

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Devoted to Social, Political, Literary, Musical and Dramatic Gossip.

VOL. II., No. 16.

VICTORIA, B. C., JANUARY 28, 1893.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM

TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

IN the solitude of my chamber, I dearly love to ponder over the words of King David, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." David was a great man, as other Davids have been before and since; but he was unfortunate in never having had a living, breathing opportunity of realizing the force of his remarks. And why? Simply because the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church was not constructed, nor even contemplated, in the days when David's "harp of solemn sound" was sufficient guarantee that the musical portion of Jerusalem entertainments would be everything down on the bills.

Musing over these facts, and the words I have quoted above, I found myself, last Monday night, in a deeply reverential mood, within the walls of the great red brick church, which adorns that part of Douglas street nigh unto James Bay flats. I have no fault to find with the church itself, but I cannot say as much for the members thereof. Long before the hour announced for the gathering of the clans, the seats nearest the hot air furnaces were filled, presumably with members of the congregation. I do not propose to give a report of the meeting; I merely desire to place myself on record as being opposed to the methods adopted by one or two members of the congregation to discredit the pastor. Rev. Mr. Macleod has labored faithfully in the vineyard since his arrival in Victoria, and he should not be thrust aside in the manner of a worn out suit of clothes.

The meeting was not without amusing features. One gentleman (a doctor by profession) said that the revenue from the cemetery was certain to double during the current year, at which the sons of Scotia present became perplexed, fearing, no doubt, that the aforesaid medical gentleman had entered into a conspiracy with other members of his profession to "remove" a number of the congregation in order to swell the funds of the church. However, Sandy got the matter through his head at last, and there need be no fear that the regular services next Sunday will be disturbed by any outburst of laughter at the point made by the disciple of Escalapius, last Monday night.

It is not perhaps within my province to offer advice to the congregation of St. Andrew's. If it were, I would urge upon them, in the cause of Christianity, the wisdom of adopting other means of settling

their grievances than by calling open meetings to discuss matters which should not be known outside of the church. And further, Mr. Macleod should not feel himself constrained to abide by the decision arrived at Monday night, and I am greatly mistaken in the man if he does not fight the matter out to the bitter end. Just now he is regarded in the light of a martyr.

The gifted gentleman who controls the musical and dramatic department of this journal is a person who has my most earnest respect, so that the few remarks I am about to make must not be taken as an infringement in any way upon his domain, or an assumption of his prerogative of criticising, fairly, fully and frankly, anything coming within the jurisdiction of his department. I went to the Burns Anniversary concert on Tuesday evening, at great inconvenience to myself. It is not often I go to a concert; that is the ordinary combination of piano solo, vocal duett and instrumental trio, the recitation and the reading, going under the collective name of concert, but for the past two or three years, I have been induced to attend the Burns concert, which has now become a sort of annual event. It is needless to say that the inconvenience referred to was more than compensated by the pleasure derived; very difficult indeed would it have been to spend a pleasanter or more intellectually profitable evening. The closely packed audience was in itself a feature of the occasion, speaking as it did of the merit of the attraction and the spirit of strong national feeling that pervades the Scottish nature. Then the frequent bubbles of excitement and enthusiasm as the several performers mentioned the name of some familiar home spot, were something good for the feelings. Many a hard drawn face lit up with a smile at these references, carrying back the owner to days long since past, to scenes of memory dear, and bringing in the wave of recollection reminiscences of times and things that can be never again.

A word or two as to the choir and the several performers; this, however, still without prejudice to the musical editor's opinion. Speaking as an amateur, but one who has some love and ear for music, I don't know of a better balanced choir, or a better trained musical organization than the choir of the First Presbyterian Church. There is a seeming unanimity of desire among the members, an apparent effort to blend all for the common good, or effect, that I fail to notice in other bodies of a similar character; the leader leads, and the choir follows, but he is a good leader, leading with discretion and ability, and the choir is a good choir who appreciate the fact that all depends upon there being a head, and that discipline must be main-

tained if the desired result is to be attained. I heartily congratulate Mr. J. G. Brown on his success in this respect, for he has worked very hard to my personal knowledge to gain this success. But then the man's spirit is such that, to use the expression of a late candidate for political honors, he "enthuses" all with whom he comes in contact. He is naturally a rustler, but he is a good one. I was sorry to see that he was down on the programme for only two songs, but as he had to give a couple of substitutes and took part in one or two duetts etc., he appeared often enough to show what he could really do. He simply took the house by storm, his truly Scottish accent, his rich humor and more than all his fine voice and musical ability, made him a host more friends and admirers, if it were possible to make him any more than he has. As to the choir's performances, they were very pretty selections, simple, on the whole from a musical point of view, but beautifully rendered, the shading, if I may use that expression, being remarkably pure, and the expression all that the authors of these sweet Scottish pieces could wish. Madame Laird, who has recently become identified with Miss Adams in the Victoria Conservatory of Music, made a good impression, showing herself to be an artist in voice culture. She received such an unmistakable recall that it was not possible for her to do anything but, accede, which she gracefully did.

Like my friend, Mr. Aaron Lewis, being popular in social circles, I am frequently invited out to select evening parties, and as I invariably respect my host or hostess by not writing about her entertainment in a ridiculous spirit to a Vancouver paper, my welcome is never worn out. I must, however, say a word or two about what I saw the other evening at the house of a very estimable friend, and what I have got to say will only go to show to what extent the female mind will go to copy anything novel. Most of the readers of THE HOME JOURNAL know of the agitation that has been going on lately by the *British Matron* and other mild reformers of the modern ballet; they prophesied that in a very few years the festive ballet dancer would wear positively no clothes at all, and that the theatre would be so full of bad young men and bald-headed old ones in the front and second rows that there would not be a seat left for the modest maiden or prudish matron. Consequently was evolved out of the fertile mind of the theatrical manager what is known as the reformed ballet, which consists in long, loose, flowing robes (two or three), very clinging, and capable of being thrown into the most graceful folds and forms. Under this costume, the fair dancer wears a set of