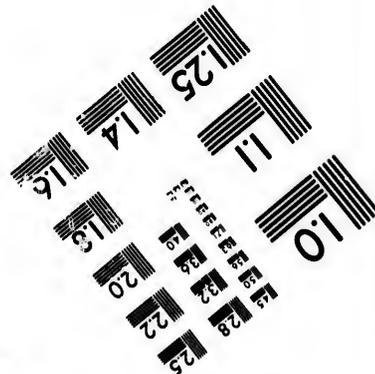
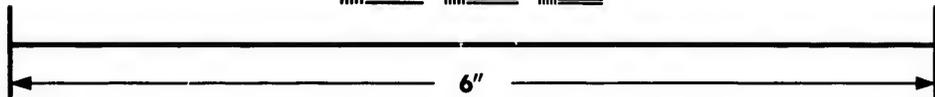
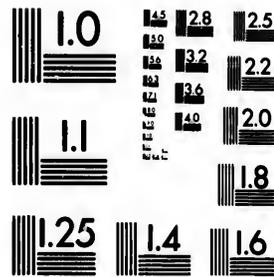


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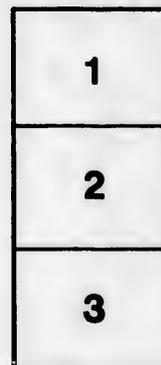
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CELEBRATION
OF
BURNS' CENTENARY,

1759-1796

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA,

25TH JANUARY, 1859.

REPORTED BY MESSRS. WEEKS AND COCHRAN, AND PUBLISHED BY
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BURNS' CELEBRATION.

THE hundredth anniversary of the natal day of Scotland's National Poet, ROBERT BURNS, was celebrated with becoming honor by his countrymen, the citizens of Halifax, on the 25th January. Long looked for and anxiously expected by the Sons of the Heather, the arrival of the day did not find them asleep at their posts, but vigilant and ready. It was a real Nova Scotian winter's day—cold, clear and bright—and from an early hour in the morning, the city over, private houses and public buildings, flung their banners to the wind. At half-past two the members of the North British and Highland Societies, with Scotchmen and their descendants, to the number of three hundred or thereabouts, starting from Mason Hall, marched in procession to Temperance Hall. At the head marched Mr. William Grant, the Marshal, with his staff of office. He was followed by the members of the Society, wearing their appropriate badges. The Banners of the North British and Highland Societies, and the National Flag of Scotland were carried by the members of the Society. The latter was borne by Mr. John C. Muir, supported by Thomas Hume, and James Wallace, dressed in the costume of Highlanders, with drawn swords. At two o'clock the doors of Temperance Hall were thrown open for the admission of ladies. Long before had the avenues lead-

ing to that building been filled with an anxious and expectant throng of Nova Scotia's fairest daughters; and when at last egress was afforded, their exertions to effect an entrance threatened demolition to the voluminous crinolines that encircled them. Till nearly three o'clock the tide did not abate, and when at last the ladies to whom tickets had been issued, were all accommodated with seats, the galleries and the space immediately beneath them, were filled with a thousand as blooming cheeks, flashing eyes and merry hearts as could have been at that hour found under any one roof in the wide circle of our beloved Queen's dominions.

The procession arrived shortly before three o'clock, at which hour the Hall was completely filled. There were present about sixteen hundred persons. As the procession marched up the isle the Band struck up, and played with much spirit, "The Campbells are Coming." The members of the Committee, and the carrier and supporter of the Standard, ranged themselves on the platform. Besides these we noticed His Lordship Judge Wilkins, Dr. Twining, the Rev. Mr. Jardine, and the Rev. Mr. Boyd; the High Sheriff, Benjamin Wier, Esq., M. P. P., and others. At three o'clock precisely the Chair was taken by His Lordship the Chief Justice, who had cheerfully expressed his willingness to preside over the meeting, and on each side a child—scions of the Gael with tartan and plaidie—old age and youth well met on such an occasion—the boys were sons of James Wallace and John Muir.

His Lordship opened the meeting with the following Address:

On this day one hundred years ago, in an humble village in Ayrshire, Robert Burns was born. In early life he had to struggle with many difficulties. Of humble birth, he had not the advantages and blessings of a finished education; but his genius bursting through every ob-

stacle, has continued down to the present hour to thrill the hearts of his countrymen wherever found—and has achieved for him a world-wide fame. (Cheers.)

A Scotch peasant drawing his inspiration from the same fountains that tinge the Scottish character with a romance peculiarly its own—making the Highland heath and low land vale, the mountain and the stream of his native land, the subject of his poesy, can we wonder that his writings have taken so firm a hold on the affections of his countrymen. (Cheers.)

Failings may have marred his character, as spots obscure the disc of the sun, but they were few, and it becomes us not at this hour to revert to them. Let us turn rather to those more touching and beautiful traits which exalted and spiritualized his nature, and have made his name a household word wherever Scotchmen may be found. (Cheers.)

It is not my intention to detain you with any lengthened remarks, for the Orator of the day will no doubt enter fully into everything appertaining to the subject he is to treat upon. I may say, however, that I have been called upon as a member of the North British Society, and as the son of a Scotchman, to fill this chair. (Cheers.) I responded to that call with pleasure, and I need hardly say that I duly appreciated the honor of being so selected. (Cheers.) I have lived many years amongst you, and now in the decline of life, it is gratifying to me to think that I possess the esteem and good will of my fellow citizens. (Loud cheers.)

Allow me now, ladies and gentlemen, to introduce to you the Hon. William Young, who will address you on the life and writings of Burns; and from whose eloquence you undoubtedly expect to derive much pleasure.

Hon. Mr. Young then delivered an oration occupying an hour and a half, which was received throughout with

enthusiastic applause, a full report of which immediately follows. After which Captain Taylor moved that His Lordship the Chief Justice vacate the chair, and William Murdoch, Esq., be called thereto, which having passed in the affirmative—

JOHN ESSON, Esq., M. P. P., moved that the thanks of the meeting be conveyed to his Lordship the Chief Justice, for the manner in which he had presided over the meeting, and the interest he had manifested in everything connected with the celebration. Though somewhat unwell when requested to preside, a glow of satisfaction (a real index to the feelings of pride with which, as a Scotchman, he cherished the memory of Burns) suffused his face, and he said, "that the meeting in honor of his country's Poet should not pass off without his presence, if God gave him health and strength to attend it." It was to him, as well as the citizens in general, a source of pleasure, to see the venerable Chief Justice occupying the Chair on that occasion, and that he might long continue to mingle in such scenes was, he knew, the ardent wish of all present.

The motion passed with acclamation, the Band playing "Auld Lang Syne."

THE HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he begged leave to remind the Chairman of an omission. It seemed to him that His Lordship the Chief Justice should not have been allowed to vacate the Chair, before the meeting had expressed in the strongest manner possible, the feelings of thankfulness they entertained towards the Orator of the day for the Address he had delivered. He would therefore move that the thanks of the meeting be conveyed to the Hon. William Young, for the able, eloquent, and instructive oration with which he had gratified them, and which would find its way to the heart of every Scotchman the world over.

The motion also passed with acclamation, the Band playing "The Garb of Old Gaul."

Hon. WILLIAM YOUNG, in responding, expressed his gratification at the unexpected compliment paid him. The preparation of his Address had been a labor of love; and how, after having been engaged in it, he could return to the dry and thorny paths of politics and law, he scarcely knew. (Laughter.) Such a compliment, coming from the Hon. Attorney General, was indeed grateful to him, and might be regarded as an index of a better state of feeling, probably excited by a contemplation of the genius and character of Burns.

Three cheers were then given for his Lordship the Chief Justice, three for the Hon. William Young, and three times three for the Queen. The meeting then separated, the Band playing "God save the Queen."

After leaving the Hall, the procession again formed, and marched through several of the principal streets in the same order.

At six o'clock in the evening the members of the Societies referred to, and their guests, partook of a sumptuous dinner, served up by George Nichols, who even surpassed himself in his character as caterer. All the good things of the season were supplied in profusion. The wines were excellent, and the champagne was not spared by Auld Scotia's sons. We believe that this is the first occasion where champagne was ever dealt out without restraint to all present. The Hall was tastefully decorated with banners, and the tables were judiciously arranged. The Band of the 62nd Regiment, under the able direction of Mr. Carey, discoursed sweet music during the progress of the Banquet.

The Hon. WM. YOUNG presided. On his right sat His Excellency the Earl of Mulgrave, on his left Colonel Dick. Capt. Taylor filled the Vice-President's chair; while throughout the room the rich dresses of the Army Officers present, well contrasted with the plaids of the

members, and the more sober garb of the civilians. When the clatter of the knives and forks, well sustained for some two hours, had subsided, the President proceeded to propose the list of Toasts, which were drunken with enthusiastic and unanimous acclaim.

The Hon. Chairman said, that having now discussed the preliminary business of the evening, and laid in a tolerably good foundation which most of them had moistened "wi' a wee drap of the barley bree," he would now proceed with the regular toasts. But before doing so, he could not but congratulate the admirers of Burns, whose genius had drawn together as numerous, as intellectual and as brilliant a meeting as had ever assembled round a dinner-table in Halifax. (Cheers.) Altho' the generous wine would continue to flow freely round the table, this was intended, and should be regarded as a literary entertainment, and he was proud to see present many gentlemen of known ability and eloquence which would presently be brought into play. There was a noble band, too, not, it might be, of the sweet singers of Israel, but masters of the thrilling and soft music of Burns, which would penetrate to their inmost souls.

