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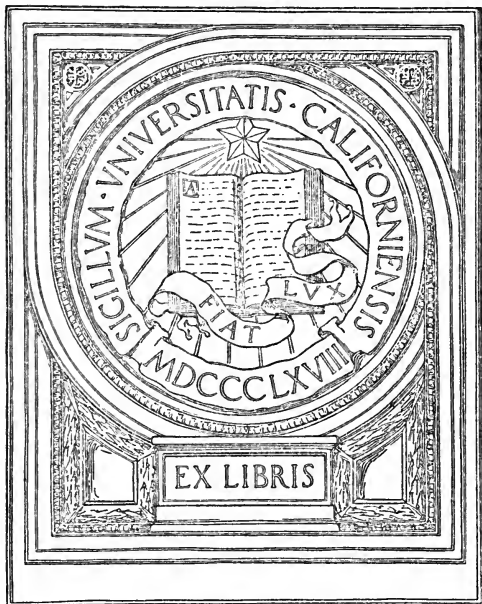


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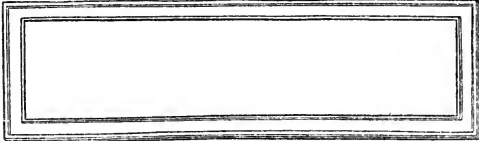
CENTENARY
BOOK
OF THE
DUMFRIES
BURNS CLUB
1820 - 1920.

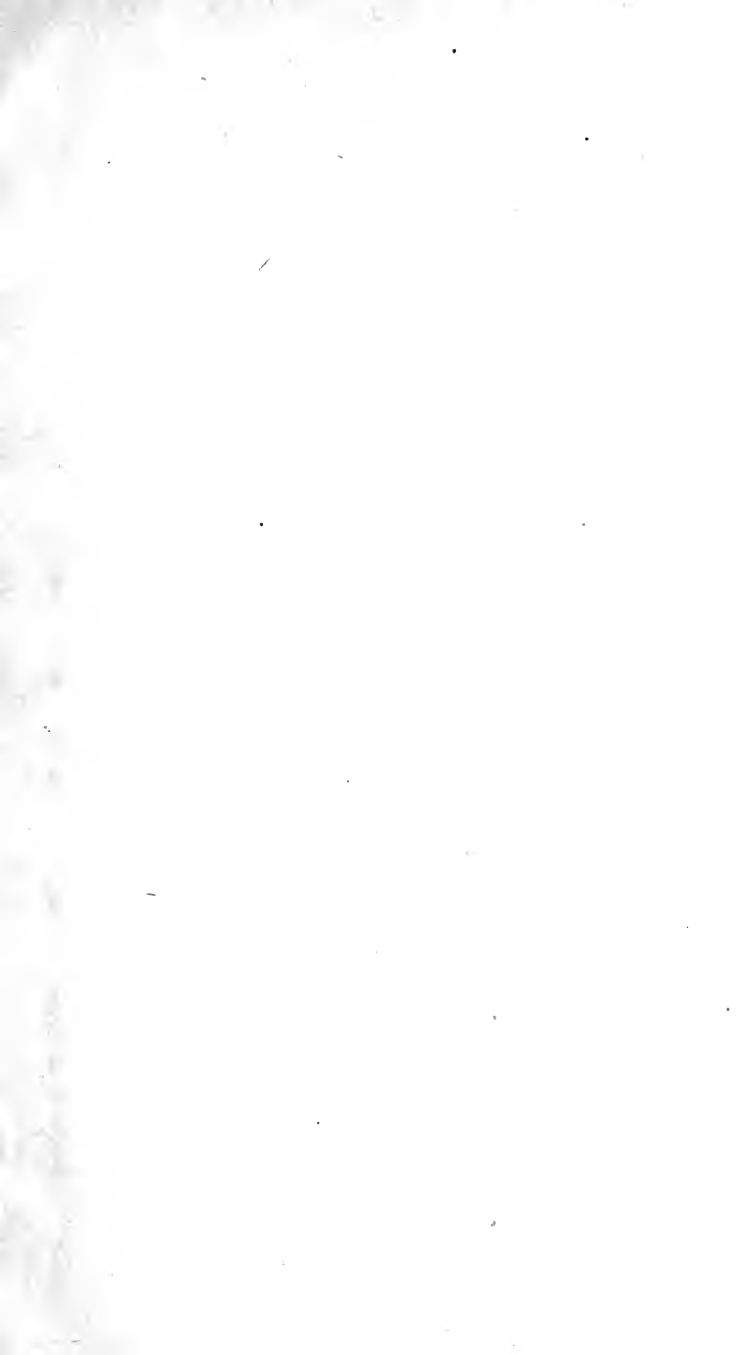


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Centenary Book

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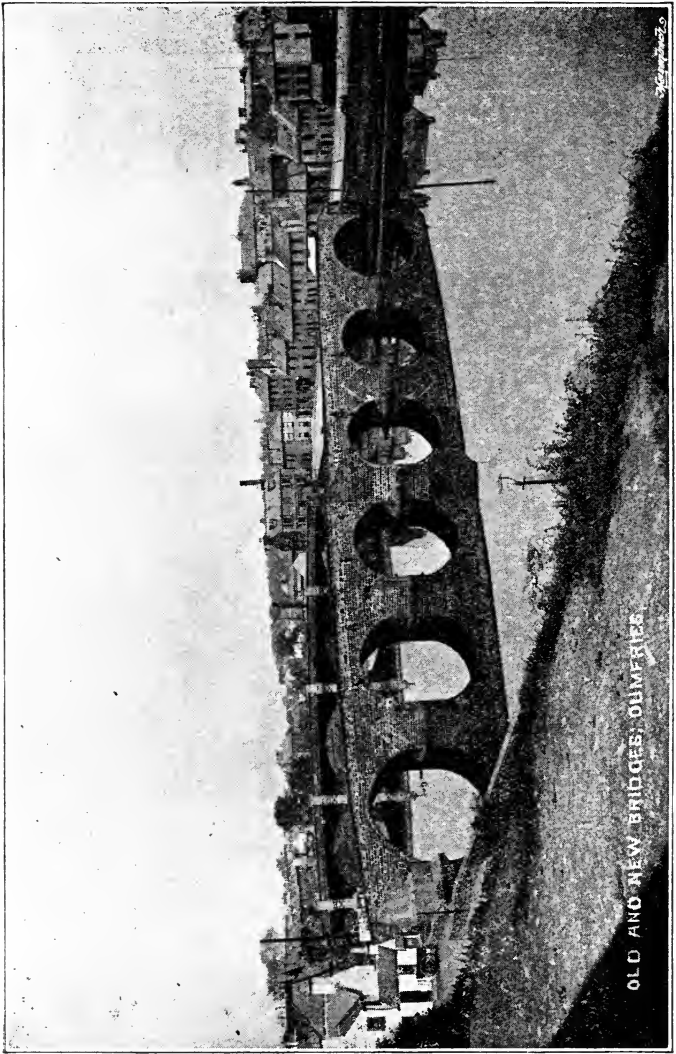
THE BURNS CLUB OF DUMFRIES

With Full Account of the Anniversary Dinner on
23rd January, 1920, and Historical Sketch of the
Club since its Formation on 18th January, 1820



WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

THE COURIER AND HERALD PRESS
111-113 High Street, Dumfries
1920



High 7, near W. W. Kemp

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FOREWORD.

THE Centenary Dinner of the Dumfries Burns Club was in many ways an event of so much interest that the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier and Herald* have decided to issue a book from a Report of the Proceedings. There could be no more fitting publishers, for John M'Diarmid, the first Proprietor and Editor of the *Courier*, and his son, William Ritchie M'Diarmid, were for more than fifty years chief among those who upheld the honour of Burns in Dumfries. William Ritchie M'Diarmid was Secretary of Dumfries Burns Club for no less than 33 years. Again, it was as Editor of the *Courier* that Thomas Aird gave his poetic and gentle presence to Dumfries for 30 years, and all lovers of Burns of the last Dumfries generation had also a tender place for Aird.

The Burns Dinner of 1920 was a wonderful tribute to the vitality of the love of the Poet, for the number who sat down to the "cup of kindness" more than doubled the highest previous record during the hundred years of the Club's existence. It was specially favoured by the number of distinguished guests from a distance, who honoured the Club by joining them in paying tribute to THE IMMORTAL MEMORY, and by the quality of their speeches. Most remarkable of all was the spirit of the whole gathering. There were 140 men present who neither spoke nor sang, but one felt, in a way seldom experienced, that everyone present had an active and responsive part in the spirit of the meeting. It would have been a thousand pities had there been no permanent record of so notable a communion of spirit.

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Perhaps the Editor will allow me as Chairman of the meeting to put on record here the deep gratitude of everybody to the Secretary of the Club—Mr John M'Burnie. The Burns Club seems to have entered upon a new life, full of vigour and enthusiasm, and of this Mr M'Burnie is the begetter. For the dinner itself, and all that pertained to it, his arrangements were perfection. It is a special fortune that at this important time in its life the Club should have such a Secretary. The members of Committee also are entitled to warm thanks. It is significant of their harmonious spirit that, while every member of Committee individually worked hard to ensure success, scarcely any formal meetings of Committee were necessary.

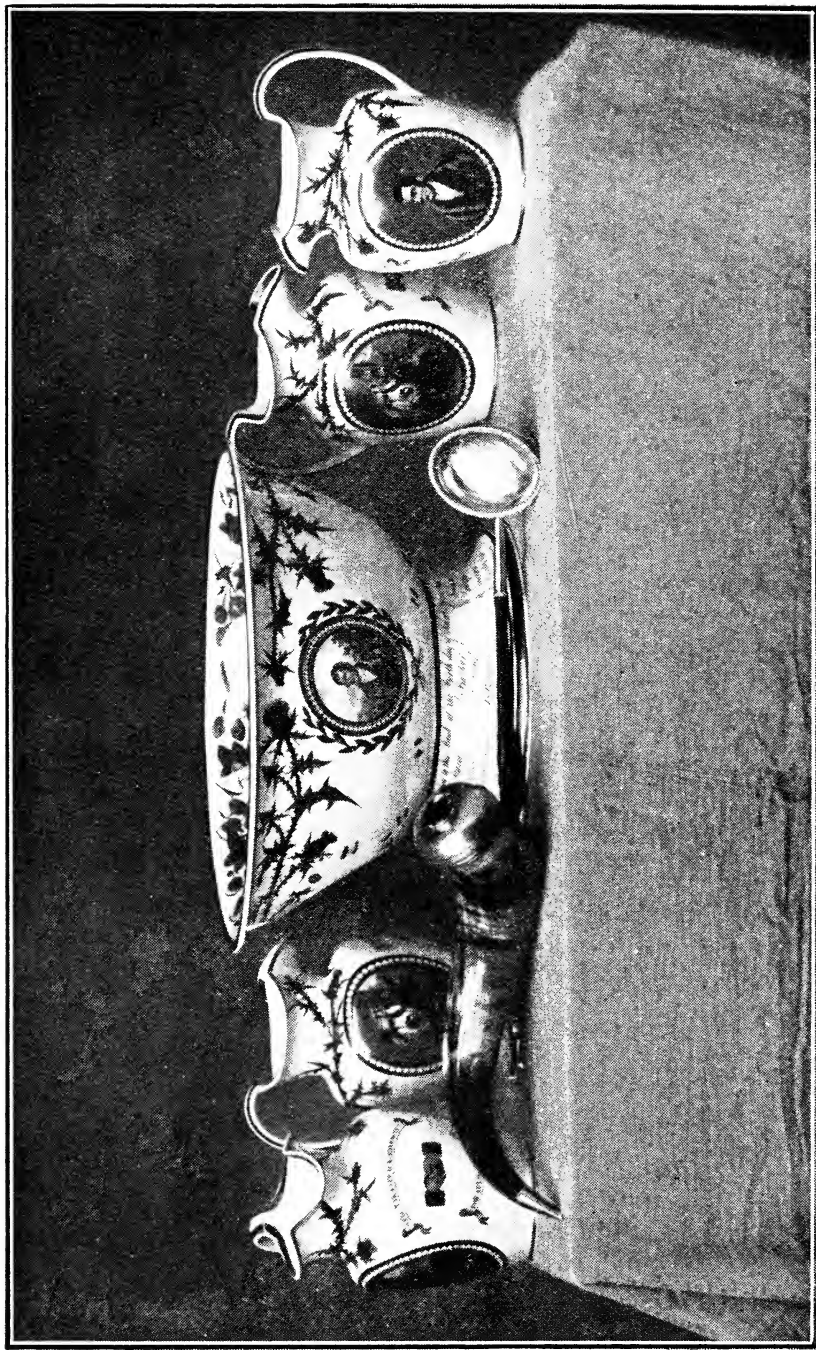
Another thing I should like to note with satisfaction is that for the first time the Club had the honour of having as its guest Mr John Maxwell, the President of the other principal Club in the Town—the Burns Howff Club, which meets annually in the very room where Burns was so often "blithe wi' comrades dear."

One other thing I would like to say. Its relevancy may not be apparent to everyone, but if this book goes, as it will, all over the world, there are many who read it who will understand. I want to pay a tribute to the influence of the old Edinburgh University Dumfries and Galloway Students' Society (the "D. & G.," as it is called), now flourishing in at least the 70th year of its life. Of that Society I was in my day a devoted member and in a small way an office-bearer, but its principal relation to the Centenary Dinner is this. The Minute Books of the Society record that Sir James Crichton-Browne was a zealous member, and no doubt there laid the foundations of his delightful eloquence. Sir James Barrie, to whom the Burns Club is so much indebted, also took his fair share in the work of the University Society, and the honoured name of Dr George Neilson is also found on the roll of members. John Foster's wit, in my day, played around the walls of the Civil Law Class-Room where the Society met, and R. W. MacKenna was just beginning there to try his literary 'prentice hand, which has since attained such perfection of craftsmanship. Shortly after my time, Joseph Hunter led the Society, as he so well led many things in the University, and no one will readily

forget the delightful warmth and delicacy of expression with which he welcomed to Dumfries our distinguished guests on the 23rd January. The old "D. & G." had, therefore, no small share in the success of our Centenary meeting.

May this book, as it goes on its journey, not only be a bond between Dumfries, where Burns lived and died, and those who love him everywhere, but may it also remind many far away of the old home and kindly faces in the Queen of the South.

R. A. GRIERSON,
President,
Dumfries Burns Club.



Punch Bowl, Jugs, Ladle, and Snuff Mull purchased by the original Founders of the Club, and still preserved in Burns House, Dumfries.

THE
CENTENARY DINNER

**Verbatim Reports of Memorable
Speeches — Gifts of Interesting
:: :: Burns Relics :: ::**

The Burns Club of Dumfries, founded on 18th January, 1820, celebrated its centenary on Friday night, 23rd January, 1920, on the occasion of the anniversary dinner in memory of the Poet. These anniversary dinners had been in abeyance during the War, and it was a happy circumstance that their resumption under conditions of Peace should have fallen in the year of the centenary of the Club which inaugurated them, and which has, in that and other useful and signal ways, helped to keep the memory of the National Poet fresh and green in the old town in which his remains rest. Elsewhere, in this book, there will be found related at some length the circumstances in which the Club came into being and its history generally during these past 100 years. A most interesting story it is, linking up the present with the names of those who, as contemporary friends of the Poet, raised soon after his death the Mausoleum which stands over his grave and thereafter established the Club. The centenary dinner was in every way worthy of the occasion. Indeed it will rank as probably the most successful Burns event that has ever taken place in the old

burgh. The company was large and representative, numbering about 160, and including not a few Dumfriessians of note and other distinguished guests, Among the latter we may, without invidiousness, mention Sheriff Morton, K.C., Sheriff of Dumfriesshire and Galloway; Lord St. Vigeans, chairman of the Scottish Land Court and formerly Sheriff in this Sheriffdom; Sir Herbert E. Maxwell of Monreith, Bart., eminent alike as a writer, a scholar, and a sportsman; Sir James Crichton-Browne, F.R.S., whose name is an honoured household word throughout his native district and far beyond; Sir J. Lorne MacLeod, LL.D., ex-Lord Provost of Edinburgh; Dr George Neilson, stipendiary of Glasgow, and distinguished archæologist; Dr R. W. MacKenna, of Liverpool, author of "The Adventure of Death" and other works of note; Mr Joseph Laing Waugh, Edinburgh, author of "Thornhill and Its Worthies," "Robbie Doo," etc.; Mr John Foster, Sheriff Clerk of Elgin, author of "The Searchers" and other successful romances; Mr Holbrook Jackson, editor of "To-day," an able London journalist. The speaking throughout the evening was on a remarkably high level of excellence, the note being given by the unusually fine oration with which the able and popular President of the Club (Mr R. A. Grierson, town clerk) proposed "The Immortal Memory." From first to last there was not a tedious or uninteresting moment, and when, well into "the wee sma' oors," the company at length joined in singing "Auld Lang Syne," they did so with the unanimous feeling that the evening spent had been

one of unqualified edification and delight. Altogether the organisers of the occasion had every reason to be deeply gratified at its great success, and in this connection special acknowledgment was made of the valued services of the hon. secretary of the Club, Mr John M'Burnie, Sheriff Clerk of Dumfriesshire.

The dinner was held in the Royal Restaurant, in the new premises adjoining the upstairs tea-room, which were opened temporarily for the occasion, and large as the dining-room was, all the available space was fully taxed. The long, snow-white tables with their complement of glittering silver and decorations of cut flowers presented an attractive appearance. Occupying a prominent place on the chairman's table was the punch bowl of Spode ware which was first used at the Club dinner in 1820, along with the four companion jugs for carrying the toddy round, and the snuff-mull which was purchased at the same time. The glasses were of the same kind as those which were used at the first dinner. On the east wall of the dining-room hung the original portrait of the Bard, presented to the Club by Gilfillan at the 1822 meeting, and a replica of the companion portrait of Bonnie Jean.

Mr R. A. Grierson, president of the Club, presided. He carried the famous Burns whistle (used in the drinking contest celebrated in the song), with which he regulated the proceedings. He explained that it had been very kindly sent for use that night from Craigdarroch, through their friend, Mr Irving Edgar. It was very interesting to

have it, and it would add a great deal to the fascination of the evening. In addition to her kindness in lending the whistle, Mrs Smith Cuninghame of Craigdarroch had also presented a photograph of the whistle to the Club. Mr Grierson was accompanied on the right and left by—

Sheriff Morton, K.C., Sheriff of Dumfries and Galloway; Provost Macaulay, O.B.E., Dumfries; Sir Herbert E. Maxwell, Bart. of Monreith; Sir J. Lorne MacLeod, LL.D., ex-Lord Provost of Edinburgh; Colonel J. Beaufin Irving of Bonshaw, county commandant, 3rd V.B., K.O.S.B.; ex-Provost Nicholson, Maxwelltown; Dr R. W. MacKenna, Liverpool (son of the late Rev. R. MacKenna, Dumfries); and Lieut.-Colonel P. Murray Kerr, formerly officer commanding the 1-5th Battalion K.O.S.B.; Mr John M'Burnie (secretary of the Club); Lord St. Vigeans (formerly Sheriff of Dumfries and Galloway); Sir James Crichton-Browne, Crindau; Mr J. W. Whitelaw, solicitor (a former president); Dr George Neilson, stipendiary magistrate, Glasgow; Mr Joseph Laing Waugh; Mr John Foster; Mr John Maxwell (president of the Burns Howff Club). The croupiers were—Mr G. B. Carruthers, Mr W. A. Hiddleston, Dr Joseph Hunter, and Judge D. H. Hastie.

The following others were seated at the Chairman's table:—Sheriff-substitute Ballingall, Rev. J. Montgomery Campbell, Mr Jas. Geddes, Judge O'Brien, Mr John Robson (county clerk), Dr J. Maxwell Ross (medical officer for the county), Mr J. E. Blacklock, Mr R. D. Maxwell (editor of "Courier and Herald"), Judge Smart, Bailie M'Lachlan, Mr Jas. Reid (editor of "Dumfries Standard"), Mr Holbrook Jackson (London), Mr John Maxwell (H.M. Commissioner for the Gold Coast).

There were also present: — Members — Mr Alexander Bryson, Mr Thomas Dykes, L.D.S., Mr Robert Austin, Mr John White, Mr R. J. J. Sloan, Mr R. Y. Mackay, Mr Andrew Millar, Mr Eric A. Gibson, Mr Wm. Gibson, Mr John Henderson, Mr James Henderson, Mr W. H. Hall, Mr W. Black, Mr John Thomson, Bailie D. Brodie, Mr R. Lindsay Carruthers, Mr A. Coulson, Mr David Robertson, Mr David Manson, Mr William J. Stark, Mr W. F. Crombie, Mr John Johnstone, Mr James Wyllie (Tinwald Downs), Mr Peter Biggam, Mr W. G. Johnstone, Mr Bertram M'Gowan, Mr John Gibson, Mr David Fergusson, Mr Robert Morrin, Mr G. W. Shirley, Mr Patrick Egan, Mr Henry B. Reid, Dr J. M. Donnan, Mr W. J. Laurie, Mr George Will, Mr W. B. Spence, Mr Sam Dickie, Mr Walter Henderson, Mr Frank W. Michie, Mr Stewart Ritchie, Mr G. B. Fraser, Mr John Barker, Mr W. Bannerman, Mr Graham F. Macara, Mr R. L. Robertson, Mr David G. Grieve, Mr Alfred Corrigan, Mr James Arthur M'Kerrow, Mr M. H. M'Kerrow, Mr James C. M'George, Mr John Lennox, Mr F. J. Pidwell, Mr Robert Dinwiddie, Mr Walter S. Johnstone, Mr J. N. Chicken, Mr George Dougal, Mr John Irving (solicitor); Mr John Irving (saddler), Mr John Grierson (grocer), Mr Charles M'Lelland, Mr J. M. Bowie, Mr Robert Oughton, Mr J. A. Gibson, Mr John Henderson (Shawhead), Rev. John Wilson, Mr J. H. Chicken, Mr Irving Edgar, Mr A. D. Robison, Mr John Dickie, Mr Robert Adamson, Mr James Wyllie, Mr James Wyllie, junr., Mr Matthew S. Wyllie, Mr H. J. Robison, Dean Lockerbie, Rev. Walter M'Intyre, Major C. R. Dudgeon, Dr A. J. Gordon Hunter, M.C., Mr James Kirkland, Mr John S. Stobie, Mr John Kerr, Mr Charles Chicken, Mr D. H. Hastie, junr., Mr D. H. C. Higgins, Mr James Reid, Mr George Hutton, Mr W. Clark, Mr George Bryson, Dr H.

