

The Dornoch Burns Club.

BURNS NIGHT

IN THE

SUTHERLAND ARMS HOTEL,

ON

Friday Evening,

25th January, 1924.

CHAIRMAN: SHERIFF J. W. FORBES, M.A., LL.B.

CROUPIERS: { DR. JAMES MACLACHLAN, M.B.E.,
AND
MR R. ROBERTSON, D.C.M.

SECRETARY: D. F. MCLEOD.

Again we meet a' cronies fine,
As cronies met in auld lang syne
Wha' lo'ed the lassies, and the rhyme
Like Rab himsel';
If Rab was here, in muse, he'd chime
An' story tell.

D. H. Donaldson.

What We'll Hae.



SCOTCH KAIL OR COCK-A-LEEKIE.

SAUT HERRIN' AND TATTIES.

THE HAGGIS
AND A NIPPIE.

"His knife see rustic labour dight."

STEAK AND KIDNEY PIE.
NEEPS. TATTIES.

TAM O' SHANTER PUDDEN.
TRUMLIN' TAM.
AIPPLES AN' SIO LIKE.
KEBBUCK. FARLS O' CAKES.

COFFEE.

Toast List.



Address to the Haggis.....Mr D. H. DONALDSON.

The King.....THE CHAIRMAN.

"God Save the King."

The Imperial Forces.....Mr J. F. HARDIE.

"Rule Britannia."

Reply—LIEUT. J. G. MACDONALD.

THE IMMORTAL MEMORY

EX-PROVOST WILLIAM G. MOORE, M.B.E.

The Royal Burgh.....Mr R. HENDERSON.

Reply—COUNCILLOR J. H. ARTHUR.

The Land o' Cakes an' Brither Scots.....Mr GEO. CROW.

The County of Sutherland.....Mr JOHN SUTHERLAND.

Reply—DR BREMNER.

Brither Clubs.....Mr D. F. McLEOD.

Reply—MR D. LEITH.

The Lassies.....Mr D. MACLEAN.

Reply—MR C. McHARDIE.

Proposer of Immortal Memory

DR JAMES MACLACHLAN, M.B.E.

The Chairman.....Mr WM. MACLEOD.

Reply—SHERIFF FORBES, M.A., LL.B.

The Croupiers.....Mr A. J. MOORE.

Reply—MR R. ROBERTSON, D.C.M.

Mine Host.....Mr ANGUS ROSE.

Reply—MR ROSS.

Auld Lang Syne.

Accompanist.....Mr W. H. INNES.

Ex-Provost Moore, M.B.E., proposed the "Immortal Memory" at the annual Burns dinner of the Dornoch Burns Club, held in the Sutherland Arms Hotel, on Friday night, 25th January. Sheriff Forbes, M.A., LL.B., president of the Club, presided over about fifty members, including Dr James MacLachlan, M.B.E., and Mr R. Robertson, D.C.M., as croupiers. The following is a complete list of those present:—

Sheriff Forbes, W. G. Moore, Dr MacLachlan, D. H. Donaldson, R. Henderson, John Sutherland, Dr Bremner, Chas. McHardie, John Mackintosh, W. G. Macdonald, W. McGregor, J. Campbell, J. G. Macdonald, Thomas Murray, W. H. Innes, Jas. Rideout, Alex. Davidson, J. Macdonald, K. Robertson, D. Leitch, D. F. McLeod, H. M. Ross, Robert Grant, C. R. Mackay, Sergt. Thorpe, A. J. Moore, Hector Munro, John Cumming, John Oman, David Ross, Robert Grant, Angus Ross, Angus Rose, J. H. Arthur, Wm. Baxter, J. McPherson, Geo. Crow, Wm. McLeod, Thomas J. Hardie, Wm. Grant, John Grant, Thomas Mackay, Alex. Thompson, D. MacLean, F. Nicolson, D. Campbell, Wilfred Munro.

The haggis was piped in to the joyous strains of, "There was a lad," by Piper T. Murray, and the customary "address" was delivered by Mr D. H. Donaldson. After proposing the toast of The King, the Chairman read apologies for absence from Mr Gilbert Watson, Mr J. F. Hardie and Mr J. K. Mackay, Fortrose. Greetings were intimated from Ayr and Maybole Burns Clubs, and received with hearty applause. The Chairman extended a hearty welcome to all members present. He was glad to see such a full turn-out.