And now, Mr. Vice, I shall announce the first toast, which will rise naturally to the lips and gush warm from the heart of every loyal British subject. It is our singular good fortune while under the rule of a great constitutional monarch, to acknowledge the sway of an accomplished woman and an exemplary wife and mother. The calm and almost severe simplicity with which our Queen has assumed the empire of India, and of more than a hundred millions of human beings, has something in it approaching to the sublime. But Her Majesty not only commands the respectful homage of the intellectual and sound-thinking in every part of her dominions, she knows how to draw to herself the subtler and finer essences, the unreasoning, it

may be, but the romantic and fervid attachment which clung so long and so passionately to a House no more. Burns has declared that his poetic fervor kindled amid the stern grandeur of the Highlands; and so also the hereditary loyalty of the North has kindled into a brighter glow, and been transferred to the royal mistress of Balmoral. I have now to propose to you—

“The QUEEN—reigning in the affections of a free and loyal people, and ruling over the most extensive and powerful empire the world has ever seen.”

Her Majesty's health was here drunk with three times three and one more, after which :

The Hon. President proposed the next toast :

“The genius and fame of ROBERT BURNS, whose memory is embalmed in the hearts of his Countrymen, and destined for a glorious immortality.”

In proposing it, he said—

Mr. Vice—The next toast is dedicated to the proper business of the evening. Having discussed at such length within a few hours the character and genius of Burns, he regretted that the etiquette and rule on such occasions debarred him from handing over so inviting a theme to some tongue more eloquent and gifted than his own. It would be vain to repeat what he had said, and as an original piece of poetry, the production of a gentleman now present had been handed him, he would preface the toast by reading the following appropriate and beautiful extract :—

Oh! thou, great Poet of the heart,
Great master of the poet's art;
All earth this day resounds thy praise,
And owns the power of thy sweet lays;
On this, thy hundredth natal day,
The nations join to bless thy sway.

* * * * *

In ev'ry page, in ev'ry line,
 True charity and goodness shine,
 Thy verse the heav'nly truth reveals,
 That man should feel for all that feels.
 'Twas thou who first, in noble strain,
 Didst sing how hollow, false and vain,
 Are titles, honors, riches, birth,
 Compared with "sense or pride o' worth."
 The People's Poet, thou didst sing,
 An honest man is more than king.
 Thy manly lines did first proclaim
 That to be lowly was no shame,
 To give respect where'er we find
 "The man of independent mind."
 Thou didst assert it nature's plan,
 That man, though humble, still was man,
 In cot or castle, court or camp,
 "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
 The man's the gowd for a' that,"
 Thy song will haste the glorious hour
 "When man to man, the world o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that."

The toast was received with enthusiasm.

The Hon. Chairman then proposed the health of

"The Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales and the other members of the Royal family."

Which was received and drunk enthusiastically.

He then proposed

"The Right Hon. Sir Edmund W. Head, the Governor General, and the Lieutenant Governors of the other British North American Provinces."

Which also met with a most enthusiastic reception.

The President gave the next toast :

"His Excellency the Earl of Mulgrave—trained in the Imperial Parliament for the arduous duties of a Constitutional Governor, and, like his noble father, the friend of literary genius and of popular rights."

And prefaced it as follows :

Mr. Vice, we are honored this night with the presence of the Lieut. Governor, the representative of Her Majesty, who, like ourselves, appreciates the transcendent merit of our national poet. In the position which I have held as a public man since His Excellency's arrival, in opposition to his advisers, I may not perhaps be accounted the most suitable interpreter of his opinions; but I have been honored so far with his friendship, and know enough of his sentiments and wishes to be assured that, having been familiarized with British usage in the best and noblest school in the world—in the House of Commons—he was most anxious to fulfil his duties in the spirit of the constitution, to extend equal courtesy and right to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, and to promote the happiness and advance the welfare of the Province. His noble father, the Marquis of Normanby, I had the good fortune to know as Colonial Secretary in 1839, and at a subsequent period as our Ambassador in Paris. His administration of Ireland, as one of the most popular Viceroys, and his literary taste, are known to us all; and as the politics of his family have always leaned to the popular side, I trust that His Excellency's administration here may be alike agreeable to himself and acceptable to the people.

His Excellency the LIEUT. GOVERNOR, rose and said :

Perhaps, Mr. President and gentlemen, it may be expected of me, before alluding to the toast to which you have so warmly responded, to say a few words in explanation of the reasons which induced me to allow the last toast, which under other circumstances it would have been my duty to respond to, to be drunk in silence. I refrained however, from offering any remarks upon it for the simple reason that I did not wish to inflict on you two speeches on the same subject.

It gives me, sir, the greatest pleasure to join in the

celebration of an event which is even now being celebrated, not only in this city, but in the Mother Country, British America, the United States, in fine, sir, over the whole world, wherever the English language is known. (Enthusiastic cheers.)

On this day, wherever Scotchmen dwell, wherever the Anglo Saxon race have fixed their domicile, men of every shade of opinion, of every station, may be found uniting together, cordially and heartily, to honor a man, who during his life time occupied a somewhat humble station, and did not receive that reward and encouragement which his transcendent genius merited.—(Rapturous applause.)

It is not my intention to descant on the poetical abilities and distinguished talent of Burns, great as they were, for after the address delivered to-day by your worthy Chairman upon that subject, it would be in vain for me to attempt to depict in more glowing colours than he did, the merits of that extraordinary man—the struggles he had to undergo, or the difficulties which beset him in the performance of the great work he had in hand. There is one point in his history, however, to which I may allude, for I think from the contemplation of it the juniors of this country may be incited to follow the noble example he set. (Cheers.)

Burns, the son of a Farmer—himself a ploughman—from his earliest youth upwards strove unceasingly to cultivate his mind, and succeeded to a degree which enabled him to produce those beautiful, those immortal poems which have gained for them universal celebrity, exhibited in the celebration of the day—an honor, I believe, never accorded to man before. He had no external aid to assist him—his birth was humble; and, sir, though I cannot be supposed to disparage the advantages of birth, if the position it confers be rightly used, yet my tendencies of mind have always induced me to honor far more the man

who has made his own position, and by his unaided exertions achieved fame for himself, than he who owes it to his lineage, however exalted. (Prolonged cheering.)

Such was the case with Burns, and such I hope may be the case with many of the inhabitants of this Province. Nova Scotia has already given men to the world whose names will be illustrious in History. Within the last two years, nay sir, within the short period I have resided in this Province, you have one example, when your Legislature had the pleasing duty to perform of marking the high sense they entertained of the courage, skill, and assiduity of one of Nova Scotia's sons.

Another instance occurred shortly before my arrival here; but though I refer only to these two instances, there are many other names, which will go down to posterity with honor and renown.

In the Church, in the Senate, in the Field, at the Bar, or in the arena of Commerce, are to be found Nova Scotians, equally honored, equally esteemed by their countrymen, and whose renown is not confined to the narrow limits of this Province.

Who can tell the effect, who can judge the influence which the history of a man like Burns has exerted upon these men? Who can say what a contemplation of his untiring assiduity may lead the sons of Nova Scotia to achieve in the future? (Cheers.)

Education is not confined to the Seminary or the College—though the influence of such Institutions cannot be undervalued—self instruction may effect vast results. The soul and the mind of man, that which distinguishes him from the brute creation, is susceptible of cultivation and improvement.

Education is to the mind what the labors of the skilful husbandman are to the soil—with it, everything can be accomplished—without it, nothing.

Let me urge, then, upon my audience the necessity of cultivation in the season of youth, for that is the period during which a store of information may be hoarded from which the possessors may reap a rich reward in after life.

Your hon. Chairman has alluded to my career in Parliament. It is true, sir, that for ten years I succeeded in retaining the confidence of a large and influential constituency in my own country, and during that period, I may, without egotism say, I endeavored conscientiously and without intermission to perform the duties incumbent on me to fulfil. I own that I did not often participate in the public debates, for I am one of those who think that actions speak louder than words. Nor do I pretend to be anything of an orator, though not undervaluing the importance of public speaking. But while in the House of Commons, I have often thought, that if a little less was said, and a little more was done, the public interests would be better sustained. While there, I took my stand in the ranks of the party to which I belonged. I was essentially a party man, and never lost an opportunity of advocating the principles I conscientiously entertained. I have, however, the satisfaction of knowing that during my Parliamentary career, from the day I entered the House of Commons until I left it, I always knew how to distinguish between political antagonism and social friendship, and, I shall ever remember with pleasure the expression of friendship and good-will, which I received not only from my own party, but from members of every shade of opinion in the House of Commons, on the announcement of my appointment which first took place on the moving of a new writ for my Borough; and although such a reference from me at this time may seem somewhat egotistical, I cannot refrain from saying, that the manner in which my appointment was received was most gratifying to my

mind. And, sir, I only trust that when I leave this Province I may carry away with me the good feelings of every party, sect, denomination, and shade of politics, as I trust I did when I left the House of Commons.—(Cheers.)

I told you that while there I was a party man, but when I left that body I ceased to belong to any party. In this country I know no party; and, sir, so long as I hold the office to which Her Majesty has been pleased to appoint me, whoever may be selected by this people to administer their public affairs, shall receive from me an honest, cordial, constitutional support—and it will be the greatest satisfaction to me, if by God's blessing I may be enabled in any way to promote the interests and well-being of Nova Scotia and its inhabitants. (Prolonged cheering.)

(Hon. WILLIAM YOUNG here read a telegram from the friends of Burns in Pictou, conveying their good wishes to his admirers in Halifax.)

Hon. W. YOUNG.—I find that it is precisely ten o'clock, at which hour we have been requested to join with those engaged in celebrating this day in New York, and elsewhere, in drinking to the following toast:

“Kindred associations throughout the world—may they preserve the songs and disseminate the sentiments of Burns, till

“Man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brithers be, and a' that.”

This toast was drunk with enthusiastic applause.

“The Army and Navy—the safety and pride of Britain”—was then proposed from the Chair, and drunk with three cheers.