A. G. Dykes, Dr T. S. Macaulay, Mr Philip Mackie, Mr R. O'Connor, Mr George Gordon, Mr Thomas Grierson, Mr Wm. Dinwiddie, Mr James Egans, Mr William King, Mr Arthur Robson, Mr David M'Jerrow, Mr Duncan Moir, Mr Duncan Macleod, Dr Burnett, Mr Tom Oliver, Mr James Dickie, Mr E. A. Hornel, Mr William Johnston, junr., Mr James A. Morrin, Mr Leslie Macdonald, Mr G. H. Reed, Mr William Kemp, Mr D. H. Hunter, Mr Thomas Gibson, Mr T. J. Johnstone, Mr James Houston, Mr James Flett.

Apologies for Absence.

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence from the following:—

Sir J. M. Barrie, Bart.; Sir George Douglas, Bart.; Sir John R. Findlay; Professor John Edgar, St. Andrews; Colonel R. J. Geddes, C.B., D.S.O.; Mr H. Cavan Irving, C.B.E., of Burnfoot; Mr Norman M'Kinnel, London; Mr D. M'Naught, President of the Burns Federation; Mr Thomas Carmichael, S.S.C., Edinburgh; Mr Frank Miller, Annan; Professor John H. Miller, Edinburgh; Mr Wellwood Anderson; Rev. J. C. Higgins, Tarbolton; Mr Phillip Sulley, Elgin (who acted as secretary to the 1896 Centenary Committee); Mr John Mackechnie (a former secretary of the Club); Mr Alexander Carlyle, Edinburgh; Major William Murray, O.B.E., M.P.; Captain R. W. Campbell, Corsock; Dr Livingston; Dr T. Bowman Edgar, Kirkconnel; Mr J. W. Critchley; Mr Matt. S. M'Kerrow; Mr Alfred D. Calvert; Mr Hugh S. Gladstone; Mr Jas. Kissock, Banff; and the following ex-Presidents:—Mr J. C. R. Macdonald, W.S.; Sheriff Champion, Mr John Grierson, Mr James Carmont, Right Rev. A. Wallace Williamson, D.D.; Mr J. H. Balfour-Browne, K.C.; Dr J. Maxwell Wood; Mr John Symons, Dr Fred H. Clarke, Mr H. Sharpe Gordon.

Appended are some of the messages received:—

Sir J. M. Barrie—"Hearty thanks to the Burns Club for their kind invitation. I am sorry I can't be present at this anniversary, but social functions are somewhat out of my line, and besides, I could not get North at that time. My very best wishes, though, to you all for a great and worthy evening."

Professor John Edgar:—"I have to thank you for your kind invitation, but alas! my time is full up with University work and on Friday, especially, as luck would have it, there is a most important business meeting which I must attend. I shall be thinking of your great gathering and of the distinguished company of your guests, and I wish the privilege of being present had been granted me. May the dinner be a great success! I am certain that the speeches will be worthy of the occasion, and I hope someone of the speakers will recall the great words of the Poet:—

'The man o' independent mind
Is king o' men for a' that.'

The spirit of the words made Scotsmen a power in the world, but I sometimes fear that our countrymen are beginning to forget them."

Mr H. Cavan Irving:—"Many thanks for your kind invitation to the dinner to be held on the 23rd, of which I am sorry I must decline the pleasure as I do not feel up to such entertainments in the dirty, dark nights such as we are getting now, as a very little upsets me after my recent illness. Please express for me my appreciation of the honour that the Dumfries Burns Club have done me and my thanks for their kindness."

Mr Norman M'Kinnel:—"Will you please convey my thanks to the Club for their very kind invitation and my great regret that I

cannot accept it? The play I am in at present looks like running till Easter at least, and 'nights off,' except under medical advice, are not allowed. I should like to have revisited the auld toon under the auspices of the Burns Club, but will have to pay the penalty of success and bow to the inevitable."

Mr D. M'Naught:—"Much as I feel honoured by your kind invitation for the evening of the 23rd, I regret that a family bereavement compels me to decline any such engagements this year. With best wishes for the success of your centenary meeting and salutations to all the brethren."

Mr Thomas Carmichael:—"I have received your kind invitation to attend the centenary dinner of the Dumfries Burns Club on the 23rd. It would have afforded me great pleasure to be present on the occasion, but I regret to say that considerations of health prevent me being with you at the dinner. I regret this very much, but I hope you will have a most successful and enjoyable celebration."

Mr Frank Miller:—"I value highly your kindness in sending me an invitation to the anniversary dinner of the Dumfries Burns Club, but I fear must deny myself the pleasure of accepting it on account of the state of my health. Will you do me the favour to convey to your Club my thanks, and express my regret at my inability to attend?"

Mr Wellwood Anderson:—"I received your pressing invitation to attend the centenary dinner. Very many thanks, but I fear I cannot be present at this most interesting gathering. The list of speakers is well worthy of the historic occasion. Fain would I have listened to our dear old friend's oration for he will, I know, shed lustre on

the scene, and give you a most interesting and brilliant speech.

'While terra firma on her axis

Diurnal steers on,

Count on a friend in faith an' practice

In Robert Grierson.'

There will, alas! be many familiar faces missing from the festive board, and while honouring our beloved Burns and drinking to his Immortal Memory, our thoughts will surely turn to our fallen heroes in the Great War. With best wishes for a most enjoyable meeting.

'Lord send you aye as weel's I want ye.

And then ye'll do.' "

Mr Phillip Sulley:—"I regret very much that it will not be possible for me to attend the centenary meeting of Dumfries Burns Club. Though not the oldest, it is clearly the most important by its direct connection with the Poet and his friends, with his sons, and by the possession and custody of so many important personal relics. I am very proud of being connected with it, and send heartiest greetings and congratulations to the brethren."

Mr John Mackechnie:—"I shall be unable to be present, but I hope the centenary dinner will prove a great success, and I have not the slightest doubt that the president will rise to the occasion."

Mr Alexander Carlyle:—"I deeply regret to have to inform you that I shall be unable to be with you on the 23rd at your dinner owing to the state of my health. Will you please accept my thanks and regrets, and express to your Club my feeling of gratitude for the honour they have done me in inviting me to the centenary dinner, and my great disappointment at being obliged to forego the pleasure of being present on so memorable and interesting an occasion."

Major Wm. Murray:—"I am sorry to have to fail you. I regret very much that I am unavoidably prevented from coming to the Burns dinner to-morrow, and beg you will accept my most regretful apologies."

Mr J. C. R. Macdonald:—"As I am not going out in the evenings this winter I regret that I cannot be present at the dinner on the occasion of the centenary of the Club on the 23rd inst., and specially so as I believe I now stand very near the top of the list of surviving past presidents."

Sheriff Campion:—"I much regret not being able to put in an appearance at this notable Burns Club gathering. Since it was my happy fate to be appointed to Dumfries thirty years ago, this is, I think, the first one I have missed. With best wishes to fellow-members and all friends."

Right Rev. Wallace Williamson:—"I have your kind letter and invitation to the centenary meeting of the Burns Club. I should have been glad to accept the invitation had it been possible, but I much regret my engagements will prevent my being present. I regret this all the more as I have most pleasant recollections of the kind welcome I received from the members of the Club some years ago. I trust you will have a happy and successful celebration."

Captain Campbell:—"I regret, indeed, that owing to the pressure of literary and other duties I am unable to be with you on this historic occasion, and trust you will excuse my inability to attend. By maintaining the interest in Burns you do a great work. 'There are more things in Heaven and earth' than 'overtime' and a pound of flesh. In recalling the nobility and grandeur of Burns you project a happy sunbeam into a material world. We are all sickened with militarism, dollar patriotism,

and bawling commercialism. By uplifting idealism and romance you may save our souls."

Greetings From Other Clubs.

The following greetings from other clubs were intimated:—

Burns Clubs:—Coquetdale, Hamilton, Allo-way, Hawick, Govan ("Ye Cronies"), Irvine, Govan Fairfield, Glasgow Albany, Gareloch-head, Hamilton Mossgiel; Thornliebank, Birmingham, Cupar, Hamilton Junior, Dun-dee, Bridgeton, Hull, Dunfermline United, Gourrock, Stane Mossgiel, Derby, Galashiels, Kilmarnock ("Jolly Beggars"), Portobello, Dalmuir, Port Glasgow, Kilmarnock, Kelso, London, East Stirlingshire, Mid-Argyll, Montrose, North Berwick, Gourrock ("Jolly Beggars"), Edinburgh ("Ninety"), Elgin, Liverpool, Birtley, Annan, Glencraig, Charle-ston, Paisley, Howff (Dumfries), St. James' (Paisley), St. John's (Greenock), and New-castle and Tyneside. The Burns Federation: and the following:—Ballarat and District Caledonian Society; Caledonian Society of Sheffield; The Saint Andrews Society, Glas-gow; Leeds Caledonian Society; North Staf-fordshire and District Caledonian Society; Birmingham and Midland Scottish Society; Jesmond Constitutional Club. From Mr Walter Scott, New York, a life member of the Club, was received the following cable, "Star of Robert Burns in brilliancy is greater than ever."

Grace having been said by the Rev. J. Montgomery Campbell of St. Michael's, dinner was served. While it was being partaken of music was discoursed by an orchestra led by Mr J. Cheadle; and by pipers, under Pipe-Major T. H. Boyd, who played Burns' airs.

In the service of the dinner the Royal Restaurant firm excelled itself. All the time-honoured dishes found a place on the menu. The haggis, "Great chieftain o' the puddin' race," was ushered in to the tune of the pipes, and having been carried aloft round the dining-room, was finally placed in front of the Chairman, who with uplifted hands recited Burns' address:—

Fair fa' your honest sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the puddin' race.
Aboon them a' ye tak' yer place,
Painch, tripe, and thairm,
Weel are ye worthy o' a grace
As lang's ma' airm.

The menu card and toast list was a work of art, designed by Major W. F. Crombie, and printed by Messrs Maxwell and Son, High Street. A facsimile is reproduced elsewhere. The greeting sent to other clubs, which was printed on the back of the menu, consisted of lines written by Mr William Grierson, the first secretary of the Club, and afterwards found among the papers of General M'Murdo of Mavisgrove, now lodged in the Public Library.

The musical programme, detailed on the toast list, was very much enjoyed, all the artistes having a hearty reception. The pianoforte accompaniments were ably played by Mr J. Johnstone.

The toast of "The King" was proposed from the chair, and was received with cheers, followed by the singing of the National Anthem. "The Queen, the Queen Mother, and other Members of the Royal Family" was also proposed by the Chairman, and was pledged with enthusiasm.

Sheriff Morton, K.C., proposed the toast of the "Imperial Forces." He remembered, he said, that when he was in the habit of going first to public dinners the toast that he had the honour to propose that night was worded as the "Navy, Army, and Reserve Forces." He thought



Sheriff Morton, K.C.

that the reason why the designation of that toast had had to be altered was due to the fact that our fighting forces, within the last twenty years at any rate, had assumed a complexity that they did not possess previously and an extension beyond the territory from which they were drawn that, he thought, the oldest or the youngest of them there never expected to see. (Applause.) The first occasion upon which anybody could have expected that the British Empire

would be able to rally any more than the sons born in Great Britain was during the South African war, but even there the contingent sent by our Colonies was small indeed compared with what was sent during the last tremendous struggle. There was one thing certain now, it was plain to every nation upon the globe that when they engaged in arms with the British Empire they engaged with all its sons in that very far-flung dominion. (Applause.) One thing he thought they were entitled to take out of that struggle was that the prestige and the power that brought us our Empire lived in the descendants of the farthest part of it at this present time. In the newspapers as they read them from day to day during the last struggle they found sometimes that a contingent from Canada was getting the praise of the day, at another time a contingent from Australia, and at another time some battalion or some division of the home forces, and they were not only united in the determination with which they went into this struggle but they were united as brothers in arms in respect that each contingent from wherever it was drawn proved itself to be worthy of the comrades with whom it fought side by side. We had great cause to take courage for the future of the British Empire when we considered that our Imperial Forces were not only more numerically than they were before, but that they were imbued with the very same spirit that had brought our Empire to its high pitch among civilised peoples. Even in the Navy, where we did not expect we would

have a contingent from the Dominions, we found that when they were chasing the "Emden" there was one battleship sent by Australia, not only manned but provided by the Commonwealth, and it was within the recollection of all how worthily indeed that contingent did its work. (Applause.) There was this further to be said, not only had we extended the territory from which we drew our fighting forces but we had also extended the nature of the fighting arm that defended this Imperial Dominion. (Applause.) For the first time in the history of civilisation or of the globe our fighting forces had included an Air Service. He was not really competent to discuss the Air Service, but one thing that struck him was this, that the great thing that seemed to be absolutely permanent among the British people from wherever drawn was the power of initiative and the power of utilising science for the benefit of the British people. There was this further to be said of the fighting forces—they were not in any way bound by mere tradition. They were willing to accept service from wherever it came, willing even to accept new ideas which some Government departments did not seem to be over-willing to accept, and from whatever quarter they came the fighting forces were willing to utilise all the help they could get. What had brought this Empire to its present pitch was the indomitable courage of our people, and if the last war demonstrated anything it had shown to the whole of Europe and the whole of mankind that that indomitable courage was as great at the present time as it ever had been. (Applause.)

Colonel J. Beaufin Irving of Bonshaw, in responding, said the Navy had fought three important battles, the Battle of the Bight, the Battle of Falkland, and the Battle of Jutland. In the days of Waterloo the Army were said to be chiefly ploughmen, but in this



Colonel J. Beaufin Irving.

great war they were of every possible sort from dukes to labourers, and professional men of all kinds. Even the parsons took up a rifle to do their duty to their God, their King, and their country, and quite right too. (Applause.) The whole Empire as a body had pulled together in the most wonderful way, and every Colony, even the very smallest as well as the biggest, gave something in money and men to help the Mother Country. He knew of one small colony that was an illustration of

this—New Guinea—which had formed just a company and five or six officers, but still had shown goodwill in trying to pull together and help. It was marvellous the numbers we were able to put in the field. He read somewhere that we put altogether six million men in the



Colonel P. Murray Kerr.

field, and the way they had fought was never surpassed in any war we had ever been engaged in. (Applause.)

Colonel P. Murray Kerr, who also responded, paid a tribute to Colonel Irving. Perhaps some of the younger men present were unaware that Colonel Irving as a young soldier began his fighting career in the Abyssinian campaign, and was very seriously wounded there. In conclusion, he said that in the recent war, as on all previous occasions in history, the British Army had covered itself with glory. (Applause.)

“ THE IMMORTAL MEMORY.”

Burns’ Charter of Manhood.

The President, in rising to propose “The Immortal Memory,” was warmly cheered. He said:—We are, in this room in Dumfries to-night, very specially near to



Mr R. A. Grierson, President.

Robert Burns. For we are met to mark that, on the 25th day of January in the year 1820, some 40 Dumfries men, most of whom had known Burns in life, sat down in the old King’s Arms Inn for the first time as a Burns Club. Rather I should say we are here in continuity of that meeting—in unity of heart and thought with those men whose love for Robert Burns has lived in the brotherhood of this Club throughout a hundred years. That meeting in 1820—which was, even in Dumfries, not actually the first,

but was among the first held anywhere—was the beginning of the fulfilment of those oft-quoted words of Burns:—"Don't be afraid; I'll be more thought of a hundred years after my death than I am to-day." But could even his poetic, prophetic eye have foreseen the fulness of the realisation that to-night—100 years after that little gathering of his own townfolk — it should be, that by his genius, "the whole round earth is everyway bound with a gold chain" of common love and common thought? (Applause.) There is no land, however remote, where there are not a few faithful met to think of home and Robert Burns. (Applause.) And the eyes of men everywhere are turned to-night, not to the stately Cathedrals where lie the great statesmen of the days when Burns lived, but to that old Churchyard where lies a man who died in a little room, in a poor house, in a mean street, of a small Scotch burgh. That is to me one of the very wonderful things of the world. (Applause.) And here, at the joining place of that golden chain, linked up for us as it is by the traditions of these 100 years, and in the presence of so many of our distinguished guests, I do honestly feel how difficult it is to say for you what you would wish me to say. It is not possible for any ordinary man at this time of day to say anything new, which is true, of Burns. For myself, I have neither the knowledge nor the skill to do more than follow him along the main road. And perhaps it is as well. For Burns—and when I say Burns, I mean not alone the man who lived and died at

the end of the eighteenth century, not alone the Burns who has lived after death, but the Burns who lived and died, and the Burns who lives still, one and indivisible—Burns has walked down the broad highway of life among common men and women. He has created for them by the wayside no poetic and imaginary Island Valleys of Avilron. Rather he has gathered as he went, because they were also his own, all their thoughts and loves and hopes and fears, and their faults and frailties too. He has faced with them the blast and the cold, he has stumbled and fallen with them on the muddy road, but has stood up with them and rejoiced, when it shone, in the honest warmth of the good Scots sun. (Applause.) That is why Burns has lived throughout the century.

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
 That's a' the learnin' I desire,
 Then tho' I drudge thro' dub and mire
 Wi' plough or cart;
 My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
 May touch the heart.

(Applause.) But the broad road has been broken and washed away by the tides of war. We have struggled through, and stand, rather doubtfully, on the other side, while from a red sky the wild wind blows, shaking the old watch towers which we thought used to guard the way. And the question is, has Burns as a vital force gone from us, and are we but taking to-night "a cup of kindness yet for the days of Auld Lang Syne"? Or has he crossed with us and is he still the companion of our

journey? I think he is. And this is why. Burns would, I suppose, be called a man of letters, a literary man. But all letters which are immortal, imperishable, are so in so far as they have ceased to be "Letters," and have become of the fullness of the lives of men. Not in a blind spirit of hero-worship—for years ago when I began the study of Burns, I was then something of a sceptic—and accepting for the moment the worst that his critics, moral and literary, can say, I do soberly believe, with a people's voice down the century and over the world for witness, that Burns was not only great as a poet, but was one of the few whom Heaven has sent to speak the truth from the hearts of men. (Applause.) He formulated no new systems of government, he set forth no fresh creeds, he taught no new rules of life. He sang because he must. Every one of us feels the joy of the strength of life and the beauty of its tenderness and all the majesty and soft sweetness of Nature, and we know somehow that these things have in their fuller development a deeper and more lasting meaning than what we immediately see and feel, but we cannot express what that is. We are dumb. We feel, Scotsmen not least, almost with pain sometimes, that we cannot speak even to ourselves of what are our deepest emotions. Burns is the tongue of the eternal thoughts of ordinary men and women. (Applause.) He does not preach to us. He sings for us the songs of our own hearts. (Applause.)

I have used the figure of the road, and it is interesting to note how much in literature, which has the claim to be great and

lasting, is the story of a pilgrimage or a journey, beginning with the early story of Moses' march in the desert. In our own land there are many instances, from the days when Chaucer travelled with his pilgrims from the Tabard at Southwark to the Shrine at Canterbury, to the modern times when Stevenson wandered with his donkey in the Cevennes. And it has struck me that in all of them, according to the form of their story, there is either the promised land or the lights of the city or the warmth of the inn and the end of the road. Burns, as I have said, was a wayfarer too. He did not write at a study desk nor look from a college window. The Muse was his companion as he followed the plough. He wrote "To Mary in Heaven" lying on his back in the stackyard at Ellisland. "Tam o' Shanter" came to him as he wandered by the banks of the Nith at Dumfries. And clearly he, too, saw the lights at the end of the road. It is an old hope, but it had seemed something rather transcendental and unattainable for a work-a-day world. Burns tells us of it in the Scottish tongue straight to our Scottish hearts:—

For a' that and a' that,
 It's coming yet for a' that,
 That man to man the world o'er
 Shall brithers be for a' that.

(Applause.) He seems to make it more possible for ordinary folk, and especially as he gives us in the same song the simple Charter of our right of way to it—

A man's a man for a' that.

(Applause.) This song is sometimes used in a limited and political sense, and

therefore some people are rather afraid of it. But it is our own Charter, and we cannot be afraid of it. (Applause.) It is the common Charter, and no one can limit it. It is a declaration of unity and not of division. (Applause.) This may be noticed. There were dining clubs at the beginning of last century, many of them political, Pitt Clubs and Fox Clubs. No Tory would have sat at a Fox dinner, and no Whig would have eaten with the Pittites. But although the concrete theme of "A man's a man for a' that" was an attack upon what Burns saw as the pretensions of the aristocracy and upper classes of his own day, yet to-night, here and everywhere, men from castle, villa, and cottage sit together at the feast. (Applause.) Because, though it is a legitimate practical weapon whenever and wherever arrogance and pretence are found, the essential meaning is deeper and more lasting than its applicability to the special conditions of any particular time. Had Burns attacked, however powerfully, only the immediate questions of his own time in Church or State, he would to-day have been buried on the forgotten shelves of old libraries. He does a great deal more than attack. He distils the perpetual essence of that manhood which has the right to possess the road. It is not Conservatism nor Liberalism nor Socialism, nor social rank nor the want of it. It is a simple thing, but very great. It is "pith o' sense and power o' worth." (Applause.)

Then let us pray that come it may,—
As come it will for a' that,—

That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree, and a' that.

