

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

By DANVERS HAMBER.

CYCLING.

A PHENOMENAL RIDE.

Seven years ago, when Charles M. Murphy, the American cyclist, first mentioned his idea of riding a mile in a minute, he was looked upon as one completely bereft of his senses. To the ordinary mind the task appeared beyond the power of man, while even the most enthusiastic Yankee wheelmen laughed at Murphy's determination. However, the cyclist triumphed in the end, for after seven year's cogitation, scheming and practice, he succeeded in riding a mile in 57 4-5ths seconds. The very thought of the terrific pace is enough to make one shudder, and I am not surprised that Mr. James Sullivan, the Secretary of the New York Amateur Athletic Association, who acted as referee, found a few grey hairs in his head after Murphy had finished his wonderful, yet foolhardy, journey. The place selected for the ride was an abandoned stretch of railroad near Maywood, on the Long Island Railway. Murphy's track was made of five 10in. planks laid between the rails, and he rode within a sort of waggon cover, built out from the tender of the engine that made the pace, while every precaution was taken to prevent the wind from underneath the engine striking him. Necessarily the arrangements were absolutely perfect, or the daring fellow could not have lived through the horrible ordeal. For the first few hundred yards after starting

Murphy held on to a rail projecting from the tender, but with full steam up he let go, and his times were, quarter 15secs, half 29 2-5ths secs, three-quarters 44secs, and the full mile 57 4-5ths secs. The four quarter miles were timed, first 15 secs, second 14 2-5ths secs, third 14 3-5ths, and the last 13 4-5ths secs. There can be no doubt about the correctness of the time, for several expert clockers of high reputation, were on duty, and their times were confirmed by Mr. Sullivan. Phenomenal as Murphy's ride undoubtedly is, it can serve no useful purpose. It is far from likely that he will find any other man ready to attempt to lower his record, and he would not try the feat again if he were offered £5000. He has realised his dream after seven years' anxiety, and, by this time, is probably on the high road to fortune, for he was inundated with highly remunerative offers from theatrical and exhibition managers after the successful issue of his hazardous undertaking. It is probable that Charles M. Murphy will go down to posterity as the only man who drove a bicycle one mile in less than a minute. For the sake of humanity, and also for the sake of the sport, it is to be hoped that no other cyclist will endeavour to compass the feat so miraculously performed by Murphy. It was daring, and it was desperate, for the odds against a man living through such a ride were tremendous.

CRICKET.

The English cricket season, which as I write, is in its last week, has been an extraordinarily successful one from a run getting point of view. The king of batsmen, Prince Ranjitsinhji, has already exceeded all previous records in scoring 3000 runs in first

class cricket during the season. As the Indian Prince plays in a few more matches yet, he will probably make his record one for all time. In 1871, Dr. W. G. Grace, then perhaps at his highest standard of excellence, made 2789 runs. His aggregate