Colonel DICK, on behalf of the Army, said it afforded him great pleasure to mingle in a social gathering such as he saw before him. The writings of Burns had, no doubt, done much to keep alive those national feelings which stimulated the soldier to deeds of daring in the hour of battle; but as much had been said of them, he

would not occupy time with further references. For the Army he thanked the audience for the manifest enthusiasm that marked the reception of the toast, and he begged leave, for them, to drink the good health of all present. (Cheers.)

Mr. CHEVALLIER said—In the absence of those whose peculiar duty it was to respond to the toast of the Navy, he begged leave to thank the audience for its reception. Had the Admiral of the Station, Sir Houston Stewart, been present—himself a true, loyal-hearted Scotchman, than whom no man more highly appreciated the Scottish character, and everything connected with her history—whose sterling qualities of head and heart all present appreciated—he would have delivered, in responding to the toast, a speech which they would not have been in a hurry to forget. (Cheers.)

Hon. WILLIAM YOUNG.—Mr. Vice, the next toast ought not, perhaps, to come from the Chair; and if the sentiment accompanying it were not one rather of admonition than of eulogy, I might have handed it over to some one less interested than myself. This day I resolved, from the first, to separate from party action and feeling. On the Centenary of Burns, I would not be a party man; and therefore the playful allusions I have made here and at Temperance Hall, as they carried no sting, and were uttered with the most perfect good humor, will be received, I am sure, as they were meant. The present toast, I am happy to announce, will be responded to by gentlemen in every way competent to do it justice.—I beg leave to propose:

“The Legislature of the Province—may their deliberations always be marked by dignity and truth.”

Hon. STAYLEY BROWN said—In responding to this toast, I must commence by stating, what every member of the Committee well knows, that it was my most anxious desire

to save those present from the infliction of a speech from me. It has pleased the Orator of the day, however, to bring me forward a little more conspicuously, perhaps, than was becoming my modesty. (Cheers and laughter.) In the references made by him to-day it seemed to me that he thought, engrossed by the toils of office, I could not even enjoy one day—a day like this, which should be marked by nothing but hilarity and good feeling—without thoughts of politics and party. Sir, it well becomes us to celebrate the event we commemorate; for if there be in any man one drop of Scottish Blood, one spark of Scottish feeling, Burns is the man and this the hour to call it forth. (Loud cheers.)

The committee having charge of the day's arrangement determined to select as the Orator on this occasion one, who having leisure unemployed by state affairs, could devote his time to the subject. I listened to the Oration of the Chairman at Temperance Hall. To his eulogy—to the panegyrics he passed on the life, character and writings of Burns, I heartily respond; but I then thought, and I think still, that he might have been content with this subject, and not have travelled beyond it to say that I for the last two years had not enjoyed myself so much as during the last fortnight. (Cheers and Laughter.) But apart from these considerations, I hail the celebration of this day with delight and pleasure. The tribute we now pay to the memory of that great Poet whose achievements in the realm of song, have delighted and entranced all classes of men—all ranks of society—is well merited, well deserved. The lapse of time, instead of taking from, has lent an additional charm to his writings, and increased the admiration felt for him by all who peruse them. In conclusion, on behalf of the Legislature I return thanks for the reception of the toast just proposed.

HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL—I comply with the request of the chairman to acknowledge this toast, in the assurance that whatever engages the warm affections of a large portion of the community, will meet a hearty response in the Legislature of this, our common country, where are and must be united in indissoluble bonds the interests and the affections, the hopes and the cares of all the members that make up that common country, as the streams that find the same channel to the sea. Although they may not at once commingle, and for a time may each preserve the peculiarity it brought from its own rocky soil, yet all unite in making up the volume and power, the beauty and the usefulness of the noble river that enriches the land. There may be some here who imagine that the hall of legislation is not “meet nurse” for poetic fancies, and who see small harmony between the occasion of this festival and the toast I am called upon to answer. But they who have experience, and who know what are the tender, love-engendering influences of red benches and high-backed, courtly chairs, might perhaps rebuke such skepticism. (Laughter.) Without, however, venturing on this difficult problem, I may say that even in the arid atmosphere of politics may be found the susceptibilities to be moved by Burns’ tender strains, and to render deep homage to the power of his muse. But Burns has other claims to universal regard besides poetic genius; and it is not left to his countrymen alone to do honor to the memory of one on whom nature had stamped a nobility confined within no national borders; and who, though he loved the land so dear to him with intensity, had yet a heart that warmed with the sentiment of patriotism, drawn from higher than classic authority—even the stirrings of his own generous emotions. Nothing human was alien to his affections; for under all the variations to which the character and lot of man is subject—unless, indeed,

of baseness, with which Burns held no terms—he felt and acknowledged that—

“A man's a man for a' that.”

There are peculiarities in this celebration. Anniversaries are always interesting, because they present images of times long gone by, and scenes far away, free from the roughness incident to the business of every-day life; but here it has taken not one year, but the circle of one hundred years, to give voice, unweakened by repetition, to the emotions of this day. This celebration is peculiar, too, in its subject—the honor of the muse; for these are utilitarian times, when poetry is at a discount—when the praises of Jenny Spinner of the Cotton Factory are likely to excite more interest than the tenderest adulation of “Jenny,” whether of the “lint white locks” or “golden tresses,” although you throw in any amount of “banks and braes,” winding streams, “milk white thorn,” and that most ethereal of all the gases, “lovers' vows.”

An exception has lately been made in favor of the glory of arms. It is but an exception. Our fellow-countrymen in arms, without regard to national distinctions, have added to their country's honor: each of the military friends who have honored us to-night with their presence have placed a stone in the pillar that records the national glory; and we know that as they have, so they will cheerfully again, should the necessity arise, shed their blood and risk their lives to maintain the honor and secure the liberties and peace of their country. We render them all honor for it; but yet they must be content to bear a rival in the throne of their countrymen's regard. The progress of commerce and the change of markets are potent competitors in days like these.

To-day is a grand exception, and, by common consent, over all the wide domain of our gracious Queen, prices current are thrown aside, that one universal act of homage

may be paid to the genius of poetry, as it breathed and poured itself from the heart and from the lips of Robert Burns.

The name of Burns is associated with my early recollections. I spent some years of my boyhood under the roof and care of the minister of Ruthwell, a few miles from Dumfries—himself a man of talent, a poet and a philanthropist—the Rev. Dr. Henry Duncan, author of the *Philosophy of the Seasons*. He had been the friend of Burns—was intimately acquainted with his history, and the ardent admirer of his genius; from him I learnt leniency to the feelings and sympathy with the poetry of Burns, whilst the things connected with his eventful but short career were as household words. (Cheers.) At this time, Mrs. Burns and her family lived in Dumfries, where I also was at school for some time, and the house she then occupied was familiar to me.

I entered into the defence you made to-day of Burns' moral character. Without denying, or attempting to palliate, what was wrong in his conduct or works, I will venture the remark, that if there were nothing since then more glorious to recommend Burns, the universal tribute this day accorded to him over the world would never have been exhibited. But Burns was a man of a noble nature.

The Attorney General made allusion to various elements in Burns' character—his manly independence, his large humanity, his hatred of oppression, his tender sympathy with the suffering, and his warm affections. A deep reverence for the Deity and religion, it was asserted, was manifested in many of his pieces, notwithstanding the rashness of expression in others; nor could the imputation of a libertine be justly imputed to one who ever maintained an elevated opinion of the female sex, and whose more impassioned and indignant appeals were aroused in their favor against the heartless seducer. The

Attorney General quoted a few lines from several of Burns' pieces, in support of his views: "The Winter Night," "The Cotter's Saturday Night," "The Mountain Daisy," and especially the "Epistle to a Young Friend." Burns had himself a generous heart, and men will deal justly with the frailties of those who are judged by the standard he erected when he sang:

"Then justly scan your brither man—
More gentler sister, woman;
Though they may gang a wrang,
To step aside is human."

The Attorney General closed with remarks on the unhappy conclusion of Burns' history, and referred to some of his touching allusions to himself, as when he admonished his youthful friend:

"And may he better risk the read
Than ever did the adviser."

And when from the fate of the daisy he foretold his own:

"Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred;
Unskillful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er."

The Hon. Chairman then proposed the eighth toast:

"The Scottish peasantry—a noble race—may it endure forever."

ROBERT MILLER, Esq., said—God be praised, I am no politician. I appear before you as a simple admirer of the Scottish peasantry. The peasant everywhere is the product of the land he tills: native to the soil, and no traveller, he is the creature of the physical and spiritual influences of his neighborhood and nation. If born in Africa, he is a negro; if in Scotland, he thanks the kind Providence that makes him—could it do more for any man than make him a Scotchman. Other men like our-

selves may be natives of our beloved land, but by intercourse with strangers and foreign trade have lost much of their native character; the peasant has the peculiar honor—if it be an honor—of being nothing but Scottish. If you would know, then, what such a country as Scotland can produce, you must not look to a Macaulay or a Sir Walter—these are British—but a simple unadulterated peasant; and I do not fear to base the greatness of my country on the greatness of her peasantry. The Scottish character is known and revered from pole to pole; the Scotchman is welcomed at Paris, at Rome, at Vienna, at St. Petersburg; and this is not because of his own individual character, but because of the Scottish idiosyncrasy to be found only in the Scottish peasant,—because, in fact, of the honest, chivalrous character of the Scottish peasantry. Were I to tell you what I think of these humble folks, you would not, perhaps, credit my account; but I shall put Scotland herself in the witness-box: I call upon the genius of my country to speak for me, and tell you what she makes of her children: “Thou spirit of the everlasting hills, of the lonely and stern heights and mountain solitudes, the heathery braes and mossy moors, the lakes, the streams, the glens, the wooded and unwooded wilds, what kind of man dost thou make of thy child? Does not thine infant, dandled on thy knee, suckled at thy breast, drink from thee stern manhood, lofty sentiment, unconquerable might, patience, fortitude, courage, rough but noble as thyself, an honest and an honorable man. Thou thyself art a creature of heaven and earth, of sky, and lake, and ocean, and hill, and glen, and dale; thou art free to every form of all the elements, and thou makest him as unconquerably free as thyself. Never has the foot of foreign invader left a lasting impression upon Scottish soil.” (Loud cheers.)