The musical programme was as follows:—

Song, "There was a Lad," Mr John MacKintosh; chorus, "Ye Banks and Braes," led by Mr MacKintosh; song, "The Lass of Ballochmyle," Mr Wm. MacLeod; song, "The Star of Robbie Burns," Mr Wm. Grant; recitation, "Tam o' Shanter," Mr D. H. Donaldson; song, "Afton Water," Sergt. Thorpe; song, "A Man's a Man for a' that," Mr T. J. Hardie; song, "Bonnie Wee Thing," Mr J. Sutherland; song, "Green Grow the Rushes O'," Mr W. Grant; song, "We are a' Scotch Here," Mr Tom Hardie; song, "Jean," Mr J. H. Arthur; special poem, "The Bard," song, "Comin' Thro' the Rye," Mr John Grant; song, "My Love She's but a Lassie yet," Mr C. R. Mackay; song, "Loch Lomond," Mr Jas. Rideout; song, "The Pawkie Duke," Dr Bremner; song, "Dinah Duck," Mr A. Thompson; company, "Auld Lang Syne."

IMPERIAL FORCES.

In proposing the toast of Imperial Forces, Mr T. J. Hardie said that he hoped the new Labour Government would carry forward the plans of their predecessors in office with regard to the Air Force of which unit the Duke of Sutherland was head—(cheers)—the Army and Navy, and he hoped no serious change would take place either at the War Office or Admiralty.

Lieut. J. G. Macdonald suitably replied.

IMMORTAL MEMORY OF BURNS.

The tribute to The Immortal Memory of Burns was in the capable hands of ex-Provost W. G. Moore, M.B.E. Being a close student of Burns, as was anticipated, he dealt with his subject in a masterly, instructive, and interesting manner. He waded into the spirit of the poet's life and brought forth many sterling gems of his character, demonstrating, as he did, how inspiring are the life and works of the Immortal Robbie Burns. In proposing the toast of "The Immortal Memory," ex-Provost Moore spoke as follows:—

INTRODUCTORY.

Mr President and Gentlemen,—It is with feelings of no ordinary diffidence that I rise to propose this toast, "The Immortal Memory," and while I appreciate the honour, I feel very unequal to the task. The subject is vast, and one which may be approached from various angles. As proof of this, for well over a hundred years this toast has been proposed by all classes of

men—including in their number we have Statesmen, Professors of Theology, men of Literature, Science and Art. All have paid tribute in eloquent terms to the memory of this wonderful man.

LOWLY BIRTH.

One hundred and sixty-five years ago, to be correct, on the 25th day of January, 1759, there was born in an "auld clay biggan," or as Allan Cunningham calls it, "The Mud-walled House," on the banks of the Doon, he whose birthday we are met to-night to celebrate. Within a week after his entrance into this world, part of the frail structure, which had been built by his father, was carried away by a violent tempest, and the infant poet along with his mother had to be conveyed to a neighbour's house; surely a fitting prelude to the life of storm and stress, sunshine and tempest on which the infant poet was launched.

INHERITANCE FROM FATHER.

It might be instructive to ask, was there anything about his parents or his immediate forbears which would account for the extraordinary genius of the son? John Murdoch, who acted as teacher to Robert and Gilbert Burns, describes the father "as by far the best of the human race that ever I had the pleasure of being acquainted with." From other remarks made by Murdoch, and also from the writings of Burns himself, there can be little doubt which of the parents the poet most resembled, both in appearance and temper. There is one trait of his character which he undoubtedly inherited, and that was an entire absence of the mercenary spirit and a total inability to make money. His father, a most patriotic Scot, taught his son to love his native land, to treasure its traditions, to guard its privileges, and to widen its freedom.

GREATNESS OF BURNS.

Nature had, however, given this child, who was ushered into the world amid "a blast of Januar' Win'," the patent of true nobility; the passport to eternal fame. From that lowly, smoky interior there has gone forth a great, a mighty wave, which has enveloped in its fold this whole universe. To-night on the snow clad plains of Canada, under the torrid sun of India, on the lonely African Veldt, and the bushland of Australia, his songs will be sung, his poems recited, and in eloquent tones, the Immortal Memory will be proposed. It is only at long intervals that nature gives to a few of her sons, scattered here and there, the passport of immortality. I am not learned enough to enumerate all on whom she has bestowed this rare and bounteous gift. Homer, the blind bard of Greece was one, Virgil was another, Dante, credited by his contemporaries with having explored the depths of Hell, was another. Then comes the myriad minded Shakespeare, and the soaring Milton:—

Dazzled by excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.

Years roll on, and it would seem as if nature had taken upon herself to excel all previous efforts, and forth came Robert Burns, gleaming, flashing, with a radiance adown the centuries, through continents and lands undreamt of by his brilliant predecessors.

