ANNUAL

# Burns Chronicle

AND

# Club Directory.

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**Edited by D. M'NAUGHT, Kilmaurs.**

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# PREFACE.

As one of the principal intentions of the Federation in founding the *Chronicle* was the establishment of a permanent record of current Burns events, no apology is necessary for the amount of space devoted in this issue to the proceedings at the inauguration ceremonies which occurred during the year.

The desire to complete the Earnock MSS. within as short a compass as possible has necessarily curtailed the space at our disposal. The earliest convenient opportunity will be taken of printing the Bibliographical material which has been accumulating on our hands since the interruption occasioned by the Death Centenary editions chronicled in our last.

We beg to congratulate the members of the Federation on their very successful and enjoyable meeting at Mauchline, and to express the hope that the fixture at Dumfries will be as well attended.

We again return our warmest thanks to our contributors, but for whose kindly assistance and advice the editorial functions could not have been so profitably discharged. The continued success of the *Chronicle* is largely owing to their spontaneous efforts.

D. M'NAUGHT.

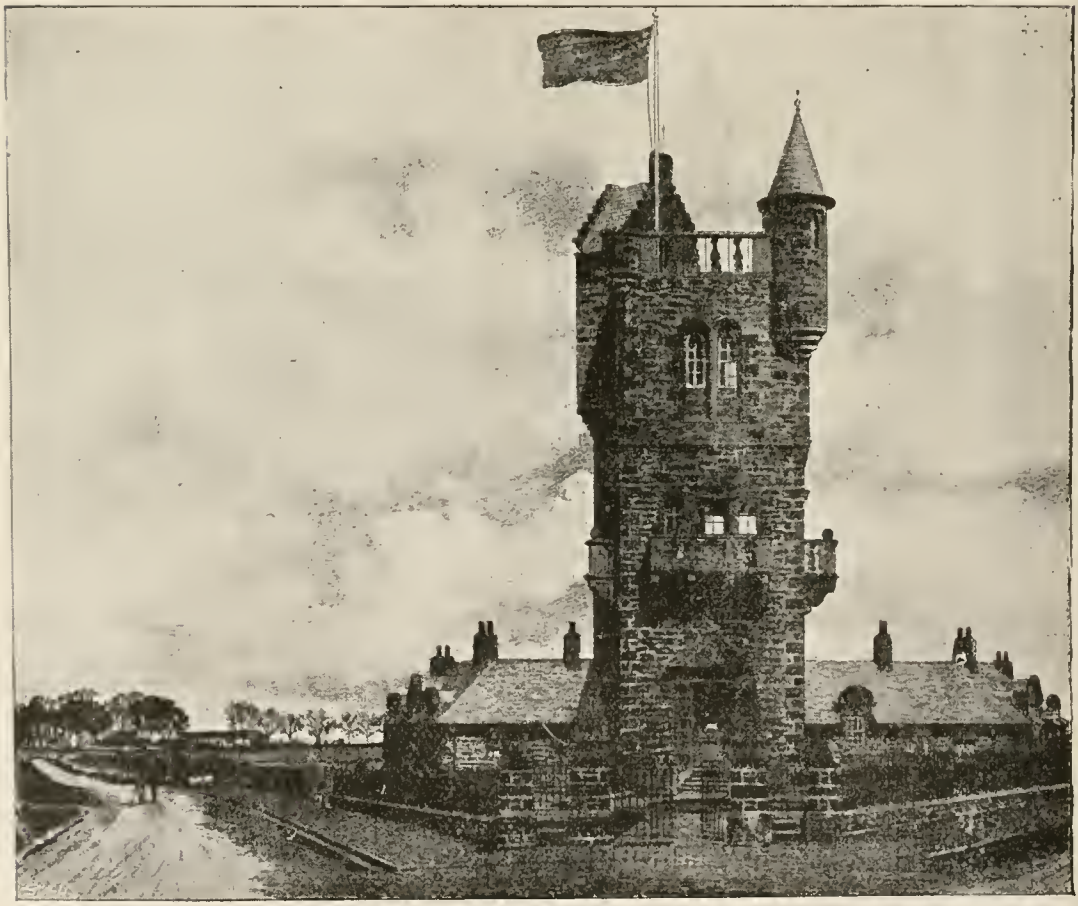
BENRIG,
KILMAURS, *1st January, 1899.*

# NATIONAL BURNS MEMORIAL AT MAUCHLINE.

## INAUGURAL CEREMONY.

THE National Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes at Mauchline were inaugurated on Saturday, 7th May, 1898. The credit for the inception of this scheme belongs to the Glasgow-Mauchline Society, the office-bearers of which have worked indefatigably during the past three years to promote the success of the undertaking. The appeals made for subscriptions met with a generous response. The intention was to raise £5000. This sum has not yet been reached, but the total sum collected up to date amounts to £4410, leaving a comparatively small balance still to be raised. The buildings have already been sketched and described in our pages. They are situated near Mossgiel, about half-a-mile from Mauchline, at the junction of the Kilmarnock and Tarbolton roads, and they are designed in the Scottish baronial style of architecture, the red stone having been taken from the famous Ballochmyle quarries. The Tower—a square-built, turreted structure—is 67 feet in height, and is divided into three floors, to be used as a Museum for Burns relics and other articles of interest. From the top a magnificent view of the surrounding country is obtained. The Cottages, which are simple and tasteful in design, consist of two single and three double apartments, and are situated immediately behind the Tower. They have been tenanted since November last, and one of the occupants is the widow of a great-grandson of Burns. The buildings are surrounded by a parapet wall and wrought-iron railing and gates. The architect was Mr. Fraser, Glasgow, and the builders were Messrs. M. Muir & Co., Kilmarnock. It may be remembered that the first sod was cut on 4th July, 1896,

and on the 23rd of the same month, when the centenary of the Poet's death was being celebrated, the foundation-stone was laid with Masonic honours by Mr. Hugh R. Wallace, of Busbie and Cloncaird. The inauguration proceedings began with a procession of Friendly Societies and representatives of Burns Clubs. It was marshalled on Beechgrove Park by Sergt.-Major Giles of the Ayrshire Yeomanry, and marched through Mauchline to the Memorial Homes, headed by the



*Mossgiel in the distance).* *Mauchline Homes.*

Newmilns Brass Band. In front of the Memorial a platform was erected. Several hundred persons were admitted to the enclosure by ticket, and about two thousand people witnessed the proceedings from the public roads on both sides. Mr. Marcus Bain, J.P., C.C., of Woodside, president of the Glasgow Mauchline Society, presided, and among those present were:—Mr. J. G. A. Baird, M.P.; Mr. Hugh R. Wallace, of

