

The success of any society greatly depends upon its president and secretary. This year, therefore, great things may be expected of the Caledonians. The President, Mr. S. S. Bain, a native of Cromarty, and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. T. Mitchell, a Lewisman, are both endowed with these national characteristics that have made the Highland race second to none.

THE PRESIDENT—MR. S. S. BAIN.

According to traditional accounts, the Burgh of Cromarty, Scotland, was founded by Alyphos, forty-third in direct line from Japheth, a contemporary of Rehoboam, fourth King of Israel. Be that as it may, there is evidence that the early history of this very picturesque place flourished in antiquity.

Coming down to the Reformation struggles, Cromarty men were found in the van. Here it was that Hugh Millar was born; his literary works, the active part he took in the movement which led to the disruption of 1843; his able advocacy with such champions as Chalmers, Beith and Bonar, for the cause of religious freedom and their ultimate triumph, were incidents which enhanced general interest to an already very interesting place.

To the members of the Caledonian society, and readers of this magazine, it will be interesting to observe that Mr. S. S. Bain, the newly elected president, was born and received his early education in the Burgh of Cromarty. After school days he devoted his attention to the study of nursery. The singing of the "Auld Scotch Songs" was not forgotten or put aside. His fame in this connection was such that his presence at all important functions became a necessity.

In 1871 he left his native land to make his fortune, and went to Chicago; but the terrific fire which occurred there shortly after his arrival blighted his prospects, so he came to Montreal. Here he started a nursery and florist business and to-day he figures at the head of his profession in Montreal. On Beaver Hill stands his elegant stone store; his nursery is at Verdun, of which municipality he has been mayor for the past three years.

Mr. Bain is overflowing with love and enthusiasm for his native Scotland. As a singer he may aptly be called the Sim Reeves of Canada. To the active work of the Caledonian Society he devoted much of his time. He founded the Caledonian choir, and for three years acted as its conductor; to his special knowledge of music the choir owes its present state of efficiency.

In religious matters, Mr. Bain is equally energetic. In the Crescent Street Presbyterian Church, he holds the office of deacon, conducts a large bible class, and is a valuable co-worker in its Sunday school. Mr. Bain is married to a daughter of the late Col. Wools, Stanstead, Que.

ROBERT MACKAY ESDAILE—1ST VICE-PRESIDENT.

We had hoped to present the readers of the FIERY CROSS with a portrait of Mr. Esdaile, and we still hope to do so on a future occasion. In the meantime we have to content ourselves with the following word-sketch.

The Esdaile family have occupied a leading position in the social circle of Montreal for the past

fifty years. Individually they have been identified with all that pertained to the well-being of the community, and very partial to those movements advanced toward the aid of their less fortunate "brither Scots."

Foremost in the good work, Mr. R. M. Esdaile, since he attained manhood, was always found; and his election just now to the office of 1st vice-president of the Caledonian Society of Montreal is a recognition of the esteem in which he is held by his countrymen. Born in 1850, he is a son of the late Mr. Robert Esdaile, who came from Perth, Scotland, in the early thirties, and who settled in Montreal. He was educated in the High School, and McGill College. In 1867 he became associated with the well known firm of J. and R. Esdaile, of which he is now leading partner. He always evinced keen interest in sports, especially those identified with Fair Scotia.

Since 1870 he has been a member of the Thistle Curling Club, and for three years acted its president. He was also one of the founders of the Montreal Football Club, of which he is now a Life-member. Lacrosse and Snowshoeing offered attractions to our subject. In its old days, the Montreal Lacrosse Club had no more active and efficient member. Mr. Esdaile was a prominent player in the Hockey matches which took place in the Victoria Rink in 1874.

To the work of the St. Andrew's Society, of which he has been a member for the past 25 years, he devoted much attention. In this society he acted with much acceptance as Assistant Secretary; Second and First Vice-Presidents, respectively.

The Royal Scots also came in for a share of Mr. Esdaile's patronage. For a great many years he was connected with this popular Corps; from which on account of the pressure of business, he ultimately retired, as Senior Captain, retaining his rank.

No less in business than in Social Circles, he is esteemed. He was twice elected President of the Corn Exchange, and no more popular member graces the Spacious Hall of the Board of Trade, on the council of which he sat for some years. That Mr. Esdaile will add lustre to his present office in the Caledonian Society goes without saying.

THE HON.-SECRETARY.

The energy displayed by Mr. J. T. Mitchell in the discharge of his duties as hon.-secretary has been such that he has earned the lasting gratitude of every leal-hearted Caledonian. He has held the office for the past few years, and it is but fair to admit that in the history of the society, there has been no more capable official. Mr. Mitchell was born and brought up in Uig, Island of Lewis. When the Macleods held this island, the Parish of Uig was the scene of many a bloody battle with the Clan Macaulay. Christianity in its earliest form was here established. In several places there yet remain the ruins of Druidical temples. For mountain scenery, as well as its long sketches of sandy shore, Uig is accepted one of the choicest spots in the North Highlands. Mr. Gladstone takes pride in his connection with this place; where his grandmother was born. The Uig people were always leaders in advancing their country's cause. The great land agitation which swept over the Highlands originated in the island of Bernera, within this Parish.

Mr. Mitchell has therefore been nursed in a fit cradle. He came to Montreal several years ago. Soon after his arrival he obtained employment in the "Witness" office, and now holds an important position in that establishment. His only fault, that