I see that you are restive. I had wished to speak of

my countryman's love of God as well as country; but I crave your indulgence while I further briefly advert only to his love of kith and kin. Locked up in the solitude of hills and glens, the Scottish peasant is excluded from all general intercourse, and so learns to take his family and his few friends to his bosom with an uncommon love. Away in the solitudes of nature, the Scottish heart finds no outlet for its affections but in the delights of home, and he loves his little ones and his relations generally with an affection unrivalled in intensity, the ardor of a strong, unchanging heart. His domestic affection is his chief characteristic—his clannishness. Some call this a vice; but God be praised that I have at least this Scottish feeling in me: love of children my own (if I should ever leave my bachelor condition) and love of relations. I am no philanthropist that would begin by loving the whole world, and end with doing good to none. But charity begins at home, say I; and God has grouped us into families that we should love our children and relations first, and then the rest of the world. The Scottish peasantry only follows nature, only obeys God in being clannish; and I am at once proud and happy to say, that if they are anything, they are family men. I wish 'twere permitted me to say more.

The Chairman then proposed the ninth toast:

“The Clergy of all Denominations.”

Which was received with enthusiasm.

The Rev. Mr. Boyd said—I can assure you, sir, that when I entered this room, I had no expectation of being called upon to respond to the toast which has just been received with so much enthusiasm. I duly appreciate the honor, and however inadequately the duty may be performed, it is at least done with warm feelings towards the Poet in whose honor this demonstration has been made; and although there may be some blemishes in his writings

which, as a Minister of the Gospel, I may condemn, yet, as a whole, they breathe a spirit of manly patriotism and touching pathos, which, to the sons of Caledonia, stern and wild, is peculiarly grateful. When I look, sir, at the meeting, and see, upon the right hand and on the left, the representatives of the loyalty and the patriotism of Nova Scotia, I cannot but conclude that the sentiments which animate those present to-night, are coincident with those who have made the empire of Britain the admiration of its friends and the terror of its foes. (Loud cheering.)

Captain TAYLOR, who ably filled the Vice Chair, in proposing the tenth toast,—

“Wallace and Bruce—Abercrombie, Moore and Clyde—heroes that will live forever in the history of their country,”—

said: Of the first of these heroes I will only say, he served his country in her greatest need.

Of Abercrombie and Moore, their great and glorious deeds are recorded in the annals of their country, and the recollection of them even at this day makes every Scottish heart thrill with enthusiasm. They both fell nobly fighting for their country's cause—the one crowned with victory on the shores of Egypt—the other at the ever memorable battle of Corunna.

Of Lord Clyde, better known as Sir Colin Campbell, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army, I need say but little, as his heroic deeds and brilliant successes in the Crimea, and more recently in India, have won for him a world-wide fame.

It is not necessary, I am sure, for me to say more of these illustrious heroes; the bare mention of them is enough, I know, to bring a glow of pride and enthusiasm into the heart of every Scotchman, and to call forth three hearty Scottish cheers. (Applause.)

The President then gave the eleventh toast, with some appropriate remarks :

“ Lady Mulgrave and the fair daughters of Acadia.”

“ Thy daughters bright thy walk adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer's sky,
Soft as the dewey, milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured thrill of joy.”

After this toast had been drunk with three times three, Mr. R. G. HALIBURTON spoke to the following effect :

If the statement made by a previous speaker be correct, that Scotchmen are valued “because they are *family men*,” then I feel that, being a bachelor, I have but few claims upon your attention. But this objection is a still more serious one in any one who attempts to respond to this toast. I always suspect Benedicts like yourself, Mr. Chairman, of some sly mischief when you propose the health of the ladies, and then leave it to some unsophisticated bachelor to reply. “Let us call upon one of those unfortunates whose principal acquaintance with the weaker sex has been a sad experience of negligent laundresses and exacting landladies, and let us see what sort of an idea he can have of the ladies!” As I am honored with this duty, conscious of my ignorance I shall try not to betray it, and shall take warning by a little incident that occurred the other day. Two little black boys were looking in at a confectioner's window with watering mouths, eyeing the delicacies within, and, as if to have the satisfaction of getting as near to them as possible, pressing their faces against the panes, and making little round white rings with the tips of their noses on the glass, (how it is that *black* noses make *white* rings on a window-pane, I would respectfully suggest as an interesting subject of inquiry for our Literary and Scientific Society); one of them had planted his nose within an inch of some tempting jellies, and, as if enjoying the pleasures of imagination by *mentally* devouring them, exclaimed: “Is'nt dat *de*-licious,

Sambo! What's de name ob dat?" "Dat!" exclaimed Sambo, who evidently affected to be a "connoisseur," and assumed a look of infinite contempt; "why, you stupid nigger! you don't know your own food when you sees it! *Dat's Gum Arab-ic.*"

Gentlemen, being a bachelor, I shall take warning by Sambo's ignorance; and remember that I have been only *outside the window*. I felt the force of this little incident while listening to an eloquent and interesting lecture on "True Greatness," by one of the speakers this evening, in which he touched slightly upon some of the amiable weaknesses of the fair sex. As they had no reply on that occasion, I may be pardoned if, as their representative, I enter a solemn protest against these remarks. Would he endeavor to stand between them and fashion—that sweet tyrant that everywhere lords it over the sex? Ineffectual effort! Even Louis Napoleon, who could gain an empire, has been compelled to bow to the reign of Crinoline. In vain he has imposed a tax upon these (to us) mysterious components of female attire. Crinolines flourish, while the husbands suffer. Well, then, may the ladies be indignant at such treasonable remarks, for, if there is anything that comes up to one's ideas of "*true greatness*," it is the ladies' crinoline of the present day. But the ladies must forgive his ignorance on this subject, and, in justice to him, remember that he, too, has been only *outside the window*.

If dress were all that renders woman attractive—if she were like the bright butterfly whose wings are radiant for a brief summer's day, and then cease to charm because they cease to glitter, then men might well strive to control the judgment of the fair sex in matters of dress.

But may they not well be allowed to pursue their own wishes on this subject when we recall with admiration and respect those noble and domestic virtues which elevate and

adorn the female character, and which shine brightest in the hour of darkness and trial! They may not win fame in the tented field, for home is the scene of their triumphs. Martyrs to the cause of duty and love are to be found in the obscurity of private life, as truly great as any martyrs or heroes whose names are blazoned on history. How many a one is there who, having resigned all that is near and dear, for one who, though unworthy, is still nearer and dearer, has, without a murmur, endured trials and privations from which man would have shrunk; not seeking the applause of the crowd, but hiding from the eyes of all the sacrifices which she secretly and silently endures!

Perhaps the best proof of the power of the fair sex for weal or woe, is this: that it has led more souls to heaven and sent more to perdition, than any other influence that can control the heart of man.

In illustration of this he alluded to that brilliant poem by Praed, where "The Red Fisherman" is described as trying his different baits for mortals. A mitre hooks one, fame another, but a *lovely woman* is his *red hackle*—his fly that takes when all others fail.

The speaker showed that if this be sometimes woman's influence for woe, how infinitely greater is it for weal, and how many an erring soul has she recalled to the paths of happiness and virtue.

He then turned from the subject of the fair sex to what, as the more pleasing part of his duty, he had reserved for the last—the privilege of responding for Lady Mulgrave—who would, he had no doubt, duly appreciate the honor they have done her; and concluded by paying a just tribute to her Ladyship, who, like his Excellency, has, by her interest in our charitable institutions and by her cordiality and kindness, endeared herself to all classes of the community.

His Excellency the **LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR**: Mr. President, Vice, and Gentlemen,—Most nobly have you celebrated the natal day of Burns. I do not believe a place can be found where, in proportion to its population, greater honor has been done to his memory. But we must all agree that there is one present to whom much of the praise is due. I am sorry that it was not my lot to hear the oration of your worthy chairman at Temperance Hall, but I have marked the admirable manner in which he has presided over this festive board, and from it can fully appreciate the eloquence he exhibited on that occasion. I have much pleasure, therefore, gentlemen, in proposing the health of the **Hon. Mr. Young**, your chairman.

This toast was received with enthusiastic applause.

Hon. Mr. Young—I feel deeply grateful to his Excellency, and to you, Mr. Vice and gentlemen, for the manner in which my health has been received; and am only too happy to hear that the efforts made to render this celebration acceptable to all, and in which I have been so ably sustained by the Committee, have been successful. I sought to forget to-day Nova Scotian politics, and to look only at the great object we had in view—that of paying the tribute of esteem and respect to our departed countryman, which his memory so well deserves. I again thank you for the honor you have done me. (Cheers.)

The hon. Chairman said—I now have to propose the following toast :

“The Literature of Scotland, enriched by a thousand associations.”

This toast was received with all the honors, and was briefly responded to by **Mr. JOHN McCULLOCH**.

The hon. Chairman then proposed the thirteenth toast :

“The Poets of Scotland—a long and illustrious line: Ferguson, Ramsay, Campbell, Hogg, Tannahill, Scott, Mackay.”

Which was duly honored and responded to by ANDREW MACKINLAY, Esq., as follows :

It is a pleasing feature of the present scene, on looking round upon this vast assemblage of men composed of all classes, who have met on the present occasion for the purpose of celebrating the centenary of one of Scotland's most distinguished sons, that this is not only a demonstration to *his* genius, but a tribute to talent, without reference to sect or country.

It is said that the Literature of a country stamps the character of its people. This is true to a certain extent in all countries; but in none has it such a marked influence over the habits and character as that of the Scottish people.

Their songs, their romances and their legendary ballads, to which they have been accustomed to listen, and with which they have been fascinated from their earliest childhood, cling around their memories, calling up the recollections and associations of their earliest days. These impressions continue with them through life—ever producing a strong influence over their minds, both as individuals and a people.