Busbie and Cloncaird; Mr. J. B. Thorneycroft, of Netherplace; Mr. J. Leiper Gemmill, writer, Glasgow; ex-Bailie Hamilton Marr, Govan; Mr. Thomas Killin, Glasgow; Mr. W. S. M'Millan, writer, Ayr; Mr. James F. Gemmill, Glasgow; Mr. Hugh Alexander, Glasgow; Provost Mackay, Capt. David Sneddon, and Rev. John Craig, B.D., Kilmarnock; Rev. Wilson Baird, Mauchline; Mr. John Paterson, Maryhill; Mr. Wm. Young, R.S.W.; Mr. W. H. Anderson, Belfast; Mr. A. B. Todd, Mr. Wm. Hill, and Mr. D. A. Adamson, Cumnock; Mr. Alex. Longmuir, Irvine; Mr. J. E. Campbell, Paisley; Mr Goldie, Newmilns; etc., etc. Mr. W. S. M'Millan intimated apologies for absence from Major-General Sir Claud Alexander, of Ballochmyle; Sir William Arrol, M.P.; the Marquis of Bute, Lord Eglinton, Lord Glasgow, Lord Stair, Sir John Gilmour, Sir Thomas Lipton, Sir John Muir, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir James Thompson, the Hon. T. Cochrane, M.P.; Mr. A. L. Orr-Ewing, M.P.; Mr. Faithfull Begg, M.P.; Bailie John Marr, Govan; Mr. G. A. Ramsay, Greenock; Dr. Smith, Kirkcaldy; Mr. Allan Weir, Wolverhampton; Mr. Matthew Arthur, Mr. James Coates, Mr. R. A. Oswald, Mr. Somervell, Mr. C. G. Shaw, Mr. J. B. Dunlop, Mr. Craibe Angus, Mr. D. M'Naught, Mr. A. M. Brown, Mr. J. Lawrie Coulson, Mr. Charles Howatson, Mr. R. W. Knox, Mr. W. H. Dunlop, and Mrs. Baird, of Cambusdoon. The large gathering sang two verses of the hundredth Psalm, led by a choir in the balcony of the Tower.

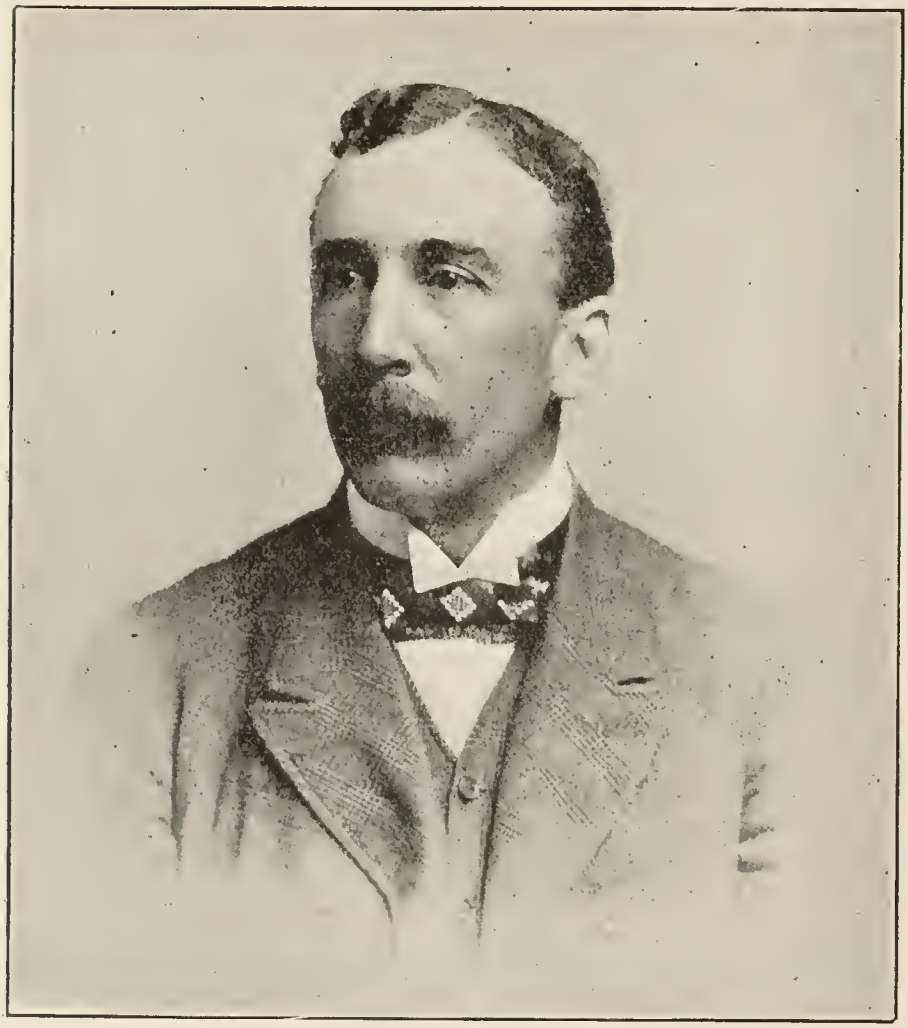
Mr. Thomas Killin, Glasgow, hon. treasurer of the scheme, in name of the subscribers, handed over the Memorial to the Glasgow Mauchline Society. In doing so he said—Twenty-three years ago Mr. Andrew Macrorie, of Kilwinning, at a re-union of the natives of Mauchline in Glasgow, said: "Not a street, road, inn, mansion, or cottage in Mauchline bears the name of Burns. In the whole parish there is nothing except one short inscription on a recent building—placed there, Sir, by your late uncle-in-law, Mr. John Gibson, of Dalmellington—to tell the stranger that here shone in its noonday splendour the brightest poetic genius Scotland ever knew." Fully three years ago the Glasgow Mauchline Society (acting on a suggestion that had been previously made by Bailie John Marr, Govan) set themselves the task of endeavouring to wipe out this reproach. The then officials—Mr. Wm. S. M'Millan, secretary; Mr. J. Leiper Gemmill, vice-president; and myself the president—were appointed a sub-executive to carry out arrangements in connection therewith. Imbued with that spirit of patriotism which Wallace created many centuries ago within sight of this place, and which Burns re-created here

over a century ago—I say imbued with that national fire which burns, or ought to burn, in the breast of every man, causing him to feel and to think his country, the spot where he was born, the place to which he belongs, the best, the very best, in all the earth, we have done our utmost to accomplish our allotted task, and to prove ourselves worthy of the confidence reposed in us. But all this sentiment, this spirit of patriotism, might have been as naught, as "sweetness wasted on the desert air," but for a generous and sympathetic public—the subscribers. The little town of Mauchline, or a Mauchline Society, I fear, could never have accomplished a work like this, but, with that hub of the universe—Glasgow—attached to it, making it a Glasgow Mauchline Society, we were enabled to work wonders. I am not here just now to thank the subscribers, as I hope to have an opportunity of doing so to-day in another place, but I will say that, though our scheme has been made known wherever the English language is spoken, and we had hoped to get great support furth of Scotland, we have been woefully disappointed. It would be unfair to say we have no donations from abroad, as we have some, and mostly from natives of the district in distant lands. Still, taking the world as a whole, we are forced to confess that, even in this, "east or west, hame's best." Besides the sub-committee, we have also a Building Committee—Ex-Bailie Hamilton Marr, Govan; ex-Bailie G. A. Ramsay, Greenock; and Mr. A. G. Alexander, Mauchline—who have done their work well. I am sure Mr. Marr and his associates will be glad their labours are at an end. And now, Sir, it seems to me there is a proper fitness in your being chairman on this occasion. As a County Councillor you have already shown your interest in improving the amenities of the Memorial, and as a Justice of the Peace I know you will guard it well. The stone used in building is from the celebrated Ballochmyle Quarries, of which you are the proprietor. You are the largest employer of labour in the district, at any rate in the parish, and last, but not least, you are almost the largest contributor to the scheme. Altogether, you are a worthy representative of the custodiers of the Memorial. I cannot close without quoting an addendum which Mr. Macrorie had to his reproach. He said—"Some day, I doubt not, this unparalleled neglect will be remedied, and when it is taken in hand it will be well done." If you, Sir, and the Glasgow Mauchline Society look upon these words now as almost prophetic, we shall be satisfied. Though our task is not yet completed—being still £950 short of the sum aimed at—we hope you will prize well the part that is completed, as we think it is the noblest memorial that has yet been erected to Scotia's Bard. It is the fruit of much labour, and its success, so far, undoubtedly the result of the application of two Scriptural texts—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," and "Be of a stout heart, and of a good courage." I had the distinguished honour, as president of the Society, in being the first to subscribe my name to the subscription list, and now, as treasurer, I have a greater honour, and beg, in name of the subscribers, the sub-Executive, and the Building Committee, to hand over the National Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes, Mauchline, to you, as president of, and for behoof of, the Glasgow Mauchline Society. (Loud applause.)

