

mouth. We expect that the discussions will not always please us, that the decision of the wise philosophers of the Society will sometimes give us defeat and not victory, and that will be a most pleasant bitterness in the mouth; for if we could always win, victory would soon make us rebels to ourselves. We expect that the Society will arrange this year in a somewhat makeshift fashion, next year in a more regular way, a series of lectures on questions of Scottish interest, and it ought to endeavour to obtain addresses from any literary visitors from Scotland on the special subjects of their work. If the Society should grow large and influential, it may do much to centralize Scottish thought and work in Vancouver, and the County Societies might easily become associated with it, to the advantage of themselves and the central Society alike. We hope that the Society will keep alive the memory of the great Scottish festivals, Beltane and Yule, and that Hallowe'en with its mystic associations and its merrymaking, may wake psychic echoes in the minds of men who, perhaps in their own boyhood, have gone a-masking with the old traditional guisers' songs, or have heard from the lips of their fathers stories of these picturesque customs now fallen almost into oblivion.

Always, in every town, there is a meeting on the 25th of January to celebrate the birth of the reviver of Scottish song. Everyone knows that enthusiasm without eating and drinking is like pictured fruit, and a Burns night without a dinner is only a Barmecide's feast. There have been many great men in Scottish literature, but only three have been taken to its heart by the Scottish nation, Robert Burns, Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson. The Society could not better show its appreciation of the social side of Scottish life and its love for great men than by setting apart

one night every year for the commemoration of each of those names and giving enthusiasm the solid basis of a dinner.

Now I wish to clear away a misunderstanding which has arisen about our promising child even before it has seen the light. A friend has written to me, not in any spirit of disapproval, but rather of praise, and it seems that he regards the Society as educational. I wish to scotch at once the idea that our purpose at any rate is educational. All that we wish to do is to give some opportunities for innocent pleasure and amusement. We are sure that no one need shun our meetings from any fear that we are teachers. Education has too formal a countenance to bring pupils flocking into the school room, and half of us suspect that he has a rod behind his back. I, for one, would not let Education show his face, but if he likes to lie hidden at the back of the hall, where we shall hold our meetings, I do not see why we should rudely drive him out. And perhaps if we ever are persuaded that his face is growing less sour we may allow him, in the end, to come and sit in our company on condition that he says nothing. Seriously, however, I think that the world at present has far more need of being interested and amused than of being educated. Life is a serious and a growing burden. To many it seems less desirable than it did to their fathers, for they demand far more from it. The over-serious mind tends to create its own sorrows, and the most pressing need of education is the cultivation of happiness. If our Society in its small way gives even a few thinkers an added interest in life and a few evenings of pleasant mental occupation, it will have deserved well of its city, for it will have helped to make happier and therefore better citizens.

Since this article was written a preliminary meeting for organization of the proposed society has been held, and as a result another meeting will take place at an early date to settle the Constitution, appoint an Executive, etc. Information as to the Society may be obtained by reference to Mr. George Duncan at 615 Pender St. West, Vancouver.—Editor, B.C.M.

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