It is not my intention, at this late hour, to touch upon any of the more lengthened productions of the leading Poets, but I shall simply take up a solitary piece, snatched, as it were, at random from what may be called the fugitive literature of Scotland, and amongst which class of poetry some of the finest and most beautiful productions are to be found; we might take, for instance, the Broom of the Cowden Knows, the Birks of Invermay, or the Flowers of the Forest. We should take the last, as it is one of those short border songs with which every reader of Scottish poetry is acquainted; its music well harmonizes with the words, being plaintive and melancholy, and when taken together, call up before us in vivid array the

Field of Flodden, with all its utter desolation, as depicted in that beautiful melody. Such pieces as these, so full of pathos, can never perish; they are reality itself; they will ever continue to fascinate and to charm, ever giving a tone and a character to the Scottish people, permanent and enduring as the language in which they are written. (Cheers.)

The Chairman then gave—

“ The Chief Justice, the Bench and Bar of Nova Scotia.”

With respect to the first part of the toast he had no difficulty, for he well knew that there was not a man in the room who would not respond from his heart to the health of the Venerable Chief Justice, who had done them the honor to fill the Chair at Temperance Hall that day; the other members of the Bench deservedly enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the community; as to the “ Bar,” being a member of that well-abused body himself, he felt delicate in eulogising them too highly. (Laughter.) But to be serious, the Bar was a useful body in a country; at that very hour, some of those present might have their honor, their fortunes, the reputation of their families, in charge of a lawyer, dependent on his skill and ability; it was highly important, therefore, that the Bar should be composed of men—as he believed it was in Nova Scotia—who were capable of performing the high duties imposed on them. (The toast was received and drunk with applause.)

WILLIAM SUTHERLAND, Esq., in responding, said: That the Chairman owed the position he occupied to the profession which had been complimented in the toast just drank. The Barrister's position was one of honor and responsibility, and he hoped it would be found that the confidence placed in them by the citizens of Halifax would never be reposed in them in vain. On behalf of the Chief

Justice, the Bench and Bar, he thanked the company for the reception of the toast.

The fifteenth toast :

“Scotchmen and their descendants—and the eminent men who are this day commemorating the Genius of Burns all over the world,”—

was given from the Chair and received with rapturous applause.

Mr. PILSBURY, American Consul at this Port, in a brief speech, introduced Major NORTON, American Consul at Pictou, who said :

Mr. Chairman—I have come amongst you as a stranger, and my worthy friend, Mr. Pilsbury, in the language of Scripture, has taken me in. (Laughter.) But now that I am here I suppose I must do the duty which properly should have devolved upon him.

I received an invitation to attend the banquet, and I have travelled 100 miles to mingle with you on this memorable occasion. (Cheers.) And on my arrival I found that my invitation had increased in value one hundred per cent., as it gave me access not only to this feast, but to a literary banquet of the highest order.

I had heard much of the oratorical powers of your distinguished Chairman, but never had an opportunity of listening to him till the present occasion; and a rich intellectual treat it has proved to be. Mr. Chairman, you have alluded to the celebration in my own land. There is one feature I cannot forbear to mention. My countrymen appreciate the poetical genius of Burns, but still more do they appreciate the pure democratic feeling which is displayed in his life and writings. In the estimation of this great Poet, a man, however humble his position, crushed as he might be by misfortune, and struggling against the iron hand of poverty, if he preserve an honest name—

“A man’s a man for a’ that.”

Sir, in your address to-day, you made some beautiful quotations from the writings of that distinguished man; but to my mind there were others more powerful in their appeals to the different passions. What can be more beautiful or touching than that simple ballad, commencing,

“I'm sitting on the stile, Mary.”

Appealing as it does, to all the finer feelings of our nature.

Then, sir, turn to the sentiments contained in Bruce's Address :

“Wha would be a traitor knave—
Wha would fill a coward's grave,
Wha so base as be a slave,
Let him turn and flee.”

What language can be found more powerful and withering than this. And what, sir, more beautifully and feelingly expressed than the sentiments contained in the song “John Anderson my Jo.”

“We clamb the hill thegither,
And monie a canny day, John,
We've had wi ane anither ;
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand and hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my Jo.”

Again, sir, what, in all the evidence of his genius, is more world-wide in its renown than that “Doch and Dorrisch Song of Auld Lang Syne ?” and how feelingly do these two lines come home to every heart, and how beautifully expressive of sympathy are they :

“And here's a hand, my trusty friend,
And gie us a hand o' thine,
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet
For Auld Lang Syne.”

Sir, the sentiment which you have called upon me to respond to is so broad and expansive, that were I to attempt to do it justice, I would occupy too much of the time of this company. I shall only therefore make reference to two celebrations of my countrymen mingling with yours in commemoration of the eventful day. At the head of one of these presides the distinguished Poet of my native land, William Cullen Bryant—and with pride and pleasure I know, does he unite in rendering homage to the humble peasant Poet whose memory we this day celebrate. Sir, in Boston, presiding over the convivial assemblage, there is a man who may be said to be the greatest living orator of the age—Hon. Edward Everett, and uniting with him on this occasion will be found the names of Cushing, Longfellow, and a host of others of the Literati of my country.

Sir, to-day this celebration possesses peculiar interest to every Scottish heart, and the enthusiasm displayed in this Scottish assemblage, is a powerful evidence of the *ama patriæ* which burns so warmly in the heart of every true son of the heather.

Sir, it has been my good fortune to mingle with Scotchmen both of high and low degree, and amongst them all I never found one but whose heart was in the right place,—giving evidence of the noblest work of God—an honest man. (Loud Cheers.) I fear, sir, I am trespassing too far upon the time of this company. (Cries of no, no! Go on!) But I must beg permission to close by referring to your own highly favored land. The population of Nova Scotia is composed of English, Scotch, Irish, and an occasional sprinkling from my own country—possessing, as they do, a combination of the indomitable spirit of each country they represent. No portion of the American Continent teems with more valuable resources of wealth and comfort than may be found embraced within the cir-

cumscribed limits of Nova Scotia. (Cheers.) All that is wanting to make available these blessings of an Almighty Hand, is the united industry of her population. We find hidden in the bosom of the earth stores of mineral wealth unsurpassed by any other land. Her agricultural products, embracing all that is required for the sustenance of man, requires only the introduction of the improvements of the age, to place her in a position favorably to compare with the other portions of this Continent. And when the iron chain of communication now forming shall have been completed, an impetus will be given to every branch of industry in the Province, and will prove the means of fully developing her resources, and greatly enriching her population.

I beg to return my thanks to those who have listened to me, and will close by offering the following sentiment :

“Nova Scotia and her inhabitants—a race of Scotch, English, and American origin—may they unite to develop those great resources which the Almighty has conferred upon their country.”

The Chairman then proposed :

“Our Guests—we give them a cordial welcome.”

Drunk with all the honors.

B. WIER, Esq., M. P. P., having been requested by the Chair to respond, said : I feel highly honored, Mr. Chairman, in being called upon to respond to this toast on an occasion like the present. Though not a Scotchman, my ancestors came from a portion of England very near the borders, and I do not know but connections may have been formed between those on the one and the other side of the line. (Laughter.) The arrangements had been, he was glad to see, carried out without reference to party, —all agreeing to sink their political differences, that they might duly celebrate the memory of a man who had made

a name for himself, the splendor of which the lapse of time, instead of dimming, added new lustre to. As a guest, and one who had enjoyed himself heartily at the entertainment, he begged leave to thank the Chairman for the honor done. (Cheers.)

“The Mayor and Corporation,”

was then proposed, drunk, and responded to by Alderman CALDWELL.

“The Press—the friend of national liberty.”

was responded to by Mr. BARNES.

“The land we live in,”

was then given, and briefly responded to by Mr. WALTER C. MANNING.

The hour of half-past two having arrived, after a song or two the party broke up, all highly delighted with the entertainment.

ORATION.

HON. WILLIAM YOUNG said : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen : When the Marshal just now requested the band to play a Scottish tune, and stated, by a slip of the tongue, that presently you would have something better, he volunteered a promise which it is impossible to fulfil : for what voice, however eloquent or inspired, could surpass the Scottish muse ? (Cheers.)

By an unanimous vote of the General Committee, it was determined that besides the Banquet in the evening, which will probably be one of the most brilliant affairs ever witnessed in the Province, an Oration should be delivered in this place upon the genius and character of Burns, so as to give scope for a more critical and elaborate review of his writings than would otherwise have been possible, and to admit the fairer sex to a share in the festivities of the day, from which they would else have been excluded.

It was also unanimously decided that I should deliver this Oration,—a responsible but agreeable duty, and which I cannot but account the highest compliment ever paid me by the partiality of my countrymen. (Cheers.)

It is a gratifying circumstance that the Chair is filled by the venerable Chief Justice—the head of my own profession—at the great age of eighty-four, with his affections still warm and his intellect undimmed—a living impersonation of the integrity and purity of the administration of the law. Perhaps, on this occasion, I may be permitted to say that it is not impossible that the Scottish blood which circulates in his veins may have contributed to the formation of those estimable and sterling qualities which illustrate and adorn his character. (Cheers.)

In glancing my eye over this brilliant *parterre*, it is gratifying to find that the ladies have assembled in such force ; for, after all, what would an oration be, and especially an oration on Burns, the very Poet of love, were it not hailed and illumined by female smiles ? (Cheers.) To a Scotchman, and, as I have reason to think, to a Nova-Scotian as well as a Scotchman, the very presence of the sex is an inspiration, and kindles his imagination into a warmer and tenderer glow. (Renewed cheers.) I think, also, that the General Committee has been happily compounded : all shades of opinion are there, and party differences, by common consent, are for a time forgotten. The extreme Liberal and the extreme Conservative are beside me. Her Majesty's Government and her Majesty's Opposition are duly represented. I see my honorable friend the Receiver General indulging in a laugh with a Liberal committee-man, and am inclined to think that he has not appeared to such advantage or enjoyed himself half so much at any time these two years as during the last fortnight while he has been under my fatherly care. (Cheers and laughter.)

