RUGBY

TENNESSEE

BEING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SETTLEMENT FOUNDED
ON THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU

BY

THE BOARD OF AID TO LAND OWNERSHIP, LIMITED
A COMPANY INCORPORATED IN ENGLAND, AND AUTHORISED TO HOLD
AND DEAL IN LAND BY ACT OF THE LEGISLATURE OF
THE STATE OF TENNESSEE

BY

THOMAS HUGHES
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

WITH A REPORT ON THE SOILS OF THE PLATEAU

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COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE FOR THE STATE

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"There need be no hesitation in affirming that colonisation in the present state of the world is the very best affair of business in which the capital of an old and wealthy country can possibly engage."—John Stuart Mill.

"Is it possible that I, who get indefinite quantities of sugar, hominy, cotton, buckets, crockery ware, and letter paper, by simply signing my name once in three months to a cheque in favour of John Smith and Co., traders, get the fair share of exercise to my faculties by that act, which nature intended for me in making all these far-fetched matters important to my comfort? It is John Smith himself, and his carriers, and dealers, and manufacturers; it is the sailor, the hide-dresser, the butcher, the negro, the hunter, and the planter, who have intercepted the sugar of the sugar and the cotton of the cotton. They have got the education, I only the commodity. This were all very well if I were necessarily absent, being detained by work of my own, like theirs, work of the same faculties, then should I be sure of my hands and my feet; but now I feel some shame before my wood-chopper, my ploughman, and my cook, for they have some sort of self-sufficiency, they can contrive without my aid to bring the day and year round, but I depend on them, and have not earned by use a right to my arms and feet."—R. W. Emerson.
PREFACE.

This book is the best answer which the founders of Rugby, Tennessee, can at present make to the large and rapidly increasing number of questions which reach them from all parts of the United Kingdom about that settlement. These inquiries, speaking roughly, are addressed mainly to three points—(1) The class of persons for whom the place is intended; (2) What it is like; (3) Its prospects.

Part I. of the book deals with the first question; and I hope will sufficiently indicate the views of the founders. They will gladly welcome any persons who like to join them; but those whom they have specially in their minds are, young men of good education and small capital, the class which, of all others, is most overcrowded to-day in England. The experience of the past six months has proved that such an outlet—indeed that many such—are needed. It has also proved that, except in rare instances, the young men who go out are not able at once to earn their living, and that they should not be sent out under the age of eighteen at earliest. The Board strongly recommend that boys and young men should be placed, for a year at least, with one of the present settlers to
learn their business, which can be done at a cost of from £60 to £70 for the year's board, lodging, and teaching.

The letters to the *Spectator*, which form Part II., written on the spot last autumn (and reprinted by kind permission of the Editors), give my own first impressions of the site and surroundings, more accurately, I believe, than anything I could now write on the subject. They are printed without alteration, in order that they may remain, and be taken as, first impressions only. At the same time I may add that on going over the proofs I see scarcely anything which I should have to modify were I to sit down now to write them over again.

Part III., and especially Colonel Killebrew's report and the glossary, will enable readers to judge of the present condition and prospects of the settlement. Colonel Killebrew is the Minister of Agriculture of the State of Tennessee, and the highest authority on all matters connected with land in those parts.

The Board is glad to take this opportunity of thanking him for his valuable paper, which, coming from an entirely independent quarter, may be safely relied on as to the quality and capabilities of the soil on the plateau, in and around Rugby. They have always warned intending settlers that they will have to work hard, and with intelligence, in order to succeed in farming on the Cumberland plateau; and have stated their own conviction that such conditions are far better than those (if indeed they exist anywhere)
where settlers have only to scratch the soil to get heavy crops for any number of consecutive years. They are aware that more rapid returns may probably be looked for in other parts of the States, both in the west and to the south of Rugby, where the Alabama Southern Railway Company, through their English management, are offering great advantages to the same class of settlers for whom Rugby is intended. But there will be need of many more Rugbys before the present demand is adequately met; and, meantime, they are glad to find their own anticipations borne out, and to be able to recommend their settlement as one well fitted in all respects as a home for young Englishmen.

Readers who desire to pursue the matter further, and to watch the growth of Rugby, Tennessee, may do so by reading the monthly paper which the settlers are publishing, under the name of the Rugbeian, and which may be procured in this country.
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RUGBY—TENNESSEE.

PART I.—OUR WILL WIMBLES.

CHAPTER I.

THE GENTLEFOLK OF ENGLAND.