Mr. MARCUS BAIN then said—In name and on behalf of the Glasgow Mauchline Society, I have the very greatest pleasure in accepting the gift of the National Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes. The trust which has thus been confided to this Society will, I am sure, be ever regarded as of the most important and sacred nature. I feel confident that at all times there will be bestowed upon it that care and attention which it deserves as commemorative of our National Poet, and I am certain that the public of Mauchline and locality, and I trust a much wider public, will do nothing in any way to deface a Memorial so handsome and so worthy of him who now occupies such a warm place in our breasts. But it may be said by many that Robert Burns needs no such Memorial as this, in respect that one hundred years after his death it might be inquired—"Where is the Scotsman whose love and admiration for him are not ardent?" While we cannot conceive of a time which shall ever come when it will really be necessary to erect a monument to him in order to keep green his memory in the affections of the people, there is, I think, something peculiarly significant in this Memorial which has been erected close to and in front of Mossgiel, because here, looking upon the scenes which we now behold, he toiled and sang, and by his songs he has moulded and shaped Scottish character from his own day to ours. There is, I say, something peculiarly significant in this Memorial, which will be handed down to posterity as a record and testimony of that sweetest of Scottish singers—Coila's Bard. I suppose it is part of the national character the desire to possess in some substantial form a memorial or representation of the great and noble men and women of Scotland. Hence I like the name national, and am disposed to think that no greater incentive to patriotism could be found than in honouring the illustrious dead who have done so much in some form of noble work to conduce to the honour of the country. Scotland has never wanted sons eminent in literary or military genius, who by patient self-denial have done good to their fellowmen. I trust, then, that especially the young life of our country, looking upon this Memorial and remembering the genius of Robert Burns, may increase in strength and patriotism, may not only emulate but excel in such virtues those immortals who have gone before, and thus conduce to making our dear old Scotland greater and more beloved. Now, I am sure we are all sensible of the kindness of Mr. Baird, M.P., in coming here to-day to inaugurate this Memorial. Mr. Baird needs no introduction. No gentleman in this county is held in higher esteem. He bears the reputation of being a model landlord and all-round good fellow. As a politician his zeal and attention to his Parliamentary duties are well known. He is, as you are aware, one of the oldest members of the Glasgow Mauchline Society, and is therefore one of ourselves, and he has greatly honoured us in coming here this afternoon. Before desiring you, Mr. Baird, to perform the opening ceremony I have the pleasing duty of handing you, as a memento or souvenir of this interesting occasion, a key wherewith to open the door of the Memorial, and of asking your acceptance thereof.

Mr. J. G. A. BAIRD, M.P., who was received with loud cheers, said—Ladies and gentlemen, allow me, in the first place, to

thank you for the elegant and valuable, but, I may add, somewhat unneeded souvenir of a day which will always be memorable to me. The Rev. William Auld, better known to posterity as Daddy Auld, in the description of this parish which he wrote for the Old Statistical Account of Scotland, among other remarks on the people has the following :—"The inhabitants are of a middle size, from 5 ft. 4 in. to 6 ft. 2 in.,



*Mr. J. G. A. Baird, M.P.*

and make a decent appearance, particularly at public meetings." Were the reverend gentleman alive and with us to-day, I do not think that he would see any reason to alter the opinion which he expressed more than a century ago. I need hardly say that I felt highly honoured by being invited to open this Memorial to the king of Scottish poets. I am quite aware

that there are many among those whom I see before me who are better equipped for the task than I, and who may be disposed to be critical, wherefore I ask their kind indulgence, especially as speaking in the open air is not a recreation which I often indulge in, and I avoid it as much as possible. We are met here to-day, ladies and gentlemen, to complete an undertaking which was begun two years ago come July. Mr. Killin has already explained its origin, how it was felt to be a reproach that at Mauchline there was nothing to remind us that here Burns spent some of the most fruitful years of his poetic life. It might be argued that there was no need of anything to remind us. Are not the names of Mauchline and Mossgiel inseparably connected with the name of Burns? Could anything fashioned by the hand of man bind these names closer together? It might even be argued, as you, Sir, have reminded us, that Burns had no need of memorials at all, that all the statues of him and buildings dedicated to his memory are mere superfluities, and that his true memorials are the poems and the songs, written for Scotland, treasured in Scotland, and not in Scotland alone, but all the world over. There are names which need no obelisk or lofty column to perpetuate their memory. Wellington and Nelson, Shakespeare and Milton, Newton and Faraday, Pitt and Peel are a few which readily occur to the mind. We can lay down no rule. We cannot say this man can never be forgotten, there is no need for a monument, or that man must have one, less peradventure his name should perish. We cannot tell what changes may take place in human ideas. I believe that there are people who prefer works like "The Woman Who Did" to "The Bride of Lammermoor." It may be that a generation will arise in the future which prefers Ibsen to Burns. I do not think it probable; I think it as likely that the children of the future will set the chemist above the pastry cook; but posterity are queer folk, and not to be depended on. The name of Burns may be enrolled among those which time cannot wear out of the hearts of a grateful people. If this be so, why, then, this monument? I will tell you. At Alloway, a monument; at Dumfries, a mausoleum; at Ayr, Irvine, and Paisley, effigies in bronze; at Kilmarnock and elsewhere, monuments; at Mauchline, nothing; and had it not been for the Mauchline Society