(Applause.) It is this "pith o' sense and power o' worth" which has saved this nation in times past. (Applause.) It is the great need to-day. (Applause.) It is the Charter of plain men of whatever degree. The world is not to be won by men with their heads in the intellectual, political, financial, or social clouds, often with feet of clay, and never by what Carlyle calls "shrill and wire-drawing men." It will be won by men with their heads set square on broad shoulders, and their feet, with the joy of life, ringing on the hard road—men in whom the red blood flows warm and clean and strong to the steady beat of honest hearts. (Loud applause.) These are the men whom Burns elsewhere places in the centre of the King's highway and gives royal honours:—

For thus the royal mandate ran
 Since first the human race began,—
 The social, honest, friendly man,
 Whate'er he be,
 'Tis he fulfils great Nature's plan,
 And none but he.

(Applause.) This declaration of manhood does not stand alone. The whole of Burns' work, and not least his song, if we read it aright, is woven round it. It is the centre of the complete web of life. There is no time to say more of that to-night, except that the qualities of manhood as Burns defines them are not self-grown and solitary things. They are sown in the home, they blossom and bear fruit in the market place. And Burns is often in the market

place, and there his humour, among the deepest and most pervading of all his gifts, has play. He lived in a time of famous wits who were verbal epicures. But his wit is never on the surface; it is a full, deep human sense which seeks right into the springs of life. (Applause.) Sometimes so keen and true is it that it approaches to something akin to sadness. There is no quality, in the sense in which Burns had it, which is a more real part of the nature of full statured men. It is a thing of wisdom, the solvent of the rasping wheels of life:—

O wad some power the gifae gie us
 To see oorsels as ithers see us,
 It wad frae mony a blunder free us
 Or foolish notion.

And Burns' humour is always human—about people, never about the machine. It seldom touches the political machine, and, when it does, it is, as in the Election Ballads, more about men than matters. Though he lived in Dumfries, he hardly ever speaks of the municipal machine, for which the Provosts, Bailies, and Town Clerks of his day were no doubt profoundly thankful. (Laughter.) But he gossips at the Cross about ministers and doctors, lairds and farmers, schoolmasters and lawyers, all in some relationship to that grimly humorous old gentleman, "Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie." (Laughter.) But, far beyond these things, he brings out from all the homely scenes of life that richness of humour which is not jest but fulness of insight and sympathy.

The luntin' pipe and sneeshin' mull
 Are handed oot wi' richt guid-will;

The canty auld folk crackin' crouse,
 The young anes rantin' thro' the house;
 My heart has been sae fain to see them
 That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.

But when we speak of Burns' Charter of manhood, the question is asked, did he uphold it himself? I would not trouble to speak of that, did it not honestly disturb so many people. After all, do those things which the kindly earth has covered for 125 long years really matter now? But Burns is entitled to be tried, not by a judge in the white robes of judiciary, but by a jury of his peers. (Applause.) He sums it all up himself:—

Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me
 With passions great and strong,
 And listening to their witching voice
 Has often led me wrong.
 Where human weakness has come short,
 Or frailty crept aside,
 Do Thou, All Good! for such Thou art,
 In shades of darkness hide.

And when Burns has thus submitted himself with confidence at the great Judgment seat, why need we bring our petty police court complaints against him? (Applause.) He had many faults, but of the great master sin of hypocrisy, which I think may be the most difficult to answer for at the Day of Judgment, he was free. He was open as the day. (Applause.) There is no offence he committed, hardly any morbid thought of his mind, which he does not in his poems or his letters confess to the world. How many of us are of sufficient stature to dare do that? He opened the windows of his soul that the sun's rays might search out the dark

places and the soft winds cleanse and purify. And reading again, as I have done closely, his Life and his poems—his poems in all their varying moods, and his Life in all its fitful phases—I do believe that whenever the Lantern-bearer stood at the door and knocked, the portal of Burns' soul flew open wide. And in the dark days he was himself a lantern-bearer, letting the light shine on "puir auld Scotland." (Applause.) Can we think that this light, which shines so free and bright even to-day, could come from a vessel which was essentially impure? No, to the jury of plain men, Burns is in right of his Charter, the qualities so mixed in him that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, "Here was a Man!" (Loud applause.)

There is nothing more simple and touching than the part which Burns himself hoped he might take in the working out of "great Nature's plan." In the troublous days when Burns lived the people were faced, though in somewhat different outward form, with the same great problems which are ours to-day. There is this difference, that in those days of Lord Braxfield and his contemporaries many thought that things were as they were, because it was the way of the world and so must always be. To-day we are all agreed that the great social evils should be removed, and that there should be a fuller, freer, more beautiful and more equal life for us all. (Applause.) We still differ bitterly, and perhaps legitimately, about the methods. To-night is not the time to discuss these differences,

nor are we here to forget these great questions. We are here with Burns, to try for a moment to realise the great common measure of hope and purpose. Burns did not ask to drive the chariot of wealth and power, or to ride on the whirlwind of revolution. He wanted to do a very simple, loyal and loving thing.

That I for puir auld Scotland's sake
Some useful plan or book might make,
Or sing a sang at least.

(Applause.) It is ours in this new and complex world to make and do some "useful plan" to help men's progress. It was his to sing. If there be controversy as to his life or literary criticism of some of his other work there is none as to his place as a lyric poet. If there be dispute as to the meaning of the "Divine Right" of Kings or the limits of the Voice of the People as the Voice of God, this is sure, that the songs of a people are their divine inheritance. (Applause.) There were songs and singers in Scotland long before Burns. Had there not been so, there would have been no Scotland and no Burns. But he breathed into the nation's minstrelsy a newer, sweeter, stronger voice, and left it to us, our heritage for ever. He sang, and to this day all Scottish hearts are vibrant with his melody. (Applause.) I shall not quote; you will hear his songs to-night from voices sweeter than mine. These songs are not descriptive of Nature. They are Nature—themselves the note of the song of the birds, the very sound of running waters. (Ap-

plause.) They are not apart from the manhood and womanhood of which we have been speaking, but rather the sweetness which comes from their strength, the power which comes from their tenderness.

And they are carolled and said,
 On wings are they carried.
 Although the maker is dead
 And the singer is buried.

And with these songs singing in their hearts the people go, not singly, but together. A social system there must be, organisation there must be, high politics and even party politics are needful, but neither aristocracy nor democracy, neither monarchy nor republicanism, neither labour nor capital, neither socialism nor individualism, will take us to the end of the road unless the motive power within it is manhood, brave, sincere and free. (Applause.) Free it must be above all—not kept down by powerful men or deadened by the overweight of the organisation. Freedom is but the full realisation of manhood.

Upon that tree there grows such fruit,
 Its virtues a' can tell, man;
 It raises man aboon the brute,
 It makes him ken himsel', man.

And only when the mass of men in all lands bear God's "guinea stamp" of "pith of sense and power of worth"—when "sense and worth o'er a' the world do bear the gree for a' that"—then, and only then, will the gates of the nations be lifted up and the people shall pass through, from the rough highway, over

the streets of the City of Peace to the warmth and brotherhood of the world's great inn. (Applause.) Is it a dream? I cannot and may not discuss that in a religious or mystical sense except to say this, that it has been the hope of all nations since the world began, the central points of all faiths, even those which were non-theistic and material. Our forefathers in the uplands of Dumfriesshire and Galloway read from the big ha' Bible as they looked towards the gateways of their hills—

Lift up your heads, o ye gates! and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors! that the King of Glory may enter in.

But let us look at it in relation to Burns. During the five years of war since last we met, when all our minds were troubled, it sometimes occurred to me, when I was thinking of the possibility of presiding on the next Burns birthday—Is it any use meeting about Burns and speaking of his memory as nothing less than “immortal,” if the central part of his message to us was a vain delusion, and men are to go out for ever, without hope, spinning the same “weary pun' o' tow”? Men of “pith of sense” will not travel a road which leads them nowhere. Burns' life, despite the joy of existence which a man with so great and free a spirit must have had, was a tragedy. Without saying that the tragedy was necessary to the message, the two are in our minds inseparably bound together. Was all this agony of this great spirit only to sing to us, in however' magic music, of a false hope? We ourselves

have seen, what none before us have, the fulfilment of Burns' hope and prayer that, when need came, "a virtuous populace would stand a wall of fire around our much-loved isle." (Applause.) Those who stood in that "wall of fire" did not guard for us a Slough of Despond, but a Highway of Hope. And the souls of the brave will surely go with us to the end of the way and will pass with us or those who come after us through the uplifted gates into the Promised Land. It may be a long way to go, but, come it soon or late, we remember that Burns first began to pray for it and then changed his note and foretold it with confidence—

Then let us pray that come it may,—

As come it will for a' that,—

That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,

May bear the gree and a' that.

For a' that and a' that,

It's coming yet for a' that,

That man to man the world o'er

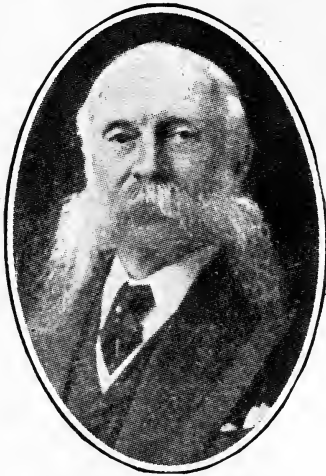
Shall brithers be for a' that.

(Loud applause.) In the silence, therefore, not of sorrow, but of fulness of knowledge of what he has been and is for Scotland and for us, we drink "The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns."

The company then rose and pledged the Memory in solemn silence. Afterwards there was a spontaneous and prolonged outburst of cheering in tribute to the eloquence and power of Mr Grierson's oration.

“DUMFRIES BURNS CLUB.”**Sir J. Crichton-Browne Presents Valuable
Relic From Sir James Dewar.**

Sir James Crichton-Browne, who was heartily received on rising to propose the toast of “The Burns Club of Dumfries,” said:—I am a mere satellite this evening



Sir J. Crichton-Browne.

to our central orb, Mr Grierson, who has so worthily and eloquently proposed the familiar but ever-inspiring toast of “The Immortal Memory of Burns,” and I shall be glad if I can in any degree reflect his luminous enthusiasm in submitting to you the kindred toast of “The Dumfries Burns Club,” which has reached its hundredth birthday, and exists in order to keep the immortal memory bright and untarnished. It has fallen to Mr Grierson’s lot to revive, after an interval, those

delightful symposia of our Dumfries Burns Club which reach away so far into the past and have been, I might say, red-letter days in the annals of Dumfries. It is his, I hope, to inaugurate this evening a new series of these symposia which will stretch away down uninterruptedly into the peaceful future which is, we are told, in store for us, and keep alive in our children, and our children's children, the proud and grateful feelings which they never fail to arouse in us. (Applause.) For four years—terrible, harrowing, woe-ful, glorious years—our Burns Club festivals have been in abeyance, but I do not think that during these years Burns has been less in our thoughts than he would have been had our celebrations continued, for to those of us, early steeped in his poetry, throughout all the change-ful vicissitudes of the war his words have, I am sure, recurred to us from time to time as the best possible expression of our surging emotions. (Applause.) Like us, Burns passed through trou-bleous times, and his life indeed was one long warfare—a tragic conflict with ad-verse forces which, notwithstanding his cour-ageous resistance, wounded and crippled and finally overwhelmed him though vic-tory came after he was no more. Apart altogether from the difficulties in which his own indiscretions involved him, “affliction was enamoured of his parts and he was wedded to calamity.” Failure dogged the footsteps of this greatly-gifted man, and it is impossible to scan his biography without almost shuddering at the dark destiny that pursued him from his very boyhood, frustrating all his

manly endeavours for that modest competency which would have enabled him to give free play to his genius. Hard work and frugal living availed not to compensate for the poor soil and high rent of the farm of Mount Oliphant from which his father was ejected. The workshop in Irvine, in which he had started flax-dressing, was burnt down and left him without a sixpence. The farm at Lochlea was a ruinous venture under a hard and grinding factor, and so was Mossgiel, to which he and his brother removed, for there backward seasons and bad crops again stranded them. Throughout the sudden and brilliant triumphs of Edinburgh he was harassed by the problem what he was to do to make a livelihood, and when he emerged from these and settled at Ellisland, bent on persevering industry, fresh trouble confronted him. There was no success. The very nag he had bought and got into good condition for the Dumfries Fair died suddenly of an unsuspected affection of the spine; the farm didn't pay its way, and even with his hard-earned stipend of £50 a year as an exciseman, he could not make both ends meet. When launched on purely official life in our town of Dumfries, he was threatened with ruin because of some unguarded words which would to-day be described as mildly democratic. Even on his death-bed he was haunted by a dun. Burns was indeed a man whom,

Unmerciful disaster

Followed fast and followed faster,

and looking back on his career it is now impossible to say whether the disasters

that befel him blunted or whetted his poetic powers. Clouds as well as sunshine are necessary for the fruitful land. Of men, as well as of trees exposed to storms, it is sometimes true that "the firmer they root them the louder it blows." Had Burns enjoyed comfortable days and smug respectability we might never have had "Man was made to mourn," or "The Jolly Beggars." (Applause.) Some of the sweetest of his songs were crooned in moments of the deepest despondency. His humour was the complement of his melancholy. His satiric wit was a protest against hypocrisy and the slights put upon him. His tenderness and sympathy would have been impossible but for the sufferings he endured. Perhaps, on the other hand, he might have risen to still higher flights in the empyrean than those he achieved had he not been clogged by earthly cares; and this seems certain, that the hardships and disappointments he passed through and the anodynes to which they drove him cut short his days and curtailed the volume of his production. He was only 37 when he died, and "full surely his greatness was a-ripening." (Applause.) The splendid elasticity of Burns' spirit and the inexhaustible goodness of his heart are shown forth by the way in which through all his troubles he rallied from their crushing effects, poured forth again his stream of poesy, limpid and sparkling as ever, and exercised a personal charm and witchery that fascinated all who came within his sphere. As Syme, who knew and loved him, said, "He was burnt to a cinder;" but even

then he glowed with the old radiance, for within a few weeks of his death he composed that exquisite song which Mendelssohn caught up into heavenly harmony, "O, wert thou in the cauld blast," and that witty election squib, "Who will buy my troggin?" (Applause.)

There was one misfortune that befel Burns that had no redeeming quality or wholesome reaction, but was all evil, and that was the death in 1791, at the age of 42, of his patron, the Earl of Glencairn, who was not only his patron, but I venture to think, the best, the wisest, the most constant and helpful of his friends. (Applause.) Burns was introduced to Lord Glencairn, the 14th Earl, who took his title from one of the most picturesque upland valleys in our country, by his cousin-german, Mr James Dalrymple of Orangefield, Ayr, who also furnished Burns with the pony on which he journeyed to Edinburgh. Lord Glencairn had artistic tastes and a love of poetry, inherited, no doubt, from his mother—the daughter of a poor violinist and music master in Ayr, but adopted and enriched by an Indian Nabob—and so he at once appreciated Burns' merits, to use Burns' own words, "took him in hand," and carved out whatever success marked his future career. He it was who secured Burns' entrance to the best set of Edinburgh society, who made him known to Dugald Stewart, Mackenzie, Blair, Monboddo, and all the men of light and leading in the Scotland of the period, who introduced him to Creech, the publisher, who persuaded the Caledonian Hunt to subscribe for 400 copies of the Edinburgh

edition, who interested the Scottish nobility in the work, and who was instrumental in securing the appointment in the Excise. He believed in Burns, and from first to last showed him steadfast kindness, and it was therefore a sad and ill-fated day for Burns when, in 1790, just when he and Jean were happy for a little at Ellisland, and when he had excelled himself in "Tam o' Shanter," Lord Glencairn was attacked by illness which necessitated his wintering abroad, and carried him off in the prime of his life in January, 1791. No one who studies the relations between them will doubt that, had Lord Glencairn survived, the last five critical years of Burns' life would have been very different from what they were. Lord Glencairn was a man of high and upright character, and of a generous nature. He had great influence with Burns, who deferred to his judgment, and was deeply attached to him. Had he lived, he might have swayed him in the right direction; he would most probably have secured for him that promotion in the Excise which he desired and which would have freed him from sordid anxiety, and he would certainly never have allowed the pecuniary embarrassment and abject misery of his dying days. But what Lord Glencairn's life might have prevented, his death precipitated. Burns felt the blow acutely, and it no doubt contributed to the recklessness of his later years. Burns liberally acknowledged his obligations to Lord Glencairn, and gave fervid utterance to the affection and gratitude with which he regarded him. During his lifetime he wrote to

him:—"Your Lordship's patronage and goodness have rescued me from obscurity, wretchedness, and exile," and in the Lament on his death, amongst its elegiac strains he dwelt on the same theme:—

In Poverty's low barren vale,
 Thick mist obscure, involved me round,
 Tho' oft I turned the wistful eye
 Nae ray of fame was to be found;
 Thou found'st me like the morning sun
 That melts the fogs in limpid air;
 The friendless Bard and rustic song
 Became alike thy fostering care.
 The bridegroom may forget the bride
 Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
 The monarch may forget the crown
 That on his head an hour hath been;
 The mother may forget the child
 That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
 But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
 And a' that thou hast done for me.

In a letter to Glencairn's sister, Lady Elizabeth Cunningham, in 1791, Burns wrote:—"If among my children I shall have a son that has a heart, he shall hand it down to his child as a family honour and a family debt, that my dearest existence I owe to the noble heart of Glencairn." He named his fourth son, born 12th August, 1794, three years after the Earl's death, James Glencairn Burns, and that son, who became Colonel Burns, now perpetuates the name of Glencairn on his tombstone on the wall of the mausoleum in St. Michael's Churchyard. (Applause.)

I think you will agree with me that Burns' association with Lord Glencairn was a moving and memorable episode in his history. Well, of that episode it is my privilege to present to the Burns Club

this evening what will, I think, be regarded as an interesting and valuable souvenir. In Paterson's edition of Burns, published in Edinburgh in six volumes in 1891, and edited by Scott Douglas, I find the following under date January 25th, 1787:—"On this the Poet's birthday the Earl of Glencairn presented to him a silver snuffbox. The lid shows a five-shilling coin of the Reign of Charles I., dated 1644. On an inner and carved bottom of the box Burns has, with his own hand, recorded the fact and the date of presentation." That silver snuffbox presented to Burns by Lord Glencairn on his birthday exactly 133 years ago, at a dinner of the Caledonian Hunt, lies on the table before me, and I am commissioned by the owner, one of the most distinguished men of science of the age, Sir James Dewar, to offer it to the acceptance of the Dumfries Burns Club. (Loud applause.) On the 12th of July, 1894, at the close of the season, Sir James Dewar looked in at Christie's showroom in London, and noticed amongst other silver articles and coins this box, which attracted him by its artistic quality. On picking it up to look at it, he found that it had a double bottom, and on removing the outer casing he read this inscription, unmistakably, as regards the signature at any rate, in the hand-writing of Burns:—

Presented

By my highly esteemed
Patron and Benefactor,
the Earl of Glencairn.
25 January, A.D., 1787,
Robt. Burns.

Remuneratio ejus cum
Altissimo.

Sir James had not seen the catalogue in which the box was correctly described as having belonged to Burns, and so he went back to the sale next day thinking that perhaps its special significance was not known, but determined anyhow to ac-



Sir James Dewar, F.R.S., LL.D., Etc.,
Donor of the Glencairn Snuff-box.

quire the precious relic, for he is a profound and reverent admirer of Burns. (Applause.) The box was put up at a small figure, but was rapidly run up, and ultimately Sir James found that he had one competitor left, a man on the opposite side of the room, who went on persistently bidding against him. But Sir James was more persistent still, and finally the box was knocked down to him

Burns Snuff Box
4 Gift
To the Burns Club
in the City of Edinburgh
By Sir James Dewar, F.R.S.
Presented to the Club by his Majesty's
Highness the Earl of Glencairn, 27th August 1787

Presented
by my highly Esteemed
Patron and Benefactor
the Earl of Glencairn
27th January A.D. 1787
Robt Burns
Remuneratio quo aere
Utile sumo



Silver Snuff-box presented to Burns by the Earl of Glencairn on the Poet's birthday, 1787; acquired by Sir James Dewar and gifted by him to the Club, through Sir James Crichton-Browne.

at a very large price. (Applause.) When the sale was over, Sir James went to the man who had been bidding against him and said, "I suppose you are a Burns worshipper like me and are sorry to have missed the box?" "Burns!" the man replied, "I didn't know the box had anything to do with Burns. I have been bidding on behalf of a Scottish nobleman (naming him) who very much wants the rare Carolus coin let into the lid of the box to add to his collection!" (Laughter.) And that leads me, parenthetically, to say that apart from its Burns connection, this box is very valuable because of this coin, which is generally known to collectors as the "Oxford Crown," of which only eleven specimens are known to exist, and as all are in fine condition it most probably was never put into circulation, and is therefore a pattern. The dies for this coin were made by Thomas Rawlins, Chief Engraver to the King, who, when the Tower Mint was seized by the Parliament in 1642, removed to Oxford and produced this extremely fine piece of work, all the details of which are, as you will see, executed with much care. But, for us, the inscription is more curious and alluring than the coin. Burns had a partiality for scratching on glass, and many window panes have borne traces of his diamond ring, but here we have him scratching on silver and essaying a Latin motto—"Remuneratio ejus cum Altissimo."—which means, "his recompense is with the Most High," and is a graceful compliment to the donor of the box. Burns was fond of using scraps of French in his correspond-

ence, and says in his autobiography that he and his brother Gilbert studied Latin with John Murdoch, but he could hardly have written of his own accord, "*Remuneratio ejus cum Altissimo,*" which looks like a quotation, but has not been found in any concordance, and which it has been suggested was perhaps supplied to him by his friend William Nicol, who was a classical master in the Edinburgh High School.