But this celebration is marked by a grander and more distinctive feature. Where in the history of the world was ever such ovation paid as this day to the memory of Burns ? In every quarter of the globe, wherever the Scottish race has penetrated, we may be assured that they are now assembled to do honor to their national Poet. The most distinguished literary men of the mother country and America, without distinction of origin, will contribute their finest talents to raise one universal song of praise, which will ascend from every corner of the earth. The countrymen of Burns, to be sure, as is natural and proper, lead the way, but they carry with them the sympathy and approval of all educated men. Here is true fame !—an earnest of the spirit which is every

day more and more developed, and, overlooking the old and factitious distinctions, awards the highest place to intellect and genius. (Cheers.)

And Scotland, thus glorying in her son, has largely participated in the progress of the age. The Duke of Argyle, in a speech recently delivered in Dundee, shows how wonderfully she has advanced during the last century in all the elements of wealth and civilization, to a degree, indeed, that is scarcely exceeded by the Canadas or the Western States. Cobbett, who, it must be admitted, whatever his faults may have been, was a keen observer, and one of the most racy and idiomatic writers in our tongue, full of English prejudices against Scotland, was tempted to visit the rich straths and valley of the Clyde; and, in a sketch which he has given of his journey, recants all his old opinions, and paints with fervid eloquence the beauty of the river, the exquisite and varied scenery, and the evidences everywhere apparent of improvement and wealth.

Some ten or twelve years ago, while in the north of Scotland, after enjoying the sunrise and the whirring of the black cock from among the heather on the top of Birnam Hill, I proceeded through the pass of Killi-
crankie—famous for the fall of Dundee—the Claverhouse of Scott,—and was astonished to find in that remote region a skilful and scientific agriculture—cottages embowered with the eglantine and the rose—hotels with all the modern appliances, and symptoms of a refined and progressive people.

With such a country, it is not to be wondered at that Scotland takes such a strong hold of the affections of her sons, and that Scottish enthusiasm is aroused on a day like this.

Some allowance will naturally be made for it, but I beg to assure such of my audience as are not Scotch, that I

will keep within due bounds, and will not willingly offend the rules of good taste, or advance any opinion which a man of a clear head and a kind heart would not readily endorse. (Hear, hear.)

It will be necessary, in order to understand the character and position of Burns, to take a rapid glance at the capital and the literature of his country. Edinburgh is now one of the most beautiful capitals in Europe, and combines, in a singular degree, old associations and a romantic position with modern refinements. But at the first visit of Burns, between seventy and eighty years ago, it challenged equal admiration, and drew from him a poetical tribute in the following lines :

“Edina ! Scotia’s darling seat !
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch’s feet
Sat legislation’s sovereign powers !
From marking wildly, scatter’d flowers,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray’d,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honor’d shade.

“Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy trade his labors plies ;
There architecture’s noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise.
Here, justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod ;
There learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks science in her coy abode.

* * * * *

“There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar,
Like some bold vet’ran gray in arms,
And mark’d with many a seamy scar ;
The pond’rous wall and massy bar,
Grim rising o’er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell’d th’ invader’s shock.”

(Applause.)

The last of these verses describe the castle so dear to all our Scottish recollections. The next, which I have not cited, touched that "noble stately dome," which the Poet regarded "with awe-struck thought and pitying tears," and which long remained dilapidated and neglected; but the fine taste and generous heart of our beloved Queen has taken away that reproach, and restored the ancient palace of Holyrood to something of its pristine splendor. (Cheers.)

The literary history of Scotland previous to the days of Burns presents some remarkable features. In the days of the early James', she produced a body of men not inferior to the leading minds of the southern kingdom; but after the transfer of the Court to London, and the withdrawal of the nobility, the spirit of the nation seemed to be paralyzed, and in the long interval of nearly two centuries—from Buchanan to Hume—there was scarcely one distinguished writer to be found in her literary annals. The country torn by dissensions, and agitated by the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, seemed at one time as if she were about to lose her ancient manly spirit, and sink into a province. But the native character of the people received a new impulse, and Scotland, in the words of her own Poet—

"Come, firm resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk of Carl-hemp in man,"—

assumed fresh courage, and asserted her independence. It was then that a galaxy of eminent men sprang up.

Doctor Robertson's History of Scotland appeared in 1754—Hume's England at the same period—and a few years later, Adam Smith published his celebrated Wealth of Nations, which laid the foundation of the modern science of political economy. Of this celebrated book, Buckle, in his late fascinating and brilliant, but somewhat dangerous work, does not hesitate to say, that it has

exerted a larger influence on public opinion and the destinies of mankind, than all the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. Dougald Stewart, too, had just entered upon his course of metaphysical inquiry,—and the intellect of the country, although somewhat tainted with foreign admixture, was everywhere reviving and expanding, when suddenly there arose a great national Poet from the very midst of the people. I am not ignorant that the value and beauty of poetry have been depreciated by many eminent writers, but that serves only to show, that their thoughts had run too exclusively in other channels, and that they took too narrow-minded and contracted a view.

Newton thought poetry was little better than ingenious nonsense, and Sir Edward Coke, one of the lights of my own profession, consigned to eternal reprobation five orders of men, among whom were rhyming poets and chemists.

The chemists have since asserted their claims to distinction,—and as for the other, whoever has had the hard fortune to toil over the dry logic and quaint conceits of Sir Edward, must acknowledge, that whatever skill he may claim in black letter law, he had very little poetry in his composition. (Laughter.)

As the ballads of a country are the ground work of its historical knowledge, so the man who has the genius to write its songs, exercises an influence oftentimes superior to its legislators. God save the Queen and Rule Britannia excite an enthusiasm which an act of Parliament cannot, and the Song of the Shirt has drawn forth sympathetic tears and touched the finest emotions of the heart. Poetry to be effective must be true to nature, and awaken a corresponding echo in the hearts of the people. Now the poetry of Burns was eminently true and eminently national. He was touched by an enthusiastic love of his country, and his country has passionately returned his love. All hail, then, to the birth of Robert Burns, the Poet

of Scotland, the Poet of all time. As the genius of one country saluted him—

“When sweet with modest worth she blushed
And stepped ben.”

All hail! my own inspired bard!
In me thy native muse regard;
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low,
I come to give thee such reward
As we bestow.

* * * * *

I taught thy manners—painting strains,
The loves, the ways of simple swains,
Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends;
And some, the pride of *Coila's* plains,
Become thy friends.

* * * * *

“*And wear thou this,*”—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head,
The polish'd leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.”

(Applause.)

But Burns thus highly gifted was guarded by the twin gaoler of the daring heart, low birth and iron fortune.

Robert Chambers, in his recent biography, styles him “the great peasant.” Professor Wilson describes him as the greatest Poet who has ever sprung from the bosom of the people. But it is injustice to him to consider him merely as a prodigy. Had he been nothing else, he had long since been forgotten. His claims to intellectual distinction are independent of his birth. Nature herself stamped on his ample brow the seal of a rare and original genius. “All his faculties,” says Dougald Stewart, “were equally vigorous, and his predilections for poetry were

rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a genius exclusively devoted to that species of composition."

There is nothing more striking in literary history than his sudden appearance, a dark-browed, manly, independent thinker, in the literary coteries of Edinburgh, where he contended on equal terms with the highest—dissolved them by his pathos into tears, or overwhelmed them with floods of merriment. Yet he was not intoxicated by the draught, and when his bubble of fame was in the zenith, he saw the reverse which was too sure to follow. Johnson, the great moralist of England, after producing his London—a satire in its power of expression, knowledge of life and character, and true poetry, scarce inferior to Juvenal—wandered about the streets of the metropolis for days in want of food. The neglect and privations, then, of Burns were not peculiar to Scotland. He derived his enjoyments from other than external sources, or as he himself expressed it—

" It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It's no in makin' muckle mair;
It's no in books, it's no in lear,
To make us truly blest;
If happiness hae not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest."

With hard fortune, then, but with a stout heart, and calm content in his peasant home, our Poet cultivated the seeds of poetry and national feeling. He tells us that Blind Harry's *Life of Wallace* was his first book. This favorite Poet of the Scottish peasant he devoured with patriotic ardor. "It poured," he said "a tide of Scottish prejudice in my veins which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest." (Cheers.)

The vision of Mirza and the Hymns of Addison, some dramas of Shakspeare, Pope, Homer, and Locke on the Human Understanding, were among his earliest studies.

The man who could master these, and appreciate them, was no vulgar peasant. Above all, he was familiar with his Bible, and drew inspiration from the fervid devotion of the Psalms, and the sublime eloquence of Job and Isaiah.

At the age of 25 he had probably as much learning as Shakspeare ever had, but far better models to form his ear to harmony, and to train his fancy to graceful inventions.

There may be some question whether his narrow acquaintance with the classics was a misfortune; without depreciating the value of a classical education, it must be confessed that it has not always contributed to the power of easy composition. Erskine, the most brilliant and successful of our forensic orators, and Hugh Miller, one of the most effective of modern writers, had but little acquaintance with the classics, and the idiom of a genuine English style has been often stiffened and distorted by too slavish an adherence to the ancient models.

