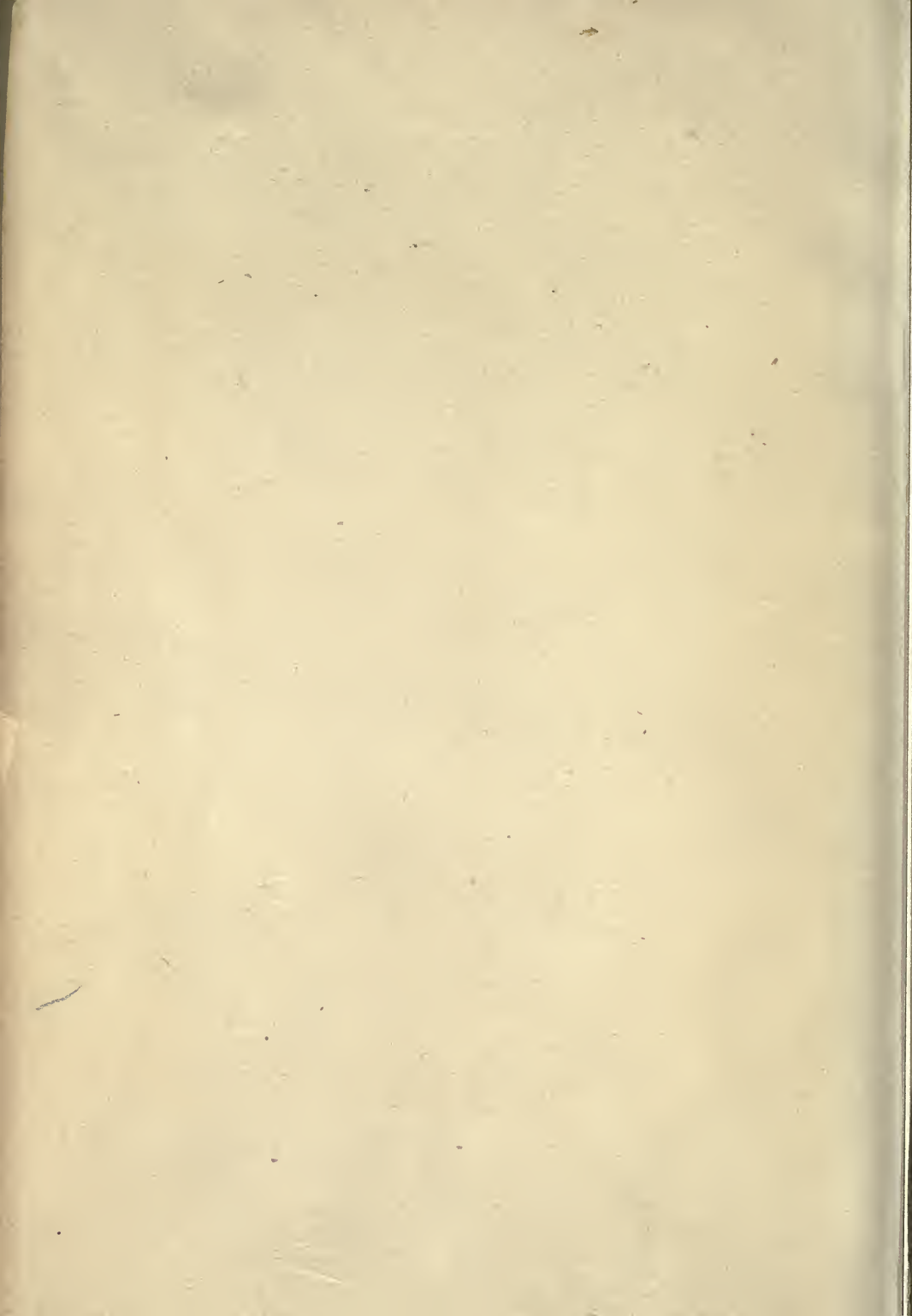


Angus, James
The Rosebery Burns Club

PR
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Yet think not all the Rich and great
Are likewise truly blest. Burns.
—

Las Vegas

THE
ROSEBERY BURNS CLUB,
GLASGOW.





Faithfully Yours
Las Angeles

BSGT
Yang

THE
ROSEBERY BURNS CLUB
GLASGOW.

A SHORT SKETCH OF ITS ORIGIN
AND GROWTH.

BY
JAMES ANGUS
(Founder of the Club).



GLASGOW: W. & R. HOLMES.
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1906.

