The Chronicles of the Caledonian Society of London

1956-1961

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DR. D. MACRAE STEWART, M.A.

President, 1956–1957

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CHAPTER I.

1956–1957: Dr D. Macrae Stewart, M.A., *President*

A Highlander from Wester Ross as President; "Neil Munro," by Mr Duncan McIntyre; Past-President William Dalgarno on "The Romance of Insurance"; "The Immortal Memory," by Mr Aitken Watson; Professor Robert Cruickshank on "Wit and Humour in the North-East"; Our Pipe-Major in France; "Reminiscences of a Crown Counsel," by Sir Thomas Taylor; The President on the Society; Admiral Sir William Davis on the Navy's debt to Scotland; "The President," by Past-President William Dalgarno.

UNTIL Dr Donald Macrae Stewart, M.A., was elected President, only two Gaelic speaking Highlanders had occupied the chair since 1908–1909. In that year a member of the medical profession, a native of Wester Ross, a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, and a Gael, was the principal Office-bearer. When Dr Macrae Stewart became President history repeated itself.

Dr Macrae Stewart was born on 22nd April, 1896, in the village of Lochcarron on the West Coast of Ross-shire. He began his education at the village school, then had four years at Dingwall Academy, and finally seven years at Aberdeen University where he graduated Master of Arts in 1917 and Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, with honours, in 1922.

Having decided to devote his life to General Practice he came to London in 1923 and gradually built up a very large practice in the boroughs of Barking, Dagenham and Ilford. He is now the senior of a partnership of five, all Scots, is specially interested in maternity and in the treatment of children, and is a member of the South-East Essex Division of the British Medical Association.

In December 1924 he married Miss Jenny Dawson, a native

of Buckie, and a graduate in Arts of Aberdeen Univeristy. His daughter, who graduated in medicine at Aberdeen at the age of 21, later married an English surgeon, now a consultant, and his son, educated at Fettes College, Edinburgh and at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, studied medicine at Cambridge and at the London Hospital. He now holds the degree of B.A., M.B. and B.Chir. (Cantab.).

During the last war, Dr Macrae Stewart was Medical Officer in charge of Barking Borough Council First-Aid Post from 1939–41, and Medical Officer, with the rank of Major, for the 102nd City of London Home Guard Rockets A.A. Battery from 1942 until the cessation of hostilities.

Dr Macrae Stewart has always taken a keen interest in London-Scottish activities. He is a Life Member and Vice-President of the London, Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association ; a Life Member and Past-President of the Ilford Scottish Association ; a Life Member of the Scottish Clans Association ; a member of the Burns Club of London and a Life Managing Governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation and a Life Director of the Royal Caledonian Schools.

With such an energetic and enthusiastic Scot the Society was assured of an interesting and successful session.

The new President, Dr Macrae Stewart, had a warm welcome at the first meetings of session 1956–57, held on Thursday, 15th November, 1956, at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington.

At the business meetings the President welcomed Past-President the Right Rev. Dr R. F. V. Scott, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ; the members responding heartily to the call.

At the Little Dinner, Dr Macrae Stewart, after submitting the loyal toasts, thanked the members for electing him their President and said he was privileged to mention an event of unique importance in the history of the Society. That night they were honoured to have with them the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Past-President the Right Rev. Dr R. F. V. Scott (loud applause)—who was there as a member of their Society. Addressing Dr Scott, the President said : " We are glad and honoured, Sir, that, notwithstanding the multifarious duties of your high office, you

have been able to spare the time to be with us tonight. In the great task which you are discharging so brilliantly, your fellow-members and their guests here tonight wish you God's speed and continued good health and success." The President's good wishes to Dr Scott were received with loud applause.

Neil Munro: An Appreciation.

The President introduced the author of the evening's Sentiment, Mr Duncan McIntyre, who had prepared an appreciation of the life and work of Neil Munro. Mr McIntyre said:

Neil Munro was born in Inveraray on the 3rd June, 1864. Though most of his life was spent in Glasgow, and though his travels took him to the Continent and to America, his roots remained firmly planted in his native soil.

On leaving school he obtained employment in a law office in Inveraray, but even thus early the passion for writing had gripped him, and he sent many contributions to the local papers. Indeed, his determination to become a journalist was so strong that he taught himself shorthand, which he practised with great speed and skill even as a youth. At the age of 17 he moved to Glasgow, where he became cashier to a firm of ironmongers. Four years later, however, he found more congenial employment with a Greenock paper, and very soon became a full time reporter with the *Glasgow News* (in those days a morning paper). From then on, his progress in his chosen profession was rapid and one might almost say, inevitable, and after a short spell with the *Falkirk Herald* he returned to the *Evening News and Star*. In 1888 the old morning paper died, and the style and character of the *Evening News* was recast, with Neil Munro as Chief Reporter, assistant editor, art critic, reviewer and special writer.

Busy as he was with so much newspaper work, Munro still found time to write poetry and short stories for such magazines as the *Speaker* and *Blackwoods*; some of these being collected in 1896 in that classic of Scottish short stories, *The Lost Pibroch*. Thereafter followed a succession of brilliant novels and stories that definitely stamped their author as being among the great.

What a splendid, romantic list it makes:

John Splendid	in 1898
Gilian the Dreamer	,, 1899
Doon Castle and	
Shoes of Fortune	,, 1901
Children of Tempest	,, 1903
The Daft Days and	
The Clyde	,, 1907
Fancy Farm	,, 1910
Ayrshire Idylls	,, 1913
The New Road	,, 1914, and
Jaunty Jock	,, 1918

a list that surely contains some of the most distinguished writing in modern Scottish literature.

After the instant success of his first full-length novel, Munro gave up the daily routine of newspaper work to devote himself completely to more serious literature, but the call of the rolling presses was strong in his blood, and very

soon he was again writing brilliant, amusing articles for the *News*, under the name of Hugh Foulis, such heart-warming tales as " Para Handy," " Erchie " and "Jimmy Swan."

By that time, Neil Munro was widely recognised as a writer of genius, being generally regarded as the greatest interpreter of the heart and soul of his own Highland people, and soon his eminence in his own field brought him official recognition. In 1908 he was honoured by Glasgow University with the honorary degree of LL.D., and the following year there came to him an honour which must have been very close to his heart, when his native town of Inveraray awarded him the freedom of that burgh.

After the Great War, a war that cost him his eldest son, and a war he had predicted in an article since quoted as one of the most remarkable prophecies ever penned, Neil Munro was appointed editor of the *Evening News*, a position he held with distinction till 1924, when his health began to fail, and he was forced to seek sunshine and rest in the South of France. He completed only one more literary task—a history of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Almost on the eve of his final breakdown, he was able to visit Edinburgh to receive the recognition of his capital city with his second honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He died in Helensburgh in December, 1930.

That, then, is a brief survey of the life of Neil Munro, that lovable man of gay and gallant spirit, that debonair figure, whose great charm drew all men to be his instant friends.

How are we to assess his work in the fields of Scottish literature and British journalism ? What place does he hold, what rung of the ladder did he reach ? Well, at his passing, it was said, and I think truly, that his death left the throne of purely Scottish literature vacant. And can we honestly say that that vacancy has ever been adequately filled ? I think it is quite true to say that his serious writing puts him in the great line of Scott, Galt and Stevenson ; and his romances are quite worthy of a place beside those of R.L.S., who so dazzled the literary world with his magic spell.

The astonishing thing about Neil Munro's enduring literary achievement is that it was largely a relaxation, and an escape from his strenuous practical career as a journalist—a career culminating in the editorship of a great evening paper, one would have thought sufficient to absorb the energies even of a man by no means ordinary. But Neil Munro never regarded his journalism as a mere stepping stone to higher planes of writing. In his hands journalism became literature, and indeed, it has been said of him that " in respect of imagination and sheer writing ability he was the greatest journalist of his time."

Perhaps the ultimate secret of Munro's inspiration is to be found in his poetry, in those lovely simple poems that so eloquently express the deep undying love of the Gael for his own native countryside. Never so well-known for his poetry as for his fictional writing, Munro was, however, a considerable poet in his own right. As a poet he stood by the old ways and unashamedly claimed that " sentiment was the first and last excuse for poetry." If I may say so, how right he was, even if today that point of view would be highly unpopular in academic circles. As he said himself, his poetry loiters in the past, but he gives the old themes an individuality of colour and cadence, that emphasises his zest and passion.

In the preface to *The Poetry of Neil Munro*, John Buchan makes the point that the prose of Munro seems more strictly poetic than his verse, illustrating his point with this lovely passage from *John Splendid* :

> I know corries in Argyle that whisper silken to the winds with juicy grasses, corries where the deer love to prance deep in the cool dew and the beasts of far-off woods come in bands at their season and together rejoice. I have seen the hunter in them and the shepherd too, coarse men in life and occupation, come sudden among the blowing

rush and whispering reed, unheeding the moorhen and the cailzie-cock rising, or the stag often at pause, while they stood passionate adventurers in a rapture of the mind, held as it were by the spirit of such places as they lay in a sloeberry bloom of haze, the spirit of old good songs, the baffling surmise of the piper and the bard. To those corries of my native place will be coming in the yellow moon of brock and foumart—the beasts that dote on the autumn eves—the People of Quiteness ; have I not seen their lanthorns and heard their voices in the night ?—so that they must be blessed corries, so endowed since the days when the gods dwelt in them without tartan or spear, in the years of peace that had no beginning.

Yes, that is indeed poetry in prose, but I'd like you now to listen to these verses—which he called " To Exiles "—listen to them bearing in mind Neil's justification of sentiment. Though he was obviously thinking of exiles in the far off distant places, I feel that this poem has a special significance for us, even if we are removed only by a few hundred miles from home.

Are you not weary in your distant places,
Far, far from Scotland of the mist and storm,
In dowsy airs, the sun smite on your faces,
The days so long and warm ?
When all around you lie the strange fields sleeping,
The dreary woods where no fond memories roam,
Do not your sad hearts overseas come leaping
To the highlands and the lowlands of your home ?

Wild cries the winter, loud through all our valleys ;
The midnights roar, the grey noons echo back ;
Round steep storm-smitten coast the smitten galleys
Beat for kind harbours from horizons black ;
We tread the miry roads, the rain-drenched heather,
We are the men, we battle, we endure !
God's pity for you people in your weather
Of swooning winds, calm seas and skies demure !

Wild cries the winter, and we walk song-haunted
Over the moors and by the thundering falls,
Or where the dirge of a brave past is chaunted
In dolorous dusks by immemorial walls
Though rains may thrash on us, the great mists blind us,
And lightning rend the pine tree on the hill,
Yet are we strong, yet shall the morning find us
Children of tempest all unshaken still.

We wander where the little grey towns cluster
Deep in the hills, or selvedging the sea,
By farm-lands lone, by woods where wildfowl muster
To shelter from the days inclemency,
And night will come and then far through the darkling
A light will shine out in the sounding glen.
And it will mind us of some fond eyes sparkling
And we'll be happy then.

Let torrents pour then, let the great winds rally,
Snow-silence fall or lightning blast the pine ;
That light of home shines warmly in the valley,
And, exiled son of Scotland, it is thine.

Far have you wandered overseas of longing
And now you drowse and now you well may weep
When all the recollections come a-thronging
Of this rude country where your fathers sleep.

They sleep, but still the heart is warmly glowing,
While the wild winter blusters round their land ;
That light of home, the wind so bitter blowing—
Do they not haunt your dreams—oh come back and share them !
Here's the old cottage, here the open door ;
Fond are our hearts although we do not bare them—
They're yours, and you are ours for evermore.

That, to me, is poetry of a very high standard, poetry, if you like of the heart rather than the head—but to my mind all the better for that !

To this man, who perhaps more than anyone else succeeded in transmuting the real spirit of Gaelic into beautiful and expressive English speech, we all of us owe a great debt of gratitude for so magnificently enriching Scottish literature in his serious writing. But Neil Munro was more than a great writer, he was a great humourist, a humourist of kindly but penetrating observation—a humourist who laughs with people but never at them, whose characters and situations we instantly recognise as being within our own experience. As a humourist he has provided me with material that has brought me—as a performer—more success than anything else of the kind, ancient or modern, and I would like, with your permission, to acknowledge my own personal debt to him, by reading now one of his Para Handy Tales, which, though written in the early days of the century, seem to be ageless in the appeal of their humour and the skill of their drawing.

Much to the delight of his listeners, Mr McIntyre then recited the story of " Wee Teeny " which vividly describes her voyage in the *Vital Spark*.

And now, concluded Mr McIntyre, how can I round off my inadequate picture of the Prince of Scottish letters ? How better than by quoting from the *Evening News* on the night of his death, when the leader writer said this : ". . . a poet always, a poet to the last line of his prose, a poet following the gleam to the end, and enshrined forever in the hearts of his countrymen, a supreme master of his great craft, expressing a noble personality in noble words—that was, that is, Neil Munro ! " (Loud applause.)

The President said they had already indicated by the warmth of their applause their intense appreciation of the Sentiment on Neil Munro. " It is a Sentiment of a very high literary order, and one which our honorary historian will be proud to include in our Chronicles. With great skill and a compelling enthusiasm he has proved to us without a shadow of doubt, that Neil Munro was a writer of genius, and a great poet : and I am sure that the majority of us will go home tonight resolved to re-read his books. We are grateful to you Mr McIntyre for a most interesting and instructive address."

Mr McIntyre was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for the literary treat which he had given us.

Mr J. C. M. Campbell proposed " Our Guests " and began by saying that in that part of our beloved land which lies to the north of the Highland line, hospitality has always been taken as a matter of course, and at no time was it customary to mark the occasion by means of a toast. Before sitting down at table, it was the custom of the head of the house to ask a member of the family to scan the horizon to see if there was a stranger on the road who might share the meal with them. In other words, there was always a stranger's portion in the pot, and no question asked.

Mr Campbell reminded us that Scott in *The Lady of the Lake* gave us an example of this hospitality when Roderick Dhu pledged his word to Fitz James " as far as Coilantogle Ford, from thence thy warrant is thy sword." " Therefore," said the speaker, " that toast must have been the product of the ' inferior people ' from that less civilised part of Scotland, in order to prove their hospitality." Having offered this preamble, he turned to the guests who were so numerous—over 40—that he could mention only three. The first was one who was known to us all. He had been here before and gave us a fine paper on " The Scot in Drama." It was a masterly work ; but today's Sentiment on " Neil Munro " was a piece of excellent literary work. Mr McIntyre is well-known to thousands of people through his appearances on television and the radio. (Hear, hear.) Those of you, said Mr Campbell who have your ears tuned aright will have detected the soft cadence of the West Highlands in his voice, and I am glad that not all the years he has spent with the B.B.C. Repertory Company have destroyed that heritage. His interest in the London Scottish Drama Guild is well-known ; but he has many other qualities which you might look for in the bearer of such an illustrious name. To those of us who have been fortunate enough to be born with the sound of Gaelic in our ears the name Duncan Ban McIntyre stands for all that is best in the fields of Gaelic poetry. What Robert Burns means to the Southern Scot, Duncan Ban McIntyre is to the Gael—only we think he is a better poet. (Oh ! and applause.)

Then we have with us tonight Mr Angus F. Murray, who responds for the guests. He is a Dornoch man, of which town his father was Provost. Glasgow University was his alma mater. He has been for many years in the service of the largest insurance company in the Empire, and is now its joint Investment Manager. In these difficult times this must be a task demanding " prudential," if not providential genius.

We have with us also Viscount Elibank, C.M.G., D.S.O. Lord Elibank began his career as a soldier and saw service in India and China. In 1908 he became an M.P. and continued in the House until 1923. Although he held many important Government appointments during the first World War, this did not prevent him serving in France and Belgium when not only was he mentioned in despatches, but was awarded the D.S.O. We are glad to have him as our guest tonight. (Applause.)

As you know, it has been the custom for many years at our first meeting of each session, to submit the toast of the London Scottish Regiment. It is therefore natural that our members, of which no fewer than 18 have served in the regiment, should select as their guests their regimental comrades. There are so many of them here tonight that I cannot possibly mention them

individually, but we are glad to have amongst them the present commanding officer and the adjutant. We are delighted to have these London Scottish guests. (Applause.)

Mr Angus F. Murray, M.A., F.I.A., replied for the guests. He thanked Mr Campbell for the eloquence with which he had proposed the toast, and continued: "Mr Campbell, as you can guess from his accent, is, like myself, a Highlander, and like a Highlander he has skated over our deficiencies and magnified our virtues and for that, sir, we are duly grateful. And I have to thank the Society for the hospitality that in true Caledonian fashion you have showered on us tonight. Good food, good wine, good company, all have been present in abundance."

When Mr Miller asked me to reply to the toast tonight he knew I required all the help he could give me and he supplied me with a copy of the "Chronicles" of the Society. On studying that, I find that many illustrious people have replied to the toast, but could not trace any actuaries in their number.

The actuary is, I suppose, a rather curious fellow, and there have been many attempts to define the profession. Usually he is described as a rather unattractive blend of accountant, banker and undertaker. (Laughter.) If this can be accepted as a fairly good working definition it does inspire me with a measure of confidence in speaking for my fellow guests. Accountancy and banking are both professions which are regarded as being, if not the exclusive preserve of Scotsmen, at any rate those where they would expect to occupy all the leading positions. Undertaking I had felt might have been different, but your Society's "Chronicles" made it quite clear that judging by the frequency with which speakers at your functions have regaled you with jokes about funerals, undertakers must occupy a very high place in the affections of all true Scots. (Laughter.) This preoccupation with mortality is, I think, a particular characteristic of the Highlander, and is almost as common a trait as is the exercise of thrift on all occasions. In Sutherland they tell the story of the old crofter's wife who was ministering to her dying husband. Relations between the couple had been strained for many years, due mainly, it was said, to the extreme frugality of the wife. Evening was descending and in the gathering gloom she lit the candle by her husband's bed. Then she eyed him distastefully and said: "Now, look, you haven't a long time left. I must go out to milk the cow. You should be all right till I come back; but if not and you find yourself going—don't forget to blow out that candle." (Laughter.)

The mortality side has fortunately never been much my concern and I usually pass off awkward questions about death rates, expectations of life, which are occasionally levelled at me, by saying airily: "Oh! well, Keynes said, you know, in one of his books that in the long run we'll all die," and that usually puts a stop to it. When it comes to the banking or finance side, one has to be a bit more precise but I am sure that many of the accountants and bankers here will agree that most laymen credit them with an acumen and foresight which they certainly don't possess.

There are, of course, many accountants here tonight, as is only to be expected in a Scottish gathering. Then there are the bankers; Mr Miller told me there were enormous numbers of them. Not long ago when I was in Sutherland, myxamatosis was rife among the rabbits. Everywhere you went you came across their carcases. One day I mentioned this to an old farm

hand, who replied : " Och man, it's awful ; the place is alive with dead rabbits." (Laughter.) I would hate to compare bankers with dead rabbits, but there is no doubt that this place is alive with bankers tonight.

I suppose bankers and institutional investors get to the stage where they feel they can't learn much more about investing, but keep on learning a great deal more about human beings and becoming more and more impressed by the old Scottish sentiment that " There's nowt so queer as folks." Another remarkable thing about the banking and investment world is that the more important you are the less you need to know. I am sure all the important people here tonight will agree with me. Not long ago the chairman of a very important bank departed this life, and his executors got together to clear up his estate. Now the executors had all worked with the late chairman, and knew that it was his custom, whenever he had an unusually serious discussion with an important client, and a balance sheet was produced for his inspection, to go to a small private safe ; open it carefully, take out a small piece of notepaper, read it, put it back, and then, after studying the balance sheet for a moment or two, give his decision to the important client. All the executors were eager to see what was on the piece of paper, and they gathered round as the safe was being opened. They found the piece of paper, unfolded it, and found the words read : " The debit side is the one nearest the window." (Loud laughter.)

The London Scottish.

The President gave the toast " Our Regiment the London Scottish." He said the toast was always honoured by the Society at the November meeting and continued :

We take a special pleasure in toasting the London Scottish, because of our very close association with the regiment. We recall with pride that this Society in conjunction with the Highland Society of London, was instrumental in raising the London Scottish in 1859, that is 97 years ago, and our close association has continued throughout the years. Many members of the Society, past and present, have served in the regiment, and one of our past-presidents—Past-President Col. Duncan Bennett, was for many years its commanding officer, and is now its joint honorary colonel. In war, the gallant deeds of the regiment have inspired us ; in peace, its devotion to its members and their dependents has elevated us. In adversity, steadfast ; in victory, modest ; the London Scottish has achieved an unassailable reputation and gained an illustrious name. We are proud to pay our tribute to the regiment. The toast was drunk with Caledonian honours.

Piping Selection.

Tonight, too, we had a happy innovation. The piping selections were given by Pipe-Major L. V. N. de Laspee, who is the Queen Mother's piper, and by Pipe-Sergeant W. Ferguson,

both of the London Scottish. The Society was proud to have them with us.

Pipe-Major de Laspee carried the pipe banner of the Queen Mother, who is the joint honorary colonel of the regiment, and Pipe-Sergeant W. Ferguson that of the City of Glasgow. The pipers played as their selection " Loch Lomond," " The 71st Highlanders," " Maggie Cameron," " Duntroon," " Inverness Gathering " and " Highland Laddie."

At the close of the piping the President said all would agree with him that the piping was delightful. The London Scottish had good cause to be proud of their pipers. (Applause.)

The President thanked Mr Hugh McInnes for his delightful singing of " Kelvingrove," " The Uist Tramping Song " and " Wanderlust," in which he was accompanied by our own excellent accompanist, Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Thanks were also given to the London Scottish pipers, Pipe-Major de Laspee and Pipe-Sergeant Ferguson.

Pipe-Major Robertson, M.B.E., played the Society's Strathspey. " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended a hearty gathering.

It may be noted that the first four verses of " Auld Lang Syne " were sung by members of the London Scottish.

The meetings on 20th December, 1956, had in the chair the President, Dr Macrae Stewart, who having given the loyal toasts at the Little Dinner, held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, called upon Past-President William Dalgarno to give his Sentiment on :

The Romance of Insurance.

The President said Mr. Dalgarno was well qualified to speak on the subject for he had spent the greater part of his working life in the speculative and hazardous work of Insurance.

Mr Dalgarno traced insurance from the days when ancient China led the procession of men who had invented and developed what had now become one of the most intricate professions. He then said :

It may be difficult for the man-in-the-street to picture romance in the lists of figures which are the stock-in-trade of chartered accountants, brokers, and others, who make up the world of insurance. But in various ways romance

has shown itself freely from the time that the method of insurance first presented itself to the ancient Chinese.

In our own country the history of insurance is no older than say two and a half centuries. In the latter part of the seventeenth century the trade of the country involved the taking of risks by traders amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds, with no organised system of covering themselves against the hazards of the sea. Apart from storms, there were many perils in those days to be insured against, such as men-of-war, fire, enemy action, pirates, rovers, thieves, jettisons, surprisals, arrests, restraints and detainments; and all those risks were covered by the policies of the day. It may be truly said that insurance had its basis on the high seas, for Marine Insurance was the origin of all our insurance, and was an important part of banking. Bottomry is a system of borrowing money on the security of a ship, the lender losing the money if the ship is lost.

The best place to find backers who would underwrite their names to the value of a ship and its cargo was one of our old coffee houses. Probably the first man in the country to use his coffee house for the meeting of shipowners, seafaring men, merchants and others who had a common interest in shipping and marine insurance, was Mr Lloyd. This was the origin of the Corporation of Lloyds. Unlike the present day competitor, the merchant venturer was always searching for insurance cover. Then came the great Joint Stock Companies, and a market developed which became the world centre for the insurance of ships and cargoes.

I should mention here that there was, and is, a distinction between the companies and Lloyds. A member of the public can do business direct with an insurance company, but not direct with Lloyds. Lloyds' market is made up of syndicates of underwriters. Brokers act as the agents of the policy holders, and are paid by a commission; underwriters receive the premium and are liable for the claims. A risk, whether it be marine, fire or accident, is placed, not with the Corporation, but with one or more syndicates of Lloyds underwriters.

As I have said, marine is the oldest type of insurance. I have seen it stated by a historian that, according to the Law of Rhodes, no maritime insurance agreement could be made unless the lender himself sailed in the ship. This cautionary measure must have gone some way to prevent an unsound ship from going to sea.

The standard policy is much the same as that used some two and a half centuries ago. It reads like a lot of gibberish. Lawyers found it so difficult to interpret the policy that they have said: "If such a contract were to be drawn up for the first time today it would be put down as the work of a fanatic endowed with a prime sense of humour." However, it served its purpose.

The Great Fire of London in 1666, was the most notable insurance disaster that ever happened in this country, outside war destruction. The damage amounted to at least £10,000,000. The disaster made the public think seriously of insurance. In those by-gone days insurance companies had their own fire brigades—such as they were. In this connection the fire mark system was established: plates were fixed to walls to identify the premises insured. Few, if any, of these plates are still *in situ*, but they will be found in museums and in the possession of private collectors.

An insurance policy is essentially a contract of indemnity; the aim is to put the insured in the same position as he was before the loss or damage occurred—no better and no worse. Most policies also contain what is known as a replacement clause: if disagreement on value arises, as it sometimes does, the company has the option of replacing the property or articles concerned, in lieu of paying cash.

There is the story of a farmer who sustained a fire loss. His barn and certain outbuildings were destroyed, and he submitted what seemed an

exaggerated claim, later confirmed by an independent firm of builders. The farmer refused what was deemed a generous cash offer, and the company then exercised their option under the replacement clause, and made arrangements for the destroyed parts to be rebuilt—replaced. The farmer had a few years earlier effected a policy of insurance on the life of his wife, and the farmer instructed cancellation of the policy. Presumably *he* did not favour domestic replacement.

One of the most romantic parts of insurance is that classed under " accidents," to which was devoted a great part of my working life. This department covers " a multitude of sins " and includes motor cars and other things such as sickness, liability to the public, breaking of glass, livestock, fidelity guarantee, comprehensive household, and many other risks.

Here my experience was both amusing and disturbing, especially where motor car accidents were concerned. No car insured with my company ever exceeded a speed of 25 miles an hour ! And if any charge had ever been brought by the police, I can only imagine it had been for loitering ! A cynical judge once remarked : " I suppose this is another case of a collision between two stationary cars."

Having read statements of alleged witnesses of the same accident, I really began to worry about history. There was the classic case of the driver who reported that the steering wheel, brake, pedal, accelerator, clutch and dashboard had all been stolen from his car ; but later he withdrew his claim, explaining that he had got into the back seat of his car by mistake.

Claims other than for motor cars come within my province, and as an example of my troubles was the case of the lady who claimed for the loss of a bracelet under an " all risks " policy. The amount insured for, £500, was paid. Some short time afterwards the lady found her bracelet which had been mislaid. And, realising that she was not entitled to both the money and the piece of jewellery, she reported to the company that, in the circumstances she had taken a course that she was sure the company would approve ; she had sent a cheque for £500 to Dr Barnardo's Homes !

Some of my strangest experiences came to me when I was selling insurance in the North-east of Scotland. There were many romantic moments, I can assure you : at times I narrowly escaped matrimony ! I attended many " meal and ales," and it was a great joy to listen to a converse in the rich, expressive doric of Buchan.

Life insurance is self-explanatory. The service offered today is extensive with economic schemes to meet any set of circumstances, in which death duties, pensions, children's education, etc., figure.

Our National Health Service is in part a form of life insurance of which we are all aware. Societies for the protection of their members were of old dated by the Acts of Parliament and in America insurance made gigantic strides. For example, the Ancient Order of United Workmen was formed in 1868 in Pennsylvania, and in 1917 there were 675 similar societies, with total funds of 9,634,662,816 dollars. Mention of this amazing progress of American insurance must remind you that I have spared you from many figures ; but if the Romance of Insurance is seen anywhere it is here. I shall give you a few figures, but they shall be few. In 1949 the British Insurance Companies stated that " although over £500,000,000 worth of British insurance is sold overseas every year, it causes no shortage of anything at home. Insurance is a major export that brings much-needed foreign currency into Britain without depriving us of a single thing. On the contrary, the £40,000,000 net earnings (over £25,000,000 in dollars) from the overseas operations of British insurers go far to pay for your rations—the nation's tea, for instance, for over seven months, or twelve million meat rations for the whole year."

It is told by an official of the B.I.A. that premiums overseas for British Institutions come to £500,000,000 per annum with net earnings of £40,000,000.

Insurances are transacted in over one hundred countries, and at least seventy different currencies.

The following two sets of figures will show you the astounding strides that insurance has taken in this country :

Premiums for fire, motor, accident, marine and other minor classes of insurance :
For 1938—total £139,252,000
For 1954—total £587,107,000

Life insurance transacted by companies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland:
Sums assured in 1938—£227,755,521
Sums assured in 1954—£734,067,000

To bring this Sentiment to an end, I think I can truly say that, after seeing those gigantic figures, Insurance's strength is good faith, and that the commodity produced must be complete confidence.

While literally it is not correct to say that you can insure anything, it is very nearly so. It would be impossible in the time at my disposal to tell you all that I would like to about the many peculiar forms of insurance. Artists' and dressmakers' models, and actresses and dancers insure their limbs against accident or the losing or gaining of avoirdupois. Parents insure against triplets or worse forms of domestic risks.

Away back in 1900 or earlier there was St Katherine's Guild, whose rules had it that it befall that any of the brotherhood fall into poverty or be unable to help himself, or any other chance through fire or water—through the working of some divine or supernatural agency, or sickness " so that it be not upon himself alone in his own wretchedness he shall have in the week X III jd." The brotherhood actually insured themselves against trouble.

I hope I have done something in this altogether incomplete Sentiment to support and emphasise the importance of insurance on the economic life of the country ; and in conclusion I would like to express my appreciation of the patient hearing you have given me. If you know now more about insurance than you did before I began to speak, I can only describe the result as just another miracle ! (Laughter and applause.)

The Guests.

To Mr A. R. Rutherford was entrusted the toast of " Our Guests." He said the guests were, as always, helping the Society to carry out quite an essential part of our proceedings. " In fact they are helping to carry out one of the rules of our Society." As is usual, we have many welcome guests, many distinguished guests, who, we hope, are enjoying the mental and physical fare we are placing before them.

We are delighted to have with us, as our own chief guest, Sir James Crombie, K.B.E., C.M.G., the chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise. (Applause.) Sir James is a native of the City of Aberdeen ; he graduated at Aberdeen University ; and he has at various times served the War Office, the Treasury, the Ministry of Food, the Foreign Office, and as Third Secretary to the Treasury, ultimately having been appointed to be

Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise. He is one of that high administrative class of Civil Servant whom we all admire. We are privileged to have as our guest one who has brought great fame to his native country. (Applause.)

Sir James Crombie in replying to the toast, said he, a Civil Servant, approached the task of after-dinner speaking with trepidation. The position of Civil Servants made them men of silent action rather than men of hasty action. The greatest of all the Customs and Excise Officers was Robert Burns ; and his (Sir James's) department had disclosed a lot of interesting, indeed important facts refuting the charges of inebriety against the poet.

As the world knew, Burns' district was Dumfries, and while he was working in that district as a gauger, his superior officers sent the usual reports to the Board. It was found that the reports about Burns were very favourable, and proved conclusively that he was not the inebriate that was charged against him.

Here is the interesting comparison of Burns with four others of his fellow excisemen from the " Age and Capacity Report." " Robert Burns, aged 32, the Poet, does pretty well." (This was the last report on the poet ; in the next he was dead.) Of the other Excisemen :

One—a blundering officer.
Two—Can do, but given to drink.
Three—But middling—drinks.
Four—A weak man, but sober.

And, continued Sir James, the letters that Burns wrote to his superiors about the work, and his request for consideration of his position were all to his credit. There were no signs of intemperance then.

Sir James said that to show the loyalty and the liveliness of the poet, he quoted a reply by Burns to an invitation, the hurried verse having been written on a leaf torn from one of his Excise Notebooks.

The King's most humble servant, I
Can scarcely spare a minute ;
But I'll be wi' ye by and bye,
Or else the Deil be in it.

However, said Sir James, I have to finish and I wish I could say " Thank-you " in a similar way as the Great Exciseman did to a house in the Highlands during the Highland tour :

When Death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
A time that surely shall come ;
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more
Than just a Highland welcome.
(Loud applause.)

Mr Donald Fraser and his accomplished accompanist, Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., were thanked for a vocalist programme of " Border Ballad," " The Erisky Love Lilt," and " Bonnie Mary of Argyle."

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson gave his selection, as well as

our own Strathspey. " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem closed the programme.

At the business meetings prior to the Little Dinner a letter was read from Mr Miller, as secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation, thanking the Society for the contribution to the Festival Fund of £587, the response to the President's appeal.

Before the Little Dinner held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on 17th January, 1957, over 120 members and friends heard from the chair, what is called " The Selkirk Grace." At the conclusion of dinner the President, Dr D. Macrae Stewart, gave the loyal toasts, and when these had been honoured, he explained for new members and guests that at our first meeting in every year our honorary secretary, Mr W. M. Miller, sang that fine old song " Here's to the Year that's awa'," which was written by a songster named Dunlop, a Port-Glasgow Customs House Collector.

Mr Miller gave a robust and understanding interpretation of the song, and was rewarded by great applause.

The Immortal Memory.

The President reminded members and friends that at this time in all parts of the world homage was being done to the memory of our great poet, Robert Burns. " Tonight," said the President, " we are greatly honoured because our annual Sentiment in memory of the poet is to be given by a distinguished Scotsman, an eminent Queen's Counsel and a recognised authority on Burns, Mr Aiken Watson," on whom he called for his Sentiment.

Mr Aiken Watson, received with applause, said :

I have often asked the question : why in these days when language has become so standardised—indeed a professor has reduced the differences to " U's " and " Non-U's "—we as a very practical race still worship at the shrine of a poet who wrote in the vernacular. In essaying to offer some reasons I am only too conscious of the fact that I may be laying my head on the block.

The effectiveness of any light depends entirely on its background. The impact of Burns involves some consideration of my countrymen.

For hundreds of years the Scots have enjoyed the reputation of a religious people. The thunder of John Knox, the sufferings of the Covenanters, and the deep feeling provoked by the Disruption are all eloquent of this reputation. But a critical analysis of all these events compels admission that these deep rifts were concerned more with form than substance. We are not as a nation,

as we sometimes complacently assume, necessarily better Christians than our brethren in less enlightened countries.

Indeed, despite these religious overtones, as a nation we have always had a shrewd respect for what we might call the better aspects of materialism. As Barrie said—" There are few more impressive sights than a Scotsman on the make," or again, " the grandest moral attribute of a Scotsman—he will do nothing which will damage his career."

Do not suppose that these oblique criticisms suggest that ambition is unworthy or confined to our ain folks. Perhaps it is that we are a little more honest about it. Maybe it is that we are a little more earnest in the pursuit of it.

This attitude can be readily explained. Up until the dawn of the industrial revolution, Scotland was a relatively poor country. Her export trade was meagre. Her monetary circulation was such that as late as the end of the 18th century it would have been difficult outside the four main cities to change at short notice a £5 note. In the basic industry of agriculture, a poor soil in an unkind climate, coupled with lack of drainage, all combined to make life on the land hard and precarious. Survival was a grim struggle against want. Small wonder that these conditions produced an earnest pursuit of material betterment which eagerly grasped every opportunity, and became an ingrained characteristic transmitted from generation to generation ever since.

This was the Scotland in which our poet was born and grew to manhood. Contemporary Scotland emerging from religious intolerance was eagerly awaiting some voice to express its inner feelings and justify its latent faith in its capacity for achievement.

Almost at a bound Burns fulfilled the need. He became the articulator of the inarticulate. In language which was theirs, the commonplace ceased to be commonplace. The countryside hitherto a drab challenge of toil assumed a new aspect. Man's idealism—his courage in the face of disaster—his kindliness, his fears, and his strivings, took on new garb in the homely language of a son of the soil, and Scotland rejoiced.

As Longfellow wrote :

Touched by his hand the wayside weed
Becomes a flower : the lowliest reed
  Beside the stream
Is clothed with beauty : gorse and grass
And heather where his footsteps pass
  The brighter seem.

Today we who inhabit great cities : we whose avocations are far removed from the plough : we are still subconsciously rooted in the soil of Scotland. Somewhere back along the avenue of time our forebears wrested from that soil the living which ensured our descent. Even when strange words escape our precise understanding, we are strangely moved by the poet's diction. That is the impact of Burns on the posterity of his countrymen.

But our poet was too much of a humanist to confine himself to the inanimate. He was ever observant of mankind and his own countrymen in particular. It may be said indeed that he provided a kind of working moral philosophy for the race.

I have spoken of the better aspects of materialism. The poet forestalled me. Did he not say :

To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile,
  Assiduous wait upon her ;
And gather gear by ilka wile
  That's justified by honour ;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
  Nor for a train attendant,
But for the glorious privilege
  Of being independent.

The superiority of all wives freely admitted by all wise husbands constrained his gentle irony :

Ah, gentle dames ! it gars me greet
To think how many counsels sweet
How mony lengthened sage advices
The husband frae the wife despises.

Conduct on all occasions could receive no better advice :

The fear o' Hell's a hangman's whip
To haud the wretch in order ;
But where ye feel yer honour grip,
Let that aye be your border ;
Its slightest touches instant pause
Debar a' side pretences ;
And resolutely keep its laws
Uncaring consequences.

Despite personal lapses, domestic felicity is thus encouraged :

To mak' a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

Despite the savagery of "Holy Willie's Prayer," an attachment to Christian doctrines is thus encouraged :

When ranting roun in pleasure's ring
Religion may be blinded ;
Or, if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded
But when a life were tempest driven
A conscience but a canker
A correspondence fixed wi' Heav'n
Is sure a noble anchor.

Burns lives on. He will continue to live so long as Scotsmen and their descendants feel that the land of their or their forebears' birth, even if "a man's a man for a' that," has transmitted to them a priceless heritage.

Brother Scots, I give you the toast, "The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns."

The toast was drunk with Caledonian honours ; and Mr Aiken Watson's address was loudly applauded.

The President said : During the coming fortnight many of you will hear "The Immortal Memory" proposed at meetings of various Scottish societies, and some of you may even essay the task yourselves, but I am certain very few, if any, of those you hear will possess the excellence and high literary quality of the Sentiment you have just heard. By his skilful study of the poet's life and times, and by his masterly presentation of his poems, Mr Aiken Watson has, if that is possible, increased our admiration of Burns. And he has, I hope, rekindled our enthusiasm for these ideals for which Burns stood—honesty of purpose and the dignity and brotherhood of man. (Applause.)

Our Guests.

Mr George Deans proposed " Our Guests " and informed them that tonight they were in the company of four distinct types of Scotsmen—Highlanders, Lowlanders, Fifers, and Aberdonians, but, he added, let me assure our guests that we have sunk our differences this evening and, united, extend to one and all a very sincere and hearty welcome and trust that they are enjoying our Scottish hospitality.

Mr Deans continued: Mr Aiken Watson, who has given us such an excellent Sentiment, responded to the toast of the guests in March last year. On that occasion you were informed of his achievements and the only change is that he is ten months older and presumably (if it were possible) ten months wiser. Incidentally, it is a great pleasure to this Paisley buddy to welcome someone from his own county of Renfrewshire, for Mr Aiken Watson is a native of Johnstone, little more than a stone's throw from the birthplace of Habbie Simpson, the piper of Kilbarchan. (Laughter.)

Dr Don needs no introduction. His outstanding services to Church and State are known to us all. (Hear, hear.) It might not be so well known that he is a golf addict—a vice which we all can share whether we play nine or eighteen holes, or simply concentrate on the nineteenth. I hope Dr Don is not like an ecclesiastical friend of mine who when he is safely over the water hazard refers to it as " that bonnie wee burn " and at other times as " that blasted sewer." (Laughter.)

I was interested to learn recently of Dr Don's great love of St Andrews, and I am sure we all wish him well on this his fiftieth year of membership of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club. (Applause.)

Dr Smart will be remembered for the able Sentiment he gave to this Society almost six years ago on " The Scottish Novel since Scott." Read it again, Brother Caledonians, in your " Chronicles." When it was delivered it was described by Past-President Dr Scott as " a wonderful and masterly address." (Hear, hear.)

Mr T. W. Haynes is also an old friend, who in December, 1954, gave us some inside information on our then President, William Dalgarno; some of it not perhaps so complimentary as his host would have liked. (Laughter.) Mr Haynes is an amazing person—an Englishman, who is manager of an important Scottish Insurance Company—a salutary thought for all Caledonians. (Laughter and Applause.)

Amongst our guests for the first time is Sir John Macpherson, a scholar of George Watson's College and a graduate of Edinburgh University, who for some years was Governor of Nigeria, and is now Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office. (Applause.)

Sir Francis Low is described by his host as " a thoroughbred Aberdeenshire Scot," who adds, " you will just have to put up with him." (Laughter.) We are delighted to " put up with you," Sir Francis, particularly when we remember the great influence you exerted in India when for many years you were editor of the *Times of India*. (Hear, hear.) We appreciate that you could not fail to make a success of that appointment when we realise that you began your career with the *Aberdeen Free Press*. (Laughter and applause.)

It is appropriate that when the Dean of Westminster is replying to the toast of " Our Guests," one of those guests should be Sir James Brown, an Estates Commissioner of the Church Commissioners for England. (Applause.) I don't quite know what that appointment involves, but I believe the main

function of the Commissioners is the management of the Church Estates in order to endow and augment benefices. (Applause.)

We are very pleased to have with us Alderman W. A. V. Bryan, J.P., of Ilford Borough Council. Alderman Bryan was Mayor of Ilford from 1946 to 1947, and has always shown a keen interest in the activities of the Ilford Scottish Association. (Applause.)

Then we have Mr Jim Campbell, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen. Like his predecessor in office, he is a Scot which, I am sure explains why those he represents find him not only such a good negotiator, but one who is very conscious of the value of negotiations.

We are always pleased to entertain our friends from other Scottish Societies, and tonight we are glad to have Mr James Mason, President of the Harrow and District Caledonian Society, and Mr Frank M. Orr, a Past-President of that Society.

Mr President, Mr Vice-President, and Brother Caledonians, I have the honour to couple with this toast the name of the Very Reverend Alan C. Don, Dean of Westminster.

Dr Don's Amusing Reply.

The Very Rev. Alan C. Don, K.C.V.O., D.D., who was heartily received, thanked the Society for their hospitality and Mr Deans for his kindly references. He said it might have been better had an Englishman been called upon to respond to the toast ; we might then have heard of something from the other side of the national shield.

The perfervid claims made on behalf of our native lands are sometimes rather humorous. For instance, I read the other day that our new Prime Minister was " English of the English." As his grandfather was an Arran crofter, as sure as anything, we claim him as a Scotsman. (Laughter.)

Whatever claims we make we are always conscious in some extraordinary way, of being aliens ; but certainly that feeling was never conveyed to them by their English hosts, who were always everything that Scots should be.

We are more sentimental than our hosts. We partake of the haggis and the whisky and try to make ourselves believe that in our own homes we had been accustomed to that way of living. Nothing could be farther from the facts. (Laughter.)

Regarding the Scots in London, Dr Don was able to report that now Westminster Abbey was entirely in the hands of the Scots, without any assistance at all from the Aberdonians. (Loud laughter.)

The amusing side of the ecclesiastic quarrels were humorously referred to by Dr Don. When I was in Dundee, where I was for ten years, we had the usual skits at each other, the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians.

We Episcopalians, because we knelt at prayers, were shouted at by the Presbyterians :

" Pisky, pisky, say Amen,
Doon on yer hunkers and up again."

To which the Episcopalians retaliated :

" Presby, presby, dinna bend,
Sit ye doon on man's chief end."

(Loud laughter.)

It was all great fun.

In recalling some of the events of his early life at Dundee and Broughty Ferry (where he was born) Dr Don recalled the terrible Tay Bridge disaster, when the bridge was wrecked and a train thrown into the raging waters

with a great loss of life. His father with one or two friends went out that night, but had to crawl on hands and knees, they were unable to stand against the howling, lashing wind and rain. There were rumours of a terrible accident, and the first real evidence was the sight by his father of the roof of a railway carriage being carried out to sea.

Dr Don said it was true that he had been for 50 years a member of the Royal and Ancient and he had just had a note from the secretary to say that because of that fact they had reduced his annual subscription from £20 to £5 (applause)—quite a consideration to a Scotsman. Apropos St Andrews, Dr Don told the story of what happened to his old friend the Rev. Dr Winnington Ingram. Dr Ingram was on St Andrews Links, and drove right into that fearsome bunker they called Hell's Bunker. Dr Ingram said to his caddie, " What do they call that bunker ? " " They ca' it Hell," replied the caddie. " Why do they call it that ? " asked Dr Ingram. " Oh," said the caddie, " they ca' it that because aince ye get in there, ye never get out." By a miracle the golfer made a brilliant recovery, and landed on the green. The caddie rather surprised said, " If I were you, Sir, I would see that I was burryt wi' that niblick." (Loud laughter.)

Dr Don complimented and thanked the Society for their hospitality and cheerful evening. (Applause.)

Besides Mr Miller's rendering of " The Year's that's awa'," Mr Alexander McRae contributed to the musical programme in his beautiful tenor voice, " O' a' the airts," " The Star o' Robbie Burns," " The Lea Rig " and " A Man's a Man." He had, as usual, our accomplished pianist Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., to assist him.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave a fine selection prior to his toast. The pieces were " The Laird o' Luss," " Monymusk," " Tail Toddle " and " My Faithful Fair One," as well as our own Strathspey, " The Caledonian Society of London."

" Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem closed a programme which had delighted the large audience.

Mr John Swan.

At the business meetings held prior to the Little Dinner, the President expressed his and his colleagues' pleasure at again seeing Mr John Swan back among them after his severe illness in Scotland. He hoped that Mr Swan would continue in the good health which he now enjoyed. Mr Swan thanked the President for his good wishes.

Dr. Macrae Stewart, the President, took the chair at the business and social meetings on 21st February, 1957, and at the Little Dinner, having honoured the loyal toasts, introduced Professor Robert Cruickshank, M.D., F.R.C.P., who gave as his Sentiment " Wit and Humour in the North-East."

A Brilliant Scientist.

The President said we had been honoured tonight, for the Sentiment is by one of the leading bacteriologists in the country, Professor Robert Cruickshank, M.D., F.R.C.P. Mr Cruickshank is Professor of Bacteriology at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, and is medical director of the Wright-Fleming Institute at the same school, a most worthy successor to our friend, the late Sir Alexander Fleming, of penicillin fame.

For me, continued the President, it is a singular pleasure and also a source of pride, that I should be given the opportunity of introducing him, for he is the product and one of the outstanding sons of that great bastion of learning in the North-East corner of Scotland, and of that very modern medical school which is also one of the leading medical schools in the country—the University of Aberdeen and I take reflected glory from the fact that for five years he and I were fellow medical students. (Applause.)

He has chosen for his subject tonight, not bacteria, very interesting and personal though that subject would certainly be, but the more congenial after dinner topic—" Wit and Humour in the North-East." Those of you who have already had the privilege of hearing Professor Cruickshank will know that very few, if any, are as well qualified as he is to speak on this subject. I have much pleasure in calling upon Professor Cruickshank to address us.

" Wit and Humour in the North-East."

Professor Cruickshank, received with applause, said :

My thesis tonight is that wit and humour serves as a mirror for the character and qualities of a community. Some of our friends from south of the Border might say that I am starting from a false premise, for they believe that the Scots have neither wit nor humour, and get to the top without any of the saving graces. Indeed, that is the reason for the popularity of the suggestion that an operation for a brain tumour is required to get a joke into a Scotsman's head.

The second part of my thesis is that the folk of the North-East have a character and qualities that are distinctive from those from other parts of Scotland, and therefore their wit and humour is also distinctive. I said distinctive, not superior, qualities, for although a Buchan loon, I am not one of those who subscribe to the view, " Tak' awa' Aberdeen and twal mile roon, and whaur are ye ? " and naturally I do not subscribe to the sentiment represented by the headlines in an Aberdeen newspaper. The first line in large type : " Aberdonian drowned in mid-Atlantic," was followed by a much smaller line, " Sinking of the Titanic."

I am prepared to admit that other parts of Scotland are almost as good as the North-East—Ayrshire, the Lothians, the Mearns, even the Kingdom of Fife. But each has its own characteristics, and consequently its distinctive wit and humour. This individuality is greatly to be prized in these days of B.B.C. uniformity. Local patriotism is deeply ingrained in the Scot, and explains the flourishing Caledonian, St Andrew, and Burns Societies all over the world. It explains a strong nationalistic movement : the rivalry between Scotland and England, Lowlands versus Highlands, and Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Edinburgh motorist was probably satisfied when he saw two

pointers on an Edinburgh lamp post—one painted " Glasgow " and the other " Gentlemen ! "

Two Aberdeenshire towns, Peterhead and Fraserburgh, have similar antipathies, and this brings to mind the story of the two seamen on a London–Aberdeen boat. The two men were on deck, when a fierce wave drove the Fraserburgh man overboard with his pail of water. The Peterhead man rushed to the Captain and shouted, " D'ye min' yon Fraserburgh man you took on, Sir ? " " Aye' what's the matter wi' him ? " " Weal, Sir, he's awa' wi' yer bucket already."

Perhaps we should define what we mean by wit and humour. Wit might be called the sword of wisdom. It is sharp and pointed—sometimes barbed ; it demands a high level of intellect, as exercised by such exponents as Wilde, Whistler and Shaw. There is the tale of Shaw's encounter with Isadora Duncan. " With your beauty and my wit what wonderful offspring we might have." " Yes," replied the lady, " but what a disaster if the children had your beauty and my wit." There is, too, the story of the City Fathers who quarrelled over the erection of a wooden bridge. Sidney Smith suggested that if the magistrates' heads were knocked together the question would be solved.

Humour is broader, more humane, more earthy : expressed as fun at one's own or others' misfortune : a kind of escapism. There was the case of the big, fat woman, who was always complaining. She was so stout that she explained that " there's ower muckle o' me to be a' weel at the same time."

There is also the unconscious naive humour ; for example the case of the two farmers (one driving) in a motor car. The driver was apparently quite satisfied until his companion said, " We're gettin' nearer the toon." " Fut gars ye say that ? " said the driver. " Weel yr're knockin' mair fowk doon " was the reply.

Now let us look at the factors that helped to mould and form the character of the North-East. Up to 200 years ago the North-East was relatively undeveloped and unproductive. Dour stony land in a cold, bare countryside with Arctic north-east winds sweeping over it : more akin to Holland ; there are many traits in common with Dutchmen. As a Strathmore farmer put it, " Strathmore has been well farmed for 500 years : Aberdeenshire has been scraped up between the stones in the last two to three generations."

The two men who did most to organise farming in the North-East were Grant of Monymusk, who introduced that wonderful vegetable the turnip, and good grasses which led to the six years' rotation ; and James Anderson of Monkshill, who introduced fertilisers, and stressed the value of good seed and good stock. But you can imagine the years and generations of unending toil to snatch a bare living from the soil : clearing the stones, building dykes, draining the land, planting trees, building houses and steadings until in 150 years the North-East became one of the foremost agricultural communities in the country, and the nursery of some of the finest cattle and horses that we rear. Amos Cruickshank at Sittyton started the shorthorns ; McCombie of Tillyfour converted the black polled cattle of Buchan into the famous Aberdeen–Angus ; while men like the Cockers and the Sleighs have bred some of our finest Clydesdales. But even today, the farmer of the North-East is a " working farmer," and perhaps looked down upon a little by the " gentlemen farmers " further south.

Let me here trouble you with personal reminiscence. My father started a farm of 130 acres with three horses, two cows and ten stirks ; he reared a family of nine, put three through the University, one is a L.R.A.M., and my father himself became the recognised breeder of Clydesdales in the space of thirty years. Hard-working, undemonstrative, yet a sentimentalist with appreciation of beauty in good horses and cattle ! The intense devotion of

North-East farmers justified the farm housewife in declaring, " There's naething in my man's heid bit beasts."

The second great influence is the love of learning. This, of course, is a Scottish characteristic, but it was very favourably fostered in the North-East by certain financial inducements—and even our unworldly clergymen have always been " called " to move from Auchterless to Auchtermair ! These inducements were the Dick bequest, which was used to supplement the salaries of teachers in Moray, Banff and Aberdeenshire, who reached certain educational standards ; and the Milne bequest which increased the salaries of headmasters and graduate teachers in Aberdeenshire. The result was that the cream of the teaching profession in Scotland tended to migrate to the North-East. Some of them had double degrees in Arts and Divinity, and undoubtedly these University men had a stimulating and elevating effect on the educational and cultural standards in the North-East. Many a lad o' pairts has cause to thank his county dominie for seeing that he got a University education. For many years now, one of the main exports of the North-East has been brains in the shape of teachers, doctors, and civil servants. Aberdeenshire has produced more senior wranglers than any county in the United Kingdom.

This ambition to get on is seen even at the lowest levels. There was the case of a boy who was thought to be " nae a' there," but was so near a case that it was difficult to decide whether to leave him where he was or send him to a special school. The day came when the medical authorities had to decide, and the boy was subjected to a thorough examination. The boys in the school knew what was happening and when their doubtful schoolmate was released, they chaffed him about being sent away. "Ye're gaun to the Daft School." " Oh na," said the boy, " I'm nae gaun." " Hoo's that ? " came the doubtful query. " Weel," said the half-baked loon, " Ah didna pass ! "

Two other influences that helped to form our character in the North-East was religion and the admixture of the Celtic element in our Lowland stock. The minister, the headmaster and the banker were the three wise men of the parish, and it is fair to say that brose and the Bible were the staple diets in our upbringing. The preaching was a bit Calvanistic, but the minister was usually a real pastoral shepherd. Many friendly stories are told about the minister and his man.

We are a rather unimaginative lot in the North-East, but every now and then we throw up a writer, painter, or minor poet with creative and imaginative powers. Examples are writers like Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Eric Linklater, John Allan, Lesley Storm ; poets like Tullochgorum Skinner, Charles Murray, Violet Jacobs, Mary Symon ; an architect like James Gibbs, St Martin's. Indeed I was tempted at one time to take as my text, " The writers and poets of the North-East," but I did not think they were altogether representative of our community.

Maybe it is the Highland or Celtic element that is responsible for this imaginative quality. This quality sometimes expresses itself as picturesque language and hyperbole among the ordinary country folk.

If, then, we were to analyse the character of the North-East Lowlander, the following positive qualities might be set down.

Capacity for hard work, and ambition to get on, resulting from struggle with soil, and love of learning. You know the story of the Aberdonian who was sent to London on business. " Did you see mony fowk in London ? " he was asked on his return. " No," he replied, " you see I only met heids o' depairtments."

With this ambition goes pride in performance or " a guid conceit o' oorsels," like the boy who was questioned on what he was drawing on his slate. " I'm drawin' a picter o' God." " But that's not like God," said his teacher. " But it will be when I'm deen wi't." Then there was the statement

from one Scot to another early in the 1914–1918 War : " If England gives in we'll hae a stiff fecht! "

There is, too, the story told of and by Sir Harry Lauder. He was having a shoot with a friend on Deeside, and after the shoot the gweed wife entertained the company to a high tea. Altho' Lauder sang songs and told his stories he made no impression on his hostess. He tried his best, but failed entirely. Six months later he was accosted by a man in Toronto, who reminded Lauder of the happy meeting in Deeside. " Oh," said the comedian, " tell me what wis wrang wi' the gweed wife, I could na get her to lauch ? " " Weel " was the reply, " After you left she turned to her man and said : ' What a funny man that Lauder is ; I could hardly haud frae lauchin at 'im '."

For understatement and taciturnity the natives of the North-East are notorious. " It's nae sae bad : it micht be waur " is praise indeed.

And thriftiness is so often mistaken for and denounced as meanness, as in the case of his dying wife who he advised on any sign of impending dissolution to " blaw oot the candle." There is a hatred of exaggeration or blawin'.

I hope I have not painted for you an unprepossessing picture of dour, taciturn, ambitious Aberdonians, but the folks of the North-East have a real and unsophisticated zest for life. Many of those qualities which I have been outlining are common to Scots in general. We're a' John Tamson's bairns, and we can demonstrate to our English friends that the Scots are not without some of the saving grace of humour.

The Sentiment was heard through continuous laughter and Professor Cruickshank sat down amid loud applause.

Thanks for a Brilliant Essay.

The President said :

It is well-known that the North-East of Scotland is a nursery for keen business men and for men of intellect, but it is not such common knowledge that in this area are also cradled men and women with a keen sense of humour, and here in the person of Professor Cruickshank we have the happy and rare combination of both qualities—a brilliant mind allied to great natural wit. It is evident that he loves and admires the people of the North-East from whom he has sprung, and tonight he has given us a Sentiment worthy of them and in keeping with the best traditions of our Society. Professor Cruickshank has painted for us a very vivid picture of the North-East and given us a stirring account of the lives and conditions of a hard-working, happy and ambitious people, an account well illustrated by means of apt quotations and very humorous stories brilliantly told.

We are very grateful to you, sir, for the thrill and pleasure you have given us by your most interesting and entertaining address. (Applause.)

Mr Andrew A. Rothnie, in proposing " Our Guests," excused the human race for their after-dinner speaking in a clever Alan Herbert rhyme, part of which read :

> The dog, considered a sagacious beast,
> Does not give tongue when he has had a feast ;
> Nor does the cow go mooing round the mead
> To tell the world she has enjoyed her feed.

Not even lions, I imagine roar
After a meal—unless they want some more,
All nature has agreed that it is best
When fully fed to ruminate and rest. . . .
But modern man, by some malignant fate
When he has eaten simply must orate. . . .
This quaint old custom could be understood
If all the speeches were extremely good ;
But it is not an easy trade,
And more than half of them were best not made.
Oh, what a wise and comfortable thing
If all the toasts were silent like " The Queen."

In proposing this toast, Mr. Rothnie told the story of our Society—how our chief care was the support of the two great London charities, the Corporation and the Schools ; and he welcomed the many visitors.

Thanks had already been given to Professor Cruickshank, and they had to respond to the toast, Mr. Harold Dodd, Ch.M., F.R.C.S., a surgeon on the staff of several London hospitals. Mr Dodd is a man of lofty ideals ; and has had a close connection by means of his pen, with many causes. His chief study is varicose veins and is the joint author of the principal book on that subject.

We have with us, too, His Worship the Mayor of Chelsea, Mr Harry Hynd, M.P., Professor M. Y. Campbell, Col. R. J. Gray, War Office Medical H.Q., Mr Maxwell Tebbitt, Ministry of Health, Rev. R. Crawford, assistant to Dr Scott, Captain Duncan, London Scottish Adjutant, and others. We welcome them all.

Mr Harold Dodd, Ch.M., F.R.C.S., in acknowledging the toast, said the Good Book told them in all things to give thanks, and it also bade them give hospitality. We were enjoying it to the full that evening, and now endeavouring to give thanks for that hospitality. There was in Scottish hospitality generosity and good taste, characterised also by a warmth and friendship—making atmosphere. As Professor Cruickshank said, no one can accuse the Scots of being mean ! Being a doctor, he could not help but agree that the practice of forming societies was health-giving. He looked with admiration at the Caledonian Society of London, which was formed in 1837, the year of Queen Victoria's accession. He wondered if Englishmen formed similar societies when they went to Scotland, but enquiries of three friends in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen resulted in blanks in reply except one society of Yorkshire students at Edinburgh University.

Mr Dodd went on to prove that his family (the Dodds) had its origin on the Borders, and concluded that he might call himself a Scots cousin. If so, that explained the link between their worthy President and himself. "Thank you for your hospitality," he ended, and " May God bless you all ! " (Applause.)

The President thanked Mr Don Paulin for entertaining them to the Scots songs, " Bonnie Wee Thing," " Hey, Johnnie Cope," " Ca' the yowes to the knowes." The singer was accompanied at the piano by Mr J. W. Storey, assistant organist of St. Columba's. Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave a fine bagpipe selection, and ended with our own Strathspey. " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem closed a delightful programme.

At the business meetings before the Little Dinner, four new members were admitted to membership : W. P. Keith, M.V.O., a native of Edinburgh ; Strathearn H. McFarlane, Edinburgh ; Graham Maclean, Falkirk ; James Moxon, Hamilton.

The Hon. Historian said that those members who did not take in the French morning newspapers would perhaps not know of the great success of our officer, Pipe-Major Robertson, M.B.E., who had been invited with his pipe band to the carnival at Brest last summer, and had judged the piping and dancing events. He was a tower of strength to the Carnival, and the Caledonian Society of London had secured great kudos by his visit.

The Hon. Historian also reminded members that their Society in this year 1957 was 120 years of age. He congratulated the President on occupying the chair in this important year of our history.

The Little Dinner of 21st March, 1957, will long be remembered as one of the most successful in the history of the Society, for on that occasion Sir Thomas Taylor, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Aberdeen University responded to the request of the President of the Society, Dr. Macrae Stewart, to give the Sentiment at the March meeting, which he did brilliantly, under the title, " Reminiscences of a Crown Counsel."

Sir Thomas Taylor.

