VARIOUS

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RUGBY SCHOOL

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On the eastern border of Warwickshire, about 13 miles from Coventry, and 16 from Warwick, stands the cheerful town of Rugby, a place of great antiquity, but of little note previous to the erection of a grammar-school there, towards the close of the sixteenth century. The circumstances under which this school was founded, and the rank it has attained among our classical seminaries, may probably be interesting to the reader.

Rugby School was founded in the ninth year of Elizabeth, by Lawrence Sheriff, grocer, of London, chiefly as a free grammar-school for the children of the parishes of Rugby and Brownsover,

and places adjacent. For the accommodation of the master, who was, "if it conveniently might be, to be ever a Master of Arts," he bequeathed a messuage at Rugby, in which it is probable he had himself resided during the last few years of his life, and he directed that there should be built, near this residence, a fair and convenient school-house, to defray which expense, and of a contiguous almshouse, he bequeathed the revenue of the rectory of Brownsover, and a third portion of twenty-four acres of land, situate in *Lamb's Conduit Fields*, "near London," and termed the Conduit Close. These eight acres were of trivial value at the period; and in 1653, the trustees of the property paid the schoolmaster a salary of 12*l*. a year, and each of the alms-men 7*s*. 7*d*. In 1686, the Lamb's Conduit property was leased for fifty years at 50*l*. per annum. The metropolis increased, and stretching one of its *Briareusian* arms in this direction, the once neglected field rose in value, and in 1702 (thirty-four years before the expiration of the above term) the trustees granted a fresh lease to William (afterwards Sir William) Milman, of forty-three years, to commence at the termination of the former lease. Building was not then a mania, and Sir William obtained his term for 60*l*. per annum; so that until the year 1780, the annual produce of the estate belonging to the Rugby charity, was only 116*l*. 17*s*. 6*d*.! But, shortly after the grant of an extended term to Sir W. Milman, handsome streets of family houses sprung up, and it was computed that a ground-rent of at least 1,600*l*. would accrue to the charity on the expiration of his lease. A much greater income

has, in fact, arisen, and the revenues will be materially increased on the termination of the present leases.

The flourishing finances of this noble institution are well managed by twelve trustees, chosen from the nobility and gentry of the country.[1]

The ancient buildings of the Rugby seminary were a humble tenement for the schoolmaster, a principal school-room, and two or three additional school-rooms, built at different times, as the finances would allow. These being found too limited, in 1808 the trustees commenced the erection of the present structure, from the designs of Mr. Henry Hakewill. It stands nearly on the same spot as the former humble building, and is composed of white brick, the angles, cornices, and dressings to the windows and openings being of Aldborough stone. The style of architecture is that of the reign of Elizabeth, the period at which the school was founded. The building is massy, august, and interesting from its graceful disposition of parts. The principal front is that represented in our engraving, which extends 220 feet.

The schools are entered by a gateway opposite the street, which leads to the principal court, a fine area, 90 feet long by 75 feet wide, with a plain cloister on the east, south, and west sides. The buildings on the south of the court comprise the dining hall, belonging to the boys in the head master's house, and three

[1] Their annual meeting is in August, when the examination takes place. Fourteen exhibitions have been instituted, each of the exhibitioners being allowed forty pounds per annum to assist in their support, for seven years, at either university.

schools for different classes; those on the west are occupied by the great school; and on the north are the French and writing schools. The east side adjoins the offices belonging to the head master's house. About sixty boys are accommodated here; the remainder lodge in the houses of the other masters, and in the town of Rugby.

Lawrence Sheriff, the benevolent founder of this institution, was born at Brownsover, whence he removed to London, where he kept a grocer's shop in Newgate-street. A more gratifying portrait of true beneficence than Sheriff's bequest can scarcely be found in British annals; and this gratification is greatly enhanced by the justice with which his intentions have been carried into effect at Rugby. The alms-houses were originally for four poor old men; but the dwellings have been augmented in proportion to the increased revenues.