BURNS HOLD ON MANKIND.

The question has been asked over and over again, wherein lies the secret of this mighty hold Burns has upon all mankind, more especially upon his own countrymen? Lord Roseberry, well called the orator of the Empire, says it is sympathy and inspiration. His own big heart went out to all. His tenderness embraced all creation,

animate and inanimate, and he poured the rich melody of his song over all.

BURNS AND NATURE.

In what is believed by many to be the sweetest of all his lesser poems, he shows how close he was to nature:—

Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,
(Verhuging with wild brood thickening green,
The fragrant birch, the hawthorn boar
Twined anurous round the enraptured scene—
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too—too soon the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.

Again and again we find him tuning his lyre in praise of nature's wildings as "To a Mountain Daisy," and it is well known that when these lines were penned, some of his love affairs had gone wrong. Then again, in a burst of patriotic fervour, he sings:—

The rough burr thistle spreading wide
Among the bearded bere,
I turned the weeder clips aside,
And spared the symbol dear.

Perhaps the best known of his poems on what we are pleased to call the lower creation, is the one entitled "To a Mouse," on turning up her nest with the plough, and this strongly evinces his sympathy with even the weakest of created things:—

Wee sleekit, courin', timorous beastie,
Och what a panic is in thy breastie.

And then again:—

I am truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion
And fellow mortal.

The mavis, the blackbird, the lark, and a host of other woodland songsters all inspired his muse.

POETRY OF BURNS ON SCOTTISH LIFE, ETC.

I should here like to make reference to some of his larger poems. We have "The Cottars Saturday Night," that most perfect idyll in any literature. What a charming picture does it unfold to us of the interior of a Scottish peasant's cottage, cheerful, decent, self-respecting poverty, supported and solaced by the hopes and the exercise of religion; parental tenderness, piety, and the sweet virtue of love. Utterly homely and realistic, it has yet in it a quiet beauty and completeness, which satisfy the imagination no less than they touch the heart.

From scenes like these auld Scotia's grandeur springs
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad;
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
An honest man's the noblest work of God.

Then he shows his kindly feeling in the "Twa Dogs," and his wealth of humour in the scenes of lawless life and love in the "Jolly Beggars." I must not omit to mention "Tam O' Shanter," that wonderful masterpiece of genius and imagination, but as it is to be recited here to-night, I shall not dwell any longer thereon.

LOVE SONGS.

It is, however, when we come to his songs in which he deals with the lassies that Burns shows the depth and tenderness of his love. But how am I, a mere man, to deal with his loves and love songs? Love songs, versatile though his genius was, continued through life to be his favourite theme. He has written with more fervour and with more variety of natural feeling on this subject than perhaps any other poet. The best of his love songs were reserved for his wife Jean Armour and his "Highland Mary," as also some to Clarinda. His newly wedded wife inspired:—

O' a' the airts the wind can blaw.

I have already quoted from "Mary in Heaven." She also inspired that beautiful gem beginning:—

Ye banks and braes and streams around;
The Castle of Montgomery.

In one of his songs to Clarinda occur the lines in which, according to Scott, lie the essence of a thousand love tales:—

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been brokenhearted.

LOVE FOR SCOTLAND.

We immortalise Burns for his incomparable lyrics, we love him too for his love of the living and the lifeless. But what of his love for the land we love the most—Bonnie Scotland! He loved his country with all his heart, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and it is this love that he has made dear to every Scotsman in every part of the globe. Writing to Mrs Dunlop, he says: "Scottish scenes and Scottish story are the themes I wish to sing," and so strongly did Scottish blood course in his veins that he felt it would boil there until "the floodgates shut in eternal rest."

Even then I wish I mind its power,
A wish that to my latest hour
Will strongly heave my breast,
That I, for puir auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or book could make
Or sing a song at least.

That he has sung a song at least we know full well, and in singing has gathered up the feelings, sentiments, aspirations, and folk songs of our forefathers, preserved them in words that are imperishable, in melodies that are immortal. He sung its good things of this life, its souper scones, its hamely parritch, chief o' Scotia's food, its herrings, its haggises, its tippeny and its usque bae. He also sung its superstitions, its ghaists, its brownies, its fairies, its witches, its grizzly ideas of death, and, above all, its muckle black deil. He also gave her her grandest war lyric depicting the spirit that won her freedom, a lyric that thrills the heart of every Scotsman in every quarter of the globe, "Scots wha hae." This, with poetry so true to Scottish life and Scottish feeling, so vivid and descriptive at times of Scotland's bewitching scenery in "Guid braid Scots," has made the name of Burns a charm wherever Scotsmen gather, transporting them to the scenes of childhood and of home where they "May drink a cup of kindness yet for auld lang syne."

