

**THE EARLY DAYS OF
MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE, OR,
PUBLIC SCHOOL LIFE BETWEEN
FORTY AND FIFTY YEARS AGO**

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The Early Days of Marlborough College, or, Public School Life Between Forty and Fifty Years Ago by Edward Lockwood

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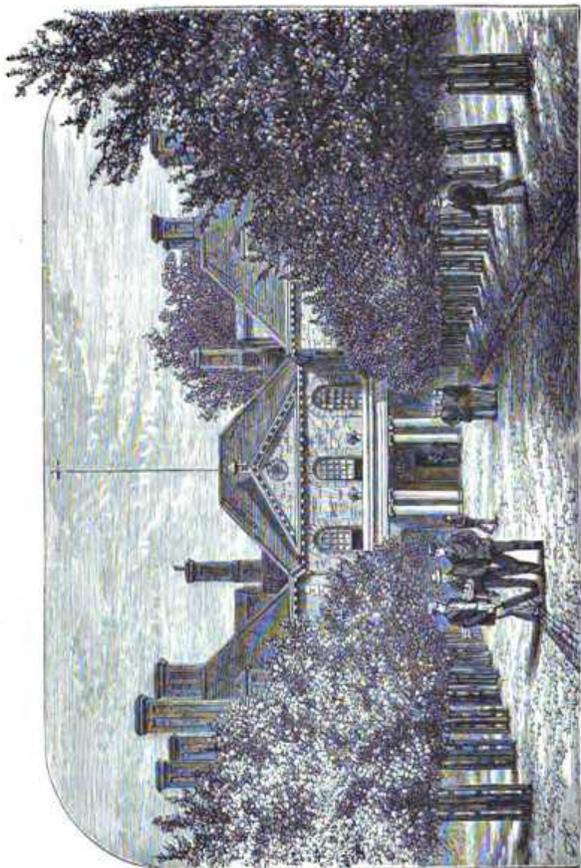
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EDWARD LOCKWOOD

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THE EARLY DAYS OF MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE.



THE "CASTLE" INN OF COACHING DAYS.
(New part of *Marlborough College*.)

THE EARLY DAYS
OF
MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE;

OR

Public School Life between Forty and Fifty Years ago.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A Glimpse of Old Haileybury;
Patna during the Mutiny;
A Sketch of the Natural History of the Riviera;
AND
Life in an Oxfordshire Village.

BY

EDWARD LOCKWOOD,

Indian Civil Service (Retired),

AUTHOR OF "THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MONCHVÉ."

ILLUSTRATED.

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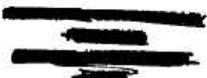
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PREFACE.



OFTEN hear it said that no school turns out better scholars than Marlborough; and certainly I have no reason to doubt this fact, for even in my time it was by no means behind other schools in this respect. Indeed there is good reason to suppose that there is no better school all round, for after my time there appears to have been a thorough reform and cleansing of the Augean stable, effected, I imagine, chiefly by raising the terms, and obtaining sufficient raw material necessary for the manufacture of the sleek and happy schoolboy. In holding up a mirror of early days there, I am merely giving a brief account of the place as I knew it. I was unfortunate in going there in its tentative days, when cheapness was overdone, for after all other expenses had been paid, there could not have been much left over to provide efficient masters and sufficient food out of the £15 which my father paid each half-year for me, particularly as I find, on

reference to corn averages, that bread was then at least double the price it is now.

At the same time, should anyone invite me to give an apt illustration to the text That "Creation groaneth and travaileth until now," it would be that mathematics and dead languages—the most dry and uninteresting of all subjects, except to an elect few—form the chief items in the curriculum of our schools; and that the elect, who, as a matter of course, preside over the schools, understanding and delighting in these subjects, are apt to give short shrift and little commiseration to dull fellows like myself, who don't—or at least didn't at the age of eight—share their knowledge and enthusiasm.

Those who are not fully aware how much humbug—unconscious no doubt—there is, even amongst the best of men, may feel surprised that the great moralist, and generally reasonable Dr. Johnson, should always have expressed his approbation of enforcing instruction by means of the rod; and yet, not only do we find him beating his schoolmistress, but also bitterly complaining of his master. "He used," he said, "to beat us unmercifully, and did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence." If such things were done to the green tree, what must have been done to the dry? If the owner of such an intellect complains, how must the dunces have suffered? We also find Boswell and his patron laying their heads together to defend a ruffian—whose salary appears to have been only £20, and therefore plainly of the cheap and nasty type—who had been "somewhat severe" in the chastisement of his scholars. "This man," says the great

moralist, "has maimed none of his boys; they are all left with the exercise of their corporeal faculties. In our schools in England many boys have been maimed; yet I never heard of an action against a schoolmaster on that account." But the subject is too horrible to continue, and it may be considered very presumptuous on my part in venturing to imply, "*Maxime! si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.*"

The great classical scholar and writer of the next century also, so far as I can make out, ranges himself on the side of the rod. I don't remember that Macaulay's biographers mention that he was ever beaten at school; if he was, it must have been for turning the tables on his teachers, and exasperating them by knowing too much. He seems to think that a boy even deserves a flogging for using the word *θυμωσι* in the same sense to which the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker, (no mean Greek scholar) ascribed to it.

But when such authorities as these are for hammering boys, no wonder that dull children, on leaving home for school, incline to exclaim with me,

"And turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu."

I have always felt sore when recalling my school-days, but now I have had my say in the following pages, I feel like Mr. Pickwick, after he had pitched into Dodson and Fogg in his lawyer's office; and I am happy in raising my voice against the rascally trick some masters have, or at least had in my time, of scamping their work, and making their wretched pupils suffer in consequence.