After the loyal toasts had been honoured, Dr Macrae Stewart, introducing Sir Thomas, said he did so with the greatest possible pleasure, and with a

very deep sense of pride. Sir Thomas Murray Taylor, C.B.E., Q.C., M.A., LL.B., D.D., LL.D., as they knew was the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen, and one of the leading figures in university circles in Great Britain today. A native of the North-East (he was born in Keith), he is one of the most brilliant men to have graduated from Aberdeen, and as Principal of his alma mater, he has proved one of the most able administrators the university has ever had. Under his guidance and forceful leadership Aberdeen University has greatly increased her activities and widened her sphere of influence. He has behind him a wonderful record of personal achievement and public service, and we in the Caledonian Society of London feel greatly honoured and privileged that Sir Thomas, in spite of the many demands on his services, has been able to find time to come here tonight to address us. (Applause.)

For me it is a particular pleasure to be given the opportunity of welcoming the Principal, for I had the distinction of entering Aberdeen University as a student the same day as he, over 40 years ago, and for two years we were classmates in the Faculty of Arts. While I branched off into medicine, he made law his career, and I watched with amazement and admiration his rapid and easy acquisition of the highest academic honours, and his meteoric rise to the exalted position he now occupies. It is on some of his experiences in the Scottish courts, where for many years he was a distinguished counsel, that he has elected to speak to us tonight. I am sure you are all impatient to hear him and so I have very great pleasure in calling upon Principal Sir Thomas Taylor to address us.

Principal Taylor, who was received with loud applause, thanked the President for the kind words he had used in introducing him. He was not keen on speaking in public outside his specific duties, but loyalties prevented him from saying " no " to Dr. Macrae Stewart's appeal.

What he had to say tonight showed the great difference in parts between the laws of England and Scotland.

Principal Taylor, who began a comprehensive examination of the legal processes of England and Scotland, called upon his six years' experience as a Crown Counsel for his illustrations of the various points discussed.

The law of Scotland, he said, differs greatly in various matters from that of England. In our country the law is centralised : all the serious crime is under the control of the County Court. Private prosecution is all but unknown.

Officers called Procurators Fiscal are allotted to four Circuits, namely one in the North, one in the West, one in the South, mainly Glasgow, and one in Edinburgh, called the Home Circuit ; which strangely, includes Orkney and Shetland. These Procurators Fiscal takes cognisances and are responsible to the Lord Advocate in the detection and proof of crime. The police only take instructions.

There are great differences in the amount of crime in the various areas. Glasgow is the worst, and this is probably because of the large, and lower, Irish population. Then, again, for the same reason Dundee has a higher crime record than Aberdeen, although the population is about the same. The variation does not stop there. In some parts of the country it is impossible to get a conviction at all. An example of what was meant was a prosecution in which Sir Thomas was engaged professionally. The question was asked,

" What is the next case about ? " and the reply was, " A razor slasher " and the cry was immediately raised, " Let's get at 'im." " Perhaps a very natural and proper spirit," said the Principal with a smile.

North of the Border it is surprising to see how the work of the prosecution of crime is carried on. We have no Coroners' Courts in Scotland, nor preliminary trials before magistrates. Unlike the long-drawn out, and practically double trial of a prisoner, as in England, the Proscurator Fiscal in our case, carries on investigations behind closed doors, completing his case before the prosecution begins. Witnesses are produced in the witness box without any knowledge whatever of the case in which they are to give evidence.

The English system is unfair to the accused, because the minds of witnesses and members of the jury may be prejudiced by what they read of the magistrates' Courts proceedings.

Another difference in the laws of England and Scotland is that in England a man by his will can cut off his wife and family from participation in his estate, but in Scotland some part of the deceased husband's estate is automatically reserved for the widow and family.

Again, in England a person is either guilty or not guilty of the charge, or modified charge, against him. We in Scotland have the third and sometimes comforting verdict, Not Proven, By the law of Scotland the onus of proof is on the Crown, and as a conviction cannot succeed on the evidence of one witness, uncorroborated, it is often impossible to determine who actually caused the death in cases of suspected murder.

In a remote part of Sutherland a newborn child was found dead with a ligature round its throat, and the young mother and her mother were suspected of the crime, but there was no evidence to convict, and the jury came back with a verdict of Not Proven. There might have been a further charge of concealment of pregnancy, but that was not taken up, and by the Court's order both women walked out. It was just a police affair. The jury said of course they knew that she had committed the crime, but that she had been in jail long enough !

The law has, as you will understand, its humours. There was the case of an elderly lady who said to his (the speaker's) mother : " Eh, Mrs Taylor, I'm richt gled to see your son gettin' on sae weel. He got the wifie aff ! "

An attempt at suicide may, on occasions be a minor affair in Scotland and much more serious in England. In his day, said the Principal, gas was the usual method used by the suicide. He remembered one case where a man was so determined to die of gas poisoning that he bored a hole in the ground until he reached a gas pipe, made a hole in the pipe, and sucked the gas until he had completed his job.

There was another case—one of accidental death—which baffled the authorities for a time. Two men were cleaning out a boiler, the entrance point of which was very narrow. The men started their work and talked to each other for a time. All at once one stopped talking ; the other man didn't trouble about this, but ultimately he found his fellow worker inside the boiler with his skull cracked. It turned out that as the entrance to the boiler was so small the suction had suddenly driven the man in, dashed him against the back of the boiler, where his head was crushed. The Factory Inspector had never heard of anything of the sort happening before.

Guns were a common instrument to use when murder was intended, and sometimes, as has been said, it was impossible to secure the facts. Sir Thomas remembered the case of two men friends who went in a motor car to a shoot. It was a most heart-rending case. One of the men bent back to take his gun. It was loaded. He took it up. It went off accidentally and blew off the top of his head. His friend lifted the other gun which also went off mysteriously, and he also was killed.

Here is another case—from Forfar—of two farm servants who were for

some reason at loggerheads. They were in the country at the same time. One of the men had a light overcoat over his arm, saw the other man fire at him. The shot lodged in the overcoat, the owner of which tried to get away, but another shot was fired, and this one took effect. The gunman was charged with attempted murder. The defence was that the accused was firing at a pheasant, and then, when he was running to help the injured man, the gun went off. But the Dundee jury did not accept that story.

Another case concerned the burning of the Castle of Alness. The Temples had taken the place and at the time of the fire they were at Inverness. Lady Temple had much valuable jewellery, which presumably had been destroyed. One of the articles missing was valued at £20,000. The family left for the south immediately after the necessary work was done. Some lads went through the adjoining woods on their way to see the ruins. One kicked at a bundle of leaves, disclosed a packet in which was the £20,000 jewel. Inquiries disclosed that the butler had just emerged from penal servitude and through an advertisement placed by himself he had got the situation.

Sir Thomas remembered one case of an Oban man who was, by a bit of ordinary fraud, the cause of a charge against two sharp-practice men. In the Court everything was going satisfactorily when the Oban man was asked to look round the Court and see if he could pick out the man who had cheated him. The Oban man looked round the Court, and picked out a member of the jury! That, of course, finished the case, and the Principal said: "You awful ass, why did you do that?" "Weel," said the Oban man, "I was thinkin' it micht be a trap." No forensic skill could cope with that.

The Principal said that the ablest Scots judge that he knew was Lord Sands, and a case which Sands settled in Glasgow concerned a Jewish gentleman who took advantage of a bargain to import one million toilet rolls which he advertised and sold at 3d. a roll, netting £12,000, which he maintained was not gained in the nature of trade. The nature and quantity of the matter dealt with excluded the suggestion that it could have been disposed of otherwise than as a trade transaction. Neither the purchaser, nor any purchaser from him was likely to require such a quantity for his private use.

Thanks for a Masterly Sentiment.

The President in thanking Sir Thomas, said that to those of you who have attended all our dinners this winter, it must have become apparent that in the choice of speakers there has been a certain bias towards men from the North-East, with special preference shown to graduates of Aberdeen. We make no apology for this, for this policy has enabled us to see and hear such brilliant and distinguished men as Sir James Crombie, Professor Robert Cruickshank, and now the Principal of the University himself. Sir Thomas has long been regarded by those best qualified to judge as one of the leading orators in this country today, and I am sure that all of you here tonight, after listening to his brilliant address will fully endorse this verdict. He has given us a Sentiment of the highest literary quality, couched in beautiful language and delivered with the sure touch of the master of the spoken word. We have greatly enjoyed his concise and lucid account of the system of criminal

administration in Scotland. He has thrilled and amused us by his fascinating account of some of his experiences in the Scottish Law Courts in his earlier years, and by his masterly analysis of the character of the various types of people he encountered in these days.

We are very grateful to you, sir, for the very great honour you have done us by coming here tonight, and for the delight you have given us by your outstanding Sentiment which was a great oratorical and literary treat. I assure you that we shall recall this evening with pleasure for many years to come.

Mr Vice-President, Brother Caledonians, and Welcome Guests, I ask you to accord a very hearty vote of thanks to Principal Taylor for his most learned, instructive and entertaining address. (Loud applause.)

The Guests.

Sir George Campbell, K.C.I.E., submitted the toast " The Guests," and said the Aberdeen University invasion of London was today in full swing. Here we have the principal and vice-chancellor. The rugger team today played the London Irish and on Saturday they hope to conquer the London Scottish. With these important elements of the University in London we may conclude that Scotland's North-Eastern seat of learning may soon be triumphantly installed in the Metropolis.

Sir Thomas Taylor was appointed Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1948. From 1935 until 1948 he was professor of law at that university. It must be unusual for anyone to become principal of a university of which, at the time of his appointment, he was a professor, but this is what happened in the case of Sir Thomas. He has impressed us tonight with his oratory. That, however, is not surprising. When Sir Winston Churchill was given the degree of Doctor of Laws by Aberdeen University, Sir Thomas as professor of law had to make the oration. This so impressed Sir Winston that he took the unusual course of asking for a copy of the speech.

Sir Thomas's honours came upon him thick and fast. He was an M.A. of Aberdeen (with first-class honours in classics) in 1919 ; Fullerton and Ferguson scholar in classics 1919 ; LL.B. in 1922 ; senior advocate depute, 1934. He was called upon to act on many Government Committees, was professor of law at Aberdeen (1935–48) and was sheriff of Renfrew and Argyll (1945–48). We are greatly honoured by his consenting to address us tonight. (Loud applause.)

We welcome tonight too, Mr W. S. Duthie, O.B.E., M.P., who most of us here know, represents in parliament the county of his birth, and during the last war he was instrumental in keeping a good supply of good food in our kitchens. In the 1914–18 war he was in the Canadian forces with the Gordons and helped to edit " Letters from the Front " ; Sir John Taylor, K.B.E., C.M.G., Director-General of the Hispanic Council, London, was Ambassador to Mexico from 1950 to 1954 ; Rear-Admiral G. P. Thomson, C.B., C.B.E., an old friend, whose Sentiment " What the Royal Navy owes to Scotland " delivered in November, 1948, will be remembered by many of you. Professor Robert Cruickshank, F.R.C.P., who a month ago gave his interesting and amusing Sentiment on " Wit and Humour in the North-East " ; Dr Alex. Cruickshank, O.B.E., spent 24 years in the Sudan, was senior physician to the

Sudan Government in Khartoum, and for five years was lecturer in medicine in the Kitchener School of Medicine ; Rev. L. O. Williams, B.A., is minister of St Andrew's Presbyterian church in Goodmayes, Ilford.

Mr W. S. Duthie's Reply.

Mr W. S. Duthie, O.B.E., M.P., replying to the toast, said that presence at a gathering of the Caledonian Society brought memories flooding upon us. They thought of the great work of charity that the Society was engaged in ; but he feared that the Royal Scottish Corporation had attempts from the thriftless as well as appeals from the thrifty who had fallen by the way. This reminded him of the story of the dog which was induced to enter a river to secure a stick. Instead of swimming to the stick, the dog ran over the water, and back with the stick in his mouth. The dog's owner was thunderstruck. He tried again, and the same thing happened. In an ecstacy of delight the owner called a policeman and threw the stick into the pond, and asked him what he thought of this. The dog rushed over the water as before. The owner looked enquiringly at the policeman, who quickly said, " Your dog's a fraud, he canna swim."

Mr Duthie had been asked to give a reminiscence of the Gordons in the last war and with great gusto told the audience how in an alarm because a kebbock had broken loose, the Seventh Gordons had " Shot the Cheese."

The President gave the toast, " The Honorary Office-Bearers," and in doing so referred to Mr. Miller, the Hon. Secretary as one of the most efficient and popular secretaries this Society has ever had. " He is the right hand man of every President, the power behind the throne, and as long as he remains Secretary the Society is bound to flourish. He is a born organiser and very thorough and the smooth efficiency which characterises our dinners is due to his meticulous attention to detail. I am sure you would wish to thank him for his inestimable service to the Society and at the same time I wish to thank him for the great debt I owe to him."

The President also warmly thanked the Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A., for his valuable services ; Mr J. H. Robertson, C.A., Hon. Auditor, " a cheerful and willing worker," and the Hon. Historian, Mr William Will, C.B.E., whose latest volume of the " Chronicles " is in the press. (Applause.)

Mr Miller replied briefly and thanked the President for his encomiums.

During the evening Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave as his selection, " Mr MacLeod of Alnwick," " MacLennan's Overcoat," " Christmas Carousing " and " Leaving St Kilda." These, with our own Strathspey, made a fine selection.

The President thanked the Pipe-Major and also Mr Angus Stewart, who sang to us several Scots songs, and his accompanist Mr Joseph W. Storey.

" Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem closed an inspiring programme.

Ladies' Night, 25th April, 1957.

The night in the Session set apart for the entertainment of members' ladies and friends is the most important night in our social calendar. This event in 1957 has not been surpassed in brilliance in modern times. Dr. Macrae Stewart, our President, and Mrs Macrae Stewart received over 170 members and guests.

Following an excellent dinner, and before opening the programme, the President made sympathetic reference to the death of Past-President Sir Murdoch Macdonald, who, despite his foreign travels and business, and his work as a member of Parliament, had given great service to the Caledonian Society of London. A telegram bearing the Society's sympathy had been sent to Sir Murdoch's family, and a wreath had been acknowledged by his son.

After a short interval and the pledging of the loyal toasts, the President gave the annual toast, " Success to the Society." He said :

The Society is this year celebrating the 120th anniversary of its birth, It was founded in 1837, the year that Queen Victoria came to the throne, by a small band of Scots who decided to form a Society which would include men from all parts of Scotland. The Highland Society of London, founded in 1778 and still going strong today, had of necessity a restricted membership, and so the Caledonian Society of London came into being. The Highland Society may have been too restrictive but our Society, I regret to tell you, in its earlier years erred in the opposite direction for we have in our possession the minute showing that in February 1843, out of a total membership of 47, eight were Englishmen and one was an Irishman.

In those early days members had to wear Highland dress at meetings and the Society even dismissed a member of the Committee from his seat on the board for daring to appear in ordinary dress at the dinner on 30th November, 1842.

Dr Charles Hogg, a distinguished medical man who was President in 1869, was at a Caledonian reunion and was called to a patient. He was in full Highland dress, but he borrowed a large coat in which he completely

enveloped himself. Thus attired, he presented himself in his patient's room; but inadvertently the doctor allowed the head of his dirk to protrude between the buttons of his overcoat. This at once caught the eye of the sufferer, who begged the Doctor to reveal what was hidden from her view. Unable to resist this appeal Dr Hogg threw off the borrowed garment. The effect was magical. The lady was so charmed, especially with the red waistcoat, that from that moment her malady took a favourable turn, and the Doctor had the satisfaction at the end of an hour, of returning to receive the congratulations of his brother Caledonians on his remarkably successful treatment of a most critical case.

The physicians of these far off days lacked the advantages of modern medical science, but it would appear that they had very effective substitutes. This lady in question was probably a psycho-neurotic, and if modern Scottish doctors had the courage of Dr Hogg, and visited their neurotic lady patients in full Highland attire, there would probably be less need for modern electric shock therapy. (Laughter.)

The main objects of this newly-formed Society were " to promote good fellowship and brotherhood and to combine efforts for benevolent and national objects connected with Scotland," and these are the objects laid down in our Constitution today. At the first festival held at Beattie's Hotel in 1838, 12 members and 22 guests were present. The Society prospered. We read that at the annual banquet in 1844 at the London Tavern, no fewer than 140 gentlemen and 72 ladies were present. To the Caledonian Society of London belongs the honour of having first initiated the good custom of inviting ladies to sit at the table at public banquets.

To our monthly dinners came distinguished English guests and famous men from all parts of the Commonwealth, and at these dinners brilliant addresses were given by famous Scotsmen; and these addresses or Sentiments as we now term them as recorded in the " Chronicles " have " contributed materially to the records of topographical, biographical, historical and literary Scotland." Our Society, I submit, can modestly claim that throughout its 120 years' existence it has fulfilled its object of promoting good fellowship amongst Scotsmen in London.

Our most important object and the one in which we take the greatest pride is the support of two major Scottish Charities in London—The Royal Scottish Corporation and The Royal Caledonian Schools. It has been aptly said that acceptance of membership is an acceptance of service, and I am proud to record that our members have throughout the years nobly met their obligations. We contribute annually to these two great charities between £850 and £900, and in addition to this financial support 44 of our members serve on the Committee of Management of the Corporation, and 17 are directors of the Schools. The Royal Scottish Corporation, founded as long ago as 1611, and granted its first charter in 1665, the year of the great plague, has now on its pension roll 229 old and infirm Scots; and the Schools, initiated by Royal Charter in 1815, have the responsibility of caring for over 100 children.

Our Society is also very proud that in conjunction with the Highland Society of London it was instrumental in 1859 in raising that very famous regiment, The London Scottish. That was 98 years ago and we have maintained a close association with the Regiment throughout the years. Many past members of the Society and actually 20 of our present members served in the Regiment, and one of our number, Past-President Colonel Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., was for many years its commanding officer and is now its honorary colonel, an honour he shares with the Queen Mother.

The Caledonian Society of London has been served by outstanding men of great ability, men who have given years of ungrudging service and were and are unsparing of themselves in their work for the Society. By their noble work they have advanced the prestige of our native land in this great

Capital, and have set a very high standard for others to follow. We can I think, confidently claim that our Society today is worthily upholding the great traditions of the past. We give generously to charities ; large numbers regularly attend our monthly meetings and dinners we have brilliant sentiments or addresses by distinguished speakers, and many famous men are happy to attend as our guests. We can echo the words of Mr Robert Hepburn, President for eight years, when on being presented with a life size portrait of himself in 1857, that is 100 years ago, he said : " We have raised a standard in London around which honest hearts may rally, and we have not been unmindful of the claims of the orphans and fatherless nor neglectful of the tottering steps of age and infirmity."

Proud of our past and looking forward with confidence to a future of selfless service by our members, I am happy to give you the toast of " The Caledonian Society of London." (Applause.)

Mr John R. Aldridge, Vice-President, in proposing the toast, " Our Guests," said :

Among the 87 ladies with us tonight I am glad to see Mrs Rintoul and Mrs Abernethy, whose husbands, Past-Presidents of the Society, we remember with affection. (Hear, hear.)

Even if I had the eloquence of a Demosthenes or a Burke, I could not hope to do justice to the toast of "The Ladies." I am fortified by the knowledge, however, that at no time in history has woman ever expected to receive justice at the hands of man. (Laughter.) The woman, alas, always pays.

All married people know that the relations they acquire by law take far more interest in them than do their blood relations. I remember my Gaelic speaking mother-in-law asking me the first time I met her, " What like would you be getting ? " I was non-plussed. But I was ultra-violated when next morning I was visited at my hotel by a gentleman from the Scottish Widows who wanted to know if I was insured. (Laughter.)

No, no, the relations you acquire by marriage, especially your wife, take the greatest interest in you. At this Gaelic speaking spot I told you about—it is called STYX and I didn't believe it either at first—they used to tell a tale about a coo which I thought gave milk but it turned out to be a dog in Gaelic.

Translated it was about Tonal who came down from the hills complete with bonnet, kilt and brogans to visit a relative in the big city. Arrived there he boarded a bus, stated his destination, and asked the conductress, " How much ? " " Sixpence for you," she said, " and thrippence for the dug." "But I have no dog," was the reply. " What's that on your lap ? " said the girl. " That is my sporran," said Tonal. And the wifie sitting next to him said, " I thocht it wis queer he wouldna' tak a biscuit." (Laughter.)

We bask somewhat in the glory we have acquired through the fact that one of our Past-Presidents, the Very Rev. Dr Scott, is this year's Moderator of the Church of Scotland. He has many good stories. One relates to two ladies in Glasgow having a " stairheid gossip." " Hiv ye heard the rumour aboot Mrs MacPherson ? " said one. " Heard it ? " said the other, " I started it." (Laughter.)

Well, ladies, there was much more I wished to discuss with you, but as you see we are not alone. For the next half hour or so I had hoped to have a quiet sociable natter with you, and to discuss one or two of the husbands, detail what goes on at our Little Dinners to which ladies are *not* invited, and touch upon some subjects which in Victorian times have been described as " secrets of the boudoir." But there it is. We cannot possibly enjoy a good going gossip in the presence of men, because as we all know, men have absolutely no idea of how to gossip.

I'm getting black looks from the honorary secretary for taking up so much time so I'll tell you who's here.

First there is Sir James Crombie, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G. He is one Exciseman the Deil has not been able to get away with. Sir James is the Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise, and we thank him for relieving us of entertainment duty. (Hear, hear.) Last December he charmed us all, when replying for the Guests, by reading extracts from the records of his Department which dealt with Robbie Burns. Robbie was a first-class exciseman.

Rev. Dr Moffett needs no introduction to a Scottish audience. We all recall the excellent Sentiment he delivered on " Faith and Freedom in Scotland," in November, 1950. (Hear, hear.)

Duncan McIntyre, he too, is no stranger to this audience. Rev. F. R. Mitchell we are always glad to have Mr Mitchell at our dinners. Frank Webster : Mr Webster has given us the pleasure of his company on many occasions.

As our President holds high office in the Ilford Scottish Association, it is natural that tonight he should be well supported by guests who are responsible for the direction of that Association. Amongst that number are Mr Anderson, Vice-President, Mr MacKenzie, Mr Paul and Mr McAlpine, all directors of the Ilford Scottish Association.

We also welcome Mr J. R. Slater, the honorary secretary of the London Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardineshire Association.

I now come to the bravest man in the room—the man who is shortly to reply on behalf of the ladies and other guests, to this toast. You may think it strange gentlemen, that the ladies cannot speak for themselves, but I gather that when the ladies heard that a sailor was to do the job, they were quite content to place themselves in his arms, bearing out the maxim that all the nice girls love a sailor. (Hear, hear.) And, indeed, Admiral Sir William Davis, K.C.B., D.S.O. and Bar is one of the best loved personalities in the Navy today. He has had a brilliant career since leaving Osborne and Dartmouth. He got his first D.S.O. for his work at the Sicily landing, and his second for his part in destroying two German convoys in the Bay of Biscay. His C.B. came in 1952 and his K.C.B. in 1956.

Since 1954 Sir William has been vice-chief of Naval Staff and with the world in its present state Sir William can truly say life has never a dull moment for him. I like to think that Sir William's success was inevitable : his mother came from Ross-shire. He had two years with Admiral Sir Roderick McGrigor as Chief of Staff ; that must have helped a bit. As a junior officer he raised some eyebrows by tearing around at excessive speeds on a motor cycle, and he has apparently never got over his love of speed. Recently he bought a new car, and within a few days sent it back to the garage with the complaint that it appeared to be sluggish between 85 and 90 miles an hour. (Laughter.) Not only is he a bold man, he is a fast man, so don't say I didn't warn you, ladies. (Laughter.)

We do appreciate, Sir William, your sparing the time to be with us tonight, and we thank you for undertaking to reply to this toast, which is offered most sincerely to all guests. (Loud applause.)

Admiral Sir William Davis, received with applause, thanked the Society for inviting him to reply to the guests' toast on Ladies' Night, and asked :

Would it not have been more appropriate if one of the charming ladies here tonight had to speak instead of me ? I can see by looking round how many of them would welcome the chance of taking my place ; or even would it not have been better to seek among your speakers one of what I like to regard as

the professionals in the art of oratory ? The Church—Dr Moffett, who many of us have heard both from the pulpit and on other occasions, and whose name is one to be conjured with ? The Politician—I beg your pardon, the Statesman, as one must be after a dinner of this excellence ? Squadron Leader Cooper, who has contributed much to the government of this country and to the well-being of his constituency ; and above all the stage ?—and who has not admired Mr Duncan McIntyre's many and varied performances ? (Hear, hear.)

May I thank Mr Aldridge for his kind remarks about my past—many escapades I am glad to say have now lapsed into obscurity. I can only attribute them to my Scottish blood, as I am sure you will agree, the Scots are a turbulent race. Some years ago I looked at what I can only believe was an aprocryphal document produced by a Scottish ancestor of mine at the beginning of the 18th century. It was, I suspect, a very bogus family tree dating back to the Kings of Orkney in the 11th century all purporting to be our forebears. Well, there was one thing that stood out in this document—only about one in three of the people mentioned died peacefully in their beds ! (Laughter and applause.)

I was looking the other day at the objects of your Society, and the one that struck me most was that clause referring to the promotion of mutual help, good fellowship and love of their own country by Scotsmen. May I borrow from Sir Walter Scott :

Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself has said
This is my own, my native land ?

This is as noticeable outside the United Kingdom as it is in the U.K. There is hardly a place in the world where it is not evident. In the course of the last 35 years I have had in the Navy, the great good fortune to see most of the world, and I have many happy and perhaps convivial memories of festivities such as St Andrew's Night at places like Aden, Abadan, Ceylon, Hong-Kong, Mauritius, even the Seychelles ; in fact about the only place I know of where there is no Scottish Society is Tristan da Cunha. (Laughter.)

We in the Royal Navy owe a tremendous debt to Scotland. Not only do Scots build many of our best ships and produce the finest example of marine engineering skill in all the world, but you also provide us with an exceedingly plentiful supply of naval officers, many of whom have risen to the highest ranks. Let us look for a moment at those who have held the post of First Sea Lord in recent years : Admiral Lord Cunningham of Hyndhope, who, against tremendous odds, held the Mediterranean for us ; and as a fighting Admiral of the first order will go down to history as one of the great sailors. His successor, Sir John Cunningham, an officer of outstanding ability and who is directing with tremendous skill the destinies of the I.P.C. ; Lord Fraser who sank the Scharnhorst and commanded our fleet in the Pacific with such distinction in the closing stages of the war ; Admiral of the Fleet Sir Rhoderick McGrigor is the present and was in the past rector of Aberdeen University, a great sailor and a great gentleman. (Applause.) And now, for the first time in over a decade we have not a fullblooded Scotsman in the shape of Lord Mountbatten as our present First Sea Lord. The Government, ruled of course by Scotsmen, naturally appointed a Scotsman, Lord Selkirk, as our present political head as First Lord, and a mighty fine job he is doing at his post. Gentlemen, I remember hearing a disgruntled Sassenach say when Admiral McGrigor was appointed as First Lord, " It is no good ; the First Sea Lord's post is a closed shop for Scotsmen." (Laughter.)

We have some characters in the Admiralty, one of which is the messenger who looks after the First Sea Lord's affairs, and when Lord Mountbatten came he found it hard to understand what the messenger said until the messenger had undergone what the educationalist would call a " refresher course " in the English language ! (Laughter.)

Your President is a great Gaelic speaker, and I would like to tell him this language has been and is used in the Navy, for during the war Admiral Sir R. McGrigor and Admiral Sir Robert Burnett exchanged signals of greeting in Gaelic after a satisfactory action, and all the communication ratings in the ship thought it was a private code known only to these two distinguished Scotsmen ! (Laughter.)

Again, on behalf of the guests here, I thank our hosts for a wonderful dinner, and above all for your traditional good fellowship. (Applause.)

Past-President William Dalgarno, in proposing the health of the President, said he felt highly honoured in being entrusted with that, perhaps the most important toast of the session. Their President, who was just concluding the very serious work of his session was a fervent Highlander, who was born at Lochcarron. He is the son of an ardent Free Kirk Elder, whence came the sincerity that occupied our chair in 1956–57.

Dr Macrae Stewart was educated at Dingwall Academy ; and from there he passed to Aberdeen University ; where he graduated in Arts and then in medicine, in which he took his degree in surgery, with honours. His life since his university days has been one of great activity. First he was in general practice in Manchester and he moved to London to become the senior partner in a large practice in Essex.

Like all busy men, Dr Macrae Stewart finds time to give his valuable services to others. His main social work, outside his medical practice, has chiefly concerned Scottish associations. He is a Past-President of the Ilford Scottish Association, and a Vice-President ; a life member of the " Clans," a member of the Burns Club of London and a committee member of London, Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association. Although not a native of the Three Counties, he qualified for membership when he married a lassie frae Buckie, who is also a graduate of Aberdeen University. Our President is also a life managing governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation, and a member of the Aberdeen University Club.

Mr President, continued Mr Dalgarno, I have prepared some notes, and have taken the elementary precaution of bringing them with me (laughter)—unlike the minister who mislaid the notes of his sermon, and made a clean breast of it from the pulpit. " My friends," he said, " I may as well tell you that I have mislaid my sermon, and I must ask you to bear with me, as I can only pass on whatever words the Good Lord puts into my mouth. But if you can manage to come to the evening service I can assure you you'll hear something worth listening to. " (Laughter.)

Dr Macrae Stewart, you will agree, is a lad o' pairts, and I would take this opportunity of saying that he has produced a most successful session. (Hear, hear.) The standard of the Sentiments has indeed been first-class, even if the Aberdeenshire accent and flavour have been dominant. He has filled the chair with dignity. We have appreciated his shrewd and wise judgment, and his kindly and generous spirit. His outstanding distinction in my opinion has been his deep sincerity. (Applause.) He has well upheld the traditions of the Caledonian Society of London. Dr Macrae Stewart's consistency stands well out when compared with the elder in his native county of Ross-shire. The Wee Free Kirk was threatening to instal an organ. The senior elder opposed the proposal to the extent of declaring that if the organ came in he would go out. Well, the organ was installed and the elder stuck to his intention, but he attended instead an English Church where an organ had been in full

blast for several years. Questioned as to his inconsistency, the elder said: "I dinna gie a docken aboot an organ in an English Kirk, bit am no gaun to stan' for an organ in the Hoose o' God." (Laughter.)

This is a toast that requires neither eloquence or argument in order to commend it to your instant acceptance. It is "Our President," and I ask you to drink it with Caledonian honours. (Loud applause.)

The thanks of the audience for the beautiful rendering of Scots songs by the St Andrew's Singers, a quartet, and individual members of the party, were given by the President, who also thanked Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., for his splendid selection.

As is customary at this meeting, the Past-Presidents present saluted and congratulated the President, and Mrs. Macrae Stewart pinned the gold badge of the Society to the coat of Sir George Campbell, K.C.I.E., the immediate Past-President.

The Society's Strathspey, "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem ended a successful gathering.

"Auld Lang Syne": An Innovation.

The singing of "Auld Lang Syne" was an innovation, the four verses which were sung individually, having been contributed by the following ladies: Mrs Macrae Stewart, Mrs Campbell Mackenzie, Mrs Robert Eadie, and Mrs Graham MacLean.

Annual General Meeting.

The annual meeting covering session 1956–57 was held at the Society's headquarters on the 7th November, 1957, Dr D. Macrae Stewart, M.A., President, in the chair.

He reported with deep sorrow, the death on 24th April, 1957, of Past-President Sir Murdoch MacDonald, K.C.M.G., C.B., a member since 1924 and President during the year 1937–38. A Resolution expressing appreciation of his work, and sympathy with Sir Murdoch's sons, was passed.

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A., submitted the annual financial statement, which showed a satisfactory position. As in past years, £50 each was voted to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools.

Mr John Kinloch and Mr James Mason were elected members of the Society and the resignation of Dr J. B. Patrick was accepted with regret.

The Secretary read a report from Past-President William Will, C.B.E., on the visit to South Africa of Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., during the summer, when the latter had, with great acceptance, judged the piping competitions at the 25th Annual Scottish Gathering held in Johannesburg during August.

Past-President William Will, C.B.E.

The President intimated the resignation from the office of Honorary Historian of Past-President William Will, C.B.E., consequent on his having taken up residence in Scotland. The following Resolutions covering Past-President Will's services to the Society were passed with acclamation.

1. " That the Council and members place on record their appreciation of the long and valuable service rendered to the Society by Past-President William Will, C.B.E., a member since 1918, President in 1924–25, and Honorary Historian from 1925 to 1957. His constant concern for the Society's welfare, his zealous promotion of its objects, his wise counsel in its direction, and his able guidance of its activities, have always inspired and impressed his colleagues, who will long remember his jealous regard for the maintenance of the Society's high reputation and good name.

"As Honorary Historian, an office he held with distinction for 32 years, he was responsible for the compilation and issue of five volumes of the Chronicles, an arduous task, which not only involved the accurate recording of the Society's proceedings throughout that long period, but ensured their permanent preservation. In addition to acknowledging the debt which the Society owes to Past-President Will for his invaluable contribution to its advancement, his colleagues also recognise the unobtrusive and kindly way in which at all times he discharged his duties. His pleasing personality and charming manner endeared him to all who were privileged to possess his friendship.

" With affection and respect, the members express the hope that he will enjoy happiness and contentment in the land of his birth."

2. "That in recognition of his meritorious service to Scotland and to the Society, Past-President William Will, C.B.E., be elected an Honorary Member. "

It was decided that these Resolutions should be prepared in the form of an Illuminated Address and sent to Past-President Will.

The President welcomed as his successor in the chair for the year 1957–58, Mr John R. Aldridge, whom he invested with the insignia of the Presidency. Mr Aldridge expressed his gratitude for this honour and moved that Dr D. Macrae Stewart be awarded the Gold Badge of the Society as a mark of appreciation of his services as President.

The following other officers for the new session were

elected: Vice-President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D.; Honorary Secretary and Honorary Historian, Mr W. M. Miller; Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A.; Honorary Auditor, Mr J. H. Robertson, C.A. To take the place of the retiring members, Messrs James Aitken, Alexander Dowie, M.B.E., and T. M. Munro were elected to the Council.

JOHN R. ALDRIDGE

President, 1957–1958

CHAPTER II.

1957–1958: Mr John R. Aldridge, *President.*

Another Aberdonian President; Lord Strathclyde on "The Scottish Office"; "Gaelic Songs of Scotland," by Mr J. C. M. Campbell; "Burns," by Mr John Wilson, M.A; Death of Past-President William Will, C.B.E.; Rev. Ian R. N. Miller on "The Noblest Prospect"; "The Backward E'e," by Mr W. E. Swinton; Mr J. Nixon Browne, M.P. on "Scottish Characteristics"; The President on the Society; Sir Sydney Littlewood on "The Scots."

IN the long history of the Society we have had many Presidents who were natives of Aberdeenshire. Mr John Reid Aldridge, whose grandfather served in the H.L.I. during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny, was born in Aberdeen in 1894. He was educated at Gordon's College, one of the two prominent schools in the Granite City.

He came to London at an early age and was employed as a boy reporter on the long defunct *Morning Standard*. There were obvious signs that the *Morning Standard* was on its last legs, so the President emigrated again, this time to the United States, where he joined the Press side of the General Electric Company. From there he moved to Montreal, Canada, and worked with the *Gazette*.

On the declaration of the 1914 War he enlisted in the Royal Highlanders of Canada (The Black Watch). He was awarded a Military Medal and a commission in the field at the Battle of the Somme, and was twice mentioned in dispatches. After being severely wounded in 1918, he returned to England, where, upon recovery, he undertook a number of military duties.

At the end of the War he joined the London Press Department of the Canadian National Railways, leaving them in 1928 to join the organisation of Sir Basil Clarke, who specialised in

propaganda work for international and national causes and for large commercial undertakings.

He was asked to assist in building up a control for greyhound racing which had captured the imagination of the public in the years 1927 and 1928, and since 1930 he has been associated with the administration of the control of the sport through the National Greyhound Racing Society of Great Britain, of which he is Secretary.

After his marriage at Crown Court Church, London, in 1931, he moved to the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, where during the Second World War, he served with the East Surrey Home Guard and A.R.P. services. He was appointed to the local Bench in 1944. He is also a member of the Committee advising on the affairs of Canadian ex-servicemen resident in this country.

He has always shown a practical interest in the two great London Scottish charities. For many years he has been a member of the Committee of Management of the Royal Scottish Corporation and of its New Applicants Sub-Committee; thus he comes into direct contact with our compatriots upon whom adversity has fallen. His sympathetic consideration of their needs has always impressed his colleagues.

The President's favourite belief, based upon experience, is that a good Scots accent is a passport to anywhere.

At the General Meeting on the 21st November, 1947, held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, the deaths on the 16th November, 1957 of John Weir, O.B.E., J.P., F.S.A.(Scot.), a member since 1914, and R. Tweedie Wilson, a member since 1933, were reported. Resolutions covering their work for the Society, and sympathy with their relatives, were passed.

At the first Little Dinner of the session, on 21st November, 1957, Mr. John R. Aldridge, the new President, was warmly welcomed to the chair. As in former years the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, was the venue.

After the loyal toast had been honoured, the President introduced Lord Strathclyde, P.C., Minister of State for Scotland, and thanked him for accepting an invitation to address the Society on

The Scottish Office.

Lord Strathclyde, who received a hearty reception, which he acknowledged, said :

I doubt if there is a part of Scotland more Scottish tonight than this room. It is probable that there is not a city or county but could find among us someone who knew nearly all there is to know about it. This, in itself, is intimidating and I would not dare to pose as sufficiently expert to talk to you on any part of our country lest someone might rise to refute me. So I don't propose to make that mistake.

Thinking over what was left to me, Mr Chairman, I decided that I might speak to you about an unknown office. If I call it the Scottish Office, it is only for convenience, for I must tell you (in case some expert in the audience rises to correct me) that there is no single Government Department of that name. Under the circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that so little is known about the operations of the four departments under the Secretary of State for Scotland. Yet, increasingly, the work done through these departments affects all Scotland and I think it might be useful if every Scot knew a little about them, if only to understand more clearly the reason for some of the things done ultimately for his benefit.

To find a starting point one doesn't have to go far from this room since in fact, for all practical purposes the story began some seventy years ago in a small but very beautiful building in Whitehall called Dover House : true it is that between 1707 and 1745 there was from time to time a Secretary of State for Scotland, but thereafter there was a lapse of 140 years until in 1885 the first Secretary for Scotland, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, set up his office there. Ever since (with the exception of some fifteen or sixteen years when it was out of use for structural reasons) Dover House has remained the outpost of Scotland in London.

To begin with, it represented nearly the only bit of Government that Scotland possessed, and I feel that the Duke of Richmond must have felt pretty lonely, for after all, he was a single Minister and at that not of the first rank.

It is a measure of the development that has taken place in the intervening years that, today, the Secretary of State is one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State with a senior Minister as his deputy, three Parliamentary Under-Secretaries and two law officers (the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor-General) to assist him. In Scotland itself the Government's headquarters are St Andrew's House, but there are also various offices and institutions scattered throughout the country.

Dover House, of course, remains. And because I am speaking to you in London, I want to say something about the work that still goes on there before sketching in some of the details of what happens elsewhere.

In 1885, Dover House was *The* Scottish Office. It represented the centre where everything affecting government in Scotland happened. It was the seat of government. Today, it's merely the ear. Yet without it, much of the work done in Edinburgh would be impossible.

The four hundred miles that separate London from Edinburgh present formidable difficulties in administration and it is the job of the small staff in this outpost to overcome them. These officers, drawn from the departments in Edinburgh, maintain close liaison with the London Ministries and act as collectors and transmitters of information in both directions. By private telephone lines and a teleprinter service, the two capital cities are linked together administratively.

During the Parliamentary sessions, the Scottish Ministers have their

offices in Dover House and senior officials from Edinburgh use it as their headquarters when they come down to do their business either at Westminster or in Whitehall. It would be true to say that, at least when Parliament is in session, there is no busier office in the whole of London. So, although its function has changed with the passing of the years, Dover House still remains an important centre for Scotland in the heart of London.

It is recognised as such even by people not intimately concerned with government. This is proved by the questions that pour into it daily. Anyone at a loss for information about Scotland turns to it almost at once. Not long ago, for example, a lady phoned up the Liaison Officer of the Scottish Home Department and demanded to know where she could find a Scottish housemaid. " I have always found the Scots domestic servants to be honest and efficient," she said. " I have just lost one. Where can I get another ? " When the officer attempted to explain that this was not among his functions, she was quite indignant. " Nonsense," she said, brushing aside his protestation, " you are the Scottish *Home* Department. If you don't know the answer, who does ? "

Sometimes the resourceful staff of the office are hard put to it to deal with the problems thrust upon them, but my experience is that they are seldom defeated. Certainly, it is true to say that around this office the administrative history of our country has grown. The decisions taken in its rooms in the three score years and ten of its existence have changed the history of Scotland. Some of these decisions I should like to try to isolate for you tonight.

The first was that the new Secretary for Scotland should become directly responsible for a number of functions which had been vested in Whitehall departments and indirectly for the work of certain statutory boards in Scotland. For example, the Board of Supervision, which was concerned with the Poor Law, the Fishery Board and the Lunacy Board—all became his responsibility. It was also his business to deal with law and order, education, poor relief, public health, local government and fisheries. Clearly the post was not intended to be a sinecure.

But this was only the beginning. Shortly he found himself responsible for the Board of Agriculture for Scotland and then later, for the Scottish Board of Health. It was out of this new responsibility that he got his first assistant. The work undertaken by the Board of Health was so important that it was decided to appoint a Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health for Scotland. Responsibilities continued to increase. By 1926, it was recognised that the work done at the Scottish Office merited an enhanced status and the Secretary for Scotland was elevated to the rank of one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

Forty years had passed between the setting up of the office at Dover House and this major elevation. The changes that have taken place since, however, have been of even greater significance. In 1926, the pattern of Scottish administration was, to say the least, irregular. Some of the Secretary of State's functions were discharged by officials working in his office and under his direction. For other functions, however, he had merely a general responsibility and he could find himself in the somewhat uncomfortable position of having to answer in Parliament for what a particular Board operating under the direction of its chairman and members did rather more closely than the Board answered to him. This was clearly unsatisfactory. In 1928, some of the old Boards were converted into statutory departments. The Board of Agriculture was replaced by the Department of Agriculture. The Board of Health became the Department of Health. Education came into line with both of these departments and moved its headquarters from London to Edinburgh and a division of the Scottish Office at Dover House opened its doors in Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh. It was obviously time to review the whole system. In the late 1930's, a Committee was appointed to do this job, and on

its recommendations the present system of central administration in Scotland is based.

The essence of the system they suggested was that the Secretary of State should hold the baby—the whole of it. In 1939, all the various pieces of Scottish central administration—boards, offices, departments, etc., for which the Secretary of State had responsibility suffered a change. Full power was, in the legal phrase, vested in him and all the multifarious duties were re-allocated between the four major departments that we know today—the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, the Scottish Education Department, the Department of Health for Scotland and a new department, the Scottish Home Department. All of them now worked in the name of the Secretary of State and by his direction. In this year, the scattered remnants were gathered together under one roof at St Andrew's House.

Throughout the whole period, there had been a growing recognition that as much Scottish business as possible must be transacted in Scotland itself. Increasingly, too, Scots people insisted in recognising their Secretary of State as something more than a Minister in charge of a specific number of statutory functions : in their view, he was Scotland's Minister. Everything that concerned the welfare of Scotland began to find its way on to his desk. By 1940, it was apparent that this was more than one Minister and an assistant could shoulder and he was given a second Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State to share the burden. Even this wasn't enough. In 1951, the office which I now hold of Minister of State was created and, at the beginning of the following year, yet another Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State took office.

This, then, is the broad picture of how the Scottish Office developed. The more cynical among you might be inclined to regard it as a prime example of what has been satirically described as Parkinson's Law. This is a mythical law under which it is said the fewer ships that the Admiralty have at their command, the more Civil Servants and Ministers are needed to deploy them. Just in case you are thinking that this may be the case in Scotland, I would like to probe the organisation a little more deeply, and in so doing, dispel any such thoughts.

No-one needs to look for work in the Scottish departments. The effect of what one might call the evolution of devolution has been to commit the Secretary of State to a range of work that requires no fewer than eight Ministers to cover in England and Wales. From this you will gather that those under him have not all the time in the world to play with.

Broadly, the work is organised in the following way. Under the Secretary of State, the Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State are given the general oversight of certain blocks of work. These duties may be changed from time to time, but at present Mr Nixon Browne is responsible for housing and allied subjects, health, town and country planning and local government ; Mr Niall Macpherson deals with education, police, fire and civil defence, criminal justice, children, social and miscellaneous services, industry and development, electricity and roads ; and Lord John Hope supervises agriculture, food, fisheries and forestry. I myself have the responsibility under the Secretary of State for general oversight of the business of all the departments, and in particular for industry and development, the Highlands and Islands, and, of course, Scottish business in the House of Lords.

Administratively, the Secretary of State is advised by a Permanent Under-Secretary of State who is the senior Civil Servant in Scotland. It is his duty to advise the Ministers on questions involving Government policy in Scotland where more than one of his departments is concerned, and on questions which fall outside the province of any of them. Then come the four major departments, each of them equal in status and headed by a Secretary who is responsible for the work of his department direct to the Secretary of State.

Generally speaking, the work of the four departments corresponds to the work of similar named departments in England but there are quite significant departures. For example, the Department of Health not only covers the field of health services which are, in England and Wales, the Ministry of Health responsibility : it is also responsible for much of the work done south of the Border by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, including town and country planning, housing, water and drainage. The Scottish Home Department is not only comparable to the Home Office : it is charged with work which, in England, is done by the Prisons Commission, the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, the Lord Chancellor's Office and, for good measure, some of the work done in England by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The Department of Agriculture now does nearly all the work of its opposite number in Whitehall. except the supervision of the fishing industry which is looked after by the Scottish Home Department, and some of the functions of the Ministry of Food which, in Scotland, are distributed over the whole four departments, The Scottish Education Department is probably the only one of the four departments which is not charged with a greater variety of work than the Ministry of Education. The history of all this distribution of functions in Scotland would, in itself, make up an interesting and significant story, but probably this is not the place or the time to tell it.

One thing, however, I should make plain. In these days when there is much loose talk about the evils of bureaucracy it is well to be clear that the Scottish departments have no separate statutory existence of their own, nor have they powers and responsibility other than their responsibility to the Secretary of State. Whatever they do, they do at his direction. If one of their actions is questioned, it is the Secretary of State who must answer for it in Parliament and elsewhere, and if they make mistakes, he must " carry the can."

When Mr Truman came to the White House for the first time, he placed on his desk a notice which stated in large capital letters : " THE BUCK STOPS HERE ! " What that means in Scottish terms can scarcely be catalogued. To give you an idea, let me say this, that the Secretary of State is responsible for agriculture, fisheries, the generation and the distribution of electricity, economic development (including the Highlands and Islands), new towns, the general structure and finance of local government, private legislation, local government services which include education, housing, public health, water supply and drainage, prevention of river pollution, town and country planning, roads, welfare services, police, fire and civil defence. Pausing for breath, let me proceed : national health service, lunacy and mental deficiency, public order including services connected with courts of law, the prerogative of mercy, approved schools, probation and remand homes, prison and borstal services. Nor is that all. There is a welter of miscellaneous services which include licensing, State management districts, regulation of shops, theatres and cinemas and the representation of the people. All these come within the ambit of his duties.

And in making out this list, I have not included the joint responsibility which he holds with other Ministers. For example, he is jointly responsible for the Forestry Commission and the Herring Industry Board. For what each of these bodies does in Scotland, however, he alone is responsible.

Even this lengthy catalogue is not complete without some mention of the part that the Secretary of State has to play as a member of the Cabinet. This duty—arduous and of the utmost importance—is fundamental to all the Secretary of State's other responsibilities, for by his membership of the Cabinet, he is enabled to ensure that Scotland's problems and aspirations are promptly and thoroughly considered at the highest level.

It will be seen, even from this inadequate outline of the work of the Scottish departments, that the Secretary of State and his officers are not given a great deal of leisure time. During the Parliamentary session, Ministers have to divide their time between London and Scotland. When Parliament is up, they are invariably to be found at their desks in St Andrew's House or out and about seeing what is happening in the fields which are their concern. It is a life which demands all the physical and intellectual resources that the holder of the office can bring to bear on it.

I don't think that as a Nation we realise how fortunate we have been in those who have held the office of Secretary of State in recent years or the debt we owe to them for so ungrudgingly and patiently bearing the burden with all its vexations, anxieties and tribulations and accepting the physical and mental strains which are involved. Only a man who truly loves his country would dream of tackling it; only such a man could find the strength of purpose necessary to enable him to persevere in it. (Loud applause.)

The President thanked Lord Strathclyde for his erudite, informative, factual and entertaining Sentiment, and proposed his health with Caledonian honours.

Distinguished Guests.

Councillor John R. Hannay submitted the toast, "Our Guests," during which he welcomed, not only Lord Strathclyde, but Sir Andrew Innes, K.B.E., Q.C., Air Chief Marshal Sir George Pirie, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C., D.F.C., Sir William Alexander Drummond, K.B.E., C.B., MacLaren of MacLaren and Achleskine, the Rev. Fred. R. Mitchell, many members of the London Scottish Regiment, and Mr Richard Edmonds, Chairman of Town Planning of the London County Council, who responded to the toast.

The Scots "A Great and Hospitable People."

In an amusing and witty speech, Mr Edmonds referred to his experience of Scots and Scotland. He was particularly grateful for the kindness shown to him during his career as a young journalist in Glasgow, and later during his army service, when he said a Sergeant-major of the Royal Scots did his best to make him a soldier capable of accepting the responsibility of commissioned rank. Notwithstanding the abuse which that warrant officer had hurled at him, he subsequently found that the firebrand had given him a surprisingly good commendation. He concluded by describing the Scots as "a great and hospitable people."

The London Scottish.

The President on proposing continued success to the

London Scottish Regiment, referred to the Society's close association with the regiment and concluded with these words : " In adversity steadfast, in victory modest, the London Scottish has achieved an unassailable reputation and gained an illustrious name. We are proud to pay our tribute to the regiment." The toast was drunk with enthusiasm.

The musical part of the programme was provided by Mr James MacPhee, who in his pleasing tenor voice sang " Bonnie Wee Thing," " Nancy's Hair," " Deidre's Farewell to Scotland," and " Bonnie Strathyre." The singer and his accompanist, Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., were thanked by the President.

The pipe selections were, on this occasion, given by Pipe-Major L. V. N. de Laspee (carrying the Banner of the Queen Mother) and Pipe-Sergeant W. Ferguson (carrying the Banner of the City of Aberdeen), of the London Scottish Regiment, who gave the following selections : " The Brig o' Don," Mrs MacDonald of Dunach," " Arniston Castle," " Grey Bob," " The Cock o' the North " and " Highland Laddie."

Two new members, Mr John Kinloch and Mr James Mason, were received by the President.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., played the Society's Strathspey, " The Caledonian Society of London." A harmonious evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

The December meetings of the Society were held on Thursday, 19th December, 1957, at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, the President, John R. Aldridge in the chair.

At the Little Dinner, after the loyal toasts had been honoured, the President reported that consequent on his appeal for the Royal Scottish Corporation, the satisfactory sum of £666 had been raised by the Society, its members and friends.

Mr. J. C. M. Campbell, a member of the Society, then gave his Sentiment, " Gaelic Songs of Scotland," which he illustrated frequently by singing feelingly in Gaelic many of the passages to which he referred. He said :

I welcome this opportunity to tell you something about our Gaelic Bards and their works. The subject is a vast one and in the time available I can only deal with one or two of the most famous of the Bards.

At the end of the fifteenth century a Highland Chief wrote a poem (in Gaelic) to a friend of his saying he ought to take down the songs that were being sung in the country and this he did. That was four hundred years ago and an interesting thing about this collection—we call it the Book of the Dean of Lismore—is that it was lost for the next 250 years. But the songs were not lost. People went on singing them as though they had never been taken down, just as I heard my parents doing when I was young.

We know this oral tradition goes back much further than four hundred years *before* the Book of the Dean of Lismore. The reasons for our certainty are these. The Dean's collection is full of ballads of a kind that flourished in the fifteenth century, as they did all over Europe. But they are recastings in the new form of something much older and some of them have an older metrical shape than others and words that were obsolete long before the Dean's time. Their theme is the heroic deeds of the Fingalian heroes, who are said to have flourished in Ireland in the third century. Now the Book of Leinster was compiled in 1160 from other sources, and *it* says there were a hundred and twenty prime tales about the Fingalians in circulation then. So the Scottish Gaelic ballads of the fifteenth century were nothing but a new development of something much older. And it's significant that in all their thousands of lines not a trace of the Middle Ages has got into them. They are still the record of a way of life remembered since pre-Christian times.

But it is strange what tricks oral tradition can play with historical facts, and one of the oldest is the one that sets the Fingalians fighting against Manus Righ Lochlinn, Magnus King of Norway. As the author of the ballads is represented by Ossian, son of Fingal, and he spends a lot of his time in extreme old age with St Patrick, we must be allowed to date the Fingalians before the coming of St Patrick to Ireland. That is a long time before the first Norse raiders appeared at the end of the eighth century, and longer still before Magnus Barelegs the last great Norse conqueror who is said to have adopted the kilt and was killed in Ireland in 1109. But tradition is like that. The Fingalians were the great Keltic heroes and Magnus became the eternal enemy—they just had to fight each other.

In the ballad of Aillte it is told that Fingal omitted to invite two of his warriors, Raoine and Aillte, to a feast. The heroes in umbrage left the Fiann and took service with Manus for a year and a day. The ballad describes how :

> " The wife of the King of Norway of the dark shields
> Gave deep love a love that was not slight,
> To handsome Aillte of the sharp-edged weapons
> And stole away secretly with him."

In fact they eloped back to the Fingalians, and the King of Norway came after them with the fleets of nine Kings and all their people. In the ensuing battle, half the Fingalians were killed, including Aillte, but none of the followers of the King of Lochlinn escaped, except a few who strangely enough eventually turned up in Greece. The battle between the Lochlinners and the Fingalians is the subject of another epic poem which makes dramatic use of the emblems of the heroes. King Manus looks out as the hosts appear over the hills in all directions. He asks what is on the banner of each in turn, and at every reply his fear increases.

The Ballad of Caolte.

Most of the heroes have some supernatural attribute. Fionn or Fingal was descended from a God (through his Mother) and could see the future by biting his thumb. Caolite was an extraordinary swift runner and one of the most remarkable things he did once was to round up two of every kind of animal, including birds. He also killed the Giant of the five heads and rescued the daughter of King Comhain from him. The battle between them went on

all day, until the giant glanced sideways to tell the position of the sun. Caolte decapitated him then and had his own wounds healed by the Princess.

The Ballad of Diarmad.

The Fingalian hero who possessed the fatal attribute of charm was Fingal's nephew Diarmad. The Clan Campbell has the doubtful honour of claiming him a their progenitor. On one occasion when Diarmad was visiting his uncle he was called upon to quell a fight of dogs. In the excitement his countenance became flushed and Grainne, Fingal's wife, glanced at him and immediately fell in love with him. Diarmad did not share his aunt's passion, but she threatened to kill herself unless he fled with her, so he complied. Fingal discovered them in a lonely glen and he planned a curious means of destroying Diarmad. Fingal pretended friendship and suggested a boar hunt. When the boar was killed Fingal asked Diarmad to measure it from tail to head. Now Diarmad, in common with Achilles had a vulnerable heel and while measuring the boar one of the bristles pierced the fatal spot. As the blood flowed from the wound Diarmad asked Fingal for a drink from his healing cup, which would have saved Diarmad's life had he been allowed to drink from it, but Fingal refused. When Grainne saw that Diarmad was dead she took a spear and ended her own life. So much for the Fingalians.

In the heyday of the ballad the Scottish Highlands developed the use of the small harp—like the Lamont harp of 1460 which is kept in Edinburgh. Major wrote in 1521, " in the accompaniment of the voice the Highlanders make use of the harp, on which they perform most sweetly." But in the Gaelic world of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a new instrumental and poetic form gained power. The pipers developed a unique and complicated kind of composition now known as " Piobaireachd." This is really the Gaelic word for pipe music, but it has come to stand for a particular form, of theme and variations, which the pipers to certain Highland Chiefs evolved in the latter days of their almost independent rule in the Highlands. About 180 of them survive today, many of them worthless, while others surely comprise one of the most precious contributions to music outside the main European tradition.

The bards meantime developed the song in eight-line stanzas known as " Orain Mhora " or Great Songs. And they confined them to airs which often show a strong influence of the only instrumental music to which the Highlanders were (and often still are) accustomed. Rob Donn Mackay's " Praise of Isobel Mackay " is one of these songs. It is difficult to perform, because Gaelic is a stressed language and as the exploration of the ground of the pibroch proceeds, it becomes harder to put the stresses right. But ignorant of English as Rob Donn was, he possessed an astonishing mastery of his native tongue, the Sutherland dialect of Gaelic. The Pibroch to whose air Ron Donn wrote his praise of Isobel Mackay is " Failt' a' Phrionnsa "—welcome to the Prince.

Rob Donn was born in 1714 and brought up first in the valley of Strathmore beneath Ben Hope in Sutherland, now quite deserted. He began his life as a herdsman and had plenty of opportunities for meditation in remote places. His praise of Glen Gollaidh is an excellent example of that other body of Gaelic folk songs, the lullabies and work songs, the love songs for people and places.

His song for Ann Morrison is cast in a larger mould, though it is not in the eight-line stanza of the " Orain Mhora." Rob Donn was courting Ann, but while he was away droving cattle she made a more opulent match with John Murray, a joiner. The song, made when he returned and discovered her infidelity has a curious quality. It is tender but philosophical ; regretful but with a hint of satire of which he was one of the greatest exponents. Rob

Donn's was the careless disposition of those rare people who are absolutely untrammelled and free. From much of his poetry he might appear incurably flippant. But he could be moved to anger, as he was when the Highland Dress was proscribed, although his clan had fought against the Jacobites at Culloden. And he was moved to one of his most impressive utterances on the death of John Munro, Minister of Eddrachillis and Donald Mackay, Schoolmaster of Farr, in the present village of Bettyhill. In this elegy which is in the form of an address to death, his poetic genius reaches a level rarely excelled in Gaelic poetry.

Into the Europe of the Romantic Movement was launched Macpherson's so-called Poems of Ossian, and Europe fairly gobbled them up. There was a vogue for the heroic virtues and the natural simplicity that people associated with some ancient way of life. Macpherson drew on the traditions of his native Badenoch to give Europe what it wanted. Napoleon took his book to Russia. Goete wrote Werther. Herder dreamed of Scotland, " I would fain hear the living songs," he wrote, " witness all their influence, see the places that the poems tell of, study in their customs the relics of this ancient world, become for a time an ancient inhabitant of Scotland."

In that world lived Duncan Ban Macintyre of whom none of these people had ever heard. In thought, Duncan Ban belonged to a primeval age when man was a hunter before he even became a farmer. He revelled in hunting the deer and he described the behaviour of animals, plants and mountain streams with a tumultuous imagery and an intensity of affection that never ceases to surprise. There were two scholar bards in his time, Alexander Macdonald and William Ross. Many hold Macdonald supreme in his age, but others prefer Duncan Ban with all his limitations. In his poem on Ben Doran, Duncan Ban is at his best, praising the beauty of that famous landmark in strains that are inimitable and have rendered his name immortal. George Borrow, the eminent English novelist, who in addition to knowing Gaelic was conversant with most European languages, selects lines from this poem as being possibly the best ever composed on spring water in any language. Here is his free translation :

" The wild wine of nature
Honey like in its taste,
The genial, fair, thin element
Filtering through the sands,
Which is sweeter than cinnamon,
And is well known to us hunters.
O, that eternal, healing draught,
Which comes from under the earth,
Which contains abundance of good
And cost no money."

These words of praise, coming as they do from an impartial observer go further than anything I can say to illustrate the poetic genius of Duncan Ban.

In 1746 there occurred the tragedy Robert Louis Stevenson has made famous in his novel *Kidnapped*. Colin Campbell of Glenure was murdered in the country of the Appin Stewarts, who had risen for Prince Charles Edward. There has been understandable sympathy for the innocent Stewart who was hailed before an all-Campbell jury and hanged for the crime. But Duncan Ban mourns the death of the equally unfortunate Glenure in a lament which would alone make his name immortal.

His poem on the Misty Corrie, a favourite haunt of his, which anyone may visit today, is another example of the Bard's keen powers of observation and wealth of description. Such is his affection for this little corner of earth and all the wonders of nature it contains, that one is left in doubt whether it is not so much a song as a prayer. Listen to the way he describes the movement of the salmon through the water :

" In the rugged gully is the white-bellied salmon,
That cometh from the ocean of stormy wave,
Catching midges with lively vigour
Unerringly, in his arched, bent beak,
As he leapeth grandly on raging torrent,
In his martial garb of the blue-grey back,
With his silvery flashes, with fins and speckles,
Scaly, red-spotted, white-tailed and sleek."