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TO
The Rosebery Burns Club,
WHOSE WEAL HAS BEEN THE GOAL
OF
MY WISH AND EFFORT,
THIS
SHORT SKETCH
IS
LOVINGLY DEDICATED.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,—

IN accordance with a promise made by me at the beginning of this session, I avail myself of this opportunity to deliver what is termed on the syllabus as the President's address, taking as my subject, "The History of the Rosebery Burns Club."

To enable me to explain the events which led up to the founding of the Club, it will be necessary for you to go back with me to the year 1866. On an evening in that year, a number of youths gathered together at the corner of Hutcheson Street and Ingram Street. The conversation was (at least to them) of a very interesting nature. They had just left school, and started in their first situation; and that evening it was decided that some notice should be taken of such an interesting event. The result was,

that a soiree and concert was held in Wright's Temperance Hotel, Glassford Street (which premises now form part of Messrs. Woodrow & Sons, printers). This first venture was so successful that a similar entertainment was held in the same place in the succeeding year.

The following year the function took the character of a soiree, concert, and ball, which was held in a hall situated in Gartland Street. The tickets were printed, "Annual Festival of the Young Men of Hutcheson Street."

In the following year the same form of festival was held in the Lesser Trades Hall, Glassford Street, at which 150 were present. Mr. James Somers occupied the chair. This was the last of the soirees. During the following years the festival took the form of a dinner, a number of which were held in the Old Pope's Eye Tavern, Moodie's Court, Argyle Street, as also in "His Lordship's Larder," St. Enoch Square, the building now occupied by a warehouse company.

A silver cup was presented to the young men by Mr. James Wallace, a member.

The cup occupied a prominent place on the table at the annual dinner, and was retained during his year of office by the chairman, whose name and that of the croupier were engraved on the cup.

In the year 1879, the Young Men formed an Association, which they designated the Hutchesonian Association, one of the objects of which was the raising and maintaining of a fund by entry-monies and annual subscriptions, from which any member or members might receive aid in adverse circumstances, the amount granted in each case being submitted for approval to a general meeting of the Association, specially convened for the consideration of the respective claims on their sympathy and help.

Owing to a decrease in the number of original members, the Association was dissolved in 1886.

At a social gathering, held on 29th April, 1887, I, having been the first and last chairman, was presented with the Hutchesonian Cup, a relic which I value very much, and which recalls many happy memories of the friends of my youth.

In January, 1885, several members of the

Hutchesonians organised a meeting in celebration of the birthday of Robert Burns, which was very successful, and after paying expenses, left the committee with 10s. in hand. The outcome of this gathering was, that a meeting was held in the St. Mungo Vintners Co., Queen Street. Amongst those present were Messrs T. Swan, J. Davie, W. Wren, T. Johnston, W. Barrie, J. Reid, W. Dott, and J. Angus.

A motion that a Burns Club be formed was submitted by James Angus, seconded by Thomas Johnston, and carried unanimously.

James Angus moved that the Club be named the Rosebery Burns Club, which was seconded by William Barrie, and agreed to.

It was also agreed (1) that the membership be limited to 50; (2) that the members meet quarterly for the purpose of transacting business in connection with the Club; (3) that the entry-money be 2s. 6d., and annual subscription 1s.

Thomas Swan was elected treasurer and secretary, and I had the honour conferred upon me of being appointed the first president.

It was also agreed to write to Lord Rosebery



Heath.

LORD ROSEBERY.

requesting permission for the adoption of his name as that of the Club ; also, that he would consent to be the patron. By the time this letter was forwarded the membership cards of the Club had been printed, one of which was enclosed in the letter to his Lordship. In his reply Lord Rosebery (not to be denied his little joke) said he was always adverse to his name being associated with any club, but in this case, it would appear by the card which he had received, that he had no say in the matter, the Club having been named and membership cards issued ; he had, however, much pleasure in being associated with the Club, by agreeing to be patron.

Within the first twelve months of the Club's existence, an attempt (which was defeated) was made to hold the meetings of the Club fortnightly.

Later on the same party made a motion that the meetings of the Club be held monthly, so as to enable the members to have meetings devoted to harmony. This second attempt to increase the number of meetings was also defeated, the executive being determined that

the Rosebery Burns Club would be conducted on literary lines and not altogether on harmonic.

The applications for membership were so numerous that it was agreed to increase the number to 100, and later on the number of members was unlimited.

At the period already referred to, viz., 1886, the meetings of Burns Clubs were chiefly of a social character, and the proceedings were not of a nature to contribute to the intellectual development of the members, nor form a fitting tribute to the genius of the National Bard of Scotland.