in Glasgow, nothing to-day. Now, if Burns were to have a monument at all, a solitary memorial, a single witness testifying to this grip upon the hearts of the Scottish people, where should it be? Here at this spot or no other. Here where he lived, laboured, and wrote the poems which made him immortal among the sons of men. Here where, guiding the plough, his eye, his heart, his brain combined to give, through a mouse and a mountain daisy, a fame to the ungrateful soil of Mossgiel which will only perish with his own. Seek where you will, Mauchline is the true Mecca of the pilgrim to the land of Burns. Let us look round and consider. Twelve miles or thereby to the south-west lie Alloway Kirk and village, with the little cottage where, on 25th January, 1759, a blast of wind blew hansel in on Robin. Close by stands Ayr, chief town of Burnsland, with its "twa brigs." Nearer hand the farm of Lochlea and village of Tarbolton, where the Poet spent youthful days, and where his good old father died. Further away, again, to the north-west lies Irvine, where Burns dressed flax for a few months. To the north Kilmarnock, whence issued the book which first made him famous, a single copy of which is now worth its weight in gold. Not very far to the west lie the moorlands, well-known to me, where dwelt honest-hearted auld Lapraik, the king o' hearts. Away to the south sweet Afton flows among the green braes of New Cumnock; and Nith, by whose banks the Poet was wont to seek peace and inspiration after struggling with the riddlings of creation at Ellisland. And then Dumfries, where came to him the twilight of his life, followed by the darkness of death; followed again by the rise of his star in the firmament, where it shines and will shine so long as men delight in poetry and honour poets. Well, ladies and gentlemen, the proposition which started me on my excursion through Burnsland was that if we were dealing with a vacuum, if no memorials existed, Mauchline was the spot where one might most fitly be placed. I trust that I have said enough to justify my opinion. No doubt the assertion may be contested. No fewer than seven cities in Greece contended for the honour attaching to the birthplace of Homer. The case before us is different. The main facts as to life and death are authentic and "downa be disputed," but, from the cottage at Alloway to the mausoleum at Dumfries, the centre of the orbit may, I

think, be placed at Mauchline. Were it needed further to strengthen the claim, it was at Mossgiel yonder where the verses were fashioned which first made, and which still mainly justify, perhaps, the fame of the Poet. It was at Mossgiel, or during the Mossgiel time, when the "Twa Dogs," the opening poem of the Kilmarnock edition, was written; "The Holy Fair;" "Hallowe'en," in which are preserved for posterity the manners and customs of the Scottish peasants on that fateful night; "The Cottar's Saturday Night," which depicts the simple life of long ago; and, strange juxtaposition, "The Jolly Beggars," that rattling piece of what the Poet called rhyming ware; the verses to a Mouse and a Mountain Daisy, to which I have already alluded; and many others which I need not name, except perhaps "The Vision," or at least part of it, where Burns first saw himself

> Crowned with the noblest wreath of rhyme—
> The holly wreath of Ayrshire's peasant.

Where, then, could be found a more appropriate site for a national Memorial? For let it be remembered that, although the Associations may be local, the Memorial, for reasons which I have attempted to give, is national in so far as here is the focus of interest to all who admire the genius of Robert Burns and visit his country. And Ayrshire attracts visitors from all parts of the world. Wherever the Union Jack floats there you will find Scotsmen, and wherever you find Scotsmen you will discover the cementing influence of the name of Burns. Nor is the love of his poetry confined to Scotsmen. Other people may stumble over the old Scottish words, and it may be confessed that even to Scots a glossary is sometimes a necessary evil; but his genius is recognised by all who can understand him, and by none more than by the citizens of the great Republic across the Atlantic. The audience, indeed, grows larger. The English language is spreading almost with the rapidity of a prairie fire over the face of the globe wherever white men can live. It is the language of the future. English poetry, Scottish poetry, Irish, American, will have an ever-widening circle of votaries. Shakespeare will and must remain king among the poets. After him who shall be the princes? I do not know who the rest may be, but this I feel sure, that the poems and songs of Burns will and must remain one of the

most precious possessions of our race. Even now, next to the National Anthem, "Auld Lang Syne" is better known and more often sung than any other verses in the language. But I need dwell no longer on this subject. Apart from these considerations altogether, we Ayrshire men may be grateful to the Mauchline Society for having placed on this site a tower from which we can obtain a view of our native county which may be equalled but which cannot be surpassed. Standing here, where Burns probably often lingered on his way to a political discussion at Nanse Tinnock's, or on some other errand, we may consider the changes which have come over the face of the countryside within the last century and a half. The natural features of the country are the same, the changes wrought by time in such a period are trifling, but the changes wrought by the hand of man are many. The landscape must in some respects have changed to a degree which we can hardly realise. The sea was there, the hills and undulations of the ground; grass grew and water ran. But the woods and plantations which now please the eye and charm the prospect were not there, if we are to believe records which we possess. Trees in Burns's time there certainly were, but scanty, and for the most part marking the position of the mansion and the homestead, or clothing the sides of the river glens, where Nature placed them in past ages. Moreover, the cultivation of the soil was imperfect, and the surface of the land must have presented a very different appearance to what it does now. The fact is that the dawn of agriculture as we now know it was only just beginning. And the Mossgiel of to-day is, I cannot doubt, as unlike the Mossgiel of Burns's time as these cottages here differ in appearance and comfort from the auld clay biggin' at Alloway. And that suggests to me that in one respect this Memorial to Burns differs from all others with which I am acquainted. This is the first attempt, so far as I know, to connect the memory of the Poet with that burden which he had to bear all his life in a greater or less degree, and which called forth the sympathy with the poor expressed in many of his verses. Poverty was his companion through life. Ill fitted in temperament to endure it, he fretted at times almost to madness, and I doubt not that agitation of mind led him into company and distraction, from which a more stoical nature would have preserved him, though what he would have gained might have been our loss, for we

might have lost our poet. It was a happy thought of the Mauchline Society to include some provision for the aged poor in their plan for honouring the memory of Robert Burns, and I wish all success to Mr. Killin, the treasurer. (Applause.) Well, ladies and gentlemen, I have come to the end of my task. Here is the Monument, built of stone which has lain under the soil for ages, cut and raised from the quarry by the hand of man; let us hope that it may be as enduring in its new position as it was in the bed where it was first laid down. (Loud applause.)

Mr. BAIRD then opened the door of the Tower, and the platform party inspected the interior, and signed their names in the visitors' book.

The weather up till this time had been bright and favourable, but a heavy shower of rain came on rather suddenly; and after the choir, accompanied by the band, had given an effective rendering of "Scots wha Ha'e" and "John Anderson my Jo," the proceedings terminated.

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## THE DINNER.

### MR. BAIRD ON HENLEY.

A DINNER, in connection with the opening ceremony, was held in "Poosie Nansie's" (Jolly Beggars' Howf)—Mr. Marcus Bain, J.P., C.C., in the chair, Messrs. W. S. M'Millan and Hamilton Marr, croupiers.

Among those present were representatives from the following Burns clubs—Belfast, Leigh, near Manchester; Glasgow St. Rollox, Paisley, Irvine, Jolly Beggars, Cumnock, Winsome Willie, Cumnock; Maryhill, Glasgow Haggis, Glasgow Co-operative, Tarbolton, Kilmarnock, etc., etc. A letter was received and read from Sunderland Burns Club wishing success to the scheme. A telegram was received from Dr. John Smith, Kirkcaldy, intimating a second donation, and Mr. George Anderson, London, also intimated a second donation.

Rev. WILSON BAIRD said Burns's Selkirk grace.

The CHAIRMAN, in a few well-chosen words, then gave "The Queen and Members of the Royal Family," which was responded to with enthusiasm.