CHOICE HINTS FOR A PLAN TO DISCHARGE THE NATIONAL DEBT

(For the Mirror.)

"Great events sometimes spring from trivial causes," of the truth of this adage, no man is, I think, so great a *heretic*, as to express any doubt—were such the case, it would be by no means difficult to conjure up a host of evidence, in support of our proposition; but, seeing that "such things are," let us at once to the point.

The present age is so rife in whims and proposals, that I am rather apprehensive, some may doubt the *feasibility* of the following. Nevertheless, it is, methinks, quite as good, as many others which recently were strangled, in struggling for existence.

In looking over some old pamphlets the other day, I met with the following "true and particular account" of Mr. Peter Pounce, Postmaster, of Petersham, and his horse, Prance.

Now, according to my author (of whose veracity I entreat the reader to use his own discretion) it seems this Mr. Pounce was an exceedingly good kind of man, and that his horse, Prance,

was also an exceedingly good kind of horse; moreover, when the postmaster travelled, he usually put up at the *George*, where there is exceeding good entertainment for both man and horse. Upon one occasion, being in great haste, Mr. Pounce directed the ostler not to put Prance into the stable, but to tie him to the brew-house door. Now, as cruel fate would have it, there was just within the nag's reach, a tub full of wine lees, which, luckless moment for him, (being thirsty) he unceremoniously quaffed off in a trice, without even *here's to you*.

The consequence was, Prance fell down dead drunk; nay, he acted death so much to the life, that his master, reckoning him absolutely defunct, had him flayed, and sold his skin to a tanner, who happened to be drinking in the alehouse kitchen. Mr. Pounce then walked in a solitary mood to his home, and communicated the melancholy affair to his good lady, who wept bitterly at Prance's untimely fate.

But leaving her to dry her eyes, we return to the nag—the weather being cold, he was by the loss of his skin, &c. quite sobered, and prudently trotted to his master's door, at which he whinnied with much clamour for admission.

Bless me, my dear, exclaims Mrs. P. our nag's ghost is at the door—I know him by his whinnies; upon which Mr. Pounce runs with alacrity to the door, and sure enough there he was—no ghost—but in propriâ personâ except his skin. In this exigence, the gentleman had four sheep killed forthwith, and covered the nag with a woollen garment. To make short of it, the horse rapidly

recovered, and bore two tods of wool every year.

From this narration it is proposed to embrace the manifest advantages which offer themselves for improving the woollen trade—that great staple of Britain's wealth, in manner following:—

First, then, let an accurate estimate be taken of the number of sheep annually slaughtered in these kingdoms.

Secondly.—Let proper officers be appointed to collect these skins into commodious warehouses.

Lastly.—That such a number of horses, mares, and geldings as the said skins will conveniently cover, be flayed (without fear of Mr. Martin!) and their backs forthwith enveloped in fleece.

By this arrangement the following benefits will arise to the government and community:—

1. Every horse whose hide was formerly only useful after death, will then afford an annual profit by producing two tods of wool yearly, without any loss to the tanner or shoemaker, who will still necessarily have as many hides as heretofore.

2. The health of that useful animal the horse, which is probably liable to more disorders than any other (the human species excepted) will be much better preserved by woollen than a hairy covering.

3. There will be little occasion for saddles, &c. as the fleece will afford a very easy seat, much softer than leather, and well adapted for ladies and invalids.

Lastly.—There will be an annual acquisition of about 40

millions sterling, from this novel mode of procedure, of which please to accept the following algebraical demonstration:—

Let x be the unknown quantity; a, the horses; b, the sheep; then per simple equations x, plus a, plus b, minus tods, plus sheepskins, equal one thousand—then minus sheep, plus horses, minus wool, plus tods, equal one million. Lastly, horses plus sheep, minus hides, plus fleeces, in all equal forty millions.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

There, reader, if you are still a sceptic, I cannot help it.
JACOBUS.

ANSWER OF THE LONDON STONE. [2]

(For the Mirror.)

