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THE RUGBEIAN, AND DISTRICT REPORTER.

RUGBY, MORGAN CO., TENN.,
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THE HUGHES PUBLIC LIBRARY, RUGBY.

HUGHES PUBLIC LIBRARY, OPENING DAY.

The origin of the Hughes Public Library was just two years ago. Before Mr. Thomas Hughes' return to England, after he had formally opened the Rugby settlement on behalf of the Board of Aid, on October 5th, 1880, he visited Boston, and while there was entertained at a breakfast given by the publishing house of Houghton, Mifflin and Co. All the principal publishing firms of the country were represented, and Mr. Dana Estes, of Boston, announced a plan he had conceived of establishing in Rugby, a free public library, "as a token of respect for Thomas Hughes." The proposition was well received, and at once acted upon by the publishers of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, subscribing together about six thousand volumes, and suggesting "to the authorities of the town that it (the library) should be named the 'Hughes Public Library.'"

At a meeting of the colonists at Rugby the gift was gratefully accepted, and a committee formed to take immediate steps for the carrying out of the proposed plans. Promises of support in the way of books and documents came in freely from many States, and the Public Library at Chicago, in remembrance of Mr. Hughes' efforts to restore their library after the fire, directed their librarian, Mr. Poole, to supply the vacancies in the catalogue of the Rugby library, furnishing books not already contributed.

The foundation stone was laid by Mrs. Hughes on the 5th of June last. Since then the books from the various publishers have been received, and Mr. Bertz, the librarian, has been very busy preparing a preliminary catalogue, and otherwise arranging, with the Committee, all that was necessary to complete the work for opening day.

Although the building is but small, the inside room is spacious, and appears to be amply sufficient for its purpose. The walls are filled with shelves; and with convenient tables and other necessary accessories, the room is very complete, and presents a neat and bijou

appearance. As one stands in the centre, surrounded by the six thousand gaily backed volumes, and looks out upon the immediate forest scene, with the unbroken ground of past ages in every direction, the reflection is that Rugby possesses at an early stage in its history, a collection of books that would indeed have made Dominic Sampson raise both arms, and exclaim "Pro-digious!"

The building is pretty faithfully represented in our engraving, and, it will be seen, portrays an interesting and attractive feature to the visitor arriving in the town, at the entrance to which it stands. The library is, in truth, a most appropriate and graceful tribute and "token of respect for Thomas Hughes," from the publishing world of the United States, and is a boon to Rugby of no common kind, and one of inestimable value.

The contractor was the late Mr. Winkley, but at his death, the work was continued and successfully completed by Mrs. Winkley, with the management of Mr. F. Taylor, builder, of Newbury Road, Rugby. The total cost has been about \$2,013.47.

On Thursday, Oct. 5th, the Library Trustees were sufficiently advanced in their work to call together their friends and neighbors in celebration of opening day. By three o'clock in the afternoon the building was comfortably filled by residents and neighbors of Rugby, and justly noticeable among all were Mrs. Hughes and Mr. W. Hastings Hughes, ably representing, in the much regretted absence of Mr. Thomas Hughes, the benevolent and excellent gentleman whose name the library bears, and in whose honor it was conceived and carried to its great success.

Mr. Blacklock, as one of the Trustees, commenced the proceedings by remarking: We have been called together in this colony to take part in several important events since the settlement took its rise. About two years ago, many of us who are here now, heard Mr. Thomas Hughes speak to us on the opening of the colony. Subsequently the arrival of Bishop Quintard called us together again,

and then the church was dedicated, and then the schools were opened, and now again we meet to open this splendid library. We owe all this to the American people, and to their gratitude and high estimation of Thomas Hughes, for his untiring spirit and energy, mainly after the public library at Chicago was burned, in doing all he could to replace the lost treasures. Mr. Hughes' name invariably calls up a broad, loving response from all here and in England. America gave all this to Rugby, it is the noble gift of America, and Chicago is going to supply the vacancies among the books, in order that we may have a "symmetrical library." We have not books here that will not be read, but all readable volumes. We have plenty of law books, though; and the people of Tennessee are noted for their love of law. Why here we have within my reach legal documents of Massachusetts—an armful!

This library is in harmony with all we hear and know of America. In all new places a plot is set aside for educational purposes, so that men and women may grow up in intelligence; all over the land it is so, and among them all Rugby holds a proud position, and from Chattanooga to Cincinnati you can't match it. No, we can't fail in Rugby, because we have vim, we have energy, we have religion, we are a God-fearing and law-abiding people. The speaker then referred to many points of common interest and sympathy between this country and England, how each was drawing nearer to the other to achieve victories of peace, not of war. He then, on behalf of the Trustees, declared the library open to the public.

Mr. W. Hastings Hughes: I feel quite unable adequately to represent my brother on this occasion. All I can do is to thank you, through our Chairman, for the work you have so well done, also to thank those who have subscribed the money and books for this library. I know all this will be very cheering to my brother, as we have, evidently, been going, as a colony, through some heavy trials.

Mr. Cyrus Clarke: I never could talk much when I had nothing to say, but I am very gratified to be present here to day. Now I love the name of Thomas Hughes. His name came to me years ago—during our civil war. There is no higher estimate I would give to a man than I would give to Thomas Hughes, and I am glad this library bears the name of such a man, gentleman and Christian. Now I want to say that the foundation of true government rests upon the intelligence of the masses. Happy are the people with such books as we have around us, and thrice happy those who read them. I have belonged to Rugby from the first, and never liked to belong to anything that failed, now Rugby has not failed, and will not fail. Why should not this beautiful country be settled up by industrious people and made to "blossom like the rose," by "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia," and beyond Jordan? Rugby can't be shut up here in a nut shell; if it is, it will become as dead as Cleopatra—let us get the people here. I have railroad on the brain,—have had it for two years. I had a man here yesterday about the rail, who has both brains and money. He wants all to help him, and Rugby to help him. I took him up and down the woods yesterday, and dropped him over a precipice once, and thought I had killed him, but I had not. Now I will never cease to labor till the railroad is done. The speaker concluded by calling upon all to live for some purpose, reciting the well known lines, commencing

I live for those who love me.

Mr. Wilson: I will just read a few figures as to the present financial situation, which is not so good as it ought to be, but we hope to be extremely solvent in the course of a few weeks, with enough even to endow the library:

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| Total Subscriptions to August 30th, 1882 | \$1,767.40 |
| Ditto during September | 145.00 |
| Total Expenditure to date | \$2,013.47 |
| Liabilities | \$150.00 |
| Additional requirements to end of year, including warming and lighting building | 150.00 |

Mr. Bertz, as librarian, said he was afraid this would be but half an opening, as it would be some weeks yet before the catalogue would be filled in by the donations, and the books received from Chicago. In the mean time the room will be opened from nine to twelve, and any one during those hours could come and read there. After the catalogue was completed books could be taken away from the library. Respecting the books, he said, I would like to say I think we have rather too much fiction—still we are very grateful to the givers. We want a few more scientific works, and some on the useful arts. I should mention now that Mr. Hill, of Cincinnati, has kindly promised fifty additional volumes to the library.

Mr. Wilson: I should like to say before breaking up, that the building is an excellent piece of work, and we ought to express our gratitude to Mrs. Winkley, the contractor, for pushing the work through so well; the shelving we have to thank Mr. Taylor for.

Mr. Blacklock then invited those present to walk around and inspect the books. The formal proceedings then terminated.