Burns' favorite book, however, was a collection of Scottish songs and ballads. It was his *vade mecum* and his companion; he conned them over line by line till they became his familiar friends, and he taught himself how to distinguish the true pathetic and sublime from affectation and fustian. Like Scott, too, his imagination in early youth was fed from the old superstitions and ballads of his country. An old woman in the family had an immense store of them. His mother was well versed in this favorite literature of the peasantry, and Jean, his wife—like the old woman of Moliere—with her native wood-notes wild—sang every song as he composed it, and married his immortal verse to the favorite airs of his country. (Cheers.) He was fired, too, with a lofty ambition—to use his own fine and characteristic image—

like the groping of Homer's Cyclops round the cave, he cherished the eager desire which he has poured forth in verse—

“Even then a wish (I mind its power)—
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or beuk could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough, bur-thistle spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,
I turned the weeder-clips aside,
And spared the Symbol dear!”

It is singular to observe to what extent he carried this “last infirmity of noble minds.” He would rather incur censure than sink into oblivion—

“The mair they talk I'm kenned the better,
E'en let them clash.”

In another of his poems he declares—

“Tho' to be rich was not my wish,
Yet to be great was charming.”

But he sought greatness by identifying himself with the people. He looked upon rural life not through “the ærial veil of imagination,” but in its reality—hallowed and warmed with a poetic glow—

“One touch of nature makes the world kin.”

He felt the power of nature and aspired to be her Poet:

“I have some favorite flowers,” said he, in Spring, “among which are the mountain daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plovers in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion

or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can all this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery which, like the Æolian Harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident? Or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities: a God that made all things,—man's immaterial and immortal nature, —and a world of weal or woe beyond death and the grave."

Thus it was that he communed with Nature, both in her external aspect and her immaterial essence, till at length every phase of passion, from the wildest gust that thrills along the strings, and wakes to ecstasy the living lyre—from the sublime ardour of the patriot, roused to defend his country—to the softest breathings of the most delicious of the passions, found its exponent and interpreter in Burns. (Cheers.) His famous war ode, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,"—the noblest and most stirring ever written by man, and which has nerved many a Highland regiment 'as they rushed with the far sounding cheer into the thickest of the battle—(enthusiastic cheering)—he composed amidst the fiercest turmoil of the elements, while the Poet felt the inspiration, and thoughts, imagery and feelings came rushing upon him during the storm, firm as the measured tread of marching men.

It was his delight, he tells us, to wander alone on the banks of the Ayr, whose stream is now immortal, and to listen to the song of the blackbird at the close of the summer's day. But still greater was his pleasure in walking on the sheltered side of a wood, in a cloudy winter day, and hearing the storm rave among the trees; and more elevated still his delight to ascend some eminence during the agitations of Nature, to stride along its summit, while the lightning flashed around him, and, amidst the howlings of the tempest, to apostrophise the

Spirit of the Storm. Such situations he declares most favorable to devotion—"Wrapt in enthusiasm, I seem to ascend towards Him who walks on the wings of the wind."

This was his enjoyment on the Sabbath Day—when he could indulge in a free intercourse with the charms of Nature, whether in her wilder or softer moods. How different from the Sabbath occupations which I have too often witnessed, even in Protestant countries, on the Continent of Europe. The peasantry of Sweden, Holland, Prussia and Bavaria have a very different training from the thoughtful, sedate, and religious peasantry of Scotland, who alone could have produced an intellect racy of the soil like Burns. (Cheers.) It was his pleasure, too, and his good fortune, to cultivate the provincial dialect of his country—a dialect not mean and vulgar, like that of some distant country, but the language of a cultivated people and of polite life—full of a wild, warbling cadence, and, in the mouth of an accomplished woman, the most delicious music in the world. (Cheers.)

"He woo'd each maiden in song"—

as Wilson finely says—"that will, as long as our Doric dialect is breathed in beauty's ears, be murmured close to the cheek of innocence, trembling in the arms of passion."

"My heart," says Burns in one of his letters, "was completely tinder, and was eternally lighted up by some goddess or other."

"Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed
To see me thro' the barley!"

(Laughter.) The chord was first struck by that master passion which he describes as the first of human joys—one sweetest blessing here below. "Thus began with me love and poetry."

His first attempt was scarcely worthy of his fame ; but his taste rapidly improved, and, after his visit to Edinburgh, and he was admitted to the society of refined and accomplished women—"a thing," he says, "altogether new to me,"—he poured forth those inimitable songs which are the finest memorials of his genius. I must delight you with a few passages, without which it is impossible for such of you as are not familiar with Burns, to estimate his power :—

“ When youthful love, warm, blushing, strong,
Keen, shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th’ adored name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

“ I saw thy pulse’s maddening play
Wild send thee pleasure’s devious way,
Mised by fancy’s meteor ray,
By passion driven ;
But yet the light that led astray,
Was light from heaven.”

(Applause.)

“ I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair ;
I hear her in the tunefu’ birds—
I hear her charm the air.
There’s not a bonnie flower that springs,
By fountain, shaw, or green ;
There’s not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o’ my Jean.

“ My Nannie’s charming, sweet, and young ;
Nae artfu’ wiles to win ye, O ;
May ill befa’ the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nannie, O !

“ Her face is fair, her heart is true,
 As spotless as she's bonnie, O ;
 The opening gowan, wet wi' dew,
 Nae purer is than Nannie, O ! ”

(Applause.)

“ There was a lass, and she was fair,
 At kirk and market to be seen ;
 When a' the fairest maids were met,
 The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

“ And aye she wrought her mammie's wark,
 And aye she sang sae merrilie ;
 The blithest bird upon the bush
 Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

“ As in the bosom o' the stream
 The moonbeam dwells at dewy e'en,
 So trembling pure, was tender love,
 Within the breast o' bonnie Jean.

“ O Jeannie, fair, I lo'e thee dear :
 O canst thou think ta fancy me ?
 Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot,
 And learn to tent the farms wi' me ?

“ Now, what could artless Jeannie do ?
 She had nae will to say him na ;
 At length she blush'd a sweet consent,
 And love was aye between them twa.”

“ There's naught but care on every hand,
 In every hour that passes, O ;
 What signifies the life o' man,
 And 'twere na for the lasses, O ?

“ The warly race may riches chase,
 And riches still may fly them, O ;
 And though at last they catch them fast,
 Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O !

“ Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes, O ;
 Her 'prentice hand she tried on man,
 And then she made the lasses, O !”

(Enthusiastic cheers.)

But it must be confessed that Burns was not always so complimentary. He gave the sex a gentle touch now and then, which some of them perhaps deserve. (Laughter.) You remember his famous verse :

“ Oh, woman, lovely woman: fair !
 An angel's form's fa'n to thy share ;
 'Twad o'er meikle to've gien thee mair—
 I mean an angel mind.”

Then there is his song to 'Tibbie :

“ O Tibbie, I hae seen the day
 Ye wad na been so shy ;
 For lack o' ear ye lightly me,
 But, trowth, I care na by.

“ Yestreen, I met you on the moor—
 Ye spak na, but gaed by like stour ;
 Ye geck at me because I'm poor,
 But fient a hair care I.

“ I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
 Because ye hae the name o' clink,
 That ye can please me at a wink,
 Whene'er you like to try ;

“ But sorrow tuk him that's sac mean,
 Although his pouch o' coin were clean,
 Who follows ony saucy queen,
 That looks so proud and high.”

(Applause.)

It is not, however, one of the charges against Burns that he failed to do justice to the fair sex. He sung their praises with a genial heart ; but it is said, also, that he

sang too seducingly the praises of "John Barleycorn."
True it is he said :

"That if ye do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise."

True it is that of his favorite hero he said :

"Wi' just a drappie in his e'e,
He was nae fou', but just had plenty;"

and that Burns occasionally may have resembled the hero he depicted ; but it is equally true that he was never seen intoxicated in Dumfries, and that he loved "the social crack" and the company far better than the drink ; and, if the truth must be told, the lawyers of Edinburgh—"the noblesse of the robe," as they were styled, with their high jinks, which Scott has immortalized in his "Guy Mannering"—were more to blame for the example they set than the peasant Poet ; while, as to the clergy, Professor Wilson testifies that he has heard "Willie brewed a peck o' Maut," sung with great unction and success at presbytery dinners ; but surely this was a libel on the kirk. (Loud laughter.)

A much more serious charge affects the religious convictions of our Poet. "Offended conventionalities," as Chambers expresses it, "brooded and whispered over his grave;" and it must be confessed that occasionally over his poems there is cast a levity of expression not at all in accordance with the purer and more refined taste of the present age. Let us recollect, however, that we must try him by the standard of his own time, and not by ours. "His wildest wit," says Gray, "was never tainted by indecency." Lord Cochran, the biographer of Jeffrey, in his recent most amusing and graphic memorials of his own time, describes a laxity of expression and usages, in the clergy and the laity of that age, not inconsistent with genuine piety and refinement, as then understood, but

which would be shocking to us now. Some of the verses in "Holy Willie's Prayer" would be now-a-days indefensible; but if it were a true picture of the cant and hypocrisy it scourged, the lash was well applied. The friends of Burns might quote, too, the high examples of Milton, Byron, and Goethe, all of whom have approached to the very verge of sacred things, and touched on holy ground. The "Satan" of Milton,—the "Mephistophiles" of Goethe,—the "Cain" of Byron—are each of them more liable to misconstruction than the most vivid and sarcastic pictures of Burns. In his most celebrated piece, "The Holy Fair," which was approved and corrected by Dr. Blair, while he lashes the follies, the affectation, and the grimaces of the actors, he keeps aloof from the Communion Table; and we could hardly wish one of the most spirited and poetic satires that was ever penned, unwritten.

Burns himself says, in 1787: "Experience of the weakness, not the strength, of human powers made me glad to grasp at revealed religion."

His best letters to Mrs. Dunlop are full of expressions of religious feeling and religious faith; and in his letter to Cunningham, written in 1794—two years before his death—he says:

"It is in this point of view, and for this reason, that I will deeply imbue the mind of every child of mine with religion. If my son should happen to be a man of feeling, sentiment, and taste, I shall thus add largely to his enjoyments. These are no ideal pleasures,—they are real delights; and, I ask, which of the delights among the sons of men are superior, not to say equal, to them? And they have this precious vast addition, that conscious virtue stamps them for her own, and lays hold on them to bring herself into the presence of a witnessing, judging, and approving God."