The executive determined to remedy this state of matters so far as the Rosebery was concerned, believing that the duty of members as such is of a two-fold nature—that is (1) the instilling into a somewhat prejudiced public mind a more intimate knowledge of the Bard, and to quicken a clearer and juster apprehension of what is best and noblest in his teaching; and (2) in the furthering of a knowledge of and the fostering of a love for our national literature generally amongst our fellow Scots.

Unless it goes on these lines a Burns Club is unworthy of the name it bears, and only when going on these lines are we, as Burnsites, giving honour to the name of the poet and perpetuating his memory in a fitting and worthy way.

A literary session was started in 1887. These meetings were held in the premises of the St. Mungo Vintners Company, Queen Street ; in 1889 the place of meeting was removed to the premises of the same firm, corner of Hope Street and Argyle Street (the site being now occupied by the booking hall of the Caledonian Railway Company), and later on to the Cobden Hotel, Argyle Street ; the Bank Restaurant, Queen Street ; the Trades House Restaurant, Glassford Street, and Alexandra Hotel, Bath Street.

It was a hard, uphill fight to keep the Club together from the year 1887 up to the year 1894. The support accorded the executive was very discouraging, the meetings being very poorly attended. Twelve was considered a large meeting, and I remember on one occasion when a gentleman appeared to find an audience of two prepared to listen to his lecture, which

lecture, needless to say, on that occasion was not delivered.

It was at this crisis in the history of the Club, 1894, that there joined the membership one who during his life had done much for Burnsiana, and whose enthusiasm in all that was to promote the prosperity of the Club will never be forgotten by those who were associated with him in the management. I refer to the late Mr. W. Craibe Angus. Mr. Angus was president of the Club during sessions 1895-96, during which period, and up to the time of his death, on 11th December, 1899, he, by the earnest manner in which he entered into the literary work of the Club, did much to ensure its prosperity.

Mr. Angus was a man of strongly marked individuality. He had a profound veneration for Burns. He was a man of strong opinions, and expressed them in the tone of moral courage and intellectual vigour. He was a prominent and picturesque figure, and will be sadly missed at many a Burns function in the future. He has left a void in the West of Scotland that cannot soon be filled.

Big, breezy, bold an' wondrous kind,
 Wi' piercing eye that glowed wi' fire—
 A giant, wi' a giant's mind,
 Justice and truth his life's desire :
 Nane shall we ken in years to come,
 Nane trust we as we trusted him ;
 His name we'll cherish where we roam,
 Nor let his lustre e'er grow dim.

Since the death of Mr. Angus the literary work of the Club has been continued with great success, the past session 1904-05 being the most successful in the history of the Club ; and for this success the members are indebted to our late President, Mr. Alexander Pollock, who never permitted personal ease to stand in the way of any undertaking that was to be to the interest or prosperity of the Club, and whose wise and unflagging energy acted as a constant stimulus to those who had the privilege of working with him.

On 21st February, 1905, a lecture was delivered (as per syllabus) on "Glasgow at the Close of the 18th Century," with special reference to the different visits of Burns to the city. The lecturer was Dr. R. B. Lothian, who

had an audience of over 150—such a contrast in numbers from the time when it was considered a good literary meeting with an attendance of twelve.

Several delightful excursions have taken place, the members, accompanied by their lady friends, having visited Ayr, Mauchline, Catrine, Tarbolton, Maybole, Dumfries, Stirling, Roslyn, Linlithgow, and Lanark.

Some of the outstanding incidents in the Club's history may be briefly summarised. The first occasion on which the Club was brought prominently before the public was at the annual dinner held in Galloway's Restaurant, Stockwell Street, on January, 1887, at which the chairman, speaking of the Glasgow statue to Burns, said it had been a standing disgrace that it had been left unfinished, but he had been glad to notice from the papers that Greenock had come forward with a subscription of £25 to finish the reliefs on the sides of the statue. He trusted that all the Burns Clubs in the City would now come forward with the means to put the finishing touch to the statue. The result of this

appeal to the meeting was a subscription of £5, which was forwarded to Bailie William Wilson, treasurer of the Statue Committee, who in acknowledging receipt through the Glasgow press, paid a high compliment to the enthusiasm of the Rosebery members, and pointed to the Rosebery as an example for the other Clubs to follow.

Bailie Wilson, during the few years that he was spared to be amongst us, took a warm interest in the affairs of the Club, and was the means of introducing to the Club such gentlemen as Bailie R. M. Mitchell and the late Dr. Underwood, then Consul at Glasgow for the United States of America.

