

# MARITIME MINING RECORD

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## ON MID-SUMMER HOLIDAY.

(By the Editor.)

We must needs go to Ayr; "Auld Ayr which ne'er a town surpasses for honest men, and bonnie lassies." As to the former I have my doubts; my little experience is that they are as ready to make a bawbee, by way of an overcharge, as any other honest Scot. As for the latter I cannot say, as I invariably look away when I see a female form approaching, that is, when there is 'somebody' with me; at other times, oh well, never mind. One must needs pass through Ayr in making for the 'banks and braes o' bonnie Doon' Nigh a quarter of a century had passed since a former pilgrimage to the shrine of Burns, and the poet who helped to make Scotland famous, and who helped to make the whole world better, by making its people broader. The Auld Brig o' Ayr, is being repaired to keep it from falling into decay. 'Sam o' Shanter's' inn looks spic and span. Trams now run past the cottage, the kirk and the monument. The cottage is in splendid condition; the bed in which Burns was born seems none the waur, and the crockery is still displayed on the racks, after the fashion of thrifty Scottish housewives of moderate means. One must now pass the turn stile in order to gain access to the cottage. There is a charge but one does not grudge it, as the grounds, around the cottage, are in trim order. In olden days the barn, or the byre, and stables were attached to the house. One enters by the byre to the kitchen, and through the kitchen to the birth room. The males bare their heels. How humble a home it was to have been the birthplace of so great a genius. The people come streaming in, and moving out. They are from all parts in Britain and from abroad. Americans are largely in evidence, and all are eager to inspect any relic and visit any spot associated with the life of the poet. The grounds around the monument are a thing of beauty. Why all this fuss over Burns, is a question heard once in a while. Why? Because Burns was a man with a heart, because he did more than any other mortal, perhaps, to humanize man. He was, if not the poor man's, the whole peoples poet. His bugle notes awakened the common people to a new dignity, and to a new self respect.

In going to and from Ayr, by water, one passes Ardrossan, a large seaport town; Largs one of the largest coast watering places, and other smaller health and pleasure resorts. Our ship's company were landed at Weymouth Bay much to their surprise. A transfer was made, after some delay, to another steamer. A gentleman passenger was not at all pleased with the delay, and amused

his fellow travellers with some sharp criticisms of steamboat management. As the passengers were disembarking from the steamer, we were to finish our journey in, he made many remarks which, if they annoyed the steamer people, delighted the travellers. The transfer, he declared, was made to save a few coppers to the company; that was the main object; the comfort of their patrons was only a secondary consideration. Seeing an old lady coming down the gangway he said, "Come away, but be careful; there's nobody here to attend to the old folks; you may break your leg for all they care; the youngsters can manage for themselves, the old people have to whether they will or no. My good lady never look for chivalry from steamboat or railway officials," and so he rattled on. What he said was all appreciated, for it was true, and expressed good humor.

A number of years ago I was in Glasgow 'Green,' on a Saturday afternoon, and was so amused with the number of spouters, and the variety of subjects, that I vowed when next in Glasgow to again pay the 'green' a visit, and therefore it was that on a Saturday afternoon I formed one of a motley crowd, that had congregated outside the 'green' gates, for no longer are the Scottish and Irish Demosthenes permitted inside the portals. Outside the gates, however, at the foot of the reformed 'Gallowgate' there is ample space for many informal platforms. Any old thing, tub or box, serves the speaker's purpose. Every subject is treated of by these open air orators. While a majority spout for practice or spout for the mere love of the thing, one or two may be given a consideration. Of course only one or two of the 'stan's' could be visited in an afternoon. The discussion in progress at, let me call it, No. 1 platform was between, as I soon learned, a catholic and a protestant, and of all subjects who would have expected to hear a hot debate on the 'virgin birth.' It didn't take long to come to the conclusion that the speakers knew not a little on many subjects while wholly 'not up' to the subject under discussion. Both seemed to be familiar with the old masters, and spoke glibly of historic painters and paintings. This was to show how the masters had regarded the incarnation. The one contended that Mary was not a child bearing woman as are other women. The other contended that God in bestowing upon her the motherhood bestowed upon her the greatest honor that could be conferred upon her, and so they kept at it, hammer and tongs. Stepping over to another group we found a socialist at work, and having a hard time of it. He was lecturing and, between pauses, trying to dispose of a socialist periodical. He was asked to explain what was