A CENTURY and a half ago, more or less, the Spectator, looking round with that keen sympathetic eye of his on English life, was much exercised in his mind by the phenomenon which confronted him in the person of that handy and genial friend of Sir Roger de Coverley, Will Wimble. Now Will, as I trust almost every reader remembers, was one of the deftest of the English race in those early Georgian days. He was not only the best man at hunting a pack of hounds, or catching a fish, in the county, but was “versed in all the handicrafts of an idle man.” He wove nets, trained “setting dogs,” tied mayflies “to a miracle,” and furnished the whole countryside with “angle-rods of his own make.” He would even now and then present a pair of garters of his own knitting to the mothers or daughters of the young squires, of whom he was the chosen companion.

Sitting in his room at night, after their first meeting, the Spectator could not help feeling a secret touch
of compassion towards this honest gentleman, and much concern how so good an heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. Will had been tried, it seems, by his parents at divinity, law, or physic, who, when they found his genius did not lie that way, had given him up at length to his own inventions. This kind of humour, on the part of the aristocracy, moralised the Spectator, was filling several parts of Europe with pride and beggary, wherever they would rather see their children starve like gentlemen than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath them.

Addison, indeed, seemed to think that in England this silly and mischievous prejudice was dying out, and that the rising generation of Will Wimbles were likely to be put to some kind of trade, when they showed themselves clearly unfit for a learned profession, without losing caste. If it were so the change worked very slowly, for the traces of "this kind of humour" were quite apparent a quarter of a century ago, even if they have wholly disappeared to-day. Probably the great increase of the standing army and navy, and the conquests in India in the latter half of the last and the first half of the present centuries, which opened careers for so many Will Wimbles, may account for the slow progress of a reform, which in a great nation of traders, such as the England of that period became, might have been expected to march quickly. At any rate, the "silly humour" has at last been buried. There are to-day few gentlefolk left in England who would not gladly see a son of theirs turn his hand to any trade
or employment under the sun by which he can fairly hope to earn an honest livelihood.

Nevertheless, and in spite of this new attitude of the English landed gentry, there can be no sort of doubt that the Will Wimbles amongst them have largely increased, and at a rate far more than in proportion to the increase of the class itself. Go through any English county and you will scarcely find a family which does not own one or more cadets, of fair average abilities, good character (the downright scapegraces having decidedly diminished), and strong bodies, who are entirely at a loose end, not knowing what in the world to turn their hands to. At the same time, the need of finding something to which they can turn their hands gets more pressing. For it is clear enough that the ordinary younger son's yearly allowance of £150 or £200 out of the family estate, upon which so many of them were wont to vegetate, will no longer be forthcoming, and that such boys will have to consider themselves lucky if they get a public-school education, and at the end of it are left to fight their own battle, with the help of an occasional £50 or £100 note from home at critical times.

So far we have only been thinking of the Will Wimbles who troubled the Spectator—boys of gentle birth and bringing up, the sons of the squirearchy for the most part, with no taste or capacity for study, but full of various energies and tastes which were intended to be useful to their fellow-creatures. But in our time the problem has grown in dimensions. A large class has arisen, far exceeding that of the landed gentry in numbers, whose sons are brought up essentially in the same manner as their
sons, if not with precisely the same surroundings. The sons of professional men, manufacturers, merchants, go nowadays to the same schools, and acquire the same habits and notions, as the sons of the landed gentry. It may safely be said that in our time of change, when the old order gives place to the new so noiselessly, yet so swiftly, there are few more striking, and, in one aspect, more encouraging facts than this vast increase of public schools in England during the last half-century. Fifty years ago some six or seven of these were educating little more than 2000 boys, on the old lines, which they had inherited from Tudor times. To-day, what with such new foundations as Marlborough, Haileybury, Radley, Wellington, Dulwich, Clifton; and the best of the old grammar schools which have started into new life; there are upwards of forty engaged on the same work of training what may be roughly called the young gentlefolk of this country. And, happily, the aims and methods of the education they are giving have improved as rapidly as the numbers requiring it have increased; till, in the best of our schools, where extravagance is sternly controlled, and simple habits are encouraged, little remains to be wished for. Our boys, up to the age of eighteen or nineteen, have as good a chance of getting high culture, both for mind and body, as any that can be had now, or, I believe, ever could have been had, in any part of the world.

But what then? Thousands of them leave our public schools every year, and have to turn to such methods of getting a living, and to such portions of the work of the world, as they find open to them.

Now, whether it be our British incapacity for getting