Mr. W. S. M'Millan proposed "The Army, Navy, and Reserve Forces."

Captain Sneddon replied.

Mr. H. R. Wallace, of Cloncaird, gave "The Houses of Parliament" in a few well-chosen remarks, saying he was glad to have the pleasure of coupling Mr. J. G. A. Baird's name with the toast. It was well known Mr. Baird had never made a political enemy, and he hoped he would be long able to serve his country politically either in the one House or the other, whichever one it might be.

Mr. Baird replied, and proposed the "Immortal Memory." In doing so he said—When, in addition to opening the Memorial this afternoon, I was invited to propose "The Immortal Memory" at the banquet, I confess that I felt some trepidation. I felt that I was not asked to place Ossa on Pelion, but first to place Pelion in position, and then pile Ossa on the top of him; but fortifying myself with the ancient saw that if I were to be hanged—you know the rest—I accepted the invitation, and am here to endeavour to perform the task. The difficulty of saying anything new on the subject is quite apparent. Everything that could be said has been said over and over again many times better than I can hope to say it. Those indeed who desire to know their Burns may obtain satisfactory information and guidance from Carlyle's essay, and the admirable speech delivered by Lord Rosebery in Glasgow two years ago. There has, however, been published an essay which has aroused much indignation among Scotsmen, so much so that one reverend gentleman has been so carried away by his feelings as to utter sentiments which I can hardly reconcile with the principles of Christian forgiveness which he no doubt inculcates from the pulpit, and this perhaps is the more remarkable when we consider how Burns treated his clerical predecessors. This at all events is evident, that he has forgiven Burns, if he cannot extend the same measure to his latest critic. Now, gentlemen, I wish to get rid of this subject at once, and henceforward hold my peace. 'Tis a disagreeable one to deal with at the best. Mr. Henley, for of course I refer to him, has thought fit at this time of the day to drag into daylight every episode in the life of Burns which can in his judgment make him what he describes, in language which seems to have been chosen in order to inflict

pain upon admirers of the Poet, whom, by the way, he sneers at in the most superior way. As regards these latter I need say nothing except to advise them to seek comfort, if they need any, in the essay and speech aforesaid. But why this *post mortem* examination? We knew as much about the life before as we wanted. We knew that Burns was no saint. He knew it himself. Little was concealed. He was no hypocrite. He wrote and did things which are to be regretted, and cannot, in my view, be excused, but it must be remembered that he lived and wrote many years ago, and though lapse of time does not make wrong right, yet it should make us slow to deliver judgment based on the facts but without the attendant circumstances and environments from which we are separated by more than a century. Well, gentlemen, I have read this essay more than once to try and read out of Henley what he wishes us to read into Burns, but I have failed. I have refreshed myself with Allan Cunningham, I have read Lockhart, Carlyle, and Lord Rosebery, and I am going to give you an extract from the end of Carlyle's essay which I think expresses better than anything else the true view to take. I will not quote the whole passage; it is too long, but here is the conclusion, which contains the gist. Carlyle was speaking of the injustice of the world in its judgments of such men. "Granted," he says, "the ship comes into the harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all wise and all powerful; but to know how blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the globe or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs." As to Mr. Henley's remarks upon the morals of the Scottish peasantry of the time, I ask what is the evidence upon which he bases his conclusions? Mankind sinned then as it sins now, but we do not base our estimate of the Scottish people of to-day upon the proceedings in the High Court of Justiciary. In concluding this matter, and let me say here that in my judgment the Centenary Edition, with the exception of the passages to which I have referred, is in other respects most excellent and valuable, and the essay shows an appreciation of Burns's genius and achievement which makes one regret all the more that it has been so disfigured. What I was going to say was this—What would Burns himself have said or written about this attack upon himself and his people? It is on record that, such

was the terror he inspired, he once stopped two wild young fellows from fighting at a penny wedding by threatening to "hing them up like potato bogles in sang to-morrow." He had a sharp pen as well as a rough side to his tongue. For my part I wish to hear no more of the follies and frailties of Burns, and I trust that this inquisition will be the last. And now let us pass from that to a more agreeable topic—the work and genius of the Poet. Let me say that I am not "daft" about Burns on the one hand, nor on the other do I profess to be a critic. Like most I have my likes and dislikes. Burns, like most artists, was unequal. Take a collection of the life works of any painter. You will find pictures which you would like to possess, and others which you would only hang because of the hand which limned them. One would like to have an edition of the poems and songs selected by the Poet himself. Which would he cut out and which retain? There is a field for conjecture. One thing is certain—neither he nor any editor, critical or otherwise, could cut out of the hearts and memories of the Scottish people the verses and lines which are there treasured. Take for instance—

> "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that."

The idea here conveyed might now be considered trite and commonplace, the truth being universally conceded, but the expression is so short, yet so complete, that it resembles the gold which we use to convey the value of many copper coins. Therein is manifest the true Scot, who, with the exception of politicians and other windbags, ever desires to convey his ideas in as short and compact a form as he can. And therefore these two lines have become one of those brevities which save us the trouble of thought and expression. Here is another—

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft agley";

and another—

> "O wad some power the giftie gi'e us
> To see oorselves as ithers see us."

But these are mere examples of a facility of form and language for which posterity shows its gratitude, as it does for any blessed invention, in the best possible way—by constant use.

I wonder how many who flavour their speech with lines and verses quoted from the poems and songs could give the context. And yet the pearl may owe much of its brilliancy to the diamonds which surround it. Take a gem out of its setting, it remains a gem still, but it lacks that which lent it light and colour. So, in order to fully appreciate the gems of Burns, or for that matter of any other poet, one must turn to the setting of the poems and the songs, the first worked by genius, the second by genius and industry, both inspired by love of his art. Hard to separate, yet we have been told that it was done, and that by two of our greatest poets—Tennyson and Wordsworth. Aubrey de Vere says of Tennyson, speaking with admiration of other poets—"Not less ardent was his enthusiasm for Burns." "Read the exquisite songs of Burns," he exclaimed; "in shape, each of them has the perfection of the pearl—in light, the radiance of the dewdrop. You forget for its sake those stupid things, his serious pieces." Aubrey de Vere goes on—"The same day I met Wordsworth, and named Burns to him. Wordsworth praised him even more vehemently than Tennyson had done, as the great genius who had brought poetry back to nature," but ended, "Of course, I refer to his serious efforts, such as the 'Cottar's Saturday Night.' Those foolish little amatory songs of his one has to forget." Fancy forgetting the songs of Burns; but if Tennyson and Wordsworth could take such opposite views, what is to become of the ordinary mortal? If I were asked, Which will you keep and which resign, poems or songs? I should find it hard to answer. Happily there is no need. We have them all to pick and choose, and as Burns was a man of many moods—serious, gay, sentimental, fierce, mournful by times—so we may select according to the need of the moment. He was poor, and his poverty sometimes aroused a bitterness, manifest in certain poems, but at other moments philosophy came to the rescue, and he comforted himself by reflections which doubtless have found an echo in the hearts of those who have felt his misfortunes sting. He was proud, and chafed at inequalities in station; but though poverty and pride sometimes gave a sharp point to his pen, the mind directing it thought out and wrought out in verse the balancing wisdom which is shown in the epistle to Davie, and "Is there for honest poverty." Then there are the Bacchanalian and amatory