What has been the history of this snuff-box since Burns' death in 1796 till it appeared in Christie's saleroom in 1894? We may be sure that Burns never parted with so dear a memento, and it is unlikely that his widow would do so. She was left in poverty, but subscriptions were immediately got up on her behalf, and she continued to live in the house in which her husband died until her own death in 1834. Then it was that Burns' household effects, furniture, linen, china, etc., were brought to the hammer, and that, as Burns' fame had by that time risen by leaps and bounds, extraordinary prices were realised, a tin tea kettle bringing £2, an eight-day clock £35, and a small wooden chair £3 7s. Then, no doubt, it was at that sale that this snuff-box was sold, and I think I have discovered a clue to the purchaser. About the date of the sale at Christie's (just before it) a newspaper paragraph appeared in which the reporter said:—"At the house of Mr Robert Hepburn, 9 Portland Place, was found a silver snuffbox which had been presented to the Poet Burns by the Earl of Glencairn." Now, Hepburn is a Dumfries name. There

was a Mr John Hepburn selling land in the burgh in 1564, and a Mr Hepburn apparently in the Town Council in 1715, and I can distinctly remember that in 1854—that is to say, just 20 years after the Burns sale—there was a family of the name of Hepburn, a branch, I believe, of the Buchan-Hepburns of Haddingtonshire, who were the owners of Castle-dykes. There can be little doubt, I think, that some member of that family bought the box at the Burns' sale and that it remained in the possession of that family until 1894. (Applause.) Since 1894 the box has been in the hands of Sir James Dewar, and has been an object of interest and veneration to the many distinguished people who have frequented Lady Dewar's salon. But Sir James recently made up his mind that it should go to some public body for permanent preservation, and he has happily decided on the Burns Club of Dumfries. (Loud applause.) He has been urged to bestow it on the British Museum, on South Kensington, on the Edinburgh Portrait Gallery, on the Antiquarian Society, and in other quarters, but has felt that it should go to the place where the Poet's ashes rest and where his memory is kept green. (Applause.) When he hinted to me that he thought of our Club, you may depend upon it that I did not discourage the notion. (Applause.) Sir James Dewar has visited Dumfries more than once, has with me lingered by the grave of Burns, and by the

Lonely heights and howes,
Where he paid Nature tuneful vows
Or wiped his honourable brows,
Redeemed with toil—

he has felt the Burns glamour of Dumfries, and now pays his tribute to the memory of the Bard. (Applause.) I wish Sir James could have been here this evening, but he writes to me—"The last thing I want is any notoriety about this presentation. It is because of my love for you that I wish to see the box located in your native town." (Applause.) Sir James may shrink from notoriety, but he cannot escape our heartfelt acknowledgment of his gift. (Loud applause.) The box is really a national treasure and will be an heirloom in our Club. A new value is, I think, added to it by the fact that it comes to us from an illustrious man of science, the successor of Davy, and Faraday, and Tindall, who, while enlarging the boundaries of knowledge, has kept in communion with poetry, music, and art, and who is a countryman of Robert Burns. (Loud applause.)

The toast was honoured with great enthusiasm.

The Chairman, in calling upon Mr J. W. Whitelaw, said it was a very great pleasure to him and to all the old members of the Club to think that one who had been so long associated with the Club, not only personally but in a hereditary way as Mr Whitelaw had been, was there to acknowledge the toast of the Club and to speak for them in acknowledging this gift. (Applause.)

Mr J. W. Whitelaw, in responding to the toast, said:—I have a very pleasant duty to perform, namely, to tender our sincere thanks to Sir James Crichton-Browne for the able manner in which he has proposed the toast of the Dumfries Burns.



Mr J. W. Whitelaw.

Club. He has alluded to the formation of the Club 100 years ago, and I would venture in reply to add to what Sir James has so well said a few remarks regarding those three gentlemen who were the original office-bearers of the Club. They were Mr John Commelin, Mr John Syme, and Mr William Grierson. Mr Commelin was a native of the Stewartry, and was proprietor of King's Grange, in the

parish of Urr. He was for a time in business as a writer in Kirkcudbright, but afterwards came to Dumfries, and ultimately became agent of the British Linen Bank here. He was a man of excellent literary taste and a good classical scholar. Mr William Grierson was a successful draper in Dumfries, and lived in Irish Street, where his son, the late Dr Grierson, of Thornhill, was born. He seems also to have been interested in agricultural matters, as he was tenant of the farm of Boatford, near Thornhill, and on retiring from business in Dumfries he went to reside at Grovehill, which is quite near Boatford. He was a Justice of the Peace for the county of Dumfries, and seems to have taken a somewhat prominent part in the public life of the town and district. It was Mr John Syme, however, who had most intimate relations with the Poet. He also was connected with the Stewartry, although not, I think, a native of it. His father was a successful Writer to the Signet, and owned the property of Barncailzie, in the parish of Kirkpatrick-Durham. John Syme at first studied law, but gave that up and joined the Army, and ultimately took up farming at Barncailzie. Subsequently that property had to be sold on account of the failure of the Ayr Bank, in which his father was involved. John Syme then came to Dumfries and took up residence at Ryedale, when he became distributor of stamps for the district. His office was on the ground floor of the house near the foot of Bank Street—then known as the Wee Vennel—on the first

floor of which Burns occupied three or four rooms when he came to Dumfries from Ellisland. A great friendship sprang up between the two men, and Burns was very frequently at Ryedale; it was with Syme that he made his famous tour through Galloway, and Mr Syme showed many acts of kindness to the Poet during his lifetime, and to his widow and family after his death. Mr Syme seems to have had very considerable literary ability, and there was at one time a question as to whether he should be the editor of the "Work and Life of Burns," published after the Poet's death for the benefit of his widow and family, and which produced quite a considerable sum. In the end Dr Currie, of Liverpool, who was a Dumfriesshire boy, was chosen as editor, and Mr Syme was at very considerable trouble in collecting material for and in otherwise assisting Dr Currie, who was a personal friend of his own. Those three gentlemen to whom I have referred were the leaders of a coterie of Burns enthusiasts in Dumfries who, before the formation of the Club, used to meet every 25th of January and celebrate the Poet's birthday; it was that coterie who initiated the movement which resulted in the building of the mausoleum; and at the dinner of 25th January, 1819, held in the Globe Inn, they resolved to purchase a punch bowl for use by the subscribers on similar occasions. I mention this fact as it was the nucleus out of which the Club sprang. The bowl was obtained from a well-known

manufacturer of the time, Spode of Staffordshire, at a cost of £15, and was exhibited at a business meeting of the subscribers on 18th January, 1820; and at that meeting it was resolved to form the subscribers, whose names are given on the bowl, into a society to be called the Burns Club of Dumfries—(applause)—and Mr Commelin was appointed president, Mr Syme vice-president, and Mr Grierson secretary and treasurer of the Society. At the dinner held a week later in the King's Arms Inn, the bowl was "han'selled," and it became a great feature of the annual dinner for many years. It still exists, though in a rather dilapidated condition, and I am glad to see it on the table to-night. Such was the origin of the Dumfries Burns Club, and it is well that we should have in our memories to-night the three gentlemen who acted as sponsors for us at our nativity. I wonder if these gossips "keekit in the loof" of the baby club and in their imagination foresaw that their original number of thirty-five would a century later expand to a membership of 176, and that many Burns Clubs would spring up not only in this country but all over the world wherever a little band of Scotsmen were gathered together. (Applause.) In addition to proposing this toast, Sir James has, with his well-known charm of phraseology, made a very valuable and interesting presentation on behalf of Sir James Dewar. This is of such importance that I think it warrants full official recognition, and as our secretary is also

to say a few words in reply, I leave him to deal with the matter. I think, Mr Secretary, I have kept within the time limit you set me, but if you will bear with me a minute longer I would also like to make a presentation to the Club, although on a much lower plane than the one I have just referred to. When Mr Syme's effects were distributed by public roup after his death, my father purchased at the sale a wooden toddy ladle, and the tradition of the time was that this ladle was frequently in use on the occasion of Burns' visits to Ryedale. Therefore it may possibly be a link with the Poet, and it undoubtedly is one with his friend, Mr John Syme, who was one of the authors of our existence. I beg that the Club will become custodiers of it, if they will condescend to accept so humble a gift. (Applause.) Sir James, I have again to thank you for your proposal of this toast. (Applause.) To the Burns Club my personal thanks are due for the very great honour they have done me in asking me to respond to their toast on this the centenary meeting of the Club. (Applause.) Long may the Dumfries Burns Club continue to flourish, to keep green the memory of the Bard, and to preserve that spirit of Scottish nationality of which he was the embodiment, and which, fused to a white heat by the fire of his immortal genius, shines through and illuminates his Works. (Loud applause.)

The Chairman, in calling upon Mr M'Burnie, referred to him as the "heart and marrow of Dumfries Burns Club."

Mr M'Burnie, in reply, said:—It is scarcely fair that an ex-Dean of the Faculty of Procurators should pass on the important duty of thanking, in name of the Club, the generous donors of the gifts which have been presented to us this evening, but I shall endeavour to do



Mr J. M'Burnie.

so briefly. It is not often in the history of our club that such a valuable relic comes our way unsought. I think you will all agree that the snuff-box which you see on the table is a handsome gift, and the unassuming way in which Sir James Dewar has asked it should be given to us stamps it with the true spirit which should animate every gift, in that it is the spontaneous freewill offering of the giver. (Applause.) Sir James Crichton-Browne

has truly said, however, that the fact of this gift being presented to us cannot remain hidden, and I am certain that our friends of the Press will see that Sir James Dewar's generosity to us is known from John o' Groats to Land's End, aye, and also in those Dominions beyond the seas where our National Poet's name and works are loved, honoured, and revered as warmly and as worthily as they are in the old town of Dumfries. (Applause.) The gift is doubly valuable to us, coming as it does through one of our oldest surviving vice-presidents, our illustrious townsman, Sir James Crichton-Browne. (Applause.) I should like to draw your attention to Sir James Crichton-Browne's own modesty in connection with this matter. I think if he had told his own part as fully as he has given us the history of the gift, we should find that, but for his friendship with the giver and his judicious mention of our Club, we might very possibly now be hearing that some one of those other institutions which he mentioned was glorying in being the proud possessor of this wonderful prize. I think you gentlemen, who know Sir James so well, and appreciate his persuasive eloquence, will not forget to connect him in our thoughts with that other Sir James when you think of our good fortune, and I imagine I can hear some of you saying "They're a worthy pair." (Applause.) One might enlarge indefinitely on this theme, but the time at my disposal tonight forbids, so we can only congratulate ourselves and mark our gratitude to the giver as best we may. (Ap-

plause.) Mr Whitelaw is one of ourselves, and his bringing with him some tangible token of his affection for the Club, of which he is now one of the oldest members, is only what we might expect. (Applause.) But, gentlemen, we do not always get what we expect, or even what we sometimes consider we might justly claim as our due, more especially in the way of Burns relics, and his action to-night is therefore all the more to be commended as an example for others to emulate. (Applause.) The article he has handed over to-night was the property of a gentleman who was not only one of the first members of our Club, but who was also one of the closest friends of the Poet during these last trying years in Dumfries. It therefore serves to remind us both of Burns and of Syme, and so will prove an interesting addition to that collection in the Burns House, which we are anxious to enrich. (Applause.) I have now to hand over to the Club, on behalf of Mr James Craik, Dalgrange, Cambuslang, an old son of Dumfries, a bread basket said to have been the property of "Bonnie Jean," and an old banner which was carried in the procession on the occasion of the Dumfries Centenary celebrations in 1859. Mr Craik narrates that the bread basket was given by Jean Armour to an old woman who used to work for her, called Mary Burnie, and was given by the latter to a member of his own family. He states that his father had many times gone messages for "Bonnie Jean," as their houses were not far apart. The history of the banner he does not know quite

so well, but he is aware of the fact that it was some time in the Wilson family, one of the members of which, Alex. Wilson, cabman, died recently in Dumfries, and that it was carried in the 1859 procession, which he states he well remembers, because in his anxiety to see his father, who was in the company, he overbalanced himself, and fell on his head on to the pavement below, necessitating a close acquaintance with sticking plaster, this fact impressing the matter in his memory. (Laughter.) Some of you gentlemen may remember Mr Craik, as I myself recollect a brother who carried on business at the Pent House End. He wishes to present these gifts to us in name of his late mother, who resided at the Pent House End for over half a century. (Applause.) I have already thanked Mr Craik in your name, but I am sure you will wish him to know that you appreciate his kindness in returning these articles to Dumfries, and making them over to your care. (Applause.) You have before you to-night, I think, the first gift made to our Club, the portrait of Burns, painted by J. Gilfillan, miniature painter, who joined our Club in 1821, and who presented this portrait to the Club, along with a companion portrait of "Bonnie Jean," the following year. These portraits graced the dinner in 1822, and while only one of them is here to-night, it is accompanied by a replica of its companion, the original being now in the National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. How it came there is a story too long to tell to-night, but we are satisfied

that in the replica before you, which was presented to the Club by Sir John Findlay, Edinburgh, in amicable settlement of a long standing dispute, we have secured a work of art well worthy of hanging in the place from which the original has been removed. (Hear, hear.) In addition to those brought under your notice by Mr Whitelaw, I should like to mention only one of those original members whose name is on the old punch bowl, Mr G. W. Boyd, W.S., a brother of the Mrs Maxwell of Gribton of that day. It had been long thought that the last survivor of our original members was the late Mr William Gordon, writer, father of Mr Henry Gordon, sheriff clerk, and Mr H. Sharpe Gordon of Glenæ, who both sometime held the office of secretary of our Club, but I find a minute in Mr Henry Gordon's handwriting stating that at the time of his father's death he had discovered Mr Boyd was then surviving, and resident at that time in the Isle of Man. I find Mr Boyd survived until 1887, so that he was a member of this Club for no less than 67 years, and at the time of his death was not only our oldest member but was also the oldest member of the W.S. Society, of which he had been a member for the long period of 71 years. I do not know his age at the time of his death, but you will see from the figures given that his membership of these societies had certainly not impaired his vitality. (Laughter.) Mr Whitelaw has mentioned the house in Bank Street, and it may therefore be fitting to read at this stage a communication dealing with

this subject, sent to me by Dr J. Maxwell Wood, Edinburgh, a former president of the Club, with a request that I should bring it before you in the course of our proceedings to-night. His letter is addressed to the chairman and members of the Dumfries Burns Club at the Centenary celebrations 1920, and is as follows:—

May I, as a life-member, be privileged to express the deep pleasure I feel at the very immediate prospect of the Dumfries Burns Club attaining its centenary? Much water has flowed underneath Devorgilla's bridge since the 18th January, 1820, when the Club came into existence, which, expressed as a century of consistent and useful existence, must give us pause. And now the question arises—at least for those of us not in immediate touch—of how this happy completion of years is to be notched in the post of practical appreciation. For myself, it has been a cherished thought for many years that some day, not alone would the house where the Poet died have its doors thrown wide to the Burns Pilgrim, but also that the house in Bank Street, where the Bard dwelt on retiring from Ellisland, would come to be an additional shrine in Dumfries for his devotees. In a word, is it not possible for the Dumfries Burns Club to acquire possession of the Bank Street House, restore it as far as possible to the semblance of its original condition, and so preserve and throw open to the public an important landmark of the Dumfries period of Burns's life? A further elaboration of the scheme might be the restoration of Syme's tax-office below, which could be utilised as a repository for such things as would appeal to the visitor, much as the "Old Edinburgh" bookseller's shop at the base of John Knox's house here. It may be, however, that other plans have been made,

or that great difficulties are in the way. Nevertheless, I take this unique opportunity of making the suggestion.

I hold in my hand the original minute book of the Club, which contains most interesting information, but time forbids us going into it at any length to-night. One is, however, impressed with the care with which the then secretary recorded that "the company was highly respectable," all the more that he concludes his report of several of those early dinners with the note, "three of the Club glasses were broken at the dinner table by accident." (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I think we may feel quite entitled to class ourselves under the description given by that secretary of his company—(laughter and hear, hear)—but I am very certain that your present secretary will have no occasion to add a note to his minute reporting any disaster to our table appointments to-night. (Laughter.) It is interesting to recall that one of those present at the Club dinner in 1822 was James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd," who was then an honorary member of the Club, and that he was one of the singers who on that occasion entertained the company. At that same dinner there were admitted as honorary members rather a famous group, and it might not be amiss to give their names—Robert, William, and James Glencairn Burns, sons of the Poet; Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Moore, Thomas Campbell, James Montgomery, Allan Cunningham, George Thomson,

General Dirom of Mount Annan, W. R. Keith Douglas, M.P., and Professor William Tennant, Dollar. (Applause.) Before sitting down I might mention two other recent gifts to the Club, the one by Sir J. M. Barrie when he purchased for a handsome figure the items on exhibition in the Burns House which had belonged to the late Provost James Lennox, and the other by our good friend and fellow-member, Walter Scott, of New York, who purchased, also for a very considerable sum, and again restored to our custody, the MSS. connected with the Dumfries Centenary celebrations in 1896. Mr Scott is a gentleman who never forgets to send us a greeting as each Christmas and anniversary day comes round, and one who does much more good work for Burns Clubs and other societies of every description than ever comes to the knowledge of the majority of our members. (Applause.) These have already been fully brought to your notice, but as this is our first dinner since they were received I may be pardoned for recalling them to your memory on this historic anniversary. Gentlemen, I must now conclude, and I ask you to accord your hearty thanks to the donors of the valuable and interesting gifts by which the Club has to-night been enriched, and I shall thereafter endeavour to convey your appreciation to them in suitable form. (Loud applause.)

The Chairman suggested that Dr Maxwell Wood's letter be remitted to the Com-

mittee for their sympathetic consideration, and this proposal was adopted.

The Chairman, in calling upon Lord St. Vigeans, said the fact that that gentleman had been Sheriff of Dumfriesshire and Galloway brought to his mind one sentence he was sure they would all wish him to say. There were a great many people there that night, but there was one vacant place which all of them, and especially the older members of the Club, felt created a great blank. In all his membership of the Club he had not seen the place of Sheriff Campion once vacant. Unfortunately that night Sheriff Campion was not present. He could conceive of no man who more fully met Burns' conception of simple, true, courteous, and gentle manhood than Sheriff Campion. (Applause.) They hoped that before very long he would again be restored to his place in the Court, where he not only had the appreciation of all who practised before him but the confidence of every member of the public. (Applause.) He had already taken upon himself, in anticipation of what he knew was the desire of the members, to convey to Sheriff Campion by letter, so that he would receive it at the time the dinner was beginning, an expression of their sympathy with him and their feeling of regret that he was not able to be present. (Applause.) It was a great honour to them that Lord St. Vigeans should have come so far to renew at that board of friendship his associations with Dumfries. (Applause.)

“SCOTTISH LITERATURE.”

Lord St. Vigeans, in proposing the toast of “Scottish Literature,” said:—The importance and wide range of such a subject might well appal the stoutest heart, but my task becomes all the more onerous when I see the distinguished names of the men who are to reply—men



Lord St. Vigeans.

who have made their mark in the world of Letters, and have helped to swell the stream of Scottish Literature, which has flowed down to us from early times, in such rich and copious volume. Scotland geographically is a small country, and was little known to Continental nations even in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, except through the gallant bearing of her soldiers and the breadth of the erudition of her scholars

who sought glory and learning in the Courts and Universities of Europe; but it early made its mark in history as the home of a shrewd and far-seeing race, gifted with no mean talent for grasping and expounding the eternal verities of life. (Applause.) If we surveyed the whole arena of Scottish literature, and could claim no other names than those of Burns and Scott, Carlyle and Stevenson, Scotland might proudly say that she had made a memorable contribution to the roll of names of imperishable power and genius. (Applause.) The earlier literature of Scotland, from its archaic form, and its many obsolete words and phrases, is apt to repel the general reader, but it well repays perusal. In Barbour, Dunbar, Gavin Douglas and Sir David Lindsay, you find a genuine touch of the true spirit of poetry, in spite of the mediæval forms in which their works are cast. Barbour's *Brus* may be taken as the earliest example of our vernacular literature; and if nothing else in the *Brus* lived, his *Apostrophe to Liberty* is worthy of a place in our remembrance.—

Ah, Fredome is a noble thing,
 Fredome maks man to have liking,
 Fredome all solace to man gives;
 He lives at ease, who freely lives;
 A noble heart may have nane ease,
 Na ellys nocht that may him please,
 Giff Fredome faille;
 He suld think Fredome mair to prize
 Than all the gold in warld that is."

(Applause.) That sentiment, expressed by a poet who wrote in 1375, has rung through the centuries in

the hearts of Scotsmen, and even in our own day has inspired our men to stern deeds of valour. (Applause.) But Barbour did more than bequeath to us these stanzas. He did for the Scots language what Chaucer did for English. He made it a living language, fit for expressing all shades of emotion, and capable of becoming a literary vehicle of thought. What is noteworthy of these early makaris is that they founded before the sixteenth century a distinctive national school of Scottish literature, created by men who had not only the power of vivid description, but also possessed the sacred gift of imagination, besides being imbued with a lofty sense of patriotism and a love for the dignity and well-being of Scotland—that patriotism which has been called the most genuine, the most intense, and the most illogical thing in the world. (Laughter and applause.) These characteristics are further developed in the Scottish Ballads, which display so much genuine feeling, and exhibit, in its rarest form, the depth and intensity of human emotion. As a distinguished critic has said, they are ardently poetic, and are inspired by a Homeric power of rapid narration. In Sir Patrick Spens you have a vivid description of a storm at sea:—

They hadna gaen a league, a league,
 A league, but barely three,
 When the lift grew dark, the wind blew
 loud,
 And gurly grew the sea.
 The anchors brak and the topmast lap,
 It was sic a deadly storm,

And the waves cam' o'er the broken ship,
Till a' her sides were torn.

Or take another aspect in a Ballad which is native to the South Country, "Fair Helen of Kirkconnell":—

Oh Helen fair, beyond compare,
I'll weave a garland of thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I dee.

The years between what may be termed the ancient and modern writers in Scotland were, unfortunately, years of sturt and strife, filled with persecutions, polemical controversies, and sad bickerings on ecclesiastical questions. Those years produced much controversial literature which showed great learning and an intricate knowledge of ecclesiastical subtleties, not unmingled with vicious bitterness. These controversies are, happily, in a large measure forgotten, and with them much if not all of the literature to which they gave birth. Those years are unrelieved by any light-some spirit of poetry, save the homely pastorals of the gentle and joyous Allan Ramsay, and the outburst of song that centred round the person of the brave and handsome but unfortunate young Chevalier—touching and pathetic as became a lost cause. Their intensity is only equalled by some of the later poems of the Highlands in which you hear the exile's passionate yearning for the lone sheiling of the misty Isle.