BURNS SATIRE.

But in our enthusiasm for Burns songs, do not let us overlook an aspect of his genius as remarkable as his gift of writing songs, an aspect that made him an object of respect if not of fear—his gift of satire. It has a message of world-wide significance. It has been said that what "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon" is to other songs, the "Holy Fair," is to other satires reaping at one fell swoop a harvest of spiritual vanities and earthly conceits. Burns had many faults, and so have we all. He hated alone the oppressor and the hypocrite, and on them his pen poured remorseless satire.

ESTIMATE OF MORAL CHARACTER OF BURNS.

Coming to a subject of extreme delicacy, an estimate of the moral character of Burns, I might say that we are here standing on a threshold where the bravest might tremble, where the wisest would be silent; for Burns was no ordinary man. He was a man of extreme parts, with a mind far more sensitive than most, with an inspiration so strong and so rapid in its movements as to amount almost to a passion. Burns stands to be judged not by ordinary men like you and me, but by

a jury of his own peers. How at any rate shall we judge a giant, great in gifts and great in temptation, great in strength and great in weakness! Let us glory in his strength and be comforted in his weakness, and when we thank Heaven for his inestimable gift of Burns, we do not need to remember wherein he was imperfect. Few things so move me to indignation, and do more to defame the name of Robert Burns than those false admirers who hold him up as an example of intemperance. Little do they understand the soul of Burns, at heart so noble, in weakness so repentant. Nevertheless men, as poorly endowed as Burns was rich, have nobly striven against the blast of cruel fortune and kept their heads erect. Shall we make Burns less than they! He may have fallen where they stood, but it was to rise again and show himself a man. Have not many of his sweetest songs been crooned in moments of deep despondency! Is not his "Man was made to mourn" one of his classics, the progeny of a mind that would not barter away its independence for the glittering gear of this world!

SACRED IDEAL.

The man is gone, but the poet and his message are with us still. He has sung us no modern poet has sung: The Heav'n-born hope; the brotherhood of man itself. Burns has, in his "A man's a man for a' that," lit the torch of manhood, honesty, freedom, common sense and sterling worth. He saw with a keen eye that the value of a man was to be estimated, not by the position he happened to occupy in this world, but by what he himself was as a man. That:—

The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

Burns was here no doubt attacking as he knew them, the pretensions of the aristocracy and upper classes of his own day, and this democratic spirit goes further when he hopes

That man to man the world o'er
Should brithers be and a' that.

This song belongs not to one particular class, but to all who came under the following ideal:—

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.

This song reminds us what we are apt to forget, that the goal of humanity will be reached not so much by statesman, politician, reformer, preacher and dreamer, important as these may be, but by honest, upright common men upon whom God has placed his own guinea stamp, "the pith o' sense, the pride o' worth." In this song Burns is more than a singer, he is a preacher and a prophet. For such a one there is forever a place in the hearts of men. For this alone Burns belongs not to a nation but to the world, lives not for an age, but while ages last.

Gentlemen, to-night then let me say in conclusion that, although he fell, he struggled not to fall, and, ere you condemn and wonder at his weakness, try to estimate the strength of those wild waves and blasts which assailed him; and, while you blame him more than them, weep at the thought that between them such a ruin was wrought, and such a glorious wreck remains.

I now ask you to be upstanding and drink in silence to the honoured dead.

The masterly oration of ex-Provost Moore was keenly listened to throughout, and punctuated with well-merited appreciation.

THE ROYAL BURGH.

Mr R. S. Henderson, in able terms, proposed the toast of The Royal Burgh of Dornoch. It was said, he remarked, that

confession was good for the soul. He had a confession to make. When in Dornoch but a few days, he had referred to Dornoch as a village—(laughter)—but was promptly told to note and remember it was a Royal Burgh. (Laughter.) Fate must have decreed that his expiation should be to propose the toast that night of The Royal and Ancient Burgh of Dornoch. (Laughter.) Mr Henderson, in the course of his remarks referred to the hospitality extended to strangers by the Dornoch people, and also stated how struck he was with Dornoch and its picturesque surroundings—always a pleasing attraction to strangers. (Cheers.)