elements which might be expected, and which are, a stumbling-block to some honest folks. Opinions may differ as to whether the Poet should have exercised a stricter censorship over what he published, but no one who condemns the sentiment can deny the merit of the verse. What is printed is printed, and Burns must stand or fall with his poetry as a whole, and not upon part of it. Burns was intensely patriotic—Scotland first in his affections; but his patriotism was by no means bounded by the Tweed. He was democratic, and that side of his character perhaps forms the bond between him and the great nation across the ocean. In truth, he was a strong mortal, a marvellous compound, a phenomenon of a man, a born poet if ever there was one. 'Tis idle to speculate on what he might have been had his birth been postponed for a century. Perhaps a prosperous farmer, with flocks and herds galore, taking prizes at the shows, and standing by the plate at the church door, with no time for poetry. One cannot conceive it. Living when he did, he was moulded by an environment acting on a nature in some respects weak. Of his times he has left us living pictures. Through his verse he brings us closer to our forefathers, closer to a Scotland differing much from ours, closer to a people who, with all their faults, had the true Scottish nature and character, which still show themselves in storms and stress as in peace, helping to win, helping to make, helping to keep, an Empire. Scotland was then poor, but reared men. A constant struggle with nature, industry ever face to face with adversity, a hard and stern theology, brought out a type of character which found its natural expression in the fathers of Burns and Carlyle. I say those men were typical of the class and time to which they belonged. I do not say that their characters were perfect or universal, but I believe that they were common. Imperfect, they nevertheless, in my humble opinion, form one of the best foundations on which to build and maintain a nation. Such was the character which Burns inherited, but nature added strong passions and a fiery genius, which made the poet but overthrew the man. Napoleon, a man of different nature—cold, passionless—was driven on by ambition, an ambition which in the end destroyed him. Had Napoleon been born without ambition, he might have remained a good artillery officer, possibly a successful general—nothing more. Had not Burns been endowed with strong passions, he

might have made an excellent ploughman, a prosperous farmer, or perhaps a factor like his brother. In Burns, fortunately perhaps for him, certainly for us, passion and genius were accompanied by a strong and vigorous vein of humour. Humour broad, pungent, not always refined, but laughter-moving. We have it in his poems. We might have found it in his conversation, had a Boswell been there to report. Robertson, the historian, says that his conversation surpassed his poetry and prose. That it was not always serious we may be certain. The man who wrote the "Jolly Beggars," as well as "Man was made to Mourn," could see the lights as well as the shades of human life. For one thing at least we may be grateful. He wrote for the most part in the language of the country. Now, Daddy Auld says, "The Scots dialect is the language spoken, but it is gradually improving and approaching nearly to the English." How shocking! Gradually improving and approaching nearly to the English. This was the language of Burns; possibly not appreciated by Mr. Auld; appreciated by us nevertheless, and understanded of the people. How far this improvement has gone, I know not. Many, no doubt, of the old Scots words have gone out of common use, but Burns has preserved them for posterity. Had he written entirely in English he might have had a larger audience, but his poetry would have lacked the vigour which gives it much of its charm. But he did more, infinitely more. Much of the old Scottish minstrelsy was dead or dying. Fragments of some old songs existed, others were unsuited to the modern ear. There were tunes without words. Burns took them in hand. It was a labour of love. With untiring industry, aided by his genius, he constructed a body of song which stands unsurpassed. Tennyson says—"Burns did for the old songs of Scotland almost what Shakespeare had done for the English drama that preceded him." Then there were his own. Such as "O' a' the Airts," and "Sweet Afton," and above all the one which is known all over the world, "Auld Lang Syne." Whenever I hear it now it minds me of the time, now twenty years ago, when I was a soldier at Aldershot. Troops were leaving for South Africa, and each regiment was played out of camp to that tune. It sounded melancholy then as it does under any similar circumstances. We hear it now perhaps more frequently on festive occasions, but wherever and whenever it

is sung, it bears witness to the fact that Burns realised his wish to do something for puir auld Scotland's sake, to make a song at least. The songs alone would have placed him on a pinnacle of fame. Well, gentlemen, I have said my say upon Robert Burns, man and poet. Whether it was worth saying is another matter. I must now make an end. The "Memory of Burns," which we are about to drink, is a very living memory, but nowhere can it live longer or remain greener than here in Mauchline so closely associated with his life and work. (Prolonged applause.)

Provost MACKAY gave "The Glasgow Mauchline Society." He said it was a remarkable thing that the hope of a former chairman of a Mauchline reunion in Glasgow had that day been realised in the Memorial the Glasgow Mauchline Society had been enabled to erect. He understood one of the features of the Society was to help young men, natives of Mauchline, coming to Glasgow, and this new movement to help a few old folks was a similar one, only varying in character. Though they were still £950 short of the sum they aimed at, he hoped it would be completed ere long.

Mr. J. LEIPER GEMMILL, in acknowledging the toast, said—On behalf of the Glasgow Mauchline Society, I have to thank you all very warmly. Provost Mackay has asked as to the origin of the Society, and I may say it is just eleven years since the desire to form such a society became a settled purpose in my mind. I made inquiries as to similar societies, and after getting the co-operation of other friends hailing from Mauchline, a conversazione was held, and the society formally inaugurated. Sanguine as I was in taking the initial steps towards founding the society, I did not dare to hope that it would ever attain to its present success; but great as that success has been, I dare not prophesy that in the coming years—if not in our days, then in our childrens'—the cottages forming the homes will be doubled—aye, trebled—and that the Memorial will become one of the greatest benevolent institutions in the county of Ayr. And now let me hope that, while we have been able to build the Tower, our friends from far and near will assist us in filling it with fitting relics of Burns and the district. Now that a suitable building has been erected, I trust that our friends, especially from Kilmarnock, will, if at all possible, see their way to give us back some of the Burns relics that originally came from the Mauchline district, and which in a sense belong to us. As to the Cottage Homes—and these have always seemed to me to be by far the most important branch of the scheme—I most earnestly trust that at no distant date the endowment fund will be completed, and that we will be enabled to give the inmates something more than the mere shelter of a roof tree. Few incidents connected with the movement have given me greater pleasure than last November, when the tenants got entry, going round the houses in my official capacity, and along with my wife welcoming the cottagers, and wishing them God-speed. It was delightful to see

their pleased, grateful faces, and the "wee bit ingles blinkin' bonilie," and it is something for our society to have helped—

> "On the wan cheek of sorrow to waken a smile,
> And illumine the eye that was dim with a tear."