Tradition has it that either Duncan Ban's wife or another one pointed out to him that all his songs of love were addressed to mountains and places. Thereupon he composed the song to his wife, Fair Young Mary. He says that he went to the wood where radiant trees and saplings grew, and plucked the shoot most rich in blossom. He swears that Mary will never lack food so long as he dwells in deer country. His wife, in fact, is praised just like any of the other fauna of the land he loved. But the day came when Duncan Ban was too old to climb his beloved hills any more. In 1802 when he was nearly 80 years of age, he climbed his favourite mountain for the last time. It is Ben Dorain in Perthshire, nearly as symmetrical as a tent, and in winter it changes its coat to white like a mountain hare. " I was on Ben Dorain yesterday," sang the bard, " I was no stranger on her domains. I looked on the valleys and the mountains I had known so well. It was a happy picture as I tramped on the hillsides at the hour when the sun was rising and the deer would be bellowing." Then he spoke of the clear rain and the air on the peaks of the high mountains that had given him his robustness and vitality. " Farewell to the deer forests," he ended, " O they are wondrous hill country with green cress and spring water, a noble royal, pleasant drink. Farewell to the moor plains which are beloved and the pastures which are plentiful. As these are places to which I have said goodbye, my blessings are theirs for ever."

When the ship bringing Prince Charles Edward reached Arisaig in Scotland, a man about forty-five years old immediately went aboard, " without any manner of ceremony and conversed with him in a very familiar way, sitting close to the Prince and drinking a glass with him." It was Alasdair MacMhaighster Alasdair, or Alexander Macdonald, whose poems of welcome Prince Charles had already seen in France. Alasdair had been in Glasgow University and afterwards taught as a schoolmaster in various parts of the Highlands. It was while at Corryvullin that he wrote the beautiful descriptive poem on Allt-an-t-Siucair (Sugar Burn). It is in the highest Gaelic tradition, of minute awareness of the details of nature. Everything is drawn with vividness and exact knowledge, the flowers, the behaviour of the different birds, the movement of fish. Allt-an-t-Siucair, a very ordinary mountain stream, is described with an imagery and power of experience hardly equalled in our tongue ; indeed in the opinion of some it has no parallel in English.

This is the world that the Gaelic Bards have ever celebrated with such special care, and on which such heavy sorrows were about to fall, but there is no foreboding of this fate in the poem in which Macdonald heralded the coming of the Prince.

" Joyful I am he is coming
Son of our rightful exiled King
A mighty form which becomes armour
The broadsword and the bossy shield.

He is coming o'er the ocean
Of stature tall, and fairest face
A happy rider of the war-horse
Moving lightly in the charge.

The music of thy pipes and banners
Would fill thy folk with reckless fire
Our proud spirits would awaken
And we'd put the mob to rout."

Such was the eager expectancy with which Macdonald, and many other bards, hailed the coming of the Prince. It was based on the high ideal of loyalty to the rightful King, whose throne was occupied by a Usurper, and it was expressed in the manner of the Gaelic tradition by the bard, who carried this tradition to its highest summit of excellence.

" Early as I awaken
Great my joy loud my laughter
Since I heard that the Prince comes
To the land of Clanranald.

Thou'st the choicest of all rulers,
Here's a health to thy returning,
His the royal blood unmingled
Great the modesty in his vision."

Such were Macdonald's feelings, as he had already expressed them, when, on 25th July, 1745, he first met Prince Charles on his ship off Arisaig.

The fate of all that courage and loyalty is one of the brightly lit episodes of history. Bravery in the face of odds and steadfastness under suffering are strong in their claims on our sympathies, and the wretched Jacobites had plenty of odds and sufferings by which to earn them. Compared with the killings and pillaging on which Macdonald commented, after Culloden, the prescription of the Highland dress may seem a rather tame annoyance. But it was imposed on loyal and rebel clans alike, and Samuel Johnson was to remark later how deep it had struck the Highlanders' pride. Macdonald sang :

" How I loved the proud plaid
Beneath my arm and round my shoulders,
Than any coat I could get
Though of the finest cloth from England.

My favourite is the clothing
Which needs the girdle for its fastening,
The plaid in folds a-flowing
When I arise to make a journey."

Despite their sufferings, the Jacobite Highlanders didn't give up hope after the failure of the Forty-Five. Many continued to believe the King would return, and their hopes are magnificently expressed in a poem Macdonald made in the form of a dialogue between the Prince and his people. The Prince says :

" Lose not heart, beloved people,
And God will always take our part.
Put your firm trust in Him, gladly,
He alone can give us help ;
And continue loyal, loving,
Fasting, praying, mournful kind,
And be faithful to each other,
Thus alone your death-wounds shall be healed."

The people answer :

" We've lost our tiller and our rigging,
Our sheet anchor's torn away.

We've lost our charts, our compass with them,
Our pole-star, and our daily guide ;
Headless, footless, are our bodies,
We're but useless lumps of clay,
But hasten, love, upon thy journey
With brave speed ; but soon come again."

And the Prince concludes :

" O, dry up your tears, my true friends,
Beloved folk, who've suffered hard.
You will yet be prosperous, happy,
A double guard around Whitehall ;
When the cowardly rebels, skulking,
Weakly cringe amongst the stones,
You will live in courtly triumph,
Lordly, lively full of joy."

Such was the testimony of Alasdair Macdonald. Three years after his death Samuel Johnson visited the Hebrides where he found many ignorant things to say about Gaelic culture. But he made up for it by writing of Alasdair Macdonald's cousin Flora that she bore " a name that will be mentioned in history and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour."

The President thanked Mr Campbell for his brilliant Sentiment, which he said, must have involved immense research and which showed a love of the subject he had expounded so ably. The members would long remember this happy experience.

Guests.

Mr Norman B. McIvor, M.C., gave the toast, " Our Guests," and extended a warm welcome to all the friends who attended. He mentioned that Mr C. Leo Burgess, C.B.E., who was replying to the toast, was Clerk of the Peace for the County of London, an appointment which he had held since 1941. Amongst other guests were Dr Redvers Ironside, F.R.C.P., a prominent consulting Neurologist attached to various London hospitals, and recently appointed an Honorary Physician of the Royal Scottish Corporation ; Mr Peter Murray, B.Sc., a native of Perth and Managing Director of an important company of Civil Engineers, and Mr Bryson Reid of the Earl Haig Poppy Fund.

Mr C. Leo Burgess, C.B.E., who responded to the guests toast, said that although in preparation for his speech tonight he had studied at great length many books on Scotland, he had learned in half an hour from Mr Campbell's Sentiment far more than he had been able to absorb from all his reading.

He congratulated the Society on its charitable objects, and in conclusion thanked the members for their hospitality and kindness.

Mr Hugh MacInnes provided the musical programme. He sang " Bonnie Strathyre," " When the Kye Comes Hame," " The Lewis Bridal Song " and " Westering Home." Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., accompanied with his usual artistry.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave as his selections, " My Highland Home," " Dorrator Bridge," " The Blackbird," " Ardtornish," and ended with our own Strathspey.

" Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem wound up an interesting evening.

At the business meeting preceding the Little Dinner on the 16th January, 1958, the death of Mr Foster Brown, a member since 1930, was intimated and noted with deep regret.

Support of the Scottish Corporation.

It was also reported that, since the last meeting, the sum which would be available to the Royal Scottish Corporation consequent on the President's Appeal, had been increased by £200 to £866, this substantial advance being entirely due to the President's personal influence.

At the Little Dinner which followed the business meeting, the loyal toasts were honoured, and in Gaelic the President wished the members a " Happy and Prosperous New Year." He then called on the Honorary Secretary, Mr W. M. Miller, in accordance with the usual custom, to sing " The Year that's awa'." This he did.

The Immortal Memory.

In inviting Mr John Wilson, M.A., to give the Sentiment " Robert Burns," the President mentioned that as Mr Wilson was President of the Burns Club of London, he could be regarded as a master of his subject.

Mr Wilson said :

Writing on a Burns Supper held in Edinburgh in 1819, Lockhart describes the oration as a cauld harangue, and goes on to ask what are the qualifications of a speaker on Burns. Here in Lockhart's words are what is needed :

" The austere and highbrow can know nothing of the full hearty swing of jollity. How can they ever sympathise with the misty felicity of a man singing, ' It is the moon and ken her horn ' ? I think no man should be allowed to say anything about Burns who has not joined in this chorus, though timbertuned and sat till daylight, though married."

This, of course, makes a good introduction to any Burns oration, but I no mere orator. I took this introduction deliberately because it fittingly leads in what I want to say tonight to this special audience.

Burns' real eruption into poetry was in 1784 when he moved to Mauchline. He had just been disciplined by the Kirk session for his ploy with Lizzie Paton. With a background of near bankruptcy at Lochie, Tarbolton, his father newly dead, only a few as yet, like Aitken, saw promise rather than performance in Burns. It was not a very enviable position for a young man and there is evidence that the proud passionate Burns took it rather badly. His torment of mind mounted and could find no relief. It was then that he received a letter from an Ayrshire farmer of the name of Rankine. Now farmers are not usually mealy-mouthed, least of all Ayrshire farmers. I know, I was brought up amongst them. Not only are they forthright, but there is the salt of shrewdness on their tongues and Rankine was the wale of them.

When Rankine heard gossip about Lizzie he wrote to Mossgiel, a funny quizzing, admonishing letter, as to a sad bad young fellow, suggesting that he would be glad to have Mossgiel's own account of the business. He received a prompt reply in two verses beginning, " I am a keeper of the law in some sma' points altho' not a." This brought the relief Burns needed and he felt accepted. He stretched himself at his ease amongst congenial companions. Relief came in contempt for the unco guid. Laughter, broad gusty laughter, seized Burns and so came his first verse epistle. It was broad, it was bawdy. It was irreverent—but the verses came trippingly off his pen, and it is genuinely humorous.

It begins :

" O rough, rude, ready-witted Rankine,
The wale o' cocks for fun and drinkin' !
There's mony godly folks are thinkin'
Your dreams and tricks
Will send you Korah-like a sinkin'
Straight to auld Nick's."

Burns then proceeds to give a quite unrepentant account of the amorous adventure which landed him before the Kirk session.

Burns had found an audience ; the very fellows to sing, " It is the mune and ken her horn " ; the very fellows to sing it with misty felicity, in tune and out of tune. They would sit till dawn, tho' married. Nae doot aboot that.

And there, gentlemen, I think is perhaps something important about Burns. He understood good company and conviviality—he had the knack had he not, of taking you and me, as we read him, into the circle of boon companions ? As you read " Tam o' Shanter," do you not feel that Burns has taken you there ? You are sitting warming yourself at the ingle. For *you* the souter tells his queerest stories. *You* hear the Landlord's ringing laugh, while outside the storm might rair and rustle. Have you noticed how often Burns brings you in out of the storm to the lowin' ingle ? Do you remember how in " The Jolly Beggar," you're inside Poosie Mansie's

" When hailstanes drive wi' bitter skyte
And infant frosts begin to bite,
In hoary crunreuch drest,
Ae night at e'en a merry core
O' rundie gungrel bodies
In Poosie Nansie's held the splore."

And there you are in, right inside listening to the " quaffing and laughing, the ranting, the singing."

More surprisingly, do you remember the cotter ?

" November chill blaws lood wi' angry sough ;
The short'ning winter day is near the close ;
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes,
This nicht his weekly moil is at an end.

At length his lonely cot appears in view
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;
Th' expectant wee things, toddlin' stacher through
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee,
He wee bit ingle blinkin bonnilie,
His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wife's smile."

And there you are, in again. And be the company disreputable or pious and respectable, Burns has wrought this magic for you. You are welcome.

Gentlemen, there are greater poets than Burns, but I can recall none, not even a McDiarmid, who can take me so far ben with my fellow men as does Burns, far ben with all our fellow men, the pious cotter ; the gungerel bodies ; the bletherin', blusterin', drunken blellum ; the Hallowe'en party ; the crowd at Mauchline Fair ; saints and sinners. And it takes a real artist at 200 years distance to create this illusion. This was a great humanity Burns had and we bask in its warmth. We join the charmed circle of the boon companions.

But with that the magic is not complete : Add to this convivial humanity —humour (the two often go together—in fact nearly always) and to these two add yet a third thing, Burns' felicity in the Scots tongue.

The three-fold touch—humanity, humour and deftness of verse—matured in Burns after his release by Rankine. They flourished especially in the Mauchline years, 1784–1786 and what entertaining excellence they produced. Two epistles to Davie ; three epistles to Lapraik ; The Cotter ; Hallowe'en ; New Year salutation to the Auld Mare ; The Holy Fair ; Death and Dr Hornbrook ; Holy Willie ; Address to the De'il ; The Jolly Beggars.

A wonderful haggis feast—warm, reeking rich and aye the main ingredients are conviviality, humanity, humour and this neatness of versification as if this verse were the only medium that could carry so much humanity and humour.

Auguste Angellier, a French writer of high literary and academic repute, published a *Life of Burns* in 1893. He cannot be suspected of narrow nationalism, or of the sentimetality of the Burns cult. Of Burns he wrote this :

> " One of the most joyous, if not *the* most joyous, of the modern poets, the one with the frankest and most abundant laughter."

This joy bubbled so freely and generously that it included the publicans, sinners and even the tax-gatherers. In the Inventory, he even addressed his tax-gatherer in verse !

Mr President, just think how much more popular our present-day tax-gatherers would be if they knocked a bob off standard rate for every schedule declared in verse. Think of how industrious we all might be in trying to write poetry. No more mute inglorious Milton's amongst us !

Hear part of Burns' return to his tax-gatherer of gear and plenishings :

" Wheel carriage I ha'e but few,
Three carts, an' twa are feckly new ;
An auld wheelbarrow—mair for token ;
Ae leg, an' baith the trams, are broken."

Not great poetry ; but humorous, a touch of humanity, clever and neat as to versification, happy and entertaining. And, of course, we can't help

recalling that Burns himself stated that he rhymed for fun. An even more striking example of Burns's joyousness, a longish poem of 1786, never published because of its bawdiness, is called the " Court of Equity." In it, with humorous effrontery, Burns imitates and mocks the Kirk sessions of the day by setting up a court to try fornication, but there all resemblance ends for the crime is not fornication but the hypocritical concealing of one's ploys so that the woman is deserted and the offspring disowned. Here are the opening lines :

" In Truth and Honour's name, Amen.
Know all men by these presents plain
We, ——s by profession,
A Court of Equity deputed ;
With special authorised direction,
To take beneath our strict protection,
The stays-out-bursting quondum maiden
With growing life and anguish laden
Who by the rascal is deny'd
Who led her thoughtless step aside ;
He who disowns the ruined Fair-one
And for her wants and woes does care none ;
The wretch who can refuse assistance
To those whom he has given existence."

There has scarcely ever been a better qualified or more knowledgeable court. It consisted of Burns as chairman, Smith as fiscal with Richmond as clerk and Hunter as messenger-at-arms. Richmond, of course, drew from Burns the epitaph :

" Lament him, Mauchline husbands a
He aften did assist ye."

Here is humour—some of it bawdy—neatness of versification, though some is near to doggerel.

You can just see the Rabblesian Rankine and much of the male Ayrshire Society of the day, little moved, perhaps, by the physical sin but all agreeing with Burns in censuring the man who failed to see to the needs of his lassie and his offspring. The poem is not without its purpose even if it is bawdy.

With this thought in mind it is worth taking a glance at " Holy Willie's Prayer."

When Burns first " leaked " this poem to his cronies, you can see Rankine, Richmond, Hunter and all the rest of them, full of glee as they contemplate William Fisher and the other reputed saints losing control of their natural functions at the Presbytery o' Ayr as the " glib-tongued Aitken " flays them and set the " warld in a roar o' laughin'."

Boon companions wiping the tears of laughter from their eyes as they savour the vulgar yet rich comedy of the situation. Then suddenly the provider of the feast of laughter, shapes all to a profound moral point and because of all the companionship and laughter we are all the more ready to listen. Stroke by stroke he paints the rottenness of hypocrisy and finally nails it down to blasphemy. Can you recall that terrible verse :

" But Lord remember me and mine
Wi' mercies temporal and divine,
That I for gear and grace may shine
And a' the glory shall be Thine, excelled by nane,
Amen, Amen."

This is devastating—this bargain with God. We've got to be pretty sure of our own humility before God if we are going to grin at that verse. So the

poet teaches more piercingly than volumes of theology, philosphy or sermons, and the foundation is humour, just humour.

Sean O'Casey says " Laughter is wine for the soul. Nothing seems too high or too low for the humourist. He is above honour, above faith, preserving sanity in religion and sanity in life."

We've seen Burns in " Holy Willie's Prayer " preserving sanity in religion. What about sanity in life ? I invite your attention specially to " The Jolly Beggars." Mark that the poet who appears in that work is asked to entertain the ragged, disreputable company for a second time. And there in that company with scarce a rag to cover their nakedness, but plenty within to keep out the cold, the truth comes out in line after line of the poet's second song.

Along with the conviviality Burns puts the truth into the mouth of the poet. That is significant. Here is what the poet sings :

" What is title ? What is treasure ?
What is reputation's care ?

and again :

" Life is all a variorum
We regard not how it goes ;
Let them cant about decorum
Who have characters to lose.
Round and round take up the chorus
And in rapture let us sing
A fig for those by law protected !
Liberty's a glorious feast !
Courts for cowards were erected
Churches built to please the priest."

Perhaps we frown a little at these bold assertions from such disreputable people. But reflect. They have chilblains but no thrombosis, no gastric ulcers there. For those whose life is " keeping up with the Joneses," the Jolly Beggars have only loud mocking laughter. We've got to be pretty secure inside the dignity of our academic robes, the respectability of our pin-stripe business clothes to withstand the attack of that kind of laughter—the laughter of those with nothing to lose.

This kind of sane searching laughter Burns had in plenty. Burns as you know, laughed at and even pitied the De'il. How much that did in Burns' day to free the spirit of Scotland no-one will ever know. What " Tam o' Shanter " did to laugh out of Scotland, hag-ridden auld wives' tales that yet held people bound by fear, will never be known.

Well, this strain of humour and humanity most pronounced in Burns was the breeding ground of much that is excellent in his poetry. I sometimes think that even the tenderness that one constantly meets in Burns, particularly in his songs, was not unconnected with his humour, even with his bawdy humour. Take the poem in welcome to his love-begotten daughter. One verse says :

" Welcome, my bonnie, sweet wee dochter—
Tho' ye come here a wee unsought for,
And tho' your comin' I hae fought for
Baith kirk and queir ;
Yet, by my faith, ye're no unwrought for !
That I shall swear ! "

Scarcely a verse for the drawing room ! Yet the same poem contains lines like these :

" Thou's welcome wean ! Mishanter fa' me,
If ought of thee, or of thy mammie
Shall ever daunton me or awe me,
My sweet, wee lady,
Or if I blush when thou shalt ca' me
Tit-ta or daddy ! "

" Wee imagine o' my bonnie Betty,
As fatherly I kiss and daut three,
As dear and near my heart I set thee."

These are manly thoughts but tender, embedded in humour, even bawdy humour. Tenderness echoed in song after song down to the last and most tender :

" O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee."

But, gentlemen, if I begin on the songs you'll be here to the morn's morning and they are another sang a' tegether, and in any case they're for singing, not things to be blethered about.

But we will note that the songs make the conviviality of Burns all the more worth while. Not only does Burns invite us to join the boon companions, he also provides us with something worth singing.

Please let me quote what Hilaire Belloc has to say about songs and singing—it seems to me to fit Burns the song writer like a glove :

> " Song gives a permanent sense of futurity and a permanent sense of the presence of Divine things. . . . It is that immortal quality in the business which makes it a different kind from the other efforts of men. Write a good song and the tune leaps up to meet it out of nothingness. It clothes itself with tune, and once so clothed it continues on through generations, eternally young, always smiling, and always ready with strong hands for mankind. On this account every man who has written a song can be certain that he has done good ; any man who has continually sung them can be certain that he has lived and has communicated life to others. It is the best of all trades, to make songs, and the second best to sing them."

Is not the boon companionship of Burns continued even in the songs at their tenderest ? In a sense are not the songs born of conviviality and meant to cement boon companionship? This man Burns might have been one of our very own boon companions—a card, a wag, a character, one to beguile the time, ever welcoming ; human to his very core with his full share of the weaknesses of humanity.

Add to that his humour—not the loud empty laugh, not the cruel laugh of the curled lip, but the enjoyable laugh of common humanity, the laugh of sanity, the bringer of wisdom—a homely wisdom, it is true, but a deep wisdom needed for everyday life as we know it.

" O wad the Pow'r some giftie gie us."
" Then gently scan thy brither man."
" I'll get a blessin' wi' the laye."
" The best laid schemes."
" A man's a man."

Anon the wisdom turns to tenderness. And still it is wisdom—a kind of higher wisdom that rises in the song to the height of fine feeling and emotion,

recalling to us some of the best moments of our lives. Each man knows for himself what these moments are :

" Had we never looed so kindly."

" O' a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly lo'e the West."

" This sweet wee wife o' mine."

" Bonnie Wee Thing."

" Ca' the yowes."

Then, lest you are overcome by tenderness and become satiated with fine feeling, you can turn to " Duncan Gray " and learn the wisdom of how to treat a hoity toity Lizzie. And, of course, you can spurn the whole lot of them and though timber-tuned, and though married, you can sing—" It is the moon I ken her horn." And still it's all in homely rhyme, neatly turned, musical, lingering in the ear and mind. And how enjoyable it all is !

Always there is something to enjoy and ever and anon something to ponder, to lay up in the mind and to treasure in the heart.

Through the poetry I see this man Burns, a boon companion, a teller of good stories, who could ca' the crack to a tune worth lisenting to ; humourist, prophet, poet, yet always of our common humanity ; with a rich homely wisdom for me and you.

I'd like to have sat down with the man, the poet—Robert Burns—at times. Wouldn't you ?

A man worth remembering I think. Indeed a poet who does not let us forget. (Loud applause.)

The toast " Robert Burns " was drunk with Caledonian honours and the President expressed the members' thanks and appreciation to Mr Wilson.

A Welcome to our Guests.

Mr Donald S. MacPhee submitted the toast of " Our Guests." He said that it was difficult to do justice to the toast, in view of the fact that there were present 56 members and 58 guests. He was, therefore, compelled to confine himself to a few names, assuring all the guests, however, that they were delighted to have them. He extended a hearty welcome to Mr John Wilson, to whose Sentiment the members had listened with interest and pleasure.

Mr. Wilson, a native of Kilmarnock, has spent many years before and during the war in West Africa as Education Officer. He was a graduate of Glasgow University and is now a Lecturer in the Institute of Education at the University of London.

Mr MacPhee also referred to Sir John Macpherson, G.C.M.G., who had given distinguished service to the country and was now Permanent Under-

Secretary for the Colonies ; Sir John Taylor, K.B.E., C.M.G., who had rendered outstanding service mainly in Consular and Ambassadorial appointments, over a period of some 35 years and was now Director-General of the Hispanic Council ; Mr William Grant, a Director of the largest bakery company in the world ; Mr Alfred Spence, a Director of a group of drapery companies ; and Mr James E. Currie, a citizen of the United States, who in addition to important business interests in this country, was Vice-President of the American Chamber of Commerce in London.

Regarding Col. Alan Chambers, D.S.O., O.B.E., who was responding to the toast, Mr MacPhee told the members that Col. Chambers was a Canadian who had served with the Vancouver Scottish in Sicily, Italy and North Africa and, at the latter part of the war, was at General Eisenhower's Headquarters. In 1945 he became European Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the Dominion of Canada, the only office outside Canada and the United States caring for Canadian ex-service men and their dependents from World War II. Col. Chambers was also an Attaché to the High Commissioner for Canada.

In conclusion, Mr MacPhee said he was informed that on the War Memorial in Perth, Western Australia, there is an epitaph which says, " They did their damnedest, Angels couldn't do more." In proposing the important toast of the guests he had tried, in the time at his disposal, to follow the sentiment expressed in this quotation and concluded by wishing all their guests happiness and prosperity.

Scottish Influence on Canada.

In responding to the toast of the guests, Col. Chambers dealt at some length with the influence of Scots on the early history of Canada. He explained that in 1759 at the surrender of Quebec, the keys of the citadel were handed over to a Scot, General Murray, by two Scots in the service of the French, Chevalier de Ramesay and Chevalier de Johnstone, and that the Plains of Abraham were so named after an Edinburgh man of the name of Abraham Martin. The first settlers in Canada were 300 officers and men of the Fraser Highlanders, who were present at the conquest of Quebec. From 1773 onwards, waves of Scots settled in Nova Scotia and elsewhere, and even today the mother tongue of 17,000 is Gaelic. Canada has now become a nation and of all the races which have contributed to its advancement, Scots were the most significant.

Accompanied by Mr J. W. Story, A.R.C.O., Mr Angus Stewart sang " Of a' the Airts," " Ca' the Yowes " and " Afton Water." Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., besides playing the Society's Strathspey, gave as his selection, " Cornriggs are Bonny," " The Keel Row," " Speed the Plough " and " Come

ye by Atholl." As usual, the evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

The February 1958 meetings of the Society were held on the 20th of that month, as usual at the Rembrandt Hotel, the President, Mr John R. Aldridge in the chair.

Death of Past-President William Will, C.B.E.

At the General Meeting, the President, in reporting the death on the 4th February, 1958, of Past-President William Will, C.B.E., said :

When I received this year's list of members it was with great satisfaction I saw heading the list, under the bold title " Honorary Member," the name of Past-President William Will, C.B.E. This was the greatest honour his Brother Caledonians could pay him when he returned to Scotland, to mark their appreciation of the 40 years service Mr Will had given the Society since joining it in 1918. It was really far more than a mere honour. It was an earnest appreciation of the great affection we all had for him, and we hoped Past-President William Will would be spared for many years to enjoy this affection and the memories it created.

This, alas, was not to be, for, as you know our Senior Past-President William Will, died on 4th February. Since then many tributes have been paid to his integrity, industry, sense of justice and fair play, attributes of which we were fully aware.

Only a fortnight before his death our Honorary Secretary had seen him in Dundee, when Mr Will had exhibited his usual keen interest in the affairs of the Society and wished us all well.

You need no reminding of the outstanding service which he gave to the Society over that long period of 40 years. I think I can say without hesitation that no man has influenced the Society's activities more than William Will. It is only some three months since we minuted the Society's indebtedness to our Senior Past-President, and I feel, that with our expressions of gratitude then given fresh in our memories, we can but close with the greatest regret this long and wonderful chapter in the " Chronicles " of our Society by passing the following brief, but heartfelt Resolution which I now submit :

> The Council and members record with deep sorrow the loss which the society has sustained by the death on 4th February, 1958, of Past-President William Will, C.B.E. In November last, after Past-President Will had moved to Scotland, the members expressed their gratitude of his long and valuable service and recorded the high regard and affection in which he was held by all his colleagues and friends. The council and members express their sincere sympathy with his daughter in her irreparable loss.

The Resolution was approved and the meeting stood in silence in memory of one of its most beloved members.

The death on 21st January, 1958, of Sir Alexander Gibb, G.B.E., C.B., LL.B., F.R.S., a member since 1929 was also reported and noted with deep regret.

The Noblest Prospect.

The principal item at the Little Dinner which followed was a Sentiment, " The Noblest Prospect," by the Rev. Ian R. N. Miller, M.A. When the loyal toasts had been honoured, the President introduced Mr. Miller, who said :

Some time ago I was honoured by an invitation to give the Sentiment one evening to this Society and I had in mind to recall something of the famous names that can be found in France and the Low Countries, names which can be directly traced to Scots faring forth from their native land throughout the centuries.

Having a good deal of Douglas blood in me it has always been a beckoning fascination to research into the exploits of that family in Poland where the name has been, and still is no doubt, a fairly common one and an honoured one.

However, the necessity of providing a title made me think again and so I chose the title " The Noblest Prospect." It is perhaps quite appropriate that a Scots minister should take this theme for a Sentiment to this company, for it was a Scottish minister which called forth this quip from Dr Samuel Johnson. It was in July, 1763, in the Mitre Tavern in Fleet Street that Boswell gave a supper party. It was to have been in Boswell's lodgings in Downing Street but he had had a quarrel with his landlord and the venue was changed to the tavern. There were six in the party—Dr Johnson, Goldsmith, a Mr Thomas Davis, Mr Eccles, Boswell, and Mr John Ogilvie. This last was a Scottish minister of whom it has been said, " with the exception of the publication of a book and an occasional visit to London, the life of Dr Ogilvie was marked by hardly any incident."

" He was untimely enough," as Boswell says, " to choose for the topic of his conversation the praises of his native land." He began by saying that there was very rich land around Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied in Edinburgh and did not think much of it, contradicted this with a mocking laugh. A bit disconcerted but by no means put off, Dr Ogilvie took up a new topic on his native Scotland by observing that Scotland had many noble wild prospects.

To this Johnson replied, " I believe, Sir, you have a great many. Norway too has noble wild prospect ; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, Sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotsman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England." And who of us would like to contradict the Doctor for all our pride of race and country and wealth of reminiscence ? We have taken the road too. If this evening we recall some of those who have used that high road before and since this remark was made, I hope it will be of some interest.

There are occasions when you can hear someone remark that a minister takes a text but it seems as if his sermon has very little to do with the text. I hope it will not be quite like that with this, but if I stray and speak of some who have gone even further than England and have added lustre to the country of their birth and upbringing, I hope the excursion off the strict path to England will be forgiven.

The character of a people is quite naturally affected by the economic condition to which over a considerable period they have been subjected. And what has happened throughout the centuries and even in our own lifetime is that economic pressure has driven Scots all over the world to seek fortune and a livelihood. In my last charge in Scotland—in Kilmarnock—I was greatly struck by the fact that it seemed as if the majority living there had relatives in the United States or Australia or Africa—but chiefly the States, and the

relatives were of this generation driven out by the economic depression between the wars. This process has gone on right down the years, for Scots did not stand too well so far as wealth and opportunity were concerned and so they had to stir forth and become wanderers on the earth. So much so that there is an English proverb which says, " In every port one might find a Scot, a rat, and a Newcastle grindstone " (the presumption of mentioning a grindstone !)

Bishop Leslie, who in himself had an interesting history, being born in Aberdeenshire, educated at Aberdeen and Oxford, survived the Commonwealth and came back in favour, with a bishopric in Ireland, living till he was over 100 and dying the oldest bishop in Europe—wrote, " So many of our countrymen have so good success among strange nations, some in the wars, some in the professing of the sciences, and some in merchandise," and this is a fair summary of the recurring situation.

One of the first professions open to a Scot was that of a mercenary. The Scot was renowned for his fighting qualities. The good Sir James Douglas who followed Bruce's dying instruction and carried the heart of that hero on a crusade, was reckoned to have been in encounters against England 57 times and against the Saracens and infidels 16 times. His record was perhaps no better than that of many Scots who went soldiering over the Continent of Europe and fought for the French, the Germans, the Dutch, the Swedes and the Russians.

The Scots took to the career of mercenary soldiers as naturally as the Swiss. Lindsay of Pitscottie, author of the *Chronicles of Scotland* tells how 1,500 Scots at one time passed in ships over to Sweden to help the King of that nation against the Muscovites. Many of you may have noticed a letter in the February issue of *Scottish Field* asking for some information about the " Sinclair Stone," a commemorative tablet set up in Central Norway extolling the qualities of Norwegian bravery. One, George Sinclair, with a party of 300 Scots making for Sweden were ambushed and annihilated by the Norwegians en route. There may have been other similar incidents but it is well-known that a great many Scots fought for Sweden.

It is also established that many fought on the side of Sweden's enemies and in particular, the Russians. Much of the fighting took place in Finland, which may have been a battleground between Sweden and Russia for a thousand years and no doubt, Scot met Scot in opposing camps and battle there. Have any traces been left ? Some years ago on a particularly hot day in the market place of Turku I contemplated buying a new hat from a stall. My wife did not think a great deal of the hat although the idea was good. The stallholder and I could not converse—he speaking Finnish and I knowing none. He thought there might be a loss of sale and so he dived round to the back of his stall and produced a mirror so that I could see what I looked like and with a broad smile uttered one word, " Braw." I tried him with a few other Scots words without success. Was this a gift to the language from Scotland ? It may be of course that " Braw " is a Scandinavian word but it may be the other way round and this is not as fanciful as it sounds. The ballad " Edward " was discovered by Swinburne in Finland and was brought back and translated as " a find." But as it happens this is the most authentic—the one really authentic ballad of Scotland and had found its way to Finland. So my little experience with the word " braw " in a market place in Finland may not be purely fanciful.

While we are in Finland it might be well to recall that it was a Scot who played a major part in the building of the Russian Empire. Patrick Gordon, a younger son of a younger son of Gordon of Haddo, whose parents had no fortune to offer him other than a good name and a strong constitution, at the age of 17 took up the profession of soldiering. First he fought for Sweden, was captured by the Poles and induced by them to change sides which he did—

twice. He might well have been killed by the Swedish army as a traitor when he was recaptured, but he was brought before his old Commander—a fellow countryman—General Douglas. This second period of service with the Swedish Army lasted for three years. After some further vicissitudes he became a soldier of the Russian Czar. It was after 25 years of service before he met his illustrious master the Czar Peter—Peter the Great. The service by which Gordon set his mark on the history of Russia and of Europe was the breaking of the power of the Strelitzers. These were the guards or household troops of Muscovy. They showed their zeal for their master the Czar by knowing, hanging or shooting any who, in their opinion had not acted faithfully. It was, of course, the much more dangerous power they had of deciding who was to be the master. This organised terrorism had been created by Ivan the Terrible and eventually inherited by Peter, then aged 17. When Gordon took over protection of the Czar he had the problem of the Strelitzers to deal with once and for all. This was not done with kid gloves ; in his diary there is an entry, " Today seventy men were hanged by fives and threes on one gallows." The task was thoroughly done and established Peter as undisputed Czar. The gratitude of the Czar was deep and genuine ; there is a long entry in a diary on the death of Gordon, " The Czar who had visited him five times in his illness and had been twice with him during the night, stood weeping by his bed as he drew his last breath—and the eyes of him who had left Scotland a poor wanderer were closed by the hand of an Emperor."

About 50 years after the death of this remarkable man, we find another Scot especially prominent in Russian history, Samuel Greig, the son of a skipper in Inverkeithing. Young Samuel entered the Navy and on a request from Russia for some officers to train their navy, Samuel Greig was fortunate to be one who was chosen. His capabilities brought him to the front at once and he was promoted with great rapidity until he became virtual master of the Russian Navy. The old Fifeshire skipper's name of Charles was dragged out of obscurity to give the usual Russian patronimic of nobility, and the young officer became Samuel Carlovich Greig. He died after a somewhat inconclusive but bloody battle with the Swedes—both parties claiming the victory—so much so that in Petersburg and in Stockholm the Te Deum was chanted. " Is it not generous " says a witty historian, " in Providence to have so arranged it as to suit both parties, and so earned there a Greek, here a Lutheran song of praise."

Be that as it may, there is no possible doubt but that this remarkable man made the Russian Navy. So the story could go on of how Scotland produced in large numbers the streams of fighting men, " no doubt because the Scot had had so much experience in fighting and on the whole enjoyed the trade." But those were rough days and it is easy to find flaws in the character and conduct of many who achieved fame in this field. If you are concerned with keeping cold and hunger away, it is easy to become mean and grasping, having neither time nor energy to indulge the imagination. Furthermore, such soldiers of fortune as we have mentioned in talking with one another were likely to consider man's chief end, and the answers were not always precisely those of the Shorter Catechism.

It is interesting, however, that one of the great ages of Scotland, sometimes called the first Pereclean Age was at a time when soldiering was again to the fore because during this period of time when so much Scots talent was lost by emigration to England there were two rebellions—the '15 and the '45. If you can think of the day when at school you learned history, the impression no doubt left, is that so far as the 18th century is concerned nothing more important happened than the '15 and the '45. Yet at this time great men were given by Scotland for the arts and science. Dr William Hunter, of Kilbride, in Lanarkshire, whose father had destined him for the church, but after five years of theological study, Hunter decided he had had enough and

decided to study medicine. This he did with a friend, Dr Cullen, who had established a practice in Hamilton. Doctors in those days not only dispensed their own medicine but also practised surgery. Dr Cullen disliked the surgical part of his practice and it was agreed that Hunter should come to London to improve his technique prior to joining his friend in partnership. This he did and to St George's Hospital, where he studied anatomy under a Dr Nicholl. Strange to say, if a modern Hunter came from Scotland to study at another hospital in London it would be under the distinguished tuition of a Professor Nicol, and this present one—a Scot.

The rise to eminence of Dr Hunter in the realm of anatomy and surgery is well-known as also that of his brother John in the realms of blood circulation. William's gift to succeeding generations was not only in his own distinction in the profession but also in the founding of the Hunerian Museum—first founded in Great Windmill Street. According to a contemporary account in the *Scots Magazine* it is said to have cost £100,000 in buildings and furnishing.

Others of this Pereclean Age included the novelist Tobias Smollett from the parish of Cardross, William Murray, Earl of Mansfield—the eminent lawyer, who in addition to a distinguished political and legal career so framed his decisions for the advantage of posterity that the law of marine insurance may be said to have been framed by him. Adam Smith, who according to a survey of a biographer, " extended the boundaries of science and enlightened and reformed the commercial policy of Europe." This very great son of Scotland, the only child of a custom's officer and his wife, although spending a good deal of his life in Scotland, was destined at one time for the church and resided in Oxford for seven years and owed much and gave much in his sojourn in the South.

A considerable amount of talent was lost by emigration to England at this time. Young Scots were moving to the English Universities and were likely afterwards to settle in London. Scots were finding their way into the military and naval services, into government posts and with the East India Company. When Lord Bute was carrying on the government for George III, he showed a preference for his countrymen and so accelerated the flow of talent from Scotland.

A later period in history following on the first Pereclean Age when the well-worn road to England filled up again and when the time could be referred to as the Second Pereclean Age—from the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review* to the death of Sir Walter Scott, there was a slackening of the hold of the kirk. Less and less was the attention of the Scottish mind riveted on eternity—and gravitating to the proverb—a purely Scottish one, " Hand in use is the father of affluence." To this period belong some remarkable names but not all of the owners of them came South. Some who did include Thomas Telford the eminent engineer who began his working life as a stone-mason in his native parish of Westerkirk in Dumfriesshire. He employed some of his spare time in being a rhymster under the name of " Eskdale Tam." One rhyme addressed to Burns gives a sketch of his own character and his own future.

" Nor pass the tentie curious lad,
Who o'er the ingle hangs his head
And begs of neighbours books to read
For hence arise
Thy country's sons, who far are spread
Baith bold and wise."

This man's works are to be seen over the length and breadth of the country—the Menai and Conway bridges, the Caledonian Canal, the St Katherine's Docks, the Holyhead roads and bridges, the canals in Salop, harbours in England and Scotland. This remarkable man died in 1834 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Time does not permit of mentioning more than a few of the names of others of this period of genius and achievement. William Murdoch, who invented gas lighting, William Fairbairn, James Naysmyth, Robert Napier, all engineers.

But what of today. When the history of the present age has been written will there be names to stand in equal honour beside those of the past ? We are, of course, too near our age to find how great some of the familiar names to us will be. There are the detractors who maintain that the qualities from which greatness comes are no longer the qualities we once took for granted in our race. I do not share that view, although it is true that prosperity often breeds unpleasant traits of self satisfaction, arrogance, want of initiative and sheer laziness, and poverty makes necessary mutual helpfulness, neighbourliness and even self sacrifice. Like all generalisations, these can be refuted by examples to the contrary. The qualities of independent judgment and of ability to take decisions, and the ability to examine a matter from all sides will still produce greatness.

With confidence we can speak of Fleming in the realm of medical science and Baird in the field of scientific discovery, to mention but two—that stand beside the great names of the past.

But for the rank and file of us it can be said that the good Dr Johnson was right—the road has led us to a gracious life, to opportunity and happy achievement, and it can still be said the road is " The noblest prospect," whether we travel by Lambton Toll and Berwick-on-Tweed, by Gretna-Longtown and Carlisle or more surreptitiously by Coldstream, or quite boldly over Carter Bar.

Enthusiastic applause greeted Mr Miller's Sentiment, and in thanking him the President expressed his pleasure that Mr Miller had, after many previous invitations, been persuaded to take the right road which had at last led to the Rembrandt Hotel.

Mr Sydney G. Wilson, M.C., in proposing the toast, " Our Guests," said of Mr Miller :

We have listened with the greatest pleasure to the Sentiment the Rev. Ian R. N. Miller has given us with the intriguing title of " The Noblest Prospect." Mr Miller is a native of Glasgow, graduate of the Glasgow University and of Westminster College, Cambridge. He is the fifth generation of his family in the Ministry. He is, however, the first missionary, because he is the only one of his family who has tried to convert the heathen south of the border. He has occupied many important positions and since December, 1950, has been in charge of St John's Presbyterian Church of England, Northwood. He is a member of the Council of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, of which Mr W. S. Duthie, M.P. for Banff, is Chairman. He has been appointed by the British Council of Churches to visit America this summer as an accredited preacher. Our best wishes go with him.

Amongst other guests who were welcomed were the Rev. Ian R. M. Gillan, Sir Thomas Robson, M.B.E., F.C.A., Sir Charles Banks Cunningham, C.S.I., the Rev. L. O. Williams, B.A., Dr A. F. McDonald, and Mr James Wylie Patterson.

In referring to Mr Leslie Holmes, who had undertaken to

respond to the toast, Mr Wilson reminded the members that Mr Holmes was one of the famous " Two Leslies " who in the 1930's used to top the bill at leading variety theatres. Many, if not all, of their songs were of their own composition ; they had had the great honour of appearing before the late King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at a Royal Command Performance. Mr Holmes had been a broadcaster, a recording artist and a composer of numerous hit songs. With almost Scottish canniness he chose the right moment to revert to commercial interests, and was now Publicity Manager of a prominent Sunday newspaper which organised many National sporting and other events.

The toast was heartily honoured and Mr Leslie Holmes replied in an amusing speech in which he detailed the things he liked and the things he disliked about Scotland. He mentioned that his grandfather was born in Dundee and that he had had many pleasant associations with Scotland, for instance with the World Pipe Band Championship sponsored by the *News of the World.*

Mr. Donald Fraser sang with great acceptance, " Land of Heart's Desire," " My Love is like a Red, Red Rose," " Afton Water " and " Annie Laurie." He was accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., in his usual efficient manner.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., contributed his selection of pipe music, finishing with the Strathspey, " Caledonian Society of London." An enjoyable evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

Council and general meetings were held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on Thursday, 20th March, 1958, the President, Mr John R. Aldridge in the chair.

Mr William Grant was admitted to membership.

At the Little Dinner following, the President gave the loyal toasts. In introducing Mr W. E. Swinton, Ph.D., F.R.S.E., F.S.A.(Scot.), as the author of the evening's Sentiment, " The Backward E'e," he said that while Mr James Chalmers would later tell the members about Dr Swinton, he (the President), felt compelled to mention that Dr Swinton, a Lt.-Commdr. R.N.V.R. during the war, tonight appeared as a full-blown Admiral. With Viscount Montgomery, he shared that elevated rank in the Nebraska State Navy, to which he was appointed

by the Governor of that State. It was difficult to understand why the State of Nebraska, which was over 1,000 miles from the nearest seaboard, should have a navy, but an examination of the map showed that the State was bounded on two sides by a large river called the Wynot, so " why not " a navy ?

Mr Swinton said :

The title of my Sentiment is taken, of course, from the last verse of Robert Burns' " To a Mouse."

" But och, I backward cast my e'e
on prospects drear !
And forward, though I canna see,
I guess and fear ! "

I remember that when I was a schoolboy, I was assured by my schoolmaster that these were the least worthy lines that Burns ever wrote, presumably because of this air of melancholy. My own criticism had been that I did not think one looked back on a *prospect*, but now I feel that perhaps both of us were wrong.

Is there merit in the backward glance ? Whether the answer is yes or no, it is certainly a Scottish habit. In this the Scots are not unique, though their communal past has its peculiarities.

Long before Scotsmen looked back or forward on prospects the Chinese were firmly established as worshippers of ancestors, and, presumably, of ancestral times. And there seems much sense in the habit. If we have pride of birth, of upbringing, of locality, surely the merit lies there, amongst our ain folks, and to them the praise is due—" Let us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us." If we are more famous than our fathers, the least we can do to their memory is to credit them with our paternity ; if we are less famous, they and their merits will often be in our minds and on our lips.

The Chinese ancestors are kept in memory and spiritual being by the living ; the descendants are supposed to be directed and sustained by the ancestors. This continuing interdependence of ancestry and family is something we understand in Scotland, something that gives us a guid conceit of ourselves.

That it has its national values, I am sure. Our native land, the excuse for many reasons for our being here tonight, has always been beautiful—rugged yet benign, fit mother for a hardy race. Nonetheless, that race has been small, its members have been on the average, poor in almost everything but spirit : And yet that spirit has made the name of Scotland known wherever the wind blows—in a' the airts.

Other names are in the winds, too, but there is little doubt that the pioneer spirit, the necessity of getting on, the certainty that if one is to achieve anything, it must be worked for, has been peculiarly characteristic of Scotland and Scots people.

The old jokes about the " Heids of Departments " may often be true, but much of the progress was not merely in individual men and women. Scotland had a pride in ideas. If its religion came from Ireland (which may or may not be true) Scotland made the most of it, enhanced it and made men burn with zeal, and race on with the fiery cross. The Scots saw the virtue of knowledge and three of their Universities are of the 15th century ; three Universities, for a handful of people in a poor and barren land, and a fourth just round the corner of time !

Sir James Barrie has reminded us that there are not four universities in Scotland but five—" and the fifth is the poor proud homes that said so long

ago, there shall be education in this land." I believe Scotland has done more by and with education for the benefit of the world than any other nation.

" Poverty, pride and pianos," used to be the nickname of a " cold grey city " some of you will know. I imagine that the pianos are less noticeable now, except during that special week or two in the autumn. Is the description unworthy and to be derided ? I think not. Poverty can often harden a young man better than riches, and provided that it is his spirit that's hardened not his heart, it may be a good thing. And what of pride ? One of the deadly sins, to be sure, though I am sometimes more afraid of the deadly virtues than the deadly sins. Memory and pride can make a fine alliance and I feel that the Scottish National War Memorial, set upon that castle rock, is certainly the moving embodiment of that amalgam.

There is an old Scots saying that " a man's mind is a mirk mirror," and maybe we delude ourselves with the so-called glories of a phantom past.

I revisited recently some of the scenes of my own youth. How I remember the long walks I used to have with my father, the steep braes and the gowans fine. I discovered that the long walks seemed to have shrunk and, strangely enough, the braes were littler than I thought. As for the gowans, they had gone with the folks I used to look up to in those bygone years. It was, I felt, as if I had been making a little mythology of my own. Maybe our Scottish story is a myth too.

Well, if it might be, all the more reason for some of us to re-examine it, to reassess it, to refresh our minds at that inspiring, if doubtfully historic, source. I have a feeling that the national prospect is not so drear, however the personal aspect occasionally may be. But there is another larger value in it that saves sentiment from becoming sentimentality—or false sentiment.

History is built up of past and present. The past is the key to the present and both are the foundation of the future. If our backward e'e deceives us not, it may give us a clue to the future.

" Muckle din but little woo' quo the De'il as he clippit the soo."

We all know occasions where even the best of us yield more din than " woo," when little worth comes from the discussion.

We ask then the perennial question—" Stands Scotland where she did ? " And my answer is, at this moment, I fear not.

There is a lack of the national vitality, that creativeness, that not so long ago was characteristic of the blue bonnets as well as the blue jerseys. Part of this is due to the lack of self-sacrifice that is now in scarce supply in all these islands. Nearly everyone has a right to go, for example, to the University these days and the Carnegie Trust and the Welfare State have sapped much of the strength of will of parents as well as sons. " Who wants to be strong all the time ? " someone will ask, and with reason, but in the days of our youth we were proud (that sin again!) of our accomplishments in a competitive world. Now we need neither be proud nor grateful.

The Scottish virtues are being, of course, watered down by the spirit of the time (a strange paradox) as well as by extrinsic factors. Hence all the more necessary is the backward glance, the re-appraisal. Poor Rabbie Burns had in his life much cause for complaint. Would that he could be with us tonight ; he would find it hard to despair either of the past or the future of his countrymen in so distinguished, so influential and so determined a company as I have had the honour to address tonight.

Mr Swinton's Sentiment was received with great appreciation.

A Welcome to the Guests.

Mr James R. Chalmers, B.L., in proposing the toast of the Guests, said that they had a goodly company of friends, some distinguished, some good looking, and all well behaved. Their principal guest, Dr W. E. Swinton, who had contributed an excellent Sentiment, was born in Fife, educated at Glenalmond and Glasgow University. He studied science and medicine, but became interested in Anatomy and Vertebrate Palæontology (the large and fearsome pre-historic animals) and has since written books and papers on these animals, their bones, habits, diseases, etc. He is now Principal Scientific Officer and Training (Education Officer) in the British Museum (Natural History). He has travelled extensively, especially in Canada and the United States of America, lectured there and in Mexico, Germany and Belgium—in fact he is a Medallist of Brussels University. As a young man he was a member of the Scottish Arctic Expedition in 1920. To those of us who are still keeping up the payments on our television sets he will be familiar as a television personality who has appeared in that medium about 20 times and, moreover, has broadcast on about 60 programmes. Next year he will be President of the Museums Association, the professional body, under Royal Patronage, of all the Commonwealth and British Museums—1,000 or more of them. Dr Swinton claims membership of all sorts of Societies, but I hope I may not be out of order in hoping that one day he might round off his many achievements by becoming a Brother Caledonian in our Society.

Other guests who were welcomed were Mr John Wilson, who had given the Burns' Sentiment at our January meeting; Mr W. E. Ockenden, an eminent City Banker; Mr Andrew Irving, Director of a large steamship company; and Mr Everman, an American visitor from Santa Barbara.

With regard to Mr J. Nixon Browne, C.B.E., M.P., who was responding to the toast, Mr Chalmers said that he was Member of Parliament for the Craigton Division of Glasgow, and Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland. He reminded members that in November last they had listened to a most informative Sentiment by Lord Strathclyde on "The Scottish Office," and had, therefore, some idea of the multifarious duties and responsibilities which fall upon Mr Nixon Browne. Mr Chalmers concluded by giving a hearty welcome

to all guests and expressing the hope that they had enjoyed themselves.

Scottish Characteristics.

Mr J. Nixon Browne in responding to the toast of the guests referred to the important people, including his Bank Manager, mentioned by the Proposer. "These guests," he continued, "are honoured by the invitation extended to them, especially those, who like himself, were Sassenachs. All over the world gatherings of Scots such as this were taking place. More than any other nation the Scots cherished the ways and traditions of their native land. Living a life away from Scotland they form colonies to bring their compatriots to them and to help each other to conquer the land of their adoption.

"So many Scotsmen," said Mr Nixon Browne, "leave their native country, taking with them their unique talents, that there is more room in Scotland itself for the English, Welsh and Irishmen." That is why I am here. If I had represented an English constituency I'd never have been Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for England. There are far too many Scots representing English constituencies ahead of me! But isn't it a grand thought that two such different peoples should live in harmony and equality? The Scots speak freely in English debates, but on purely Scottish matters woe betide anyone but a Scottish member who dares to take part! Not that Englishmen don't complain—this they do frequently because they suggest we take up the time of the House on grave matters and in a language they profess not to understand. One promient Labour member has suggested a simple two-clause Bill which he claims would solve the problem:

Clause 1.—"The Act of Union is hereby repealed."

Clause 2.—"This Act does not apply to Scotland." (Laughter.)

Your President, with whom in another connection I have worked so closely, and been very frequently at loggerheads, knows that we do not conform and that we don't want to conform. As one who has spent the greater part of his life in Scotland, I do all in my power to preserve our separate identity. While we keep this we have something unique to add to the world; something no other nation has. All you men who have left Scotland to earn your living do not always realise the problem of your native land that you have left behind. The problem is the slow depopulation of the Highland Counties, the uneven pattern of industry so far from the main industrial centres. We need and get splendid assistance from the United Kingdom taxpayer, but we must seek, and go on seeking for more; more industry to balance our economy; more for roads and our tourist industry; more of that sort of Government assistance that helps us to help ourselves. What I am asking this distinguished Society to do is to remember one of your objects—the advancement of Scottish National interests. Think and talk about Scotland's problems, sell Scotland to Industrialists contemplating making a move, sell Scotland to Industrialists in other countries, buy Scots woollens for your wives and Scotch whisky for yourselves—if there is none to stand you one! That is my challenge to you—worry about Scotland's National interests—it worries me and it is worth while worrying about. Mr President, we have had a very good dinner. We thank you for it and for the honour you pay us in inviting us. (Applause.)

The Honorary Office-Bearers.

The President in submitting the last toast of the evening, " The Honorary Office-Bearers," said :

Tonight it is my privilege to thank our Hon. Office-Bearers for the assiduous manner in which they have carried out their duties since their appointment at our last Annual General Meeting. They have discharged their duties with credit to themselves, satisfaction to the members, and in so doing have enhanced the prestige of the Society. I thank them with the respect due to those who toil and labour, without remuneration, in the service of their fellowmen.

Brother Caledonian William M. Miller has held the courtesy title of Hon. Secretary since 1945. I say " courtesy title " because he is actually the Managing Director. He is unique in that he combines the duties of Managing Director with those of Shop Steward, which gives him complete control of the rank and file, and of those members of the Board who have been awarded the Gold Badge of the Society. Everybody does exactly as he tells them. And the extraordinary thing is you never realise you are being told. (Laughter.)

I have to admit that I am totally ignorant of Treasurers and Auditors, honorary or otherwise. A Company Balance Sheet might be written in Greek so far as I am concerned. All I know about these gentlemen is that they either want money or want to stop you getting it, but as both the Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Auditor are Chartered Accountants you cannot, of course, argue with them. Nevertheless we tender to them our grateful thanks.

The President then referred to what he called " Our Newest Office-Bearer the Hon. Historian." " This office," he continued, " had been held for 32 years by that beloved figure, Past-President William Will, C.B.E., whose death we recorded with deep regret last month. Although I know that Brother Caledonian W. M. Miller will reduce my speeches to a minimum, I am sure he will fill the office of Hon. Historian with acceptance to us all. We wish him well in the task of maintaining the Chronicles."

The toast having been pledged, Mr Miller replied as follows :

During the 18 years in which I have been an Honorary Office-Bearer, I have responded so often to this toast, that I feel sure the President will one day address me in the same way as the irrascible Provost addressed the talkative Bailie at a Council meeting in Scotland. " Bailie Broon," thundered the Provost, " what we want fra' you is silence—and damned little o' that." (Laughter.)

While you, Brother Caledonians, may think it would be unnatural for me to be silent, I would have been happy on this occasion to keep quiet if I could have persuaded one of my fellow office-bearers to accept the duty of replying to the President's amusing remarks. But they both declined so I had no alternative but to speak—I really had no choice. In this respect I am quite unlike the young man who, after courting a girl for some months, was summoned by her father, who said to him, " Young man, I want to know whether your intentions are honourable or dishonourable." " Thank you very much," replied the young man, " Thank you, sir, I didn't realise I had a choice ! " (Laughter.)

The President has suggested that as the new Honorary Historian I may, in reporting his speeches in the Chronciles, curtail some of his brilliant orations and thus deprive posterity of his words of wisdom, to which we have listened with pleasure and profit, with awe and humility. He is not far wrong ! The

cost of printing the Chronicles is now so heavy that we must choose between the preservation of solvency and the presentation of eloquence. In this, as in so many other things, money talks and consequently there are " mony talks " which unfortunately, cannot be fully recorded in our Annals. Notwithstanding his fears, however, the President has been generous in his praise—and in a laconic and reserved Scot this is unusual. We are always so frightened of being regarded as effusive. This is illustrated, I think, by the experience of an English visitor, who attending a kirk in Scotland, and obviously accustomed to a less formal type of service, kept exclaiming, " Hallelulah, Praise the Lord." This was too much for one of the Elders, who finally moved forward to the interrupter, tapped him on the shoulder, and warned him, " Look here ma man we dinna praise the Lord here ! " (Laughter.)

Mr President, the Honorary Office-Bearers are grateful for your high commendation—which of course is well merited—and they thank you, Brother Caledonians for the kind way in which you have received the toast.

Mr Alexander MacRae, who has entertained the members on many previous occasions, provided the musical part of the programme. He sang " Turn Ye to Me," " The Lea Rig," and " The Herding Song," in which he was tastefully accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

The Pipe-Major's selection was composed of " The Earl of Mansfield," " Climbing Duniquaich," " The Ale is Dear," " Mist Covered Mountains." and the Strathspey, " The Caledonian Society of London " " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem concluded a successful evening.

Annual Festival

The social work of the session closed with the Ladies' Night, held on Thursday, 17th April, 1958, at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7. The large company was received by the President and Mrs. Aldridge.

The President on the Society.

The loyal toasts having been pledged, Mr John R. Aldridge proposed the toast of " The Caledonian Society of London." He said :

There are some mysteries in life which are never solved. On the other hand, time solves some of the mysteries, so, for a short space this evening I am undertaking the part of time in order to explain at least one of the mysteries connected with the Society, that is the one which decrees that the President must propose the toast of the Society.

Before I can do this, however, I feel I should give our guests something of our background.

If you look at the top of the inside page of your programme, you will see that the Society was founded in 1837. The year is printed in very small type,

indicative of our modesty and self effacement. The rules governing the conduct of the Society were laid down by the Founding Fathers, and remain practically the same today, 121 years after the event.

Membership is limited to 100, excluding life and council members. We are pledged to support financially the two great Scottish charities in London—The Royal Scottish Corporation which cares for the aged Scots by pensions and other means, and the Royal Caledonian Schools which looks after the upbringing of Scottish children who have lost their parents. I hasten to add that this is not a prelude to passing round the hat, but it gives me the opportunity to thank the members for the magnificent manner in which they supported my appeal for the Corporation and to express the hope that they will be as generous to the Schools.

The Society was also responsible, with the Highland Society of London, for raising that famous territorial unit, the London Scottish. That was just on 100 years ago. The Hon. Colonel of the Regiment, Colonel L. Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., is a Past-President of this Society, and it is pleasing to think that next year, when the " Scottish " celebrates its centenary, the President will be this year's Vice-President, Lt.-Col. J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., who served with the " Scottish " in the last war. (Applause.)

I wish to refer to our rules again, one of which states that the object of the Society shall be " the promotion of good fellowship among Scotsmen in London." Many years ago the toast of the Society was always given by one of the guests.

On one occasion, however, the guest, obviously overcome by the good fellowship which had been promoted during the evening, made a proper hash of the toast. Not only did he fail to extol the virtues of the Society, but he completely ignored the presence of the ladies who had sat throughout the evening in the discomfort of the very tight lacing which was prevalent in those days. This resulted in a number of candid lectures at home that night, and a meeting of Past-Presidents urgently called together decided that in future, to be on the safe side, the President would remain sober and give the toast of the Society himself, leaving the ladies to the Vice-President.

I rather like addressing the ladies. They always have such a sense of humour, and as long as your humour them they are all right. They may like to know that from an American source, I learn that since the depression set in there have been fewer divorces due to the high cost of " leaving." (Laughter.) Alimony isn't what it used to be ! The goodwill of the Society remains as high as ever. I would ask you to rise and drink to the continued prosperity of the Caledonian Society of London. (Applause.)

A Welcome to the Guests.

The Vice-President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., in proposing the toast of the guests, said :

This night is always a happy one, for it gives us the opportunity to show our wives, sisters, daughters and friends, what we do on the five nights of the winter when we desert them. Not that there is any secret about what we do, for it is all recorded in the Chronicles of the Society. And here I should like to pay my own personal tribute to that very lovable and agreeable character Past-President William Will, who edited our Chronicles so well and faithfully for over thirty years. They are now in the hands of our Honorary Secretary who will keep them satisfactorily although he did warn us that he would have to be economical.

However, to return to my subject, I have much pleasure in mentioning especially Mrs Rintoul, whose late husband was our President some years ago.

She takes an enormous interest in the Society and its work, and we are delighted to see her here tonight.

I am sure that the other fair ladies who turn this occasion into such a flood of colour, will forgive me if I do not mention any of them by name. They know how pleased we are to have them with us.

Continuing, in referring to what he called " the stronger sex," the Vice-President welcomed Sir John Tait, a member of one of the great merchant firms in the Far East, a Banker, and an elder of St Columba's Church. He congratulated the Rev. Dr Moffett on his appointment as an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

At this point Mr Thomson recalled the experience of a young curate who was delivering his first sermon. He was so nervous that he asked the verger for a glass of water, and the latter being an understanding man, thought it wise to lace it well with gin.

At the conclusion of the service the curate enquired respectfully of his Bishop, who was a member of the congregation, how he had conducted himself. The Bishop in his reply suggested that it would perhaps be an improvement if the curate did not wave his notes above his head ; did not, at the end of his sermon roll these notes into a ball and throw them at the nearest member of the congregation, and that when he was descending from the pulpit he should walk solemnly down the stairs instead of sliding down the banisters. (Laughter.)

Mr Thomson expressed his pleasure at the attendance of Mr Howard Johnson, Member of Parliament for the Kemptown Division of Brighton ; he welcomed Mr W. Anderson and Mr R. M. Fergus of the Ilford Scottish Association, and Mr W. McLennan of the Sunbury-on-Thames Caledonian Society.

Finally said the Vice-President, we have Sir Sydney Littlewood, who is replying to this toast. He is a great legal luminary and it is through him and his work that the Law Society and Lawyers were not nationalised as was the Medical Profession. This great work resulted in the Legal Aid and Advice Act of 1949, which I believe is generally known as " the Littlewood Act."