In his reply, Councillor J. H. Arthur, thanked Mr Henderson for the eloquent manner in which he proposed the toast. The toast, he stated, should have been replied to by others higher in the civic circles of the Burgh than a mere Councillor. Dornoch was well known from one end of Great Britain to the other, and the renowned golf course was now drawing players from far and near. The three excellent articles descriptive of Dornoch Castle, Dornoch as a City, and Dornoch Cathedral, which were published recently, must have been read with interest by many. (Cheers.) The first article appeared in the "Northern Times," the second in "The Scotsman," under the well known initials "R.M.," our late member for the Burgh, Lord Alness, and the third in the "Aberdeen Free Press," the report of a lecture given by Mr Douglas Simpson, Aberdeen, to the Ecclesiological Society there. Mr Arthur then referred to more local matters relating to roads, taxes, lighting, etc. (Cheers.)

THE LAND O' CAKES AN' BRITHER SCOTS.

The toast, The Land o' Cakes and Brither Scots, could not have been entrusted in more capable hands than those of Mr Geo. Crow. The toast, he said to his mind, was of the very first importance wherever Scotsmen gathered together, particularly on the occasion of a Burns anniversary. The sentiments which the toast called forth could only be fully appreciated at such a gathering as theirs. (Cheers.) Scotsmen held the supreme place amongst the nations of the world in their love of country and of their race. (Cheers.) The great struggles of the centuries which had been undertaken by the natives of Scotland to gain their independence; the grim fight which in many parts of Scotland and along her seaboard had to be fought by the inhabitants to wrest a livelihood from nature, had made who were Scotland's pride, and who prided themselves in their Motherland. (Cheers.) Scotland had immortalised herself in many ways. She had been the backbone of the Empire in war, in trade and commerce, in thrift and in sport. (Cheers.)

THE COUNTY OF SUTHERLAND.

In giving the toast of the County, Mr John Sutherland dwelt on its natural features and its entrancing beauties rather than on its institutions. For forty-four years his work brought him into close touch with these, and with the peoples who—a regrettable contemplation—composed its rapidly diminishing population. Its rocks and rivers, mountains and moors, caves and corries, landscapes and seascapes, held for him an irresistible fascination. The interior of the county he described as one great unbroken sanctuary for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field—a perfect paradise to the naturalist. After dealing with its rivers and the wonderfully fine distribution of its mountains, he referred to what he regarded as the most interesting bit of Sutherland—the Island of Handa, of

Scourie, one of the greatest nurseries of the sea-fowl in the British Isles. Other features touched upon were the Cave of Smoo, and Rob Donn's grave, both at Durness; Bonnie Strathmore and Dornadilla. He considered the finest view in Sutherland was that from Hope Lodge, when the sun was in the west. (Cheers.)

Dr Bremner made an ideal reply, touching, as he did, upon the natural beauties and attractions of the county of Sutherland, and paid a compliment to Mr Sutherland for his instructive remarks.

BRITHIR CLUBS.

Mr D. F. McLeod, in proposing the Toast of Brithir Clubs, said—I have to thank the Committee for giving me the opportunity to propose this toast. We must not forget at this moment thousands of Burns admirers are attending functions such as this to do honour to his memory. Men of all countries are members of Burns Clubs, and Scotchmen predominate, but whatever the nationality of its members they come with one aim to honour Burns. Together they are drawn by the golden thread of his genius, and the never diminished hope of the brotherhood of man.

For a' that an' a' that,
It's comin' yet for a' that;
That man to man the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

We talk to-day of the enthusiasm of Burns Clubs. Well, it is said when the first Kilmarnock edition of his works appeared in 1786, it immediately took hold of the national mind, and Hogg, writing in his *Memoir of Burns* says:—"No sooner had the volume appeared than old and young, grave and gay, high and low, learned and ignorant, were alike delighted, agitated, and transported. Shepherds, ploughboys, and maid-servants cheerfully gave the last savings of their penny fee to buy the works of Robert Burns. This was in 1786, and here we are now 138 years after, and is the enthusiasm any less? Judging by the great number of Burns Clubs in existence, the interest is not only kept up but is increasing. When he was 20 years of age Burns formed what was called the Bachelors' Club in Tarbolton. He had for its members all the available youths of his own age in the district. He was of course the moving spirit of the Club and the great social element in himself and his own literary genius influenced its members. It became known as the Literary Institute. Members were encouraged through the magnetic personality at its head to debate on every conceivable subject, but his "Burns Nights," when he recited his own poems and songs attracted the larger audience. When leaving Tarbolton Burns wrote his "Farewell to the Brethren of Tarbolton Lodge."

A last request permit me here
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, I ask it with a tear,
To him, the Bard that's far awa'.