And now, Mr. Chairman, if you will permit me for a minute or two a digression from the programme, you will enable me to fulfil one of the most pleasing duties that it has ever been my lot to discharge. In connection with the erection of this Memorial there is one gentleman who has ungrudgingly given all his spare time, energy, and enthusiasm towards the movement, and much of its success is owing to his labours. I refer to our honorary treasurer and friend, Mr. Thomas Killin. Some of us who know how much he has done, felt that the opening of the Tower should not be allowed to pass without some recognition of his work, and though it was only on Monday last we took active steps, the response has been so generous and spontaneous that we are now able to present him with this very beautiful drawing-room clock and ornaments, together with a handsome gold watch for Mrs. Killin. It is fitting that Mrs. Killin should be thus remembered, as we owe much to her and the family, and in handing it to her, Sir, you may tell her from us that while it is the best money can buy it is not good enough for her; and may I, on behalf of the subscribers, express the hope that you and she may be long spared to each other, and, in the long after-time, as your children look on these ornaments, they will, I am sure, feel proud of your work and proud of their father. The inscription bears:—"Presented to Mr. Thomas Killin, in recognition of his many services in connection with the National Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes, Mauchline. 7th May, 1898."

Mr. Thomas Killin, in thanking the directors and friends for their kind gifts, said he never felt anything so much in his life as the gift of these presents. He had often heard of such a thing, but never experienced it before. Till the present moment he had not known anything of this presentation, and he hoped they would pardon him for not being able to say more at present than repeat what he had heard others say, that he thanked them all, in name of Mrs. Killin and himself, from the very bottom of his heart.

Mr. Killin then gave "The Subscribers." He said—Although I asked specially to be put down for this toast, I must confess when I began yesterday to think of how I would propose it I was in an entire quandary. It seemed to me had it been the non-subscribers I had to propose I might have had something to say about them. I could have told how one gentleman wrote me, in reply to an appeal—"Dear Mr. Killin, I had your note this morning about a memorial to a Mr. Burns, who it would seem has been about Mauchline for some time. As he must have left before I was there I did not know the gentleman at all." I could also have told you of an M.P. who, while sympathising strongly with the scheme, said he was in the same position as Burns, poor fellow—

> "Doomed to the hardest task of man alive,
> To make three guineas do the work of five."

I am glad to state, however, that that gentleman has now sent a donation. Another M.P. also drifted into rhyme, and when writing me—"leeve, auld horse, an' ye'll get corn"—said, "when fortune's favours fa' anew" we would hear from him. Well, I regret he has not been fortunate yet. But my toast is "Subscribers." Well, Mr. Chairman, on looking at this subscription list, I feel in the same position as the saintly man was in his dream. On his humble couch one night, while sleeping the sleep of the just, he dreamt he had crossed "that bourne from whence no traveller returns" and was in Paradise, and what surprised him greatly was to see so many individuals whom he knew, but never expected to see there, while a great many of his friends whom he thought on the straight road to that place were conspicuous by their absence. But my position is not a dream, but a reality. It would be invidious to name, but many of you here will miss the names of celebrated clubs in London, Edinburgh, and elsewhere, as well as of many celebrated Burns men. I don't wish to be too critical here, however, as every one knows his own business best, and perhaps the many charitable and other schemes which have been before the public for the last three years may be the cause of this. But when we come to the subscribers, how our heart warms. From the day our hon. president, Sir Claud Alexander, Bart., gave us the first grand lift, even till now, nearly every subscriber has expressed his sympathy for the scheme. Just now I cannot refrain from mentioning an interview I had with the late Mr. Thomas Anderson, who left £1000 to our scheme, shortly before his death. "An' ye come frae Mauchline," he said. On replying in the affirmative, he said—"Man, I ha'e slept in the howf, and I am gaun to le'e a' my property to the Mauchline Burns Memorial!" I may here say that I am delighted to have to couple the name of Mr. Hugh Alexander with this toast, as whatever merit there may be in the charitable part of the scheme, it was he who suggested it. "Mak' it hames for the auld folk," said he, "an' I'll gie ye £50 mysel'." I may also say that during my thousands of calls on people in Glasgow, Paisley, Port-Glasgow, Greenock, etc., during my holidays, and at other times, I have met (except on only some two or three occasions) with the utmost courtesy—one well-known gentleman in Paisley actually thanking me for taking the trouble to call on him and give him the opportunity of subscribing to the scheme; and let me just now add this note that from the medical faculty (although not perhaps subscribing as large sums as some of the other professions) I cannot speak too highly of the praise they had for our scheme. It was but natural, seeing we are a Glasgow Mauchline Society, that the bulk, or a great deal of the money should come from Glasgow. Directly or indirectly, Glasgow has contributed £1,200; Paisley, £150; London, £50; 55 Burns clubs have contributed £320; Ayrshire, £700. We had donations from the Scottish nobility, from the Duke of Hamilton downwards, to the tune of £90. Knights and Baronets, £330. All the great families engaged in the thread, iron, chemical, and other industries, also stockbrokers and ironbrokers, are well represented. Although we have £80 from abroad, I regret to say that only one American has contributed £1 to the scheme. 900 subscribers in all, but with clubs, etc., the fund comes up to several thousands. Although led to

believe that America might do great things, and a great many pounds have been spent in postages and stationery there, still the result is as I have mentioned. Other Memorials are being proposed for certain celebrated individuals who have lived in Scotland, and it may perhaps be useful to them, and to others probably, who may think of raising some other memorial to Burns elsewhere, to know a little of the wiles that have been used by us to extract money from people towards our scheme. Not to speak of over 5000 calls that one person has made during a period of fully three years, he has written some 5,200 letters, sent out over 10,000 circular letters, and 40,000 circulars, the postage alone being over £40. When you add to this the labours of some others, it will give you a sort of idea of how subscribers have been got for the scheme. And now, gentlemen, I think I have said enough. To some of you my remarks may seem egotistical. If so I apologise. There is just one remark I would like to make before sitting down, and that is, as the treasurer in raising funds for this scheme, by none have I been better assisted than by Messrs. J. Leiper Gemmell and W. S. M'Millan. Others have done much, but these deserve to be named especially, and I would also like to take this public opportunity of thanking, in name of the executive, those many friends, who, besides subscribing themselves (and some who were unable to subscribe) have sent in names of parties, and information which has led to further donations being obtained. To the names of subscribers comes to be added the donors of the site of the Memorial, Major-General Sir Claud Alexander, Bart., of Ballochmyle, Mr. W. H. Campbell, of Netherplace, and the Ayrshire County Council. A host of others have also given donations in kind, etc., and a few have promised annual subscriptions whom it would take too long to name, but to all I have to tender the thanks of the Executive. The sentiment I have to propose then, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, is "The Subscribers and Donors," coupled with the name of Mr. Hugh Alexander, Eastfield, Rutherglen.