I understand that Sir Sydney in his recreations applies himself to rose growing and keeping lawns in a condition that makes all his gardening friends envious. If, from his multifarious duties he could spare the time, I would be happy to enlist his services towards the improvement of my lawns. (Applause.)

Sir Sydney Littlewood on the Scots.

Sir Sydney Littlewood replied to the toast of the Guests, and on rising was received with applause. Sir Sydney said :

While I am happy to be present tonight, I confess that I have suffered some embarrassment, mainly due to the fact that everybody present has been speaking a language which I don't understand! In the Monologue given to us by Past-President Dalgarno, I have comprehended only about one word in six, and my appreciation of the situation has not been greatly helped by the prodigious hospitality provided by the President.

I have, however, some knowledge of the characteristics of the Scots. When I was a prisoner in Germany during the Great War, one of my colleagues was a graduate of Glasgow University—a very learned man. After I had been at this camp for some weeks I noticed that this Scot never received parcels, so I naturally enquired if he had no friends to take an interest in him. His reply, typically Scottish I suggest, was as follows: "You were obviously getting far more parcels than you needed or could consume, so I cancelled mine!"

After that war I visited Scotland and I was so impressed by the country that I have been very many times since. I must admit, however, that I have not always been pleased with the weather. Simon Ford said, "If the Scots knew enough to go in when it rained they would never get any outdoor exercise." Then Campbell told us that "The Scots are steadfast not their clime."

I have already referred to the language difficulty, which reminds me of the conversation of two men who had dined rather well. One of them was explaining to the other that unfortunately in his married life he had had no children. "My wife," he said, "is impregnable." His friend replied, "No, you mean "unbearable." "No, that's not it either; she was "inconceivable." (Laughter.)

Then there was another occasion on which a junior partner was complaining about his senior, who was always holding up the work, to whom he always referred as "Old Thrombosis," explaining that "thrombosis was a bloody clot that interferes with circulation." (Laughter.)

You may recall that Dr Johnson had no very high opinion of Scots, and most of you know that he described oats as "a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." He also told us that haggis was "a mass of meat, generally pork, chopped and enclosed in a membrane. In Scotland it is commonly made in a sheep's maw of the entrails of the same animal cut small with suet and spices."

Haggis has never been a dish which I relished, but it seems to be very acceptable to most Scots, probably because it can be used as an excuse for adding whisky.

I don't know the origin of the word "Whisky," but Johnson suggested that it came from an Irish and Erse word "usquebaugh" which signifies the water of life. He continued, "it is a compounded distilled spirit being drawn on aromatics and the Irish sort is particularly distinguished for its pleasant and mild flavour. The Highland sort is somewhat hotter and by corruption in Scotland they call it 'Whisky.'"

The Scots are very proud of their scenery, and on one occasion in the presence of Johnson, a Scot was extolling the wonderful prospects of his land. Johnson's reply was, "Norway too has noble, wild prospects and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble, wild prospects. But, Sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotsman ever sees is the high road that leads to England." This view was apparently shared by Francis Lockyer, who is quoted as saying, "In all my travels I never met with any one Scotsman but what was a man of sense. I believe everybody of that country that has any, leaves it as fast as they can."

In concluding his amusing speech Sir Sydney referred to the splendid service given by the President as a magistrate of

Kingston Borough and added that he had enjoyed himself immensely notwithstanding the language difficulty, had greatly appreciated the singing, had had a wonderful dinner, an excellent evening and a thoroughly good time. (Loud applause.)

PAST-PRESIDENT JAMES R. STEELE ON THE PRESIDENT.

Past-President James R. Steele submitted the toast, " The President." He said that the President was a very old friend of his, an extraordinary man, one of many parts, modest and unassuming. Many years ago he had been specially selected to become Secretary of the National Greyhound Racing Society of Great Britain, not only for his ability, but also because of his great integrity. At the outbreak of the 1914 War when the President was in Canada, he joined the Canadian Black Watch in which he served with distinction, was mentioned twice in dispatches, and was awarded the Military Medal. Later he became President of the Canadian Ex-Service Association of Great Britain, and was now a member of the Advisory Committee of the Canadian Veterans Association of the United Kingdom. Until the Welfare State came into being he was a governor of the London Hospital.

Aldous Huxley said, " Experience is not what happens to a man ; it is what a man does with what happens to him." This quotation certainly applied to John R. Aldridge. As a result of his appeal for the Royal Scottish Corporation the substantial sum of £866 had been contributed by members and friends, the largest amount achieved by any President in recent years. This was an indication of the high esteem in which he was held.

The Society had had a most successful year under his Presidency ; he had worthily upheld its traditions and they were grateful for what he had done for the Society and for the great Scottish Charities whose interests the members all had at heart. (Applause.)

In his reply, the President, thanking Past-President Steele for his eulogies, suggested that the latter had a flair for such speeches, which he said, reminded him of the man walking down Sauchiehall Street with a roll of linoleum on his shoulder. When he was stopped by a friend who enquired what he was doing with this linoleum, his reply was, " I have a flair for this ! " Continuing, he expressed his appreciation of the support given to him throughout the year by all the members, and of the help he had received from the Honorary Secretary.

During the evening the Past-Presidents saluted the President and the Past-President's Badge was pinned by Mrs Aldridge on the coat of the immediate Past-President, Dr D. Macrae Stewart, M.A.

The musical programme, with Brother Caledonian Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., at the piano, was supplied by Miss Elizabeth Dall and Mr Niven Miller. The former sang " The Auld Hooose " and " Doon the Burn," the latter " Mary of Argyle " and " Up in the Morning's no' for Me," and together, " The Dashing White Sergeant " and " Leezie Lindsay." In his inimitable fashion Past-President William Dalgarno gave two monologues " Sewin' Machine " and " Hugh McCurrie's Marriage." Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., besides playing the Society's Strathspey, gave the following selections—" Invercauld," " Balmoral Castle," " The Farmer's Daughter " and " Wooed and Married and A'." " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem completed an enjoyable evening.

Annual General Meeting.

On 5th November, 1958, the annual meeting for the session 1957–58 was held at the Society's headquarters, the President, Mr John R. Aldridge in the chair.

The death on 6th October, 1958, of Past-President Alexander MacDonald, C.B.E., was reported and a resolution recording his services to the Society and expressing sympathy with his wife and family was passed.

The usual satisfactory financial statement was submitted by the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A.

Contributions of £50 each to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools were voted.

It was reported that the following had now qualified as Life Members, Past-President Col. L. Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., Brother Caledonians William Ramsay, J. McW. Simmie and J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., Vice-President.

Mr W. Ure Wilson, M.C., and Mr Sydney B. Taylor, B.Com., F.C.I.S., M.Inst.T., were elected members of the Society.

The Honorary Secretary was instructed to convey to Mrs Ethel E. Miln the members' thanks for her kindness in presenting to the Society her late husband's gold and silver badges and her lady's badge.

On demitting office, the President thanked the members for their loyal support and recommended Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., as his successor. He recalled that the new President was following his father, who occupied that office during 1939–40. The new President expressed his appreciation of the honour conferred on him and assured members that he would do his best to maintain the traditions of the Society.

In recognition of his services to the Society the Gold Badge of the Society was awarded to Mr John Aldridge.

Other office-bearers for the new session were elected as follows: Vice-President, Mr. R. A. McWilliam, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Historian, Mr W. M. Miller, Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A., Honorary Auditor, Mr J. H. Robertson, C.A., and to fill vacancies on the Council, Mr J. C. M. Campbell, Mr A. R. C. Fleming, A.C.A., Mr A. G. C. Robertson and Mr Douglas G. Robertson were elected.

CHAPTER III.

1958–1959: Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., *President.*

Son of a former President takes the Chair; "Highland Soldier," by Brigadier Lorne Campbell, V.C.; Solicitor-General on "Politicians and Lawyers"; £1,025 for the Royal Scottish Corporation; "The Scot in the Wine Trade," by Mr Charles Williams; Mr Martin Lindsay, M.P. on "Members of Parliament"; "The Immortal Memory," by Mr W. E. Swinton, Ph.D.; The Agent-General for Ontario on Scots; Centenary gift to the London Scottish Regiment; "Port of Leith," by Mr A. K. Watson; Governor of the Bank of England on Bankers; "The Navy and its Scottish Components," by Rear-Admiral Thomson; Toast to Honorary Office-Bearers; The President on the Society; Mr Ian R. A. Peebles on "Cricket and Cricketers."

UNTIL James Currie Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., was elected to the Presidency, only twice before in the long history of the Society had a father and son occupied this high office. Son of James Thomson, F.R.S.E., who was President in the year 1939–40, our new President became a member of the Society in 1938 and thus from a comparatively early age he must have been deeply conscious of the traditions of the Society.

Born in London on the 4th February, 1911, Mr Thomson was educated at Marlborough College and Pembroke College, Cambridge, where in his final year he studied law. At the age of 21 he became a member of the family firm of Charles Mackinlay & Co. Ltd., Leith, Scotch Whisky Distillers, Blenders and Exporters, for whom he travelled extensively abroad. In 1936 he joined the London Scottish Regiment as a private and was Commissioned two years later. Just over one year later, after War had been declared, he became the first wartime T.A. Adjutant of the 1st Battalion. In command of a Company he went to Iraq with the Battalion in 1942 and later that year left to take up a series of Staff jobs. In 1944 he was appointed

J. C. THOMSON, M.B.E., T.D.

President 1958–1959

Second-in-Command of the 2nd Bn. The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. Later that year he was promoted to Lieut.-Col. and was in command of that unit in the Gothic Line, Italy. Subsequently, until released from the Army in October, 1945, he served in Greece, Austria and again in Italy. In that year he married Letitia Blanche Borthwick, widow of Captain Michael Fleming by whom she had three sons and a daughter. Mr and Mrs Thomson have in addition, twins, a son and daughter. Now living in Hertfordshire—30 miles nearer Scotland than London—he takes an active interest in local affairs, being on the Parish Council and the Hertford Rural District Council. He is a J.P. on the Stevenage Bench and is President of the Aston Branch of the British Legion. He supports, as all members are expected to do, both the Royal Scottish Corporation of which he is Life Managing Governor, and the Royal Caledonian Schools.

At the Council and general meetings held on 20th November, 1958, at the Rembrandt Hotel, the new President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., took the chair.

The Honorary Secretary intimated that Mrs Janie B. MacDonald had presented to the Society the Gold Badge of her late husband, Past-President Mr Alexander MacDonald, C.B.E., an action greatly appreciated by the members.

At the first Little Dinner of the session which followed the business meetings, a large company gave a hearty welcome to Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D. His principal guest was Brigadier Lorne Campbell, V.C., D.S.O., T.D., who gave as his Sentiment, " Highland Soldier." After the loyal toast had been honoured, the President in introducing Brigadier Lorne Campbell, referred to the latter's services during the recent war, when in command of the 7th battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (51st Highland Division), he had won the Victoria Cross at the Battle of Wadi Akarit. The official history of the 51st Highland Division in describing this action concluded by saying that Brigadier Campbell's " gallantry and leadership can seldom have been surpassed in the long history of the Highland Brigade." The Argylls had recognised this honour by making him the Honorary Colonel of their 8th battalion. He was a worthy member of a family which had already produced one other V.C.

HIGHLAND SOLDIER.

The following is Brigadier Campbell's Sentiment :

In the Spring of 1915 the first whole Division of Highland Soldiers took the field as part of the British Army, and you will remember that at the end of the war the Germans listed the 51st (Highland) Division as the most redoubtable of all British Divisions. Ever since they were formed, the Highlanders have been asked to take on hard and dangerous tasks and by dash and determination they have usually succeeded in them, often when others had failed. Ticonderoga, Fuentes D'Onoros, Waterloo, The Alma, Balaclava, Lucknow, Dargai, Beaumont-Hamel, these are names which shine bright in British military history and all the brighter for the action of Highlanders. But what perhaps interests military historians more still is at least two occasions on which Highlanders by their peculiar temperament refuted accepted tactical doctrine. In 1740 when an infantry action consisted in the two sides standing opposite each other in serried ranks and exchanging volleys and an officer was able to take his hat off and invite the other side to fire first, at the battle of Fontenoy the Black Watch, who were appearing for the first time as a unit of the British Army, on the orders of their commanding officer, when the French were about to fire, threw themselves flat on the ground, and, when the bullets had passed over their heads, leapt to their feet and charged, whereupon the French, disgusted by such a display of bad manners, turned their backs on them and fled. They repeated the operation several times during the battle, each time with the same success. I say they all lay flat on the ground, but the officers carrying the colours did not do so for obvious reasons, nor did the Commanding Officer, Munro of Foulis, who realised that he was so fat that if he lay down he would not be able to get up again. The other occasion was at the Battle of Balaclava in 1854. Up till then it was held that infantry could only receive cavalry in square and the fate of a battle often depended on whether the infantry had time to form square before the cavalry arrived. When the Russian cavalry were advancing on Balaclava and the Turks had fled, the 93rd Highlanders, later to become the 2nd battalion the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who were the only troops left between the advancing enemy and the Allied supply post, received the Russian cavalry in line, two deep, and beat them off, and then had to be restrained from charging out after them.

Of course the uniform had something to do with it, inspiring pride in the wearer, admiration in his friends and apprehension in his foes. There is still extant a correspondence between the Kaiser and Queen Victoria. The Kaiser wrote to say that he had that morning seen the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders drilling in Hyde Park and was much impressed by the smartness of their uniform and would like to be Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment. To this Queen Victoria replied with the royal equivalent of " Not on your life," which was perhaps a fortunate answer as German Court etiquette would have obliged him to wear pink silk tights over his knees.

But in 1940 a Division of Highlanders again took the field, in battledress and without the kilt, and again did as well as ever. After the first division had been betrayed by the French a second one took its place and was the only division out of all the Infantry Divisions of this Empire that Montgomery chose to take with him all the way from Alamein to Berlin. At Alamein its casualties of 2,000, only equalled by the Australian Division, showed how hard it fought.

The Elder Pitt claimed the credit for the formation of the Highland Regiments, but in fact the suggestion was first made by a Scotsman, Forbes of Culloden. It found favour with Walpole, the Prime Minister of the time,

but was not accepted by the Cabinet, so it only resulted in the formation of the 43rd Regiment, later re-numbered the 42nd, from the Independent Companies of the Black Watch.

Nineteen years later, in 1757, Pitt started the formation of Highland Regiments in a big way. The reason behind it seems to have been political rather than military. The Government was terrified of the Highlands and could not understand them. When there was trouble there the usual method was to give a Commission to some well-affected chief to raise his own men and those of his friends and settle it in his own Highland way. What frightened them was not so much the pugnacity of the Highlanders as the way in which they blindly followed their Chief, while the chiefs followed their own inclination or interest, and loyalty to the Sovereign counted for nothing. As each chief was entirely independent, squashing one had no effect on the rest; all being their own masters, new alliances and new plans could be made in the twinkling of an eye. The idea now was that, if you could give the King's Commission to the Chiefs and Chieftains and get them to bring their men with them, you would secure the loyalty of the leaders, introduce some idea of military discipline into the Highlands and, best of all, have the regiments as hostages for the good behaviour of their friends at home.

The plan worked marvellously. Many leading men either applied, or were asked, to raise regiments, bringing in their own men. Lesser chieftains joined them with theirs. A chieftain who brought a hundred men was made a captain, one who brought twenty or thirty a lieutenant. Between 1757 and 1800 the Highlands raised fifty battalions of Regular Infantry. Their names are full of romance—Fraser's Highlander's, Macdonald's Highlanders, Macleod's Highlanders, Loudoun's Highlanders, Keith's Highlanders, Campbell's Highlanders, Montgomery's Highlanders, the Strathspey Highlanders and many more. Most of them were disbanded when the emergency for which they had been raised had passed: but the remainder form the Highland Regiments of today.

Even after the regiments were formed the Government continued to treat the Highlanders as barbarians, not deserving common decency or honourable treatment. There is no need to say anything about the complaint of a Scottish writer that they were " put to every hazardous enterprise where nothing was to be got but broken bones." That was part of the game. But there were two things of which the Highlanders were frightened. One was being left abandoned far from home and the other was being separated from their friends. So, when a regiment was raised, they were given two undertakings, one that if they were disbanded they would be taken back to Scotland and disbanded there, and, two, that they would not be drafted, that is transferred to other Regiments. Yet time and again it needed the threat of mutiny or actual mutiny to force the Government to honour their obligations. You may remember the conversation between Cameron of Erracht and the Duke of York, their Commander-in-Chief, when the Duke of York told him his Cameron Highlanders were to be drafted. When Erracht objected that it could not be done, the Duke replied, " Then the King, my father, will send them to the West Indies." To which Erracht answered, " You may tell the King, your father, from me that he can send us to Hell if he likes and I will lead them, but he dare not draft us." They were not drafted and they were sent to the West Indies.

The War Office disliked the kilt and time after time they took it away from Highland Regiments, who mostly only got it back in the middle of Queen Victoria's reign; the Highland Light Infantry not until after the Second World War. The 2nd Black Watch, 1st Seaforth, 1st Gordons and 1st Argylls all suffered in this way. But it is worth remembering that but for the Highland Regiments the kilt and the pipes would probably no longer exist. Both had been proscribed by the Disarmament Act of 1746, the pipes being

decreed to be a weapon of war. But for their use by the Highland Regiments both would probably have disappeared.

There is no doubt that the Highlanders make good soldiers. I think they have three strongly developed qualities which help them to be so, qualities acquired by heredity, tradition and upbringing.

The first, the outcome of heredity, is a hot and emotional temper which can be roused by the right words or the right circumstances to an enthusiasm amounting almost to frenzy, which gives them the courage and temerity to undertake and carry out tasks which they could not attempt otherwise. The Highlander has always been a fierce and unyielding fighter. Once he gets his teeth into anything no casualities or enemy action can make him let go. At the battle of Falkirk in 1745 when Hawley's cavalry had broken the ranks of the Highlanders and was trampling them on the ground, though prostrate and with no room to use their swords, they continued to stab upwards at the horses with their dirks, to seize the clothing of the riders and haul them to the ground and to shoot them with pistols. When the cavalry were routed, they leapt to their feet and pursued them, running, it is said, almost as fast as the horses.

The second is an intense loyalty to their leaders and to their comrades. This is, of course, the old clan tradition. The clan was an association of kinsmen for mutual help and protection. The Chief, chosen by the clan, was the military commander, law-giver, judge and Minister of Health and Welfare to his clan. The clansmen, who regarded him as their kinsman and friend, obeyed him implicitly and knew it was their duty, if needs be, to die for him, just as he was always ready to die for his clan. When the clan was drawn up for battle it was drawn up by families, a father flanked by his sons, brother beside brother, so that every man felt that he was fighting for his neighbours as well as for himself. They have been doing this for nearly two thousand years. Tacitus, writing of the Celts who opposed the Roman soldiers, said, " Their line of battle is not formed of a fortuitous collection of men, but is a conjunction of whole families and tribes of relations."

The third quality, the result of upbringing, is great physical endurance. It is less called for now and so less practised, but the seeds of it are still there, all the more so because this endurance was not a passive endurance induced by a hard life in hard surroundings, but the outcome of an active frame of mind, a desire not to become soft. When Burke wrote of being able to see where the Highland army had spent the night by the holes melted by their bodies in the snow and referred to his clan being offended because young Keppoch used a lump of snow as a pillow, it was not the lump of snow which offended them, but the fear that this was the first sign of degeneracy. Highlanders who found themselves in a house with a bed in it often slept on the floor for fear of becoming soft. It is remarked that the Highlanders went everywhere on foot and this is still true of the Highlands today where people cheerfully walk great distances without thinking anything of it. Montrose's men are said at time to have marched sixty miles without a halt for rest or food. When after their long march through the icy mountains they attacked at Inverlochy at dawn, they had nothing to eat but a handful of oatmeal moistened with snow and eaten off the point of a dirk. When the Highland Army retreating from Derby reached the Border Esk they found it flooded neck deep. After they had struggled across it, and in spite of their long march, the pipes struck up and the whole army started to dance.

You will notice that I have taken my examples from the past. This is because I wanted to show the qualities undiluted. But in the remote Highlands these old ways still persist in a modified form and they still exist everywhere handed down from father to son, in Highland families which the depopulation of the Highlands have scattered all over the world. They are probably nowhere more strongly preserved than in the Highland Regiments. A regiment is always a great guardian of tradition and few races are more traditional than

the Highlanders, so that a Highland Regiment above all regiments preserves the old rules of conduct and the old spirit and passes them on to all who join it.

By the beginning of the last war the fifty Highland battalions had become twelve; soon they will be only four. Let us hope for its fighting reputation that the British Army will never be without Highlanders. In the last war there was a serious threat of all Infantry Regiments being amalgamated into a single, anonymous Corps of Infantry. Luckily it was defeated. Already there are rumblings in some places about the suicidal folly of the present policy of cutting down the infantry to a skeleton, and perhaps some day we shall see more battalions of Highlanders appearing again. But whatever may happen Britain will surely never forget the debt of gratitude which it owes to the Highland Soldier.

Brigadier Campbell resumed his seat amid great applause and the President expressed to him the warm thanks of the members for an outstanding Sentiment.

Guests—"An Embarrassment of Riches."

This toast was proposed by Mr Vernon J. Eddie, who in the course of his remarks said: "In our guests tonight, we have almost an embarrassment of riches: rarely can our gatherings have been graced by such a galaxy of gallantry, conviviality, spirituality and sagacity, comprising as it does representatives from the Army, the Wine and Spirit Trade, the Church, Public Service and the Law.

At the head of the list comes my good friend Brigadier Lorne Campbell, V.C., D.S.O. The President has recounted the history and career of Brigadier Campbell. We congratulate him on the excellence of the Sentiment he has given us tonight. In the Wine and Spirit Trade it has been my pleasure to hear Brigadier Campbell speak on many occasions and I can assure you, Brother Caledonians, that not only is he one of our best public speakers, but in fact we consider he has now lost his amateur status.

One last thing about Brigadier Campbell that must impress us all; not only is he Master of the Vintners Company, but when they hold the annual examinations to appoint Masters of Wine, he sets the questions; this will give you some idea of the profundity of his knowledge of wine. We all thank him for his presence here tonight and for his praiseworthy Sentiment.

And now I come to the main body of troops. From the London Scottish Regiment, we welcome the Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. J. McGregor, M.C., and wish him good luck in the Command he has taken over, Col. Torrance Law, D.S.O., T.D., Lt.-Col. James Peddie, D.S.O., T.D., Major H. Chedbury, Adjutant, Major David Ord, M.B.E., T.D., Regimental Secretary, and Lt.-Col. W. Menzies, T.D., D.L.

We are honoured, Brother Caledonians, by such an imposing array of officers from the London Scottish Regiment and since the toast of the Regiment will be proposed later in the evening I will only say what considerable pleasure it gives us to welcome these many and gallant officers from the London Scottish Regiment who have done so much to sustain the quality and to keep alive the traditions of the Regiment.

It gives me great personal pleasure to welcome on your behalf Colonel

Riseley of the Honourable Artillery Company, because we are both described as veteran members of the H.A.C. and were indeed comrades in arms in Territorial days before the war in the 86th Ack-Ack H.A.C. Regiment. Col. Riseley's association with the H.A.C. goes back many years before 1939, for in 1925 he was in the H.A.C. Infantry Company. In post-war years he has worked with tremendous energy as a member of the Court of Assistants of the Hon. Artillery Company and indeed was Vice-President of the Court when Lord Allenbrook was Col. Commandant. We are happy to know that the oldest regiment in the British Army is so worthily represented with us tonight.

And now I come to my personal guest, Dr Joseph Moffett, O.B.E., who needs no introduction to members of the Caledonian Society. On behalf of you, Mr President, Mr Vice-President, and all Brother Caledonians, we would extend our warmest congratulations to Dr Moffett on his being created an O.B.E. in the New Year Honours List.

We welcome once again Mr E. A. Armstrong, C.B., C.B.E., and on this occasion he is not expected to earn his dinner as he did when he delivered his Sentiment, " The Auld Alliance " some years ago and a second Sentiment, " Claverhouse," in December, 1955 ; Mr Armstrong seems to be a glutton for punishment. But we are happy to have him with us.

We also welcome Mr G. B. Young of the Scottish Council, and Mr Alexander Belch, C.B.E., the Hon. President of the London Ayrshire Society.

Now I come to the Rt. Hon. William Grant, Q.C., M.P., Solicitor-General for Scotland, who is responding to this Toast. Mr Grant is the member for the Woodside Division of Glasgow and has been Solicitor-General since January, 1955. His early years were spent at Fettes, and he took his Arts degree at Oriel College, Oxford. However, I am glad to say he very wisely returned to Edinburgh University to graduate in Law and was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1934. I make that point advisedly because there are two things to which, as I see it, Scotland has held most tenaciously—one her Church and the other her Law.

But I can't get away from the Army tonight. Mr Grant was also in the Royal Artillery—in fact we had the pleasure of serving together in the Ack-Ack defence of Glasgow at 12th Ack-Ack Divisional Headquarters in the early days of 1941–42.

It is always a privilege and an honour to entertain at our gatherings one of Her Majesty's Ministers. Since Mr Grant is to respond to the Toast I would remind him of the story which his Chief, The Prime Minister, told at the recent Lord Mayor's Dinner, about the old whale giving advice to the young whale as follows : " Be careful young man, it's when you're spouting that you may be harpooned." (Applause.)

The Solicitor-General on Politicians and Lawyers.

In his reply to the toast, the Right Hon. William Grant, Q.C., M.P., made the following observations :

You have done me an honour tonight and I feel rather nervous, especially after listening to Brigadier Lorne Campbell's Sentiment. I am a little like the curate who was going to preach his maiden sermon. He was extremely nervous, so, on the Saturday night, he asked his Vicar's advice. The Vicar said, " Well, you are going into the pulpit at 11 o'clock tomorrow morning. At half past ten precisely, take a really large whisky and you'll be all right." Acting on his advice the curate conducted the service magnificently. After the service he enquired of the Vicar if he had been satisfactory. " Yes," said

the Vicar, " a most eloquent sermon, but as an older man may I make three very minor criticisms. In the first place there are, as you no doubt realise, only ten commandments and not twenty, in the second place there were only twelve apostles and not twenty-four ; and, when David slew Goliath he used a sling and a stone—he didn't cut the blighters head off." (Laughter.)

I suggest that you have been rather rash in asking somebody who is both a politician and a lawyer to speak tonight. Politicians are usually very long-winded and lawyers very tedious—and neither is popular with the public. I understand that when Field-Marshal Montgomery retired the other day, one of his staff officers who had served with him for a long time said he too was going to come out and was going into politics. He asked Monty whether he could use Monty's name as a reference and Monty agreed. In due course a letter came from Central Tory Office to the Field-Marshal asking about this chap and Monty replied to the effect that he has served with him for seven years, was honest, intelligent, and hard-working and, therefore, quite unsuitable to be a Member of Parliament. (Laughter.)

Lawyers, as I suggested, can be quite tedious, and these chaps who teach law can be the most tedious of all (I taught law for some years myself). At a lawyers' dinner the incoming President was making his presidential address, which was going on and on. One old lawyer said to the other, " You know, this chap really does touch rock bottom," and the other chap replied, " Yes, I agree, but my real objection is that when he gets to rock bottom he stays there for so long." (Laughter.)

On the other hand, of course, lawyers do take a rather more detached view of life than some other people. A certain Lord of Appeal in Ordinary in his younger days at the Bar and for a number of years, was standing Counsel for the Jockey Club and at the same time standing Counsel for the Ecclesiastic Commissioners. (Laughter.) And, we have suffered from tedious lawyers. One who came from Aberdeen and who was a Judge was incapable of putting one plain word on one page of print which, of course, made his judgements a little difficult to disentangle. When he was practising at the Bar he had the same faculty of talking at great length and to no great purpose. Once when he was addressing their Lordships in the House of Lords, after about an hour he saw that their Lordships were not taking much interest ; he felt rather hurt about this, so he put his brief down and said, " I hope your Lordships are following me," whereupon Lord Dunedin who was in the Chair (a rather acid old man) said, " Mr So and So, all their Lordships are at least half an hour ahead of you." (Laughter.)

I finish on golf. It was mentioned that I had played some golf for the Scottish Bench and Bar, that makes me think of a certain English Judge who used to play in the original Bench and Bar golf matches between Scotland and England. He was the sort of top chap at the Admiralty Bar in England, he was also frightfully well dressed, and for that double reason he was always known as the " ocean swell." (Laughter.) He was playing golf at St Andrews on one occasion—a very legal match. They were getting to the 18th hole, and the light was fading ; his opponent played a shot towards the green, and the Judge turned to his caddie and said, " I didn't see that ; is my friend in the bunker or is the bastard on the green." (Laughter.) I'm sorry I'm afraid I've kept you in bunkers too long.

Before I sit down may I say this very sincerely that I have never heard a better speech than that of Brigadier Lorne Campbell's tonight. (Applause.) Mr President and Gentlemen, may I on behalf of not only myself, but of your other guests, say thank you very much indeed. (Applause.)

The London Scottish.

In proposing the toast of the London Scottish Regiment,

the President reminded the members that the Society was largely responsible for raising the regiment in 1859, at a time when it appeared that there might be some danger from the French. In three wars the regiment had acquitted itself with distinction in the course of which it had suffered grievous losses, confirmed by the fact that over 2,000 names were inscribed on the War Memorials at headquarters. No fewer than 20 members had served with the regiment, including Past-President Col. L. Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., who was now Joint Honorary Colonel.

A new member, Mr William Grant was received by the President.

Mr Sam Ross of the London Scottish sang " The Rowan Tree," " Westering Home " and " Scotland the Brave," accompanied in his usual efficient manner by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

On this occasion the piping selections were given by Pipe-Major L. V. N. de Laspee and Pipe-Sergeant W. Ferguson of the London Scottish Regiment. They played " The Crusaders' March," " The Glendaruel Highlanders," " Donald Dhu," " Munlochy Bridge," " Sandy Duff," " Cock o' the North " and "Highland Laddie."

A very successful evening ended by Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., playing the Society's Strathspey and the members singinging " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

At the Council Meeting on 18th December, 1958, prior to the Little Dinner held at the Rembrandt Hotel, a sub-committee composed of the President, Past-President Col. L. Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., and the Honorary Secretary, was appointed to submit recommendations regarding the manner in which the centenary in 1959 of the London Scottish Regiment should be marked by the Society.

At this meeting it was also decided that the Lady's badge recently returned to the Society by Mrs Miln should be presented to and used by the Vice-President during his year of office.

Result of Appeal for the Royal Scottish Corporation.

At the Little Dinner, after the loyal toasts had been

honoured the President read a letter dated 5th December, 1958, from the Secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation expressing his Committee's warm thanks for the magnificent contribution of exactly £1,000 received from the Society, its members and friends, on the occasion of the Corporation's 293rd Anniversary Festival. The President supplemented this letter by adding that since then a further £25 had been received, making a total of £1,025, the highest contribution for the past 25 years. The President thanked the members for their generosity.

The President then called on Mr Charles Williams to give his Sentiment

The Scot in the Wine Trade

which was as follows :

I do not know by what strange chance you came to invite a man of Welsh origin with an almost aggressively Welsh name, who nevertheless prides himself on being a Cockney, to give you the Sentiment. " The Scot in the Wine Trade." However, *che sará sará.*

Grapes suitable for making wine can only be grown, for reasons of soil and climate, on a few limited parts of the earth's surface and those parts not concentrated but widely separated. On the other hand there are, thank goodness, in all other parts of the earth persons who wish to drink wine and are prepared to pay for it. The problem of the Wine Trade is, in essence, to transfer wine from the hands of those who grow and mature it, across the sea, into the mouths and down the throats of those elsewhere who are thirsting for it. In that great and beneficent task, which may surely be described as philanthropic as well as commercial, the Scots have, as they have in almost every known human enterprise, played a great and characteristic part.

The theme of my Sentiment divides itself, naturally, into three parts : the Scots who stayed at home and carried on the wine trade there ; the Scots who practised the trade in England ; and the Scots who went abroad and engaged in the actual production and shipping of wine.

Fortunately I can begin with a famous Scots family, the Cockburns, who, in themselves, exemplify all three parts of my story. The Cockburns are a Lowland family descended from Alexander Cockburn who, in about 1330, married the heiress of Langton, which is about a mile west of Duns in the eastern part of Berwickshire. Ten generations later in 1796, at the age of sixteen, Robert Cockburn, younger brother of that advocate, who was later to become the celebrated Lord Cockburn and author of the famous *Memorials of Edinburgh*, set up a wine merchant's business in Leith, in which, in Trafalgar year, he was joined by his younger brother John. From that association stem three firms, all still flourishing at the present time : Cockburn & Campbell, whose present head is Archie Cockburn, and Cockburn & Co. (Leith) Ltd., both wine merchants and both established in Edinburgh and London ; and Cockburn, Smithes & Co., the world famous Port Wine shippers, founded by Robert Cockburn in Oporto in 1815, of which the head at the present time is my old friend Freddie Cockburn, great-great-nephew of the founder.

Before we leave the United Kingdom, I wish to mention three other firms, two in Scotland and one in London. At the present time one of the largest and most respected firms of wholesale wine merchants in Scotland is J. G. Thomson & Co. Three families have ruled the affairs of this firm since

the 17th century: the Browns, the Thomsons, and the Andersons. The Browns were brewers and vintners at 54 Grassmarket, Edinburgh, but in 1709 Andrew Thomson, a Bailie of the City, who had married a Miss Brown, inherited the business, and the premises became known, as they are to this day, as Thomson's Court. About the middle of the 18th century his son, James, moved the business to its present site, known as The Vaults, Leith, which are of great antiquity, probably having been associated with the Abbey of Holyrood from its foundation in 1143. Above ground there survives one room with decorations carried out in 1632 and the rest was built by the Thomsons in 1785. In 1876 the last of the fourth generation of Thomsons retired and, since then, the firm has been directed by three generations of the Anderson family.

We, in the Wine Trade, set great store by the continuity of our trade, and here is a fine example from J. G. Thomson & Co. Mr William Anderson Ferrier, Chairman from 1938 to 1946, who died in 1951 at the age of eighty-four, and who, I am glad to record, was an old friend of my father and myself, had 72 years of service with the firm, having joined at the age of twelve as the then Chairman's horse-boy. Willie Ferrier received his early training from a Mr Gibson, who was in the Vaults as a lad at the time of the Battle of Waterloo, and thus the service of two men to the same firm covered 136 years. In Glasgow the leading wholesale wine merchants are Samuel Dow Ltd., founded in 1807, whose Chairman, Sam Dow, is of the fourth direct generation from the founder.

The London firm, which I have in mind, will, I hope, interest you. John Reid, who was Bailie of Tain in Ross-shire, married the heiress of Shandwick in that county. His son, Andrew Reid, came to London, founded a famous brewery, and his name is perpetuated in that of the celebrated stout. Andrew's son, Nevile Reid the first, is said not to have been one of the world's workers, and, after a time, lost his job in the family brewery. He then set himself up in a wine business in Suffolk Lane. That business did not flourish, but the family continued in " wine " and, though the style of the business has changed several times, today it is going strong in the City of London as Reid, Pye & Campbell, with Nevile Reid the fourth as one of the senior partners and Nevile Reid the fifth as junior partner. It is also rather pleasant to know that the widow of Nevile Reid the third is living at Shandwick on the same estate, which came into the family as the dowery of her husband's great-great-grandmother.

But a special reason why you will be interested in this firm is that the speaker who gave you his Sentiment last month, Brigadier Lorne Campbell is the present Campbell of Reid, Pye & Campbell. Lorne's grandfather, Fred Campbell, of Airds in Argyllshire, started life as a regular Army officer but changed over to the wine trade and became a partner of Nevile Reid the second.

And here perhaps I may digress for a moment. In each of the two World Wars of this century a Victoria Cross has been won by a member of the Wine Trade. In the first war, Jock Christie, a wine merchant in the North of England, won the V.C. in Palestine. Christie's father was from Ayrshire and his mother from the Kingdom of Fife. A quarter of a century later, in the second war, Lorne Campbell won the V.C. in North Africa. So you see that both our heroes are Scotsmen.

I must now take you on a voyage round the wine-growing countries. There is a long tradition of good claret, that is of Bordeaux wine, in Scotland. The first Article of the Roles of Oleron, a kind of Western European maritime code of the 10th century, mentions the freighting of ships from Bordeaux to Scotland. And you will remember the first two lines of the old Scottish ballad, " Sir Patrick Spens " :

" The king sits in Dunfermline toun
Drinking the blude-red wine."

One of the results of the Auld Alliance was that claret was admitted into Scotland up to the time of the French Revolution without duty and was for centuries the ordinary beverage of the Scottish aristocracy and middle classes. Writing in the 1820's Lord Cockburn said in his " Memorials " :

> " I have heard . . . old people say that, when a cargo of claret came to Leith, the common way of proclaiming its arrival was by sending a hogshead of it through the town on a cart, with a horn ; and that anybody who wanted a sample, or a drink under pretence of a sample, had only to go to the cart with a jug, which, without much nicety about its size, was filled for a sixpence. The tax ended this mode of advertising ; and, aided by the horror of everything French, drove claret from all tables below the richest."

There were many Scots who engaged in the French wine business in France, but I have only time for one example. In 1641, William Johnston, probably of the influential family of Annandale in Dumfriesshire, left Scotland and settled in Ulster. He died young and his family established themselves first in Londonderry and then in Armagh. His son Alexander took part in the famous defence of Derry in 1689 when that city was unsuccessfully beseiged by King James II for 105 days. One of William's grandsons, also named William, was later on sent, when quite young, to Bordeaux to learn French and the elements of commerce with a firm consisting of two French brothers, who had a business partly in wine and partly in pharmaceutical drugs. He returned to Ireland, but a good deal later, having been ruined by the speculations of a business partner, he emigrated to Bordeaux and was received into the firm, which had trained him years before, in a position of trust and responsibility. He took over the wine interests of that firm in 1734. It was thus that the Johnston family came to enter the claret trade in Bordeaux.

That firm, after 224 years, still exists to this day in Bordeaux and has a flourishing business in Scotland and elsewhere. Its name is Nathaniel Johnston et Fils, and the present head, Nathaniel Arthur Johnston, is of the eighth generation in the direct male line from the Johnston, who left Scotland in 1641. He has, I am happy to say, two of his four sons in the business with him. The Johnston family are French now, but, I can assure you, intensely proud of their Scottish ancestry.

When we reach Oporto, in Northern Portugal, at the mouth of the famous River Douro, we are met, apart from the Cockburns, even today, by a plethora of Scottish names in the list of Port Wine shippers—Gould, Campbell, Robertson, Tait, Dow, Mackenzie, Graham, and Sandeman. There is indeed one small firm still in existence, but now under Portuguese management, with the ultra-Scottish name of Campbell and Menzies.

I can only linger with two of these firms. The Grahams, who are a cadet branch of the Montrose family, were established in Glasgow in 1786 and in Lisbon by the time of the Peninsular War, but were concerned with general trading, and particularly with cotton goods, and not with wine. A younger brother John went out from Scotland at the age of sixteen, hoping to join the family firm. He was told politely that he was old enough to fend for himself. He did so, but returned later to set up his own Port shipping business in Oporto. His relations in Scotland were somewhat surprised and unnerved when they found that John's first shipment to Glasgow was 400 pipes (it is the equivalent of over a quarter of a million bottles). However they sold it all and came up for more. By 1820 Grahams were well established as Port shippers. The present name of the firm is W. & J. Graham & Co. and the present seniors are Max and Gerard Graham the grandsons of the founder. Their agents in England are Nevile Reid and Lorne Campbell.

The Sandemans, on the other hand, are a Perthshire family and stem from one John Sandeman of Alyth, who married in 1628. One of his great-

great-grandsons, George Sandeman, who was born in 1765, founded his Port business in London and Oporto at the end of 1790. Earlier that year, in May, he had written to his sister in Perth :

> " I can scarcely bring myself to think seriously of leaving London . . . when a person has left his native place for a long time, he wishes to show some sort of splendour when he returns : therefore I shall remain where I am, till I shall have made a moderate fortune to retire with, which I expect will be in the course of nine years ; which to be sure is a long time, but some lucky stroke may possibly reduce it to five or six."

Optimistic, no doubt, for a young man of twenty-five, but then he had the advantage of our sons, for there was no income tax in those days. Indeed it is an odd coincidence that George Sandeman should in 1790 have fixed nine years as the maximum in which to make his " moderate fortune," for it was exactly nine years later, in 1799, that income tax was introduced into this country by William Pitt.

Early in 1805 Sandeman moved his London office to 20 St Swithin's Lane and there to this day his great-great-great-nephew, Patrick, and the latter's two sons, Timothy and David, carry on the business that " Old Cauliflower," as he was nick-named for wearing a white wig well on into the 19th century, founded 168 years ago. I am glad to say that there is yet another generation of young Sandemans growing up to take their place in the firm in due course.

I spoke, a little while back, of our pride in the continuity of the Wine Trade and I gave a human instance. Here is an inanimate example. The inventory of fittings and fixtures that George Sandeman took over in 1805 at St Swithin's Lane included " a Capital Patent Crane with three iron wheels, Jib, Roller, Rope, Pulleys and Jigger." In 1940 during the blitz Sandeman's modern hydraulic lift was seriously damaged by enemy action. The Capital Patent Crane was therefore put into commission again and, after the provision of a new rope, did fine service raising stocks of vintage port from the firm's cellars.

Let us move on to the Sherry Country, in Andalucia, in the S.W. of Spain, round about the town of Jerez de la Frontera. There also we find that the Sandeman family have been established as Sherry Shippers since 1879, though for more than fifty years previously they had been engaged in the Sherry business as agents. We also find Mackenzie & Co., whose founder, Kenneth Mackenzie, started his Sherry shipping business in 1842. His great nephews, Ian and Eric Mackenzie, carry on the business now.

There is in Puerto de Santa Maria near Jerez a firm of Sherry shippers, Osborne y Cia., whose history is interesting. The business is owned by the Osborne family, now completely Spanish, but who all descend from an Englishman, named Thomas Osborne, who came from Exeter to that part of Spain early last century. They sell their sherry in Spain and Spanish-speaking countries as Osborne's Sherry, but elsewhere, and particularly in the United Kingdom and U.S.A., they sell it as Duff Gordon Sherry. The reason for this is that Duff Gordon is the older name, the business having been founded some time prior to 1772 by Sir James Duff, born in Ayrshire in 1734, who was British Consul at Cadiz. He brought from Scotland in 1805 his nephew, William Gordon, to be his partner and agent in London. That nephew eventually became Sir William Duff Gordon, and the Duff Gordons controlled the business till 1848, and retained a financial interest in it till 1872, though now the family has dropped out. However, as I have said, their name lives on honoured in the Sherry trade.

This brings me to a fascinating by-path. Shortly after William Gordon started his Sherry agency business in London, he engaged as confidential clerk a young man born and brought up in Edinburgh, John James Ruskin, whose mother was a Scotswoman from Glenluce in Wigtownshire. In due course

this Mr Ruskin started an agency business of his own, under the name of Ruskin, Telford & Domecq, to sell Haurie's, late Domecq's, sherries. Mr Ruskin was a tremendous worker. He made a fortune out of selling sherry and he richly deserved it. Haurie's business was at a low ebb when Ruskin began, and yet, shortly before his death in 1864, he could write : " I went to every town in England, most in Scotland and some in Ireland, till I raised their exports of 20 butts to 3,000."

The point of this is that John James Ruskin's only child was the famous author, John Ruskin. You may therefore take pride in the little-known fact that John Ruskin was one-quarter Scottish, and I may take pride that it was his father's earnings from Sherry that gave John Ruskin the leisure to travel on the Continent and then to write that long series of famous books headed by *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice*.

In Germany and in Italy I have not been able to find Scots engaged in the Wine Trade, but as far afield as Madeira the principal shippers of that wine today are Cossart Gordon & Co., founded there in the year of the '45. The first Gordon of that firm was Thomas Gordon, who came to the island from Balmaghie in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1758. His descendants continued in the business until early this century.

In the newer wine-producing countries, I find no record of Scots in South Africa, no doubt because the planting and tending of the vine was largely carried out by the Dutch, and there are no records of Scotsmen engaged in the early days of the Wine Trade in the U.S.A. In Australia, however, the Scots may be said to have been largely responsible for the foundation and early growth of wine-making in that continent. Captain John MacArthur established in 1796 at Camden Park, thirty miles from Sydney, the first commercial vineyard in Australia. A little later, in 1824, James Busby, a Scot, revered as the founder of the Australian Wine Trade, arrived in that country. He was granted 2,000 acres on the Hunter River, 100 miles north of Sydney, and there he planted vines, giving his property the Scottish name of Kirkton. Busby carried on his viticulture in a scientific way, for in 1836 he returned to Europe, collected 2,000 cuttings out of 365 varieties of vine from France, Germany, Spain and Portugal, brought them to Australia, and tried them out there. It is from these cuttings that nearly all the vineyards in Australia derive. In addition in very early days the Australian wine growers included a Carmichael, a McKay and an Angus.

We have now pretty well toured the world and, even without using the wealth of further material at my disposal, I have, I think, demonstrated to you that every time you drink a glass of wine it is quite on the cards that it has been grown or made, shipped or sold, by a Scotsman or the descendant of a Scotsman. It is a record of which you and your countrymen can fairly be proud.

Gentlemen, South of the Border it is a dogma that one can never address a Scottish audience without dragging in the name of the immortal Robert Burns. In that respect I propose to follow precedent. Had my subject been " The Scot as a consumer of Wine," I could without difficulty have built my whole Sentiment round the poet, but, alas, as things are, " dragging in " is no doubt the appropriate phrase.

For I must admit at once that Burns was never in the Wine Trade. He did, however, have something to do with the Wine Trade, for, when, during the last eight years of his life, he was Excise Officer first at Ellisland and then at Dumfries, it was part of his duty to " survey," that is to check the stock, and to check the Excise permits, of the wine dealers in the neighbouring parishes, of which, in his Dumfries days, there were as many as a score. Without aspersing in any way our modern Revenue Officers, I only wish that nowadays my firm's bonded stocks were checked by anyone half so genial and happy-go-lucky as Robert Burns.

I would remind you too that, although, in considering Burns's writings, we largely think of him, witness " John Barleycorn " and other famous poems, in connection with the national drink, whisky, yet nevertheless wine appears very often in Burns's works, particularly in his songs. I give you only one example. "The Gowden Locks of Anna," which Burns considered the best love song that he ever composed, begins with the line, which I find rather startling as the opening gambit of a love song :

" Yestreen I had a pint o' wine,"

On that note, and none too soon, I will sit down, but not before drinking your President's and your healths in the pint of wine with which you have generously furnished me this e'en.

That, gentlemen, is my last word and that's my Sentiment.

The members by their loud applause showed their appreciation of this interesting Sentiment for which the author was warmly thanked by the President.

Important Guests.

The toast of the guests was submitted by Mr. H. R. Stewart Hunter, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., who in the course of his speech made the following observations :

Before leaving home tonight, my wife warned me that my speech should be of the " bikini " type, brief, holding closely to the subject, and adequately covering the essential parts, and I will, therefore, adopt her warning and present to you some of the guests whom we have the pleasure of welcoming tonight.

Firstly, Mr Charles Williams, from whom we have heard a most absorbing and interesting Sentiment this evening. Our President in his introduction told you a great deal about Mr Williams, but I would like to say that in his Sentiment he made many complimentary remarks about the Scot in the Wine Trade, and I am sure you will all agree that Mr Williams as a Welshman has added honour and distinction to the name of Wales in the Wine Trade. I feel that his Sentiment can be said to have had the depth, colour and pleasure of a good wine fully enjoyed.

We have, also, with us Sir Thomas Robson, M.B.E., F.C.A., who is a partner in one of the largest accounting firms in the country, and, I believe I am correct in saying, the world. He has served on many Government and other committees, and has for many years been an active worker in the Boy Scout movement and is at present Vice-President of the London Scout Council. Of particular interest to members is the fact that he is an Elder of St Columba's Church.

We have also with us Sir James Miller, D.L., J.P., LL.D. Sir James is Managing Director of a large firm of Building and Civil Engineering Contractors. But we in this Society will know him better as the Lord Provost of Edinburgh from 1951–1954. Sir James has many interests and has the distinction of being an alderman of the City of London.

Mr Nevile Reid is also a member of the Wine Trade. He is a partner in business of Brigadier Lorne Campbell, V.C., who was the author of that brilliant Sentiment to which we listened at our last meeting. It should be noted that he is also an ex-member of the London Scottish Regiment.

And now I come to Mr Martin Lindsay, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., who is to reply to this toast. Mr Lindsay has been Member of Parliament for the Solihull Division of Warwickshire since 1945. He served in the Army from

1925–1936 and 1939–1945; was on the Army Staff in Norway in 1940, and later with the First Battalion the Gordon Highlanders, with whom he won the D.S.O. This is, indeed a distinguished record in itself, but Mr Lindsay's accomplishments range much wider as he has been on two Polar Expeditions. In 1930–31 he was Surveyor to the British Arctic Air Route Expedition to Greenland and in 1934 was leader to the British Trans-Greenland Expedition and it was for these expeditions that he was awarded the King's Polar Medal. He has been honoured by many Geographical Societies not only in this country, but throughout the world. He is a member of the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland. His business interests are considerable and to cap it all he is an author of no mean repute, having several published books to his credit.

To those guests whose names I have not mentioned, our welcome is no less sincere. The members of this Society pride themselves that their guests for the evening are equally welcome, whoever they are. (Applause.)

Mr Martin Lindsay on Members of Parliament.

In responding to this toast, Mr Martin Lindsay, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., said:

I regard it as a great honour to have been asked to reply to this Toast and to tell you how much we guests are enjoying dining with the most important Caledonian Society outside Edinburgh and particularly to reply to a Toast so felicituously proposed by Mr Stewart Hunter. He very kindly inferred that Members of Parliament are very busy men, I can assure him that not everybody takes such a charitable view. When I was elected in 1945 my wife said to me, " I always understood M.P. stood for Mr Pompous, and we're not going to have anything of that kind in this house." (Laughter.) At any rate, I think there is some truth in a theory that we do have to do a certain amount of work nowadays. I recently came upon a copy of a letter which was written by a forebear of mine, a Mr Antony Hunter, to his constituents in Shrewsbury a hundred and fifty years ago, when they said they wanted him to oppose the Excise Bill. " Gentleman," he wrote, " I have received yours and am surprised at your insolence at troubling me. (Laughter.) Do you know, that I very well know that I bought you, and by God I am determined to sell you. (Laughter.) And I know what perhaps you think I do not know that you are selling yourselves to someone else, but I know what you do not know that I am buying another borough. (Laughter.) May God's curse light on you all—may your houses be as open and common to all excise officers, as your wives and your daughters were to me when I stood for your rascally corporation." (Laughter.) Unfortunately I don't see much future for any of us if we wrote to our constituents in these terms, but at any rate I am pleased to have escaped tonight from the only one of Her Majesty's prisons in which whips are still in force, to be with you all and to say how much all the guests are enjoying themselves. We Scots always take the greatest pleasure in dining amongst ourselves; we think a great deal of each other and of ourselves and we are quite right in doing so. The fact that the French have not succeeded in stopping the sale of Scotch Whisky confirms that no one will ever stop the Scots. Many of you, like me, had the great honour of serving with Scottish troops in the last war. We may all remember with a certain amount of malicious pleasure, the jealousy the English troops had for all of us and how they used to say that whenever the names of our formations appeared in the papers, it was only because the English papers wanted to sell their copies in Scotland. (Laughter.) We remember that Field-Marshal Montgomery has been in the news lately. Some of us have read his book; some of us saw his exposition of the Battle of El Alamein last week on television. Well, I thought

it was a little bit unfair of him not to point out to his audience that what with the Scots, the 5th Indian Division, the New Zealanders, the South Africans, particularly the Scots, the English had really comparatively little to do with it. Well Mr President, time is getting on and I would like to say on behalf of all the guests that we do greatly appreciate the honour you have done us in inviting us tonight to dine with your great Society. We have heard your contributions to your two famous Scottish charities, which I think I can only describe with one adjective—tremendous. We wish you every possible good fortune. (Applause.)

Two new members, Mr S. B. Taylor and Mr W. Ure Wilson, M.C., were received by the President.

Mr Alex. MacRae, accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., sang the following songs—" Turn ye to Me," " Of a' the Airts," " The Mull Fisher's Love Song " and " Gae bring to me a Pint o' Wine." The selections of Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., were " The Rhodesian Regiment," " Highland Whisky," " Thomson's Dirk " and " Loch Rannoch."

The Society's Strathspey and the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended the proceedings.

The President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., took the chair at a well attended dinner held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on the 15th January, 1959.

The loyal toasts having been drunk the President expressed his regret that on this occasion the Honorary Secretary was unable to sing " The Year that's Awa'," which he had done for many years at the first dinner of the year. Mr John Graham who would be singing again later in the evening had kindly undertaken this duty.

The Immortal Memory.

In introducing Mr W. E. Swinton, Ph.D., who had generously agreed to give the Sentiment, " Robert Burns," the President reminded members that Dr Swinton had delighted them with an excellent Sentiment in March, 1958, and expressed the Society's appreciation of Dr Swinton's kindness in returning so quickly to enlighten and instruct them.

Dr Swinton said :

Mr President, Mr Vice-President, Gentlemen, and of course, Caledonians, there is no reason why Caledonians shouldn't be gentlemen, but there may be many reasons why non-Caledonian gentlemen are not, of course, Caledonians (Laughter.)

I am not a Caledonian, I am not quite sure about being a gentleman. I

think that to be a gentleman might preclude me from being really an authority on Burns (laughter), but those of you who are authorities on Burns may speedily know that you are listening tonight to the address of a novice. This is the first time that it has been my privilege to move this Immortal Memory, and you will observe the faults. And why shouldn't there be faults ? Burns died—I needn't tell you when he was born, you will know, most of you. (Laughter.) He died in 1795 and the first Burns Dinner was in 1801. What an extraordinary thing that any man of any kind or authority should have a memorial dinner six years after his death. Why most of us wouldn't even be remembered six years after our death ! I am not being in any way light about this. It is a most extraordinary fact and when you think, as I am bound to think, of all the addresses that have been given all over the world since 1801, what is there left for me, especially me, to say ? I am not a Burns expert in the sense that would entitle you tonight to expect me to recite long passages from the poems. I should never dream of it because you are all capable of correcting me in any passage I might choose.

Tonight when I was going to try so very hard to make a Sentiment that would please you all, the loud speakers have fallen down, and if any of you do not regard this as a good Sentiment, remember that all the best bits have been inaudible. (Laughter.) But there is something new to be said. I happen to be a member, amongst other things, of the Council of the National Book League, surely one of the most educated organisations in the country. Yet I find that the *Journal* for the current month has a paragraph which states, " Robert Burns was born on the 13th January, 1759." The greatest authority on literature making a mess of the birthday of the greatest literary figure of all ages, and then I have had the temerity to say that there is nothing new to be said. It might be more helpful to insist that some of the things that we say might be accurate, for accuracy has never been a hallmark of the criticism of our national bard.

What is the general background of Burnsiana, for you can't consider Burns without a background ; though he has often been considered I know, in that way. " Respectable Scotland, land of Grundy, Burns and backstreets, pubs and Sunday." In that little poem you have a good deal of the kernel of what's been said for, and a great deal of what has been said against Burns during these last 157 years. And when I think, as I said, of all these dinners since 1801, I am conscious that they have not all been said yet—it would be bad enough if they had. But they have been said not only in Scotland and England, in the United States and Canada, and wherever the English language or the Scottish language is somewhat transformed and mistreated. (Laughter.) Tonight they are even having a Burns Dinner in Russia with tinned haggis from Stirling. (Laughter.) What can be said about Burnsovitch I don't know, but I am sure it will be said at great length and with great vociferousness and with a very great deal of vodka, which Robert Burns might well have liked. (Laughter.) But Burns has suffered, as most of us suffer, from his friends. " God gave us our relations, thank God we can choose our friends." Burns alas has not been able to choose his friends : they have chosen Burns, and what have they said ? George Malcolm Thomson, a good Scotsman, has said, " The Scots are incapable of considering their literary geniuses merely as writers or artists, they must either be an excuse for a glass or a sermon." (Laughter.) I can only conclude that as Dr Scott is in ten days' time giving the toast at the Burns Club of London that he therefore is giving the sermon, I must be providing tonight the excuse for a glass. (Laughter.) I am sure he will enjoy that, as indeed I shall enjoy his sermon. Tonight, of course, I am enjoying neither. (Laughter.) And Thomson goes on and says, " They already have made Burns safe for hypocrisy." (Laughter.) These are fine words, but they are rather " smart alec " words. Like a great many fine words they don't bear much analysis.

An eminent physician has already proved that alcohol played no part in the poet's death, and Thomson goes on to say that in a very short time some biologist will prove that all the ladies with whom Burns was acquainted gave birth to their children by supernatural means. (Laughter.) When you come to think of it that would be no mean achievement! (Laughter.) I am reminded of the two gentlemen who had something to do with a lady who ultimately gave birth to twins. One of the consorts, who was on the spot, was enabled to wire to his fellow and say, "Mary gave birth to twins today—mine's dead." (Laughter.) The trouble about Burns is not so much what died, as what has been kept alive, rightly or wrongly and to get at the very spirit of the man one must go into a great deal of research. Research has, of course, been done, but one must also do it not so much about Burns, but about the times in which he lived. (Hear, hear.) We are apt to see this great man (and I shall have something more to say in this connection a little later on), we are apt to see him, as an immoral figure, but every so-called immoral figure must be seen against a background and in 200 years the backgrounds have changed.

Scotland of today, alas, in some ways is not the Scotland of 200 years ago, and the Scotland of 200 years ago is certainly not the Rembrandt Hotel in 1959. His views and our views are different and for his time, as we shall see, he was a giant amongst giants. And today if we consider him calmly and dispassionately, I think there is a special reason why we should continue to propose the Immortal Memory. I am a great believer, as some of you may have heard before, in memory, but I am an even greater believer in memory as a living thing, as a justifiable thing, as a step in the fluidity of the time connecting the past with the present and both with the future. I am all against memory as a piece of ritual, and if Burns were to become merely an excuse for a glass or the excuse for a sermon, then I think that the impact of Burns and his whole message have been lost and we might just as well choose Joe Stalin or W. E. Gladstone and wreath a text of some kind round his neck. I am sure that none of us here tonight will be guilty of that sort of thing, and it is all the more necessary to avoid it today when Scotland is changing.

These words of George Malcolm Thomson I quoted were from a book, published just before the last war called *Caledonia or the future of the Scots*. There are some, of whom the author is certainly one, who are rather uncertain that the Scots have any great future, not because of any lack of qualities, not because of any lack of virtue, not because of any failure in their educational system, but in the very failure of themselves as a mass population. A very large percentage of the population of Scotland today isn't Scotch at all, it is Irish and it is no derogation of that ancient and happy race to say so, but it means that the proportion of Scots in Scotland is certainly less. And wherever I go in Scotland today, I am quite frequently there in the Universities and in the Clubs, one meets an ever increasing percentage of Englishmen—I am not saying that in any derogatory sense either, but it changes the face of Scotland. Some will say it doesn't change it at all, that it's characteristic of Scotland that its greatest sons have been great elsewhere and that the virtues of Scotland, the glory of Scotland, have been echoes and repetitions and reflections from outside the native land.

I would be the last to say in a distinguished company of people in London, especially here in the Caledonian Society of London, that we have not in this audience a large measure of the distinction, the brains, the virtue and the efficiency of Scotland. But think of Burns. He never travelled at all. His genius was a native genius, it was not reflected from outside; it was not gathered through world-wide travel; it was not made in comparison with any civilisation or educational system other than the most humble in which he was born, in which he was reared, and against the comparatively humble stature of his fellow men and women. Yet he raised himself to a size which has never been surpassed.

I think it was Whistler who once said of one of his enemies that this man was born in obscurity and raised himself to the gutter. Burns was born in obscurity and raised himself on a level with the gods ! Now, that is not just Burns' Night oratory ; it is a fact. Any man who can do that without influence, without travel, without all the other elixirs and aids which are our helps today, is a man who is worthy at least of a few minutes attention tonight or any other night.

I need not tell you what Burns did ; he wrote a very large amount of poetry, which is extraordinarily good of its kind, and especially his vulgar poetry. There has just been published, the volume came out this week, a book called *Bawdy Burns*. I commend it to you, not for its bawdiness, but for the extraordinary ability with which it has been written and if there is one thing that this book emphasises it is that Burns was a bawdy poet, writing in an age in which most poetry was bawdy, in an age when most habits were bawdy, and in an age when bawdiness was the common coin of every conversation. I am not sure that we are very much better off today (laughter), but it is in one way or another covered up ; it is no longer the common coin, although I understand that there are other ways of communicating these things when one reads some of the Sunday newspapers. (Laughter.) But even if we take away this bawdy poetry what do we have ? We have a poetry of as high an order as has ever been written. Now, I can't judge its merit though I think it is of this calibre, for I am no authority on poetry. But you need not take my word, nor perhaps even trust your own view, for the literary connoisseurs have been agreed upon it for nearly 200 years, because the poor poet was only 36 when he died !

