The London & North-Western Railway

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ON THE SEVERN, NEAR ARLEY, SHROPSHIRE.

The London and North Western Railway passes through much of the beautiful country watered by the upper course of the Severn.
PEEPS AT GREAT RAILWAYS

THE LONDON & NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY

BY

GEORGE EYRE-TODD

CONTAINING EIGHT FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR AND 23 SMALL SKETCHES IN THE TEXT

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1911
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GREAT RAILWAYS
THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN

CHAPTER I
WHAT THE IRON HORSE HAS DONE

In the days of our grandfathers, when the railways were being made, many people said they would destroy the charm and romance of the country. The iron bridges, it was said, and the great cuttings and embankments, would be scars upon the landscape; the engines, with their smoke and noise, would destroy the peace of quiet places, and the crowds of trippers carried everywhere would make the country even less pleasant to live in than the town. We know now that these
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were needless fears. Instead of spoiling the appearance of the country, the railway to-day forms one of its most interesting features. The sight of a train threading its way among the Cumberland fells or along a Scottish mountain-side adds just the needed life and contrast to the scene. No one thinks of smoke and noise as he sees the magnificent corridor expresses sweeping through the shires. And as for the crowds of trippers, they have chosen their own resorts by the seashore, and prefer to leave the quiet places in the country severely alone. As the dalesman or the Highlander sees the tiny white plume of steam running far among the hills, it seems to him now as natural a feature of the countryside as the cottage smoking by the lake shore or the waterfall singing in the corrie.

At the same time there can be no question of the immense service done by the railways in a thousand ways. Very little of the business of the country could be carried on—the loading of great ships and the feeding of vast cities—if the world had to depend to-day on the slow horse-haulage of a hundred years ago. The moment a great sea-liner comes in, say, to Liverpool, long trains begin to run from it, loaded with bales of cotton and sacks of corn, to be made into clothing and bread for the people, and at the same time other trains begin running from the manufacturing towns—Sheffield and Birmingham, Bradford and London—carrying the goods with which the vessel is to be loaded for her outward voyage again. At
What the Iron Horse has Done

the great fishing-ports, too, as far north as Aberdeen, it is a wonderful sight, as the deep-sea trawlers and herring-drifters come in by hundreds after the night's catch, to see the swift fish-trains loading up and setting off at express speed to carry the precious food-supply to London and other hungry places. Of the thousands of foundries and factories, forges and mills, throughout the country, by which the people earn their bread, very few could exist at all were it not for the railways that bring them the coal and iron and other material they require, and that carry away the goods they make to markets where they can be used or sold. Hundreds of thousands of people, again, are enabled by the railways to carry on their business in the cities, and yet to live and rear their families far in the quiet country, amid sunshine and flowers and whispering trees. Thus the health of the nation is very directly improved by the help of the "iron horse."

Then, besides all these practical services, there is the pleasure that railways have brought into our life to-day. It would be impossible to reckon up how much we owe to the easy means of getting about from place to place which the railways provide. It is difficult now to imagine the time when London people went to Putney or Greenwich for their summer holiday. Every year the vogue is to go farther and farther afield, and every year it is more possible to do so. Wild Wales, or the Cumberland lakes, or the purple moors and scented glens and sylvan loch-sides
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of bonnie Scotland—all these are nowadays within easy reach of the summer holiday-maker, and to each of them every year flows a great tide of seekers of enjoyment and seekers of health.

The railway journey itself, on one of the great main lines like the West Coast Route between London, Wales, and Scotland, is a pleasure to be remembered. The solidly built carriages of the splendid corridor trains sweep along as smoothly as a yacht on a summer sea. Through their broad glass sides, as one looks up from one’s book, there is to be seen an endless panorama of surpassing interest—wood and water, mansion and town. There are all the comforts of a first-class hotel on board. And during a summer day’s journey one may gather impressions of places as different as Bosworth battlefield and Gretna Green, Carlisle citadel and Oban Bay, without more effort than if one had spent the time in a well-cushioned arm-chair at home.

CHAPTER II

ROMAN ROAD AND ROMAN TOWN

Few people think, when they read of the Roman invasion of Britain, that these wonderful people from