They, says Lockhart, who have been told that Burns was ever a degraded being—who have permitted themselves to believe that his only consolations were those of “the opiate guilt applies to grief,” will do well to pause over this noble letter and judge for themselves.

But the noblest answer may be drawn from the most perfect of his poems—“The Cotter’s Saturday Night”—the most beautiful and touching picture that was ever sketched of unaffected piety and rural life in a cottage.

“The cheerfu’ supper done, wi’ serious face
 They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
 The sire turns o’er, wi’ patriarchal grace,
 The big ha’-Bible, once his Father’s pride :
 His bonnet rev’reently is laid aside,
 His lyart haffets wearing thin an’ bare;
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
 He wales a portion with’ judicious care;
 And ‘Let us worship God!’ he says, with solemn air.

“They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
 Perhaps Dundee’s wild warbling measures rise,
 Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name,
 Or noble Elgin beats the heav’nward flame—
 The sweetest fur of Scotia’s holy lays :
 Compared with these Italian trills are tame;
 The tickl’d ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
 Nae unison hae they with our Creator’s praise.

“Then kneeling down to Heaven’s eternal King,
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays,—
 Hope springs exulting on triumphant wings,
 That thus they all shall meet in future days.
 No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
 Together hymning their Creator’s praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear;
 While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

“ Compared with this how poor Religion's pride,
 In all the pomp of method and of art,
 When men display to congregations wide,
 Devotion's ev'ry grace except the heart !
 The pow'r incensed the pageant will desert,
 The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
 But haply, in some cottage far apart,
 May hear, well-pleased, the language of the soul ;
 And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enrol.”

“ From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
 That makes her loved at home, revered abroad.”

* * * * *

“ O Scotia, my dear, my natal soil,
 For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent.”

(Rapturous cheering.)

The strangers who are here will be at no loss now to comprehend the love and reverence of Scotland for the name of Burns. His humor was as exquisite as his patriotism was deep and strong. Witness his Tam O'Shanter :

“ When chapman billies leave the street,
 And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
 As market-days are wearing late,
 An' fok begin to tak the gate ;
 While we sit bousing at the nappy,
 An' gettin' fou and unco happy,
 We think na on the lang Scots miles,
 The mosses, waters, slaps and stiles
 That lie between us and our hame,
 Where sits our sulky, sullen dame,
 Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
 Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

“ Ah, gentle dames, it gars me greet,
 To think how mony counsels sweet,
 How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
 The husband frae the wife despises !

“ But to our tale : At market night
Tam had got planted unco right
 Fast by an ingle bleezing finely,
 Wi' reaming swats that drank divinely;
 And at his elbow souter *Johnny*,
 His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
 They had been fou for weeks thegither !

“ The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
 And aye the ale was growing better;
 The landlady and *Tam* grew gracious,
 Wi' favors secret, sweet and precious.
 The souter tald his queerest stories;
 The landlord's laugh was ready chorus;
 The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle!

“ Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
 E'en drowned himself amang the nappy;
 As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
 The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
 Kings may be blest, but *Tam* was glorious,
 O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!”

(Cheers.)

The versatile powers of the Poet are shown in the succeeding stanza,—as beautiful an assemblage of poetic imagery as the English language presents :

“ But pleasures are like poppies spread,
 You seize the flower, its bloom is shed!
 Or like the snow-falls in the river,
 A moment white—then melt forever!
 Or like the borealis race,
 That flit ere you can point their place!
 Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
 Evanishing amid the storm!”

I have been speaking of Burns as a Scottish Poet, and Scotland may well be proud that she produced him ; but

now that the faint lines between England and Scotland have all but vanished, and that Ireland is drawing more closely every day to Britain, so that these two magnificent islands—small in dimensions, but magnificent in power—are combining into a perfect union, Scottish genius is British genius. The unapproachable majesty of Milton—the wonderful power and inspiration of Shakspeare—the felicitous diction and simplicity of Goldsmith—and the airy vivacity and brilliancy of Moore—are the common inheritance of us all, and belong to us in Nova Scotia as well as to the native Briton. (Loud and enthusiastic cheering.)

Burns, like other poets, was a being of impulse and feeling. He had strong passions which sometimes misled him; but his heart was always tender, and he had a generous nature. His anxieties were for others,—his mother, his wife, his brother Gilbert—and he had learned the true secret of happiness, without which no distinction in law or literature, in politics or in philosophy, will make a man truly blessed.

“ What mak’s fireside a happy clime
To weans and wife?
That’s the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.”

Burns was a most affectionate husband. It was his “craze” as he said, to see his Jean well put on. She had the first gingham gown that any woman of her station ever wore in Dumfries, and his extravagance rose at last to such a pitch that her clothing cost the enormous sum of forty shillings sterling a year. (Great laughter.)

It was the eminence of Burns that made his errors conspicuous. The dark spots were shown by the very light of his genius.

“Thou knowest that thou hast made me
 With passions wild and strong,
 And listening to their witching voice,
 Has often led me wrong.”

Let him that hath no sin cast the first stone at Burns. He paid the penalty of his genius, and was exposed to a thousand temptations which duller intellects cannot apprehend. God had afflicted him with a constitutional melancholy. “I have wished a hundred times,” said he, “that I could resign my life as an officer does his commission, for I would not take in any poor ignorant wretch by selling out.” Mark his own epitaph:

“Is there a man whose judgment clear
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs himself life's mad career,
 Wild as the wave;
 Here pause—and through the starting tear
 Survey his grave.

“The poor inhabitant below
 Was quick to learn and wise to know,
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame;
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stain'd his name!

There he did injustice to himself. The name of Burns is not stained, but lives and will live in immortal honor, and his grave, for centuries to come, will be a place of pilgrimage, and watered by the tears of every lover of genius. (Cheers.) He died early. What might he not have been had a few more years been spared to him? Johnson, at the age of thirty-eight, had produced only his tragedy of Irene, London, and the Life of Savage. The numerous works which have given him so high a place in the literature of England would never have been produced had he then been cut off. Our Poet died early, but not

unlamented ; the close of many an illustrious life has been darker than his. Scotland cannot altogether be exempted from reproach. But England and Ireland, too, have not always been just to the men who have contributed to their fame. Sheridan—who had so often delighted the House of Commons, and, in his famous speech on the trial of Warren Hastings, had surpassed even Burke himself—whose comedies are still amongst the choicest treasures of the English stage—died solitary and forgotten, when his wealthy and noble friends gave him the mockery of a splendid funeral. The death-bed of Chatterton, with all the frightful accompaniments of disease and destitution, is one of the finest efforts of the modern pencil which attracted my admiration at the Great Exhibition of the Arts, in Manchester. Bloomfield and Clare, too, were admired for a season—then left to perish. Burns, at least, preserved his independence. He died out of debt ; though from an overstrained and false delicacy he refused pecuniary compensation for those matchless songs which have been sung by millions, and will last while the English language endures. Well might he say :

“ No mercenary bard his homage pays,
His dearest need a friend's esteem and praise.”

Many anxious hours—many days of gloom and despondency were his lot ; but the exercise and the consciousness of his own talents, were sources of deep enjoyment which only the Poet can appreciate. On this auspicious day his fame has inspired two original poems, now in my hand—one from a fair poetess whose name I am not at liberty to mention, the other sent to me anonymously, but, as I believe, also from a female pen, and neither, as I understand, drawing their lineage from Scotland. They are too long, perhaps, to be given you in full,—but I will delight you with a short extract from both :

" To-day in every storied town, in each fair hamlet spot,
 Where Scotchmen find a dwelling-place—and say where are they not?
 His radiant memory they crown with wreaths of loyal fame,
 And write upon the scroll of time their Poet's deathless name.
 Fresh from the gathering dust of age his birthright robe he wears :
 His is no poor, uncertain crown—no idle homage theirs !
 In him the Poets all receive their legal right to sway,
 What love hath consecrated long, they proudly crown to-day !
 It is not rusk, it is not gold, nor valor's armed might,
 That writes upon a nation's soul such characters of light
 As those that live in Scottish hearts—o'er which their memory yearns
 In the sweet stirring minstrelsy—the patriot song of Burns.
 Thus weave they now the gathered bays Time's fountain borrow down,
 And gem with stars of pride and love, the fresh, immortal crown
 Of him who, lapped in quiet deep, sleeps amid the heather fair,
 Beside the banks he loved so well—the 'bonnie banks of Ayr.' "

" And while the Scottish maiden's rural tongue
 Recall the tender passion of his lay;
 While shepherds bask the golden broom among
 Their fair flock, tending the long summer day;
 While 'Nith' and lonely 'Lugar' roll away,
 His music mingling with each sylvan tone;
 While beauty loves his homage to repay,
 And his wronged aspirations freemen own :
 Shall *he*, on Scottish soil, all other bards dethrone ?

" Defenceless now no more—that lofty name,
 Both radiant star and beacon light shall be;
 Secure and high, it sheds a warning flame
 Down the dark billows of life's wreck-strewn sea.
 Warm youth and hoary age alike find free,
 Fair warrant, for the love his memory earns;
 When, bearing boughs from you immortal tree,
 Brave, wise, religious Scotland proudly turns
 To seek, with pilgrim love, the grave of ROBERT BURNS."

And now I shall draw to a conclusion. I have not deemed it respectful to this enlightened audience, nor just to myself, to extenuate too far the errors into which Burns was sometimes seduced; but his errors are forgotten in

the blaze of his reputation, and the love which we cherish for his memory. And, in the words of Byron, who united with Campbell and Scott in pronouncing him a Poet of the highest order, already has

“Glory without end
Scattered the clouds away—and on that name attend
The tears and praises of all time.”

(Enthusiastic cheers.)



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