Mr. HUGH ALEXANDER said—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—While I desire to thank Mr. Killin for the kind and all too flattering way in which he has proposed this toast, I am somewhat at a loss to know why it should have been put upon the list at all. I take it that all here are subscribers to the fund, and that being so we seem to be in the frame of mind the old Ayrshire farmer was in who wished the Lord to send him "a guid conceit o' himsel'," and have been drinking to our noble selves, or it may be that this is the latest trick on the part of our able treasurer to discover another victim. I was very pleased to hear Mr. Baird, and also my friend, Provost Mackay, in their able speeches commend the form our Memorial has taken. None of us can avoid being struck with the fact that Burns was above everything a pessimist. Although he had his fitful moments of gaiety, he never ceased to be afraid of "age and want, that ill-matched pair." I do not think this pessimism is altogether to be regretted. It was this feeling, as he looked upon the struggles of the labouring poor, that prompted him to exclaim indignantly—"It's hardly in a body's power to keep at times frae being sour to see how things are shared," and I believe that these poetic outbursts of discontent have had an influence in the spread of true democracy that can never be adequately

appreciated. Personally, I am not particularly anxious that monuments to Burns should be multiplied. He needs no "storied urn nor animated bust" to keep his memory green amongst us; but I think it eminently fitting, if a Memorial was to be erected at Mauchline, it should take the form it has taken, and that we should honour his memory by practising the spirit of brotherhood which he taught. It may be thought that in a beautiful country village like Mauchline, where everything looks peaceful and prosperous, there was little need for cottages and pensions; but, while I am young enough, Mr. Chairman, to hope to see many helped in these cottages, I was old enough even in my youth to see the closing years of many lives at Mauchline—lives that, after their half-century of constant toil, ought to have been ministered to with kindness and with tender care, rendered almost unbearable by the constant dread of what Burns describes as "poortith." It was for these reasons, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, that I became a subscriber, and I believe that it was feelings exactly similar that prompted the great body of subscribers, in whose name I again thank you for the toast you have so heartily responded to. And now I have another duty to perform. I have to ask you to accord to Mr. Baird your warmest thanks for coming here to-day to open the monument. It has never been a far cry from Muirkirk to Mauchline, and your committee have been exceedingly happy in their choice. The bonds of sympathy between the two parishes were forged by Burns and "honest hearted, auld Lapraik" in the year 1785, and their rivets are being rung again to-day. The critics tell us that Lapraik was no poet, that his poor verses scarce reached mediocrity. Perhaps the critics will tell us that Mr. Baird's speech to-day, like Lapraik's poetry, has no real merit. They probably would prefer that he should approach his subject knife in hand as a doctor would the dissecting table; but, gentlemen, what value would either speech or poem have that reached the head of the keenly critical but failed to find any response in the hearts of the people. We have listened to Mr. Baird's speeches to-day, and while they have been masterly as literary productions, and proofs of a thorough knowledge of his subject, they have been above all full of human sympathy and tenderness for the memory of the Bard. He has seen in Burns what we see, a man with all a man's frailties, a great, good man withal. If our distinguished guest had been capable of treating Burns in a callously keen and critical manner he would not have been what we esteem him, and you should have had to find some one else to thank him. But instead, we find him the very ideal Burns had in his mind when he said "the friendly, social, honest man, whate'er he be, 'tis he fulfils great nature's plan, and none but he." I ask you now to drink to the health, not merely of the popular member for the Second City, but to this "odd, kind chiel frae 'bout Muirkirk."

Mr. Wm. Smith gave "The Chairman" in his usual happy manner, and Mr. Bain briefly replied. Mr. J. W. Fraser gave "The Croupiers."

Songs were sung during the evening by Mr. J. Richardson, Glasgow, and Mr. Hugh Alexander, and an enjoyable afternoon was brought to a close by the company singing "Auld Lang Syne."

A grand Burns Concert was given in the Temperance Hall in the evening—Mr. William Smith, box manufacturer, Mauchline, in the chair.

## AN EPISODE OF THE INAUGURATION.

In connection with the arrangements at the Inauguration Ceremony, the following appeared in the *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald* of 13th May, 1898:—Probably the first instance of a press boycott on an extensive scale occurred at Mauchline in connection with the opening of the Burns Memorial Cottage Homes. The proceedings out of doors were followed by a banquet in Poosie Nansie's, to which the press received a fiddler's bidding, and, on arriving, found worse than no provision made. Something like a dozen members of the fourth estate put in an appearance, and looked at the window which they were expected to clamber through and seat themselves in a room adjoining that in which the banqueters were seated. The pressmen would not have it. They went and dined elsewhere, and the orators at the banquet did not speak to our readers, nor to the readers of any other paper on the face of the globe.

———

A fortnight afterwards, a humorous rhymer tuned his lyre in the columns of the *Ayr Observer* in the following entertaining style:—

### THE MAUCHLINE MUDDLE.

Ye Mauchline folks, attention pay!
All eyes are looking now your way,
Since opening the other day
The brand new Tower—
A function which, the papers say,
Made some folks sour.

Your Glasgow "buddies" (bless their hearts!)
Should shine in graces and in parts;
Masters are they of all the arts,
Save that to please;
The "Fourth Estate" keen felt their darts,
And raised a breeze.

And Burns Clubs, too, with one consent,
Their measley treatment did resent—
Although, perhaps, they never meant
To be unkind;
But, ah! the "buddies"—well, it's kent
They're nearly blind.

'Twas "manhood" Burns extolled so well—
'Tis "manhood" poets' themes still swell—
'Twas "brotherhood" he loved to tell
The world would win;
But near Mossgiel he who would dwell
Must low crawl in.

Oh, K——n ! K——n ! mend your ways,
If you'd have happy nights and days !
You'll have the Burns folks in a blaze—
You are so "class !"
You have not caught the true Burns craze !—
But let that pass.

Apologies may come too late ;
The "manhood" of the "Fourth Estate"
Is, after all, not quite ingrate
For favours small ;
But why should it at any date
Be pushed to wall ?

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This provoked an "irregular ode" which appeared in the *Cumnock Express* of 27th May, 1898, and from which we cull the following :—

. . . . . .

But a' the seats were trysted fair,
Nae room there was for ony mair ;
Reporter chaps be't to be there,
Sae anxious is the world for lear,
An' latest news ;
Sae swift a hay-laft they prepare,
Nor made excuse.

The committee forbye agreed
To mak' provision for their "feed";
And gie them a' that they might need
O' meat an' drink, frae which when freed,
In a wee nook,
They then could gang and hear the screed,
An' fill their book.

But when they saw that their plum-duff
Was laid out in a garret rough,
They vowed they never saw sic stuff,
And in high dudgeon took the huff—
Nor gaed intul't ;
To deem the press no' worth a snuff,
Oh, sic insult !

Says "Postie," I aye thank my God
For favours granted when abroad ;
But here it's plain we're in the road,
A wink is just as guid's a nod ;
Upon my soul !
They merit thirty days in quod,
The darkest hole.

The Killie man, wi' solemn air,
Says, "This is no' our usual fare;
An' for sic treatment I will swear,
If ocht be in our paper rare,
About the dinner,
I'll leave my job, tho' I rue't sair,
As I'm a sinner."

The Saltcoats man, he vowed and swore,
He ne'er met sic a shabby core,
But deil a word o' a the splore,
Frae this time forth for evermore,
Wad e'er be printit;
Quo' he, "They'll sune fin' out our power,
When they hae tint it."

The "Mail," the "Herald," "Record," "Scot,"
A' banned an' cursed sae pipin' hot,
That it was clear they a' had got
Their walking orders to boycott
The opening dinner;
And puir K——n, sad was his lot,
As chiefest sinner.

Now ye wha wad reporters hae
At opening functions, nicht or day,
Be sure an' gi'e them their ain way,
For if you don't, remember, pray,
What will befa' ye—
They'll lash ye, scourge ye, flay ye—nay,
Baith hang an' draw ye.

J. K.