These four lines, I think, express in a way the sentiment given at many a Burns dinner to-night. Burns left Tarbolton for Mauchline and here he founded another club. This club, which was much on a par with the Tarbolton one, was in existence up to 1870, after which date it became known as the Mauchline Jolly Beggars' Club, and to-night it will go down to posterity as being the first Burns Club to have its toast list and songs broadcasted to all wireless stations in the country. They are holding their Burns night now in the famous Poozie Nancy's Inn, the scene, you will remember, of the "Jolly Beggars." Now, gentlemen, I've brought this in about Burns to show you that he was the founder of at least two clubs. As regards the Burns Clubs formed after the death of the poet, the first club, or the mother club, as it is called, was formed in Greenock in

1802; the second was Paisley, 1805; the third, Kilmarnock, 1808; and Dunfermline, 1812. All are still in existence and going strong. There are several hundred clubs altogether on the list of Burns Clubs' Federation. I notice that many of them publish what they call their "special features"—"To honour the name of Robert Burns," "To foster a knowledge of his life," "To encourage Scottish literature," "To hold social gatherings," "To aid and assist the unfortunate and distressed," "To advance the social improvement and interest of its members," and the last four features are just exactly what Burns himself tried his best to do at Tarbolton and Mauchline, the meeting with his fellows for the purpose of mutual improvement. (Cheers.)

Mr D. Leith, in reply, said I have to thank you for the cordial manner in which you have responded to the toast so very eloquently proposed by our worthy secretary, Mr McLeod, and I have also to thank Mr McLeod for coupling my name with it. I fear, however, that the Committee have made a wrong selection in asking me to reply to this important toast as I know very little about "Brithir Clubs," as this is the only Burns Club I am a member of. Mr McLeod referred to the great number of Burns Clubs now in the world, which shows conclusively the love and esteem in which the memory of Scotland's Immortal Bard is held. (Cheers.) Burns Clubs seem to spring up wherever Scotchmen foregather, and we all know that Scotchmen are to be met with in queer and outlandish places. Burns Clubs may claim to be like Masonic Lodges, spread over the four quarters of the globe. Burns Clubs have helped to bring nearer that happy day so expressively foretold by the poet:—

Then let us pray the time may come,
As come it will for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brithers be for a' that.

Before I leave the subject of the influence of Burns Clubs, I might be allowed to congratulate the Dornoch Burns Club on their presenting a prize to the schools of the parish for the best essay on Burns. This we must all admit is a step in the right direction as it will encourage the young to read and study their Burns. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, I again thank you on behalf of all Burns Clubs, and I am sure if the fervent enthusiasm we see here to-night is maintained, even for a few years, we will have justified our existence as a Burns Club—(applause)—and perhaps it may be a means of fostering the formation of other Burns Clubs in the County of Sutherland. (Cheers.)

THE LASSES.

Mr D. Maclean, in proposing the toast of the Lasses, said—I had hopes of spending a quiet and enjoyable evening here to-night, but in that I have been disappointed, because what enjoyment can a man have when he knows that he has got to speak upon a subject that he knows little or nothing about? There are a few who look upon being asked to propose this toast as a very doubtful compliment. They imagine their selection is due to some superior knowledge or experience of the lasses, and they do not like that to be known, so they refuse. I have no fears in that respect, and I must admit to some experience, but I am always content to take second place in the favours of the lasses with Burns himself. Therefore I feel greatly honoured at being asked to propose to-night the toast of "The Lasses." (Cheers.) We all know how the lasses influenced and inspired the life and works of Burns. His great love and sympathy for the living and his intense grief for the dead enabled him to write the finest songs and poems in our language. The lasses are continuing to influence mankind in the

same way to-day. There has never been a great work or a great deed done but through the influence of women—(cheers)—and they in their wisdom allow man to take the credit for all the progress that has ever been made, and man in his blindness believes it himself. (Laughter and cheers.) The lasses are the progressives, we are the stick-in-the-muds. We have only to take woman's dress as an example of their progress and how the ever-changing fashions must broaden their outlook on life. We would only hope that their progress in dress has reached the limit, because they have only a few inches left to progress with. (Loud laughter.) In Burns' day a lass's chief aim was to become a house builder, and now while still retaining that high ideal she aspires to become an Empire builder. After reading the very able speeches delivered in the House of Commons by the Duchess of Athole and Margaret Pondfield, it is quite safe to prophesy that in the near future we will have a woman Cabinet Minister and at a later date a woman Prime Minister. (Laughter.) We cannot keep them back. They are made of the right stuff—

Auld nature swears, the lovely dears,
Her noblest work she classes, O!
Her pretence han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.