Why hast thou mortal, on my slumber broken,
And dragged my struggling spirit back to earth?
Though "walls have ears," yet stones have never spoken.
Why am I made the object of thy mirth?
Why am I questioned thus to tell my fate,
And primal use? Yet hear—whilst I relate.

When time was young, and earth was in her prime,
Secure I slept within her spacious womb;
And ages passed—I took no heed of time,
Until some Druid burst my dismal tomb,
And dragged me forth amidst the haunts of man.
And then, indeed my life of woe began.

And ere great Caesar in triumphant pride,
Led on by conquest, bade Rome's eagles soar
To this fair isle; full many a victim died

[2] See *Ode to London Stone*. MIRROR, No. 357, p. 114.

Upon my breast, and I was drenched with gore:
For "midst the tangling horrors of the wood,"
I stood an altar, stained with human blood.

I've witnessed scenes, which I now dread to name,
I've seen the captive bound in wicker rods
Expire, midst shouts, to feed the sacred flame,
And glut the fury of offended gods;
Those days soon passed—the gospel's milder ray
Dispelled the gloom, and spread a brighter day.

Then superstition tottered on her throne,
And hid her head in shades of gloomy night;
Quenched were her fires—her impious fanes o'er thrown,
Her mists dispersed before the Prince of Light,
Then sank my grandeur; in some lonely spot
I slept for years unnoticed and forgot.

Until Vespasian, by Rome's stern command,
To quench rebellion in my native isle,
Brought his bold legions from a foreign strand,
Our land to torture, and our towers to spoil;
He hewed me in a fashion now unknown,
And dubbed me, what I am, "The London Stone."

From me, the miles by Britons once were counted,
Close to my side were monies lent and paid;
If princes died—some gaudy herald mounted
Upon my head, and proclamations read;

Till Gresham rose; who used me very ill,
He moved the place of commerce to Cornhill.

When reeling homewards from the tavern near,
Oft with prince Henry has old honest Jack
Sat on my breast, and I've been doomed to hear
Him talk of valour, and of unpaid sack;
And whilst he talked, the roysterers gave vent,
To peals of laughter and of merriment.

Yes, I'm the hone that "City's Lord" essayed,
To make the whetstone of his rebel sword;
On me, with mischief rife, rebellious Cade
Sat whilst he thought and dubbed himself a Lord;
And bade my conduit pipe for one whole year
At city's cost, run naught but claret clear.[3]

I could a tale of harrowing woes reveal,
Whilst York and Lancaster for mastery tried:
When men the ties of nature ceased to feel,
When sires beneath their offsprings' sabres died;
And sires 'gainst children clad themselves in arms,
And England mourned the din of war's alarms.

Yes, I beheld the beauteous virgin queen,
And all the dauntless heroes of her court;
Where danger threatened, 'midst the danger seen,
Bending their fearless way to Tilbury Fort;

[3] See Shakspeare's Henry VI., part 2, act 4, scene 6.

I heard the shouts of joy which Britons gave,
When th' Armada sank beneath the wave.

I mind, Augusta,[4] well that fatal day,
When to thy ports with dire contagion fraught.
The laden vessel[5] stemmed its gallant way.
And to thy sons the plague disastrous brought;
Quick through thy walls the foul infection spread,
And thou became the city of the dead.

Scarce ceased the plague—when to my aching sight
Appeared a scene of most terrific woe;
Around me burnt one monstrous blaze of light,
I warmed, and almost melted with its glow;
I burst the chains,[6] which bound me fast, asunder,
And now remain, to learned men a wonder.

And when the city from her ruins rose,
I soon was left deserted and forlorn;
A porters' bench was raised beneath my nose.
And I became the object of their scorn:
I've heard the rascals, with a vacant stare,

[4] The ancient name for London.

[5] The cause of the great plague in 1665, was ascribed to the importation of infected goods from Holland, where the plague had committed great ravages the preceding year.

[6] Stowe in his history describes the London Stone, "fixed in the ground very deep, fastened with bars of iron and otherwise, so strongly set that if carts do runne against it through negligence, the wheels be broken, and the stone itself unshaken."See No. 64 of the Mirror for an account of London Stone.

