

NORTHAMPTON HERALD

(for the Northampton Herald).

LINES

On the altered state of Rugby, in consequence of the Railway Station and terminus there. Written on returning home from a visit to a friend residing in that town, by "An Old Rugboean."

I knew thee once, fair Rugby, calm and peaceful was thy state. Thy walks no other thoughts but verse and prose could then create.
When I within thy classic walls my classic course began; when now I visit thee I scarce can think myself a man;

For boyish thoughts, and boyish scenes, and boyish faces too. Or those I mean who once were boys, come frequent to my view; All now is chang'd;-it seems as if another generation Had turn'd things topsy-turvy, in their love of alteration.

Now coachmen with their four in hand go rattling o'er thy pavement;
Up jumps the cobbler, tailor, barber,-all in wild amazement; To witness sights and raree-shows unseen by them before. Nought scareth them,-nor din, nor dust,-but makes them stare the more.

Now busses,* cabs, and luggage-vans speed by all directions, Methinks thy streets, to suit their pace, want various corrections;
Thy corners, and thy cross-ways, seem to threaten a contusion, The blockheads that contriv'd thy streets ne'er dreamt of such confusion.

In former years I pae'd thy streets with book in hand before me, And nought disturb'd that train of thought which then and there came o'er me;
But now whoever visits thee must have his wits about him,
Or book and cane, and hat and glove will scud away without him.

A few weeks back I walk'd to see the station down the hill* On the road that leads to Newbold, very near to Rugby-mill, Thy inmates all assembl'd round the copper-boiling hissing; It made us think of tea, but ah! the butter'd toast was missing.

It seem'd that afternoon-at least-most surely to my thinking, The counties *round had met to have a glorious tea-drinking, To celebrate some great exploit, or other fete champetre Tho' tea and turn-out scarce accord with John Bull's merry nature.

There gig, and dog-car, caravan, and carride, and tandem, Were rang'd in rows along the field, or driven there at random, There country-bumpkins met and said, they never could expect To see before their nose such proofs of "march of intellect."

It oft had been predicted that they'd travel on the spout Of kettle, made by tinker, or perchance by tinker's scout.

But now they said they could not doubt the day they'd live to see.
When they'd travel thus, impell'd by steam, right merry, blithe and free.

So now they had a mind, nem con, to celebrate the day
In libations and potations, 'mid a regiment of clay;*

They toasted steam and engineers, and said, "dear-heart-alive
To think that such a train from steam such speed should e'er
derive."

They talk'd of iron-boilers, copper saucepans, and balloons, And wonder'd that
their fathers were such asses and baboons. As not to know the use of steam, when
thus they might have tried it,
If they'd put their hand before their kettle, sure they would have spied it.

And all the lads and lasses there were overjoy'd together.
And jokes were pass'd, and hearts they seem'd as light as any
feather:
"Hark! how the steam coughs," says one; "he's hoarse," replies another;
"No wonder sure" rejoin'd a third, "he caught it of his mother"

And so each nimcompoony there most witty tried to be,
For holidays were scare with them, and scarce their repartee;
Their Sunday clothes with buttons gilt were glitt'ring in the
sun,
And each his brains did puzzle hard to make the greatest fun.

I too was pleas'd full well to see such art and skill combin'd; No sights delight me
more than such results of dext'rous mind; I thought of Newton, Bacon, Locke, who
liv'd in days of yore. But rhymes grow scarce-the rest you'll guess,-so I will write no
more.

*Omnibuses.

*On the day of the opening of the Railway when the carriages
first began to run. *Tobacco pipes.