Modern Scottish literature may be said to begin with Burns; but, of course, that subject is not permitted, and if it

were permitted, it would be perfectly unnecessary to add a single word to the eloquent tribute which you have heard from your Chairman to-night. (Applause.) Burns was followed by Scott and the coterie of brilliant intellectuals, such as Jeffrey, Cockburn, Francis Horner, and Brougham, who, in the early part of the nineteenth century made Edinburgh as a centre of literature and erudition famous the world over. (Applause.) But it would be presumption for me to say anything of Scott and his contemporaries, who only need to be mentioned to remind you of all their glorious literary achievements. (Applause.)

Then a gigantic figure looms out of the darkness of a smoky den in Chelsea—Thomas Carlyle—(cheers)—who dominated the latter part of the century, and whom you may justly claim as a product of Dumfriesshire. (Applause.) It is sometimes said that Carlyle's day is past, and that he is not read now as our fathers read him. But that criticism is beside the mark. He was above all things a prophet with a message, and I venture to think that his mission was accomplished. (Applause.) His philosophy, so far as it was sound, has sunk into the consciousness of the nation, and has become part of the intellectual processes of the individual. (Applause.) There let him rest—a great figure, a powerful intellect, and a mighty force which moved the nations to consider their ways and be wise. (Applause.) Then comes a tall, gaunt figure, wasted

by illness, but sustained by all the indomitable spirit of his ancestors—Robert Louis Stevenson. (Applause.) Whether you travel with him from the inhospitable shores of Mull across broad Scotland in company with vain-glorious but lovable Allan Breck, or take a hand at the cartes with the fugitive Cluny Macpherson, in the cave on lonely Ben Alder, whether you float leisurely down the Flanders rivers listening to his shrewd comments on life and customs on the banks, or take a more venturesome voyage to the South Seas to fight the pirates of Treasure Island, Stevenson is always delightful, an ideal expositor of style, and a past master of his craft. (Applause.) I am not going to dilate upon the work of J. M. Barrie, who is also one of the brilliant sons of Dumfriesshire, beyond saying that he has not only idealised the patient, humble virtues of the Scots peasantry, but by his plays has added to the gaiety of nations. (Applause.) On the man who has made famous the scenery of Galloway and its wild life in the olden days I will not venture to speak in a company like the present, in case I should, by some literary solecism, betray the fact that, after all, I am only an outsider—(laughter)—whose official connection with Dumfries and Galloway was all too short to enable me to be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Moss-Haggs, but none too short to enable me to appreciate the all-pervading kindness and exquisite sympathy of their indwellers. (Applause.) Now, I am done. One might be tempted to imitate the advo-

cate, who was prosing on in the forenoon, and when the visitor returned in the afternoon was still at it. When the visitor asked a bystander whether the advocate was not taking a long time: "Time," said he, "he has long since exhausted time; he is now encroaching on eternity." (Laughter.) I have not attempted to give any general characterisation of Scottish literature. I leave that to the more able hands of those who are to reply.

I have to couple this toast with the names of Sir Herbert Maxwell and Joseph Laing Waugh. (Applause.) With regard to the first I will only quote the lines of Chaucer:

He was a very parfit gentil Knight,
 And like the clerk of Oxenford,
 For him was leifer han at his beddes head
 A twenty bokes, cladde in black or red,
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie
 Than robes rich, fidel, or sautrie,
 But albeit that he was a philosopre.

(Applause.) Sir Herbert Maxwell has discoursed delightfully upon men, manners, and nature, and has taken you on entrancing expeditions in pursuit of the elusive salmon, but besides all that he has done great and enduring work in archæology and history, particularly in connection with Dumfries and Galloway. (Applause.) Mr Waugh has followed the footsteps of some of his great predecessors, and has cast the halo of romance round the lives and sayings of a Dumfriesshire village, which, for obvious reasons, will be nameless. (Laughter and ap-

plause.) These gentlemen are worthy successors of a long line of literary Scotsmen, and are carrying on the best traditions of Scottish literature. (Applause.) There is an old story in the Saga of Gisli, the outlaw, about Thorgrim, who was slain, like many other Scandinavians, in a blood feud. He was buried, as was then usual, in his ship, and preparatory to his journey to Valhalla, the hell shoon were bound securely on his feet according to the then sacred ritual, and the earth was heaped upon his howe or burial mound. In after years it was noticed that one side of Thorgrim's burial howe was never touched by frost or snow, but always remained green all through the Arctic winter of Iceland. The reason is explained by the Sagaman to be that the Sun God Frey so loved his soul that he would never allow any frost or snow to come between them to chill their friendship. I never look across the cemetery of Dumfries but I think that as each year goes by, you, too, perform the same good offices for the spirit of Burns as did the Sun God Frey. Your annual festival keeps green the memory of the Immortal Bard. (Applause.) Gentlemen, I give you the toast of Scottish Literature. (Loud applause.)

The toast was pledged with much cordiality.

The Chairman, in calling upon Sir Herbert Maxwell to respond, said he did so with feelings of grateful pride in the compliment Sir Herbert had done them in being present. (Applause.)

Sir Herbert Maxwell said:—In rising to respond to the toast which has been proposed with such graceful eloquence by Lord St. Vigeans, I am torn between three emotions. The first is a sense of grave responsibility in having to reply on behalf of Scottish Men of Letters,



Sir Herbert E. Maxwell.

past, present, and to come. The second is a feeling of deep diffidence at having my name associated with the great names which Lord St. Vigeans has brought to our recollection; and the third, and perhaps the most serious of all, is a dread lest I should, unconsciously, overstep the boundary of eternity. (Laughter.) I can assure you I shall do no such thing. My words will be very brief. There is only a single particular in which I may claim—and I do so proudly—to stand on

an equal footing with any of the great names in literature of the past. It is many years since I sent my first contribution to the "Times" newspaper and received the first remuneration I ever did for anything I had written. It was exactly the same in amount, namely £5, as Milton's publisher paid him for the first edition of "Paradise Lost." (Laughter.) There the parallel ceases. (Laughter.) Burns made a better start than Milton and I—(laughter)—I like that copula—(laughter)—because I believe Burns received £20 for the first edition of his first book, published at Kilmarnock in 1786. If I am not mistaken that little volume brought a few years ago at a sale a sum close upon, if not up to, £1000. Perhaps you may think it sordid to dwell on these mercenary details, but after all poets, although they are not made on the principle of the penny-in-the-slot machine, have to live, and there are many melancholy instances of their having been pretty hard put to it to do so, and prose writers also, which probably was in Dr Johnson's mind when he said that no one but a blockhead ever wrote except for money. (Laughter.) That was too sweeping a generality, and he in whose honour we are assembled to-night was a conspicuous instance of the contrary. It is true that he received substantial sums from Creech, the Edinburgh publisher, but he never received a penny for the songs he wrote. It is a remarkable fact that is often overlooked that those imperishable lyrics which have endeared him above everything else to his countrymen and have made

his name radiant throughout the world, were flung gratuitously upon the public. (Applause.) It would have been well had it been otherwise, for in spite of what my friend, Sir James Crichton-Browne has said about disaster dogging Burns' footsteps, I think if he had taken a more practical view he might have escaped many of his misfortunes. (Hear, hear.) He told a friend, "I will be damned if I ever write for money." Would that he had realised that money is necessary to independence and may be earned as honourably by the pen as by the plough or by any other form of human energy. (Applause.) In biographical literature there are two works which, by common consent, stand out above all others in the English language in that class, and both were written by Scotsmen. I refer to Boswell's "Life of Johnson" and Lockhart's "Life of Scott." I do not know what Boswell received for his inimitable work, but it was something certainly considerable, because he refused £1000 for the copyright of the second edition. But to Lockhart's lasting honour be it said that, although the sale of Scott's Life was enormous and the profits very large, every penny of it he handed over to the creditors of his father-in-law, Sir Walter Scott. (Applause.) An allusion has been made to Thomas Carlyle as the most eminent prose writer in Dumfriesshire, and I do not suppose anybody is prepared to challenge it. But, unfortunately, there seems to have been overlooked a proposal which Carlyle made, I suppose in all seriousness, and it is really very disap-

pointing that it has never gone through. "There is a great discovery," he said, "still to be made in literature, that of paying literary men by the quantity they do *not* write. Nay, in sober truth, is not this actually the rule in all writing; and, moreover, in all conduct and acting? Not what stands above ground, but what lies unseen under it, as the root and subterrene element it sprang from and emblemed forth, determines its value." Therefore, gentlemen, I will apply that to the poor substitute for oratory which I have to offer you. I must ask you to take for granted a great deal I would have said had time permitted. I thank you very cordially for the honour you have done me in coupling my name with such an honourable toast. (Applause.)

Mr Joseph Laing Waugh, who also replied, said it was very fortunate for him that Sir Herbert Maxwell had preceded him, because he had relieved him of considerable responsibility. In what he had so well said, Sir Herbert had provided the substance — what a good mutton bone was to Scotch broth; and all that was expected of him (Mr Waugh) was a contribution of odd snippings of "hamely kail." (Laughter.) He thought we had every reason to be proud of the contribution Scotsmen had made to literature. Since the days of "Blind Harry" scarce a generation had been without its historian, its balladist or romancer, and from the latter part of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth we had in Scotland a con-

stellation of literary stars which, it might be truly affirmed, made Edinburgh the hub of the then literary world. (Applause.) The lamp burned at its brightest then; it had often flickered since; but, thank God, it had never been allowed to go out; and never would it



Mr Joseph Laing Waugh.

be as long as there was an ear open and attuned to the sweetness of the mavis' song, or the whispering of the wind in the wispy birches, an eye seeing aright the glorious beauty of purple hills, meandering streams and flower-flecked meadow land, and a heart, warm-pulsing, appreciating to the full the rugged kindness of heart, the humour, the emotion, and the sentiment which were the acknowledged characteristics of our race. (Applause.) We could not all be sweet-singing poets

and successful writers, but some of us might feel at times that we had a message to deliver, a sentiment to express, and if we approached our subject wholeheartedly with understanding and sympathy, if we spoke from the heart to the heart, then whatever our message might be and however simply garbed, it would not be denied a hearing. And in this expression not only might we be doing our little to keep the lamp burning, but we might be the humble medium of conveying to some poor home-sick exile a whiff of homeland air, a few stray notes of the mavis' song, of bringing once more to his mind's eye a bickering burn in a red cleugh side, a mist-wreathed glen 'mong his own Hills of Home, and visualising for him a lovable type of a lovable race, a replica of some old worthy he once knew and loved in the halcyon days of auld lang syne. (Applause.)

Robert Burns, whose memory they kept green that night, in his vehemence and earnestness breathed this prayer:—

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
 That's a' the learnin' I desire,
 Then tho' I drudge thro' dub and mire,
 Wi' plough or cart;
 My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
 May touch the heart.

Many since the days of Robert Burns had prayed for that "ae spark o' Nature's fire," without which all writings and all speech were as nothing. The greater the spark the greater the warmth and illumination, and whatever comes from warm pulsing hearts

goes direct to other receptive hearts, gladly welcomed and treasured there as a classic. He had many such old-world works in his heart, many treasured friends on the shelves of his modest library at home. Among contemporary writers he gave pride of place to J. M. Barrie, Neil Munro, John Buchan, and his old friend, John Foster, to whose two later works he gave a very high place indeed. (Applause.) Mr Waugh proceeded to refer to other literary notabilities, including Charles Murray, Violet Jacobs, Robert Wanlock, and Roger Quinn, and concluded by reciting with great elocutionary power the poem, "Me and Andra," by Robert Couston, which he described as a fine example of modern versification. The "Andra" of the verses is understood to refer to the late Mr Carnegie.

We're puir bit cratur, Andra, you an' me.
 Ye hae a bath in a marble tub, I dook in
 the sea;
 Cafe au lait in a silver joog for breakfast
 gangs to you;
 I sup yit brose wi' a horn spuina an' eat till
 I'm fu'.

An' there's nae great differ, Andra—
 hardly ony,
 My sky is as clear as yours, an' the
 cluds are as bonnie,
 I whussle a tune thro' my teeth to mysel'
 that costs nae money.

The bobolink pipes in the orchards white in
 your hame on the ither side;
 Gray whaups cry up on oor muir t' me, white
 seamaws soom on oor tide.

An' organ bums in your marble hall wi'
 mony a sough an' swell;
 I list to the roar o' the wind, an' the sea in
 the hollow o' a shell.

An there's nae great differ, Andra—
 hardly ony ava',
 For the measure that throbs thro' eternal
 things to me is as braw,
 An' it wafts me up to the gate o' God to
 hear His choir ana'.

We are draglit bit cratur's Andra, plowterin'
 i' the glaur,
 Paidlin' ilk in oor ain bit dub, and glowerin'
 ilk at his star;
 Rakin' up the clert o' the trink till oor
 Faither airts us hame,
 Whiles wi' a strap, whiles wi' a kiss, or
 carryin' us when we're lame.

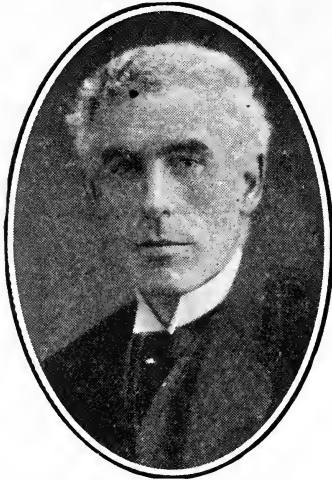
An' there's nae great differ, Andra, we're
 sib as peas in a pod,
 Ill-faured weans at the best—the draglit
 wi' the snod;
 An' we'll a' get peyed what we're ocht,
 Andra, when we gang hame to God.

What if I win fame or gear, Andra, what if
 I fail,
 Be gleg as a fumart whittork, or dull as a
 snail?
 It'll be a' ane in a hunder year whether I
 sally or slide—
 The nicht sits as dark on a brawlin' linn as
 it broods on a sleepin' tide.

An' there's nae great differ, Andra,
 whether ye bum or bizz;
 If no a wheel we may be a clink—If we
 canna pull we can bruij;
 We maun tak' the world as we find it,
 lad, an' content wi't as it is.

“DUMFRIES AND DUMFRIESIANS.”

Sir J. Lorne MacLeod said:—I rise to propose the toast of “Dumfries and Dumfriesians.” Well, at this hour of the night it is a most comprehensive toast, including as it does burgh and county, town and shire, in-dwellers and out-



Sir J. Lorne MacLeod.

dwellers, all connected with the county or burgh of Dumfries at home and abroad. I do not feel, gentlemen, that I can do adequate justice to the proposal. If it were pursued in a certain direction it might result in what I know none of you desire, the promotion of a spate of mere self-congratulation, self-satisfaction, and self-approval. Still on the night of Burns' celebration a certain expansion and exuberance is permissible. (Laughter.) We would be very far lacking in a proper

appreciation of the spirit of the great Poet whom we are commemorating to-night if we did not profess a most intense feeling of local patriotism, pride of race, pride of home, and pride of country. (Applause.) Burns, if I may just make this remark, demonstrated to the world that a spirit of this kind, intensity of local patriotism, is not at all inconsistent with larger nationality and universal brotherhood. As the Chairman so well brought out to-night pride of nationality and communion and brotherhood of the races of the world is founded upon local patriotism, local pride, local esteem, and local self-respect. (Applause.) If these qualities are not possessed by any community they are not in a position to recognise the same rights and privileges of others. Dumfries, we all know, is a wonderful county, and the Dumfriesians are a wonderful people. (Applause.) I would not venture to say that it is the first of the counties or that they are the first of the peoples within this country. Still, it would be exceedingly difficult in the rivalry and stress and competition which we know exists between community and community, and county and county, to dispossess the county of Dumfries, or the burgh of Dumfries, from a place in the very front rank among the communities and peoples of this little country of Scotland, which has gained such a high place of eminence and prestige among the nations of the world. (Applause.) It is no flattery to make an observation of that kind, because in Church, in State, in Law, in Literature, in Art, in Medicine, in Science, in the

sphere of Arms whether on land or sea, in trade and commerce — in these and in all other directions which have promoted the general progress, advancement, and prosperity of this country, the county and burgh of Dumfries have made a distinct, eminent, and unchallengeable contribution. (Applause.) One need not at this hour begin to specify names which are so well known to you all, but I think it would be difficult indeed for any other county of Scotland, or of the United Kingdom, or any similar area within the British Empire, to produce a list of men of such talent and eminence in all the different walks of life as has been produced throughout centuries from this area. (Applause.) The people of Dumfries in the whole history of Scotland have cut and carved their names in every incident, and in every epoch of importance in our national affairs, going back to the earliest days, during the Wars of Independence, during the time of the Covenanters, and even possessing memories of the '45. In these great incidents in Scottish history Dumfries played a notable part. In literature, which has been referred to already, the names of Carlyle and others have been given, and if I may just draw a blade with the distinguished speaker, Lord St. Vigean, in his reference to Thomas Carlyle, I am one of those who believe that his teaching of an apostolic character is the kind of message which has to be delivered to the people of this country to-day with increasing power, in his condemnation of mere material prosperity as compared with the advancement

of things of the mind and of the soul. (Applause.) I know Lord St. Vigeans entirely approves of what I say at this moment, that Thomas Carlyle, notwithstanding the fact that he fell upon evil and flat and chill scientific days which discarded him, will once again assume his proper place as a man with a message to deliver, a message which will be of great importance and advantage to the people of this country to receive and digest. (Applause.) I am not going to trouble you further except to say that it is a very great pleasure indeed to be associated in some ways with the burgh of Dumfries, a connection of which I am very proud. I am very glad to associate the toast with the name of my old municipal colleague, Provost Macaulay, who is held in the very greatest respect, and towards whom the greatest esteem is felt by his colleagues in municipal life throughout the country. (Applause.) I am glad to take this opportunity of making that observation to you gentlemen of Dumfries. I associate the toast with his name and also with the name of Dr MacKenna, who is one of the distinguished products of Dumfries, and who is carrying on its fame and its greatness in the sphere of medicine. (Applause.)

The Provost, in responding to the toast, thanked Sir John Lorne MacLeod for the flattering remarks he had made regarding the burgh of Dumfries. He thought that during the last five years of war the burgh of Dumfries had done its duty. In the field of battle the young men of Dumfries had shown the true Border spirit. (Ap-

plause.) He thought the burgh of Dumfries would compare very favourably with any other burgh in the numbers and in the gallantry of the men who had gone out to fight their country's battles. (Applause.) All of them had covered themselves with glory. The record that had



Provost Macaulay, O.B.E., Dumfries.

been set up by the K.O.S.B. was second to none, and the deeds of their Territorials would never be forgotten. (Applause.) We had been called a nation of shopkeepers, but he thought the shopkeepers had shown that they could "lick" even soldiers who were trained for nothing else but fighting. The young men of Dumfries had followed in the footsteps of Burns, who joined the Volunteers to take his part in repelling the French when they threatened to invade

this country. (Applause.) Men from Dumfries had made a name for themselves all over the world. Wherever one went men from Dumfries and Dumfriesshire were to be found in the most responsible positions. (Applause.) He hoped Dumfries would always retain the great name it had acquired among the sister burghs of Scotland. (Applause).

Dr MacKenna, in replying, said:—I feel it a very high honour that I have been chosen to respond for the Dumfriessians to the toast proposed with so much eloquence, with such felicities of phrase, and with such kindly sentiments by Sir John Lorne MacLeod. But kind as he was to Dumfries and the Dumfriessians, I would put Dumfries and the Dumfriessians even higher than he did, for it is probably within the recollection of some of you, though apparently he has forgotten it, if he ever knew it, that some twenty years ago a publicist, not, I believe a Dumfries man, went to the trouble of preparing a pamphlet to discover, to analyse, and to work out from whence the famous men of Great Britain came. The method upon which he proceeded was to take, I think, one thousand names, chosen from lists such as are found in "Who's Who," and from other repositories of the so-called greatness of mankind. He made a careful analysis, and his conclusion, after something like a hundred pages of carefully worked out statistics, was this, that Dumfries town produced more famous men than any other town in the United Kingdom, and was run very closely by the county of

Dumfries. (Laughter and applause.)
 Aberdeen was a very bad second.
 (Laughter.) Now, you may wonder why
 this should be, and I hope to explain to
 you very shortly why this gentleman, who
 worked out these statistics, came to that
 conclusion. I know no town which for



Dr MacKenna.

its size, and no county which for its acre-
 age, sends so many of its sons furth its
 borders. One may wonder why that may
 be, and may discover some explanation
 of it in the ancient gibe attributed to
 Samuel Johnson, who is reputed to have
 said that "the pleasantest prospect a
 young Scotsman could see was the road to
 England." (Laughter.) As one of the
 main roads to England runs through
 the burgh of Dumfries, it is perfectly

easy to understand why so many Dumfries boys and Dumfriesians migrate South of the Border. (Laughter.) And there is something in Dumfries and Dumfriesshire that endows its sons with, I think, more than the ordinary proportion of commonsense. They are endowed with the "pith of sense" which our Bard was so fond of eulogising. In addition to that, they have a high sense of duty and they are not afraid of work, so that when they get outside their own township and outside their own country where they would have to compete with men of equal intellectual gifts with themselves, and where they might have a difficulty in making a living—(laughter)—they have absolutely no difficulty, when competing with other people who are not fortunate enough to be born here, in going rapidly to the top of the tree. (Laughter and applause.) You find Dumfries men and Dumfriesians represented and holding positions of honour and opportunity, not only all over England, but, what is a much more difficult job, all over Scotland and right through the British Empire, and even in parts of the universe where the Union Jack does not yet fly. (Applause.) They are all very proud of their heritage, and they have every reason to be proud, because I do not think there is any town or any county whose history is so indissolubly linked up with the glorious history of Scotland as the history of this burgh and the county of which it is the capital. (Applause.) When I was in France I frequently came across men whose tongue betrayed them, and having

a kindly ear for the Dumfries accent, I was invariably able to spot a lad from Dumfries as soon as he had opened his mouth. I used to say to him—just out of curiosity because, unfortunately, I have lived long enough south of the Border to have lost some of my Dumfries accent, though I thank God I have lost none of my Dumfries 'backbone—(applause)—I used to say, "Where do you come from, my lad?" and invariably the lad would straighten himself up and say, "I come from a wee place in Scotland ca'ed Dumfries." (Applause.) And he said it with a pride that betokened that he felt he was "a citizen of no mean city." (Applause.) Anyone whose heritage it is to be a son of Dumfries is proud of the fact. Burns once said of Ayr—

Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a toon surpasses
For honest men and bonnie lassies.