As a man of some experience with the lasses, I would strongly advise all the bachelors present to take possession of a lass and make her his ain. (Cheers.) I cannot understand how an admirer of Burns can remain in a state of single blessedness, because the whole of Burns works breathe out the pleasures of courtship and marriage. I will give you one of his finest descriptions of youthful love—

O happy love! where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare,
I've paced much this weary, mortal road,
And sage experience bids me this declare—
"If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasures spare,
"One cordial in this melancholy vale,
"Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
"In other arms, breathe out the tender tale,
"Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the
evening gale."

I hope this will have some effect on your hard hearts, and before sitting down I will give you another advice: Breathe out this tender tale in one ear alone, because it loses its savour by change and repetition. (Loud laughter.)

Mr C. McHardie replied. He said there was no doubt Burns struck a more beautiful note in his love songs than in any of his other works. His songs in praise of Mary Morrison and his Jean, were undoubtedly among his finest works, and they saw clearly that Burns valued as the best gift on earth the love of a good woman. (Cheers.)

THE BARD.

Mr D. H. Donaldson on rising said—Sheriff Forbes and fellow cronies, since we met here last year, you have for some reason or another elected me Bard to your Club and as such I am here to-night. I have not yet been informed what my duties are, but I take it that, one who holds such an office is expected to prepare a poetical effusion appropriate to the occasion or the times, some lines which may carry a message of good cheer and encouragement to our fellow members. This I have in my crude way endeavoured to do, but anyone who has the spirit of poetry knows that the muse cannot be driven or laboured.

Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

I used the lines of our greatest authority on the muse, Scotland's man of destiny, Robert Burns. (Cheers.) Well, gentlemen, during the first few days of this year I was reviewing in my mind the events of the year just departed, 1923, and which I

think you will excuse me for describing as the year of despondency. Almost everyone we met wore a long face. "The country's done," was a common remark with young and old. Everything appeared to be going wrong.

The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft agley.

A few events, the situation in Europe, serious unemployment, earthquake in Japan, mine disasters, and no one appeared to be enjoying the glittering prizes of war with the exception of Lord Birkenhead. (Laughter.) With these facts in my mind I picked up a volume of Burns and curiously enough I opened it at his poem "Man was made to mourn." That poem seemed to fit in with the events of the year 1923. Then I came to these lines:—

But let not this too much, my son,
Disturb your youthful breast,
This partial view of human kind
Is surely not the last.

Despondency fled and these thoughts came and impressed themselves upon me. I now give you my message of hope for the coming year:—

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

What ails you, you are looking blue !
Your face o' smiles is shorn.
Listen : and I prove to you,
Man wasna made to mourn.

What's that, you say, the country's done,
You wish you'd ne'er been born.
It's yourself that's wrang, it's no the lan',
Man wasna made to mourn.

There'll aye be ups and downs in life,
Man's plans are often torn,
But smilingly meet care and strife,
Man wasna made to mourn.

Laugh, and the world laughs with you,
Weep, and you're left forlorn.
Let trouble come and seek you,
Man wasna made to mourn.

Look round your cronies here the nicht,
Note whaur a frown is worn,
What's that you say, of course I'm richt,
Man wasna made to mourn.

God, in His plan of creation,
Gave each a cross to be borne,
Whether man, woman, or nation,
Yet He never meant we should mourn.

Go, teach the brotherhood o' man,
Nae man nor woman scorn,
But haud you oot a helping han',
To any man that mourns.

The auld year's gone wi' its sorrow,
The new with bright hope is born,
With gladness : Go ! meet to-morrow,
Man wasna made to mourn.

The Chairman, in a neat speech, complimented Mr Donaldson on his effusion, and then proposed the health of The Bard, and the company responded with enthusiasm.

PROPOSER OF THE IMMORTAL MEMORY.