I will now refer to an interesting but somewhat sad incident which occurred about this time in connection with a Scottish-American poet who was associated with the Club. This was Mr. Donald Ramsay, a native of Glasgow, who had spent the greater part of his life in America, and who visited his native country each summer, when he was entertained by the Rosebery. On one of these annual visits—that

of 1892—he died shortly after landing at Liverpool. The circumstances attending this unfortunate event are peculiar.

About the middle of August of that year, Mr. Ramsay, accompanied by his wife and daughter, set sail for Liverpool. Two days before gaining that port he took unwell, and when he landed was conveyed to an hospital, where he died on 6th September. His wife, after completing all the arrangements for the trans-shipment of the body to the other side, set sail for Boston in order to prepare for the reception of her husband's remains when they should arrive. After her departure it was found that, owing to a cholera scare, it was impossible to carry out the wishes of the widow. Word was sent to her, and the intelligence came back that as the deceased gentleman had no relatives in this country, the Rosebery Burns Club were then to be asked to see to the interment of his remains in his native city. Such an appeal to brother Scots on behalf of one who, while he lived, was an honorary and much interested member of the Club, received every respect. The body was sent on to Glas-

gow by the U.S. Consul at Liverpool, and just about two months after his death, all that remained of Donald Ramsay received the last respects of his friends here, when he was laid to rest in the Southern Necropolis, alongside the spot where his father and mother were buried many years previously. Mr. Ramsay left this country in 1868, and by his ability and perseverance attained the position of senior partner of the Heliotype Printing Co., Boston. He was of a poetical turn of mind, and was known on the other side as one of the band of Scottish American poets.

When a lad working in Glasgow he used to contribute to the columns of the old "Penny Post" under the name of "Clutha." Mr. Ramsay at the time of his death was Vice-President of the Scots' Charitable Society, Boston. From this and other Societies the Rosebery Club had communications offering to defray all the expenses in connection with the interment, and complimenting the members of the Rosebery on the fine exhibition of fraternal feeling which had been displayed towards Mr. Ramsay,

whose name we, as an association, desired to honour.

Early in the year 1894, Sir James Bell, Lord Provost of the City, made an earnest appeal to the citizens for increased subscriptions toward the support of the Royal, the Western, and Victoria Infirmaries ; and, at a large and enthusiastic meeting of the members of the Club, it was resolved to signalise the opening of the next literary session by a gathering which would redound to the credit of the Club and be a substantial benefit to those noble institutions ; and it was decided that a grand concert be held in St. Andrew's Hall, on Monday, 8th October, 1894, the ordinary members of the executive taking upon themselves the responsibility of arranging and carrying out the entertainment.

The chair on the occasion was occupied by the Lord Provost, who was accompanied by Lady Bell. The concert was held under the patronage of Lord Rosebery, the Duke and Duchess of Montrose, Archbishop Eyre, the Members of Parliament for the City, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, Bart., Sir William Arroll,

Bart., Leonard Gow, Esq., kindred Burns Clubs, etc.

The following artistes gave their services gratis :—Miss A. M. Thomas, Miss Mary Finlay, Messrs. W. C. M'Phee, James Fleming, Finlay Buchanan, Rangers Musical Association, Mr. Emile Berger, pianist ; Mr. Thomas Berry, Mus. Bach., Camb., presided at the grand organ ; and an oxy-hydrogen entertainment, entitled, " Sea on Land, Cloudland, and Humours of the Camera," was produced by Bailie Primrose, now Sir John Ure Primrose, Bart., Lord Provost of the City.

It was a bold venture for a young club to make, but the members of the executive having put their shoulder to the wheel, there was no turning back, and on the night of the concert they were gratified to find an audience of over 3000 assembled, who gave a most attentive hearing to the entertainment, which was a great success ; and, after paying all expenses, the Rosebery Club was enabled to send a cheque for the sum of £12 16s. 3d. to each of the three Glasgow Infirmaries.

In response to an appeal from the executive of the Mauchline Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes, Mr. G. G. Napier, under the auspices of the Rosebery Burns Club, gave his lantern lecture on Sir Walter Scott, in the Athenæum Hall, Buchanan Street, on Tuesday, 22nd October, 1895. Mr. Thomas Killin, the President of the Mauchline Society, occupied the chair.

