

# COWBRIDGE PAST & PRESENT

(By RELAGIUS.)

The action of the townspeople of Cowbridge to restore its market to something like its former importance brings to the minds of the older generation the days when not only as a stock market it in a large degree fixed the price of meat and store stock, but its produce market adjoining the Town-hall was an important one for the sale of cattle, cheese, eggs, and poultry. Farmers' wives and their daughters were seen every Tuesday with trap loads of dairy produce being met by packsters from the Valleys before the days of the Cowbridge railway and for some years after. This has now become a thing of the past and a change in the manner of trade has made it difficult to restore the produce market, but if the same effects are employed to restore the stock markets that the older generation used in the year 1877, to reform the Corporation, we have no doubt but that success will crown their efforts. Two at least of the stalwarts of that day—Alderman Lewis Jenkins and Alderman M. John—are quite as enthusiastic in this cause as they were to free Cowbridge from the stigma of the name "A Rotten Borough."

Re COWBRIDGE IN 1877

(reference to John Bevan's offer  
to make a path to the  
Silver Well for a good supply  
of water)

THEN.

In the year 1877 a Commission was appointed to inquire as to the methods adopted by a number of boroughs that were left out of the Reforms Acts of 1832 and 1868 in administering their charters; and the evidence produced before that Commission disclosed a state of things of rank neglect and favouritism. If your readers desire to have some idea of the state of affairs in the borough of Cowbridge in 1877, let them turn up the "Gazette" for October in that year. The graphic account given furnishes a picture that the younger generation should study, then they would realise what their fathers fought for, as the following extract shows:—

"On Thursday night a meeting of ratepayers and inhabitants was held at the Town Hall (by permission of the bailiffs). The meeting was convened by handbill in the following form:—"To take into consideration the unjust way the said Corporation elects its members by selecting men who neither reside in or have any stake in the Town of Cowbridge. Resolutions will be submitted to the meeting with a view to bring the past grievances of the ratepayers under the notice of the Home Secretary."

The meeting was well attended and included most of the principal inhabitants of the town and district, amongst whom were noticed Mr. Parsons, Mr. Rhys (currier), Mr. J. Stockwood (solicitor), Mr. T. Rees (solicitor), Mr. Lewis Jenkins, Mr. S. D. Evans, Mr. John Thomas (chemist), Mr. Nicholas, Mr. David (currier), Mr. D. Rees (draper), Mr. Joseph May, Mr. Edward John, Dr. Edwards, etc., etc. Dr. Edwards proposed, and Mr. J. Thomas seconded, that Mr. Lewis Jenkins take the chair. This was agreed to by the meeting. The Chairman said he must ask the indulgence of the meeting while he made a few remarks on the object of the gathering. It was not his intention to make any observations likely to hurt the feelings of any individual member of the Corporation, but his object was to attack the system under which the Corporation of the Town Council carried on its business. The town had enjoyed the privilege of self government from a very early date—a date anterior to the period of Oliver Cromwell. The Protector took away the rights that the town enjoyed, but in the reign of Charles II. a protest was issued granting the town the right of self government. Under that Charter the present Corporation was constituted, but would any reasonable man tell him that laws enacted 200 years ago would be entirely applicable to the present age? He should think not.—(Applause.) The laws of England changed to suit the advanced civilisation of the day. (Applause.) Supposing that the Corporation fulfilled the laws originally granted, would it not be fair and reasonable to inquire how they did it? They had a right to give their views of the modern system of municipal administration. According to the modern ideas a corporation was expected to look after roads, the pavements, the drainage, the lighting, and the general sanitary condition of the town. (Applause.) Do the Corporation of Cowbridge do this? He said "No." They neither paved the streets nor looked after the sanitary condition of the town, although some attention to the matter was very much needed. (Applause.) Some time ago the pump near the Town Hall was condemned by the Rural Sanitary Authority, the water being unfit for domestic purposes, and the question was where were they to get water from? Mr. Bevan came forward and offered at considerable expense to himself to make a path through the meadow in order

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