He was early a man of genius and his genius was early recognised. His poetry has a reflectiveness, a philosophy, and above all, a humanity which has struck its readers through the ages. This is certainly not because Burns was a Scotsman, not because his followers liked a glass, but because of the sheer cold virtue that was in his words which no-one else could seem to write. He stands today as the poet of humanity of all languages wherever his poems have been translated ; he has been found to be not merely the poet of socialism, not merely to be the poet who has something to say about the belted earl and yet preferred the common man, but to be the means of bringing all men together and of touching even the hardest with pity and the softest with some golden strand.

He worked, of course, for this effect. I think one of the tragedies, one of the unhappy things, is the idea of Burns as merely the ploughman poet ; that this poesy came to him as a gift and fell like manna upon his hand and pen. One forgets that in his young days he had studied hard, strange as it may seem. He learned languages to some extent, even at 14 he was studying French ; he studied English, he knew the classics, he knew Shakespeare—he was for his time a well educated man. Of course, that is not remarkable. I happen to be something of a scientist, and the finest popular lecture on astronomy I have ever heard, I repeat the finest lecture on ordinary common astronomy I have ever heard was given to me in Bishoptown in Renfrewshire by a drunken blacksmith : it was magnificent. His ability didn't help him in his trade, he knew knowledge for knowledge's sake, and that of course, was one of the qualities, one of the ideals, of Scotsmen a generation or two ago—alas, an ideal that to my mind seems to be weakening and may well be on the way to disappearing.

Now, what has been said against Burns ? I needn't tell you because books have been written about him. One of the tragedies of Burns is that, on the one hand so many books are written on his behalf to prove that he was a saint and scholar, and on the other hand, that so many have been written derogating him and decrying everything he did. His poems have been held up to ridicule, everything has been done about his poems except that they

have never been equalled. The scholars, and the great men and those who know all the answers, have never been able to write a line that would equal the work of this poor man in our native Scotland, and I think a great deal of the derogation is due to Burns' personality.

The trouble with Burns was that he could never keep silent. If he got drunk he wrote a poem about it, a very good poem ; if he slept with a lady, or several ladies, he wrote poems about that—that was the sort of thing that got him into trouble. Burns' troubles have generally been alleged to be drink and sex. Now, I think it's true to say that in the time that Burns lived the lesser of these crimes was drink. I am not sure that drink is a crime. A very distinguished lawyer, Lord Chorley, was telling me the other evening at a dinner at which we were both speaking, he asked me if I had heard about the Scottish scientific experiment on drink, and I had to say no. He told me that in Edinburgh some years ago they had made a very scientific test. They had a Professor and they had three pupils or stooges, and they had whisky and gin and rum. The Professor gave whisky and water in large quantities to one person who got drunk ; he gave gin and water in large quantities to the second subject and he also got drunk ; and then to the third, he gave rum and water in large quantities and he got drunk. When the Professor wrote his report he said that it was quite clear that the common factor in each of these cases of drunkenness was water. (Laughter.) This is a scientific fact and I warn you as a scientist to avoid the dangerous fluid (laughter), and stick to the innocuous.

But the Church in Scotland at that time was, as I think many people are at the present time, extraordinarily against sex. I imagine that sex has its place, that there is evidence for its need. I imagine most of us here tonight are the result of sexual relations of one kind or another. But in Burns's time there was this extraordinary antagonism against those who perhaps behaved a little improperly and especially amongst those who boasted of their impropriety. I was told the other day about the not very young Scotsman who was going to get married. Being a good Scotsman, of course, he realised that he knew nothing about the art of this difficult affair, and that he would have to acquire some information. He went to a large bookshop hoping to buy an appropriate book. He avoided all the young lady assistants who were anxious to help him and he searched diligently for a suitable volume. At last he came to a very large volume, a very beautifully bound volume and certainly an expensive volume, that was labelled on the back, " How to Hug," and he thought that surely this volume would embrace all that there was about embracability. So he took it home, only to discover when he unpacked it that he had acquired the 13th volume of the Encyclopædia Brittanica ! (Laughter.) Well, one of the things about Burns is that he really didn't need that sort of advice (laughter), he found the answer to these problems where he went ; but it is overlooked that he found the answer to a great many other problems too.

It may interest some of you to know that from a natural history point of view, which is something of my own affair, he was an extraordinary acute observer, and that we know, for example, that since there is no mention in any of his poems of the rabbit—there is the hare but there is not the rabbit—we conclude that the rabbit wasn't in Ayrshire in Robert Burns' time. Many of us are content to regard Robert Burns as an acute observer of this kind in matters of natural history. Is this the man who just wrote doggerels because he was drunk and liked a woman ? Far from it. In the time in which he lived, to be drunk was a sign of conviviality. Burns went to the inns, he went to these taverns, first of all for companionship, and most of the humanity and the humility and the knowledge displayed in his works was gathered in the hard school from man to man and from woman to man. He enjoyed this knowledge of his fellow men, which is something that the world today is still in need of.

In a scientific age when invention is going apace we are fast coming to a

stage when man's inventiveness is going to outrun his mental capacity and certainly his capacity for unselfish thought and for kindness of heart (hear, hear.) I need not quote to you the New Testament praises of " Faith, Hope and Charity," but I may say to some of you that that word Charity, as Dr Scott and others so well know, is not giving a penny or sixpence to a poor man, but it is the Greek word " Charitas "—kindness of heart—which is the thing most needed today. The difficulties of the world, our own unhappiness, the problems of civilian and the soldier, of town and country life would be solved if each of us had in our heart half of the humanity and the true charity that this so-called drunken profligate of 150 years ago possessed in such large measure. We are serving not only a personal purpose, not only raising a glass to a distant memory, but are remembering the highest and most necessary demands that can be made by man on man—that of charity and humanity and courtesy, when we remember Robert Burns tonight.

Stevenson said there was something in Burns of the vulgar vagabond-like professional seducer, but isn't that true of all of us really, in our hearts—when we think of ourselves, when we think what we might have done on many an occasion—are we any better than him ? We're not—we are not as good because we never produced those same results. I remember some years ago—this is not a Scottish reminiscence—being taken to a museum in Dorchester in Dorset, where they had just re-created Hardy's study—I happen to be particularly interested in Hardy, the Writer and Poet—and I was introduced into this study. I sat in his chair, sat at his desk and took his notebook in my hand, and I took his pen in my other hand. I put his glasses on but do you think I could write a sentence ? Not a word !

And only a few weeks ago when I was in Glasgow I went down to a golf course not very far away from where Burns used to be. It was a typical winter day. The Clyde was there, as it has been for millions of years, and across it was that unforgettable sight of the distant hills of Argyllshire and the Isle of Arran, one of the most noble views to my mind in the world and one that beats Naples any day. On the brown earth the tractors were working and the seagulls were following the tractors. The little cottages were there, and the little villages and all was just as it had been 200 years ago. It has been like that for all that time and yet who has there been, either in these brown fields or in these green villages, or by these lapping waters, who has written a line that approaches a line of Burns. We have the adulation, we have the criticism, we have the canting and captious remarks against him—as I said, people can do anything to Burns except emulate him. He has never been equalled and I don't think he will ever be surpassed, and yet this is the man who could see in himself, not merely the poet, not merely the ordinary man, but the failure—the man who wrote his epitaph that " countless follies had laid him low and stained his name." Why these are words that could have raised him to greatness, for how many of us with a tenth of his qualities could be so honest and so noble as to criticise ourselves in such phrases.

I'd like to quote a poem which was in the magazine for the National Book League that I got today :

Some rhyme a neeber's name to lash
Some rhyme (vain thought !) for needfu' cash
Some rhyme to court the countra clash an' raise a din
For me an aim I never fash—I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot
Has fated me the russet coat,
An' damn'd my fortune to the groat ;
But, in requit,
Has blest me with a random-shot
O' countra wit.

This is his own view of himself. He was a failure, he thought ; yet he was a man who had written these immortal words, who worked them from the very soil on which he toiled, for fun ; and if there has never been a toast to his name in this particular connection I would like to propose it tonight.

I started off by saying that he had been calumnied, and he had been deified ; that some had said he never died of drink. Well, we know how he died, we know that he took a chill, we know that he went for the virtues of sea-bathing (then just discovered in Scotland—rather earlier than it had been discovered in England, by the way) and it didn't do him a great deal of good. But this profligate, this drunkard, this scandaliser, to whom was he writing the last letter before he died ? (I have here the recently published edition of his letters). To his father-in-law for aid to his wife, who was then in child. This is not the measure of a drunken man, this is not the work of a seducer, this is the work of a man who loved and respected his wife, and who subjugated himself, and it is in that sense I would ask him now to be remembered. It is in this sense that I propose the toast—this inadequate toast—of the Immortal Memory. I give you the Immortal Memory of one Scotsman who was at least an honest man, a loving man, and a man who could write and work and live for fun. Scotland and we would be much better off if there were more men with these virtues. (Loud applause.)

The Sentiment, for which the President expressed the members' thanks, was received with great enthusiasm.

Distinguished Guests.

Mr John Russell was responsible for proposing the toast of " Our Guests." He said that while the President had informed members of the record of our principal guest, Dr Swinton, he felt that he must express their pleasure at the bold and imaginative approach which Dr Swinton had made to his subject.

Amongst many distinguished guests he referred to the presence of Sir Frederick Minter, G.C.V.O., Sir Stuart Town, Mr John Wilson, who had given the Burns Sentiment a year ago, the Rev. Ian R. N. Miller, who in February last gave the Sentiment " The Noblest Prospect," and to a number of other guests.

He welcomed also Mr J. S. P. Armstrong, Agent-General for Ontario in the United Kingdom, who was responding to the toast. He suggested that Mr Armstrong's onerous duties would increase considerably when the St Lawrence seaway opened in June of this year, which would permit sea-going ships of up to 26 ft. draught to pass beyond Montreal into Lake Ontario and then to Lake Erie, Lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan. He himself had, only a few months ago, returned from a two years stay in Ontario, where he had helped in planning a sugar refinery in Toronto harbour, which would bring new industry to Ontario.

THE AGENT-GENERAL FOR ONTARIO.

In his reply, Mr J. S. P. Armstrong said, I have had many intimate and happy contacts with your beloved Scotland. In fact, after a series of abortive attempts by the British Forces to capture sections of Scotland, I was loaned to them in December 1940 to do the job. In January, 1941, almost single-handed (with some slight support from H.M. combined forces) I captured Inveraray, Oban, Auchnicary, Fort William, Largs, Ardrossan and Troon. Up to my neck in the icy waters of your lochs—I stood for hours day and night during January as beach-master, ushering in landing-craft. I thought I'd perish and I hoped I'd die—but somehow I survived the Caledonian climate and hospitality. I never knew which required the more stamina.

I was again in Scotland when the Canadians held their invasion in December, 1942 and I had my men billeted on the Duke of Argyll's estate, Inveraray. I was fearful of what mischief the men might get into over the festive season, so I called on His Grace the Duke, and diplomatically enquired if he would permit us to kill two deer for the men's Xmas dinner. After some hesitation, he agreed but asked how I proposed to do it. I said I would detail a sergeant with a rifle and have his head gamekeeper present. His Grace's only comment was—" Apparently Canadians are less barbaric than the Americans who persist in throwing hand grenades at my deer and fish."

Scottish immigrants have contributed greatly to the prosperous development of Canada. It was the pioneering spirit, resourcefulness and grim determination of the early Scottish settlers that pushed back the frontiers, and laid the sound foundations on which our mighty nation has been built. And when the Americans tried to capture us on several occasions many a braw Scot gave his life to defend Canada. And if the Americans ever get the bright idea of making us the fiftieth State, they will get the surprise of their life! Today it is only necessary to look at the Canadian Directory of Directors to see the weight of Caledonian influence in command of our industry, commerce, and finance. Although the Scots penetrated into every region of our vast country, it is Ontario where there is by far the greatest number. Of course, that's where the money is.

In seventy towns in Ontario you will find Scottish Societies—Caledonian, St Andrew's and Burns. With their pipe bands and Highland dances they celebrate Hogmanay, St Andrew's and Burns Nights and the Gaelic flows as freely as the whisky.

In many respects Ontario is more Scottish than Scotland—and that is how we like it and we want to keep it that way. In the two world wars the Scottish regiments we produced were indeed a credit to the kilt and to true Highland traditions.

Now 1959 is a year of great significance to Canada, Britain and the Empire. I know it is the bicentenary of the birth of Robert Burns, but it stands out in history for another momentous event. Two hundred years ago in 1759, the British, under General Wolfe, captured Quebec and defeated the French.

It was a bold young Highland Officer named Lt. McCulloch in the leading landing craft who at 3 a.m. when challenged mid-stream replied in French,

foxed the shore defences and landed the first party. With great gallantry he overcame French guards and by sheer hard climbing led his men to the summit of the Plains of Abraham. This was the vital gap through which the Old 78th or Fraser Highlanders poured their men at 4 a.m. What a shock it was for Montcalm when he awoke to see four thousand British redcoats in battle formation on the Plains of Abraham. After the battle was joined, history states it was the Frasers charging in true Highland fashion with dirk and claymore, who played a devasting part in causing the French rout.

If you attend the Royal Tournament this year one of its features will be the capture of Quebec. I have insisted that a good complement of fierce looking Highlanders take a leading part.

On behalf of the Guests, I wish to express sincere thanks for including us in your delightful, family party. We have all enjoyed ourselves immensely and the evening has been an unqualified success. (Applause.)

In addition to " The Year that's Awa'," Mr John Graham sang " Mary Morison," " Of a' the Airts," " My Love is like a Red, Red Rose " and " Aye Fond Kiss." The accompanist, as usual, was Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave the following selections : " Corn Riggs are Bonnie," " The Keel Row," " The Wind that shakes the Barley " and " My Faithful Fair One."

After the Pipe-Major had played the Society's Strathspey the evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

Centenary of the London Scottish Regiment.

At the business meeting held before the Little Dinner on 19th February, 1959, the Sub-Committee appointed to consider the manner in which the centenary this year of the London Scottish Regiment should be marked by the Society, recommended the purchase and presentation to the Regiment of a Mace (Drum-Major's Staff) and submitted estimates of cost together with a sketch of the proposed staff. The members decided that to be worthy of the Society, the Regiment and the occasion, a staff with a sterling silver head should be presented at an estimated cost of £150 excluding engraving.

The Little Dinner which followed the business meeting was, as usual, held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, the President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., in the chair.

The principal attraction was a Sentiment by Mr A. K. Watson on the " Port of Leith." The President said that the author, who had spent all his business life in Leith had been known to him for some 40 years and that as Leith High Constable he was on duty on State occasions, which naturally increased his knowledge of his subject.

Port of Leith.

Mr A. K. Watson, who was received with applause, then said :

Perhaps an explanation is necessary as to why I have chosen as my subject tonight a seaport town way up on the Firth of Forth on the same latitude as Elsinore in Denmark and Carlskrona in Sweden, and actually further north even than Moscow, and considered by some to be somewhat "off the beaten track." I have chosen Leith because, as you will hear presently, its history is unique, its present-day importance is out of all proportion to its size, and, if I am not mistaken, your appetite for more information on this interesting port may have been whetted to a certain extent by Mr A. E. Armstrong who spoke to you in 1953, his subject being "The Auld Alliance" which ended in 1560 when the English and Scottish forces found themselves fighting together against the French in Leith and which resulted in the Treaty of Edinburgh, which so many people more rightly called "The Treaty of Leith."

And, of course, the father of your President was born in Leith of seafaring people, so that we might almost say that your President tonight owes part of his character to a turbulent ancestry evolved from a history which is hard to believe could have centred round such a small port situated up there on the Firth of Forth but which, at one time, was the gateway to Scotland.

On the 1st of July, 1958, the Royal yacht *Britannia* glided majestically to her berth at Leith, and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh passed down the gangway to set foot upon the historic soil of Leith for the second time in two years. On the quay to the music of the bands of the Scots Guards and the First Battalion of the Black Watch, the Queen inspected her Guard of Honour and there were presented to her some of the men of Leith who are responsible for the port's present-day prosperity, its well-being and its future development.

I was privileged to be present on that occasion in my capacity as an ex-Moderator of the High Constables of the Port of Leith, a body formed from amongst the business men of Leith to maintain law and order long before the days of paid police forces. Restricted to fifty members, it is one of the very few bodies of its kind still in existence in Scotland, the others being the High Constables of Holyrood, Edinburgh and Perth.

It was one of these warm hazy mornings and all work stopped throughout the docks in order that the workers might pay homage to their beloved Queen. They had come from the shipbuilding yards, which during World War II built destroyers, corvettes and other men-of-war and, since then, cargo ships for owners in many parts of the world. The Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh was there, no doubt in his capacity as High Admiral of the Forth as well as first citizen of the City of Edinburgh.

The moving scene caused my mind to wander back in history to the days when the forebears of these shipyard workers, on practically the same site, were engaged in building wooden ships for the Mariner King James IV. I could visualise those great sea-dogs Sir Andrew Wood and Sir Robert Barton supervising the launching of the *Great Michael* in 1511, the biggest ship ever to have been built in either Scotland or England up to that time and upon which both of them served. At that time the great Leith Captains "were a byword and terror to all mariners of England"—woe betide any English who sailed into the Forth at that time. Indeed, the year after James III ascended the throne, five English ships did enter the Forth, ravaged the shores of Fife and the Lothians and did much damage amongst trading vessels making for Leith. Sir Andrew Wood was ordered by King James to pursue

and engage the enemy. He did so with two ships, the *Yellow Carvel* and the *Flower*, to the English five, met up with them off Dunbar and the battle commenced. In the end the skill and courage of the Leith sailors prevailed and Wood returned to Leith convoying the five English prizes in triumph.

As the guns of the Royal salute boomed out from the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle in honour of our Queen's arrival, my mind went back to 1560 when Mary of Guise, the Queen-Regent, stood upon these same ramparts watching the siege of Leith with anguish in her heart, a woman suffering from an incurable disease and allowed to retire to Edinburgh Castle from her beloved Leith upon which daily she looked to see if the banners of her faithful and gallant Frenchmen still floated over the beleagured town which was being beset by the combined forces of another Elizabeth and the Lords of the Congregation. Mary of Guise was to die before the siege of Leith ended by treaty after months of privation, a treaty which marked the fall of the Catholic Church in Scotland and the end of the ancient Franco-Scottish Alliance.

As the Elizabeth of our day stood upon the quay, I could almost visualise the pomp and ceremony, yet of a very different kind, accorded to other Queens who landed at the King's Wark in Leith : as far back as 1423, Queen Joan, along with her husband James 1st—Joan of Beaufort, a niece of Henry IV—her husband was eventually to be murdered at Perth by Graham's Highlanders; in 1449 Mary of Guildres who was married by proxy in Brussels to James 2nd, he who was killed by the bursting of one of his own cannon at the siege of Roxburgh Castle eleven years after ; the arrival in Leith in 1469 of the Saintly Margaret, daughter of King Christian of Denmark, who married James 3rd ; in 1537 Queen Magdaline, wife of James 5th, who landed with her and who, when she stepped ashore, knelt down in the fullness of her loving heart and kissed the Scottish earth and thanked God for bringing her husband and herself safely through the seas—alas, this fragile lily of France died but a few weeks after her arrival on the shore at Leith.

The equally tragic Mary, Queen of Scots, who landed at Leith from France in 1561, accompanied by her three uncles of the House of Guise and her four Maries, and received by the Earl of Moray. She dined that night in Andrew Lamb's house in Water Close, a house still standing today in all the splendour of its 16th century architecture. How quiet and unostentatious was her arrival back in her native land compared to the tumultuous reception in a later year given to George IV in 1822 when he landed at Leith. But it was of Queens I day dreamt—the Queens of James, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th, were followed in 1589 by Anne of Denmark who landed at Leith with her husband James 6th after a stormy passage from Norway in which country they were forced to take shelter from a storm and where they were married. Six Queens, five of them married to Jameses, and the sixth a daughter of a James. What a tragic lot. James 1st and 3rd murdered, 2nd, 4th and 5th killed in battle, and their daughter Queen beheaded. All these Jameses had close relations with the Port of Leith—in their way they developed it and brought fame to it. Some unwittingly caused its destruction—by fire in 1544 and by bombardment in 1560.

Long after the Royal car had driven away and the crowds had dispersed, I continued to see a panorama of ghosts of a bygone age—Leith in the days of the Romans—Agricola busily engaged at the mouths of the Rivers Esk, Leith and Almond, maintaining his Northern outposts—Inveresk, Inverleith and Cramond—away back in A.D. 80. Roman remains have been found at Leith which was obviously a storage depot replenished by sea and serving a wide area of Roman occupied Scotland. The prefix " Inver " was dropped sometime after the signing of the Great Charter of Holyrood Abbey in 1143, but retained for the lands further up the river.

Edward II and his large army encamped at Leith on their way to the field of Bannockburn in 1314. The womenfolk of Leith looked on with anxiety

as all their men had gone to fight with the Scottish army. These same womenfolk of Leith were to see the remains of the beaten English army, some 500 fugitive horsemen, pass in headlong flight a few days later.

1650—that epic year for many months of which Leslie defended Leith against the might of Cromwell and his Ironsides. So well was Leith fortified that Cromwell had to admit defeat. Unfortunately, the Leithers flushed with success, sallied out of their fortifications to chase Cromwell's army South. It was one thing to fight behind fortifications and another to fight in the open and the disaster of the battle of Dunbar resulted. Having defeated the defenders of Leith in the open, he was able to return and occupy the town.

Or as late as 1698, the excitement of the great Darien Expedition, financed by the Merchants of Leith and the Corporation of Edinburgh. Five proud ships, specially built for the expedition, set sail before a great concourse of people who had lined the quay to wish them God speed. And the second expedition set sail the following year and took with them a Chaplain, the Rev. Archibald Stobbo, from whose daughter, Jean, was descended Martha Bulloch, the mother of the first President Roosevelt. The expedition, instead of founding a great outlet for Scottish goods as was intended, ended in disaster and brought much sorrow to Leith. Nine ships in all sailed away, and only one returned.

But I was rudely jolted from my reverie—the helmets of Agricola's centurions faded, as did the bunting adorning the sailing ships in Leith harbour for the arrival of George IV, and the whole was replaced by a vast electric transformer towed by two diesel trucks coming down the road the Queen took. Police outriders on either side warned oncoming traffic of the outsized load, destined for Holland.

The mood had gone and I was back in Leith of 1958. I asked myself, " what of this Leith of modern days ? " Does it owe its present position as the biggest seaport on the East Coast of Britain, north of Newcastle, to Edward I the " Hammer of the Scots," who in his day wantonly reduced Berwick to a heap of rubble and caused the Monks of Newbattle, Kelso, Melrose and Jedburgh to take a longer journey to Leith with their vast stocks of Cheviot wool so popular on the Continent, and all of which had hitherto been shipped from Berwick. Or was it Sir Andrew Wood and Sir Robert Barton who kept the sea lanes open at a crucial time in Leith's development and maybe sired a race of seamen who were to make the name of Leith renowned throughout the world. Or perhaps the influence of great Leith men down through the ages—de Lestalric, the Logans, Barons of Restalrig, the Nisbets of Craigentinny, the Balfours of Pilrig, Sir John Gladstone, father of William Ewart, the great statesman who was born in Leith and carried on his business there for many years, Lt.-General Sir Thomas Graham, the Rev. St Sebastian, afterwards Lord Lyndoch, Major-General Sir James Kemp, K.C.B., who fought under Lord Wellington.

These, and possibly many other factors, contributed to make the Leith we know today. In the beginning of the 19th century the first enclosed docks were built at Leith, prior to that accommodation consisted of tidal berths near the mouth of the Water of Leith. Today, there are seven docks enclosing a water area of 265 acres and a length of quayside of 20,114 feet. There are six dry docks, the biggest being 550 feet. Grain is one of the principal imports at Leith and there is storage capacity for 71,000 tons in the dock elevators and mills. Unlike many dock undertakings, Leith Docks are run by a Board of Commissioners on a non-profit earning basis, surplus revenues being devoted to improving the Port and reducing charges. Leith Dock Commission was formed in 1838 and its 15 members are drawn from shipowners, Dock Ratepayers, Edinburgh Corporation, Edinburgh and Leith Chambers of Commerce, and Edinburgh Merchant Company, and give their services voluntarily.

It was inevitable that Leith would one day have to merge its identity

with that of the Capital City of Scotland. Bounded by Edinburgh to the west, south and east, and by the sea to the north, it could not expand and it therefore became a part of Edinburgh in 1920. The Act of Amalgamation as passed by Parliament stipulated that the town should retain its name with which so much history and so many traditions are connected—the name of the Port of Leith. (Applause.)

For the work and research which had been involved in the preparation of his Sentiment, greatly enjoyed by his audience, the President thanked Mr Watson.

Our Guests.

Brigadier James Greenshields, M.C., T.D., in proposing the toast of the guests said, *inter-alia* :

When I was invited to propose this important toast I was a little surprised having regard to the fact that I am a comparatively new member of the Society and more than a little dismayed knowing my incapacity. Nevertheless, may I say at once that I deem it both an honour and a privilege to be entrusted with a toast always so warmly received by the members : always too in the past so felicitiously and so eloquently proposed, and with refreshing wit and humour. Alas, I fear I can promise no such treat tonight. Tonight, as always, we have a large muster of distinguished guests—in fact nearly half the assembled company—but having borne with me so far, members and guests, you will the more readily, I feel sure, agree that to speak of all is beyond my powers. I must perforce confine myself to a few but I need hardly say that all our guests are equally welcome and equally honoured. To those not mentioned may I just say in a word that our warmth of greeting and our pleasure in their company is in no sense and in no degree lessened by the anonymity which, of necessity, cloaks them.

The President has already paid tribute to the giver of the Sentiment, Mr A. K. Watson, but I should like to add my own modest contribution to his tribute to him as a very welcome guest who has so delightfully and so worthily earned his supper—and maybe a wee drappie as well !

Not infrequently at this Dinner we are honoured by the presence of distinguished servants of the State and tonight is no exception for we are happy to welcome Sir John Lomax, K.B.E., C.M.G., M.C., who, until recently, was our Ambassador in Bolivia. He served with distinction in the Royal Regiment of Artillery in the First War where he won his Military Cross. We wish him many years of happy ease in his retirement.

In the presence of Sir Norman Guttery, K.B.E., C.B., we are honoured to have another distinguished Civil Servant who, until his recent retiral, was a Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Transport. He has now transferred his energies to the Hospital Service in an honorary capacity where, I am confident, his experience as an administrator is proving of great value.

It is no bad thing at a gathering such as this to have a Doctor in the House, and we are fortunate to have Dr A. B. Monro, Ph.D., M.D., D.P.M. Dr Monro is an outstanding authority on mental diseases, the study of which is, at long last, receiving belated attention from both State and Public. Dr Monro is also Physician Superintendent of one of our most important Hospitals, and I am sure we all wish him success in his endeavours to bring alleviation to the mentally ill.

It is my very great privilege and pleasure tonight to couple this toast with the name of our principal guest, the Rt. Hon. Cameron F. Cobbold, Governor of the Bank of England, Privy Councillor, and one of H. M. Lieu-

tenants of the City of London, who most assuredly requires no introduction, for he is at once a figure of eminence and distinction, commanding a position of respect throughout the civilised world. And no wonder, for he holds sway over a vast invisible Empire whose ramifications know no end and whose mysteries lie far beyond the ken of humbler men. We honour you, Sir, as you do indeed honour us by your presence at our table.

Despite the fact that this Society carries within its ranks the heavy burden of no fewer than 17 Bankers, I regret to say they have been singularly unhelpful, for all their speerin' qualities, in furnishing me with any helpful information regarding our distinguished guest.

I am driven alas, therefore to fall back upon my own uninspired imagination and perhaps even to the facetious. I could start, for instance, by saying, with apologies, that while it may, or may not, be true that the streets of London are paved with gold it is an undoubted fact that the financial purlieu of the City is "Cobbled." (Laughter.)

I could speculate upon how it feels to be the head of a nationalised concern, set aloof and rock-like in a surging sea of private enterprise where such strange and varied flotsam is thrown up on its stormy tides as tubes and aluminium.

I am on surer ground, however, when I say that Mr Cobbold bears a noble Scottish name as a Christian name and it is my belief that this was bestowed upon him—not I feel sure because of happy and harmonious alliteration—but surely because of an inspired foresight which recognised the value to an infant child destined to be a Banker of a name which by its Scottish character betokens canniness, thrift and a guid concern for the bawbees. Such a name is even more valuable to one seeking advancement in an Institution founded by a Scot three centuries ago.

I hope I may be forgiven for these seeming irrelevances : they serve but to cloak our admiration and our respect for the high office held by our principal guest and our warmth of greeting to him as a man and " a lad o' pairts." (Applause.)

Reply by Governor of the Bank of England.

The Right Hon. Cameron F. Cobbold, received with applause, said he was pleased and honoured to be present and thanked Brigadier Greenshields for his welcome. He added :

In spite of my first name and mother's ancestry, I cannot claim as close a Scottish connection as some of my predecessors—particularly the founder of the Bank, W. Paterson, and my immediate predecessor, Lord Catto.

Incidentally, while Paterson founded the Bank of England in 1694, it was an Englishman, John Holland, who first projected the Bank of Scotland in 1695. As a matter of fact in this particular and rare instance, the English pioneer north of the border seems to have lasted the course better than the Scotsman coming South—at any rate Paterson's connection with the Bank did not last long—just as well perhaps if there is any truth in the allegation of a 19th century historian that Paterson, when visiting the West Indies " mingled with—and perhaps joined—those daring buccaneers whose exploits form so romantic a chapter in the byways of history."

Lord Catto put the Scottish participation in the Bank of England on a different plane—though his career was romantic enough.

The Bank of England naturally treads delicately in its relations with the Scottish banks—but I think I can claim that we get on very well—we certainly keep in very close touch.

But, of course, it is not only in Scotland, or even in England, that one meets Scottish bankers. In fact if one wanders about the British Commonwealth as often as I do, one sometimes wonders how there can be any left in Scotland. In Toronto and Montreal, in Bombay and Calcutta, in Singapore and Hongkong, in Lagos and Nairobi, wherever I go and am entertained by bankers, it is pretty clear where the majority come from. And if one coincides with a St Andrew's Ball or other Scottish festivity, as has happened to me in several of those places, it is even clearer where they come from.

At least for my own profession, therefore, I can report to your Society both that banking relations north and south of the Tweed are cordial, and that Scottish banking prestige around the Commonwealth is undiminished. (Applause.)

The musical part of the programme was rather different from that to which the members were accustomed, and was given by the brothers Mr Rory and Mr Alex. McEwen, who accompanied their songs on their guitars. With great acceptance they sang, " The Lum Hat wantin' a Croon," " Johnny Cope," " Riding into Glasgow in a sour mulk cart," " The Day we went to Rothesay O " and " Johnny Lad."

The selection of Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., included " The Drunken Piper," " The Miller of Drone," " The High Road to Linton," " Nameless " and the Caledonian Society Strathspey.

A most enjoyable evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

Centenary Gift to London Scottish Regiment.

At the business meetings held at the Rembrandt Hotel on Thursday, 19th March, 1959, a letter dated 4th March was read from Past-President Col. L. Duncan Bennett, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., Joint Honorary Colonel of the London Scottish Regiment, expressing his thanks for the gift of the Drum-Major's Staff which the Society had presented to the Regiment on the occasion of its centenary. In this connection it was reported that the following inscription would appear on that Staff :

> " To commemorate the centenary of the London Scottish Regiment, this Staff was presented by The Caledonian Society of London which was largely instrumental in raising the Regiment in 1859."

London Caledonian Games.

The Honorary Secretary intimated that the Quaich which the Society presented many years ago to the London Caledonian

Games Association, which had suspended or abandoned these games, had now been returned to the Society.

At the Little Dinner held immediately after the business meetings, the President, after the loyal toasts had been drunk, welcomed Rear-Admiral George P. Thomson, C.B., C.B.E., who had kindly agreed to give the Sentiment, " The Navy and its Scottish Component." The President reminded members that the Admiral had given the Society an excellent Sentiment on " What the Royal Navy owes to Scotland " on the 19th November, 1948, and in addition on two other occasions had responded to the toasts of the guests.

The Navy and its Scottish Component.

In the course of his Sentiment, Rear-Admiral Thomson dealt with the changed conditions consequent on the threat of the H Bomb, and continued : We need to correct the English idea that the Royal Navy started with Drake and his henchmen. The foundations of the Royal Navy were laid with the Union in 1603 when the tough little Scottish Navy under Andrew Wood joined up and the joint Navy became responsible for the defence of both countries. By then, Scotland had already developed a fine maritime tradition, starting from the time Robert the Bruce decided to build a Navy. During the reign of James III and IV the Scottish Navy reached its highest development. One recalls that the Scottish Admiral Andrew Barton played havoc with English commerce in the North Sea and Channel during the early 16th century.

Curiously enough, after the Union and until the 18th century, there were few Scottish naval leaders of any note. No doubt the explanation is to be found in the religious disharmony between the two Stuart Dominions. It was not until the Seven Years' War—1756 to 1763—that Scotsmen began to join the Navy in considerable numbers and several of them achieved great renown in the Napoleonic wars. Nor must we forget that the sextant, which succeeded the funny old quadrant as a navigational instrument in 1759, was largely developed by a Scotsman named Campbell.

One of the products of the Seven Years' War was Adam Duncan, a Scotsman born in Dundee, remarkable for his leadership, ability and courage. Most of you will remember his story. You may recall how his Fleet was reduced to two ships because of the mutiny of the Nore in 1797. He then received news that the Dutch Fleet was about to leave the Texel and made signals to a non-existent British Fleet over the horizon which frightened the Dutch ships into remaining in harbour. Subsequently when the mutiny was over he soundly defeated them at the Battle of Camperdown, and from then onwards Holland ceased to be a great naval power.

Then there was Admiral Lord Keith who captured the Cape of Good Hope and whose Fleet contributed greatly to the rounding up and defeat of the French and Spanish Fleets at Trafalgar.

Admiral Sir George Cockburn was another great Scotsman at that time. So was Admiral Lord Cochrane, 10th Earl of Dundonald. His name to this day is revered by all the Latin American countries whose independence he did so much to achieve. Throughout the 19th century there was a long succession of Scottish Admirals—Macdonald, Drummond, Kerr, Maitland, Erskine, Campbell, and many others.

Coming to modern times, the First World War yielded only one naval

battle of note—Jutland. A quick glance at the list of those who commanded ships in that battle reveals at least eight Scottish captains. Then, too, Admiral Dunbar Naismith ties with Horton as one of the two finest submarine officers in the world.

As for the Second World War, I am treading on familiar ground. Cunningham, Fraser, McGrigor—who was later made Rector of Aberdeen University—Louis Hamilton, and Bertram Ramsey of Dunkirk fame, are all well-known to you. Let us not forget also that the sea Lochs of Scotland have always provided bases for the Navy in time of war.

Much of the Fleet Air Arm training is done at Lossiemouth and much of the artificer training in the Firth of Forth. Scotsmen were also prominent in the field of exploration.

Finally, let us bear in mind that it was the work of Scotsmen, who went forth to colonise, which has framed much of the structure on which the Navy has depended for its oversea bases.

To Rear-Admiral Thomson the President expressed the members' thanks.

A Fleming on a Fleming.

Mr A. R. C. Fleming, A.C.A., proposed the toast of the guests and in the course of his speech reminded members that the Society had two objects, the first charitable, the second the promotion of good fellowship amongst Scotsmen in London. The Society set great store on both these objects. He welcomed the guests who had honoured us by their presence. Stressing the fact that the other guests were equally welcome, there were nevertheless a few to whom he felt he should specifically refer.

These were Mr Henry Oscar, a name well-known and respected in the world of the theatre; Mr A. C. Archibald, a partner in a large firm of stockbrokers, who was now retiring and to whom he expressed the members' best wishes; Capt. James G. Young, D.S.C. of H.M.S. *President*, C.O. of the London Division of the Royal Naval Reserve; and Major Philip Fleming, Director of Robert Fleming & Co. Ltd., Merchant Bankers, who was responding to the toast. Last month we had as our guest Mr Cameron Cobbold, distinguished head of a nationalised enterprise, and we were equally privileged to welcome tonight a distinguished representative of private enterprise. Major Fleming, a well-known name in the City, was an Oxford rowing blue in the days when Oxford won their races, and stroked the Leander VIII, the winners at the Olympic Games of 1912. He suggested that while Major Fleming might not know a great deal about the Caledonian Society of London, he was well acquainted with its charitable objects, the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal

Caledonian Schools, because he was a Life Governor of the former and a Life Director of the latter. (Applause.)

Major Fleming in his response said :

Why you should invite such an undistinguished person as myself to address the Caledonian Society of London I cannot understand. Undistinguished as I am, I once had the honour of starting my speech, " May it please your Royal Highness, your Grace, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen." It went on—" I have much pleasure in seconding that motion ! " So you can assess my merits as a speechmaker ! Truth to tell, however, I have made a speech in this very room—it was a " Burns Night " occasion. I again made my apology as a very unpractised speechmaker though I did say I had the merit of being a true Scot, having been born at Broughty Ferry, Angus in 1889. I assured them, however, that I wouldn't be too long and told an old fashioned yarn. A man was walking along the road towards the Kirk when he met a friend of his emerging from the Kirk—" Is he dunne," he enquired, alluding to the Minister—" Aye," his friend answered—" He's din lang syne but he winna stop ! " (Laughter.)

Your President indicated to me that a few words on the subject of Investment Trusts might be of interest. I think I am right in saying that Scotland was the real pioneer in that field of Investment and that my father, Robert Fleming, was one of the first to get the idea under way. Now the Scots were and still are the finest curators of their spare cash and when from good class American Railroad Bonds they could obtain maybe 7 per cent. on their money, as opposed to 5 per cent. on some similar English Investments, they wisely went for the 7 per cent. and thus the Investment Trust movement gradually increased.

In London we are very apt to hear stories of the Scotsman canniness. I remember one story told to my father by a well-known English stock jobber to indicate the Scottish idea of saving. Father to little boy—when he was taking him for a walk—" Are those your new shoes you're wearing Wully ? "—" Aye faither "—" Well, take longer steps man ! ! ! " (Laughter.)

Well, to revert to Investment Trusts—there is no doubt that those that put their spare cash into the shares of the Investment Trust Companies have done mighty well out of it, both from the capital and revenue point of view. Whether the investors today will be equally successful in them—well, in Scottish parlance, " I wouldna like to say ! " Incidentally I was privileged to start my Investment Trust career under the Chairmanship of a very fine gentleman—Sir George Touche—a most imposing personality, with a magnificent handsome countenance, set off by a fine white beard. I've always remembered his word of wisdom, " On Directors' information you lose 50 per cent. of your money, on Chairmen's 100 ! " Now that was some 45 years ago and, by jove, I've found that advice most remarkably right ! So if I tell you to buy such and such a Company, whose shares are at 12/6, and whose break up value is 14/3, and of which I am a Director, well, be prepared to lose 50 per cent. of your money !

I could go wammelling on, but I must remember my start, " He's din lang syne but he winna stop ! " So may I say with real sincerity—thank you. (Applause.)

Toast to Honorary Office-Bearers.

The President then submitted the toast of the Honorary Office-bearers and thanked them for their services during the year, which as usual, they had discharged satisfactorily.

In the course of his reply the Honorary Secretary, stressing the fact that some of the office-bearers had been a long time in office, in his case 19 years—suggested that some of them might now have become redundant ; in that event he might have to look elsewhere for another lucrative appointment, and at the same time be forced to approach the Ministry of Labour, following the example of that dim Scot who thought that the " Book of Job " was the register you signed when applying for work at the Exchange ! He concluded by thanking the President for his congratulatory remarks and Brother Caledonians for their forebearance.

Mr Donald Fraser, ably accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M., sang " Of a' the Airts," " The Banks of Allan Water," " Mary of Argyle " and " Annie Laurie."

Owing to the absence through indisposition of the Society's Pipe-Major, Pipe-Major W. Speedy played the following selection—" Auch Mountain's Bonnie Glen," " Captain Horn," "Caberfeidh," " The Black Bear " and the Society's Strathspey.

" Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended a pleasant programme.

Ladies' Night.

At the Annual Festival held at the Rembrandt Hotel on the 16th April, 1959, a large company was received by the President and Mrs Thomson.

The President on the Society.

When the loyal toasts had been drunk the President offered the toast of " The Caledonian Society of London." He explained that, until the occasion of the Festival each session, the President has little to say. All he has to do is to persuade and ensnare or otherwise coerce his friends into speaking for him at the earlier dinners. Tonight there was no escape—either for him or for those present.

He then continued :

As the head custodian of the Society for this year, I am glad to be able to give you a good report. The twin objects of our affection, the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools, have been supported or are being supported most excellently by our members. You will all realise how I felt when I heard that the amount subscribed by the members of this Society for the Royal Scottish Corporation was over £1,000 and I hope that we shall get within a reasonable distance of this sum for the Royal Caledonian Schools.

However, the big event of this year, apart from the recovery of our quaich from the stronghold of some Scottish champion, is the Centenary of the London Scottish Regiment, with whose destiny we are so proud to be joined. We have many people here tonight who are part and parcel of this great regiment, and, as I do not wish to say anything that the War Office or the more militant members of the Regiment would not like, I am not going to dwell on the military aspect of the Regiment but on those other facets of its character which make it so unique in London.

The years I spent with the Scottish were among the most rewarding of my life. Not only did they teach me how to soldier but I enjoyed being taught, and entering into the various activities connected with the Battalion. There was both a soccer and hockey team ; there were facilities for all kinds of sport arranged ; there was a School of Arms ; there was Highland dancing and there were the weekends at Bisley. Practically all these activities still continue and can be enjoyed by any young man in London of Scottish descent, for the asking.

The Commanding Officer for most of my service with the 1st Battalion was Past-President L. Duncan Bennett and you will not be surprised when I tell you that when Field Marshal Montgomery inspected our T.A. Division, Lt.-Col. L. Duncan Bennett was one of the very few Commanding Officers left undisturbed.

I am going to name another wonderful personality and that was our Padre, now Past-President the Very Reverend Dr Scott. I don't think that any of us will ever forget the wonderful sermons at Broome Park—Drumhead services, the sound of aeroplanes overhead, green fields, huge trees and stirring exhortations. All this was part of the Scottish and if any of you can possibly put a young man just ever so slightly on the way to 59 Buckingham Gate, I am sure he will never regret it.

I feel it is part of our duty as members of this Society to do all we can to further the cause of the Regiment and with that thought I ask you to rise and drink to the health and continued prosperity of the Caledonian Society of London.

Toast of the Guests.

Vice-President R. A. McWilliam in submitting the toast of " The Guests," said :

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome our guests this evening. The last time you heard from me was, according to the Chronicles, 7 years and one month ago, when I likewise proposed our guests, and I will explain to you just why you are hearing me now.

When I was a young man we had in our district a very prosperous farmer's club, the Spey and Avon and Fiddishside Farmer's Club, and each year we held a cattle show. Some time before the show the President, a well-to-do, highly respected, if maybe somewhat pompous old farmer, called the Secretary, and said to him : " You'll go down to Gordon Castle and present my compliments to the Duke, and ask him whether he'll do us the *honour* of opening the show. Should His Grace be otherwise engaged you will call in at Cullen House and ask the Lord Lieutenant of the County whether we may have the pleasure of his company and would *he* open the show. If the Lord Lieutenant is not available, you will then go to Ballindallach Castle and ask Sir John whether he would do us the *favour* of opening the show—and if you canna get Sir John ye'll just tell Peter Scott it's his turn to open the show." So now you know why *I* am here and, welcome guests, I'm now going to tell you why you're here.

We Brother Caledonians are like a couthie well-ordered Scots family, and

you all know what such families are like : they don't have much to say to one another ; we get together on these occasions and sometimes we sit and think and sometimes we just sit.

You can imagine, then, that this would be a pretty dour party if we did not have any guests. At all our gatherings we give ourselves the pleasure of inviting our gentlemen friends, but once a year we cast discretion to the winds and disregard for a few brief hours the teaching of our thrifty forebears and we invite the ladies as well, and you may be interested to hear that we have no fewer than 119 guests of whom 89 are ladies.

I will commence, then, by giving a very special welcome to all the ladies. Obviously they are all guests and we are exceedingly happy to see so many of them with us. In fact, Mr President, I might go as far as to say not only am I delighted but relieved to see so many ladies with us : I have had some doubts as to the safety of my explaining to you why I say relieved—but on second thoughts I will do so in the hope of saving some unfortunate transgressor from stumbling into the same pitfall in the future. When I sent in my postcard to the Secretary accepting the invitation for this evening I very carefully filled in the names of my guests but completely forgot to include the name of my wife. However, the ever vigilant Secretary, in his wisdom and discretion, called me up and said : " Is Mrs McWilliam well and is she all right ? And she's in London, is she ? "—I said, " Oh, yes, Secretary, and she's fine thank you." I couldn't for the life of me think why he was being so solicitous about the health and whereabouts of my wife. So he said : " Well ye see, it's like this, ye see, I just noticed that ye hadna' invited her tae the banquet, and I was just wondering if she was well enough." I am glad to see she's here. And I just want to add, Mr Secretary, that though I'm not sure how I shall fare when we get home tonight—hitherto we have been quite friendly !

I next extend an equally warm welcome to all our Gentlemen guests. I did think of asking the Secretary for a complete list so that I could give these friends their proper place and mention each one of them individually. But when he told me they numbered 30—I decided that I'd ca' them a' through the gither."

Notwithstanding what I have said about not singling out any of our guests for special mention, I shall make no apology for mentioning just two.

Firstly, in this Centenary year of the London Scottish Regiment I must say how glad we are to have with us Col. J. D. McGregor—Commanding Officer of the Regiment. We of the Caledonian Society are keenly interested in the fortunes of the London Scottish—and the oftener we associate with you and your colleagues Sir, the better we like it.

The other is, of course, that distinguished guest who will reply to this Toast—Mr Ian A. R. Peebles. Most of you will know his name in connection with cricket. He actually started playing the great game, I understand, at Uddingston, and he carried on from there to Oxford and eventually to Middlesex and played for the M.C.C. against Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. I'm told he was only 19 years old when he went to South Africa for the first time. Now, of course, Mr Peebles progress was very outstanding, but you will all admit that he had a very advantageous start in life. We are gratified with his success and we don't want to detract from his outstanding achievements but I must just remind him that he had that very good start—he was born in Aberdeen. Now, apart from his interest in cricket and writing stories about it, I am told he has another hobby—sailing ships. I am not quite sure that he goes as far as the Solent, or Spithead to do this—in fact I am told that he does it in somebody's swimming pool. Be that as it may, Mr Peebles, we are extremely glad to have you with us here tonight and we are all looking forward to hearing what you have to say. Without more ado, Brother Caledonians, I would ask you to rise and drink to the health of all our guests coupled with the name of Mr Ian Peebles. (Applause.)

Ian A. R. Peebles on Cricket and Cricketers.

Mr Ian A. R. Peebles in replying to the toast said : May I first thank Mr McWilliam for the kind remarks he has made about me. As he has said, I was born in Aberdeen. I feel that this is my chief and possibly my sole qualification for the very important duty which has been thrust on me tonight.

Now some of you, looking at a man with such a flying start in life may well say—without rancour—that he might have done more with it. To that I would plead that I left my birthplace at a very early age. But not before I had learned several very important principles. For instance, I can remember the row over the reduction in the tram fares. Indignant citizens wrote pointing out that now, in walking to their offices, they were only saving a penny, as against the previous penny-halfpenny. (Laughter.) As I was walking here tonight, from Chalfont-St Giles, I was able to reflect that at least London Transport Executive never affronted their customers in this way.

As Mr McWilliam has said, it has also been my good luck to travel quite extensively especially round the Commonwealth. I was particularly interested therefore to see on television the other night the return of a very august traveller. The occasion was the dinner given at the Guildhall to the Queen Mother after her recent Commonwealth tour. In the course of her speech she said she had met a great many English, a great many Irish, a great many Welsh and she paused and smiled as she added " and a multitude of Scots." The great and affectionate laugh which greeted this sally struck me as one of the warmest and most spontaneous ovations I ever heard accorded any speaker.

I wonder if I might say that in a modest way I have enjoyed the same experience, for my travels have always had a pleasant Scottish tang.

The first time I set sail was on the good ship *Kenilworth Castle*, and when I wanted to write home I found the ship had only one post card aboard. It was the time honoured view of Aberdeen on a flag day with its counterpart, Aberdeen on a house-to-house collection day ! (Laughter.)

I also remember my mingled pride and embarrassment when, a little later in an up-country match in South Africa, I was piped out to the wicket. As things turned out, had my escort but waited for a moment he would then have been able to sound the retreat !

I have also had many happy times playing cricket in Scotland where, contrary to general belief in the South, cricket is very well played and keenly supported. Scotland turn out a very good side and it is particularly gratifying to me that their leading batsman is a Minister of the Auld Kirk, who has taken a packet of runs off all comers. Only recently Worcestershire went North to play Scotland and the reverend gentleman scored freely against them. But whether or not it was anything to do with his calling it seemed that he enjoyed more than his ordinary share of good fortune.

Eventually he was out l.b.w. to that redoubtable character Rollie Jenkins, a decision which he apparently did not relish, for passing the bowler he was rash enough to murmer that he thought he had been a bit unlucky. At this the bowler blew up. " Unlucky ? " he said, " If I had your luck I wouldn't be plain Reverend—I'd be the blooming Archbishop of Canterbury." (Laughter.) Being unversed in clerical matters the speaker was probably more offensive than he had intended to be.

As you may know, although my playing days are over, I still take an active part in cricket by writing about it and indeed spent the last few months in Australia following the fortunes and misfortunes of our team there. The

truth is that we were beaten by a better team, whatever the controversies of which you may have read. I can only say that, for my part, I accepted this defeat in a very generous and sporting spirit—painful though it was—the spectacle of the Sassenachs being massacred by a team which started McDonald, McKay, Davidson. . . .

Of the controversies the most serious was the doubtful bowling, or in a plain word, throwing. It was a serious matter and if not promptly dealt with will be an awkward problem in the future.

But you may well say " this is very interesting but cannot have anything to do with the Caledonian Society." Well, don't be too sure. The Christian names of the two chief offenders were Ian and Gordon.

I have already overrun my time and must now without further delay, perform the true purpose of this speech which is, Sir, to thank you for inviting me to be present tonight and for your generous hospitality to all your guests. (Applause.)

The Health of the President.

The toast of " The President " was proposed by Past-President the Very Rev. Dr Scott. He regarded it as a particular pleasure to be entrusted with this duty because of his twenty years' friendship with the President. Moreover, he had been privileged, not only to marry him to the delightful lady now sitting on his right, but to baptise their charming twins. Dr Scott had been closely associated with him in the London Scottish, which the President joined in 1936. Three years later he became the first war-time Territorial Army Adjutant of the 1st Battalion. In 1942 he left the Scottish to take a series of Staff jobs, and eventually commanded the 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. As President of the Caledonian Society he had had a very successful year. The Sentiments had been of a most interesting character, the other speakers had been excellent and tonight was no exception.

The President thanked Dr Scott for his kind speech, expressed his appreciation of the help and encouragement given to him by the members, and hoped that his successor would have as enjoyable a year as he had had.

In accordance with the usual custom the Past-Presidents saluted the President, after which Mrs Thomson, wife of the President, pinned on the coat of Mr John R. Aldridge the immediate Past-President, the gold badge of the Society.

The musical programme was provided by Miss Irene Palmer and Mr Norman Lumsden, who were accompanied by Mr Haward Clarke. The former sang " Highland Lad " and " Whistle and I'll come tae ye " and the latter, " Bonnie Earl

o' Moray " and " Westering Home." Together they sang " Uist Tramping Song " and " Turn ye to Me."

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave a finished rendering of " The Alma," " The Devil in the Kitchen," " The Kilt is my Delight " and " The Lads with the Kilt."

A memorable evening and a successful session ended with the Strathspey, " The Caledonian Society of London " and the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

Annual General Meeting.

At the Council Meeting held at headquarters on the 4th November, 1959, immediately prior to the annual meeting for the session 1958–59, it was decided that the following appointments for the new session should be recommended; President Mr R. A. McWilliam, Vice-President Mr James Aitken, and that the other officers now serving should be re-elected.

The financial statement presented to the annual meeting by the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A., was approved.

Donations of £50 each were voted to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools.

A proposal by the Council that the Society should join the World Federation of Scottish Societies, which would involve an annual contribution of 1s. per member, was accepted.

It was reported that a Mr Frank Cuddeford had presented to the Society a badge commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Society. An illustration of this badge is on page 78 of the First Volume of the Chronicles covering the years 1837–1905.

After the retiring President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., had been thanked for his services during a very successful session, the new President, Mr R. A. McWilliam was elected and invested with the chain and badge of office. The latter then proposed that the gold medal of the Society should be awarded to Mr J. C. Thomson in recognition of his valuable work. This motion was carried with acclamation.

The other Honorary Office-bearers were re-elected and the vacancies on the Council were filled.

Mr James Donald Fraser, Mr Andrew Irving and Mr John Johnston were admitted to membership.

CHAPTER IV

1959–1960 : Mr R. A. McWilliam, *President.*

A Banffshire man takes the Chair ; " Scotland's contribution to development in South America," by Viscount Davidson ; Mr. R. A. McMullen on " Canada's Scottish background " ; " Industrial Scotland—whither now ? " by Lord Polwarth ; The Argentine Ambassador on " Scots in the Argentine " ; " The Immortal Memory," by Sir William Duthie, M.P. ; " Exports—the Government in Business," by Mr Laurence J. Menzies ; Mr John Connell on " R.L.S.—An Edinburgh Man " ; The Honorary Secretary's resignation ; The President on the Society.

NOT since Mr James Cantlie, F.R.C.S. (later Sir James Cantlie, K.B.E.) was elected President for the year 1902–1903 has a native of Banffshire occupied this high office until the election of Mr Robert Alexander McWilliam, and strangely enough they hail from the same part of that county. Both sons of " Hill-fit crafters," each received his secondary education at Mortlach Higher Grade School, Dufftown ; from that point onwards their roads lay far apart, but each reached the zenith of his career in London.

Robert McWilliam comes at the tail-end of a very large family—he is the thirteenth child—and anyone who is familiar with conditions of upland farming in the early years of this century will readily appreciate that he and his family had no easy row to hoe !

Leaving school on the outbreak of the 1914–1918 war, he joined the staff of the North of Scotland and Town and County Bank at the Dufftown Branch. From 1917–1919 he served in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, returning to the same Bank in Dufftown on demobilisation.

In 1921 by joining the London and River Plate Bank (now Bank of London and South America Limited) he made the decision which shaped his career. He served first in Argentina,

R. A. McWILLIAM

President, 1959–1960

then in Colombia, and again in Argentina, for a total of twenty-six years, returning to London in 1947 when he was appointed General Manager of the Bank.

Whilst serving in South America, and since his return to London, he has travelled far and undertaken the widest variety of tasks for his employers—from Branch Accountant to Inspector and Branch Manager he trod the hard road for which his early youth had so well equipped him. To visit Columbian Branches in the early 1920's entailed long journeys of three to four days on mule-back; that was "nae bather" to a lad who had frequently to walk home six miles from Dufftown school to the foot of Ben Aigen through snowdrifts or slush.

Learning his lessons from that most efficient of all teachers —sad experience—he quickly acquired the knowledge that enabled him to take on the Management of the Bank's largest Branch, Buenos Aires—a Branch with a staff of approximately 1,000—at the early age of 37. In a country where agriculture and cattle breeding are of major importance, he was able to put his early up-bringing to good use when dealing with his many clients whose farming interests were very large indeed.

Despite his very full time job of managing the Bank in Buenos Aires, Mr McWilliam found time to take a very active part in British community affairs in Buenos Aires. He was for several years on the Committee of the St Andrew's Society of the River Plate, having been its President for the years 1939 and 1940 at the outbreak of the Second World War. It was in this capacity that in 1939 he headed the leaders of all British Associations in Buenos Aires in the formation of the British Community Council, a body which besides raising some five million pounds for Red Cross and other charitable purposes during the war, and establishing a reserve fund of some £500,000 to take care of the returning British volunteers who went home to the War from Argentina, or the dependents of those who failed to return, sent food supplies to the prisoner of war camps in Germany, sufficient to provide the full ration for 20,000 prisoners every day for a period exceeding four years.

Back home he had perforce to take up residence in London, where for twelve years he was General Manager of the Bank. He continued, however, to take an active interest in community affairs, both Scottish and Latin American. He is a Member of the Committee of Management of the Royal Scottish Corporation and is also a member of the London Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association, and the London Morayshire Club. He

is Vice-President of the Argentine Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain, Treasurer of the Anglo-Argentine Society, London, and a member of the General Committee of the Anglo-Chilean Society, London. But the call of the North was, and still is, very strong indeed, and every year, sometimes twice, he returns to his native heath, there to indulge in his favourite pastimes, fishing and golf. At the latter incidentally, he is middling good, having enjoyed a handicap as low as 8 in his better days.

It is perhaps this maintenance of his touch with Scotland that has kept Mr McWilliam so Scottish in his outlook, tongue and sympathies. With no claim to being a singer, he carries round in his head, and croons when the occasion arises, many old North-Eastern corn-kisters, little known to the present generation, and some of which have possibly never appeared in print. " What," he says, " can you expect these days when tractors have taken the place of horses, and the ploughman doesn't even know what a corn-kist is ? "

He is now a Director of the Bank, and so enjoys somewhat more leisure than in recent years. He keeps up-to-date with financial, industrial and political conditions in all countries where his Bank is established, however, and just recently, in recognition of his services to Argentina, the President of that great Republic conferred on him the honour of " Commander of the Order of Liberty."

The first business meetings of the session were held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on Thursday, 19th November, 1959, the new President, Mr R. A. McWilliam, in the chair.

At this meeting it was reported that Past-President J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., had presented a small quaich to the Society, to be used on the occasion of proposing the Pipe-Major's health after he had played his selections. The warm appreciation of the members was expressed to the donor.

At the Little Dinner which followed the business meetings, a large company welcomed the new President who, after the loyal toasts had been drunk, expressed his appreciation of the honour conferred on him.

The President then introduced Viscount Davidson, P.C., G.C.V.O., C.H., C.B., who had undertaken to give the Sentiment on

"Scotland's Contribution to Development in South America."

Lord Davidson acknowledged the honour which, he said, had been conferred upon him by the President in asking him to address the company on the part that had been played by Scotsmen in Argentina and in South America generally, in contributing to the development of the Continent from the time they won their freedom at the turn of the 19th century. He took the history of his own family as a single illustration of what had been achieved by hundreds of other Scottish families in every field of human activity in the countries of their adoption.

After the Napoleonic Wars, Scotland was greatly impoverished and thousands of families emigrated all over the world. Many went to Canada and Australia and New Zealand, and many to the United States and countries in South America, particularly to Argentina, where they were made welcome under a liberal constitution. The first thought of the Scot was a church and a minister to maintain and stimulate their Christian faith. The second priority was to teach their children ; and the third to provide a doctor to look after them in sickness. As an example of their staunch loyalty to their own folk, Lord Davidson's own grandfather was subscribing to the kirk four years after he had landed practically penniless. As they earned money by hard work, the Scots generally put their money into the purchase of land and quite soon began to import sheep and cattle, and ploughs to cultivate the soil, which brought forth large and valuable crops of grain of all sorts ; but naturally their activities were limited to areas immediately round the towns. Their relationship with the Argentines, both individuals and government, were cordial, and although a Roman Catholic country, at the laying of the foundation stone and at the first service held in St Andrew's Church, high Argentine officials were present to give proof of the tolerance which enabled any Christian community to worship in its own traditional way. After the church came the founding of the school, and because of the character and probity of the Scottish settlers, many Argentines sent, and still do send, their boys to be educated at the Scottish school.

What is true of Argentina is true in every country in the world. Scotsmen succeed because they maintain their principles and their tradition and their character wherever they are, and

they win the respect and friendship of their hosts. They work hard but withal are generous. An old proverb perhaps puts it in one sentence : " The Scot will never fight until he sees his own blood." He is never the aggressor but will defend his principles and standards against all comers. With pride in themselves goes understanding of others and a feeling of friendship to those who have given them a home and an opportunity to make a success of their lives, and a desire to return friendship and hospitality not as a virtue but as a duty.

The members' appreciation of Lord Davidson's Sentiment, which was received with loud applause, was expressed by the President.

Important Guests.

In proposing the toast of the Guests, Mr Mark W. Connell made the following observations :

We have a large number of guests here tonight, and all are equally welcome, but time will only permit me to mention a few. Our principal guest is Viscount Davidson, P.C., G.C.V.O., C.H., C.B. Lord Davidson is a Scot through and through, born in Aberdeen, which is no mean city in spite of its reputation.

He has had a long and distinguished career and has held many important offices under the Government. Since the end of the war his activities have been mainly directed to the fostering of good relations with the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries. He has been President of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Councils for the last 13–14 years. Like our President, he has a very considerable knowledge of Latin America, particularly the Argentine Republic which he has visited on many occasions and where he still does a bit of farming.

We are also pleased to welcome Mr Rene A. McMullen, Agent-General for Alberta in London for the past 12 years. A Canadian of Scottish/Irish descent, plus a bit of French, I understand his grandmother hails from Edinburgh. At one time he rode with the North-West Mounted Police, but according to our President gave it up out of consideration for the horse. Mr McMullen is a keen golfer in all weathers, who hits a long ball, although its direction is at times uncertain, and, I can only quote his friends for this, he pops up on the green from behind a tree or a bush and solemnly declares his score at two, or may be occasionally, three. I understand the handicapping committee have their eye on him.