Dr MacLachlan, in conveying the thanks of the Club to the Proposer of The Immortal Memory, paid a fitting tribute to ex-Provost Moore for his appreciation of their National Poet. The impression one formed was that the ex-Provost possessed the true Burns ring. One easily saw that he was an ardent lover and close student of the poet as his estimate indicated. They would agree with the ex-Provost that Burns should be judged by a jury of his own peers, and not by those detractors who held him up as a pretext for folly and intemperance. (Cheers.) He would like to inform the meeting that a namesake of the ex-Provost, one Dr Moore, a well known and distinguished London physician, had received from Burns a letter dated August, 1787, in which Burns gave a very graphic and detailed sketch of his life, his parentage, and the times in which he lived. This letter was the basis of most of the Burns biographies, and might be said to be the most interesting letter he

ever wrote. In the closing parts of the letter, he refers to his projected visit to the West Indies. Fortune had not been kind to him, the carking cares of life had worried him, or as he said: "Hungry rum had me in the wind." He had taken out his passage, bidden his friends good-bye, and composed his last song, "The gloomy night is gathering fast," when a letter from Dr Blacklock to a friend of his overthrew all his schemes and opened a new prospect for him. Blacklock's opinion was that in Edinburgh he would meet with encouragement for a second edition of his works. A kind providence placed him under the patronage of the Earl of Glencairn. At Edinburgh he was in a new world, for his star in life never shone brighter. The doctor then referred to the famous meeting of Scott with Burns in Sciences House, Edinburgh. He also mentioned that this Dr Moore was the father of General Sir John Moore of Corunna. Dr MacLachlan then said his task was an easy one. It was not to give a dissertation on Burns, but to propose the toast of the Proposer of the Immortal Memory. It was superfluous for him to speak of the ex-Provost. He had filled with distinction the chief office of the town, as well as being a member of all the administrative bodies of it. (Cheers.) He was a keen sportsman, and now they would know him as a student and admirer of Robert Burns. (Cheers.) He then asked them to drink his health with all honours.

Ex-Provost Moore briefly replied, thanking Dr MacLachlan for his kind remarks and the company for the warm way in which they had received the toast.

THE CHAIRMAN.

Mr Wm. Macleod proposed the toast of The Chairman. The Chairman, he said, had shown a great interest in the Royal Burgh since he came to reside in it. Last year the Chairman had given a deep, interesting and instructive address at their Burns supper—an address which had been much appreciated far beyond the confines of the Royal Burgh. (Cheers.) It was the wish of all that the Chairman would be long spared to move in and out amongst them. (Cheers.)

Sheriff Forbes (chairman) thanked the company for the kindly way in which they had received the toast. He considered it an honour to be president of the Dornoch Burns Club and to act as chairman that night. (Cheers.) They had had a most enjoyable evening, and he hoped the Club would go on adding to its numbers. The Chairman made touching reference to the death of Mr John Douglas, who had been a member of the Club, and on behalf of the members expressed sympathy with the relatives of deceased. The Chairman concluded by thanking the singers, accompanist, and all who had contributed towards the evening's enjoyment. (Cheers.)

THE CROUPIERS.

On rising to propose this toast Mr A. J. Moore said that the Committee could hardly have selected two better men for the job. (Cheers.) He never realised how well adapted they were for the croupiers chair until he began to put together a few words to propose the toast. Here was Dr MacLachlan who could judge to the fraction of an ounce how much each member should eat and drink—(laughter)—and if by mischance one should fall out by the wayside—(loud laughter)—he was always handy. (Laughter.) Mr Robertson again would instil into the ranks of the members the rigid discipline of the old army—(laughter)—and what's more, he would see to it that he was obeyed. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, their health!

Mr R. Robertson said the toast should have been replied to by the senior croupier, but as he was busy handing out gems from

the treasury of the Immortal Bard, he delegated the duty of returning thanks to him. The speaker wished all good luck, and concluded—

May fortune tumble doon yer lum
An' land upon yer hearth !
An' frae her burstin' pouch gi' ye
A' guid things o' this earth !
May she bide still jist whaur she fa's
An' may she never seek
Tae lift yer door sneek ; but sit aye
Close at yer ingle cheek !

THE SECRETARY.

The Chairman proposed the health of the secretary, Mr D. F. M'Leod. Mr M'Leod had undertaken the arrangements for the Burns' Night, and he had carried them out in a most appreciable and efficient manner.

Mr M'Leod briefly replied.

MINE HOST.

Mr Angus Rose proposed the health of Mine Host in most felicitous terms.

Mr Ross, Sutherland Arms Hotel, replied in racy, suitable terms, his remarks being interspersed with humour, which was much enjoyed. He said the motto of the Sutherland Arms Hotel was "To Please." (Cheers.)

All the toasts were most heartily pledged. The enjoyable function was brought to a close by the company singing, "Auld Lang Syne."

MENU.

Whit We'll Hae.—Scotch kail or cock-a-leekie. Saut herrin' and tatties. The baggis, and a nippie—"His knife see rustic labour dight." Het jinta, neeps, tatties. Tam o' Shanter pudding, trumlin' tam, apples an' sic like, kebbuck, farls o' cakes. Coffee.