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Less than one hundred years ago, however, it presented a very different aspect to what it does at the present time ; and even in my own recollection, things were very different indeed to what they are this day. But long previous to even that early period, *roads of a kind* were admittedly an absolute necessity for the very existence of the inhabitants, commercial or agricultural. These so-called roads were probably looked upon at the time of their inception as models of constructive genius, and adaptable for all purposes. They were, however, simply execrable, even much later ; and I can well remember, when I was a boy, of the demure look and remonstrative eloquence of a coachman, when informed that the carriage would be required to drive for four or five miles over them and back again. Our ancestors were much in the right to make their wills before encountering the perils of a ride across the moors, which were numerous ; indeed, I have heard my own father say that such a proceeding was recommendable, when one was about to travel from Edinburgh to York ! From the former to London was proportionally more difficult and dangerous, and took well on for a week to perform.* But about the year 1815 a better state of affairs began to dawn ; and through the efforts of Telford and Macadam the art of road making upon scientific principles was about to revolutionise the whole system of communication, and to bring the most distant parts of the island into ready intercourse, by means of roads of unrivalled excellence. In a great degree, the principle Macadam followed for his construction, was precisely that of the Romans, the solid basements of whose structures may still be seen in many parts of Great Britain after a lapse of eighteen centuries.

A little egotistical digression will perhaps be pardoned, when I state that I feel a sort of title to expatiate upon Macadamized roads, as it so happened that some fifty or fifty-five years ago, a very near relative of mine, in consequence of his liberal and enthusiastic support of these constructions in Perthshire, went by the soubriquet of "The Colossus of Rhodes ;" and my own father was his industrious and enterprising colleague. Both spent large sums out of their private means, of which the country generally derived far more advantage than they did individually ; but the country prospered as it never had before ; and has gone on prospering ever since.

In those by-gone days which I speak of, and to some extent remember, the easiest, safest, and in every way the best means of locomotion was either to use "Shanks's mare," or to straddle the back of a Shetland pony.

Mr. Smiles says about the state of Scotland, towards the close of the 18th century,— "We found a country without roads, fields lying uncultiva-

* Besides the dangers incident to ordinary travel, there were about this time the gentlemen of the road to encounter sometimes, who were not celebrated as being over-scrupulous in regard to the laws of *meum* and *tuum*. There is, or was once, an amusing print, dated about the year 1769, in which the driver of an English stage coach is represented in the armed guise of Sir Hudibras. He carries a horse-pistol in his belt, and a *couteau de chasse* slung over his shoulder, while the guard is accoutred with no less than three pistols and a basket-hilted sword, besides having a carbine strapped to his seat behind the coach. One of the "insides," an ancient gentleman in a Ramlies wig, is seen through the capacious window of the coach affectionately hugging a carbine ; and a yeoman on the roof is at once caressing a bull-dog, and supporting a bludgeon that might have served for Dandie Dinmont himself.