Ask, just like you, what business I had there?

Few years have passed, since I, by parish sages,
Was called a monstrous nuisance to the street,
And, though I'd borne the brunt of varying ages,
Was doomed for pavement 'neath the horses' feet,
Until a Maiden,[7] near to Sherborne Lane,
Saved me—and rescued London from that stain.

And now, vain mortal, I have told thee all,
My fate, my primal use, the what and which;
And though my struggling spirit owned thy salt,
Once more I'll slumber in my holy niche,
And "Britain's sun may set," what's that to me,
Since I, stone-blind and dumb, for aye will be.

J.E.

[7] When the church of St. Swithin was repaired in 1798, some of the parishioners declared the London Stone a nuisance which ought to be removed. Fortunately, one gentleman, Thomas Maiden, of Sherborne Laue, interfered and rescued it from annihilation, and caused it to be placed in its present situation.

HAVER BREAD

(To the Editor of the Mirror.)

A correspondent wishes to be informed of the definition of the word *avver*. In the 15th volume of the "Beauties of England and Wales," it is alluded to thus:—"This county (Westmoreland) being supposed unfavourable to the growth of wheat, black oats, called *haver*, and the species of barley called *bere*, or *bigg*, were the only grains it produced. Of the *haver*, bread was made, or the species of pottage called hasty pudding; this bread being made into thin unleavened cakes, and laid up in chests within the influence of the fire, has the quality of preserving its sweetness for several months; it is still in common use. The *bigg* was chiefly made into malt, and each family brewed its own ale; during the hay harvest the women drank a pleasant sharp beverage, made by infusing mint or sage buttermilk in whey, and hence called *whey-whig*. Wheaten bread was used on particular occasions; small loaves of it were given to persons invited to funerals, which they were expected "to take and eat" at home, in religious remembrance of their deceased neighbour; a custom, the prototype of which is evidently seen in the establishment of the eucharist, for in this county it still bears its *Saxon name*, *Arvel*

bread, from appull, *full of reverence*, meaning the holy bread used at the communion."

P.T.W.

THE SKETCH-BOOK

BATTLE OF QUATRE BRAS

Gray, as one of the party of dragoons who attended the Duke of Wellington, proceeded onward at a sharp pace through the marching columns, which his grace examined, with a close but quick glance, as he passed on, and after a march of seven leagues, came up with the Belgian troops under the Prince of Orange, who had been attacked and pushed back by the French. It was about seven o'clock; none of the British troops had yet arrived within some hours' march of the duke. The party of dragoons were ordered to remain in readiness for duty in a cornfield near the road, on a rising ground, which commanded a full view of the country in front, while the duke and his staff proceeded to the left.

The four biscuits which had been served out to each man at Brussels the night before, with some cold beef, and the contents of their canteen, helped to regale the dragoons after their long and rapid march, while the stout steeds that had borne them found a delightful repast in the high rye that waved under their noses. Here they beheld passing on the road beside them many wounded Belgians, and could see before them, at the distance of

a quarter of a mile, the French bayonets glistening over the high fields of corn, and hear distinctly the occasional discharges of musketry from tirailleurs. Gray's heart leaped with joy, and he thought no more of Brussels.

"What's this place called?" inquired one of the dragoons, generally of his comrades.

"Called!—Oh, some jaw-breaking Dutch name of a yard long, I suppose," replied another. "Ax Gentleman Gray—he'll tell you."

"Well, Mr. Gray, do you know the name of this here place?"

"I believe," replied Gray, "we are near a point called *Quatre Bras*, or the four roads."

"Well," rejoined the other, "if there were half-a-dozen roads, it wouldn't be too much for these here Flemingers—yon road's not wide enough for them, you see. Look, here's a regiment o' them coming back!"

"Ah! poor fellows—we might be in the same situation," observed Gray; "remember that their force is not strong in comparison with the French, by the accounts that have been received; better to fall back at the first of a fight than at the last."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.