Mr Val C. Fisher is another guest with connections in the Argentine. He is Chairman of an important firm of merchants with several branches in that country. He only recently returned from Buenos Aires where his Company have just celebrated their 75th anniversary. Mr Fisher is a Chartered Accountant and hails from Glasgow.

We are also pleased to have with us Sir John Macpherson, K.C.M.G., since 1956 Permananet Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, who has given nearly 40 years distinguished service to the country. He has been a guest on previous occasions and we welcome him again.

Commander R. Langton-Jones, D.S.O., R.N.(Rtd.), who is also with us, intended to be present at our dinner in March last, and his host who was

then proposing the toast which I am now submitting to you, decided that although the Commander was not present we ought to be told all about him. There is, therefore, little I can add to the information given you at that earlier dinner, except to say that we are delighted that the Commander is now able to be with us.

From Scottish Societies we have Dr T. F. Macrae, O.B.E., President of the Harrow and District Caledonian Society, Mr J. L. McEwan, M.I.P.A., a well-known industrial designer and a member of the Epsom Caledonian Society, and Mr James Wilson, President of the Gravesend and District Scottish Association.

As the toast of the London Scottish is being proposed later this evening, we have naturally a large number of friends from the Regiment. It is quite impossible for me to mention them all, but I must offer a particular welcome to Lt.-Col. J. D. McGregor, M.C., now Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. F. G. Maxwell, T.D., who commanded the 2nd Bn. during the recent war, and Mr J. A. Dewar, a staunch supporter and enthusiastic member of the Regiment. (Applause.)

Canada's Scottish Background.

In the course of his reply to the toast of the Guests, Mr R. A. McMullen said :

In an unguarded moment, your President, the blackguarding Captain of my golf club, who has told the stories about my nefarious deeds on the golf course, invited me to reply to this important toast on behalf of your many better qualified and more important guests. Your guests appreciate the delightful introduction by Mark Connell—entirely too flattering—but I must thank him for remembering my sturdy steed. Had I my own way I should now find myself in the saddle riding towards distant places. (Laughter.) Having been so fortunate as to peruse two copies of your Chronicles I would mention that in those pages I found much Scottish oratory and humour. I compliment you, gentlemen, on those very fine Chronicles.

Now, on behalf of the guests I would claim a privilege, that of joining with the members of the Society in paying tribute to Lord Davidson for his very delightful remarks—not remarks from notes but remarks from the heart, which we can take with us. (Hear, hear.) It is generally admitted that Scots are an enigmatic people. They show the world a side which says that you are dour and practical, merely to cover up the fact that you are among the most sentimental people in the world. True, your hearts may be easily touched, even if not your pockets. (Laughter.) The myth you have presented to the world is that you are tight fisted, that you are mean and careful with the bawbees. As a matter of fact most of these stories emanated from Scotland. They are manufactured in Scotland and exported all over the world. You may ask me why ? There is a simple answer. The only thing a Scot can enjoy at his own expense is a joke (laughter) and the Scots have learned the art of laughing at themselves, which is the beginning of sanity. (Laughter.)

The idea, of course, is spread abroad that you are a people without a sense of humour. Even in Scotland they will tell you that they close the theatres on Saturday nights to keep the people from laughing in kirk on Sunday mornings (laughter) and, I am told, that to make a Scotsman happy you should tell him stories in his youth that he may laugh in his old age. (Laughter.) But the Scots don't really lack a sense of humour ; it is a pose you put on so that you won't have to laugh at the stories told repeatedly by the Englishman visiting your magnificent country.

I would crave your indulgence while I speak briefly about Canada. One

cannot understand Canada without having some knowledge or appreciation of its Scottish background. The Scottish emigrant ships, the early Scottish emigrants, going back like your emigrants, Sir, to the 1700's and so on, these early settlers, many of them settled by John Galt, a typical Scot, combining a sense of business with human kindness and a literary culture, whose haunting verses even to this day convey the wistful affection of the exile. From the lone shieling on the misty isle, mountains divide us and the waste of seas, but still the blood is true, the heart is Highland, and in our dreams we see the Hebrides. That is what home, Scotland, meant to those early emigrants who suffered untold deprivation, in order to carve an Empire out of a wilderness. I wonder if you know that there was a time in the history of mankind when the only Gaelic paper published in the world, was published in Canada, was printed and published at a place called Baddeck, in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, where to this day and for over a hundred years a Gaelic College has flourished successfully. Now history tells us that John A. MacDonald, Sir, a relative of Viscount Davidson, maybe he had to get out of the country (laughter)—a Scot, the Father of Confederation, welded the Provinces and Territories into a nation, and a nation it has become.

But what of the West ? That clarion call " Go west young man, go west " had not been heard. A young man called Hendry was the very first white man to traverse the prairies of western Canada to the upper reaches of the Saskatchewan to be followed in 1793 by Alexander MacKenzie who travelled up the Saskatchewan valley, the Athabasca to the Mighty Peace, and down the flood streams to the Pacific coast, the first man, a Scot, to travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific, a distance of over 5,000 miles. The first overland journey made by man, by white man, then to be followed by David Thompson, a short sturdy, determined man, a Highland Scot, who penetrated the very heart of the Rocky Mountains, down the Okanagan, and the Kootenays, to the region of the Pacific. Yes, Scots carved a nation out of the rudiments for peaceful settlement.

And so today their descendants, and the descendants of the Scots who follow, constitute ten per cent. of our population, no less than 1,750,000 souls, are Scottish by birth or of Scottish descent. Do you wonder that today we are the leading Dominion in the Commonwealth. (Applause.)

Your President will love this. Two of our leading bankers, the Presidents of one of our greatest railway transportation systems, and of one of our international air lines are all born Scots. Many Scots occupy prominent positions today in public affairs, in the Church, in industry and commerce, all contributing to the development of a young nation which Viscount Davidson said at one time was somewhat like the Colonies we are assisting today. In matters of religion and politics, in our every day life the Scots have left an indelible mark upon the history of Canada.

In terms of gracious courtesy and generous hospitality, Mr President, this ancient Society has left an indelible imprint upon the minds of your guests. We thank you. (Applause.)

Our Regiment The Scottish.

The President in submitting the toast of " The London Scottish Regiment," referred to the gift of the Drum-Major's Staff which the Society had been happy to present during the regiment's centenary year. Lt-Col. J. D. McGregor, Commanding Officer, in responding to this toast, thanked the Society for this beautiful gift, which he reminded them would lead the

battalion on all occasions. His excellent speech was received with pleasure.

Mr John Graham, whose beautiful tenor voice was greatly appreciated, sang the following songs—" Gae bring to me a Pint o' Wine," " Bonnie Wee Thing," " Kishmul's Galley " and " Westering Home." The accompaniments were, as usual, provided by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Sergeant-Piper W. Ferguson and Lance-Corporal D. Milner of the London Scottish played the following pipe selections : " Bonnie Ann," " Struan Robertson," " Colonel McLeod," " 79th Farewell to Gibraltar " and " Hielan Laddie." The gathering closed with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne," and the National Anthem.

At the Council Meeting, held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on Thursday, 17th December, 1959, a sub-Committee, composed of the President, Honorary Secretary Honorary Treasurer, Past-President James R. Steele and Brother Caledonian Alexander Dowie, M.B.E., was appointed to enquire into the shortage of members and to make recommendations thereon to the Council.

When the loyal toasts had been honoured at the Little Dinner which immediately followed the business meetings, the President read a letter from the Secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation in which it was intimated that on the occasion of the 294th Anniversary Festival, the Society, its members and friends had, in response to the President's appeal, contributed the sum of £669 to the charity. He thanked the members for their interest and support.

Lord Polwarth, T.D., gave an interesting Sentiment entitled :

" INDUSTRIAL SCOTLAND—WHITHER NOW ? "

during which he said :

This year at the Edinburgh Festival one of our star turns was Mr John Betjeman, for whom I have a great regard. When he came on to the stage to give a recital of his poems, he started by producing a programme which we'd all bought, priced sixpence, and told us that was the programme but that was not what he intended to recite to us so we might as well tear it up. (Laughter.) Well, perhaps I should say the same about the title of my speech, which is printed on the menu. Your President told me that the Sentiment had to have a title, and so we had to think something up. But don't take too much notice

of it. It says " Industrial Scotland—whither now ! " It is really just an excuse to talk to you for a short time on Scottish industry and how we in the Scottish Council see it, and if we mingle the whither with a little of whence and where, I hope you won't mind.

Now " whence." We have come a long way since the twenties and thirties which many of you remember a great deal better than I do. Thanks to many Scots, the Scottish Council, the old Scottish Development Council and many other Scots, we have come a long way since those twenties and thirties in industry, and I think I can say, if I may, without undue bias that Scotland does owe quite a large debt for that progress to the Scottish Council (Development and Industry). Where, then, stand we today ? Well, not long ago the F.B.I. made a survey and from that survey one could gather that many of our traditional industries are in good condition today, whether they are in engineering or in textiles, or, need I say it, whisky ; but like the curate's egg Scottish industry is good in parts, but not all parts. What then of the bad parts ? Some of the symptoms are these. Our manufacturing industry is one-eighth smaller in proportion to manufacturing industry in the whole of the United Kingdom. In other words, we have got more than our share of people in other occupations, whether they be transport, or services, or I've no doubt some of you would say lawyers, accountants, bankers and other parasites of the community. (Laughter.) And, then, every year, something like twenty-five thousand people leave Scotland, of whom some 11,000 go to the south, and the rest go abroad. Then look at our figures of unemployment. By normal standards they cannot be considered high, but they are double the figures for the whole of the United Kingdom and they remain stubbornly double those figures, as they have done ever since the war. We calculate that if we are to hold our own in unemployment with the rest of the Kingdom we've got to have something like 12,000 new jobs created in Scotland every year, compared with about 4,000 that are actually being created. So you see we have a big job ahead of us. All these are signs of certain deep seated difficulties. Some of our difficulties too are in markets for our traditional goods, shipbuilding above all, something like one in eight of the whole Scottish working population depends either directly or indirectly on shipbuilding. Now shipbuilding, as you know, is coming to a difficult time—we haven't hit the worst of it yet, and the next few years are going to be very difficult ones for Scotland because of the shipbuilding industry. In coal mining too, many of our mines are difficult to work. They have bad seams, they are not economic, and Scotland is going to have to face a bigger closing down of mines than any other part of the United Kingdom. And with it it won't only be the miners that will suffer but the makers of coal-cutting machinery, railway wagons, switchgear, other industries like shale mining and the light castings in Falkirk, and that part of the country where technical changes are reducing the demand. So you see there is no single cause of difficulty in Scottish industry, and likewise there is no single cure. Now some people have said that our trouble is our people, our manpower, our management or our workers. I am quite sure that that contention is wrong.

First of all management. One or two people lately, I regret to say Scotsmen, have hinted that our management in Scotland is at fault, that we are lacking in enterprise. That I categorically deny. Look at only two examples that I can give of outstanding Scottish enterprise and industry. One firm in Glasgow who were in the field of air conditioning went out after the war into America, the home of the industry, set up in a hotel room in Detroit and walked in and carried off the contracts for air conditioning the General Motors technical centre and the Ford Office block in Detroit. Look at the little company up in Inverness who were in the business of making electric welding equipment. They have just been exporting equipment to Russia and to the United States, both in the face of competition from all over the world. If we

can do that I don't believe there is anything wrong with our management or labour. Who would be better judges than those American companies who have come to Scotland and set up enterprises there and have nothing but praise for the Scottish workmen's integrity and for his readiness to acquire new skills. Some people have said that Scots are not ready to invest in Scottish industry, but I don't believe that's true either. I say that with a little hesitation, because I'm somewhat involved personally at the moment in this. Recently, a company of which I am Chairman, decided that we would start a new unit trust, to give Scots, well—anybody, an opportunity to invest in Scottish industry. We thought that a fair start was to offer half a million pounds worth of units, and we were astonished, and overwhelmed, to find that we did not receive half a million pounds, but five and a half million pounds; so there's no doubt that the Scot is ready to back Scottish industry with his own cash.

The Scottish economy has been immensely strengthened in the last twenty-five years, and I would like to say something of what the Scottish Council has been doing to lay the foundations for a sound future. The Scottish Council, for those of you who do not know, is a body that is independent of government, it represents all sides of industry, employers, banks, local authorities, trade unions, and is run by a great number of enthusaistic Scots who are ready to give their time to helping Scotland.

It has been suggested by some people, that Scotland has provided much too little of the new development in Scotland from their own resources. Well figures, statistics, can be great liars, but in fact something like half of all the new development in Scotland since the end of the war has come from indigenous Scottish firms. We in the Scottish Council have helped companies to get into new lines of production by agreements under licence, and so on. We have several very interesting examples recently, of Scottish companies linking up with American ones. I won't go into names, but there is one, an old established Scottish machine tool maker, Douglas Frasers in Arbroath, who have just linked up with Giddings & Lewis from Wisconsin in America, who manufacture machine tools in Arbroath. Several others of the like, find new markets abroad for our companies.

The Council has sent numerous missions to North America and to the Continent. We are giving constantly advice to Scottish manufacturers about finding new markets, finding agents for their products, making itineraries for visiting overseas countries, and so on. We have a most valuable office here in London just off St James's Street, with a very enthusiastic committee of Scotsmen under the Chairmanship of Sir Cecil Weir, who are in contact all the time with overseas banks, with the buying houses of the big North American department stores and with the trade representatives of foreign countries and Commonwealth countries. Our highlight in this business of helping our people to sell was our Scottish Industries Exhibition in Glasgow this September, which some of you may have had the chance to visit. In Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, which is just about as big as the ground floor of Olympia here, something like 220 Scottish manufacturers showed their wares and, not only were we flooded with overseas buyers, but we had no less than 375,000 visitors from the Scottish public. That in two and a half weeks, I think you will agree, is a remarkable achievement. And not only have we got a vast number of orders for Scottish industry, but we paid for that exhibition without calling on a penny of the money that had been put up by our guarantors. (Applause.)

So much for what we are doing to help our own industry. There is still an awful lot to be done in attracting new industry to Scotland. Now some of our industries have been criticised for this. People say Scottish industry should be able to grow these new industries itself, it should not need to bring them in. I can assure you it's not for lack of enterprise or capital that we are

doing this. Many of these new industries have got to start on a full scale. They can't grow up from the grass roots any longer like they could in the old days when industry was a simpler thing than it is today. They need such a wide range of knowledge, in fields of design or production, or marketing, and so they have got to be brought in wholesale as a branch of something that is already existing somewhere else. In a competitive world that is the only way it can be done. The result is that we manage to attract many new industries to Scotland that never existed there before, many of them from the United States, and it is a remarkable fact that of all the American investments in Britain since the end of the last war, over 70 per cent. has come to Scotland, which has only 10 per cent. of Britain's population. We have got whole new industries, aero engines, which we never had before, earth-moving equipment (in a year's time Scotland will be the second largest producer of heavy earth-moving equipment in the world, second only to America), office machinery, typewriters, computers, adding-machines, clocks and watches, and a wide variety of light engineering which she never had before. Now these new companies bring all sorts of things in their wake, they bring new work and contracts to many existing Scottish companies, they bring new skills whether in labour or in management, and they employ some 45,000 people in Scotland.

Lord Polwarth went on to say that there was abundant evidence that Scotland had not lagged behind in the fields of science and research; particularly in chemistry, electronics and nuclear development. Since these activities, however, were much inclined to be limited by finance they were largely concentrated near London and other big centres.

There is a movement afoot now which is beginning to take shape and which offers considerable hope for enhanced prospects of employment in Scotland—the establishment in Scotland of certain departments for the manufacture of motor car and aircraft parts and maybe some additional heavy industrial developments.

The forecast in the short term, he continued, may be cloudy with showers, but further ahead we may expect long periods of sunshine or even set fair. In all this work and planning we Scots have one invaluable asset—our readiness to come together and hold together for the good of our country. This can be seen in all those who work for the Scottish Council, and it can be seen in your gathering here tonight. What better evidence of Scotland's worth could anyone ask than the brains, the achievements, the integrity, the common sense of those of you who make up this honourable Society.

If you want to help Scotland tell your friends and colleagues what Scotland can offer them in the field of industry and commerce; you will be doing Scotland and them a good turn.

Lord Polwarth concluded by quoting those immortal lines written by his kinsman, Sir Walter Scott, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*—" Breathes there a man with soul so dead . . ." and thanked the President and members of the Society for the very enjoyable evening's entertainment and for the opportunity offered him to address them on " Industrial Scotland."

In thanking Lord Polwarth for his Sentiment, which was received with applause, the President reminded members that the duties which his Lordship was discharging as Chairman of the Scottish Council were not only onerous, but vital to the wellbeing of Scotland. They were, therefore, grateful that he had found time to prepare and deliver such a comprehensive

report on Scotland's industry—a report from which they were able to appreciate more fully than ever before, the progress which had been made in our country.

Welcome to Our Guests.

Mr Robert Leitch in proposing the toast of " Our Guests," mentioned that Lord Polwarth was one of a small company who had a large task. He was an elected Representative Peer and we all knew that in that capacity he was zealous in protecting our country's rights. Apart from this fact it was quite obvious that his calling must commend him to a large proportion of our members because he was both a Banker and a Chartered Accountant. The members were all appreciative of his excellent Sentiment.

Mr Leitch also welcomed Mr John G. Phillimore, C.M.G., a Company Director, and again, a Banker. From Melbourne, Australia, they were happy to have Mr Pat Hannay, and from Scottish Societies in London, a large number of important office-bearers.

He gave a special welcome to His Excellency Admiral Teodoro Hartung, the Argentine Ambassador to the Court of St James' who was responding to the toast. His Excellency was no stranger to this country, having been Naval Attache and Head of the Argentine Naval Commission for some two years at the conclusion of the last war. In his home country he was acquainted with many of our compatriots who were happy to enjoy his friendship. (Applause.)

Scots in the Argentine

In reply to the toast of " Our Guests," His Excellency said :

I do not need to look very far for the source of Mr Leitch's information regarding my association with Scotsmen in my own country. I once had the pleasure of attending one of the St Andrew's Day banquets, organised by the St Andrew's Society of the River Plate in Buenos Aires, and no doubt your President still keeps up his close association with that Society. And I have associated on many other occasions with your countrymen in Argentina ; let me assure you, however, that although Scots are quite numerous there, particularly in the cattle and sheep-farming communities, in the Banks, and at one time in the Engineering and Administrative departments of our railways, we have never heard stories told about the Scots in Argentina to compare with those we have heard about them in Australia. (Laughter.) Besides, in Argentina we are not seriously troubled by rabbit pest—our main pest is the grasshopper. Mind you, although I have said we had many Scots in the cattle and sheep-farming communities, I am not suggesting that the

Scots are grasshoppers ; indeed, my country owes more to the Scots than most of the present generation would understand. When the building of the railways began in Argentina, the Scots were first in the field, as the names of numerous railway stations, mountains, lakes, and other landmarks bear witness. These were the men who, carrying a theodolite over the right shoulder and a shotgun over the left (for self defence and to obtain food), went forward, studying the unknown terrain as they advanced, the course and fording places of the rivers, for the laying down of the rails which were to carry civilisation and progress to the interior of my country.

Here I should like to mention particularly, the physical and psychic characteristics of the Scots, who are always to be found in those parts of the world requiring the greatest powers of endurance and possessing the most rigorous of climates. It would seem that life in the mountains, the strong winds and the intense cold of Scotland all combine to prepare these men to withstand privations and to battle with the hostile forces of nature, and with life at its hardest.

In Ushuaia, the southernmost township in the world, and in the region of Tierra del Fuego, where the climate is harsh, windy and cold, there are many Scotsmen whose families settled there many years ago. All have prospered and are today owners of estates carrying large numbers of sheep, and they have impressive accounts in the bank ! Their houses are furnished with Victorian furniture ; the ornaments, china and glass all came originally from Great Britain, and I am certain arrived straight from Glasgow and Edinburgh. With a handsome fireplace, a comfortable mantelpiece just the right height for the elbow—and a good glass of Scotch in the hand—they might be back in Aberdeen or on the banks of Loch Lomond !

The traditional Scottish hospitality is carried on, in the regions of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, with the addition of barbecues, with " empanadas criollas " (a delicious minced beef pasty) and fat lamb washed down by good red wine to counteract the fat congealing in the icy weather.

The vast majority of our beef cattle—than which, I submit, with all due deference, there are none better (with the exception of Scotch beef !)—are of the Shorthorn and Aberdeen-Angus breed, of which there are many millions ; and not only did they all originate in Scotland, but the herds are perpetually renewed and maintained by the introduction of new blood through the importation of several hundreds of pedigree bulls bought in Perth every year. All over the Province of Buenos Aires and the other cattle-rearing provinces, you will find, to this day, that the chief herdsman—the one who leads out the first prize winning animals at our great Palermo Cattle Show—is more than likely to be a Scot.

The judges at the Palermo Show are usually experts from Scotland, because of their knowledge and understanding of the quality of the cattle and their native spirit of impartiality and fairness which makes them excellent judges.

And again, it was the hardy pioneering Scots who, well over one hundred years ago, sailed to Bahia Blanca with their flocks of sheep and drove them on the hoof down to Patagonia, so laying the foundation of what has now developed into a sheep-breeding industry comparable to that of Australia and New Zealand. Today the names Patterson, Fraser, Macdonald, Scott and McGeorge, to mention only a few, are household words all over Patagonia.

I know a great Ambassador at large, going about the world vaunting the name of Scotland—to the Eskimos at the North Pole down to the explorers of the Antartic, passing on the way through every tropical and sub-tropical region ; an Ambassador accredited to the entire world ; completely efficient, competent, discreetly silent but with the gift of loosening tongues. I refer to the whisky of Scotland, which makes such grand propaganda, just as the Scots themselves do for their country.

When the proposer of this toast mentioned that I had been known to use certain obscure Scotticisms he must have had in mind the elderly lady of your community who lived many years in the hills of Cordoba, and who once told me that I was a " fashious fumart."

I am afraid, however, that my knowledge of the doric is too limited for me to try to tell you a story in your own language. I do, however, know Scotch stories which can be told in English. Perhaps they are not Scotch stories at all, but English stories about the Scots.

One is—that it is well-known in international shipping circles, that when you see a ship approaching or leaving land with no sea-gulls following her, then you will know that her port of registration is Aberdeen. (Laughter.)

The other is about the origin of the bagpipes: The Highland shepherds got mutton from the sheep's flesh, raiment from its wool, haggis from its liver, heart and kidneys, and, finding no profitable use for its bladder, invented the bagpipes. (Laughter.)

Maybe I could think of other stories bearing upon your prudence in the management of your personal budgets, but I am pleased to say on my own behalf and I am sure in this I shall be supported by all your other guests, that your hospitality to us this evening only confirms what we had already suspected, that all these stories we hear about you are, like the bagpipes, home-made!

On behalf of all the guests, Mr President, I thank you and your fellow members, adding, if I may, a personal wish of my own : that the old friendship between Scotland and Argentina be expressed in the words of the song :

Should old acquaintance be forgot ?
. . . . . .
We'll take a cup of kindness yet,
For Auld Lang Syne. (Applause.)

A new member, Mr John Johnston was welcomed by the President.

With great acceptance to the members, Mr D. McConnachie sang the following : " Scotland Yet," " Bonnie Mary of Argyll," " Hail Caledonia " and " Bonnie Strathyre." He was accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie in his usual expert manner.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., played the following selections : " The Drunken Piper," " Balmoral Castle," " The High Road to Linton " and " The Green Hills of Tyrol." " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended another inspiring programme.

Mr. R. A. McWilliam, the President, took the chair at the monthly meetings on 21st January, 1960.

At the Little Dinner he gave the loyal toasts and then called upon Sir William Duthie, O.B.E., M.P., to give a Sentiment on Robert Burns.

The Immortal Memory.

Sir William said :

Tonight we celebrate the 201st anniversary of the birth of our National Poet, Robert Burns, and I very much appreciate the honour in being invited to this Society to propose " The Immortal Memory."

I have been a life-long devotee of Burns and during the course of my reading I have come to the conclusion that it is true to say that everything that fact can declare or fantasy suggest has been said or written about Burns. I can only put before you some thoughts about the poet as seen through my own eyes.

Burns's renown is world wide ; he is esteemed the world over and only last year the Russians issued a postage stamp in his honour—a thing our own Postmaster could not bring himself to do.

He was a great lyric poet—the arch enemy of cant and hypocrisy. " Holy Willie's Prayer " has gone through the world like a purifying fire.

When we think of his lowly background and consider the tremendous spread of Burns' Societies throughout the earth, the position to which he has been raised among Scots ; the so-called Burns worship, true or affected ; when we consider how the knowledge of his poems and songs has spread universally, we are bound to ask " How did it all come about ? "

In the main Burns was not well served by his early biographers. While in a few cases we find over lavish adulation, for the most part we have false charges against his morals, his ineptitude as a farmer and so on.

It is only when we come later down in time that we get the better informed views of the man and his works in such treatise as *Some Aspects of Robert Burns*, by Stevenson and of recent years *Robert Burns*, by Dr David Daiches. Such a book as *There Was a Lad*, by Hilton Brown added much to the critical study of the poet. The Barke series of Burns books are unforgivable and depict Burns as a homicidal maniac.

To appreciate Burns, the man, one must bear in mind the world into which he was born on 25th January, 1759, and in which he lived—a loose, bawdy age ; his parents the poorest of the poor in a poverty stricken Scotland. Nevertheless we saw in that age the beginnings of an upsurge against social conditions in Britain and Europe. In Scotland indentured labour lived in a state of practical slavery. During that period were witnessed the American Revolution and the earlier and more violent phases of the French Revolution. Yet that age produced a crop of extraordinary men—contemporary Scots like Thomas Telford, Henry Raeburn and Hugh Miller, all of them poor.

The Burns epic is a series of miracles, and bearing in mind the conditions I have depicted, Burns's parents were miracle No. 1. His father hailed from Glenbervie in Kincardine and was described by Stevenson as " chill, backward and austere with his family ; a true son of the north and fanatically Calvinistic in religion and at heart loving and devoted to his family." At times he seemed to have a weakness for litigation. His mother, Agnes Brown, was described as " a very sagacious woman without appearance of forwardness or awkwardness of manner." She was an Ayrshire woman. Outwardly they were a typical Scottish crofter couple of the period—industrious, God-fearing, self-sacrificing and independent but pitiably poor. The poem " The Cotter's Saturday Night " vividly describes the simple conditions in which these people lived and yet remained contented.

Yet the miracle shines out, that in an age of illiteracy William Burness, as the name was, had somehow learned to read and write and, moreover, determined that his family should have all the education he could obtain for them. He accumulated such good books as his poor means allowed.

Miracle No. 2 is probably the early education of Burns himself. Considering the extent of illiteracy even today, and comparing conditions, the wonder is that Burns was educated at all and it must be remembered his orthodox schooling extended over a period of months only. John Murdoch, a young teacher and student of languages, was the tutor and many of the facets of this episode are described by Gilbert, Robert's brother.

As Burns grew, his remarkable gifts became apparent and were an enigma to his parents, his father foretelling that Robert's future would be remarkable.

The grinding toil of his boyhood was uppermost and he was the principal labourer on his father's farm at Mount Oliphant when only 13 and, even then, apparently doing the work of more than one man. As a young man he liked to appear to advantage in the scanty periods of off duty and he himself owns that even at an early age he was panting after distinction. He was a good-looking lad and caught the eyes of the lassies. Nevertheless, even with fascinating conversational powers, it is remarkable that his genius flourished in such conditions.

His first poem was written to a young girl named Nellie Kilpatrick, who was his partner in the harvest field—they were both 15 at the time. The poem was notable for its astonishing promise.

" She dresses aye sae clean and neat,
Baith decent and genteel,
And then there's something in her gait
Gars ony dress look weel.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May lightly touch the heart,
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart."

Contemporary English poetry at that time was stiff, lame, feeble and over polished. Dryden, Pope, Shenstone are examples with Blake, the visionary as the exception. Blake was the visionary and Burns the poet of nature.

What was Burns like as a man ? He was big and burly and of strong build. Walter Scott, who, as a boy saw Burns in Edinburgh said, " I have never seen such another eye in a human head though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time." This view of Burns is totally unlike the impression one gets from his portraits. His love affairs were many and accompanied with indiscretions but his honesty was apparent and he always owned up to his failings.

The astonishing thing is this ploughman's great and miraculous mastery of words. His soul was bursting out from the poverty stricken prison of his material life. He wrote because he had to. He hated cant, hypocrisy and humbug and his devastating onslaughts against them are revealed in his early poems. He attacked the tyranny of the established church and struck out against it and those who sat in judgment as witnessed in the ordeals in session. Such cutty-stool appearances, or the threat of them, were such that suicides of young girls and young men were not uncommon. " Holy Willie's Prayer," " Address to the Unco Guid " and so on are examples of his onslaught against these malpractices.

I count Burns great on four points :

He was a brilliant conversationalist and speaker.
He was a writer of entertaining prose as well as of poem and song.
He was a prophet as all great poets are.
But it is as a poet we know him best.

Some of my favourite poems are the letters in verse—those epistles to many friends—to Davie, to Lapraik and so on. The poem " Tam O' Shanter," his masterpiece, was written in one day ; " The Cotter's Saturday Night," can be looked upon as a great tribute to his parents.

" From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs." Such songs as " To Mary in Heaven "; on the one hand, and " Scots Wha Hae' " on the other, are brightlights of his writing.

Of course, his love songs are unchallenged and unchallengable in any language. Many songs he renewed, re-wrote and improved out of all knowledge. " My Love is like a Red, Red Rose," " Ae Fond Kiss " ; " The Lea Rig " and " O' a' the Airts," are among the finest love songs ever written. And then the love which lasts through life is so finely depicted in " John Anderson, my Jo."

Sorrow ; remorse ; friendship ; invective ; conviviality ; are all touched upon in other works and the simple things of nature as the mouse and the louse and even the daisy, are material for his pen.

He was taken up by Edinburgh Society and lionised as a nine days' wonder, then completely dropped. But in that heyday, the adulation of the rich never turned his head. He never turned his back on friends of olden days. His failure as a farmer was inevitable—an impoverished soil and worse seed. There was no Ministry of Agriculture in those days to dole out subsidies and no Agriculture Committees to advise.

For the sake o' weans and wife he was driven to take up the more secure job of exciseman and so became a civil servant ! In this arduous occupation, which required long days on horseback, he finished his days.

Why do we honour him today and join together tonight in homage ? This ploughman performed a task of the greatest service to his country. He fixed the Scottish doric as Scotland's language and made it our heritage. He made that language the beautiful vehicle for great and glorious thought. Since the Union of 1707 the Scottish doric had been draining away through English influences but Burns flung a veritable dam across that sweeping torrent, hallowed Scotland and the Scots tongue and exalted our race.

By his thirty-fifth year he had passed his peak and physical degeneration was rapid. At 37 he died in poverty, neglected. The cause of death was heart failure brought on through malnutrition and exposure during his growing years. As he lay dying he said to Jean, " They dinna think much o' me noo, they'll think mair o' me a hunner years after I'm awa'." He wrote his own epitaph :

" Who made the heart, 'tis he alone
Decidedly can try us ;
He knows each chord, its various tone,
Each spring its various bias.
Then at the balance let's be mute
We never can adjust it :
What's done we partly may compute
But know not what's resisted."

Today he is honoured not merely as a Scottish Bard, but ranks with Homer and Shakespeare and I maintain, for Divine inspiration with Isaiah and David, the Psalmist. His star has now risen clear of the mists and miasmas of his human frailties and while freedom and free men have their being on this earth that star shall shine with ever growing radiance as it climbs into the boundless vault of time. (Loud applause.)

The Sentiment was listened to with deep appreciation and the President expressed to Sir William the warm thanks of the members.

Our Guests.

Lt.-Col. F. W. McGuinness, T.D., in giving the toast of " Our Guests," said :

I am sure no one could fail to be gratified at being asked to propose this important toast before such a distinguished company, but I must admit to being more than ordinarily gratified at being asked by Brother Caledonian Miller, our efficient and omniscient secretary, because as he has heard me tackle such an assignment in another setting, it is rather similar to a widower's re-marriage—a triumph of hope over experience.

On this occasion to which I refer, while I was, as it were, standing in the wings, the Chairman—one of those who fancy themselves in the role of compere—thought fit to put the question—without waiting for the answer—" What is the difference between a ' visitor ' and a ' guest ' ? " I was able to illustrate this point by saying that during the war I had an invitation to spend a few hours at Barlinnie (the well-known military prison) and I said that had I gone it would have been as a " visitor " and not, I am happy to think, as a " guest." (Laughter.)

A number here this evening will recall a very charming reply to a similar toast in which the speaker said that it was an extremely easy one to propose because if the proposer ran out of guests he could always invent additional ones and no one would be any the wiser. Thus I might say, " Then we have with us Dr Tamson, of Boat of Garten, Professor of Conchology." (Laughter.) He was, of course, *replying* : I am *proposing* : but in my case in the time at my disposal I am in no danger of running out of names because, as usual, we have a large number of guests, many of whom are distinguished in their walks of life—so many that I could make this part of my speech sound like today's " Top People's " obituary column.

Medicine is represented by Dr Bane—*NOT*, as might be thought, the original physician of " Happy Families " but the originator, in this country, of the Emergency Medical Service.

The Building Society Movement which—I quote from the Directors' Report of a Building Society with Head Office not a hundred miles from my house—" has recently been attracting considerable public notice "—is represented in the distinguished person of Mr Askew : and I am particularly glad to see Mr Orr, a senior Past-President of the Harrow and District Caledonian Society.

We cordially welcome these and all our guests to tonight's Little Dinner ; and we hope they are enjoying themselves as much as we enjoy their company.

I know you would all like me to try to express our thanks for and our appreciation of the Sentiment given to us by Sir William Duthie. It is—whatever the high-brows may say—positively refreshing to have an annual party with Robert Burns, and very agreeably did Sir William guide our thoughts and collect our memories. Sir William is no stranger to our meetings. In 1954 he delivered a Sentiment on " The Fisher Folk of the North-East." He also, a couple of years ago, responded to a similar toast to the one to which I am now leading. Sir William can certainly look back on a remarkable career—born in Banffshire, started in Banking and continued in that line in Canada. He returned at the King's expense and fought in World War I with the Gordons, after which he apparently became an expert on—of all things—Bread—a knowledge which as a high official of U.N.R.R.A. he used to the great benefit of the people of the Balkans. It may be of no significance, but I think I should call the attention of our Very Reverend Past-President to Sir William's dual expertise unique (for 2,000 years, possible) in " loaves and fishes." As well as continuing to serve his Banffshire constituent, he now lives

on a farm in South-West England and finds time for golf, sailing and archæology. We do thank him for an outstanding and particularly enjoyable Sentiment.

You will have seen that this toast is to be replied to by Mr Ballantyne, General Manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland. I regret to say, however, that this is not the whole truth. Unless I have been incorrectly informed, Mr Ballantyne is a pluralist : he is Cashier as well as General Manager of the Royal Bank. No wonder there is unemployment in Scotland ! It is well-known that the Scots taught the English banking and in this room, at least, I feel I shall not be challenged when I say they still do, and Mr Ballantyne sits on the Boards of two associated English banks—greatly to their advantage, we can be sure.

My agents in Edinburgh tell me that he is prominently associated with youth clubs in that city, an activity of the very greatest importance to the community. On the other hand, I believe he supports the Hibernians : well, I gather there is unlikely to be much rejoicing in the Ballantyne household on that account this season. I understand that Mr Ballantyne cancelled an important engagement in Glasgow to be here this evening, so we are exceptionally gratified to have him with us, and look forward to hearing him.

The spirit of Robert Burns is abroad tonight. Like most of us he worked by day and believed in the virtue of a social glass o' strunt—in the company of his friends—when work is done. So, whether it be " strunt," bottled sunshine (wine) or water of life, I leave it to the individual preference. (Applause.)

In responding to the toast, Mr W. R. Ballantyne, after expressing his thanks for the kindness and hospitality, typical of all Scots, continued :

Scotsmen all over the world are tremendously proud of their heritage and although many of them go forth into other lands to pursue their daily callings, they still retain a great love of their motherland. This feeling of national pride is not confined to those who were born in Scotland. It is sometimes found in equally strong measure in those who have never been near Scotland but who can trace their lineage back, no matter how far back it may be, to some ancestor who was a native of Scotland.

One recent classic example of this was Mr Hughston McBain, who rose to be head of the Marshall Field organisation in Chicago. His family has had no definite contact with Scotland since his forebear left the country in the time of the Highland Clearances after Culloden, except perhaps that some members of this family may have paid a visit to Scotland. And yet, Mr McBain put himself to years and years of effort and expense to trace his family tree right back to those days and, having satisfied the Lord Lyon King of Arms as to his title, has been declared Chief of the Clan McBain. He has bought himself a plot of land in the McBain country and plans to build a house there sometime. Also, despite the fact that he is not the right size or shape, he has acquired a kilt which he sports at Scottish Gatherings and probably at other times as well. He is President of the St Andrew's Society of Chicago.

You see what a pride it is to have Scottish blood in your veins. There was the English boy at Cambridge who was, one year, invited to spend Christmas at the home of his Scottish friend. Before going north he learned from his parents that his grandmother on his mother's side had come from Scotland and, when he got to Scotland, he told his friend's mother about this, adding proudly that he had some Scottish blood in his veins. She just looked at him and said, " You have some Scottish blood in your veins have you ? "

" Well," she went on, " let me tell you that it won't prevent you from sinning but it will prevent you from enjoying it." (Laughter.) Speaking from experience I would add that what she said is not, of course, wholly correct.

And now, Mr McGuinness, I must thank you for the very kind things you said about me. I would also like to pay tribute to the excellent speech you made in your proposal of the toast to the Guests. You referred to my being both " Cashier " and " General Manager " of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Perhaps I should say something about this title of mine. Until 1920 when an Act of Parliament was passed to give power to the Directors of the Royal Bank of Scotland to describe their chief executive as " Cashier and General Manager," he was known as " The Cashier." This is something that goes away back into history, until, to be precise, 1727 when the Royal Bank of Scotland was incorporated. In those days, the most important official in the Bank was the chap who looked after the Money and Bills—" The Cashier " and this was the title which the chief officer retained even after he had nothing to do with the day to day handling of the cash. But he still remained responsible—as I do today—for the Bank's cash reserves and one of my duties is to check weekly the cash reserves which are under the delegated control of an officer called " The Cash Keeper," for he cannot be called " The Cashier," I am " the Cashier." I sometimes—and I am the first to do it—delegate the checking of the cash to my Assistant General Manager in Edinburgh, but the delegation goes no further down than that. It is not a big job, in these days it has become a matter of checking bundles and not the individual notes, etc., but the Directors of the Bank like to retain some of these old traditions and although the Act of 1920 gave them power to drop the term " Cashier " from the title they have not done so. More generally I am known simply as " General Manager."

Similarly in the Bank of Scotland, the chief executive there is known as "The Treasurer " and it was not until very recently, until after the present occupant of the office had experienced difficulty on an American tour in making the Americans understand his status, that the description " General Manager " was added to his title.

I found that Bankers in the United States were often puzzled at my description but it is not half as puzzling as some of the American Banking descriptions. For instance, they have " Presidents," numerous " Vice-Presidents " of various kinds and then " Assistant Cashiers " or " Assistant Treasurers," but no " Cashiers " or " Treasurers." To my logical way of thinking it always seems strange that you can have an assistant without a principal.

As I have come to you from the North, perhaps I should tell you something of the present state of the Scottish economy. Like the curate's egg it is good in parts, but generally speaking, Scotland is not at the moment enjoying the same measure of prosperity as other parts of the country. This is due to the structure of its economy with its tremendous dependence on the heavy industries. A great deal has been done to diversify the economy by getting concerns in the lighter side of industry and in the newer industries in the electrical and electronics field, to set up plants in Scotland and efforts, renewed and intensified, are still going on in order to achieve a more balanced industrial pattern. But it is hard and often unrewarding work and tonight I would just say, on behalf of Scotland, that if ever the opportunity should occur whereby you can do anything to further the interests of the country in this or any other direction, it would be most greatly appreciated by your colleagues at home.

Scotland is proud of the contribution which she makes to the overseas earnings of the Kingdom. It is substantial and, looming large in this regard is our whisky, the demand for which throughout the world has grown tremendously. I see in tonight's newspapers that the exports of whisky reached

a new record figure in 1959, with increased supplies going to the U.S.A. and we need have no feelings of jealousy about this for supplies to the Home Market are now unlimited and we can, subject to the availability of cash, have all we want. (Applause.)

The President welcomed new members Mr Donald Fraser and Mr Andrew Irving.

On this occasion the musical programme was provided by Mr J. MacKay Bridges, who was accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie. The former sang " The Lass o' Ballochmyle," " Ae Fond Kiss," " Afton Water " and " My Love is like a Red, Red, Rose."

As his selections, Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., played " Kenmure's on and Awa'," " Hieland Whisky," " Ca' the Yowes " and " Comin thro. the Rye." " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended the programme.

On Thursday, 18th February, 1960, the usual business meetings were held at the Rembrandt Hotel, the President in the chair.

At the Little Dinner which followed, the President introduced Mr Laurence J. Menzies, who, he explained, pronounced his name correctly and although rather contaminated with banking, was now in a higher sphere as a Civil Servant !

Mr Menzies, who was received with applause, had selected as his subject :

" EXPORTS—THE GOVERNMENT IN BUSINESS."

He said :

Gentlemen, despite that somewhat dighty introduction I would like to say at the outset that it is no empty phrase when I say that I am honoured and flattered to be asked to give the Sentiment this evening. As your President has mentioned, I am now attached to the public service and public service has a reputation for being nearly as silent as the navy, and a shade more cagey. Moreover, I feel handicapped for personal reasons. Years ago when arrangements were being made for my entry into the world there was a slight element of mismanagement and when that momentous event occurred it was on the wrong side of the border. (Laughter.) But while I feel a little bit handicapped, the management have been extremely kind and they made it clear to me that providing I don't put a foot wrong or say the wrong thing I would be welcome as a foreign visitor. (Laughter.)

Your President has been absolutely meticulous in indoctrinating me into the responsibility of my task this evening, and has made it abundantly clear in his own unmistakeable way, that this is no light-hearted task and that a sober and earnest attitude is essential. He has asked me to talk to you tonight about the day-to-day role in which Providence has cast me. You will see from your menu that I have taken for my subject tonight, " Exports—the

Government in Business." I have done this deliberately with some slight sense of provocation, indeed challenge. Many of you here, maybe even the bankers, will hold the view that government and business is in effect a contradiction in terms. Maybe you may have some justification for that opinion. A lot of you bankers here will have some knowledge of what my department does and what it is trying to do. Some of you may be in the fortunate position of never having heard of our existence. However, it is my chance tonight to give you an outline of some of the aspects of my job.

Your President has mentioned that although I am in charge of a Government Department, the Export Credits Guarantee Department, I am not by birth, or training a civil servant. I was at one stage, an honest banker, but for my sins I now find myself in charge of a Government Department—a Government Department, perhaps not quite in the normal run of Government Departments in that we do real business. We sell a product and we get paid in real money which makes us business people. We sell an insurance service of a kind which no part of the normal commercial insurance market undertakes: in short, we have a monoply, not by design but merely because some of the risks we carry are sufficiently wide to prevent there being any other starters in this game. That roughly is our job in life.

By definition, almost by statute, our purpose is to encourage United Kingdom exports. This is part of the legacy of the wartime cry of " Export or Die." Well, we are doing our best to see that you and other people don't suffer from such an early demise. We play our part by insuring the risks which exporters in this country have to bear when they sell goods and services abroad. These risks can be segregated into two parcels—firstly, the ordinary risks, non-payment by a buyer because of his credit worthiness, because he won't, or can't pay—that's easy; then the second part of the parcel, the risks which an exporter takes on his shoulders, of political developments in the buying country or balance of payments difficulties in the buying country. These are risks which are wide and unpredictable and, as I understand, they are actuarially unassessible; consequently the only people ready to underwrite that type of risk is Government. That is why we exist. The ultimate guarantors of such losses as we may suffer are the long-suffering taxpayers.

The second big difference to which I would like to draw your attention is another which I know will appeal to you all, our attitude towards profit and loss. Now I am sure almost everybody here who is in banking or equally honest occupations will concede that in most activities where earning your living is concerned, the profit motive is in the forefront, but not so with Export Credits Guarantee Department. We are charged with the task of operating on a no-profit and no-loss basis. I'll give you time to recover your breath from that impressive statement, but it is true, and believe me, it is immeasurably more difficult to achieve a no-profit and no-loss than to strive for a profit, or indeed suffer a loss. The reason for this objective is not entirely altruistic. If in our operations we make a profit, exporters in this country accuse us of charging too much for our services. On the other hand if we make a loss the Government is accused of subsidising exports which, as a matter of policy, they have pledged themselves not to do. So there out task is to walk along a very narrow tight-rope, and extremely difficult it is. Nevertheless, over the years we have made some progress and achieved some success in this direction.

I wouldn't bore you with statistics, but I'll give you two figures. Over the last thirty years we have insured exports totalling six thousand million pounds, and we have made a surplus representing something like one-third of 1 per cent. on our turnover. Now all you business gentlemen here, commission men, will perceive that in no sense can that be called profiteering or soaking the exporter.

I would like to turn now to the third definition which illustrates I think

the third difference between us and the commercial market—which illustrates how the business relationships take on a different tinge where Government is concerned. I am told tonight that there are eighteen bankers here ; that I think is excluding the representatives of the Central Bank. I'm continuing to hope that they'll keep quiet. Most of you bankers will agree that your policy when you receive an unattractive proposition from one of your customers, is to refuse to entertain the business and you have the knowledge that you are not publicly answerable for that decision. Not so E.C.G.D. Quite often our clients fail to get a deal from us which they would like us to do on the terms which they would like to do it and in those circumstances they are enabled, and do, resort to the Press, their Members of Parliament, Ministers of the Crown or the lot—that is the difference. Now we do not complain about this in principle, this is a mark of democracy. This is one of the crosses we have to bear. After all the public servants are the servants of taxpayers and it is the taxpayers' money that we are playing about with, so that really one cannot complain about that situation : all one can say is that it wastes an awful lot of time.

Well, now, these are the three differences between ourselves as a Government institution and commercial insurance market, and I think they illustrate something of what I'm trying to imply by choosing the title " Government in business."

Now I would just like to say a word or two of how we obtain our business. Although our headquarters are in the City of London we do something like two-thirds of our work through the agency of our regional offices which are situated in the large provincial cities (fourteen of them) including, I may say, two in Scotland, Glasgow and Edinburgh. In Scotland we do a lot of valuable business ; at a guess I think we've got something like £50 million worth of Scottish business on our books at the moment. But I regret to say that we do not insure the two main exports in Scotland (laughter), that is whisky and Scotsmen, neither of which is sold on credit. (Laughter.) Well, now, it goes without saying that the more business we can do over as wide a field as possible the better our book becomes, and this question of spread is a very significant word in our organisation. I'm sure any of you here who have any connection with the insurance world will know what I mean.

We do not take the bad risks entirely because we've been long enough in existence to know that there is a very short and rapid way to Carey Street—so we insist on getting some of the good business too. If by doing our business in a sound and prudent way, we achieve a surplus at the end of the year, then here is another difference. We do not, like generous company directors declare a dividend to their long-suffering shareholders ; we plough in the profits into the business for the benefit of our exporters by reducing the premium. Now I have outlined in a very superficial way what we stand for, and how we go about it, but I think I would like to make one or two comments of a personal nature. I wouldn't like you to think that because I was an honest banker once, and am now attached to the public service that I find everything in the public service laughable.

Since I have been in E.C.G.D., which is an entirely new world to me, I think I have learned quite a lot. I have learned more about public service than I ever knew before, and I have learned one thing which has impressed me a lot—how difficult it is for civil servants to satisfy their masters. We in E.C.G.D. are specially vulnerable, we find ourselves on many occasions the focal point of pressures exerted by the Government, by industry, by banking, by the press, and by Tom, Dick and Harry. Now these pressures quite often are exerted in five different directions. The result of that is that some of those exertionary pressures must remain unsatisfied. It is inevitable but on every occasion the wretched Government Department, in our case E.C.G.D., is the soft spot. And having regard to the criticism to which civil servants are

subjected, I would like to say that many of my colleagues in E.C.G.D. are really of the highest calibre. They do difficult and responsible jobs with ability, and with integrity, and don't get very much for it. I think the taxpayer gets very good value from the civil servants—I as an outsider am very proud of my colleagues.

I hope I have convinced you that there is merit in the public service, and that in E.C.G.D. we render a service beneficial to the business community and to the nation. (Applause.)

The President thanked Mr Menzies for his Sentiment and he suggested that he had made a good case for the downtrodden civil servant. The members were also able to have a more thorough understanding of the excellent work done by the Export Credits Guarantee Department.

Toast of the Guests.

In submitting the toast of the guests, Mr William Millar made the following observations :

Mr Menzies has confessed that despite his Scottish ancestry and good Scottish name, he was born in England, which has stimulated a train of thought in my mind as it was only by a narrow margin that I escaped a similar fate. To illustrate this I must take you back in time—a fairly long period of time, in fact to the 18th December, 1904—55 years and 3 months ago, when I first saw light of day. The story was told to me by my mother when I was old enough to know the facts of life. I should think I was about seven at the time as I remember I was at a co-educational school and was characterised as a " Mixed Infant "—very mixed ! (Laughter.)

It appears that shortly before my birth my mother was in Cumberland, and, as they say in the Good Book, she " felt her time was nigh." What did she do ? Well, shortly before, a Dumfriesshire blacksmith, called Kirkpatrick McMillan, had invented the bicycle and my mother was one of the early cyclists in the County. In her hour of decision, therefore, she mounted her bicycle, cycled to Hadrian's Wall, lifted the bicycle over the wall, climbed over after it, mounted on the other side and ultimately reached Ecclefechan. (Laughter.) Here I am, therefore, due to her foresight and fortitude, as a native of Dumfriesshire, a Doon Hamer and an aborigine from Ecclefechan, and, subject to confirmation by the Treasurer, a fully paid up member of the Caledonian Society, at any rate for the current year, to propose the toast of " The Guests " tonight.

I have noticed over a fair period of years in attending dinners, banquets and other public functions where speeches are in vogue, that a common thread seems to run through the opening remarks of so many orators. They start off by stressing their great unworthiness to propose the important toast which has been entrusted to them. They go on to say how much better every other member of the Society would have done it and how surprised they were when the Secretary rang them up and asked them to take on the job. Well, this is a lot of nonsense. First of all, they think they can handle the toast better than anyone else and the only element of surprise so far as they are concerned is that the Secretary did not recognise their worth and potentialities many years before. I want to tell the guests that I am not a man like that at all.

They are very fortunate in having me to propose their health tonight because it is only by a turn of the wheel—perhaps a bicycle wheel—that my

position might have been reversed and that I might have been a guest instead of one of your hosts. That fact apparently is apposite in the case of Mr Menzies and it would also have applied to Mr David Alexander who was to respond, as while he is General Manager of a Scottish bank, he was born in Cumberland. It may be that his mother was not quite so agile as mine or perhaps she was not able to afford a bicycle ! (Laughter.)

The Secretary has given me a list of the guests and I shall have to put my spectacles on to read it. Talking about spectacles and diminishing eyesight, have you heard the story of the Englishman who was keen to improve his powers of French conversation. He attended a study circle and ultimately got to the stage where he was anxious to show his prowess. The opportunity came when he found himself at a dinner sitting next to a Frenchmen, but like all of us with a very imperfect command of a foreign language, he hesitated to plunge in. His chance came with the cheese. A fly landed on it. This was his big moment and he could contain himself no longer. Turning to the Frenchman, he said, " Monsieur, regardez le mouche ! " whereupon the horrified Frenchman, raising his hands to Heaven, replied—" Mais, non, Monsieur—la mouche." Adjusting his spectacles and peering carefully, the Englishman said—" You have jolly good eyesight, haven't you ? " (Loud laughter.)

From the sex life of flies, we come to the guests. These are headed by Sir Robert Mayer, founder of the internationally famous children's concerts and choir which bear his name. I want to confess to Sir Robert that I looked in *Who's Who* to find out his age and either he has cheated or there is a misprint in the entry. If I am wrong in this, we can only ascribe his perennial youth to his life-long interest in young people and music, and we are delighted to have him at our table.

Then we come to the Rev. L. O. Williams, Minister of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Goodmayes. Mr Williams has been here before and I hope he will recognise the tact of the Caledonian Society in not inviting any Bishops on this occasion. In return for the hospitality he has enjoyed, I should like him to do something for us. If the Church of Scotland ever agree to Bishops in Presbytery, we shall certainly nominate Dr Scott as the first Archbishop and we shall expect Mr Williams to support the nomination.

Then we have Mr A. T. Young, Past-President of the Ilford Scottish Association.

And now I read to you from the Secretary's list and I can hear the scorn in his voice as he dictates to his Secretary—" Amongst our guests we have the usual bevy of Bankers." I cannot understand this antipathy towards the profession to which both your President and I belong, but it is there ! Mr Menzies has told you, and I quote his words—" I understand there are 18 bankers here tonight, or 19 if my old friend Mr Hilton S. Clarke, Principal of the Discount Office of the Bank of England, insists on being included amongst the honest bankers." We are a large component of the Caledonian Society and whenever a new banker is introduced, there is an undercurrent—a growl—not very serious, I can assure you—but audible. Our parent body, the Royal Scottish Corporation, goes even further, as in spite of their name and their character, they do their banking business with one of the " Big Five ! "

Now let me tell the company that there are certain solid advantages in having a Scottish banking connection. You may have heard the story of the man who endeavoured to join a Scottish Society. " Was he Scottish ? " " No." " Had he any Scottish ancestors ? " " No." " Had he any property in Scotland ? " " No, but he had a pair of trousers being cleaned by Pullars of Perth." That was not good enough as their bankers are owned by one of the English " Big Five." However, when he thought deeply he remembered that his wife's account was with the National Commercial Bank of Scotland, and he was accepted without further questioning ! (Laughter.)

Now we come to Mr Menzies, who has spoken to us this evening. His

publicity man must have been at work as his picture was in *The Times* and the *Financial Times* this morning in a business connection. His pictorial companion was a gentleman from Malaya—the Malayan was the one with the 'at on. We were delighted to know that Mr Menzies pronounces his name the correct way—the Scottish way, and if any of the guests have fallen from grace in this respect, I would ask that they should not be invited again until they have undergone an educational test and a process of purification. If we are not careful we shall have members of the Society whose name is Sinclair calling themselves St Clair, and those with surname of Clark putting an " e " on the end of it. In introducing Mr Menzies the President used the word " meaty." I cannot quite recall in what context but if he was referring (which I very much doubt) to a certain fulness of figure, then I would like to remind Mr Menzies of the saying that " wisdom increases with girth."

The natural habitat of the Clan Menzies is Perthshire, although when I saw the President earlier in the week, he was endeavouring to insert the claims of Banffshire, and I should like the members to know that I think our President at the last two meetings has been putting on airs on behalf of his native County ! You will remember that at the last gathering he brought with him an old friend Sir William Duthie, M.P. for Banffshire, who proposed the " Immortal Memory " in such grand style, but before the evening was out Mr McWilliam and Sir William had laid certain claims to Robbie Burns on behalf of their native counties. If my information is correct—and I am sure Sir John Tait will support me in this—Burns spent 29 years of his life in Sir John's native Ayrshire and 8 years in my native Dumfriesshire with perhaps a weekend in Banffshire or Morayshire. However, we do not want to be mean about it and we are quite prepared to concede some of his vices to Banffshire and retain his virtues for the two southern counties in the proportion of 29 to 8. (Laughter.)

Mr Menzies was formerly on the staff of the Bank of England, but in a moment of altruism he decided to go to work. I believe he is seconded to the Export Credits Guarantee Department and if he was looking for a tough assignment, then he certainly found one. This might be the opportunity to remind Mr Menzies and Mr Hilton Clarke (with an " e ") that the Bank of England was founded by a Dumfriesshire Scot called William Paterson. On the other hand, one of the promoters of the Bank of Scotland was an Englishman named John Holland. The important thing to remember from these comings and goings across the Border, it seems to me, is that it makes nonsense of the American claim to have invented " Lend Lease."

I should like to be serious for a moment and to pay tribute on behalf of the banks to Mr Menzies for the care and consideration he gives to all the difficult problems we put up to him from time to time, and to assure him that we appreciate his difficulties as I know he understands ours. I gather from his remarks that one of his few consolations is that one of Scotland's greatest exports causes him no trouble—manpower.

Finally, we come to Sir John Tait, who kindly consented to reply for the Guests when Mr Alexander unfortunately had to cancel his arrangements for coming south. Sir John is a native of Girvan and spent his formative business years in the National Bank of Scotland in their local office. It is hardly up to me to say whether it is on account of that, or despite it, that he has made his way so successfully in life, but at any rate, he left their service at an early age for wider fields of endeavour. He has been here before. I do not need to recount his many accomplishments to you but perhaps I might remind you that he is a Director of Steel Brothers, Deputy Chairman of the Chartered Bank and a member of the Port of London Authority.

It would be gilding the lily to say that Sir John volunteered to speak. He fell for the persuasions of Brother Caledonian Dowie. He is not the first man to do that. I should like to know why, in view of his antecedents, his record,

his progress through life and his present position, his pioneering days in the Empire and his knowledge of the world in general, that he has not appeared on our Toast List before to deliver the principal oration called " The Sentiment." While we are grateful to Sir John for responding for the guests, I should prefer to regard his performance tonight as a compromise speech leading to a Sentiment at some later date. I am a great believer in compromise and learned the value of it early in life when I was a member of Council of a Golf Club. I did not get there, I may say, on my golfing prowess. There was a discussion in the Council meeting as to whether women should be allowed to wear trousers in the precincts of the Golf Club. The discussion was rapidly getting nowhere and in an endeavour to finalise it, I suggested a compromise. That was that they should be allowed to wear trousers on the course but should take them off when they came into the Clubhouse. You will be surprised how much support I got for the idea ! I told you earlier that I had had to resort to spectacles. These have nothing to do with fly-sexing but are of more use on the golf course where nowadays it is difficult to differentiate the sexes. I cannot say that the spectacles have solved the problem—perhaps it is my memory which is failing and not my eyesight. (Laughter.)

Will the President, the Vice-President and the members of the Caledonian Society of London toast the Guests with me in the words of a poet who spent 29 years of his life in Ayrshire, 8 in Dumfriesshire and a long weekend in Banffshire :

" Freenship makes us a' mair happy,
Freenship brings us a' delight.
Freenship consecrates the drappie,
Freenship brings us here tonight." (Loud applause.)

In the course of his reply to this toast, Sir John Tait said :

Mr Millar has told you I stand before you as a last minute stand-in. You have often heard the announcement over the loudspeaker before the start of a rugger match on the London Scottish ground—" Ladies and Gentlemen changes—D. W. Smith will not play—his place will be taken by Slim Johnstone," or some such name—well, tonight, it is a case of " D. Alexander will not play ; his place will be taken by J. Tait." Then continuing the analogy can you see in your minds eye the unfortunate Slim Johnstone hurrying on to the ground at the tail end of the line, struggling as he runs to tie up the shorts he has been given and which belong to big D. W. Smith. They are far too wide for him anyway, so they hang down over his knees—he is not at all in training and has just had too good a meal and too liberal a quota of liquid refreshment—hoping fervently to keep out of the mauling until at least he had acquired his second wind—and praying that his pants will stay up. That Gentlemen is the parallel.

But actually, Gentlemen, I am far from being despondent over the situation as it has developed this evening—to begin with I am very honoured to be invited at all to speak at one of the quite celebrated Caledonian Society dinners. It is no mean honour from whatever angle you look at it.

Secondly I recall, somewhat aghast, the feeling of awe and admiration in which I held the General Manager of the National Bank of Scotland sitting on his throne in far off Edinburgh, when I was a miserable apprentice in a little Branch of two men and a boy in South Ayrshire. He was a King in Babylon and I but a beggar maid. To think that I would one day deputise for the General Manager of the National Bank of Scotland was something quite out of the bounds of probability—so again, Gentlemen, no mean honour indeed. And thirdly when so eminent a representative of the Commercial Bank of Scotland as is the proposer of this Toast, should refer in his own inimical way to the Chief representative of the other half of the recent marriage

of convenience, I feel it no less than by bounden duty, since Mr Chalmers is not on his feet, to defend the National's representative against any further attacks or advances, moral or immoral, from the other side—whether on H.P. or on any other questionable take-over basis.

