to Mrs Vernon, who has won the Christchurch Championship of the Ladies' Golf Club, the match being played off last week, and, it is said, with a better score by some points than that made by Miss Wilford in the last tournament, when Mrs Vernon was so close up.

On Saturday the St. Andrew's Cross competition took place at the Hutt links, Wellington, over a nine-hole course, the new course being too full of water to be played on. The Hon. F. Arkwright was the winner of the match, his score being 93, including a handicap of 22, Mr Arthur Duncan being second, with the splendid score of 74, plus a handicap of 5.

FOOTBALL.

There was great excitement in football circles in New Plymouth last week over the victory scored last Saturday by the Takapa boys over the Pounsonby boys, the cup winners of Auckland. On their return they were met at the station by a number of their friends, who heartily cheered them on their victory. Really this Club has been very successful this season, having so far only suffered one defeat.

CRICKET.

The opening of the cricket season took place in Christchurch on Saturday with a good attendance of spectators, and the pavilion was well filled. Mrs W. D. Mearns (wife of the President), with her daughters, dispensed afternoon tea to the numerous visitors. The cricket ground looked like a piece of green velvet, but everyone fears the greenness of the lawns will be very short-lived this summer, owing to the extremely dry winter.

ROWING.

A large crowd assembled at the Western Spit on Wednesday afternoon to witness the opening of the Napier boating season by the Union Rowing Club. After the opening ceremony had been conducted by Mr Hagleton, vice-president, a procession of boats was formed across the bay. A four-oared outrigger race was rowed between H. W. Allen (stroke), E. Elyett (three), S. Eddy (two), C. Steele (bow), and A. Wilson (stroke), H. Garner (three), J. Eddy (two), and G. Clarke (bow). The race which was very close, was won by the latter crew. Flat and hurdle races were held on the shore; excellent music was provided by the Garrison Band, and afternoon tea was given by a number of ladies. Shortly before five o'clock the proceedings were brought to a close.

BOWLING.

The Parnell Bowling Club open their green on the 9th. of this month.

The Auckland, Pounsonby, Remuera, North Shore, and Newmarket Bowling Greens open on the 16th.

HUNTING.

(BY ONLOOKER.)

THE Pakuranga hounds met last Wednesday at 'Alberton,' Mount Albert, the residence of Mrs Kerr-Taylor, for the last but one hare hunt of this season. I believe these hounds have this season broken the New Zealand record with their kills, our huntsman having already over fifty of this season's trophies. The weather was fine over head, though cloudy and warm, but happily no rain descended to damp one, as it has usually done at Mount Albert on these auspicious occasions. The hounds (which were a large pack, about forty in number, as Mr Selby, our huntsman, had brought out seven couples of the puppies) were no sooner thrown off in the Alberton scoria when two hares were on foot and away, dividing the pack of hounds. One half were instantly whipped off, then the whole pack, in full cry, with one hare in view, rattled their hare up by the lawn of Alberton House through the iron gate, and away across the Mount Albert and Onehunga Road, through Mr Kemp's property on the eastern side of Mount Albert, the opposite side to which we have hunted on prior runs, and away to Mr Lee's scoria. Here pussie doubled and returned via the top of Mount Albert, and back again to Alberton, and was killed in the Avenue. This run was one of the smartest and prettiest of the season, though short, as pussie was in view throughout the whole run. There were only a few followers — Mrs Bloomfield, Miss Kerr-Taylor, Colonel Dawson, Mr Wells (H.M.S. 'Goldfisch'), Mr Hyde, and a few other gentlemen whose names I did not

