

CYCLING

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A Summer's Cycling Reminiscence.

THE STORY OF A THREE MONTHS' BICYCLING
TOUR THROUGH EUROPE, AND AN ACCOUNT
OF SOME OF THE IMPRESSIONS
RECEIVED.

BY ONE OF THE PARTY.—VII.

When the penetrating rays of the bright morning sun awoke us to consciousness we felt just the same way every cyclist does who has been employing three weeks in abject idleness, and then mounts a wheel and rides till he is in that condition that a man finds himself when he accepts the invitation of a country friend, and spends his vacation on the farm, and is initiated by his host into the mysteries of the modern barn raising bee, or some energetic physical recreation of a similar nature. We were rather—well, we felt slightly stiff, and none of us appeared to be in any hurry to finish our breakfast and desert the entertaining proprietor of the Royal Hotel. The prospective delights of Melrose Abbey and Abbotsford were sufficient inducements to get us a-wheel again about ten o'clock, and we very soon were told by the friendly finger posts, which exist at almost every cross-road in Great Britain, that we were nearing Melrose, that sublime old ruin which now is but the semblance of what was once a mighty church. The 17th of June, the day we were there, was a glorious one, and as we entered the gate which protects the entrance to the ground, and saw the sunlight casting its beams through the roofless ruin, we could imagine something of the inspiration which prompted Sir Walter Scott to immortalize this creation of the twelfth century. We occupied a great deal of the morning listening to our old guide, who had the legends of King David, Edward II. and Robert of Bruce learned to perfection. The Abbey was destroyed at the time of the Reformation, and for some years was not taken care of; this in a measure explains its present dilapidated condition. We were able to obtain some splendid views with our Kodaks, one of which consisted of the party ranged around the tomb of Michael Scott, the wizard; he was such a naughty old man

in his day and generation we did not consider ourselves desecrating any memories of the past in so doing. A beautiful sight in comparison with the old ruins, monuments and inscriptions to the dead within, were the beautiful roses which, permeated with the beauty and fragrance of life, entirely covered the outer wall of the Abbey.

After paying our respects to the proprietor of the adjacent hostelry we mounted our wheels and started for Sir Walter Scott's old home. Langley, in the goodness of his heart, intuitively feeling that we required some mild incentive to merriment, took a header at this juncture, and in his frantic endeavor to avoid closer relationship with the little wheel of his machine served to make the other "ordinary" rider wish that his choice had been a "dwarf," and the propeller of the Safety to experience the feeling that notwithstanding his lack of progressiveness when a hill was met with the little bike was still the more sensible selection. By the time these ideas had made a lasting impression in our largely developed receptacle used for the retention of brilliant thoughts, we were skimming along over the hard gravel road, girded by high green hedges, over which we could just see the fields beyond. The distance to the old home of the "great enchanter of the North" is but three miles from Melrose, so we had soon deposited our wheels with the keeper at the gate, inscribed our names in the visitors' book, which, by the way, is an interesting volume to peruse, and gained admittance to the interior of Abbotsford by payment of the ever necessary shilling. Our guide first took us to the Armory, where we were shown various wonderfully constructed munitions of war; the sight of which made us rather content with nineteenth century existence. The most interesting room of the house is the one into which we were next shown—the library; here we saw the chair used by Sir Walter, the desk he wrote at, and his collection of books, numbering about 20,000 volumes. The drawing room, adjoining the library, the windows of which overlook the Tweed, is a most magnificent chamber, filled with the tokens of affection borne for Sir Walter by the people of his day and gener-