But that was before he came to Dumfries. (Laughter.) When he came to Dumfries he had to modify his sentiments, and he said in a beautiful poem:—

Fair are the maids on the banks of the Ayr,
But by the sweet side of the Nith's wind-
ing river,
Are lovers as faithful and maidens as fair.

(Applause.) If you ever discover a Scotsman out of Scotland, who has come to the top of the tree in his own particular line, whether it be in the Church, at the Bar, in Medicine, in Arts, or in Science, and you find he is not a Dumfries man, you are almost certain to find that his mother was a Dumfries woman or that he married

a Dumfries girl. (Applause.) We Dumfriesians are all enormously proud of our country. Probably many of you have heard the famous story of the K.O.S.B. soldier who was sitting beside an English soldier in a picture house in London at the time the Somme Battle picture was being exhibited. When the zero moment came and the young lieutenant threw down his cigarette and leapt over the parapet he was followed in a great wave by his faithful men. Well, in that picture the regiment which was shown going over the top was an English regiment, I believe the Bedfordshires. The Englishman gave the K.O.S.B. man a nudge and said, "Jock, do you see those fellows going over the top?" and Jock, taking his pipe out of his mouth, replied, "Aye, what about it?" The Englishman said, "They are English. Don't you see it?" And Jock said, "Aye." The Englishman said, "I thought nobody was doing any fighting in this war except you Scotch fellows. That is an English regiment. What do you make of it?" And Jock took his pipe out of his mouth again and said calmly in a good Dumfries accent, "Well, I hae nae doot oor lads are away up in the German trenches haudin' the enemy back while you lads get your photographs ta'en." (Much laughter.) At this hour of the night I do not wish to detain you. I have to get to bed some time to-night because I am being honoured with the duty of proposing "The Immortal Memory" at the Liverpool Burns Club to-

morrow night, and I have got some inspiration to-night from the most admirable speech delivered by my old friend Mr Grierson. But before I sit down I should like to refer to the debt we all owe to those Dumfriesians who, when the country was in dire need, came gladly forward, giving up all they held dearest, to go and strike a blow, as Burns would have had them do, for liberty when it was threatened by the arrogant and armed might of the Central Powers. Some of them have come back from the inferno unscathed, some, unfortunately, have come back maimed and wounded, and will to their dying day carry upon them the scars of what they have suffered, scars which ought to be for them the inalienable passport to your affection and enduring admiration. And there are others, I am sure, whom you would wish to have in memory, who made the great sacrifice and who are sleeping on the shell-torn heights of Gallipoli, in the holy earth of Palestine, or amid the mud and clay of Flanders under a simple wooden cross. These men made the great sacrifice in order that those people who live here in Dumfries and in the county of Dumfries might have freedom and the right to live maintained for them. (Applause.) They have left behind them a great memory and a great stimulus, and I hope that in years to come a generation of Dumfries boys and Dumfriesians yet unborn will find in their great example something worthy of emulation. (Applause.)

“OUR GUESTS.”

Dr Hunter, proposing the toast of “Our Guests,” said:—There can be little doubt, I think, that, in the long and splendid history of the Dumfries Burns Club, this gathering is the largest, the most representative, and the most enthusiastic that



Dr Hunter.

has ever come together to do honour to the illustrious memory of Robert Burns. Some part of that is due, as we have heard, to the fact that this meeting celebrates the centenary of the Club; not a little is due to the popularity and recognition of the public service of our cultured and eloquent Chairman—(applause)—but I am confident that you will agree with me when I say that a very large part is due to the presence of our distinguished and most welcome guests.

(Applause.) Some of them we have already had the pleasure of hearing. Others equally accomplished are to follow, and, when the evening is over and the morrow comes for reflection and the later days for reminiscence and happy memories, I am sure we will all be able to look back on a "feast of reason and a flow of soul" such as it has been rarely our fortune to experience. (Applause.) Well, gentlemen, we have brought you here to a certain extent under false pretences. It is usual to provide entertainment for one's guests, but to-night the position is reversed. We are the recipients of the entertainment from you. It may be of some interest to you to know why your names so readily suggested themselves to us when we thought of celebrating this occasion in a manner out of the common. In the first place, because most of you got your first glimpse of the light of day in one or other of these lovely southern shires, and those few of you who did not, have become bound to them by ties of close association or long personal friendship. (Applause.) Second, because we knew you were all Burns lovers, and that, if you were able, you would find joy in paying tribute to his memory where his precious ashes are laid. (Hear, hear.) Third, because you all had won distinction in various walks of life, and some of you have reputations which extend far beyond these island shores. (Applause.) But, gentlemen, we did not ask you only because you are clever and famous. We asked you chiefly because we knew that for a long time you had all been walking with love through the garden of know-

ledge—that you pursued beauty only for beauty’s sake, and that by the labours of your brain and hands you had enriched science and art and the literature of our native land. (Applause.) We are glad to see you, Lord St. Vigean, because you are President of the Land Court, and were formerly our Sheriff, and because you are known through the country as a great lawyer and a good, kind man. (Applause.) We welcome you, Sir Herbert Maxwell, because you are a statesman, a scholar, a historian, a naturalist, and a sportsman. (Applause.) We look upon you with pride and affection as one of the truly great Scotsmen of your generation. (Loud applause.) Sir James Crichton-Browne needs no introduction to an audience in Dumfries or indeed anywhere in the British Isles. (Applause.) His name is a household word, and in addition to his scientific attainments, his extraordinary power of speech has earned him fame with all classes of the people. We are proud to have him as our townsman—(loud applause)—and glad that he comes so often to gather inspiration from the Nith as it gently flows past Crindau. (Applause.) We welcome Sir John MacLeod as a man of affairs, and as an ex-Lord Provost of the great city of Edinburgh, where Robert Burns was so hospitably received, and which through all the centuries has been the spiritual home of thousands of students from the southwestern counties. (Applause.) And what of the Irvings’ veteran chief—the picturesque and stalwart Bonshaw? (Applause.) Had you lived, sir, in the days

of Burns he would without a doubt have immortalised you in an ode, an epistle, or a song, and although I am afraid there are none of us now gifted enough to pay you such a compliment, we would like to assure you that there is no more honoured name than yours in all the broad acres of this county, and we wish you many years of strength to serve your King as loyally and faithfully as you have done in the past. (Loud applause.) You, Sheriff Morton, we look upon as one of ourselves, though you did not have the fortune to be born anywhere between Queensberry and the Mull of Galloway. As the head of the legal profession in Dumfriesshire and Galloway, your name is held in the highest repute, not only because of your professional eminence, but by the unassuming and gracious kindness which marks the true Scottish gentleman. (Applause.) Mr Joseph Laing Waugh, we are delighted to see you because we are proud of what you have done for Scottish literature. (Applause.) After relating a story from one of Mr Waugh's books, Dr Hunter continued:—Well, we think you have been with the lighted candle of genius, up through and down through the character of the Lowland Scot, his quiet humour, his grit, his intense kindness, the pathos which hovers over many of the domestic happenings of his lot. (Applause.) These, and his every other natural characteristic, you have put down with the hand of a master, and to all the Scots exiled in foreign lands you must have made to live again the joys and sorrows and the

haunting beauty of their early home. (Applause.) You, Dr Neilson, historian and archæologist, we are proud to have with us to-night. (Applause.) As an authority on the Feudal period, you stand "facile princeps." Your reputation as a historical student is European, and we are glad to think that your observation of the storied ruins of the South first stimulated the love of research which has brought you the eminence you so richly deserve. (Applause.) Dr MacKenna, we welcome you as the son of one of our most respected citizens, as a poet, an essayist, and a man of science. (Applause.) You have attained a distinguished professional position, but as one of your oldest friends, I know that literature is your true love, and those who have followed your recent career predict for you a high place among the writers of this country. (Applause.) You, Mr John Foster, though you were born by the gently flowing Nith, found your inspiration in the rushing Spey, and your brilliant work within recent years has placed you far up in the ranks of modern novelists. We are proud of you, sir, as a son of the South. (Applause.) You, Mr Holbrook Jackson, I mention last, not because your reputation in letters does not entitle you to the highest place, but because you are the only Englishman among our guests, and on that account, I wish to accord you, in the name of this company, an especially hearty welcome. (Applause.) Ben Johnson found the journey to Scotland a long and arduous one when he made his pilgrimage of love to visit Drummond of Hawthornden, and

Samuel Johnson, as you know, was not very favourably impressed with the natives or their ways or their food. (Laughter.) I hope you have to-night formed a better opinion of us. A hundred years ago, if you had come, we might have offered you a different type of hospitality—(laughter)—but the days have changed, and in the modern, milder way we hope you have enjoyed yourself, and we consider it a great honour to entertain so distinguished a representative of modern English letters as yourself. (Applause.) Well, gentlemen, we are charmed to have you here, not only for your attainments but for yourselves. It is now 123 years ago since Robert Burns alighted from his friend's dogcart at the Pent House End, and made his last few feeble steps, leaning heavily on the loving arm of Jessie Lewars, up the little incline to his home. But though so long dead, his spirit still haunts the town, and if, through the ether, his magic voice might speak to us to-night, surely it would say, "These, your guests, are men after my own heart." (Loud applause.) I ask you to drink to "Our Guests," coupled with the names of Mr John Foster and Mr Holbrook Jackson.

The toast was heartily pledged, and the company sang "They are jolly good fellows."

Mr John Foster responded in a racy speech. He said that by a singular—or perhaps he ought to say plural—accident of fortune, his link with the South-west was doubly strong, for although his happy boyhood was passed within sound of the

Steeple bell, he originally hailed from near the Cross of Castle-Douglas, in the old Free Province of Galloway. He differed from Dr Hunter's generous view that the guests had done the lion's share of the entertaining. The Club had entertained their guests nobly. As the



Mr John Foster.

Lochaber fox said when he ate the bagpipes, "Ye hae gi'en me baith meat and music." (Laughter.) The more he spoke and the more he dined, the stronger the conviction grew that dinners and speeches ought to be divorced, or, rather, never be joined. (Laughter.) If his hearers would forgive the unpoetic image, dinners and speeches resembled whisky and oysters, good things in themselves, which, however, through their distressing struggle for precedence, frequently injured each

other's gracious qualities. (Laughter.) But he could not truthfully suggest that his attention to the toast list had unduly handicapped his interest in the more carnal joys of the evening. Their haggis—true food of poesy—would be, he was sure, the herald of happy dreams—(laughter)—or, at all events, of dreams! He only wished he could fashion his words into such a shape as would translate—be it ever so roughly—his feelings in being present that night, in seeing so many old friends, in such a distinguished company, and on so notable an occasion. It was a great pleasure to hear Dr Hunter, who, among his many other accomplishments, must have devoted some time to kissing the “Blarney Stone.” (Laughter.) Dr Hunter had been good enough to touch upon his ventures into literature, but he only claimed to be a humble craftsman. The difficult and crowded business of fiction-writing was not his trade, but a by-product, so to speak, and in consequence he had little to say founded on the knowledge and experience of a professional story-writer. They could, however, be well assured of his thanks and gratitude. Everyone, craftsman or artist, welcomed—indeed required—words of good cheer and encouragement, and they did not always get them! Authors, like other people, had set-backs. The arrival of publishers' cheques had not the uncanny precision of Income Tax notices and butchers' bills. (Laughter.) They had many first aids to humility; they had their candid friends who gave them words in season, and frequently out of it. (Laughter.) He was often tempted

to quote a sacrilegious rendering of our Bard's immortal couplet—

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
Tae see oor freens—before they see us.

(Laughter.) He had known some of his friends performing the miraculous feat of reading his books without cutting the leaves. (Laughter.) The Scottish Sheriff Clerks were quite a respectable body—(laughter)—he was one—but they were agreed that he was a mere novelist, and novelists with disconcerting unanimity had arrived at the conclusion that he was a mere Sheriff Clerk. (Laughter.) Mr Laing Waugh, whom he had met long ago at football on, literally, many a bloody field—(laughter)—had put it better than he could when he referred to the compensations of authors. To his (Mr Foster's) mind not the least of these was that a writer, even an amateur, dared to hope that he had written something which perhaps had lightened an hour or two in the evening to some tired, bored, worried, or dispirited man or woman. (Applause.) Mr Foster went on to refer in happy manner to the characteristics of the people of the north country, remarking that in many ways they resembled those of the people in the south, especially in their masculine speech and outlook, in their instinct for adventure and colonisation, in their love for the arts, in their hospitality, in the dry vintage of their humour, and not least, in their passionate love of their home counties. There were "honest men" there and "bonnie lassies." (Applause.) He asked them, however, to discount some of the legends told of the north.

For instance, they ought sternly to contradict the rumour which was gaining currency, that the low death-rate last year in Aberdeen was due to the increased cost of the funerals. (Loud laughter.) Many thinking people took the view that this was a loose statement, if not actually without foundation. (Laughter.) It was the very kindest thought that had prompted the Burns Club to bid him there that night, for not only was it a signal honour, but it gave him the opportunity of seeing old friends, old haunts and landmarks. His links with the old place were getting fewer as the years went on. Memories were stirred, which, as they would readily understand, he could not give expression to. Many kind things had been said that might—he hoped not—induce a little swelling of the head, but he did not envy the man who could regard these things—old friends and school-fellows, old faces, well-remembered voices—or look upon the dear and familiar landmarks of Dumfries and Dumfriesshire without a swelling of the heart. (Loud applause.)

An amusing incident occurred at the conclusion of Mr Foster's speech, when the Chairman gravely intimated that he had rather a serious communication to make; he had kept it over, he said, as late as possible in the evening so that it might not spoil their enjoyment very much. He had received a telegram which stated:—"Wanted for desertion from Elgin Burns Club dinner, John Foster, novelist, native of Dumfries. Arrest if found." (Much laughter.) He was glad they had the Chief Constable present, but he did

not know exactly what the jurisdiction was. (Laughter.) They had a Lord of Session, a Sheriff, a Sheriff-substitute, and Police Magistrates present, but he was at school with Mr Foster, and judging from the imaginative and constructive genius of that gentleman's early crimes, he thought it was a case for the High Court. (Loud laughter.)

Mr Holbrook Jackson, who also acknowledged the toast, expressed his appreciation of the honour that had been done him in being invited to attend that important celebration. He had listened with such joy and interest to the speeches that had been made that he did not know how to thank them. He had learned more in one single evening than he had ever learned in a similar space of time in his life before. He had always liked Dumfries, and had been a lover of Burns since boyhood, but his only association with Burns was the fact that he was born in Liverpool; where Dr Currie, the first biographer and editor of Burns' Life and Work, also lived. He had learned that night that Dumfries was the hub of the universe, that Dumfries won the war—(laughter)—that Dumfriesshire produced the greatest poet and the greatest prose-writer in the world; he had learned that practically every citizen of Dumfries was eminent, and that every eminent citizen of Dumfries was more eminent than any other citizen of the British Empire. (Laughter.) But he yielded to no Scot in his love of knowledge. (Laughter and applause.) He had learned also that the Dumfries Burns Club had a famous history, so famous

that he thought it ought to be written down in words and published in book form. He had learned that the Club was baptised in a punch bowl—(laughter)—and its Centenary, as they had seen that night, was celebrated in a snuff-box. (Applause.) He must confess they had



Mr Holbrook Jackson.

made him jealous of Dumfries and jealous of Scotland, and in the heat of his jealousy he said with absolute truth that such a gathering as that was impossible in his own country. He had a long and varied experience of public banquets and public meetings of all kinds in England, and the one result of these experiences was that his fellow-countrymen had never on any single occasion, and many of those had been eminent, shown the general love of poetry and general en-

thusiasm for the great men of a locality, or of a nation, as they had shown there that night. (Applause.) He did not think that he could pay them a higher compliment. (Applause.) They had had both wit and humour that night, and he was a great believer in Scottish humour. These things had given him an insight into Scottish character which he had not hitherto possessed. He hoped that one of these days England would awaken to that great love of great literature that Scotland had always shown for its own literature, and that, perhaps, they, poor English, would become as great, as eminent, and as powerful as the Scots. (Laughter and applause.) He joined with Mr Foster in thanking them on behalf of the guests for the generous entertainment they had given them, and for the enlightened speeches they had enabled them to listen to. (Applause.) He thanked them on behalf of the guests and of himself, the one Englishman among them, which he looked upon as an honour to his country. He could say with his hand on his heart, "Am I not Shakespeare's countryman, and are not you my friends?" (Applause.)

Election of Honorary Members.

The following gentlemen were at this stage elected honorary members of the Club, on the proposal of the President:—

The Right Hon. the Earl of Rosebery, K.G., K.T., Hon. Lord St. Vigeans, Right Hon. Sir Herbert E. Maxwell, Bart., Right Hon. John W. Gulland, Sir John Lorne MacLeod, LL.D., Professor Sir James Dewar,

F.R.S., Sir John R. Findlay, Right Rev. A. Wallace Williamson, D.D., Sheriff Morton. K.C., Sheriff Campion, Major William Murray, O.B.E., M.P., Colonel J. Beaufin Irving, Provost Macaulay, O.B.E., Mr Joseph Laing Waugh, Mr John Foster. Mr Thomas Carmichael, S.S.C., Dr R. W. MacKenna, Mr



Mr W. A. Hiddleston.

Holbrook Jackson, and Mr Norman M'Kin-
nel.

[The lamented death of Mr John W. Gulland, formerly M.P. for Dumfries Burghs, has occurred since the above election took place.]

Mr J. E. Blacklock proposed the health of "The Croupiers," and coupled the toast with the name of Mr W. A. Hiddleston, who, he said, had done a great amount of work for the Club, especially during the last month or two. (Applause.)

Mr Hiddleston, in acknowledging the toast, threw out the suggestion for the Committee that two or three social functions might be held in the course of the winter instead of one annual dinner. (Applause.)

Lord St. Vigeans said it would be a very grave mistake if they parted without drinking the health of the Secretary. He was indefatigable in all his undertakings, and to him in great measure was due the success of that evening. He had had a good deal officially to do with Mr M'Burnie, who had always represented to him what was the best and finest in Dumfries. He was one of the salt of the earth. (Applause.)

The toast was cordially honoured, and followed by the singing of "He's a jolly good fellow."

Mr M'Burnie, in reply, said he desired to thank all very heartily indeed for the way in which they had received that toast. It was a great honour to him to have it responded to in that fashion, and it had been enhanced by its spontaneous proposal by his old chief and very good friend, Lord St. Vigeans. (Applause.)

Dr George Neilson, in proposing the health of "The Chairman," referred in interesting manner to Burns' reception when he first arrived in Dumfries, and expressed gratification that the reception of the toast of his memory in 1920 had been so impressively given. Proceeding, Dr Neilson said it was 47 years since he entered the office in which he served his apprenticeship, and in which Mr John Grierson, his dear old friend and their

Chairman's father, was the managing clerk, and it was not without emotion that he had seen Mr R. A. Grierson that night, and listened enraptured to his great speech. (Applause.) The speech was the speech of an adequate spokesman of the Club, an adequate spokes-



Dr George Neilson.

man of Dumfries, and an adequate spokesman of the homage of the Scot, not only to the genius but to the personality and the heart of Robert Burns. (Applause.) There were many qualities of the speech that he could dwell upon, but they would allow him just to say that he admired its dashing and vivid style. He shared entirely the feelings which Mr Grierson expressed in the political interpretations which he gave. They were seething with explosives, of course—

(laughter)—but in recognising that Burns sang the song of liberty, he thought Mr Grierson had singled out the great quality which had made Robert Burns not only the immortal singer, but, as he ventured to call it, the immortal political force. (Applause.) They would remember that Burns was a great singer of reform, and that political reform was really the basis of a great part of his most impressive work. In that connection observations which had fallen from some of the speakers regarding Carlyle were not to be forgotten, because the more one looked at Carlyle as a whole he was to be considered fundamentally as a politician. The last quality of Mr Grierson's speech on which he would like to say one word was the brilliancy of many of his phrases. That term, the "verbal epicure," was one of the most toothsome pieces from the banquet speech he had given them that night. (Applause. He noticed that for five years there had been no speech. They had waited five years for Mr Grierson's speech, and it was well worth while. (Applause.) Not only had he been a most eloquent speaker, but he had shown far higher gifts. It was a tremendous programme that he had put them through. He had conducted them through time; as some speakers had said he had conducted them far into the confines of eternity. (Laughter.) (The hour was now 2 a.m.) For his part he was prepared to say that if one could be quite sure that eternity would be no worse than they had experienced that evening he was perfectly willing to go on. (Laughter.) But it was a pity to

run any unnecessary risks, and for that reason he asked them to bring the proceedings very near to a termination by drinking the health of the Chairman. (Applause.)

The toast was pledged with enthusiasm, and the singing of "He's a jolly good fellow."