The Chairman, in introducing Mr. Napier, stated that the proceeds of the entertainment were to be devoted to the funds of the Glasgow Mauchline Society's Cottage Homes, and Burns Memorial schemes. The sum aimed at for the erection of the Memorial was from £2000 to £3000, and already subscriptions had been received amounting to almost £800.

To many present Mauchline was the sweetest spot on earth, but he spoke of it on this occasion as the residence of one of the greatest of men, whose name had become a rallying standard to the Scottish, nay, even to the English-speaking race. They could not claim him as a native, but they had perhaps higher claims upon his

genius. Was it not Ballochmyle, Mossgiel, the Ayr, the Lugar, our Holy Fair, their customs, their men and women, their lads and lassies, which imbued him with poetic fire, which supplied him with themes for his peerless songs and poems, which led him to feel that he might become the National Bard of Scotland?

Mr. Napier then proceeded with his lecture. "Sir Walter Scott" is one of Mr. Napier's happy efforts, but to be fully appreciated, his lecture has not only to be heard, but the charming views illustrative of his subject also seen, as they bring scene and incident vividly before the eye and mind of the listener. His mastery of the subject is shown by his having kept the audience spellbound during the two hours the pictures flitted on and off the screen. The proceeds of the entertainment (£10) were handed over to Mr. W. S. M'Millan, hon. secretary, Mauchline Burns Memorial.

Mr. Napier, on other occasions, has delighted Rosebery Burns Club audiences with his lantern lectures on Burns, Tennyson, and Carlyle.

Among the numberless demonstrations in commemoration of the death of Burns, none surpassed in importance and significance that which took place at Dumfries. From all parts of the United Kingdom, from America, the Colonies, indeed from wherever the British tongue is spoken, memorial wreaths, votive offerings, tributes of reverence and affection were brought by specially-appointed deputations and laid by the hands of the Earl of Rosebery on the grave of the poet in the Mausoleum in St. Michael's Churchyard.

For the occasion the most elaborate arrangements had been made, all classes of the community seeming to vie with each other in their desire that the demonstration should be in every way worthy of the event.

Labour was entirely suspended. The decoration of the town was on a scale of great magnificence. The procession, which comprised the Town Council of Dumfries and Maxwelltown, members of Burns Clubs, and the local tradesmen, numbered 4000 people, with 80 carriages. Some idea of the space it occupied



ROBERT BURNS.

(29)

Bust in National Wallace Monument, Stirling.

may be gathered from the fact that it took almost an hour to pass a given point.

In connection with the centenary of the death of Robert Burns, the Rosebery Club was represented at the several demonstrations as follows :—

At the ceremony in connection with the opening of the Burns Exhibition in the Fine Art Institute, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, on 15th July, 1896, the following members were present :—Bailie John Ure Primrose, Messrs. W. C. Angus (president), Robert Kennedy (vice-president), William Wallace, M.A., J. S. Fisher, M.A., Dr. J. M'Kie, J. Law, J. S. Jamieson, and J. Angus (secretary).

At Dumfries, on Tuesday, 21st July, the following members took part in the procession, and also attended the public meeting at which Lord Rosebery delivered a speech on Burns :—Messrs. W. C. Angus (president), and R. Kennedy (vice-president), James Wilson, J. S. Jamieson, J. Smith, W. Kennedy, Dr. J. M'Kie, J. Law, J. Mathieson, and J. Angus (secretary). The Club provided a handsome wreath, which

was handed by Messrs. R. Kennedy and J. Angus to Lord Rosebery, by whom it was deposited on the grave of Burns. On a printed card attached to the wreath were the following quotations :—

“ROSEBERY BURNS CLUB, GLASGOW.

“He was the poet of nature and humanity, he raised the conception of the peasant, and gave honour and dignity to toil. It is for that reason that all the labouring classes, the masses of the world, have found in Burns their truest interpreter and their truest friend, and it is as that friend and as that interpreter that I do claim for him a place in the innermost niches of the Temple of Fame.

—LORD ROSEBERY.”

“Mourn ye wee songsters o’ the wood ;
 Ye grouse that crap the heather bud ;
 Ye carlews, calling through a clud,
 Ye whistling plover ;
 And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood,
 He’s gane for ever.

—BURNS.”

The delegates arrived in the City at 6 p.m., and, along with a large number of the members, attended the great meeting in the St. Andrew’s

Hall, at which Lord Rosebery presided, and delivered an exceptionally eloquent and stirring oration on Burns.

On the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Burns Memorial Homes at Mauchline on Thursday, 23rd July, the Club was represented by the president, Mr. W. C. Angus.

