

THE WHEELING WORLD

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THE WHEELING WORLD.

A WEEKLY SURVEY.

Dick Turpin's Cycling Gossip.

The Beauties of Devon.

EST my readers detect a lack of acquaintance with local happenings in the world of wheels, let me at once make open confession that I am Gossiping at a disadvantage. Seated, as I am, upon a comfortable lump of rock, watching the noisy Lyn romp through Lynmouth into the sea, tidings of the Excelsior boys are at a premium. I tender them my kind regards, and wish they were here!

Some days ago, when the Commodore and I left Taunton, we dreamed not of the mighty hills which awaited us. Through little, old-fashioned Wellington, whence the Iron Duke's title was taken; then came Sampford Peverell, our first Devon village.

We voted it good, and went on to Tiverton, a hilly, interesting little town, crowned with a handsome Church. A massive tower and some lavish carving give the edifice a commanding appearance.

We also noticed the "worthy Grammar School" which in "Lorna Doone" is said to be Tiverton's chief boast, after its woollen industry. But the Commodore, who is an epicure, remembers the place best for a very poem of an apple tart which figured in our midday menu there!

Northwards, up the Exe valley, a ride more or less uphill, past fragrant orchards and rich pasture land, through fine scenery, we made our way.

Apples and Blackberries.

Twenty-two miles of this landed us on high ground, whence we descended—free-wheeling for the most part—to dugy, historic Danster. A curious market cross, a Castle which has seen trouble, and a hotel which was once an ecclesiastical building, give the huddled-up village an air of importance.

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On to Minehead, and the evening found us renewing our acquaintance with the sea. Next day we turned westwards through Porlock, where we ascended the steepest hill we had encountered.

Up past orchards where apple trees must have been troubled to cling to the steep hillsides! Up past blackberries of majestic proportions, which failed to tempt the youth of Porlock to scramble after.

Up still, over open country, our road bounded by loose stone walls, our view extended over rolling hills, away into white veiling mists through which faintly loomed more hills.

Presently we reached a point where the road branched to the right for Oare. The Irrepressible had given the tip, among others, to choose this way to Lynmouth. And right glad were we in less than five minutes from acting on the tip.

The Gay Streamlet.

A sharp descent, and we were on a rough stone bridge spanning the Oare. Then we continued along an easy valley in company with the noisy streamlet. Another quaint old bridge—it was a mere jumble of apparently loose stones—and we were at Malmesmead, busily discussing a real Devonshire tea.

The Commodore placed the Lorna Doone Farm at Malmesmead on a level with Tiverton. Directly he had concluded the discussion I made a vow—breaking it shortly after—that I would waste no more time on even the most luscious blackberries!

The Oare valley charmed us; amid great hills, some grassgrown, while others loom darkly and show little but weather-worn rock, leaps and sings the little Oare water.

In its way lie masses of rough stone of all shapes and sizes; but the Oare cares not a rap. The more its troubles, the louder its song; the bigger the rocks, the gayer its dance.

So the Commodore and I went along with the Oare through Brendon and on to Watersmeet.

So the Commodore and I went along with the Oare, through Brendon and on to Watersmeet. Here we joined the river Lyn, making, as it were, a party—two rivers and two wheelmen.

And down the Lyn valley went we together, the wheelmen less noisy but equally as happy as the laughing waters.

Romping and Rollicking Lyn!

Free-wheeling mile after mile along a road which winds in and out through a grand, impressive valley. On either hand immense green hills; ahead of us, the way continually unfolding as every turn shows yet another hill away in front; behind us the view back up the valley steadily closing. And below, on our right, romps and rollicks t'is River Lyn.

So came we into Lynmouth; we had enjoyed the finest day's cycling of our lives. True, much of it was walking uphill; most of the remainder was free-wheeling down again, for level roads are few. But the scenery far more than repaid us for all our toil.

We are likely to stop at Lynmouth a few days. It is a charming little place, and a handy centre for finding scenery.

Its sea front, harbour, beacon, tower, and headland are interesting features. Moreover, there are only two Police Officers in Lynmouth and Lynton; we are told the Police Court is a rarity which comes but once a month!

The Commodore and I are agreed that this gives the place an air of freedom: we can do what we please without question. Only two policemen! Yes, we shall stay awhile at Lynmouth!

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