The Chairman thanked the company for drinking his health, and Dr Neilson very specially for the way in which he had proposed it. It was, indeed, a very proud thing, he said, for any man to be Chairman of Dumfries Burns Club, and as the fortunes of war had brought him into the chair on that historic occasion, it was an experience he would remember all his days. (Applause.) It was a very great thing to him that this toast should have been proposed by Dr Neilson, because although he had not had so many opportunities of meeting him as he would have liked to have had, he had all his life heard his father speaking of Dr Neilson with much affection. (Applause.) There was no one in his father's early days in the legal profession of whom he spoke with more affection than George Neilson. (Applause.) Mr Grierson went on to say that he felt always a deep pride in being, not a Dumfries man by adoption, but a Dumfries man by a long, if not distinguished, descent. There was one relationship he would like to mention, and it was this—that two of his great-grandfathers were regular attenders, pillars he might call them, at the old anti-Burgher Church in Loreburn Street, which Burns attended on Sunday evenings, and it was

pleasant to think that the voices of his ancestors and the voice of Burns joined in singing the old Scotch psalms. It was to him a source of great gratification that when he did happen to be in the chair of the Burns Club so many of his townsmen should be gathered around him. (Applause.) His loyalty to Dumfries, he trusted, would grow as the years went on, and he hoped that he might still be of some little usefulness to the town. (Applause.) In conclusion, to show that the race was not degenerate he must blow the whistle once again. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr Grierson then blew a hearty blast on the whistle and pronounced the parting formula—

“Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again.”

The proceedings were brought to a close with the hearty singing of “Auld Lang Syne.”



MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.



Mr A. C. Penman,
Motor Manufacturer.



Judge Hastie,
Clothier.



Mr G. B. Carruthers,
Solicitor.



Mr David Fergusson,
Solicitor.

CHAIRMAN
JOHN COMMELIN.
BANKER

CHAIRMAN
R.A. GRIERSON.
TOWN CLERK




1820-1920



CENTENARY DINNER DUMFRIES BURNS CLUB

CROUPIERS

G. B. CARRUTHERS ESQ
W. A. HIDDLESTON ESQ
DR J. HUNTER 
D. H. HASTIE ESQ

**Office-Bearers of the Club,
1820.**

PRESIDENT :

JOHN COMMELIN, Banker.

VICE-PRESIDENT :

JOHN SYME of Ryedale.

COMMITTEE :

Major WM. MILLER of Dalswinton.

ADAM RANKINE. Merchant.

JOHN McDIARMID, Editor of *Courier*.

JAMES SPALDING, JR., Surgeon.

WM. GORDON, JR., Writer.

SECRETARY AND TREASURER :

WM. GRIERSON, Merchant, Dumfries.

DON'T BE AFRAID; I'LL BE MORE RESPECTED
A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER I AM DEAD THAN
I AM AT THE PRESENT DAY."

—Burns.



MENY

"SOME HAE MEAT AND CANNA EAT,
AND SOME WAD EAT THAT WANT IT,
BUT WE HAE MEAT, AND WE CAN EAT,
AND SAE THE LORD BE THANKIT."

—Burns.

HARE SOUP.

COCKIE-LEEKIE.

"They sit i' the neuk suppin' hen-broo."

COD. PARSLEY SAUCE.

FILLETS OF WHITING AU GRATIN.

"Wae worth the loon wha wadna eat
Sic halesome, dainty cheer, man."

ROYAL SCOTCH HAGGIS.

"And on our boards that king o' food,
A guid Scotch Haggis."

ROAST BEEF.

ROAST TURKEY.

BOILED HAM.

"And aye a rowth roast beef and claret
Syne wha wad staive?"

VEGETABLES.

"Food fills the waine, and keeps us livin'."

PLUM PUDDING.

COMPOTE OF FRUIT.

SWISS PASTRIES.

"Aft he ca's it guid."

COFFEE.

"You've gien us wealth for horn and knife,
Nae heart could wish for more."

TOAST LIST

"A CHIEL'S AMANG YOU TAKIN' NOTES,
AND. FAITH. HE'LL PRENT IT."

—Burns.

1. "THE KING" CHAIR.
"While we sing 'God save the King,
We'll ne'er forget the People."
NATIONAL ANTHEM.
2. "The Queen, the Queen Mother, and other Members of
the Royal Family" CHAIR.
3. "The Imperial Forces" Sheriff MORTON, K.C.
"They've lost some gallant gentlemen."
Replies :—Col. J. BEAUFIN IRVING,
Lieut.-Col. P. M. KERR, V.D.
Song—"Scots wha hae" Mr F. J. PIDWELL.
4. "The Immortal Memory" CHAIR.
"He'll be a credit tae us a',
We'll a' be proud o' Robin."
Song—"There was a Lad" Mr D. O'BRIEN.
5. "Dumfries Burns Club" Sir JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE, F.R.S.
"Mony a nicht we've merry been,
And mony mae we hope tae be."
Replies :—Mr JAS. W. WHITELAW,
Mr JOHN M'BURNIE.
Song—"Doon the Burn" Mr DAVID FERGUSON.
6. "Scottish Literature" Lord ST. VIGEANS.
"O for a spunk o' Allan's glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld and slee."
Replies :—Sir HERBERT E. MAXWELL, Bart.
Mr JOSEPH LAING WAUGH.
Recitation Mr LESLIE MACDONALD.
7. "Dumfries and Dumfriesians" Sir J. LORNE MACLEOD, LL.D.
"There was Maggy by the Banks o' Nith,
A dame wi' pride enough."
Replies :—Provost MACAULAY, O.B.E.
Dr R. W. MACKENNA.
Vocal Duet—Mr G. H. REED and Mr J. GIBSON.
8. "Our Guests" Dr JOSEPH HUNTER.
"Each passing year
Knits others close in friendship's ties."
Replies :—Mr JOHN FOSTER,
Mr HOLBROOK JACKSON.
Song—"Gae bring tae me" Mr J. M. BOWIE.
9. "The Croupiers" Mr J. E. BLACKLOCK.
"Here are we met, four merry boys,
Four merry boys, I trow, are we."
Reply :—Mr W. A. HIDDLESTON.
Song—"Ae Fond Kiss" Mr G. H. REED.
10. "The Chairman" GEO. NEILSON, LL.D.
Reply :—Mr R. A. GRIERSON,
"Wi' merry sangs an' friendly cracks,
I wat we dinna weary."

AULD LANG SYNE.

DUMFRIES BURNS CLUB.

PRESIDENTS.

- | | | | |
|------|---|---------|--|
| 1820 | John Commelin | 1874 | Donald Mitchell |
| 1821 | Major Miller | 1875 | Sheriff Nicholson |
| | "Immortal Memory" proposed by | 1876 | Rev. Thos. Underwood |
| | John Commelin | 1877 | Thomas McKie |
| 1822 | John McDiarmid | 1878 | David Barker |
| 1823 | General Dirom | 1879 | <i>No Meeting in respect of the general distress and depression prevalent in the Country</i> |
| 1824 | William Gordon, Jr. | 1880 | Rev. J. A. Campbell |
| 1825 | John Syme | 1881 | J. C. Ross |
| 1826 | William Gordon, Jr. | 1882 | Jos. Ewing |
| 1827 | John McDiarmid | 1883 | Jas. MacDonald |
| 1828 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1884 | John Clerk |
| 1829 | David Armstrong | 1885 | A. C. Thomson |
| 1830 | John McDiarmid | 1886 | Henry Gordon |
| 1831 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1887 | J. B. A. McKinnell |
| 1832 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1888 | Provost D. Lennox |
| 1833 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1889 | Rev. D. C. Bryce |
| 1834 | John McDiarmid | 1890 | W. H. Scott |
| 1835 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1891 | J. C. R. Macdonald |
| 1836 | David Armstrong | 1892 | Sir J. Crichton-Browne |
| 1837 | <i>No Dinner</i> | 1893 | Sheriff Campion |
| 1838 | David Armstrong | 1894 | J. W. Whitelaw |
| 1839 | James Stuart Menteith | 1895 | W. A. Dinwiddie |
| 1840 | Thomas Aird | 1896 | Sir R. T. Reid, Q.C., M.P. |
| 1841 | Sheriff Trotter | 1897 | Provost J. J. Glover |
| 1842 | Dr McLellan | 1898 | John Grierson |
| 1843 | Dr W. A. F. Browne | 1899 | James Carmont |
| 1844 | C. T. Ramage | 1900 | Rev. A. Wallace Williamson |
| 1845 | John McDiarmid | 1901 | <i>No Dinner — Death of Queen Victoria</i> |
| 1846 | Sheriff Trotter | 1902 | Thomas Watson |
| 1847 | W. Bell Macdonald | 1903 | J. H. Balfour Browne, K.C. |
| 1848 | J. Macalpine Leny | 1904 | Francis R. Jamieson |
| 1849 | <i>Cholera in Dumfries, and no Meeting held</i> | 1905 | A. Douglas Thomson |
| 1850 | E. Hepburn | 1906 | James A. Fleming |
| 1851 | Sheriff Trotter | 1907 | Dr J. Maxwell Wood |
| 1852 | John McDiarmid | 1908 | Dr J. Maxwell Ross |
| 1853 | J. Macalpine Leny | 1909 | W. A. Dinwiddie |
| 1854 | Dr W. A. F. Browne | | "Immortal Memory" proposed by |
| 1855 | W. Bell Macdonald | | J. Hepburn Millar |
| 1856 | Major Scott of Gala | 1910 | William Dickie |
| 1857 | Sheriff Trotter | 1911 | John Symons |
| 1858 | W. R. McDiarmid | | "Immortal Memory" proposed by |
| 1859 | Dr W. A. F. Browne | | Geo. Neilson, LL.D. |
| 1860 | Captain Noake | 1912 | Dr Fred H. Clarke |
| 1861 | William Strachan | | "Immortal Memory" proposed by |
| 1862 | Adam Skirving | | Rev. J. C. Higgins |
| 1863 | Thomas H. M Gowan | 1913 | James Geddes |
| 1864 | Rev. W. Buchanan | 1914 | H. Sharpe Gordon |
| 1865 | Rev. David Hogé | | "Immortal Memory" proposed by |
| 1866 | R. B. Carruthers | | Sir George Douglas, Bart. |
| 1867 | John Symons | 1915-20 | R. A. Grierson |
| 1868 | David Dunbar | | <i>No Dinner held in years 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919 owing to War</i> |
| 1869 | Captain Noake | | Centenary Dinner of Club, 1920 |
| 1870 | George Whitelaw | | |
| 1871 | William Wallace | | |
| 1872 | Rev. James Barclay | | |
| 1873 | James Cranstoun | | |

SECRETARIES.

- | | | | |
|------|------------------|------|--|
| 1820 | William Grierson | 1897 | W. M. Maxwell |
| 1829 | David Armstrong | 1898 | Dr A. D. MacDonald and W. A. Dinwiddie (<i>Joint Secys.</i>) |
| 1834 | John Thorburn | 1905 | W. A. Dinwiddie |
| 1843 | W. R. McDiarmid | 1908 | J. Mackechnie |
| 1876 | Donald Mitchell | 1909 | John McBurnie |
| .. | Henry Gordon | | |
| 1891 | H. Sharpe Gordon | | |

**Office-Bearers of the Club,
1920.**

PRESIDENT :

R. A. GRIERSON, Town Clerk.

COMMITTEE :

G. B. CARRUTHERS, Solicitor.

DAVID FERGUSSON, Solicitor.

DAVID H. HASTIE, Clothier.

W. A. HIDDLESTON, House Factor.

Dr JOSEPH HUNTER, Burgh Medical Officer

A. C. PENMAN, Motor Manufacturer.

SECRETARY AND TREASURER :

JOHN McBURNIE, Sheriff Clerk of Dumfriesshire.

Greeting sent to other Clubs.

O! his was the fancy that soar'd in its flight
Like the eagle sublime, when she basks in the light;
And his was the spirit no tyrant could bend.
So dark to the foe, yet so warm to the friend;
So impassioned in love, which our nature adorns,
Then, in rapture, fill high.—'tis the birthday of BURNS

O BURNS! thy dear name e'er remember'd shall be,
While heaves the green wave round the Isle of the free;
Thy fame we shall cherish, and honour thy bust,
That seems, like a Phœnix, to rise from thy dust;
Strew with wild flowers thy grave, where each Muse sadly mourns,
Then, in silence, let's drink—TO THE MEMORY OF BURNS.

From lines sung at the Anniversary Dinner in 1820.

CEREMONY AT THE MAUSOLEUM.

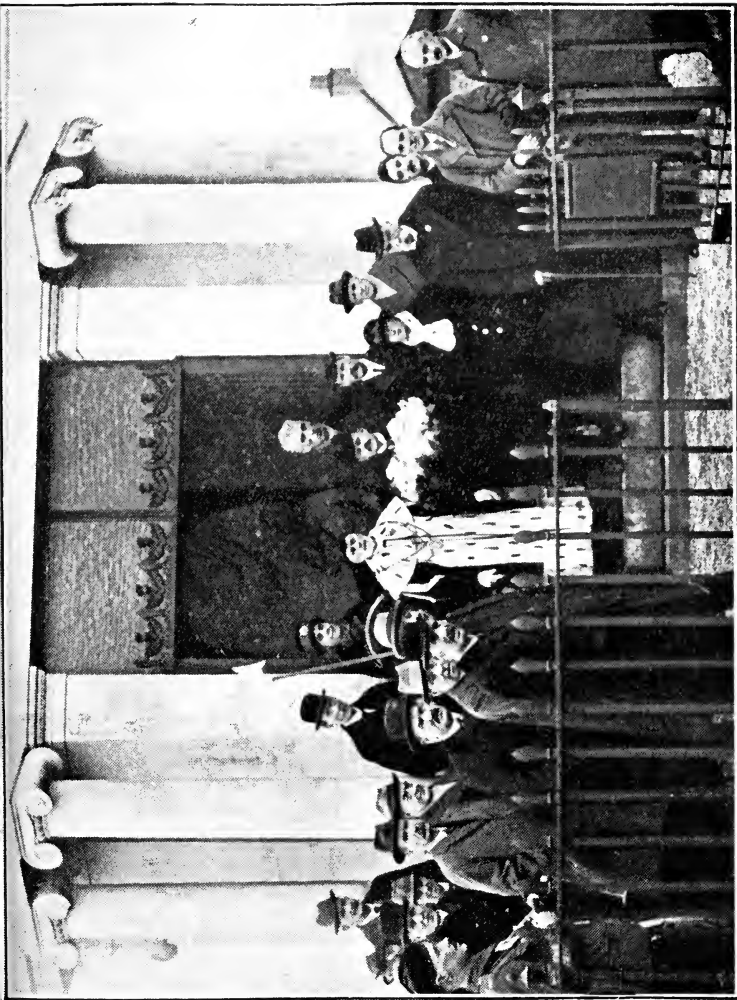
Sir J. Lorne Macleod and the
:: :: Poet's Message. :: ::

Following the usual custom on the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, the Provost, Magistrates, and Town Councillors of Dumfries assembled in St. Michael's Churchyard on Saturday afternoon (the 24th January), and proceeding to the Mausoleum laid a wreath on the Poet's tomb. The weather was bleak and cold, and rain fell at intervals. Fortunately the rain kept off during the ceremony, but no doubt the weather conditions affected the attendance of the general public, though that was considerable. The members of the Burns Club and others formed in processional order within the vestibule of the church, and included Mr R. A. Grierson, president of the Club; Mr John M'Burnie, secretary; Miss Jean Armour Burns Brown, great-granddaughter of the Poet; Miss Carlyle Aitken, Miss M'Burnie, Lord St. Vigean, Sir J. Lorne MacLeod, Sheriff Morton, Colonel J. Beaufin Irving of Bonshaw, Mr Holbrook Jackson, Mr D. H. C. Higgins, London; Mr Arthur M'Kerrow, Calcutta; Rev. J. Montgomery Campbell, Dr Joseph Hunter, Mr James Geddes, Mr G. B. Carruthers, Mr W. F. Crombie, Mr A. D.

Robison, Mr David Fergusson, Mr W. J. Stark, Mr Thomas Dykes, Mr James Wyllie, Elmbank; Mr John Irving, saddler; Mr David Hunter, Mr James Reid, and Mr Thomas Laidlaw, secretary of Burns Howff Club. Headed by Mr Grierson, Sir J. Lorne MacLeod, and Miss Jean Armour Burns Brown, and preceded by Pipe-Major Boyd, they proceeded to the Mausoleum and took up a position within the enclosing railing around the tomb. Following the first procession came the members of the Town Council and burgh officials, who had also assembled in the vestibule of the church. Those present included Provost Macaulay (who wore his robe and chain of office), Bailie Connolly, Dean Lockerbie, Mr W. Adam, Mr Robert Kerr, Mr A. Millar, Mr Stevenson, Mr D. Findlay, Mr William Black, chief constable; Mr M. H. M'Kerrow, town chamberlain; Mr John Barker, burgh surveyor; Mr F. Armstrong, master of works; and Mr Sam. Dickie, gas manager; followed by members of the public. Halberdier Stoba preceded the civic procession, which was headed by the Provost, who carried the wreath, composed of arum lilies, chrysanthemums, erigerons, white narcissus, and bronze mahonia.

The Provost reverently placed the wreath on the Poet's grave, after which "The Land o' the Leal" was played by the piper.

Addressing the company, the Provost expressed the hope that the simple tribute which they had paid that day to the memory of our national Poet would be continued by the Town Council of Dum-



AT THE MAUSOLEUM.—The President of the Burns Club (Mr Grierson) receiving from Provost Macaulay the Town Council's floral tribute to be laid on the tomb. On the Provost's right are Sheriff Morton, K.C., and Miss Jean Armour Burns Brown, great-grand-daughter of the Poet; and on his left Mr Grierson, Sir J. Lorne MacLeod, Mr John M'Burnie (Secretary), Lord St. Vigeans, Colonel J. Beaufin Irving, Mr Holbrook Jackson.

fries for all time coming. Burns, he said, was thought a great deal more of to-day than when he lived in Burns Street in their burgh. All over Scotland and wherever Scotsmen were to be found that anniversary would be remembered and celebrated. If Burns had been alive in the days of war now closed he would have been one of the first to have gone to the defence of the Empire. When this country was threatened with invasion by the French, Burns was one of the first to join Volunteers for the defence of our shores. (Applause.)

Mr Grierson, in accepting the wreath as president of Dumfries Burns Club, which has the honour of caring for the Poet's grave, said it had been the custom for the president to move a vote of thanks to the Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors of Dumfries on a day such as that. That day marked the centenary of the Burns Club, and as that wreath had been placed on the tomb of the Poet by the Town Council, not only for themselves and the community of Dumfries, but for Scotland and Burns lovers the world over, they thought it right that the vote of thanks for the wreath which had just been accepted by him should be moved by Sir John Lorne MacLeod, because Sir John until only a few weeks ago was Lord Provost of the capital city of Scotland, and he would thus be entitled clearly to speak for Scotsmen at large. (Applause.) They had always had this vote of thanks moved by a Lowlander, but on this occasion he thought they would appreciate that it should be proposed by a man of the purest Highland blood. (Applause.)

He would formally ask Sir John MacLeod to perform that office. (Applause.)

Sir J. Lorne MacLeod said:—Ladies and gentlemen,—It is a high honour and privilege for me to have the opportunity on behalf of those here assembled and on behalf of the far larger number of lovers and admirers of the Poet and man, Burns, scattered throughout this country and in every quarter of the globe, to return thanks to you, Provost Macaulay, for laying, as you have done, upon this tomb which is a national heritage a wreath on behalf of the community of Dumfries, you being the authorised and official instrument of the community for this purpose upon this day—a day which, in many respects, symbolises the life, career, and experiences of the man we commemorate, bleak, in cloud and shadow, with glimpses of sunshine. Sir, we are moved on a touching occasion of this kind with the highest emotion towards one who has proved himself to be, and will, with continuing strength and greatness, remain a potent teacher and educator in this world. A lover of freedom, a friend of humanity, a man of universal sympathy, of the highest patriotism, intense in spirit, sincere and truthful always in his utterance, a hater of shams, and an assessor of true worth and right, he comes to us in these days with a special and particular message, which we all realise and deeply appreciate. It is a pious and reverent act of recollection and homage which you, Provost Macaulay, have now paid to the national Poet in the name of the community of Dumfries, who are the

custodians and possessors of this national heritage. This glorious spirit is not dead. He is more truly alive in these later days, and his light will shine forth as a beacon of hope and courage and confidence to aspiring but weak and frail mortals in the midst of the turmoil and the clash and the warring of confused ideas and actions which prevail at this time. And we shall always seek from this source inspiration and receive new strength, encouragement, and stimulation from his lofty and inspired teaching and precepts for the benefit and prosperity of mankind. I tender you, Provost Macaulay, in the name of the lovers and admirers of Burns our grateful thanks for this respectful act which you have now paid to the memory of our national Poet, and we know that the same spirit which to-day has animated you in continuing the practice of the past in this respect will continue to animate the community of Dumfries and the Town Council as its authoritative instrument of government to pay like tribute and homage in the future. (Applause.)

Before dispersing the company was photographed in front of the Mausoleum, and on the way from the church to the grave of the Poet the processions were photographed with cinematograph cameras.

Two wreaths were placed on the statue of the Poet in High Street, one by the Dumfries Burns Club and the other by a private individual.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE CLUB.