The delegates at all the meetings wore a badge composed of Lord Rosebery's racing colours.

Although the National Bard has long ago been be-statued and medallioned throughout our native land, his admirers have still opportunities of manifesting their devotion to the immortal memory. Early in life the Bard met a bonny lass at Mauchline, to wit Jean Armour. Their courtship was by no means plain sailing, but at last, after a bitter course of trouble and misery, he contrived to make the woman of his original choice his wife. The couple settled in Mauchline, where they began their married life in a modest "but and ben." The house still stands and has naturally become an object of pilgrimage.

It occurred to the executive of the Rosebery Club that the house should be singled out from its surroundings by some mark of mingled fact and admiration ; and an interesting ceremony took place at Mauchline on Saturday, 28th June, 1902, when a Marble Tablet was unveiled. The house is situated off the Cross, and further up on the opposite side is Nance Tannock's, a public-house in Burns' time. On the other side of the Cross stands the house where Mary Morrison lived.

The Tablet, which was prepared by Mr. Mossman, sculptor, Glasgow, was placed over the doorway of the house, and bears the following inscription :—

HERE BURNS AND JEAN ARMOUR
BEGAN HOUSEKEEPING IN 1788.

ERECTED BY THE ROSEBERY BURNS CLUB,
GLASGOW, 1902.

The unveiling ceremony was performed in presence of a large gathering, the Rosebery Club being represented by Mr. P. T. Marshall, president ; Mr. R. M. Dunlop, secretary ; ex-Deacon Jack, Messrs J. A. Biggs, J. S. Fisher, A. E. Collins, J. French, W. Logan, H. A. Fisher, T. Dunlop, A. Hunter, and J.

Angus, most of whom were accompanied by their wives ; and among others present were the Rev. James Higgins, B.A., Tarbolton ; Rev. Wilson Baird, Mauchline ; Mr. William Higgins, Buenos-Ayres ; ex-Provost Marshall, Maybole ; Mr. Andrew Pollock, Mauchline ; etc.

Mr. P. T. Marshall, in introducing his wife to the audience in a few terse remarks, indicated that the Rosebery Burns Club existed for something more than an annual festival on the anniversary of the Poet's birth. This was one of a variety of ways chosen by them to commemorate the Poet.

Mrs. Marshall was called upon by Mr. Higgins to unveil the tablet, which she did in a graceful manner.

The Rev. Mr. Higgins delivered an eloquent address. He quoted at considerable length from the Poet's letters, showing his great love for Jean, and in speaking of Jean's love for Burns, he pointed out that she had remained to him a true, devoted, and patient wife through the sad closing years of his life.

It was also well known that throughout the 38 years of her widowhood she fondly cherished his memory, and boldly and ably defended his name against that form of criticism and meddling

of which we heard too much. He concluded by congratulating the Club on having erected the Tablet.

The company sang "God Save the King," was photographed, and thereafter dined in Poosie Nansie's.

At the dinner ex-Deacon Jack, in an admirable speech, proposed the Memory of Burns. He referred to the Poet's love of truth, his hatred of hypocrisy, his intense humanity, and his high appreciation of honest worth and noble manhood. Ex-Provost Marshall proposed the health of Rev. Mr. Higgins; Mr. J. S. Fisher proposed the ladies, and also moved a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Miller, proprietrix of the building, for having granted permission to the Club to erect the tablet. The proceedings, which were very successful throughout, were brought to a termination by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

To enable me to give the history of the Club up to the present session 1904-5, it is necessary to take notice of the work done by the Club in encouraging the desire for the study and singing of the beautiful songs and melodies of Scotland.

During session 1902-3, Mr. Reilly, secretary for Scotland Street United Free Church Band

of Hope, communicated with the executive of the Rosebery Club, requesting that two of its members act as judges at the Annual Competition Concert of that Union, a competition promoted with the object of encouraging among the junior members a taste for Scottish song, particularly the songs of Robert Burns. Two members of the Club have acted as judges at this competition for the past three years, and have found the work carried on by the Union of a very 'interesting' character, while several members of the "Rosebery" have expressed, in a substantial way, their sympathy in the work by presenting silver medals and books as prizes to be competed for at each of the concerts.

In session 1902-03, Mr. D. F. Turnbull (a member), with the object of encouraging a taste for Scottish song amongst the young, presented to the Club a gold medal to be competed for by scholars attending the Board Schools of the City. Failing to enlist the sympathy of the members of the Glasgow School Board in this object, the executive, with the consent of Mr. Turnbull, made the necessary arrangements for a grand Amateur Competition Concert, which was held in the large hall of the Christian

Institute, Bothwell Street, on Tuesday, 25th March, 1904.