When I was invited to reply to the toast of the Guests I immediately rang up Mr Millar—to ask him what he proposed to say. It would, I told him, be a great help to me to know. As one might expect from so experienced and sophisticated a speaker, he replied that he had no notes and did not propose to have any notes—he did, however, mention a few names of other guests likely to be present and whom he would deal with in his Speech (note the words " deal with ") and added the admonition that I should avoid being heavy—he personally hated heavy speeches—no statistics and that sort of thing. Also that at least half of those present would be bankers—the place he said stank with bankers. Clearly this could not possibly include the high officials of the Bank of England who are present tonight—for as my banking friends well know the House or The Old Lady as you may care to call that august body is never, repeat never, in bad odour. But, he added, I had a banking background and I should feel therefore quite at home. Well, I know something of Mr Millar—he comes from the right side and the right end of Scotland—from a wee toun called Annan. As many of you know, who are not East Coasters, Annan is about the first thing you see when you wake up on the right side of the Border on the overnight train from London, if you exclude the few drenched sheep you are so sorry for, huddled on the dreary uplands around Beattock lashed with rain. Of course, I could depend on a Dumfriesshire man to play fair, Dumfriesshire being just a little bit short of Ayrshire, and I was indeed grateful to him for his advice.

However, as my friends know, bankers are a clannish crowd. They retain their acknowledged reputation for helping each other at all times and in all circumstances, at times misunderstood perhaps, but on the whole a happy dependable breed. Once a banker, always a banker, factual, broad minded, with a clear appreciation of figures in all the connotations of the term. I remember one day in the Manager's room of a branch office of the Bank of Montreal in Canada (he was a Mr Newbiggin, I think from, I suppose Dumfriesshire) there was a calendar of sorts on the Manager's desk with a picture of some shapely unnamed Diana Dors and these words—" Old Bankers never die : they just lose interest." (Laughter.)

Gentlemen, as you well know, the Scottish Societies in London are famous for their genuine hospitality to their guests—when you are invited as a guest you feel you are really wanted. No possibility of experiencing the embarrassment of guests at a certain lunch party during a warm spell when the Mother asked her little boy to say Grace. " But," the boy pleaded, " Mummy I don't know what to say." " Oh, darling, just say what you have heard me say," and the wee laddie bowed his head reverently and said, " Oh Lord, why did I invite these people on such a hot day." (Laughter.)

Some of my fellow guests are very prominent people as Mr Millar has told you—they will I know feel as honoured as I am to have been invited here tonight, and as grateful for the enjoyment we have had in your midst. On their behalf and on my own I thank you Mr Millar very much indeed for the many pleasant references to us, and you Mr President, and our respective hosts for your delightful hospitality. (Applause.)

Two new members, Mr James J. Clark and Mr A. J. Mutch were received by the President.

With great acceptance Mr Donald Fraser sang " Mary Morison," " Annie Laurie," " Of a' the Airts the Wind can

Blaw " and " Land of Heart's Desire." He was accompanied, in his usual sympathetic manner, by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., on this occasion played as his selection : " Far O'er the Sea," " Bogan Lochan," " Caber Feidh " and " Bonnie Mary."

After he had also played the Society's Strathspey, an enjoyable evening ended with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

At the Council and General Meeting, held on 17th March, 1960, at the Rembrandt Hotel South Kensington, the President, Mr R. A. McWilliam was in the chair.

The principal business at both meetings was the consideration of the report of the Sub-Committee appointed " to enquire into the shortage of members and to make recommendations thereon to the Council."

In that report it was suggested that one of the reasons for the shortage of members was that members, apparently under the impression that the number is limited to 100 did not appreciate that this number excluded Life and Council members. Although therefore the total membership amounted to 109 there were actually vacancies for 38. The report recommended that to each of the monthly dinners the Hon. Secretary, in consultation with the President, should be authorised to invite a limited number of official guests drawn from those who might be expected to be interested in the Society and to further its aims, the names of the proposed guests with their qualifications to be submitted by members to the Hon. Secretary.

After discussion the Sub-Committee's report was adopted.

At the General meeting on this date the resignation of Past-President the Very Rev. Robert F. V. Scott, D.D., was submitted consequent on his decision to return to Scotland. This resignation was accepted with deep regret and the Hon. Secretary was instructed to thank Dr Scott for his services to the Society.

At the Little Dinner, the loyal toasts having been honoured the President introduced Mr John Connell, who had agreed to deliver the Sentiment.

R.L.S.—An Edinburgh Man.

Mr. Connell, who was received with applause, said :

I looked up today the word " Sentiment " in my dictionary and I discovered why this oration of mine is described as a Sentiment. It is I see an ethic-grammatical expression of some striking or global thought or wish announced in the manner of a toast. My announcement in the manner of a toast tonight, Mr President and Caledonians, is in memory of a fellow townsman of my own, Robert Louis Stevenson. And you, Mr President, said that his name has never been commemorated in this Society; therefore, it is to me a very great pride and a very great privilege to do so.

Something like 110 years after he was born in a wee house down in Howard Place (some several streets down in the new town from where I myself was brought up), I have been asked to deliver this Sentiment here tonight on what our neighbours and cousins across the Channel call St Patrick's Day, also less than forty-eight hours before some Rugby football match (whose name I can't remember) and for which oddly enough I am flying up to Edinburgh tomorrow. (Laughter.)

To be slightly more serious. Robert Louis Stevenson was a good son of Edinburgh. His whole upbringing, ancestry, boyhood, young manhood, all of these were spent within the perimeter of what those who don't know it, because I think nowadays it is a smokeless zone, still continue to call Auld Reekie. It doesn't reek nearly so much as this goddam town does! (Laughter.) He was a rather sickly boy at the Edinburgh Academy, two years junior to my own grandfather. My grandfather, who lived to 1934, which to an old gentleman like myself doesn't seem too long ago, used to say, " Oh, yes, that boy Stevenson, we didn't think very much of him, ye know! " He was away an awful lot from class, but somehow although sickly, he managed to learn to write. One of the things I want to stress about my fellow townsman is that in all his writing he represented to a very remarkable degree, what the City of Edinburgh is, what it stands for, what it feels, what it has, what it takes unto itself, what it gives to Scotland and what, without being presumptious, it gives to the rest of the world. He belonged from birth upwards (and again I hope I'm not being presumptious) to the close-knit little society in which I myself was bred. And one of its characteristics is that it compels you, when young, to the most furious rebellion, it sears your heart with agony when you're young, it sears your heart with love and pride and affection, and deep, deep, nostalgia in middle-age.

The whole of Stevenson's life until he was about 28 was bound in by, hedged in by he would have said then, by Edinburgh. As a sickly little boy at Edinburgh Academy, he was from time to time taken to the South of France but as a slightly healthier young man he went to the Edinburgh University. He became a member of the " Speak." He could not go into his father's profession. His father, as I am sure you all remember, was Keeper of the Northern Lights, one of the most beautiful titles in all Scottish life and history. There is still, I think somewhere in Queen Street, a beautiful brass plaque, to the Keeper of the Northern Lights.

He could not succeed to that. So he was bidden to be an Advocate, but he still remained within this narrow oval of Edinburgh. He was not a very successful Advocate, as we all know. He was on the other hand a very happy young man in Edinburgh, at the end of the sixties into the seventies and indeed into the early eighties. I speak with some diffidence because I lived in Edinburgh a good deal at the age of seven or eight years younger than he, some forty or fifty years later, but I have a suspicion that in Edinburgh the young man of the upper professional middle classes, in the seventies and in the eighties was not unlike that of the twenties and the thirties, possibly a bit more Bohemian and a bit more gay. There was always in his life this enormous tension, attraction, conscience which is in the Edinburgh of the Leith Walk, in the Lothian Road, the house of Thistle Street and Rose Street. And this, I think is the secret of R.L.S. if he had a secret. It is this tension between a

respectable boy from 17 Heriot Row and the chap who " doured " the house. I think this is true of almost all Edinburgh. There you have the complete contract between utter apparent serious integrity, loyalty and respectability, and underneath some surging, pulsing evil. This is the fascination of Edinburgh, it is to some extent the fascination of Stevenson. This tension I think was released by his illness, his adventure into America, his marriage to a woman older than himself, his divorce, and then his final exile. And it is to me fascinating to realise that I would like to try to communicate to you, my fellow townsman's passion for Edinburgh in his thirties.

He died at forty-four. His passion for this City was refined, tempered and strengthened by exile; the city itself of the Pentlands, the Lammermuirs and of the whole of the surrounding countryside. I would ask you to think of his last book, the book called *Catriona*, which was the sequel to *Kidnapped*; it's not as good as "Kidnapped" by any manner of means but it is steeped in a sense of Edinburgh, of a quality that I find any time I read it. On this feeling for one's own city I offer you two poems, two very short poems of his. First to his cousin, Catharina de Mattos, who was born Catharine Stevenson:

" The Bells in the City are ringing in the night,
Fine are the gardens of the houses full of light,
On the healthy Pentlands is the curlew flying free
And the broom is blowing bonnie in the north country.

It's ill to break the bonds that God decreed to bind
Still will be the children of the heather and the wind
Far away from home for it's still for you and me
That the wind is blowing bonnie in the north country."

The other poem was found after he died in the unfinished manuscript, in " The Weir of Featherstone." The " Weir of Featherstone," in my view, is still the greatest picture of our city, our capital city, that has ever been drawn. Anybody can conjure sentimental lies about it but few people know it with the heart and intellect as Stevenson did. And this to his wife who hated it, who rebelled against it, who took him across the world: he was writing in love to her, and in deeper love to his city he wrote this:

" I saw rain falling and the rainbow drawn on Lammermuir
Harkening I heard again in my precipitious city,
Beacon bells winnow the keen sea winds
And here afar—intent on my own race and place
I went—take thou the writing thine it is. . . ."

I would say that these lines express what we all feel in exile about our city, and our country." (Loud applause.)

The President thanked Mr Connell for his informative and interesting Sentiment.

Amusing Welcome to the Guests.

Mr Robert Eadie, who proposed the toast of the guests, said:

As the subject of the toast which I have the honour to propose to you is " Our Guests," I am a little bit worried by the three golden rules for after dinner speaking—be brief, be interesting, and if the subject permits, be amusing.

How is it possible to be brief and do anything like justice to 56 guests, each one of whom is a particular friend of a member of the Society who, quite naturally, wishes his friend's virtues and accomplishments to be pro-

claimed to the entire company ; not, of course, for his own gratification but for the enlightenment of his Brother Caledonians, in the hope that they may be stirred to a quickening emulation of his guest's ability of character and deeds.

Be interesting—one man's interest is another man's boredom. In a compleletly different context I have heard it said in banking circles that " one man's interest pays the Manager's salary ! " A shrewd American who spent four years in this country wrote an article on the British people after he returned home, in the course of which he said, " If you want to interest a Scotsman give him facts ; if you want to interest an Englishman talk about sport, and if you want to interest an Irishman just listen." (Laughter.)

As the majority of my hearers are Scottish by extraction or Scots by infiltration, I propose to enlist your interest by giving you a few facts. The Caledonian Society of London has been in existence for over 120 years. In the course of its history the toast of " Our Guests " has been proposed on 543 occasions. The average time taken by the proposers works out at 16¾ minutes ; 164 speakers said they would be brief—their average time works out at 19.2 minutes. (Laughter.). The longest speech on record occupied a full 25 minutes and seemed longer, and the shortest 12 seconds precisely. I should perhaps explain that these figures are the fruit of my own investigations and it is possible that further research may modify them here and there.

The speech of 12 seconds was easily a record. It was given almost 80 years ago to the very night. In those days our meetings were less abstemious than they are today and they certainly lasted longer. On this occasion it was at a quarter to eleven that the proposer of " Our Guests " was assisted to his feet. Swaying about slightly to collect his thoughts, he delivered the following oration—" Gentlemen, I give you the Guests. I wish I could see them. Gentlemen, the Guests," and then he fell down. (Loud laughter.)

The Chronicles (for the benefit of our Guests, I should say that as Hansard is to Parliament so are the Chronicles to our Society), the Chronicles on this occasion did not report the speech verbatim but contented themselves by saying that towards the close of the evening the toast of " Our Guests " was proposed in an original manner, but at no great length. (Laughter.)

Mr President, in the course of my investigations I have not found a single occasion when every guest was mentioned by name and you will be relieved to hear that I do not feel in a pioneering mood at the moment.

During the years, the average number of guests mentioned works out at 8 guests and 36/543rds of a guest. Tonight I had intended mentioning thirteen, but as this may seem to be unlucky I may be forgiven if I drop one or two by the way.

John Henry Robertson—under his pen name" John Connell." Author, Journalist, Leader writer of the *Evening News*, Brodcaster, Critic and Poet. Wrote a sequel to *Treasure Island* called *The Return of Long John Silver*. He tells a splendid story, his prose often flows like poetry and every now and again he drifts into the homely heart-warming language of the Lowland Scot.

Admiral Sir Peter Reid. " Admiral is in itself one of the most satisfactory of all distinctions. It is a noble word and has a very proud history." This is a quotation from one of Robert Louis Stevenson's essays.

I regret the absence of the Very Rev. Dr Scott, who is busy attending greetin' meetins, but I welcome his two chief helpers in London, the Very Rev. Dr Blanchard, recently Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and the Rev Dr Mackintosh, popular Assistant Minister of St Columba's.

For the second time we welcome to our table and platform the brothers Rory and Alec McEwen. It is a tribute to their generosity and a compliment to us that they show the same skill and charm to our modest numbers here as they do on television to their millions of admirers.

It is fitting that on St Patrick's Day the toast should be answered by an Irishman from Co. Down, Robert Flack, Master of Laws. Trained as a barrister he took a prominent part in running one of the most important railways in the Argentine. He lived in that country for seven years and having put his shoulder to the wagon wheel he decided to carry on and join the Transport Tribunal of Northern Ireland, of which he is still a member.

To all our guests I say, " Welcome, welcome, thanks for coming. We are happy and proud to have you with us." (Applause.)

In his reply to this toast, Mr Robert Flack made the following observations :

It is my very pleasant privilege this evening to reply for your guests, all fifty-six of them, so I am told by our mathematical friend who so ably proposed the toast and whose mind obviously runs to those dammed dots, which are I believe called decimals. I can assure you that I esteem it a very great honour indeed to be asked to speak on this occasion because the Caledonian Society is not just a Society—it is an Institution, and an Institution whose fame is world-wide. I have been told that the efficiency or standard of a Society can be judged by the skill which it exercises in selecting its guests, so obviously the fifty-six of us all agree that your standard is not in question. (Laughter.)

Now it is for me an engaging thought as to why I should have been selected on this occasion to reply for the guests. As I have been reminded on several occasions this is St Patrick's Day, and I thought that it might be a subtle compliment to the patron Saint. But I am told if we ask any youngster in Belfast today what he associated with the 17th March he will say, " Oh, that's the final of the University Rugby Cup." (Laughter.) It just shows you what Saints have to contend with these days. However, I have other thoughts, and maybe it is rather like the old-fashioned Presbyterian Minister. They used to get their sermons classified under a " firstly," " secondly," " thirdly," and so on, and then an indefinite number, but I am not going to go as far as that ; I am going at least to spare you the lastly, finally and in conclusion. (Laughter.) The firstly, as I have already mentioned is the reference to St Patrick. Of St Patrick we don't take much count in the north of Ireland today, but somehow or other the shamrock has by a strange course of evolution become changed into an orange lily, one of those peculiarities of nature which from time to time occur. But I do remember that St Patrick served his time. I'm not quite sure about the correct expression, but he certainly served his time in the north of Ireland and he is certainly buried in Downpatrick, at least we believe that anyway.

Well, now, secondly, you all of course know that the Scots, the original Scots, were the Scots who came from the north of Ireland (laughter), about 1,000 years ago—they made a very successful takeover bid. (Laughter.) So successful were they that they succeeded in getting their name imposed on the entire country although at that time the Norwegians occupied the north and the west and the English occupied the south-east and the south. Where the Caledonians came in I can't for the life of me think. (Laughter.) However, about some 250 years ago some of those Scots had their revenge because they came back and they settled again in the north of Ireland—my forebears being amongst them—so that might perhaps be another reason why I am here tonight.

But now my thirdly, and this seems to be the most likely one and that is I have known your esteemed President for many years here, and more years still in South America. Now, Sir, I understand you when you speak—I don't know whether all you here understand the Scottish dialect, I've got used to

it now—but I do remember one day in far off Buenos Aires there was a meeting of the Caledonian Society, or the St Andrew's Society there, and he made a speech, and afterwards at the end of the speech, a friend, Sir Robert Burton Chadwick, lent over to me and said—" Flack, I never knew how English Harry Lauder was until I heard Robert McWilliam speak." (Laughter.)

Of course, I can't say too much about accents myself, because my own is a bit of a mixture. I don't speak Scots like a Scotsman nor Irish like an Irishman, or English like an Englishman. I am generally taken for some kind of Colonial, or from one of the Commonwealth countries. But this question of language and pronounciation does make for confusion at times. I read of a story of an American, a soldier who was stationed at Belfast during the war, and he approached a girl outside one of the dance halls—" Tell me," he said, " what do you do about sex ? " And she looked at him and said : " Oh, about sax we have our tea." (Laughter.)

The other one I heard was about an old County Down farmer who was very ill indeed. They sent for the family doctor, and after he examined him he said : " John you are in a very poor way indeed—you are a very sick man. But there is something on your mind, there is something worrying you and if you could tell me what it is maybe I could help you." " Well," said John, " Doctor I am worried about secks." " John, how can a man of your age and condition be worrying about that subject ? " " I don't know about that doctor," said John, " if you had thirty tons of potatoes out in the fields and no secks for them you would be worried too." (Laughter.)

Now, Mr Connell had dealt very ably indeed with what I see in the programme is called the " Sentiment," and I have been trying to work out what the difference is between " Sentiment " and " Sentimentality." I suppose it is just a question of " mentality." (Laughter.) One thing I have noticed is that when Scotsmen get away from home the more sentimental they are, although they seldom allow sentiment to interfere with their business. In this connection the Ulster Scots have a very similar mentality. They tell of a time when 40,000 Ulster Scots, Presbyterians, died and presented themselves to St Peter for admission. St Peter said he could not deal with 40,000 but he would take 20,000 and the rest would have to go below, which they did and after a while Satan rang up St Peter and said, " Look, you have got to take these 20,000 Presbyterians out of here, I cannot be doing with them any longer. Between bazaars and teas they have raised enough money to buy themselves a refrigerator plant and I am out of business." (Laughter.)

I suppose it would be almost indecent to address any Scottish gathering without reference to Robbie Burns. But Robbie Burns was an excellent propagandist for Scottish products—whisky being one of them. So tonight I am (I may never get another chance), I am going to read you a poem from Ulster written, I am told, not by a ploughman, but I shudder to mention, by a stockbroker.

Sundry references to a religious subject are, of course, of a particular viewpoint and are likely to lead to what is called a breach of the peace. I will just forget that and in the meantime I will read you the poem. It is a very high standard of poetry I may as well tell you. It is supposed to be told in Belfast accent, but I will spare you that :

In a mean abode on a dreary road
Lived a man of the name of Bloat
He had a wife, the plague of his life
Who continually got his goat.
Till one night at dawn
With her nightdress on
He cut her bloody throat.
With a razor's gash
He settled her hash

And never was crime so quick
Till the sudden awe
Of the mighty law
Clutched his heart with icy chill.
To end the fun
So well begun
He resolved himself to kill
He tore the sheet
From his wife's cold feet
Then knotted it into a rope.
And he hung himself
From the pantry shelf
'Twas an easy end let's hope.
In the jaws of death
With bated breath
He solemnly cursed the Pope
But the strangest turn
Of the whole concern
Was only just beginning,
For he's in hell, his wife got well,
And is still alive and sinning.
For that razor blade
Was German made
The sheet was Irish linen. (Laughter.)

I seem to have strayed a long way from my commission to thank you and your fellow members for the hospitality extended to all your guests this evening, so on behalf of all your guests I offer you, and the Society, our grateful appreciation. (Applause.)

The Honorary Office-Bearers.

In submitting the toast of the Honorary Office-bearers, the President thanked the Honorary Auditor, Mr James H. Robertson, C.A., the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Robert Jardine, C.A., and the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Historian, Mr W. M. Miller for their services during the past year.

He reported that Mr Miller, while he was Honorary Treasurer from 1940–45, had acted as Honorary Secretary because the member holding that appointment had been working and living in Scotland throughout that period. In effect therefore, Mr. Miller had served as Honorary Secretary for a period of 20 years and now felt that after that long service some other member should be asked to accept this appointment. Accordingly, with regret, he had informed the Council that he desired to relinquish his duties as Honorary Secretary at the next Annual General Meeting. He would, however, continue as Honorary Historian until at least the next volume of the Chronicles was printed.

The President stressed the debt which the Society owed to Mr Miller for the long and efficient service he had rendered.

In the course of his reply to the toast of the Honorary Office-bearers, Mr W. M. Miller said :

When I realise that this is the last time I shall have an opportunity of telling you, Brother Caledonians, what I think of you, I feel very sad. For twenty years, man and boy, I have had to put up with you and you with me. On many occasions we have each done our " Hitler." On both sides, times without number, our patience has been exhausted, but the effort has always left us so forfeuchen that we have never had the energy to do anything about it. While many of you have been a severe trial to me I am willing to admit that at times I am very difficult. For instance, you may have noticed that I am always so positive about everything. I was once told that I was like the man who said, " I may have my faults, but being wrong is not one of them ! " (Laughter.) In one thing, at least, I am not wrong—and again I am prepared to be emphatic—and that is that I have a great affection for you all.

In one respect Brother Caledonians, you have always disappointed me—your lack of musical ability. Except for a few helpful friends who have reluctantly agreed from time to time to sing a verse of " Auld Lang Syne," practically all our members are, I gather, either tone deaf or suffer permanently from laryngitis. Why can't you be like the Welsh who use any and every excuse to burst into song ? They can't sing any better than we can, they just think they can. But I suppose I ought to be thankful that you have listened without visible protest, to my own annual musical outburst, which has confirmed each January that " the year's awa'." That harrowing experience you have borne with fortitude ! I once admitted in the presence of Past-President Dr Scott, that I had a voice like a foghorn. He was very complimentary, because while he immediately agreed, he assured me that it was a very refined foghorn ! (Laughter.) I have always been grateful for that comforting opinion.

Throughout my long service to the Society I have cherished a secret ambition—that one day all your dinner acceptances would reach me by the date specified in my monthly circular. That ambition was never realised ! But your excuses have been ingenious. Only one member, however, has ever indicated that death was the cause of his tardiness. Every month, many days after his card should have arrived, he telephoned me, beginning his conversation with the words, " The late So-and-So speaking." (Laughter.)

Mr. President, Mr Vice-President and Brother Caledonians for your consideration, your forebearance, your patience and your tolerance during my twenty years service to the Society, I express my thanks and I salute you. (Applause.)

The members were glad again to welcome the brothers Rory and Alec McEwen, who with great acceptance, accompanying themselves on their guitars, sang the following : " The Craw killed the Pussie," " The Lum Hat wantin' a Croon," " The Sour Mulk Cart," " The Day we went to Rothesay O " and " Johnnie Lad."

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave a finished rendering of the following selection : " Colonel Robertson," " The Caledonian Canal," " Dancing Feet " and " Craigmillar Castle."

After he had played the Society's Strathspey, the evening

ended with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem.

Annual Festival.

The major part of Mr R. A. McWilliam's successful year of office ended appropriately in the Ladies' Night at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Thursday, 21st April, 1960.

Before the dinner the President and Mrs. McWilliam received the large company of members and friends.

The loyal toasts having been pledged, the President in the following terms, proposed the toast "The Caledonian Society of London."

You may wonder why the President of the Caledonian Society rises to propose the toast to the Society and not one of the distinguished guests present. Well, I shall explain to you. Ladies' Night is to all intents and purposes the swan song of the President of this Society and in accordance with tradition his fellow members allow him to have his say on this occasion and, with very few exceptions, he must from thenceforth and for evermore hold his peace. Apart, then, from the few appropriate interjections which I shall have to make in the course of this evening and for the few words that I will have to say to you Brother Caledonians at the Annual General Meeting towards the end of this year, I am afraid this is the last time you are going to have the privilege of listening to me.

Of course some there may be amongst you who have attended recent gatherings of the Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association, the Ilford Scottish Association—or the London Morayshire Club—and maybe some of those are thinking they've just about heard enough of me for the time being. One thing is certain—they've all heard my two or three stock stories, so I can't offer any light relief in my approach to this serious subject of the toast to the Caledonian Society. I crave the indulgence of one or two of those present, however, just to say that I have learned the lesson implied in the remark made by the little girl who having just attended her first Church Service said—"The singing and the music were good but the commercials were much too long." (Laughter.) And following this same train of thought, I am very conscious of the eagle eye of the Secretary upon me and he has his watch on the table in front of him. Might I suggest to the Secretary that bearing in mind that this is the last occasion on which the cares and responsibilities of the evening will fall on his shoulders just as it is the last occasion upon which they fall on mine, he might relent and relax just for one brief evening.

Now those few words, Ladies and Gentlemen, were expressed in no sense of levity for I may say it is with considerable regret that the members of the Caledonian Society have reluctantly agreed to release Mr Miller from the duties of secretary, duties which he has carried out with outstanding ability for the past twenty years, but feels that he must now give up at the end of our current year. (Applause.)

Now the only story I am going to tell you has a reference to the Secretary. The distinguished singers at our last Caledonian Society dinner dedicated one of their songs to William Miller—the song had a reference to Glasgow. I

don't know whether the Secretary was near enough to hear the aside made by the principal singer, but I was. He said, " I doot whether Willie Miller ever saw Glasgow, ye' see he comes from Ayr, and he's been headin' south a' his life ; and by catchin' the train at New Cumnock instead of Buchanan Street he saved half a croon." (Laughter.)

But to my toast—what can I say about the Caledonian Society of London that has not been said at least once by the proposers of this toast in the last hundred and twenty-three years ? Nothing very new I am afraid, but bearing in mind that each year on this occasion we have amongst us invariably some who have not been with us before, may I, at least, for their benefit, and to remind those who may have been here before but may not have quite appreciated the things we stand for, recapitulate briefly the whys and the wherefores of our existence.

Our terms of reference tell you that we stand for the advancement of Scottish national and philanthropic interests and the promotion of good fellowship amongst Scotsmen in London. In the pursuit of those worthy aims we have taken upon ourselves as probably our most important role the support which we lend to charities, particularly the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools. (Hear, hear.) Not only do we contribute to these charities and encourage our friends and acquaintances to do likewise, but for those of you who do not know it, and even some of you who maybe know something about it but don't quite realise the extent of our co-operation, the greatest contribution to my mind made by the Caledonian Society of London to the Royal Scottish Corporation is to be seen by having a glance at the list of members of the management committee of that Corporation. You will find that no less than forty of the managing governors and life managing governors are members of the Caledonian Society, and I think you will all agree that service by providing manpower is frequently more important than service by providing money. You will also find that the Chairman, and I think I am safe to say several members of the committee of the Royal Caledonian Schools are likewise members of the Caledonian Society. You cannot keep these old, loose-knit bodies together, despite their great importance, and their great appeal, without some sort of hard core, and I think that we of the Caledonian Society of London may pride ourselves in that we form the hard core of at least the Royal Scottish Corporation. I submit, that that alone would be ample justification for our existence, but I think it is true to say that we fill yet another important role in the Scottish community in London. We have, as you know, in and around London, many Scottish Societies, we have the County, or Scottish regional associations, the Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association being the one that most readily springs to mind, the Perthshire Society, the Ayrshire Society, the Angus Society, the Highland Society and the Burns Club. Then we have the London district Scottish associations, the Ilford Scottish Association, the Harrow and District Caledonian Society and many others and all of those fulfil a useful purpose, but they are circumscribed either by the part of Scotland from which their members hail, or the vicinity around London where their members reside.

The Caledonian Society of London covers the whole country. We draw our membership from all over Scotland. We have even two from Banffshire ! The other one comes from the Betchach. We invite then, and I maintain should inspire, the interest of all Scots in London. It is widely believed that the Scots are pretty good at advertising themselves, but sometimes I am led to wonder whether we of the Caledonian Society have taken care to advertise ourselves sufficiently. I believe that were the work we do for the Scottish community in this capital city more widely known we would find that more of our countrymen with philanthropic interests at heart would take more interest in this Society.

I have been veritably amazed to hear what some Scots think of us :

some seem to think that we have no purpose in life other than to meet one evening a month from November to April with the sole object of like Tam O' Shanter and Souter Johnnie—" Sit boozin' at the nappy, an' growin' fu' an' unco ' happy." (Laughter.) Others seem to think that like the ancient Scribes and Pharisees we are a kind of closed shop keeping all outsiders at arms' length. I think it is high time that the Scots resident hereabouts knew that neither of those descriptions applies to this Society. Our monthly meetings take the form of social and cultural occasions of, I hope, the highest moral standing—the keynotes being good fellowship and exemplary sobriety ! And as for our being exclusive, by our Statutes we are restricted in numbers to 100 plus the life-members and members of the Council, and subject to their being prepared conscientiously to maintain the aims and ends of the Society good Scots are welcome to join our ranks.

Some may well say : " But how can there be room for new members in a Society numerically so restricted when we know that some of the larger London district Scottish Societies have memberships running into the five and six hundreds ? " A very good question indeed. But the conditions for membership are, of course, much more rigorous in our Society : candidates must be Scots, males, prepared to contribute in cash and in kind, prepared to attend all meetings to the exclusion of all other social engagements ; and must consequently live near enough to London Town to enable them to fulfil these requirements ; and finally a candidate must be what the Council would be prepared to describe as a credit to Scotland. A member becomes a life member on completion of twenty years of membership, and as our average age as you may see by a glance around this room is, shall I say, getting past the prime of life, you will appreciate that vacancies occur in our ranks with some frequency and that enables me to repeat that we are not a closed shop.

And now, addressing myself particularly to our welcome guests—I don't know if I have told you anything new about the Caledonian Society of London but I hope I may have reminded you of some of the things we stand for ; and in the hope that you will all agree that we are at least inspired by good intentions I give you the Toast of the Caledonian Society of London. (Loud applause.)

Our Guests.

Vice-President James Aitken, in the course of his speech submitting the toast of our guests, mentioned that although this was Ladies' Night there were actually 85 men present. He emphasised, however, that although there were 85 men there were 86 women, the ladies had therefore once more scored. He continued : A London Scottish lady was reported to be suffering from a pain in her neck. Her friend called to see her and asked, " Meg, whaur's the pain in your neck ? " Came the reply, " Oh, he's awa' the nicht tae the Caledonian Society." (Laughter.)

Every month during the session this Society holds what the Secretary regularly calls " a dinner confined to members and their gentlemen friends." To ease their consciences, as it were, the members arrange this annual ladies' night—one night at least when the men folk must take second place !

" Some men are born for great things ; Some men are born for small ;
Some men, it is not recorded why *THEY* were born at all."

And I'm hoping that the Vice-President, in proposing this toast to our guests is tonight at least, doing something to justify his existence! Last time I proposed the toast here was to the members and their gentlemen friends, but tonight the pleasure is greatly enhanced by the presence of so many lady friends, so many wives and lasses!

To use that trite phrase, "our ladies are charming; our ladies are gracious and beautiful," to my mind doesn't do our ladies justice at all! I would rather emulate even in this distinguished gathering, the Glasgow boy who, when asked what he thought of a particular wee lassie, replied with great enthusiasm, "Aw, she's a smasher!" Ladies ye are a' smashers!

But as will have been observed, the lasses can, and do speak for themselves! It doesn't take a woman long to make up her husband's mind about things that matter! A husband and wife were getting on in years and the husband enquired, "Jean, we're no sae young as we were. Hae ye ever thocht o' what's tae happen when yin o' us goes?" Back came the clarion reply, "Oh ay, I've made up my mind on that; I'm gaun doon tae live wi' my sister at Dunoon!" (Laughter.)

Away back in 1837 this Society was formed and I find on reading the Chronicles of the Society that, regularly, meeting after meeting this toast has been honoured. It is indeed a solemn thought that in this great City of London, over that long period of 120 years, Scotsmen have been entertaining Englishmen!

But I want to say right away, on behalf of all my compatriots here—and I say this very simply and very sincerely—that we Scots have a very warm corner in our hearts for our kindly, generous and understanding English friends, midst whom we have made our homes!

"May we always mingle in the friendly bowl,
The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

So far as our Scottish male guests are concerned, I only hope that by this time next year they will no longer be guests but have become members! Mind you, we're awfully particular who we let in—our membership is strictly limited—but when you realise that a few years ago they let me in then there's a chance for you! My point is illustrated by the sermon of the old Scottish Minister—one of the hell-fire and brimstone types. He was telling the congregation the awful fate which awaited them—the punishment they deserved, aye, and the punishment they were surely going to get! "Aye," he said, "just as surely as I'm gaun tae ding the life oot o' that muckle blue flea that's lighted on my bible!" And down came the auld man's fist on his bible but the flea flew away! Was the old boy disconcerted? Not a bit of it! Raising his hands over the congregation he proclaimed, "My friends, my friends, there's a chance for ye yet!"

Amongst the guests to whom I would make special reference are Sir Herbert MacDavid, C.B.E., Chairman and Managing Director of the Glen Line Limited; Sir James Crombie, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise who in his capacity as a higher Civil Servant has given distinguished services to this country: he responded to the toast of the guests at our dinner in December 1956, and it will not be long before he speaks again; the Rev. H. J. Purvis, O.B.E., Q.H.C., M.A., Senior Church of Scotland Chapalin of the Royal Navy and now acting as interim Moderator in the vacancy at St Columba's Church following Dr Scott's departure; the Rev. Brian Cross, M.A., Assistant Minister of Crown Court Church; and J. Cowan and J. E. Mackenzie who are respectively President and Director of the Ilford Scottish Association. We are particularly happy to have with us this evening, as our guest, Mrs. Arthur Ensor. It is good of her to have come along tonight, because she has brought her husband with her, and as our chief guest he is to reply to this toast. Mr Ensor is one of the best known bankers in the City, with the accent on "Bankers," for although now Chairman

of one Bank, Vice-Chairman of another and deputy Chairman of yet another, he had a long innings as a Bank Officer, rising to the dizzy heights of Chief General Manager of one of the biggest banks in this country.

To all our visitors tonight, I say, on behalf of my brother Caledonians, " We see in you our comrades, you have broken our bread, you have drunk our whisky. Henceforth you are our friends and we your champions ! "

" Hale be your heart ! Hale be your fiddle !
Lang may your elbuck jink and diddle
To cheer you through the weary middle
O warly cares
Till bairn's bairns kindly cuddle
Your auld grey hairs ! " (Loud applause.)

The reply to the toast of the guests was given by Mr Robert Ensor as follows :

On behalf of all your guests I should like to express our warmest thanks to Mr Aitken for proposing the toast in terms so eloquent and so agreeable. I would also say to you all how very appreciative we are of your cordial reception of it.

I have no doubt also that it would be the wish of all your guests that I should express our thanks to our hosts for the most generous hospitality which has been accorded to us this evening. The haggis has been served as one would expect at a Scottish function with its appropriate and general supply of native gravy ! (Laughter.) You may wonder why a mere Sassenach should be your guest and be responding to this toast. I also wonder ! Some while ago I did display some interest in your Society when you, Mr President, were elected to your high office and later you very kindly extended an invitation to my wife and myself to attend this dinner, but it was only subsequently that I learned of the duty which I was expected to undertake if I came as your guest. Your President apparently has some wonderful formula, and when I asked how long I was supposed to speak he said about ten or twelve minutes but the time could be reduced by a minute for every time the audience laughed —it is therefore up to you to assist.

I wonder what your President would have said if I had merely quoted the old saying :

" There are times when nothing a man can say is nearly so powerful as saying nothing."

This being my first visit to your Society I naturally wondered what the Caledonian Society was. I had, of course, heard of the Caledonian Canal, the old Caledonian Railway and the Caledonian Hotel in Edinburgh, but all those have been nationalised—perhaps Whitehall had overlooked the Caledonian Society. (Laughter.)

I first learned that Caledonia was determined by the Romans to be all that area north of a wall between the Firth of Forth and Clyde, but so that Scots could be the same the world over your great poet, Robert Burns, showed no discrimination between north and south. Be that as it may, wherever one travels, not only in the British Commonwealth of Nations, but in all parts of the world, one finds Scots everywhere and one can be sure that there will be many gatherings together on St Andrew's night and Hogmanay, and my what parties they always are ! I had some experience of the travelling Scot a few years ago. I was at the airport in Madagascar—I should think the worst airport in the world—when an excited lady came up to me and said in a real Scottish voice, " Can you talk sense Sir ? " I said that I did not know but would try, although I was not a Scot. It appeared that she came from

Inch Murran, an island in Loch Lomond, and had come all the way to Madagascar to see her brother's grave. From my point of view the interesting point of the story is that for many years my wife and I had stayed in Inchtavannch, another island in Loch Lomond and knew of the lady although we had never met her, but I did so in Madagascar of all places !

I have no doubt that wherever Scots may be in this age of noise and jets they often say to themselves :

" Give me amid the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing burns."

Those are the feelings which I have when I am able to visit your glorious country and particularly the Highlands.

On a happy occasion such as this, one must bear in mind that old saying :

" Say what is true and pleasant,
Do not say what is pleasant but is not true
Nor what is true and is not pleasant."

With that in mind I must refrain from mentioning the bagpipes or say what I think about them or what I would do with them particularly as I believe an alternative definition to their musical functions is that of an inflated senseless talker !

Your Society, I gather, meets very frequently and you have many happy times together and I am sure you are in full agreement with these lines of Hillaire Belloc :

" From the first beginnings to the undiscovered ends, Nothing is worth the toil of winning but laughter and the love of friends."

We, your guests, subscribe to those sentiments and feel honoured to be in your company and participate in the pleasures of this evening.

You may have heard the story of the old dour Scottish Professor in a theological college lecturing all morning to his students on the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. At the end of his lecture he said to his students, " Now where would you choose to be, in the house with the lights burning with the wise virgins or in the garden in the dark with the foolish virgins ? " Mr. President—it is very regrettable to record that the vote was unanimous. It appears that unanimity can be obtained on occasion, and your guests tonight are unanimous in expressing warmest thanks to you all for your generous hospitality and kindly reception of us all. (Applause.)

Salute to the President.

In the course of the evening the Past-Presidents saluted the President and thanked him for his services during the session. The Past-President's badge was pinned by Mrs R. A. McWilliam, wife of the President, on the coat of the immediate Past-President, Mr J. C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D.

The Health of the President.

The toast of the President was proposed by Past-President Sir George Campbell, K.C.I.E., who gave a brief outline of the President's career and congratulated him on a successful session. He emphasised that, notwithstanding the President's long period in the Argentine he had maintained his interest in

all things Scottish and today was an active member of that ancient Scottish charity, the Royal Scottish Corporation, and a member of two prominent London Scottish Societies.

Mr McWilliam feelingly replied. He thanked the members for their loyal support and expressed the pleasure which his year in office had given him.

The musical programme was supplied by Mr John Graham and Miss Reba Harley, with Mr Robert Eadie at the piano. The former sang "Bonnie Wee Thing" and "Kishmuls Galley," and the latter "A Fairy's Love Song" and "Wee Willie Winkie." Together they gave selections of Scottish songs.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., besides giving the Strathspey "The Caledonian Society of London," played "Bonnie Ann," "Lady Louden," "Pretty Marion" and "The Pride of Scotland." "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem ended a memorable evening.

Annual General Meeting.

At this meeting, held at the Society's Headquarters on the 2nd November, 1960, the President, Mr. R. A. McWilliam, was unable to attend consequent upon his having taken up residence in Edinburgh, and the chair was taken by the Vice-President, Mr James Aitken.

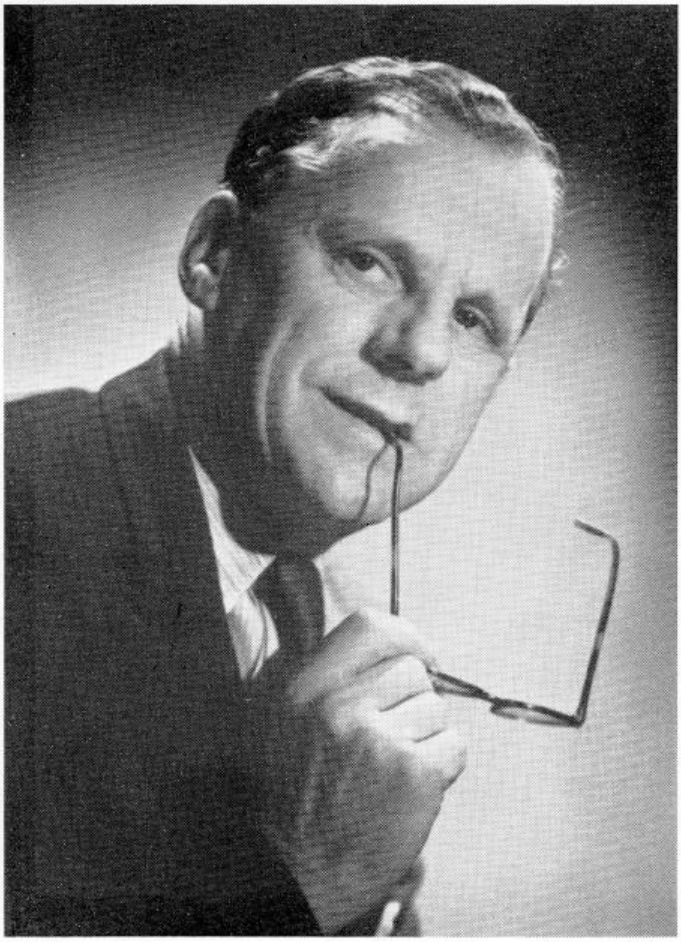
The financial statement covering the past year was approved and donations of £50 each to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools were authorised.

On the motion of Past-President John M. Swan, Mr James Aitken was appointed President for the year 1960–61, and after he had been invested with the badge and chain of office, he thanked the members for his election and proposed that his predecessor should be awarded the gold medal of the Society. Mr T. M. Munro was elected Vice-President.

Mr W. M. Miller intimated his resignation as Honorary Secretary and a warm tribute was paid to him by Past-President James R. Steele, who submitted an appropriate resolution which was passed with acclamation.

Mr George Deans was appointed Honorary Secretary and the other office-bearers were re-elected.

Mr James McL. Young, Mr Alex. T. Young, Mr Hugh T. McCaw and Mr D. Cherry Paterson were admitted to membership.



JAMES AITKEN

President, 1960–1961

CHAPTER V.

1960–1961 : Mr James Aitken, *President.*

Greenock man becomes President ; " Australia's Flying Doctor," by the Very Rev. J. R. Blanchard ; The London Scottish Toast ; Mr Hugh Elder on " Sir Walter Scott and his Journal " ; " Burns," by Mr J. M. Maxwell ; Mr David J. Johnston on " The Eastern Borders " ; " Scottish Humour—some samples and comments," by Mr Duncan McIntyre ; Sir John Tait on " Scottish Foreigners " ; " The Honorary Office-Bearers," by The President ; " The Society," by Lt.-Col. John D. McGregor ; Mr Matthew Reid on " The Ladies " ; " The President," by Past-President John R. Aldridge.

MR JAMES AITKEN, elected President for 1960–1961, was born in Greenock ; of the Argyll Campbells, he claims family association, through his paternal grandmother, with Rob Roy MacGregor.

Coming South to London with his parents, after a short period of schooling in the Metropolitan Area, he eventually qualified as an Accountant, and later became a Director of a group of London companies.

He has, from early days, interested himself in Scottish activities in and around London and has been twice President of the Ilford Scottish Association ; President of the Burns Club of London and a Director of the Royal Caledonian Schools.

Probably his greatest contribution to Scottish culture, and for which he is well-known in many parts of the country, is his close study of the life and works of Robert Burns. His services have been in great demand, and on this subject he has lectured and spoken not only in London and the immediate district, but in many English cities ; in Glasgow and Dumfries and also in Copenhagen. It is probably true that he has spoken on this subject more often than any other Burns lover now living.

At the Council and general meetings held on the 17th November, 1960, at the Rembrandt Hotel, the new President, Mr James Aitken took the chair.

The business transacted at these meetings was purely formal and at the Little Dinner which followed a large company gave a hearty welcome to the new President.

After the loyal toast had been honoured, the President introduced his principal guest, the Very Rev. J. R. Blanchard, C.B.E., B.A., D.D., who gave the Sentiment :

" Australia's Flying Doctor."

He said :

Forty-nine years ago, John Flynn began patrolling Central Australia as a Bush Parson, appointed to do so by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. He travelled by camel, horse or buggy as the occasion required. His job was to go round from homestead to homestead, from camp to camp, to let the isolated people of the Inland know that the outside world really cared for them, to do whatever he could for their material comfort and through simple friendship, offer the spiritual gifts of the religion he carried in his heart. He was to miss nobody, whatever his creed or character.

Let him be told, with a sweeping wave of the hand to the horizon, that " somewhere out there " was a lonely prospector, and no journey was too long or tough for Flynn to go out and find him. Maybe the man was ill. Flynn would doctor and nurse him till he was better. If the case were beyond his skill, patiently and tenderly Flynn would bring the man in. Should he be far through, Flynn would stay by him till death came, and then, as undertaker, parson and monumental mason perform the last rites.

As he patrolled his inland parish, Flynn saw the signs of death on all sides. Graves of men, women, children, babies, met him everywhere. Rain-flattened, wind-scoured mounds under coolabah, gum and desert oak ; by dry creek beds and by billabongs ; out on the plains. Lives lost because medical help was not near enough ! lives lost needlessly, brooded Flynn ; lives which could have been saved if organised help, quick in action, had been stationed within a radius of even 300 miles ! But what could *he* do—a lonely Bush Parson, with nothing in his pocket ?

As he patrolled, Flynn sought an answer to that question. Dreaming about it by day and night, drawing maps of Central Australia in the sand, as he camped at midday or in the moonlight, locating on them where people lived, brooding over the long distances that separated them and the nature of the country that lay between and of the inhabited spots most central in given areas. Flynn at last evolved his plan. He would have a chain of nursing homes, each at a centre as reasonably accessible to everybody as possible. That would be something where at present there was nothing.

Flynn came in from the Centre to the Coast to stir up the Church to undertake that work. By tireless prodding, at the cost of infinite patience, he woke the Church up. He got his chain of nursing homes ; his first shot in a campaign against needless death in Central Australia. The number of lives those nursing homes have saved is beyond counting.

As Flynn patrolled the Inland, founding and superintending these nursing homes, he saw that even they were inadequate. He came up against the problem of how to get the sick and injured to them. Camels and horses were terribly slow in that terrible country. Motors were faster, but in a land

of gibbers and sand-hills, most uncertain. The long trip would kill many a patient before he got there. As he brooded on this problem on many a long patrol, drumming his mind, until his head ached, came the words, " the wings of death are swifter than camels or horses or even motors." Suddenly his mind fastened on the word " wings." The word was a spark. It broke into flame. And in the light of that flame Flynn saw—Aeroplanes! Winged Ambulances! Flying Doctors! He had his vision.

That was in 1917, when the Old World was still only experimenting in aviation. But Flynn believed they would succeed and was determined to get in on the ground floor with Flying Doctors for his beloved Inland. He talked about it, until people were sick of his talk. Anybody known to be a bit of an expert on aviation, he literally dunned. He laid siege to some of the biggest minds in Australia with his dream and, like the Ancient Mariner, would not let them go. He was laughed at by many, smiled at by some, believed in by a few. " Flynn, you're fifty years ahead of your time," he was told repeatedly. But Flynn only grinned, pulled a funny face, gave his shoulders a hunch and with a quiet voice which I never heard edged with bitterness, made some jocular remark and went on talking. And what happened? As one big business man in Sydney said : " You listen to Flynn, thinking what an unpractical visionary he is, and before you know where you are you are helping him to do it." So Flynn got his Flying Doctor.

In May 1928, backed by the Presbyterian Church of Australia, men and women of all the Churches and of none, the Commonwealth Government, the Queensland Government and Qantas, an aeroplane rose from the drome at Cloncurry, inaugurating the Aerial Medical Service of Australia. It inaugurated the world's first Flying Doctor Service, brought about by a Bush Parson, who, seventeen years before, was fresh from college, buried in the isolation of the Inland, with nothing in his pocket, but with unfaltering faith in the calling of God and unfailing love for his fellowman. For twelve years Flynn's Mission ran that experiment in Cloncurry, and then handed over the assets to the Aerial Medical Services of Australia, now the Flying Doctor Services of Australia, with a cheque for £1,000. Today, Flying Doctor Services covers Central Australia with a " mantle of safety," operating from bases set out in a map, which I saw John Flynn working on 30 years ago.

The Cloncurry achievement was not, however, the end of Flynn's problems. There was a further hardnut for him to crack. What was the use of having Flying Doctors, if the Doctors did not know when and where they were needed? How were the isolated people of the Inland to let them know and that quickly? They couldn't run down the road and ring the doctor's bell! To wire the whole Inland with a telephone system was impossible. Flynn was faced with the urgent problem of communication.

The answer came, as did the answer of the Flying Doctor, in a flash. It was a magic word—" wireless." In those days, it *was* a magic word. For the Old World had not got past the stage of merely experimenting with wireless. But Flynn believed in it and claimed it, because it was a necessity for his beloved Inland. After considerable thought, he decided what he wanted ; a set that could transmit as well as receive, with a range of 200–300 miles, half-hundredweight in weight, to operate for six months without attention, and not to cost more than £50. The experts said it couldn't be done. Flynn said it could and it would.

The long list of experiments that were made over many years, the frequent and arduous trips into the Inland to try out a machine which they had invented and thought would do, the many " successful failures " they had—successful in the sense that they discovered from them what would *not* do—all go to make an epic story. But Flynn kept on believing and kept his experimenters keeping on. At long last they were successful. Alfred Traeger of Adelaide completed a set that fulfilled all requirements and Flynn set his patrol padres

distributing these sets throughout the Inland and thus equipping it with transmitting, as well as receiving, aerial power. The problem of communication was solved. Flynn's dreams had come true.

What John Flynn's work has meant to the Inland is best seen from one typical example. There was a bush mother who, before this new era ushered in by Flynn, had to travel 600 miles there and 600 back for the birth of each of her six children—her only companion the Afghan camel-driver. Now the Flying Doctor has spread the mantle of safety over that vast Inland, he can be got by wireless and arrive by air, on the dot of need. Flynn has stopped the spate of needless graves in the Inland.

There is a saying in the New Testament that Flynn was always quoting. It holds the secret of his life. It is this. " Faith is the substance of things hoped for." To him faith was no nebulous, up-in-the-air sort of thing. It is substance. It assumes forms you can handle and see. It is the injection into your mind of dreams which are already realities in the mind of God and which you also, to whom God has given them as dreams, must accept as realities. God takes hold of the faith we have to touch men's hearts and to open their pockets ; and with what comes out of their pockets it is possible to build the things you have dreamed. So faith materialises, enabling us to say that it is the substance of things hoped for. Flynn often talked in a heart to heart way like that. It was the secret of his life.

Often did we hear him also say : " Faith is knowledge in action." There was nothing of passing the buck to God in Flynn's idea of faith. It was knowledge—which he was under obligation to accumulate by using the brains God had given him. It was knowledge in action, with all the energy with which God had endowed him. His task needed maps, so he studied maps, until he became an expert map drawer. He needed aeroplanes. All that there was to be read about aviation, he read. Its technicalities he devoured. He studied wireless as he had studied aviation, until, as one expert said, he knew the " innards " of wireless. In out of the way pockets of his clothes he carried a kit of tools, with good results to many a cook-house station clock and to many a homestead's broken down sewing machine. Faith is knowledge in action ; so he lived.

As his senior patrol padre, Kingsley Partridge, said at the interment of Flynn's ashes at Mt. Gillen, " He is not dead. His work abides. His memory is forever eloquent. For across the lonely places of the land he planted kindness, and from the hearts of those who call those places home, he gathered love." (Loud applause.)

The President thanked Dr Blanchard for his interesting and instructive Sentiment and the members drank his health.

The Guests.

This toast was proposed by Mr J. T. Moore, who in the course of his remarks, said :

As many of our guests may know, we have as a Society two principal aims in life, one benevolent, for unfortunate brother Scots in London who may have struck a bad patch, and one social, for Brother Caledonians and their Welcome Guests who may have struck a dry patch. (Laughter.) The former we look on naturally as our own private responsibility, although we gratefully acknowledge much material help from friends outside the Society, and the latter, the social side, would be quite unthinkable without the company of welcome guests. Were there no guests, how flat and uninteresting would be our gatherings ! No Sentiment, as so brilliantly given this evening by our

principal guest; no showing off before our "foreign" friends, as all we Scotsmen unconsciously do; in fact, little reason why we should be here at all, and none whatever why you should be having to listen to me. So, welcome guests, you are the *raison d'etre* of our gatherings; you are doubly welcome, for the pleasure of your company, and for the excuse you give us for getting together to enjoy ourselves with yourselves, or, as we say in the vernacular "us yins wi' youse yins thegether." (Laughter.)

For me to introduce once more to you our principal guest this evening, the Very Rev. Dr J. R. Blanchard, is quite superfluous. You have heard from the President the most interesting background of this great man, and we have all listened enthralled to his Sentiment on "The Flying Doctor in Australia," delivered in his own inimitable manner, a delightful blend of seriousness and dry humour. And those of us present who also know him well as the interim minister at St Columba's Church of Scotland, have come to respect him as a truly great pastor, as those before him at St Columba's who were our Brother Caledonians. The Society is greatly honoured in having Dr Blanchard with us this evening, and we are all indebted to him for a Sentiment absorbing in its human interest and outstanding for its presentation.

Our other principal guest whom we welcome this evening and who will be honouring us by responding to this toast, is Mr R. E. Ash, General Manager in London of the National Bank of Australasia. Mr Ash was born in the State of Victoria, and has served his Bank in all the different States of Australia, before coming to London ten years ago. Like most of us Scotsmen present, Mr Ash is a visible export from his homeland, and we do hope that he feels at home in this company of exiles, with, this evening, a distinctly Australian flavour. We are especially grateful to Mr Ash, who emphasises that he makes no claim to being an orator, for so kindly agreeing, at very short notice, to take over the response to this toast, in place of the President's original choice who, on account of illness, has been unable to be with us.

We are also very pleased indeed to welcome Sir Reginald Watson-Jones, F.R.C.S. and among other distinguished appointments, Extra Orthopædic Surgeon to Her Majesty, the Queen; also the Rev. H. J. N. Purves, O.B.E., M.A., Naval Chaplain and Honorary Chaplain to the Queen, and Interim Moderator of St Columba's Church.

Tonight also, we have the toast of the London Scottish Regiment, and it is with particular pleasure that we welcome, as representing the Regiment, Col. Torrance Law, D.S.O., T.D., Lt.-Col. James Peddie, D.S.O., T.D., Major Derek Miller, M.C. and Capt. R. G. Turnbull. As a Society, we have a particularly soft spot in our hearts for the London Scottish, being fechters all, either on the field of battle or on the rugger field.

We have, of course, many other guests with us this evening.

Most sincerely do we hope that all our guests are, truly, enjoying themselves, as we so much enjoy having you with us, that you have all mastered by now the intricacies of Caledonian Honours, and that we shall have the great pleasure of welcoming you again on many future occasions. (Applause.)

Mr R. E. Ash responded to this toast, as follows:

I appreciate the compliment paid to me in asking me to respond this evening for the guests. I cannot hope to match the eloquence of previous speakers, but I can follow a good example in brevity which I recently read in a biography of the late Lord Chief Justice Hewart. He was dining at the Mansion House and was down to respond to the toast of the Law. To his Lordship's annoyance this toast was placed well down the list and it was quite late when he rose to respond. He said he had prepared two speeches, one a rather lengthy one, the other brief. Despite the late hour he proposed

to deliver them both. The first and lengthy speech was " Thank you very much indeed," and the short one " Thank you."

I feel my fellow guests will expect me to say just a little more than that in appreciation of your hospitality this evening. We have had an excellent dinner, in good company, and have listened to a fascinating and moving address by your principal guest, Dr Blanchard.

Your Secretary, when he asked me to make this response, was good enough to say it would help to create an Australian flavour. I think in Australia we can claim to have a Scottish flavour. There is no need to remind you of our Chieftain, the Prime Minister—Robert Gordon Menzies. I beg your pardon—Robert Gordon Mingees. (Laughter.)

On the more personal side, in the case of my own Bank, we had as our Chief Manager, Leslie James McConnan ; our Chief Inspector, Hector Roy Mackenzie and our Staff Inspector, Norman Kenneth McLeod. I think you will agree this adds up to rather more than a flavour. Australia owes a great deal to its sons and daughters of Scottish origin. (Applause.)

The London Scottish.

In submitting the toast of the London Scottish Regiment, the President made the following observations :

At our first dinner each session we remember with pride our regiment, The London Scottish. Formed in 1859 by this Society and the Highland Society of London, the London Scottish in three wars has built a reputation for gallantry, and during the periods of peace has never neglected those who contributed to that reputation.

Recently the Territorial Army has once again been reorganised, and in the process many famous units have lost their identity because of amalgamation or disbandment. The London Scottish is one of the only two territorial infantry regiments in London which has escaped amalgamation, but the Scottish is on a much more favourable basis than that of this one rival. We should indeed feel proud of this honour, at the same time bearing in mind the responsibility which it implies. Amongst other things the numerical strength of the regiment must be built up and if any members of our Society can use their influence to get recruits their help will be greatly appreciated.

Mr Donald Fraser, in his fine tenor voice, sang " Mary Morison," " Of a' the Airts the Wind can Blow," " Afton Water " and " Annie Laurie," accompanied in his usual pleasing manner, by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

The piping selections were given by Pipe-Major L. V. N. de Laspee and Pipe-Sergeant W. Ferguson of the London Scottish, who played " The Herding Song," " Lochaber Gathering," " Blair Drummond," " Colonel McLeod " " Scotland the Brave " and " Highland Laddie." The Pipe-Major was carrying the banner of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, and the Pipe-Sergeant that of the City of Glasgow.

A successful evening ended by Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., playing the Society's Strathspey and the members singing " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

Presentation to Mr W. M. Miller.

At the general meeting held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on Thursday, 15th December, 1960, after formal business had been transacted, the President presented to Mr W. M. Miller a Tape Recorder towards which the members of the Society had contributed. In making the presentation the President referred to the valuable service rendered to the Society by Mr Miller over a long period of years, and the latter expressed his warm appreciation of the gift.

At the Little Dinner which followed, after the loyal toasts had been honoured, the President read a letter from the Secretary of the Royal Scottish Corporation. In this letter the Charity's appreciation of the response, amounting to £679, to the President's appeal on the occasion of the 295th Anniversary Festival was expressed.

The President then introduced Mr Hugh Elder, M.A., who had undertaken to give a Sentiment on

"Sir Walter Scott and his Journal."

Mr Elder said :

This evening I am going to speak of Sir Walter Scott, not as a novelist but as the writer of a journal, which I believe is less well-known than it ought to be, and I hope that what I shall say may encourage you to make its better acquaintance.

The interest on any man's diary depends mainly on two things, first the man himself, and secondly the skill of his writing. These are the essential movers of interest. The diary of even a very ordinary man may be of value, if he records great events, but at least he must know how to write. Scott's journal covers the years from 1825 to 1832, and they were not particularly remarkable in the history of Scotland or indeed of the United Kingdom. But the man himself was remarkable, and long before he made the first entry in the journal he had earned immortal fame with his pen.

The journal covers only the last few years of Scott's life, and in it we find a self-portrait of the man, not in his years of creative power and growing fame, with his world expanding and his hopes high, but in his time of trouble, sorrow, anxiety, and increasing weakness of body. For that reason the self-portrait is incomplete, for in the journal we have the years of endurance, not the years of victory. Yet the test of a man's soul is in the crises of adversity more than in his times of triumph, and it is impossible to read the journal without feeling for its author the greatest admiration. Here is a fine brave soul.

As I have said, the journal was begun in 1825, and by that year all the greatest novels had been written, and Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, had reached the height of his fortunes. He then held a position among his countrymen which has no parallel in the history of letters. He was the greatest man in Scotland and famous far beyond its borders. Although he still held a clerkship

in the Court of Session and went daily to Court in Edinburgh during Law terms, in the vacations he was the master of Abbotsford, the best known and best loved country gentleman in the Borders. His immense capacity for work, most of it done in the early mornings, was undiminished, his creative powers still vigorous ; there seemed to be no cloud on his horizon.

The first entry in the journal is dated 20th November, 1825, and is as follows :

> " I have all my life regretted that I did not keep a regular journal. I have myself lost recollection of much that was interesting, and I have deprived my family and the public of some curious information, by not carrying this resolution into effect. I have bethought me, on seeing lately some volumes of Byron's notes, that he probably had hit upon the right way of keeping such a memorandum-book. . . . I will try this plan."

The last, unfinished entry, is dated at Naples, 15th April, 1832. Between these dates he kept his journal faithfully, and there are few gaps of any length in it. Indeed it became to him a kind of confidant, to which he entrusted his inmost thoughts, and at this time in his life he felt the need of that. He was fifty-four and had many friends, but death had recently taken from him his most intimate friend, Erskine, and that had left a gap. Scott had an affectionate wife to whom he was devoted ; but with all her merits, Lady Scott could not be his companion in the fullest sense of the word. His mighty mind had grown with the years : hers had not. Part of his life she could not share nor understand. When troubles came upon him, he felt alone : so he confided to his journal his thoughts and feelings and found relief in the writing.

The original journal, preserved at Abbotsford, consists of two quarto volumes, bound in vellum and furnished with strong locks. It is certain that Scott intended that no other person should read it during his life : it is uncertain whether he meant it to be read after his death. In his last days, though the decay of his mind was evident, there were intervals of clarity. He knew the approach of death, and, had he so wished, he could have directed that the journal should be destroyed, and this he did not do. It may be that he was content to leave behind him this intimate memorial of himself. If that is so, we have reason to be grateful.