Events and Personalities of the

:: :: Early Days. :: ::

The Burns Club of Dumfries, one of the oldest of the many such institutions scattered throughout the world, was founded on 18th January, 1820. The circumstances in which it came into being are of historic interest. It followed upon the movement which was started in Dumfries some years after the Poet's death to erect a mausoleum over his remains. This project was first mooted at a meeting of "the friends and admirers of the late Scottish bard, Robert Burns"—so runs the early record—which was held in the George Inn, Dumfries, on 16th December, 1813. John Syme of Ryedale, a good and staunch friend of the Poet, who occupied as distributor of stamps the ground floor of the house at the foot of Bank Street, to which Burns came on leaving Ellisland, and who was the latter's frequent hospitable host, presided over the gathering. This meeting resulted in the appointment of a Committee to carry forward the mausoleum proposal. On 6th January, 1814, the Committee met under the chairmanship of General Dunlop, M.P., son of Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop, the Poet's kind

friend and patroness, when it was intimated that "a large number of noblemen and gentlemen highly approved of opening a public subscription for the mausoleum." William Grierson, draper



The Mausoleum, St. Michael's Churchyard.

in Dumfries, was appointed secretary to the Committee, and associated with him in this capacity was the Rev. Dr Duncan of Ruthwell. The name of Dr Duncan is well remembered still as that of a gentleman prominently identified with every

enlightened and progressive movement in the district in his day, and founder of the Savings Bank movement. William Grierson, whose memory has been less well preserved, occupied in his time an influential position in the community. A J.P. of the county and a prominent elder of St. Michael's Church, he was a man of cultivated tastes and enthusiasms. His wife was a daughter of the Rev. Dr Sibbald, first of Johnstone parish and afterwards of Haddington, and one of his sons was Dr Grierson of Thornhill, whose museum in the ducal village remains an interesting memorial of a most interesting worthy. William Grierson purchased the small residential property of Grovehill, in the parish of Penpont, and took a lease of the neighbouring lands of Boatford, which he occupied as a led farm. He died in 1852, aged 80 years, and was buried in Penpont Churchyard. His wife, who survived till 1862, was also buried there; likewise their son, Dr Grierson, who died in 1889. The latter used to relate that the punch bowl, which the Burns Club (as hereafter to be related) acquired at the opening of its history, was "handselled" by the Committee in his father's house at 102 Irish Street, when he, being then an infant a month old, was placed in it! To return: William Grierson and his Committee appear to have gone about the raising of subscriptions for the mausoleum in a very energetic manner, and friends and admirers of the Poet were canvassed in all parts of the world. One of the heartiest responses was that of Sir Walter Scott,

who not only subscribed handsomely himself, but influenced others to do so, procuring also the celebrated Mr and Mrs Siddons to give a benefit dramatic performance in Edinburgh in behalf of the fund.

We need not go into the history of the actual erection of the mausoleum. It is a curiously troubled story, not, however, without its amusing side. The foundation stone was laid with Masonic honours on "the King's birthday," 5th June, 1815, when "a grand procession took place." The total cost seems to have been well up to £2000.

We come now to the actual formation of the Club. The Mausoleum Committee appear from the minutes to have celebrated the anniversary of the Poet's birthday by dining in the King's Arms Hotel on 25th January, 1817. For this initial occasion W. S. Walter, London, a native of Nithsdale and contributor of various poetical pieces to the "Nithsdale Minstrel," composed by request some spirited verses, from which we may quote the concluding apostrophe of the Poet by the Genius of Coila:—

Yes—long as Criffel on his ample breast
 Reflects the golden glories of the west;
 Long as old Queensberry's gigantic form
 Shall brave the summer heat, the winter
 storm;
 Long as the Nith from mountain urn shall
 flow
 And health and plenty on these vales be-
 stow;
 So long, my son—nor can the Muse deceive—
 So long thy name and memory shall live.

No dinner seems to have taken place in 1818; but on 25th January, 1819, the event was celebrated in the Globe Inn. At that meeting it was agreed to open a subscription for the purchase of a china punch bowl, to be used on all similar occasions. This purchase was carried out as well as that of a silver punch spoon, mugs, and three dozen glasses, and the whole were produced at a meeting of the subscribers on 18th January, 1820, "and very much admired." The bowl was of excellent workmanship, with elegant emblematic devices, capable of holding three gallons, and engraved on it were the names of the original subscribers.--The bowl, mugs, and spoon, still to the fore, were on exhibition at Friday night's centenary meeting, but the glasses have long since fallen victims, by two's and three's (as the minutes scrupulously record), of the convivial table.—At this meeting on 18th January, 1820, it was resolved, in order to give effect to the celebration of the birthday of the Bard, to form the subscribers to the bowl into a Society to be named "The Burns Club of Dumfries." John Commelin (banker with the British Linen Company) was chosen president, John Syme, vice-president, and William Grierson secretary, and minute regulations were drawn up for an annual dinner. On the 25th January, accordingly, the newly-formed Club dined in the King's Arms, when about forty gentlemen were present, under the presidency of Mr Commelin, with Mr Syme as croupier. At this meeting Thomas White, mathematician, and James Hogg, "the Ettrick Shepherd" (then resident in the district),

were elected honorary members. The meeting also resolved to purchase, as soon as the funds permitted, a "snuff mull," and to have a portrait of the Bard painted for the Club by an eminent artist.



Sir J. M. Barrie, Bart.,

Life Member of the Club, who purchased and presented the James Lennox Collection of Burns relics.

It had been arranged that Major W. Miller (of Dalswinton, who married one of the Jessies of Burns' muse, a daughter of Provost Staig) should preside at the dinner on 25th January, 1821, but in his absence Mr Commelin again presided, with W. Gordon, jun. (grandfather of Mr H. S. Gordon of Glenæ), as croupier. This meeting took place in the Com-

mercial Hotel (now the County), and thirty-seven sat down to dinner, which is described as "excellent"—"the wines were good, the large china bowl was often filled with good whisky toddy, and the company enjoyed the entertainment to a late hour." In the course of the evening Gilbert Burns, the brother of the Poet, then residing at Grant's Braes, Haddington, was elected an honorary member. So also was John Mayne, editor of the London "Star," a native of Dumfries, and author of the "Siller Gun"; Mayne died in London in 1836, aged 77, and William Grierson was instrumental in having a tablet to his memory placed in the vestibule of St. Michael's Church. Mr Gilfillan, a new member of the Club and an artist of some note, intimated at this dinner that he would paint and present to the Club the portraits of Burns and his widow, "an intimation which was received with much pleasure." In the following year, at the annual dinner, Mr Gilfillan duly presented the two portraits, "decorated with wreaths of laurel taken from the shrubbery at the Poet's tomb." It may be mentioned here that, through lack of vigilance on the part of the earlier members of the Club, the portrait of Mrs Burns found its way in course of time into the hands of the National Gallery in Edinburgh. The fate of the portrait is the subject of many references in the Club minutes. Eventually Sir John R. Findlay, Edinburgh, one of the Trustees of the National Gallery, generously offered to have a replica of the portrait painted for the Club by a competent artist, if the Club on its part

would accept his gift in amicable settlement of the dispute, and without further disputation to leave the original picture in the hands of the National Gallery authorities, and to this proposal the Club agreed, though not without reluctance. This replica, with Gilfillan's original portrait of Burns, has its habitat in Burns House. Both were on exhibition at Friday night's dinner.

The dinner of 1822, when John M'Diarmid of the "Courier" presided, was of special interest by reason not only of the presentation of the Gilfillan portraits, but of the addition to the roll of honorary members of a number of important and illustrious names. The new honorary members included the three sons of the Poet—Robert Burns, William Burns, and James Glencairn Burns; also Sir Walter Scott and his poetical contemporaries, Thomas Campbell, James Montgomery, and Allan Cunningham; William Tennant, professor of Oriental Languages at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, author of "Anster Fair"; and George Thomson, of Edinburgh, the correspondent of Burns, for whom the latter wrote "some of his finest words for the old Scottish airs." Sir Walter Scott, acknowledging his election as an honorary member, wrote to William Grierson:—

23rd January, 1822.

I am honoured by the intimation that the Dumfries Burns Club have distinguished me by admitting me an honorary member, to which I am not otherwise entitled, excepting my sincere and heartfelt admiration of the great national poet, whose memory

it is the purpose of the institution to celebrate.

I beg you will make my respectful thanks acceptable to the members.

WALTER SCOTT.

The original of this letter is preserved in Dr Grierson's museum at Thornhill; it is interesting as containing the first notice of Burns as "the great national poet." At this 1822 dinner a letter was read from James Glencairn Burns from India stating that "the account of the formation of the Club had made his very heart dance for joy, and that not even the concentrated rays of a thousand Indian suns could ever dry up the fountain of his Scottish feelings, which seemed to flow more freely as his absence increased." At his request, "a strong bottle was filled with punch from the bowl to be sent out to him to India," the carriage of which to London cost 7s 8d. The minutes record that James Hogg "sang several fine songs"; the Shepherd was ever a convivial soul.

The president for the year 1823 was General Dirom of Mount Annan. Among the honorary members elected were two of the three famous "Knights of Eskdale," Sir John Malcolm and Sir Pulteney Malcolm. A letter was read on this occasion from Allan Cunningham acknowledging his election the previous year as an honorary member. "Honest Allan," as our readers know, was born on Blackwood estate, near Auldgirth, served as a youth and in his early manhood as a stone mason, and going to London became

eventually secretary to Chantrey, the distinguished sculptor, and by his poetical and prose writings achieved considerable celebrity. He wrote:

I will thank you to express my acknowledgments to the Burns Club of Dumfries for having elected me an honorary member. Such a distinction was as much beyond my hopes as it was unexpected and welcome. To obtain the notice of our native place is a pleasure which befalls few, and I have the proverbial intimation of its rarity to warrant me in thanking you with as much warmth as delicacy will allow me to use. To the most gifted it seems honour enough to be named with Burns, and I know not that such honour is enhanced by electing me along with some of our most inspired spirits. . . I am not sure if you have safe accommodation in your club room for works of art. I ask this because I wish the Burns Club to accept from me the bust of a poet, one living and likely to live in his chivalrous poems and romantic stories as long, perhaps, as British literature shall live—the production, too, of the first sculptor of the Island—the bust of Sir Walter Scott by my friend Mr Chantrey. If such a thing can be accepted be so good as tell me, and I shall gladly confide its presentation to your hands.

The Chantrey bust of Scott was duly dispatched, and on 25th December, 1823, in a cordial letter to William Grierson, Cunningham again wrote:—

I have long felt how much all owe to your discreet and active enthusiasm in other matters as well as those of song. . . To render our native town distinguished, to make it as far known and famed as prouder cities, ought, and I trust has been,

the wish of all her sons. For my own part, though living in a distant place and out of the way, too far to be with you in person, I feel not the less solicitude for the fame and name of Dumfries than those who have the happiness of dwelling in her streets.



Colonel Walter Scott, of the New York
Scottish,

*Life Member of the Club, who purchased and
presented the 1896 Centenary MSS.*

This is more in consonance with the warm-hearted and kindly nature of Allan than another letter which, though it belongs to the year 1834, we may as well allude to here. Cunningham had apparently got into trouble with some local Burnsians for comments of a slighting kind which, following upon a visit to the

mausoleum, he had allowed to escape him. In this letter he returns to the charge. The design of the mausoleum he admits to be "elegant" though lacking in "massive vigour," but of the sculpture he says, "I most heartily and conscientiously dislike it." "It is," he says, "ill conceived and worse executed, and indeed the sentiment is beyond the power of sculpture to express. Who can carve an inspired or rather an inspiring mantle?" However, "you did your best to have the Poet honoured, and who can do more?" He goes on to say he also had done his best (in his edition of Burns then recently published), though, says he, "I understand that my labours have not been quite acceptable to sundry persons in the vale of the Nith." Rather bitterly he concludes:—

I am not much mortified at this reception in my native valley; so long as it is remembered that I wore an apron and wrought with a scabbling hammer in the Friars' Vennel, so long will my works not have "fair play," but time renders justice to all, and the day is not distant when I shall either be forgotten altogether or be more honoured than at present on the banks of Nith.

The Shade of the worthy Allan has no cause to complain that Time has been niggardly in the justice rendered to him.

At the dinner of 1824, the president was Mr William Gordon, jun., to whom allusion has already been made, and whose son and grandson in subsequent years also filled the chair. The venerable John Syme, now seventy years of age, was the president in 1825. He made a brief speech reaffirming his devotion to the

memory of the Bard. "Were I standing amidst a company of foreigners," he said, "I might indeed tell them that Burns was the most extraordinary man I had ever known—that the lightnings of his eye, the tones of his voice, the smile that played round his lips, or the frown that occasionally shaded his brow, were all and each indicative of a mind of prodigious power; so much so that even the proud and titled felt themselves awed by the high bearing of the peasant poet." Syme never varied in his expression of the highest admiration for the character as well as the genius of his friend. "Let me, sir," he said at an earlier dinner, "who have often and often enjoyed Burns's intimacy—who have seen him in every phase, and have heard his lowest note and the top of his compass—let me, sir, declare that in all these situations there was never a sentiment or expression that fell from his lips which did not gild my imagination while it warmed my heart, and which evidently flowed from a fine and benevolent fountain of morality and religion. For the former, refer to his conduct to his brother; on the other topic, instead of being what I may call liberal, I deemed him rather restrained by a sort of superstitious awe and dread. . . . A verse of Burns has ever struck me as the type of his mind, and it may be applicable to his justification:—

'I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
 Wild, send thee pleasure's dovious way,
 Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
 By passion driven;
 Yet still the light which led astray
 Was light from Heaven.'

Mr Gordon was again president in 1826, and in 1827 John M'Diarmid occupied the chair. In 1828 no dinner at all appears to have been held. A feature of those early dinners, by the way, was the extraordinary length and variety of the toast-list. For example, that for 1826 ran to no fewer than thirty-four toasts—one of them duplicated! Compare this with the modest ten toasts which comprised the list at last Friday night's function. But in those days there was a wide catholicity observed in the compilation of the toast-list, which we find, on another occasion, included Milton, Homer, and the Liberty of Greece! The new members admitted to the Club at the 1826 dinner, and whose healths were pledged, included Sir Robert Laurie of Maxwellton; Mr R. Cutlar Ferguson of Craigdarroch; Collector Wharton, Professor Wilson ("Christopher North"), and Messrs W. Graham and Joseph Train (the latter the well known antiquarian correspondent of Scott). The Club sustained an irreparable loss in November, 1831, when John Syme passed away. It is on record as remarkable that "his last evening on earth was spent with Captain James Glencairn Burns, just returned from India, in conversation and reminiscences of the Poet."

Again no dinner was held in 1831, but for the 1832 celebration Sir Walter Scott was invited to preside. The novelist, however, was unable to attend, and once more the social observance of the anniversary was pretermitted. Apologising for his inability to accept the Club's invitation, Scott wrote:—



BURNS' WALK. — On the left bank of the Nith, near Dumfries, where the Poet was wont to linger, wooing the Muse.

*To thee, loved Nith, thy gladsome plains,
Where late wi' careless thoughts I ranged,
Though pressed wi' care and sunk in woe,
To thee I bring a heart unchanged.*

*I love thee, Nith, thy banks and braes,
Tho' memory there my bosom tear;
For there he roo'd that brake my heart,
Yet to that heart, ah! still how dear!*

I am very much flattered with the invitation of the Burns Club of Dumfries to take their chair upon the 26th of January next, and were it in my power to do myself so great honour it would give me the most sincere satisfaction. But my official duty detains me in close attendance on the Court of Session during its sittings, besides which I am not now so equal as at a former part of my life either to winter-journeys or to social exertion. The severe illness to which I was subjected some years ago obliges me to observe great caution in these particulars.

I beg to express my sincere wishes for the conviviality of the meeting, and to express my most respectful thanks for the honour which the Club have conferred upon

WALTER SCOTT.

Abbotsford, 29th December, 1831.

We have now related, at some length, the main features of the early history of the Club. Of its later history, we have not space to do more than give a summarised narration. Its proceedings for some years about this period do not call for much remark. The annual dinner would appear to have been held irregularly. For the third year in succession, there was none in 1833, and there was none in 1835 and 1837. Thenceforward, however, as the minutes attest, the function was observed with unbroken regularity, save on three occasions, for which the explanation is recorded. The first occasion was in 1849—the year of the cholera outbreak in Dumfries; the second was in 1879, on account of “the general distress and depression prevalent in the country”; and the third was in 1901, Queen Victoria having died on 22nd

January of that year. During the late war, also, the dinners, in common with all festive observances throughout the country, were, of course, suspended, though the long-established custom of the Club to visit the Mausoleum on each recurring 25th January and meet the Town Council when they placed their tribute on the Poet's tomb has been regularly maintained.

Two outstanding events in which the Club bore a part were the celebration of the centenary of the Poet's birth in 1859, and that of the centenary of his death in 1896. With regard to the former, it was on the Club's initiative that the Town Council and the citizens generally took the matter up and with great heartiness made of the occasion a memorable success. A feature of the day was a representative public procession, organised by the committee of the Mechanics' Institute, who had arranged to carry out on the anniversary the laying of the foundation stone of their new lecture hall. The stone was laid by Bro. Stewart, Provincial Grand Master, with full Masonic ceremonial; and Dr Browne, superintendent of the Crichton Institution (father of Sir James Crichton-Browne and Mr J. H. Balfour-Browne, K.C.), who was president of the Institute at the time, recalled in a speech that Burns founded and carried out a parish library at Friars' Carse called the Monkland Friendly Society. The Burns Club held their anniversary and centenary dinner at four o'clock in the afternoon, when a company of 220 gentlemen gathered in the Assembly Rooms.

Thomas Carlyle had been invited to preside, but declined, and Dr Browne occupied the chair and proposed the Immortal Memory. The croupiers were J. M. Leny of Dalswinton; James Mackie of Bargaly, M.P. for the Stewartry; Thomas Aird, the poet, editor of the "Dumfries Herald"; and W. Bell Macdonald of Rammerscales. Colonel William Nicol Burns, the eldest surviving son of the Poet, was present, and other guests were Colonel M'Murdo of Mavisgrove; Mr William Gordon; Mr H. Fuller, editor of the "New York Mirror"; Mr George F. Train, New York (who introduced tramways into Britain); Mr Dudgeon of Cargen; Sir William Broun, etc. Colonel W. Nicol Burns, responding to the toast of "The Sons of the Poet," attributed his own success and that of his brother with the Army in India to the fame of Burns, which pursued them in good fortune and raised up kind and influential friends for them. "Wherever the sons of Burns had appeared, even at that late period—whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland—they had always been received with most affectionate enthusiasm." Dr Adam proposed "The Literature of Scotland," coupled with the name of Thomas Aird. Dr Caruthers, of Inverness, proposed "English Literature," and Dr Ramage, of Wallace Hall, proposed "The Biographers of Burns." A great "town dinner," to which a thousand persons sat down, was held in the Nithsdale Mills, then newly finished and without machinery, and deputations representative of the two gatherings exchanged visits in the course of the evening. A concert in the Theatre and a

series of balls were other features of the celebration.

Chronologically, the next event of note was the unveiling of the Burns Statue in the High Street, which took place on 6th



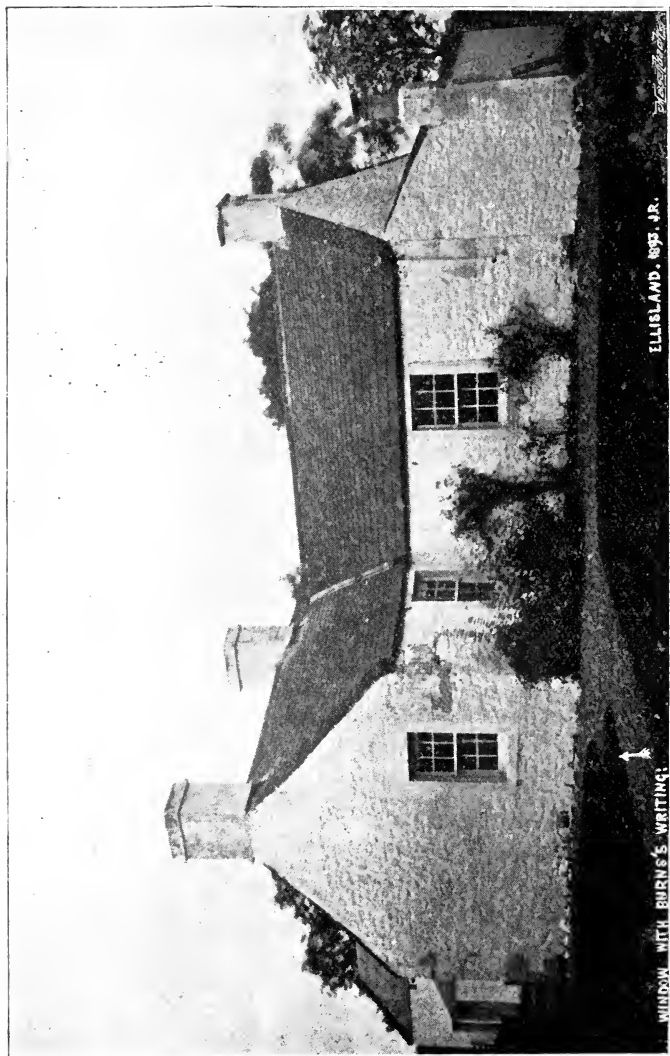
Burns Monument, High Street, Dumfries.

April, 1882, but with this the Burns Club was not officially connected. In connection with the imposing celebration of the centenary in 1896 of the Poet's death, however, it took a very active part. Soon after the anniversary dinner of that year, it began the preparation of arrangements.

for suitably commemorating the date—21st July. With the committee which it appointed were afterwards associated some other representative gentlemen of the town and district, and with the active assistance of Sir Robert Reid, M.P. (now Lord Loreburn), who was president of the Club that year, the cordial sympathy of the Earl of Rosebery was enlisted, and the movement acquired widespread and most influential support. The late Provost Glover, as the official head of the town, filled the position of chairman of the executive; and the secretary was Mr Phillip Sulley, of the Inland Revenue, now in Elgin. Lord Rosebery took a leading part in the day's proceedings, and delivered a memorable oration on the Bard. The celebration, however, will still be in the recollection of many, and a full record of it has been published, so that we need not further enlarge upon it.

To-day the Burns Club of Dumfries is in as vigorous health as at any time in its 100 years' history. Its membership is greater than it has ever been. Its enthusiasm for the Bard and his works and its devotion to his memory show no abating with the passage of the years. It has never been more competently officered than now, and than Mr R. A. Grierson and Mr John M'Burnie it could have no more zealous president and secretary. The Club has in recent years sought to stimulate interest in the Poet's works among the young by offering prizes for competitions in the schools, and this effort has met with gratifying success. At the Burns House, which

/ with the Mausoleum, is in the care and keeping of the Club, an interesting and valuable collection of relics is being built up, thanks to the contributions of interested friends.



ELLISLAND. 1893. J.R.

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