The chair on the occasion was occupied by the Hon. the Lord Provost of the City, Sir John Ure Primrose, Bart., who was accompanied to the platform by Lady Primrose, President Pollock and Mrs. Pollock, Vice-President Murray and Miss Murray, Rev. David M'Crae, Messrs. James Walsh, James S. Fisher, M.A.; J. A. Biggs, W. Jack, and others.

The Lord Provost, addressing the large gathering, which filled the hall in every part, said :—

“The Rosebery Burns Club deserved great credit for instituting a competition in which the beautiful songs of Scotland were to be sung. In these days when there was a great deal of trashy music, as well as much that was to be admired, it was delightful to find an effort being made to keep before us those songs which were the glory of our country. There was a wealth of beauty in the songs of Scotland which had never been adequately fathomed.” His Lordship then instanced some of the songs of Burns, and asked, “Where can we find human passion, human aspiration, and human feeling better portrayed? It would be a good day for Scot-

land—musical Scotland, patriotic Scotland—when she recognised that in her own songs she had epics for all time.”

At the close of the concert, Lady Primrose handed the prizes to the successful competitors as follows :—

Singing—1st prize, gold medal (presented by Mr. D. F. Turnbull, value £5 5s), Miss Catherine Crawford, Hamilton ; 2nd prize, gold medal (presented by the Club, value £2 2s), Mr. Alexander M'Gregor, Govan.

Elocution—1st prize, illustrated volume (presented by Mr. James M'Kenzie, value £3 3s), Mr. William Galloway, Easterhouse ; 2nd prize, silver medal (presented by the Club), Miss Janet Gardner, Glasgow.

The Lord Provost congratulated President Pollock on the great success of the concert, and intimated that, in the event of a similar concert being held the following year, he would present a gold medal for excellence in singing lesser known Burns songs.

The executive were so encouraged by the success attending this concert that another on the same lines was held in the same hall on the 21st March, 1905, when, in the unavoidable absence of the Lord Provost, the chair was occupied by

Mr. J. E. Christie, who was supported on the platform by a large number of ladies and gentlemen. The hall was crowded.

In a characteristic speech, wise, witty and eloquent, which held the audience spellbound, the Chairman opened the proceedings, expressing his strong love for the songs of his native land, and his sympathy and admiration with and for the Rosebery Club in the admirable and much-needed work in which it was engaged. At the close of a most interesting entertainment, Mrs. Alexander Pollock presented the prizes to the following successful competitors :—

1st prize, gold medal (value £5 5s, presented by Mr. D. F. Turnbull), Mr. Albert Timmins, Motherwell; 2nd prize, gold medal (presented by the Lord Provost), Mr. Samuel Steel, Glasgow.

The songs sung by Mr. Steel were, “O lay thy loof in mine, lass,” and “Wilt thou be my dearie?”

3rd prize, silver medal, Miss M. A. Meek, Slamannan.

And the audience plebiscite medal (presented by the Club), was voted to Miss Jeanie Cameron, Glasgow.

The Club also presented to each of the

unsuccessful gentlemen competitors a copy of the "Vagabond Ballads," by Robert Ford ; and to each of the ladies a copy of Robert Ford's "Edition of Burns Works, Prose and Poetical."

The following gentlemen have promised prizes for next year's competition :—Mr. D. F. Turnbull, gold medal ; Mr. E. Gilchrist, gold medal ; and Captain Jeffery, R.N., gold medal.

The Club has every reason to be proud of the success that has attended these two competitive concerts, a success so marked as to warrant such concerts forming an important part of the work to be undertaken by the Club each session.

I believe that there is an earnest desire to have Scotland's native doric sung as it should be, and the Club, by continuing these concerts, will add greatly to bring about the desired results. Robert Burns built up a body of Scottish song which is unsurpassed in the wide world. The songs of other bards charm us by the way in which they touch our varied sensibility, but those of Burns set our bosoms all aglow, coming as they did from the warmth of his own breast. His songs are with us in every mood, are associated with us in every memory, take us back to the days of langsyne, to the days of our

boyhood, to friends who have passed away, and to joys that return no more. His songs lighten the toil of labour and bring balm to the spirit oppressed with the world's care. He has sung our native land into greater glory in the earth because it is the birth-land of Burns. He not only sung to please our perhaps too partial ears, but he has so sung that England and Ireland and America and our far distant Colonies have listened to, and been moved by his songs, and pilgrims from these lands yearly uncover at his shrine. His songs and poems are the thoughts, sentiments, and aspirations not only of a nation, but of humanity.