know. We once more threw off in the scoria to find the other hare, but pussie had decamped by this time, so we drew along the neighbouring paddocks, across the Avenue, through Mr Willis' property to the Mount Albert and Onehunga main road. We then made a move on the eastern side of Alberton property, the hounds being cast in some young grass paddocks, where pussie was found, and made off for the Mission Swamp, followed by the anxious pack, which hunted her for some time in the high ti-tree, but could not get her to break cover. At length another was started, which took a bee line for the mountain and was lost. We then made a move for Mr Stewart's swamp, the back of the mountain, when another hare was started, and with the cry, 'Halloo, she's off!' a wild dash was made over the fields and stone walls up through Mr Lee's to the eastern side of the mountain, where the surrounding wire brought the foremost followers to a standstill. Our huntsman, after a minute's hesitation, jumped the plain wire fence into the gravel pit. The two foremost lady hunters consulted each other as to whether they would do likewise, but came to the conclusion that 'Discretion was the better part of valour,' and they made a circuit to avoid this nasty obstacle. On reaching the main rock they found the hounds were at fault. After drawing in a circle round the opposite or western side of the mountain, when we had stone walls galore to negotiate, pussie was found near the railway ballast line. Away over a stone wall in Mr Willis' property, next came a stiff stone wall into Mr Webster's, another stiff stone wall back to Mr Willis then out again on a bye-road by another wall, then away down the road and opposite to Mrs Rattray's, a stiff stone wall or gate into Mr Battley's paddock, next came a horrible jump, a stiff stone wall with thick fir tree branches close on top of the wall, each rider being forced to bend himself or herself level with their horse or they would have been hung like Absolum to the tree, as one of our well-known hunting gentleman was. Our huntsman, of course, went first, and got fearfully scratched about the face, the ladies faring better; the only noticeable mark of this dreadful encounter was that their hats were caved in. Next came a hedge with a ditch on the off side, and then a slip panel, next a stone wall into the Avenue, and the hounds were at fault again. We then drew right down to the entrance gate of the Avenue, then returned, and on our way back the hounds picked up the scent and were on pussie again, who had been quietly reclining beneath a laurel tree, and off over the mountain into Mr Lee's scoria, and away down through Messrs Sadgrove and Spragg's, out into the Mount Albert and Avondale Road, and away to the vicinity of the Asylum, back again to the district of Mount Albert by some bye roads, where we lost our hare, but we followers continued across country to Alberton, where we dispersed, as it was getting so dreadfully late. Some of our lady riders were completely knocked up, and I can vouch that our horses and the young puppies felt just as bad.

I must tell you of some of the wonderful feats that were accomplished by these enthusiastic hunters. One lady rider's horse changed his mind at a wall and jumped the wire fence into the Mission Swamp. Another lady deliberately put her horse to every gate that came in the way in preference to the walls, which he took in excellent style, but nobody followed her. They were quite contented to look on at this performance, but her steed eventually smashed Mr Battley's gate, much to his manservant's chagrin. One gentleman, who had been complaining of thirst, was seen lying, horse and all, full stretch in a shallow swamp lake. Another's horse began to buck just after he had come over a jump, which placed the rider neatly on Mother Earth just ahead of the horse. Another gentleman rider lost his seat and was seen hanging on by the horse's ears, but he cleverly managed somehow to regain his seat. Another rider's horse when descending Mount Albert tripped, and they both went rolling down much quicker than they wanted, but happily both got up unhurt, looking very pleased after their little adventure. I could tell you many more amusing incidents, but I have neither space nor time to spare. Amongst those present were Mrs Willie Bloomfield, Misses Buckland (two), Percival, Ware, Bull, Kerr-Taylor, Colonel Dawson, Captain Noakes, and several officers from H.M. ships now in harbour, Mr Wells (from H.M.S. 'Goldfisch') being one of our most enthusiastic followers, Messrs Pollock, Harrison, Hyde, Kinlock, Rae, Gordon, Seccombe, Kerr-Taylor, and many others whose names I did not know. Miss Percival followed in her little trap as far as it was possible.

The Pakuranga Hounds met last Saturday at Mr J. E. Taylor's, Mangere, where two drags were laid, but were very short, taking about five minutes to run each. The whole field of followers, including a dozen ladies, were seen in the train. Our huntsman, who objects to drags, did not follow. Mr and Mrs J. Taylor, with great hospitality, kindly invited the members and their friends to their house to partake of afternoon tea. Amongst those