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The London correspondent of a conten-
porary writes: "Many of our local cyc-
ling enthusiasts will remember the young
Italian, Porta, who spent seven years in
Australia and New Zealand as a profes-
sional cyclist. He is now living in Pied-
mont, North Italy, and has recently been
engaged as 'interpreter' to some English
and colonial mining engineers in that dis-
trict." When he arrived in Australia with
Bill Martin he could not speak a word of
English.

Before the advent of the pneumatic tire
one of the troubles that constantly wor-
ried the tourist was the breakage of
spokes. Nowadays this occurs so rarely
that the matter is never considered. It is
only through accident that the wheels are
damaged in this respect, when the means
of repairs are most simple. In the early
days, when the spokes were screwed in the
hub, there usually was trouble, owing to
their being broken off short just outside
the hub, the cause not infrequently being
the deep cutting of the screw-thread. To-
day the hubs are made very differently.
The flat flanges allow of being pierced,
through which are passed the butt-ended
spokes, the tension being effected by nip-
ples (previously passed through the rim),
screwing on to the ends.

Henri Contenet, of Paris, who towards
the end of last season surprised the cyc-
ling public by riding the remarkable dis-
tance of 48 miles 718 yards in the hour,
looks like carrying all before him in mid-
dle distance contests this year. His re-
cord so far is an exceedingly good one,
having met and defeated such well-known
pacer specialists as J. Nelson, J. Michael,
E. Bouhours, T. Linton, T. Hall, J. Gou-
goltz, Dussot, and Dangla; in fact, out of
the eight races he has competed in he has
won seven, and lost the eighth through a
puncture. It, therefore, looks as if Con-
tenet will be the first rider to cover the
coveted fifty miles in the hour. His con-
sistent riding is, no doubt, due to the
careful and regular way of living all the
year round, and continual practice (twice
every day), behind his faithful pacer. He
first came into prominence last year, after
Tom Linton met with his bad smash up
at Leipsic, Contenet then securing Marius
Thos as pacemaker, and since that time
(August) he has gradually worked his way
to the top of the tree. He is 27 years of
age, very unassuming, married, and a po-
pular favourite wherever he goes.

The League of New South Wales Wheel-
men seem to be anything but a happy
family, and a regular battle royal has
been proceeding. At the Council meeting
of the League Mr Branagan, who was late-
ly deposed by the Council from the posi-
tion of secretary because he disagreed with
the members as to the heavy charge made
for services rendered in timing, etc., a
race against the record, was cited to ap-
pear before the Council to show cause why
he should not be dealt with under Rule 23
—"The Council shall have power to fine,
suspend, or expel any member guilty of

conduct detrimental to the interests of the
League." He did not attend, but the
Council dealt with him in his absence, and
decided to expel him as a member of the
League. Mr Austin (treasurer) was in-
structed to take legal proceedings for the
recovery of all books and papers of the
League.

Mr Branagan was by no means disposed
to quietly submit to the indignity offered,
and called a general meeting of the Le-
ague, at which over one hundred were pre-
sent.

The point was at once raised by mem-
bers of the Council that the meeting was
illegal (says "The Referee") not being
called by requisition through the Council
and being brought together by Mr Bran-
agan, whom the Council had deposed.

The chairman (several having refused to
act in that capacity) ruled that the meet-
ing was in order. The members of the
Council and their supporters, and forty
altogether retired from the meeting. To
the seventy who remained behind, Mr
Branagan read letters from Narrandera,
Armidale, Glen Innes, Eskbank, Lithgow,
Gunnedah, and Braidwood Clubs, con-
demning the Council re the removal of the
secretary (who was elected by the whole
of the members of the State), and the ac-
tion which brought on the abandonment of
the Goulburn road race.

After a little discussion, during which
Mr J. Craig, vice-president of the Tam-
worth Club, and Mr Sullivan, who spoke
for Wagga, Junee, and Coolamon Clubs,
condemned the Council, Mr Remfrey (Aus-
tralian Club, Sydney) moved, and Mr E.
Wells (president Newcastle Club) seconded:
"That, in view of the recent unconstitu-
tional action of the Council in reference to
the secretaryship of the League, the Coun-
cil does not retain the confidence of the
members." The motion was carried un-
animously, the scrutineers announcing the
number of voters as sixty-five. Meanwhile
the Council and their following were hold-
ing another meeting dealing with the new
Constitution. The Branagan meeting now
joined them.

Mr Remfrey suggested that instead of
adopting a new Constitution, the League
go back to the initial one, under which it
had enjoyed so much prosperity.

Subsequently, after some disorder and a
declaration by a country member that his
club was utterly disgusted with the doings
of the Council, Mr Yates (Lithgow) mov-
ed, and Mr Remfrey seconded, and it was
carried by a large majority, "That the
proposed new Constitution be no longer
debated or considered."

The meeting then broke up.

The London General Omnibus Company
has just acquired a specially-designed
motor omnibus, of American make, which
is expected to be running in a few weeks.
If the experiment proves satisfactory the
company is prepared, it is said, to substi-
tute mechanically-propelled vehicles for the
whole of the present horse-drawn stage
coaches, and, as about 1500 will be requir-
ed, there is some fine business in prospect
for the car-builders." The article then
goes on to show that the advantages of
the change will be manifold. The motor
takes up less room per passenger carried
than the present horse-drawn vehicles; it
will keep the streets cleaner, and the air
less noisome. An opinion is also given
that "the introduction of the motors
ought to put a check upon the growth of
tramways, which, however well laid, are a
constant source of danger and inconveni-
ence to all other users of the roads."



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