Such then is the past history of the Rosebery Burns Club. What then of the future?

It has been said of Burns Clubs that their hero-worship ran entirely in the groove of the selfish and unprofitable. The annual gatherings of many were pointed to as proof of this allegation. Of late years the accusation has lost much of its point. The more enlightened clubs have begun to take action on a higher level, which has assumed practical shape in the encouragement of the study of the works of the Poet, and to some extent in the foundation of scholarships in certain of the localities,

This is as it ought to be, as I consider that Burns Clubs are neglecting their duty if they do not embrace every opportunity to encourage the rising generation to study Scottish literature. Still, with all our advancement, and in spite of our good intentions to act fair and honourable, we, on the occasion of each succeeding Burns Anniversary, are assailed by a class of people who hold back with words of disparagement for the personal character of our Poet. A strange doctrine it surely is to advance, that an eminent man is to be judged solely by his faults. Burns enjoyed festive scenes, as might have been expected of a man of such an impressionable and generous nature, but he was not remarkable in this way more than a large portion of respectable society in his own day. He had transgressions of another kind, "thoughtless follies which laid him low and stained his name." And he had grace to repent of them. On both points a gross injustice has been done to Burns in consequence of his own want of the art of hiding, and of the exposure to which poverty condemned him. Men of high position die daily with faults as great as his, known fully in their own circle, but never spoken of in their obituaries, and which, consequently, never come before the notice of

the world. Their rank and the regard to decorum, which now reigns in literature, screen them. Burns, because he was outspoken, because he was poor and of no regard, and left no friends of sufficient consequence to be offended by the discussion of his failings, has been treated in this particular as if he were some extraordinary criminal. Treat the elegant respectabilities of society, even in our purer days, in the same manner, and how many of them would come out any better than Burns. Few indeed. I ask, then, of those who think Burns unfit for commendation or even recognition to analyse as keenly the failings of other notable men of intellect, or to let the poor Bard alone. No man or poet appeals more by his work and his life for generous treatment than Burns, himself the soul of generosity. He should at least have justice.

Permit me to quote some exquisitely tender and sympathetic verses bearing on this point by the late Dr. Charles Mackay, the last which the Poet transcribed, and which were written on the fly-leaf of volume I. of a four volume addition of the "Life and Works of Robert Burns," the property of the late Mr. Craibe Angus, Glasgow :—

Let him rest,
 Let him rest,
 The green earth on his breast,
 And leave, oh leave his fame
 Unsullied by your breath ;
 Each day that passes by,
 What meaner mortals die,
 What thousand raindrops fall
 Into the sea of death.
 No vendor of a tale
 (His merchandise for sale)
 Pries into evidence to show
 How mean were they.
 No libel touches them,
 No curious fools condemn,
 Their human frailties sleep
 For God, not man, to weigh.
 And shall the Bard alone
 Have all his follies known—
 Dug from the misty past, to spice a needless book—
 That envy may exclaim
 At mention of his name,
 The greatest are but small,
 However great they look.
 Let them rest, their sorrows o'er,
 All the mighty Bards of yore,
 Or if, ye grubbers up of scandals
 Dead and gone,
 Ye find amid the slime
 Some sin of ancient time,
 Some fault, or seeming fault,
 That Shakespeare might have done ;

Some spot on Milton's truth
 Or Byron's glowing youth,
 Some error not too small for microscopic gaze :
 Shroud it in deepest gloom,
 As on your father's tomb
 You'd hush the evil tongues that spoke in his dispraise;
 Shroud it in deepest night,
 Or, if compelled to write,
 Tell us th' inspiring tale of perils overcome,
 Of struggles for the good,
 Of courage unsubdued,
 But let their frailties rest, or on their faults be dumb.

Members of the Rosebery Burns Club, you have nothing to be ashamed of in your enthusiasm. You are members of what is now one of the leading Clubs in the country, a Club noted for the purity of its meetings, and also for the enthusiastic but rational manner in which the members celebrate the birthday of Scotland's National Bard, and I appeal to the members for a continuance of their support in the administration of the Club's affairs, assuring them that it is the desire of the executive that the Rosebery Club should still advance, until we can justly assert and confidently maintain its position to be "second to none" among the Burns Clubs of the world.

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Angus, James
The Rosebery Burns Club

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