Early in the journal there is a hint of trouble to come. On 22nd November, 1825 Scott wrote :

> " Here is matter for a May morning, but much fitter for a November one. The general distress in the City has affected Hurst and Robinson, Constable's great agents. Should they go, it is not likely that Constable can stand, and such an event would lead to great distress and perplexity on the part of James Ballantyne and myself. Thank God, I have enough at least to pay forty shillings in the pound, taking matters at the very worst."

An uneasy paragraph, and there was cause enough for uneasiness. The story of Scott's financial disaster is a complicated one, and it begins long before the journal, but his fall from fortune to ruin is so much a part of the background to the journal that something must be said of it. In 1809 Scott made a serious error of judgment by providing three-quarters of the capital for the creation of Ballantyne & Co., Printers and Publishers, his partners being the brothers James and John Ballantyne, who were his personal friends, but no better men of business than Scott himself. Within five years the new firm was on the verge of bankruptcy and was only just rescued by Constable, who then became Scott's publisher and took over the other business. Scott had a fright and a lesson, but did not learn enough. His second error was to spend in the present what he believed, not without reason, that he had power to earn in the future by the sale of his novels. He borrowed heavily on that

future expectation, mainly for the purpose of realising his dream of Abbotsford as the home and estate of a country gentleman. It is easy to blame him for extravagance, but worth remembering his generosity and hospitality. At Abbotsford Scott made and gave more joy and pleasure to others than he ever got from it. If he became the country squire, he accepted and amply discharged all the social obligations of his position. Nonetheless he borrowed heavily and mortgaged the future. Constable also used credit, so did the Ballantynes, and between them they built up a fabric of paper money without any solid backing besides the assets of their business and the imagination of the author, whose future, unwritten, books could not be turned into ready cash. In 1825, as the result of a financial scare in London which caused loans to be called in, the whole crazy and complex edifice toppled in ruins. That is the story in brief. Yet, Scott apparently could not see until the very end that this was inevitable.

On 18th December, 1825, he wrote : " Ballantyne called upon me this morning. Venit illa suprema dies. My extremity is come. I suppose it will involve my all." At first, indeed, he contemplated absolute penury, with the loss of Abbotsford and all else besides ; and characteristically his thoughts are not only for himself, but more for those who were his dependents. In fact, the final crash was delayed for another month, and then the creditors closed in. Scott found himself responsible, with Constable and Ballantyne, for a debt of about £130,000. He accepted the challenge and refused bankruptcy as too easy a way of escape, for he was resolved to repay every penny he owed by writing.

" For this (bankruptcy) I would in a court of honour deserve to lose my spurs. No, if they permit me, I will be their vassal for life and dig in the mine of my imagination to find diamonds (or what may sell for such) to make good my engagements, not to enrich myself. And this from no reluctance to allow myself to be called the Insolvent, which I probably am, but because I will not put out of the power of my creditors the resources, mental or literary, which yet remain to me."

Offers of help poured in from all sides : Scott would have none of it. He realised his own fault and admitted it. The idea of a public subscription annoyed him. " Calling upon men and gods," he wrote, " to assist a popular author, who having choused the public of many thousands, had not the sense to keep wealth when he had it."

In the event a Trust was formed of all his property. Abbotsford was already settled on his eldest son, and Scott was permitted by his creditors to live there rent-free, and to retain for his personal use his official salaries, as Sheriff and Clerk of Court. His Edinburgh house was sold by the Trust. In return Scott gave a pledge that everything he wrote for publication should be at the disposal of his creditors. At this time he was actually working on a biography of Napoleon and on the novel *Woodstock*. He was resolved to repay in full, if life and strength were given to him. He had no illusions about his own fall from greatness, and he accepted it without vain regrets for the way of life which was now past. He wrote, " I have known in my day all kinds of society, and can pretty well estimate how much or how little one loses by retiring from all but that which is very intimate. I sleep and eat and work as I was wont ; and if I could see those about me as indifferent to the loss of rank as I am, I should be completely happy. As it is, Time must salve that sore, and to Time I trust it."

But he had undertaken a gigantic task, as great a labour as any of Hercules. He went to Abbotsford, where he could work quietly, and hoped that his health would improve, for already there were signs that his strong body was beginning to break. His wife was even in worse case, his anxiety for her was great, and an added burden of sorrow was the illness of a beloved grandson. He set himself resolutely to work for his creditors on the two books which then occupied his mind. April 1826 brought the good news that

Woodstock had sold for more than £8,000; but at Abbotsford Lady Scott's condition grew worse, and as her husband watched by the bedside, hope died within him. He wrote: "I am a tolerable Stoic, but preach to myself in vain. Yet, since these things are necessities, then let us meet them like necessities. And so we will." The Law Term's beginning called him again to Edinburgh, but the summons came swiftly to return to Abbotsford; Lady Scott died suddenly. All the tender memories of his youthful love were with him then, and from a full heart he wrote in his journal:

> "May 18th: Another day, and a bright one to the external world, again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gaiety and pastime. No, no. She is sentient and conscious of my emotions, somewhere—somehow; where we cannot tell; how we cannot tell; yet I would not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet uncertain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me."

From this grievous sorrow he returned to his task, now to be performed, while Courts were in session, in solitary lodgings in Edinburgh. So the years passed, and as we turn the pages of the journal we find recorded there the progress of his toil, and the effort that he made. Sometimes he was in low spirits and rebuked himself, sometimes he was far from well. Another entry reads: "This day I have fagged through six pages, and my head aches, my eyes ache, my back aches, so does my breast—and I am sure my heart aches, and what can duty ask more?"

In 1826 he made a journey to London and Paris, looking for material for his *Life of Napoleon*, and was cheered to receive a fine reception in both capitals. King George IV entertained him in London, and in Paris he was feted and almost embarrassed with compliments. He wrote: "If honeyed words from pretty lips could surfeit, I had enough of them. One can swallow a great deal of whipped cream to be sure, and it does not hurt an old stomach." The journey abroad, however, was a tonic, and in 1827 both his health and spirits somewhat improved. He finished the *Life of Napoleon*, and was gratified when at the end of the year the Trust paid its first dividend, six shillings in the pound. In two years Scott had earned for his creditors a total sum of £40,000. The journal records, however, a growing fear that the mine of his imagination was almost worked out, and the next novel, *The Fair Maid of Perth* was not easily written, though it proved successful enough. In 1828 he was seen more in company and this also was a better year for him, but after July he did not write in his journal until the beginning of 1829, when he wrote: "Having omitted to carry on my diary for two or three days, I lost heart to make it up and left it unfilled for many a month. During this period nothing has happened worth particular notice. The same occupations, the same amusements, the same occasional alternations of spirits, gay or depressed, the same absence of all sensible or rational cause for the one or the other. I half grieve to take up my pen to record such an infinite quantity of nothing, but hang it! I hate to be beat, so here goes for better behaviour."

Another gap occurs between 1829 and 1830, which Scott, when he resumes, attributes to the feeling that he was encouraging selfishness by writing so much of himself; but that was not the only explanation. His health was breaking, and he knew it. On medical advice he had to give up his Clerkship of the Court, and his doctors urged him to take more rest; but he refused. He wrote on, and though the work was not of the old quality, he was earning money for his creditors. The Trust paid a second dividend and expressed its gratitude for his most honourable conduct. By the end of 1832, he himself reckoned,

he might see the end of his troubles. But perhaps he knew that he would not live till then.

An entry in the journal records his fear that a fainting fit has been a sign of apoplexy, and early in 1831 at Abbotsford he wrote : " February 13th. I worked till one—then had a walk till three—then wrote this diary till four. Must try to get something done, for I am afraid I am twaddling. I do not think my head is weakening, but a strange vacillation makes me suspect. Is it not thus that men begin to fail, becoming, as it were, infirm of purpose.

That way madness lies ; let me shun that ;
No more of that."

Yet, why be a child about it ? What must be, will be."

His illness increased, and he wrote on with a mind enfeebled but with an indomitable will. The last two novels were completed, *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous*, and he made notes for a new edition of all the Waverley Novels. To his son-in-law, Lockhart, he confided that he thought his chances of recovery were few, but that he considered it his duty to exert what faculties remained to him for the sake of his creditors to the very last.

In October 1831 he began his last journey abroad, in search of health, in a frigate placed at his disposal by the Government, for such was his fame, even then. It was a vain quest. The interest of the journey and of places in the Mediterranean which were new to him revived his spirits, and for a time he seemed better. He wrote again in his journal and hearing that his last two novels had done well, he almost persuaded himself that his debts had been paid. The travellers stayed at Naples, and there the last, unfinished entry was written.... They reached Rome, but then Scott knew that he was dying and expressed his great wish to return home. On the journey he suffered another stroke, and when London was reached he was in a painless coma. The journal was closed for ever.

Yet, by the mercy of Providence, he reached Scotland still living, and when his own carriage brought him through his own loved Border country, he woke to consciousness and delighted recognition of his home. He lived for two months more, and although during most of the time his mind was clouded, there were intervals when clarity returned. Four days before the end Lockhart was summoned to his bedside and found him weak but fully conscious. " Lockhart," he said, " I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."

On 21st September, 1832, he died at Abbotsford, beside the waters of Tweed which he loved well, a great Scotsman, a great gentleman, an undaunted and unconquerable spirit. (Loud applause.)

The President thanked Mr Elder for his excellent Sentiment which was listened to with rapt attention, and called on the members to drink Mr Elder's health. This was done with enthusiasm.

GUESTS.

Mr Albert W. Park, in proposing the toast of " Our Guests," said :

According to legend, there prevailed in Ancient Greece, a custom whereby when a man was invited to make a speech, he was set up on a platform, with a rope round his neck. If the speech was favourably received, the rope was removed ; if the reception was otherwise, the platform was removed. Now,

Mr President, I am in the very fortunate position, that I have no rope, and no platform. It seems pretty certain, therefore, that I am going to survive. Whether the company will or not, including our honoured guests, remains to be seen.

One of the aims of our Society, is the promotion, and fostering of good fellowship, among Scotsmen in London. Now, I ask you Brother Caledonians, what better way of achieving this aim, than by inviting our friends to be our guests.

It is the usual practice for the Secretary to provide the proposer of this toast, with information concerning our Guests, and on reading through this material, four names and words stand out very prominently, namely Edinburgh, Ministry, Golf and Music.

Now Mr President, I don't know any stories about Edinburgh ; I am not a golfer, neither am I a musician ; but having a very close connection with the Ministry, I hear a great deal of what goes on, in and around kirks and manses.

There is the story of the young boy, 5–6 years old, who was attending church with the family. The visiting preacher was inclined to be rather long winded, the boy was getting restless, and in the middle of the sermon, he was heard to say in a very audible whisper, " Mummy, if he doesn't hurry up, we'll miss that bus, and be late for lunch." The service continued and eventually reached the end, and as the preacher raised his arms to give the blessing, the boy said in a very loud voice, " Oh ! look Mummy, he has surrendered at last." (Laughter.)

Now, Gentlemen, I have not reached the point of surrender, in fact my main task lies before me.

We have listened with great interest to the splendid oration given by the author of the Sentiment, Mr Hugh Elder, M.A. Mr Elder is a native of Edinburgh, and a son of the manse ; was educated at Edinburgh University, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and has been Headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School since 1946. It is obvious to us all, that Mr Elder is an authority on his subject and to you, Sir, we extend not only a warm welcome to our gathering, but our sincere thanks for an excellent address, so admirably delivered.

The ministry is well represented this evening in the persons of the Rev. H. J. N. Purves, O.B.E., M.A. Mr Purves is Senior Naval Chaplain to the Forces, and until recently was Interim Moderator at St Columba's, Pont Street.

To the Rev. J. Fraser McLuskey, M.C., B.D., the new minister at Pont Street, we extend a particularly warm welcome. He had the good fortune to be born in Edinburgh, and the good sense to commence his education at the Grammar School, Aberdeen. He qualified as a parachutist at the outbreak of war, and during his service in enemy occupied France, he was awarded the Military Cross. He is well-known to radio and television audiences in Scotland, and I have no hesitation in saying he will become equally known in his new sphere in London.

I have heard of a Church that was requiring a new minister. As is often the case an important man to please was the beadle, and as one man after another was tried, the beadle always had some good reason for shaking his head. At last, however, the day came, when, even before the candidate reached the pulpit, the beadle was heard to say, " A' thing else being equal, that's the lad for us." At the end of the sermon on being asked his opinion, he replied, " Aye, he'll dae, his prayers werena ower lang, he wasna tied tae a paper when it cam to the sermon, and his auld claes'll fit me fine." (Laughter.) I am not suggesting that this was the method of selection at Pont Street. To Mr McLuskey may I say we trust that your sojourn in London will be a long and happy one.

We also welcome Mr Ian Murray Leslie, O.B.E., who hails from the Black

Isle. His main preoccupation outside business is a very worthy object, namely helping with Boys Clubs. He is also interested in cricket, and is a member of that august body, the M.C.C.

Our next guests need no introduction, they have already introduced themselves, the brothers Rory and Alex. McEwen. They delight us every time they are here, and are always welcome. We also welcome another member of the McEwen family, their brother, Mr R. L. McEwen, a barrister.

We have with us London Scots, whom we are always delighted to honour, those gentlemen who uphold the work of our sister societies in the Metropolis, and I make no apology for mentioning first the following members from my own Association, the Ilford Scottish, Mr R. M. Fergus, Past-President, Mr A. Milne, Secretary, Mr J. E. Mackay, Director and Mr D. Perry, Director. From the other side of London, from Harrow, to be exact, we welcome Mr W. Reid and Mr W. Crawford.

And finally, it is my pleasure to welcome Sir Landale Train, C.B.E., M.C., M.Inst. C.E. He was our guest in 1955 and on that occasion also was invited to reply on behalf of the guests. A son of the manse, he hails from Kintyre, Argyll; was educated at Dulwich College and later at Hull and Glasgow Technical Colleges. Whether his name influenced his choice of career, I do not know, but he became an apprentice with the North British Railway in Edinburgh. He was appointed Chief Engineer to the London North Eastern Railway in 1942, and was subsequently a member of the British Transport Commission. Perhaps what we think of British Railways had best be left unsaid.

There remains but one thing for me to say, and I say it truthfully, without reservation of any kind, that we of the Caledonian Society of London, offer our guests a warm and sincere welcome. We are delighted to have you with us, and we trust that you have enjoyed yourselves so much, that you will inveigle your hosts to invite you back again. (Applause.)

Sir Landale Train, C.B.E., M.C., M.I.C.E., who replied to the toast of the guests, mentioned that he had been trained in Edinburgh and had been brought up to a high standard of speech making, which he believed was always maintained in this Society.

He stressed the value of our Scottish heritage and the importance of preserving our Scottish traditions and mentioned that he had this in mind when he had accepted the Presidency of the London Argyllshire Association, with which he was proud to be associated as he himself was born in that Shire.

He concluded by expressing the warm thanks of the guests and wished the Society continued prosperity.

New Members.

Four new members, Mr Hugh T. McCaw, Mr D. Cherry Paterson, Mr Alexander T. Young and Mr James Young were received by the President.

With great acceptance, Mr Rory and Mr Alex. McEwen, accompanying themselves on their guitars, sang " Lum Hat wantin' a Croon," " The day we went to Rothesay," " The

Sour Mulk Cart," " Johnnie Lad " and " Never wed an old Man." All these songs were warmly applauded by the audience.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson's selections were " All the Blue Bonnets are over the Border," " Munlochy Bridge," " Blackbirds " and " The Garb of old Gaul," given with the usual polished finish.

The playing of the Society's Strathspey and the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended an interesting programme.

The Immortal Memory.

Mr James Aitken, President, took the chair at the monthly meetings on the 19th January, 1961. After the loyal toasts had been honoured at the Little Dinner following the meetings, he called upon Mr J. M. Maxwell to give a Sentiment on Robert Burns.

In the course of his Sentiment Mr Maxwell said :

If we want to know and appreciate the genius of Burns we must deal with him as man and poet.

Greater poets than Burns there have been, but no man ever possessed more of the essential qualities of the poet than he. A capacity for powerful emotion, sensitive imagination, the feeling for words and phrases, the strong urge towards self-expression—all these, Burns had in abnormal degree. Self-expression in rhyme was a vital necessity for him—it was the safety valve of his emotions. He exploded in rhyme. His poetic emotions he found to be like measles spots—better out than in.

" Yet, when a tale comes in my heid
Or lasses, gie my heart a screed.
As whiles, they're like tae be my deid
(O sad disease)
I kittle up my rustic reed
It gies me ease."

He wrote primarily to please himself—for the joy of self-expression.

" Some rhyme a neebour's name tae lash
Some rhyme (vain thocht) for needfu' cash
Some rhyme tae court the country clash
An' raise a din.
For me, an aim, I never fash
I rhyme, for fun."

Burns has been presented to you from many points of view, and it is almost impossible to discover a new angle from which to regard him. Tonight, I propose to speak of his universality and himself as a poet. That is what he was by the Royal Decree of Heaven, that, first and last gave him his title to Immortality. But as I have already said we cannot dissever Burns the poet, from Burns the man, for the man *was* the poet. His poetry was not the airy fabric of a vision captured in some fantastic dream and imprisoned in words. It was the very atmosphere of his soul. It was everything he loved, it was everything he suffered for, it was the hopes that surged in his breast, the ideals of which he dreamed. Yet it was more than that, it was his own life

become a song, it was the common daily circumstance transmuted by his magic touch into the coin of laughter or of tears.

You have seen a beam of sunlight strike through a window and convert every particle in its path into a dancing iridescent gem. His poetry was like that beam. It was a ray of sunlight from his great heart, illuminating the dust of life's hard road, giving beauty for ashes, and transfiguring the commonplace into the sublime.

Some critics have said that he was lacking in creative gifts and that he made no great contribution to thought or to the philosphy of life, and are at a loss to understand his hold upon the popular imagination.

In reply to such critics I would say, " What contribution to thought or to the philosophy of life, does the lark make, as it pours out its soul in ecstasy under the blue lift over some purple moor ? "

Burns made the songs of a people and in doing so, won for himself a place in the hearts and affection of his countrymen, of which no jaundiced critic will ever rob him. And in spite of his critics, Burns was a man with a message, and an inspired message is a finer gift to humanity than all the airy spinnings of philosophy.

Let us not forget too that he was a prophet—and that when Burns in ringing accents, like a bugle blowing cried,

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

he was flinging a challenge in the teeth of empty pomp and pride, and claiming for honest worth, its title to nobility. That, I think as events have proved, was a very considerable contribution to the philosophy of life.

But Burns had other messages for his time and for ours. He loved freedom with a whole heart fervently, and he hated tyranny in whatever guise it might display itself. The tyranny he hated most, was that which sought to enslave the minds of men.

At a time when human rights are being challenged, when democratic freedom is denied to great masses of mankind ; when, in many places, freedom of speech is a thing unknown ; at a time when the man of independent mind has either to shut himself off from public life or seek asylum in more blessed lands ; when whole nations are ordered how they are to think, act and speak ; when a few, with tyrannical power, rule over millions of muzzled, chained and haltered automatons, it is refreshing to turn to Burns and find a champion of these human rights, given to us by God, and which, under God, no man has the right to take away, and no power on earth should be able to suppress.

" If I'm designed yon lordling's slave
By nature's law designed
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind ?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn ?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn ? "

Burns was a champion of human rights and his defence of them is more up-to-date—and of wider—(indeed more world-wide) application today than when he wrote these words 170 years ago.

To him a man was a man with the inherent dignity that God gave him when he created him in his image. He might be poor ; he might toil at a humble task with horny hands, but he has rights and privileges none may dare filch from him.

Freedom, opportunity and the undisputed right to live his own life and serve as he pleases is the undisputed prerogative of every man, whatever his race, creed or colour.

He was an inspired singer, thrilled through and through with love of his

country. He loved its institutions, every page of its chequered history, every wood and stream, every bosky knowe that came within his ken. And because he loved them, he sang about them in songs that have come down to us as a golden heritage to inspire us with a love and patriotism like his own.

Probably his love-songs, of all his poems, make the greatest and widest appeal, for apart from their beauty, which clings to them as the perfume clings to a flower, and over and above their bewitching melodiousness which haunts the very heart, they have within them the very elements that make for permanence. And the chief of these is that they are true, not for a generation, alone, but for all time.

While he was building a home at Ellisland in which to receive his hard won bride, he solaced his loneliness in song, and gave to the world this exquisite gem—

" O a' the airts the win' can blaw." *

That was the heart of Robert Burns pouring itself out in an ectasy of affection for Jean Armour ; but it was more than that, it was the supreme expression of the profound love of any man for the woman of his heart, in any age.

True love, we know, is often inarticulate, but Burns gave it voice in such a fashion that every lover must recognise in the sentiments he expresses with such surprising beauty, the things he feels, but has not the gift to make articulate with his own tongue.

Or again, let us think of all the sorrow and the tears that lay behind those haunting lines—

" Ae fond kiss." *

We find in that poem, there is more than a wistful parting message from Sylvander to Clarinda. There is all the pathos and tragedy of human love that cannot hope for its consummation ; there is all the poignant passion of ineffable regret.

The minor poet can only express his own little mind, for his own little time, but the truly great poet, the man of supreme genius, expresses the universal mind for *all* the world and for *all* time.

There is a strong personal note in almost every song Burns wrote. Most of them are, in a sense, autobiographical. Yet though they are intensely personal, with his finger prints and heart beats graven upon them, like the hall-mark stamped on a vessel of beaten gold—they still preserve a singularly impersonal quality. So that when he pours forth his burning heart in some deathless song in praise of Ailie Begbie, or Highland Mary, or Bonnie Jean, it is Robert Burns who sings, but it is more than that, it is the lover in every age, in every clime, made vocal. It is Jacob singing to his hard won Rachel in their little tent of camel's hair beneath the Syrian stars ; it is the unknown lover chanting the praises of the red-lipped Shulamite ; it is the heart of Romeo singing to the expectant ear of Juliet ; it is you, it is I, pouring out our souls in such ecstatic strains of love as we might utter, if an angel had touched our lips with a live coal from the altar.

And what is true of his songs is true also of much of his other work. It was essentially personal, it had its roots in his own experience ; it was often tinged with such local colour that its appeal might have remained forever local. But by the compelling force of his genius, the personal is made impersonal, and the local is made applicable to the universal. So that when he turns the fierce blaze of his satire on " Holy Willie," it is William Fisher who is made a byword and a scorn, but it is more than that. It is the hypocrite in *all* things who is pilloried for *all* time.

This quality of timelessness in their application and appeal is one of the reasons why so many of Burns's poems bear the stamp of immortality upon them. But there is still another and stronger reason for the dominion which his poems, and more particularly his love lyrics, exercise over the minds of men.

And it is this : grope through any of his songs with searching but

systematic fingers, and, hidden deep within them, you will find, the warm and palpitating heart of a man.

Not the flabby heart of some pallid and visionary poetaster, but the heart of a man, with red blood in his veins, with hopes and aspirations, with fears and feelings, with passions and affections, like yours and mine. When a man, in virtue of his heaven-born genius, can get so much of his personality, so much of the living human touch into his work, is it to be wondered at that men hail him as a brother and clasp him to their hearts ?

Poetry has always been recognised as one of the chief vehicles for self-expression, and no poet in any age, or in any language, ever succeeded as Burns did, in making his poems such a medium for the revelation of himself. He gave himself to the world in his verse and that is another reason why humanity will never let his memory die.

What others have tried to do with consummate art, Burns did with sublime and graceful ease. Listen to the wistful cadences of

" Mary Morison." *

Think too of the pride and constancy pulsing through

" My love is like a red, red rose." *

This has been justly called the greatest love song in literature ; recall the gem-like perfection of " O a' the airts " and the poignant sadness of " Ye Banks and Braes " and you will feel his fingers playing upon your heart strings, compelling them to a tenderness that you would fain hide from the eyes of the world.

And, as so often happens, side by side with his magic gift of tenderness, there froliced in his breast a lively and uncontrollable humour. You see it, at its best, in " Tam O' Shanter, " Address to the Deil," " Death and Dr Hornbrook "—a humour that played about his subject like a little lambent flame, but which could scorch and burn deeply when he turned it upon some whited sepulchre like " Holy Willie."

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel 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 !

Ae dreary windy winter nicht
The stars shone doon wi' skentin' light
Wi' you mysel I gat a fricht
Ayont the lough ;
Ye ! like a rash-buss stood in sicht
Wi' waving sough.

The cudgel in my nieve did shake
Each bristled hair stood like a stake,
When wi' an eldrich stoor, " quaick, quaick,"
Amang the springs
Awa' ye squaiterr'd like a drake
On whustlin' wings.

And with his humour he had a great divine gift of understanding. His soul overflowed with compassion for his fellow men :

Tae lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
When banes are crazed an' bluid is thin
Is dootless sair distress.
Yet then content can mak' us blest,

Even then sometimes we'd snatch a taste o' truest happiness,
The honest hert that's free frae a' intended fraud or guile,
However Fortune kick the ba',
Has aye some cause tae smile.

But this pity did not stop with humanity. It reached down to embrace the " wee modest crimson tippit flo'er," " the sleekit tim'rous moosie " and the wounded hare, limping past him to die in the solitude of some ferny brake. His heart was filled with a divine charity—he recognised a " Social Union "—the words are his own—between himself and all God's creatures, and because he had suffered, his heart bled for the misfortunes of these simple denizens of the fields.

But is is when he draws back the veil from the face of nature—for he reveals nature rather than describes her—that this gift of the right word astonishes us, with its certainty.

" If Heaven a draught O heavenly pleasure spare
'Tis when a youthful loving modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Every word there is like a carven stone set orderly in its place. But there is genius in the last line, for the word " milk white," set there almost casually, sublimes the whole verse into a thing of unforgettable beauty, for it directs the mind not only to the hawthorn but indirectly, and oh so delicately, to the virginal purity and fairness of the bonnie lass who is listening so eagerly to the old, old, whispered tale.

Or hear him again :

" To make a happy fireside clime to weans and wife
That's the true pathos and sublime o' human life."

A person without understanding might cavil at the word " pathos " set there so unexpectedly. Yet if we look deeply we will see that the whole beauty of the couplet depends upon that one word.

What lightens the burden of the daily task ? Surely it is the thought that we are working to provide comfort, happiness, warmth, light and love for those nearest and dearest to us. The real meaning of pathos is suffering ; burden, the grinding toil—and only by the alchemy of his genius could a poet like Burns link up the burden with the joy that makes it light.

The services of Burns to Scottish literature were great. The century that preceded his birth had been a chequered one for Scotland and had witnessed the diabolical persecution of the Covenanters and the futile efforts to re-establish the Stuart dynasty. Literature about this time was dead and the voice of the singer was no longer heard, when suddenly, like the song of a lark, soaring aloft from its dewy nest, there broke upon the ears of the people such a burst of melody as they had never heard before. Scotland had found its soul again, and its soul spoke with the voice, and through the lips of Robert Burns.

He interpreted for the people the yearnings that filled their breasts. He made their simple loves, their joys, their sorrows, vocal ; and he sang for them in a language they could understand. He has sometimes been accused of coarseness, but at its worst this was only the outspoken roughness of the farmyard, and much less calculated to do harm than the sugar-coated sexuality served up in these modern days in the form of clever epigrams by high-brow perverts.

More biographies have been written of Burns than any other literary man I know of, and, than he, no man was more unfortunate in his biographers. One alone, J. Hilton Brown, expresses honesty.

Currie, well meaning but inefficiently equipped, was of the poet's day and generation, and was much more concerned with the man than interested in his message.

Josiah Walker was also a contemporary—a poor, wheedling peddling body, with more assurance than integrity, and whose name, but for its connection with Burns, would long ago have been forgotten.

More recently we had James Barke, and his so-called fictional biography. This man, who professed to be a student and admirer of Burns, this 20th century man with the muck rake, with an eye on the profitable market for pornography has set out in rare detail and garnished with the scourings of his own fertile imagination, the less creditable episodes of the poet's life. But the impertinence of the whole affair is that he asked us to believe it was Burns' mind and not his own that he was portraying. What in Heaven's name can such pornographic sweepings lacking even the vitality and wit of honest bawdry—what can they contribute to anyone's knowledge of the man Burns and the essential greatness of his work ?

We have to admit that Burns was a man of human frailties, but if I know anything of his proud spirit, I know he would rather that posterity should see him as he knew himself, a man with human weaknesses, who sometimes succumbed to temptation like other folk. And so it is only right to admit, that he who could sing so divinely of human love, some times trampled love underfoot, he who had such a lofty conception of the dignity of man, sometimes degraded his own manhood in the dust. " Let him who is without sin, cast the first stone," or rather, since there is none of us without blemish, let us render to his frailties, the tribute of a tear.

" Swan of the Nith, if aught in thee
Sullied thy whiteness. None should see
the blemish. Men should view like me.
Thy life's short dream. And let thy faults
Like swans' feet, be
Hid in the stream."

Who are we to judge? Let us never forget his own words :

" Then at the balance, let's be mute
We never can adjust it.
What's done we partly may compute
But know not what's resisted."

And, let us always remember, it was Burns who beckoned the whole world to come reverently on tiptoe beneath the roof of a wee clay biggin' to kneel with a godly cotter and his family at their evening prayer. A man who could do that, had not turned his back on " those things that are lovely and of good repute." Let us leave it there, confident that the Infinite Mercy which was ready to forgive the sins of the sweet singer of Israel, the Shepherd King, will not be denied to the sweet singer of Scotland—the Ploughman Poet. The life that began in Alloway came to its brief close in Dumfries. It is said he threw himself forward on his bed when he died—surely the last proud gesture of his pilgrimage. He had always faced life breast forward, and given strength he would have faced death on his feet, erect and unafraid.

The tragedy was ended ; but the triumph was yet to come. For when this ploughman—whose feet had been set in the clay of his lonely furrow, but who had only to lift his brow to touch the stars—when he entered the Silence, he ceased to be a man of his age ; he became a man of the ages. Time cannot dim the lustre that surrounds his name, for today he is loved and reverenced, wherever our tongue is spoken, by every heart that has ever thrilled at the call of patriotism, or trembled beneath the holy touch of love.

If we love Burns, we must live Burns and we cannot do so more truly than by carrying on as you do in this Caledonian Society of London, the spirit of his message. Let us think the sympathetic thought, act the kindly part, and when by consideration and sacrifice we have eased a burdened shoulder and earned the name of Friend, then indeed shall we be able to sit with Kings.

Where shall we place him along the great poets of the world ? He was

not a Homer, nor a Virgil, nor yet a Dante—nor can he sit on that cloud-capped Olympian height, where Milton, the great organ-voiced Puritan, sits in silent contemplation of Man's Fall and Man's Redemption. No. He stands on a peak, all his own—a solitary, tragic but radiant figure—the greatest lyric poet that the world has ever known. In gratitude, therefore, for the great gifts that Burns has given to Scotland and humanity, I ask you to rise with me and drink to his " Immortal Memory." (Loud applause.)

* In a pleasing baritone voice the speaker sang these songs, accompanied at the piano by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

The Sentiment was received with deep appreciation. The President in thanking Mr Maxwell said that so much had been written and spoken about Robert Burns that it was difficult to imagine anything new coming to light. So many of the fallacies circulated about him in early days had been long ago disproved. It was, therefore, refreshing when we had a speaker like Mr Maxwell who had put before us some splendid reasons for drinking to the immortal memory of Scotland's poet. Not only in word, but in song he had given us a glimpse of the real Robert Burns. We were indebted to Mr Maxwell for giving us such a fine Sentiment—a Sentiment by one who was so obviously sincere in his praise of the poet.

Our Guests.

Mr Alister G. MacDonald, F.R.I.B.A., in giving the toast " Our Guests," said :

It is naturally most pleasurable to extend a greeting to one's guests. We in this Society have been accused of being a very select and superior body of Scotsmen. If our selection of guests is an indication of quality I accept the thought and I hasten to add that the discrimination shown by our friends when they ponder over and eventually accept our invitation surely adds point to the argument !

For the past one hundred and twenty-four years, members of this Society have been regularly introducing their friends to our dinners during the winter months. I submit that that is no mean achievement and reflects appreciation of good quality on both sides. Among us we invite so many guests that it is impossible for the proposer of this toast to know who they all are individually. It is, therefore, necessary so to speak to draw names out of a hat and deal in such representative fashion with a few by individual naming. May I suggest that we put all the guests names every month into the famous Scots Box of the Royal Scottish Corporation and draw forth a few at random. I have been given a short list on this occasion and would beg all our guests to accept to themselves all my greetings and welcomes even if they are not named personally.

Our President has already referred to Mr Maxwell, the author of the Sentiment. I will only add that on other occasions Mr Maxwell is head of the mathematics department at a school at Hemel Hempstead. This shows how lyrical maths. can become. In his younger days he played football for Queen's Park, Kilmarnock, and I am curious to know, why Northampton.

Sir James Crombie, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., needs no introduction as he is an old friend of ours and I am sure we would all agree that he is the perfect example of the modern Excise man.

Sir Thomas Robson, M.B.E., F.C.A., is another old friend and we are delighted to welcome him once again.

Councillor Peter Larking, J.P., is the Mayor of Dagenham and the youngest Mayor that Dagenham has had at that. I owe him an apology. We should have thought twice and invited his girl pipers here this evening to pipe in the haggis ! Anyway when we look at the Mayor we realise why the girls believe in a " pin-up " Mayor. The Mayor does a tremendous amount of work for the physically handicapped and old age pensioners.

We are very pleased to welcome another gentleman who has played just as an important part in local affairs, Alderman C. J. Gibson. Mr Gibson has been Mayor of Ilford and he has done great work for spastics and other handicapped people for many years now and we hope he is enjoying his evening with Scotsmen.

When Robert Burns was only three years old a banking firm was founded in Amsterdam by a Scotsman. Mr H. ter Meulin is now the senior partner of this same leading Dutch firm of Hope & Company. There are various reasons, therefore, why we extend a warm welcome to Mr Meulin. In passing, I would remark to my brother Caledonians how pleasant it is not to be flooded by Bankers on this particular occasion.

Another guest from overseas is Lt.-Colonel S. Johnston. He was head of the Education Department of the Army in New Zealand. He has now left that. I congratulate him not only on his move but because he is going to take up an appointment with the UNO Truce Commission in Jerusalem. I am sure we all wish him well.

Most of us have heard of the National Greyhound Racing Association, but our guest Captain W. J. Neilson, M.C., is even more superior because he is the Vice-President of the National Greyhound Racing Society, which I understand controls all greyhound activities.

We have two eminent gentlemen from the medical world with us, one is Professor R. C. Curran, M.D., M.R.C.P., and the other is Dr Brian Creamer, M.D., M.R.C.P. Both are from St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, the former being Professor of Pathology there. I am sure we all have a warm spot for the wonderful work that these gentlemen and others like them perform for the community as a whole.

We also welcome our good friend the Rev. Wm. H. Mackintosh, M.A., B.D., D.Phil. It is quite unnecessary for me to remind you that he is the Assistant Minister at St Columba's Church of Scotland. We are always happy to see him.

We are also glad to have with us two other old friends, Lt.-Colonel J. D. McGregor, M.C., Officer Commanding the London Scottish Regiment, and Major R. T. D. Macpherson, M.C., of the same Regiment.

Mr President, Mr Vice-President and Brother Caledonians, I ask you to rise and drink to the health and happiness of our guests each and every one. (Applause.)

Reply by Sir James Crombie.

In replying to the toast of the guests, Sir James Crombie mentioned that he had been brought up on the doctrine that it was more blessed to give than to receive—a doctrine which it was sometimes difficult to accept. Tonight his hosts had provided excellent entertainment and hospitality which led

him to feel that there was a lot to be said in favour of receiving rather than giving !

The President had mentioned earlier, before the Pipe-Major's selection began, that he (the Pipe-Major) should be given the courtesy of a silent hearing with no interruptions from talking. Sir James emphasised that he would not expect such a reception and it would not worry him in the slightest if the members talked throughout his whole speech ! (Laughter.)

While he was honoured and pleased to reply to this toast, he remembered that he had discharged a similar duty approximately four years ago and he felt that the members might regard his effort tonight as " caul kale het again." There was always a very friendly atmosphere in the Caledonian Society of London. The goodwill of the members could be felt towards the guests, and their welcome was always outstanding. When one added to that the delight of listening to a moving address, such as that given tonight, by Mr Maxwell, on Burns, the guests could feel that they had enjoyed a memorable evening.

This condition reminded him of the members of the Sunday School class which after listening to the teacher's eulogies on the delights of Heaven, were asked to put up their hands if they wanted to go to that delightful place. All except one boy indicated their enthusiasm, so the teacher invited him to say why he did not want to go. He explained that he was quite anxious to go to Heaven " but not with this lot ! " (Laughter.) I am in exactly the opposite position, I would be prepared to accompany the members of the Caledonian Society of London on any expedition.

Sir James ended by saying, " When I was last entertained by you I expressed the thanks of your guests in the following words of Robert Burns, which I would venture to repeat :

" When death's dark stream I ferry o'er
A time that surely shall come,
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more
Than just a Highland welcome." (Loud applause.)

Mr John Graham sang " There was a Lad " and " Gae bring to me a Pint o' Wine." He was tastefully accompanied by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

The Society's officer, Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave in his usual masterly manner, the following selection : " King George V Army," " Tollochgorm," " Grey Bob " and " My Home."

" Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem ended an entertaining evening.

The usual monthly meetings were held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on the 16th February, 1961, the President in the chair.

At the Little Dinner the President introduced Mr David J. Johnston, B.A., who had kindly agreed to give a Sentiment on

" The Eastern Borders."

After some introductory remarks, Mr. Johnston said :

Life on the border land is a very fascinating sort of condition, expecially the kind of border land that I have in mind between England and Scotland, because there is no geographical reason in the first instance why the border should be where it is. It could as easily have been at the Firth of Forth or on the Tyne. I don't know which interest you wish to pursue in this but I have a sneaking suspicion that certain sacrifices were made in Redesdale which you might want to make again to extend the frontier south—certainly the Romans thought of having it at the Tyne rather than at the Forth. But by an accident, just over a thousand years ago or thereabout, the present frontier more or less became the disputed frontier, and of course, people who live on the frontier are people who develop all the best qualities (laughter) and also all the worst qualities of the peoples who face each other across the frontier. I think that those of us who come from the borders are willing to revel in the happy result of our being born in that part of these islands, which has been disputed probably more than any other—more bloodily than any other, more completely, and with probably ultimately a less satisfactory solution than any other. I say this with all due deference to Berwick, which was at one time a free town, was one time English, one time Scottish. *The Berwick Advertiser* tells us that Berwick is still at war with Russia—a remarkable condition arising from an act which was passed before peace was signed at the end of the Crimean war. The declaration of war was between Her Majesty's Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland and the free town of Berwick-on-Tweed, and the peace was signed between Her Majesty's United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland and omitted the free town of Berwick-on-Tweed, because the Bill to include the free town of Berwick-on-Tweed in all subsequent legislation had then received the second reading. It is one of the most wonderful oversights of parliamentary procedure (laughter) which periodically stimulates the fertile imaginations of newspaper editors.

One of the fascinations about the Border land when one considers it in some detail, is that there is a very curious difference in speech from what you hear on one side of the border to what you hear on the other. Some of the most musical idiom, some of the most beautiful intonation in not necessarily standard English, some of the most remarkable dialect words still recur in speech that you find north of the Border—I am partisan in attitude so I make this admission. (Laughter.) South of the Border there is something entirely different, and there is a sort of narrow band between where it's neither Scottish nor English, it's the patois of Spittal, if you know Spittal of Berwick-on-Tweed. On the Scottish Border, on the Scottish side of the Border, you say " Dancin' in dancun' shoes," which is quite a remarkable discrimination

between what the grammarian calls the gerund and the American calls the participle. But just take this as read, those of you who have forgotten what this means. (Laughter.)

I suppose there are people in the room who remember about the Borders—not in remote historic time, however interesting that may be—the names of Willie Welsh and Jock Beattie and Jaimie Graham of Kaimflat, who were the Scottish forwards about 20 years ago. If you ever played against them you will probably still be carrying certain marks to show for it. And then in another sport, another idiom, you will recall the international reputation, beyond doubt, of a man like Jimmie Guthrie of Hawick, who rode a motor cycle over more treacherous territory, faster, and I think with less fuel consumption probably than anybody else. You will remember he was one of the ace riders for the Norton team. And then I looked, of course, at these Borders and thought, " What's my connection when I said Edencraw ? " and there's nobody bats an eyelid at this (Laughter.) That's wonderful isn't it ? And then I recollect things like Fulford Leas, Cockburnspath and the Cove—all this is very much to the east, beyond Polwarth, and I imagine everyone kens what I mean when I say Jeddart and there is a thing called Jeddart Justice isn't there ?

I was taken into this train of thought by the fact that in a very obvious sense I am the son of my father (it is a wise man who knows his father, somebody said), but I think there is no mistake. At least, most people who see us reckon there is no mistake, except that they think I am his younger brother. (Laughter.) He was one of those who on this Border country was engaged in farming, eventually became the champion ploughman of Great Britain, and by the time he had retired from the job, had trained the people who won 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th in the New World Ploughing Competition. In a sense Johnston is very much a name to conjure with in Border farming circles to this day, so that I felt that things like Fulford Leas and Crailing Ha' came in, as did Sinclair's Hill. I'm the only man in the room that went to school at Sinclair's Hill, I think. I'm prepared to bet on that.

I went back to see the school I once went to and I found it a broken down kind of honky-tonk of a billiard saloon, that had ceased long to serve one kind of educational function and had been converted into a kind of social improvisation with which I did not entirely approve.

I remember too, if I may make so bold, the references made by people in this Eastern Border country to education, the wonderful personality conjured up, by my father in particular, of the " Whupper In." I dinna ken if you ever had a " Whupper In " when you went to school—but he was the man who went round and got the truants, and on occasions he brought them to school in a bag and he emptied them out on the floor of the schoolroom from the bag in order to secure that they got the full benefit of the Scottish tradition of academic perfection in education. (Laughter.)

I have lectured on ballads of the "Worm of Wormilaw " and the " Daft Laird of Lempitlaw." I suppose they have never been collected by anybody and have disappeared from the folklore of the people of Fogo and Eccles, Hawick and Hounam and places like that where at one stage, say 60 years ago, these were the common experience and common lot of all the people. I remember too—probably no other part of England has had a newspaper which carried a long poetic epitaph on the death of a dog. This was Robbie Wightman's Wise Wattie. Wise Wattie was said to be one of the wisest dogs ever seen anywhere. He was known to go on a market day into a pub in Jeddart or in Hawick, and the men would be round—all the lads would be there having their pies and peas, or their pies and beer and there would probably be some of them standing eating with their hats on. Robbie Wightman was a good churchman and he would say " Wise Wattie, there's somebody here wi' no very good manners," and Wise Wattie would jump up

and take the man's hat off and put it down at his feet so that he would eat with his hat off !

I am reminded of a teacher who must have come from Glasga'—a teacher because this is my mother's professional wicket—with all due respect to Frank Worrall and people like that at the moment, a teacher in Pollockshields, who was trained in Glasgow. She was doing a very good job of work in a very poor school in a very poor area, and she was using modern methods and she was wearing herself out, so the Director of Education said, " I think you ought to go and teach out in the country somewhere for a while." She went to Polwarth—I don't know if you know Polwarth, near Greenlaw, a very, very small place, a very small school and there she was teaching the children, and for the whole of the first term she wasn't very happy about the contact she was making with them. Somehow bells were not ringing when they should have been, but she wasn't a despairing teacher, so she let the whole term go. In the second term she decided to get things going properly and she prepared a big picture which she took to school and when she got into the classroom, she, using drawing pins, put up the picture on the blackboard. Then she turned to the class and said, " What's this a picture of ? " Now that's not a very good question, it's not very well phrased, but this was the sense of the question, and there was just dead silence from the kids in the class. Nobody responded at all, but at last one little boy in the back put up his hand and she said, " Well, Tommy," and he said, " Do you mind if I come forward," and she said, " Yes, Tommy, come on." He came to the front and looked at this picture first from one angle and then from the other and she said, " Come, Tommy, don't you know what it is ? " Now she had drawn a clear and undisputed picture of a sheep. And he said, " I don't rightly know Miss, but I think it is a two-year's old yowe crossed between a Border Leicester and a Cheviot." (Laughter.) Thus sometimes in the arch simplicity of those who refuse to refine their general experiences but keep them within the range of specific detail our Border folk and our Border country has an awful lot to offer.

There are so many other things I'd like to talk about, to mention places like Coldstream and Kelso, Melrose and Jedburgh, and the Abbeys ; the names of people who come out of this area, David Hume, Walter Scott, Thomas the Rhymer, Edem o' Gordon and James Thomson (Burns was made a mark mason at Eyemouth), Duns Scotas who gave his name to lots of things ; the Swinton family of that ilk. There's Ayton and so on. There are all sorts of names and places so much associated with a pattern of culture, the development of our people that it is almost pathetic that this should be one of the areas of these islands suffering most from de-population. If you study a map of the British Isles and on it have marked areas from which people have been moving out, where populations have been diminishing, it is shattering to discover how the Eastern Borders, and particularly on the Scottish side, are suffering at this time from depopulation. Yet Roxburgh was once a city, once a Royal Burgh when there were only four Royal Burghs in Scotland, and today it is difficult to find Roxburgh. You'd better not run out of petrol if you are anywhere near Roxburgh because you may not get a fresh supply in Roxburgh !

Then there is all the music of the Teviot and the Slitrig, " Where Slitrig dances doun the glen to meet the Teviot waters, there stands old Hawick." The song in the common riding at Hawick, the Rule, the Borthwick, Jed, Ale, Kale, Gala, " The Bra bra lads of Gala Water." It is a fascinating countryside, fortunately relatively still unspoilt by tourism. I want to finish by saying we might do some very serious thinking. In the world in which we are talking, in the kingdom or in the country about which we are talking, we should seriously consider the possibility of a university of the Borders. While it may run somewhat counter to the general grain of a gathering like this and may sound foreign to the sentiment I have been talking about, it may very

well prove that a university at say Berwick will prove a quite interesting compromise between the cultures of England and Scotland complete as it is with the remarkable medieval traditions which survive and with the types of culture which are there. If nobody in fact, wants to start a university at Berwick (I once thought even of trying to import some American capital, shame on me ! to do this), I hope that some day somebody with some sort of power, will do more to secure that the filmic beauty of the Border country can be shared by those, like ourselves, who are removed from it, only for a short time I hope, but for others for whom the experience, even on film, will be edifying and uplifting. (Applause.)

In thanking Mr Johnston for his Sentiment, which was received with appreciation, the President expressed the gratitude of himself and the members for Mr Johnston's kindness in advancing his visit and taking the place of another speaker who, at the last moment, had been prevented from attending.

Important Guests.

In moving the toast of the Guests, Mr J. T. Strachan to whom this duty was entrusted, said :

It is said that there are only two races—the Scots and those that would like to be. For the benefit of the not so fortunate I would like to read you an essay by an Australian schoolboy addressed to " Caledonians, stern and wild." The boy wrote, " Scotland is a braw wee land on the North of England. It has water nearly all round it and whisky over a large part of it. It enjoys a peculiar language of its own and if one can pronounce it coherently it is an infallible test of sobriety. It possesses considerable mineral wealth but very little of it finds its way out of the country. Gold has been found in some districts as well as in the pockets of some of the natives. In both cases it has been found difficult to work. The national dress of the Scots is the kilt. In pattern it resembles a chess board though the wearer finds it more like a draught board ! It was invented because the aborigines were unable to find trousers big enough to get their feet through. In Scotland, for a couple to declare themselves man and wife in the presence of witnesses is tantamount to a marriage. There is often a tendency to dispense with the witnesses. The chief national characteristic is reckless expenditure." (Laughter.)

Now that we know something about ourselves I should like to tell you a little about some of our guests.

We accept it as a compliment that they are here in such numbers. They make a most imposing list, but it is, of course, only possible to mention a few by name.

This part of the proceedings might almost be titled, " This is your Life." However, to set your minds at rest, I shall only refer to those parts of it I trust will not embarrass you to mention in public.

Mr D. J. Johnston, B.A., is the author of the Sentiment which gave us great pleasure and has been listened to with intense interest. He is Advisor to Teachers' at the University of London Institute of Education. We thank him for his Sentiment and look forward to his company on future occasions.

Mr Strachan also welcomed the following additional guests, Sir John Tait, Sir William Christie, K.C.I.E., M.C.,

Rev. J. Fraser McLuskey, M.C., B.D., Rev. L. O. Williams, B.A., the Rev. Robert Wiseman, Lt.-Col. D. Scott, T.D., Dr Murdoch MacGregor, M.D., D.Ph., Dr E. W. Cook, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D., Dr I. I. Findlay, M.B., B.Sc., from Australia, Mr R. Croker, A.C.I.S., from New Zealand, and Mr R. W. Williams of South Africa.

In referring to Mr Harry Hynd, M.P., who had agreed to respond to this toast, Mr Strachan said that Mr Hynd was a Perthshire man, a Membe rof Parliament for Accrington, past Hon. Secretary and Past-President of the London Perthshire Association.

In his reply to the toast of the Guests, Mr Harry Hynd, M.P., expressed his pleasure at repeating a visit he had made more than once in the past, thanked Mr Strachan for his kind remarks, and voiced the appreciation of the guests for the excellent hospitality extended to them all.

The musical programme was provided by Mr Kenneth Atkinson, who sang " Scotland Yet," " The Laird o' Cockpen," " The Top of the Morning," " The Hiking Song " and " Westering Home." He was accompanied in his usual efficient manner by Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M. On this occasion Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave the following selection : " My Native Highland Home," " Struan Robertson," " The Ale is Dear " and " The Heights of Dargai." After the Pipe-Major had played the Society's Strathspey, an enjoyable evening finished with the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

At the Little Dinner held on the 16th March, 1961, at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, the Sentiment was given by Mr Duncan McIntyre.

In introducing Mr McIntyre the President reminded the members that Mr McIntyre was well-known to the London Scottish community and particularly to this Society, because this was the third occasion on which he had given the Sentiment. Mr McIntyre's Sentiment was entitled :

SCOTTISH HUMOUR, SOME SAMPLES AND COMMENTS.

He said :

When I was first approached by your Chairman regarding the possibility of my delivering another Sentiment to the Society, I agreed, in rather a panic I'm afraid, to talk on Scottish Humour. I have since had time to qualify

somewhat that wide and rather vague title, and I hope—and think—you will approve of the alteration you will note on your menu cards.

I have no intention of treating you to a long-winded boring dissertation on the national character of Scottish Humour, and the psychological reasons for it being what it is. No, I thought it would be much more interesting—much more fun—to place before you one or two examples of what to me is typical humour, and confine my own comment and opinion to the absolute minimum.

There are many people who maintain that to speak of " Scottish Humour " is a contradiction in terms, since they deny the Scot any sense of humour whatsoever. Admittedly there is a section of the Scottish community who seem to walk through life in the perpetual shadow of Knox and Calvin, but similar minorities can be found in any land. There is nothing essentially Scottish in such gloom.

Certainly the long list of Scots comics who have brought laughter and joy to so many, provide ample evidence of the Scots sense of humour. Let's think first of the " Unconscious Humour " that one finds rolling off the Scottish tongue so frequently, and to which the warm Scots dialects add such point and colour. I am reminded at once of the successful business man who crowned his business success by the acquisition of a new Jaguar car. Because of traffic he was quite unable to test the speed of the car even before he had reached Kyle of Lochalsh. Looking across to Skye however, he felt sure that the roads would be less crowded and so he took his car over on the ferry. After he had passed Broadford he did strike a long stretch on which there was no traffic, so he was able to speed up to something like 100 miles an hour. At that moment, a farm tractor on which were two men, emerged from a field and the only way the driver of the Jaguar could avoid an accident was to cut into the field behind the tractor, and this he did. Naturally the farm labourers were perturbed and one of them turned to the other and said, " Donal' we just got out of that field in time, if we'd been any longer we would have been killed ! " (Laughter.) Unconscious humour ? On the face of it, yes, but knowing my Highlander, I wonder !

Unconscious humour is, I suppose, most often overheard in crowds, as in the case of the Edinburgh shopper who stopped another in Princes Street, and said, " Aren't you Mrs Galbraith ? " to which came the reply, " No, quite the reverse ! " (Laughter.)

It was also in Princes Street, during Festival time last year, that a friend of mine overheard one lady say to another as he passed—" D'ye know, I washed my feet last night—and oh ! the relief ! " (Loud laughter.) Yes, one can be amply repaid for keeping one's ears open—there are gems to be heard every day.

The ordinary man in the street is also responsible for the exploiting of a very rich vein of Scottish humour in irony and scorn. Almost any of Scotland's football grounds will provide ample evidence of this, and many a referee must have wished he'd been officiating in some other country !

During my early days as an Art Master, I had occasion to teach evening classes in the Decorative Trades Institute in Glasgow, where my students were mostly painters apprentices, and very rough diamonds at that ! I could fill a book with my memories of those vivid Glasgow types, and I shall always remember a phrase used to end a bitter argument just as I entered the class-room—" Ach, yer back's a' sawdust, yer heid's burst ! " A classic in its way, I think you will agree. And, speaking of classics of ironic and satirical humour one immediately thinks of Burns, the great master of satirical verse and his biting satire " Holy Willie's Prayer."

The Scottish humour which most appeals to me, is the soft and gentle humour of the Highlands, so often regarded, as I have said, as unconscious, yet more often than not written and spoken to best advantage by the Highlander

himself at his own expense. Much of the charm, much of the point of this humour, stems from that genuine " language " difficulty of the Gaelic speaking native, whose mother tongue made life extremely awkward for him when he ventured into the intricacies of " The English." With his growing mastery of that language, however, the " funny stories " about the Highlander have become fewer and fewer, and the ones that are now " manufactured " are sometimes a little cruel, without that necessary stamp of truth, and singularly unfunny. In the days of Neil Munro, however, there was, of course, an endless field for exploration, and no one was more successful in the portrayal of the true Highland humour and character than he, no one more understanding of or sympathetic to the Gael. He never laughed at his characters, he laughed with them. Here is his story of Para Handy's invitation to the Lodge at Tarbert.

At this point the speaker, without notes, recited this amusing story much to the delight of his listeners.

How can I sum up this very sketchy review of Scottish humour ? There are many areas of our land which I haven't mentioned, all producing their own special and recognisable brands of humour—areas like the N.E. corner, in and around Aberdeen, where the cold mists of the North Sea are so often dispersed by the local gales of warm and boisterous laughter. To me, Scottish humour, like the Scot himself, is kindly and generous, though it can, when occasion demands, be biting in its satire. It has, throughout the ages, been a saving grace to a nation all too often faced with unrelenting hardship, and as such, it is one of the most sparkling facets of the jewel we call Scottish Character. (Loud applause.)

To Mr McIntyre the President expressed the appreciation of the members.

Our Guests.

Mr Douglas G. Robertson, proposing this toast, said :

It is not always the case that the Englishman completely understands the Scot, or vice versa, for that matter, and we must remember that there was a time, centuries ago, of course, when the Englishman was not so pleased to see the Scot in this green and pleasant land. I am reminded of the young Scot who had been to London for a holiday. On his return he was asked by a friend how he had fared. " All right," he replied cautiously, "but they are funny folk down there." " How's that," said his friend. " Well, late one night, it must have been about two in the morning, a man came banging on my door, banging and shouting—at two in the morning, mind you ! " " And what did you do." " Oh, I didn't do anything, I just went on quietly playing my pipes ! " (Laughter.)

We have with us this evening many guests and it is my duty and pleasure to extend to them all, on behalf of the members of this Society, a hearty and sincere welcome to this gathering.

We have a very full programme and time will allow me to mention more particularly, only a few of our guests, and I hope that those welcome guests that I do not mention will forgive me. It was Oscar Wilde who said that " after a good dinner one can forgive anything—even one's relations." I hope you have all had a good dinner.

Among the distinguished guests we have with us tonight is Sir John Tait, who is this year's President of the London Ayrshire Society. He is a man who holds our two main charities very dear to him, as he is a Life Governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation, and also of the Royal Caledonian Schools.

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Among many City interests, Sir John is a member of the Port of London Authority and, of course, is connected with the Banking world. He has been a guest at our dinner on several occasions and you are indeed welcome, Sir, once again and we thank you for promising to reply to this toast on behalf of your fellow guests. Mr Duncan McIntyre, from whom we have already heard, was born in Glasgow. He has appeared in various plays and films on television but his greatest love is reported as being sound Broadcasting. His Sentiment tonight—so full of charm and wit—will remain long in our memories and make very pleasant reading in our Chronicles for the future. (Applause)

A warm welcome was also given to Sir John Macpherson, G.C.M.G., Sir James Miller, D.L., J.P., LL.D., Mr D. G. H. H. Smith, Mr P. Cahill, O.B.E., and Mr S. H. Fletcher.

Response by Sir John Tait.

In the course of his speech, Sir John Tait, who responded to the toast of the guests, said :

A year ago I was invited here by Mr Dowie and promised a pleasant evening. The day before the Dinner I had a *cri de cœur* over the telephone—would I deputise for the Speaker who was to respond to the toast of the Guests, but had had to cry off at the last minute. Well that was that—I did have a most enjoyable evening notwithstanding. Last month, again I came to enjoy your hospitality as Mr Dowie's guest and after dinner, standing at the Bar, when one is normally in an accommodating frame of mind, your Hon. Secretary applied the screw, and here I am again.

You will have noticed in the Press recently the Court case where an English father asked for an injunction to prevent his daughter from marrying a foreigner—to wit, a Scotsman. One gathers that this Englishman would have objected just as strongly had his daughter, the little cat, brought in a Jamaican or a West African and laid him on the mat in front of father. It was just a foreigner of whatever origin that raised the ire of this isolationist yeoman of England, but Gentlemen, *our* concern over this must primarily be the humiliating classification into which we are lumped with any Motobulo from the Congo. For we are a proud race—Scotland the Brave and so on.

Then there was the case, about a fortnight or so ago, when a Scotsman of no fixed abode was described as a foreigner and ordered by the Court to return to Scotland and to stay out of England for three years. This man's grievance at the sentence, was not that he minded living in Scotland, but that he had come South to make his fortune and felt humiliated that he was returning with only ten shillings in his pocket.

In Banking circles, one would regard the significance of these two cases happening in a matter of two months, as indicating a trend—and while hitherto the Caledonian Society has justified its existence by providing each month an opportunity for a convivial occasion—when droughty neighbours meet—the policy in future must be, I suggest, to follow a sterner objective. The stake of the Scots in London and elsewhere South of Berwick is under attack and must be defended.

As a simple Ayrshire man I am not certain where the Highlands end and the Lowlands begin, or the other way about. From my part of the world we look across the Firth of Clyde to Kintyre and Arran, both I understand to be within the Highlands insofar as some speak the Gaelic in those parts. Again, is Glasgow Highland or Lowland ? There was the H.L.I.—until we in Ayrshire absorbed it ! It was a movement in reverse of taking the breeks off

a Highland man ; most of the policemen in Glasgow are reputed to be Highland ; there is a place in Glasgow called the Hielandman's Umbrella. Is Dundee Highland or Lowland, notwithstanding the Black Watch ? is Aberdeen Highland ? I have heard it stated categorically that Aberdeen is not Highland notwithstanding the Gordon Highlanders. . . .

Mr President, I am sure I speak for all the guests when I say how greatly we have enjoyed ourselves—and how much we appreciate the hospitality and the friendship you have extended to us and I will conclude by saying for all your guests, thank you very much. (Applause.)

Honorary Office-Bearers.

In submitting this toast the President said :

There is a danger in not saying enough : there is a risk in not waiting for enough to be said. Two Scots farmers met and one said, " Geordie, whit did ye gie that sick cow o' yours ? " " Turpentine," came the reply. They met a few days afterwards and the question came again, " Georgie, whit did ye say ye gied that sick cow o' yours ? " " Turpentine," again came the reply. " Weel, I gied my sick cow turpentine and she died ! " " Aye," said Geordie, " sae did mine ! " (Laughter.)

Carlyle said, " Give me a man who can laugh ; a fine, fat healthy laugh," and Henry Ward Beecher declared, " The man who cannot laugh and be gay should look to himself."

And here we are tonight having a good laugh : enjoying one anothers company as we have done every evening of this season ; receiving our guest speakers with enthusiasm and tonight has certainly been no exception.

Now all that does not just come about by itself and that is why I am proposing this toast.

Shortly after I was persuaded to accept the office of President I became very much aware in my meetings with Mr Miller and Mr Deans of the great volume of work undertaken by our Honorary Office-bearers—work done quietly and out of sight.

First of all I would like to thank my colleague, Vice-President Munro for his unfailing help, not only at these dinners, but behind the scenes at our business meetings. I would express the wish that his year of office, next session, is a very successful one.

To our Hon. Treasurer, Bro. Caledonian Jardine we express our thanks for his work in keeping the Society's accounts in order. Of course, his work is always made so much easier when we pay our subscriptions promptly !

We much appreciate the work done by our Hon. Auditor, Bro. Caledonian Robertson. I am told that Bro. Robertson performs miracles. At 12 midnight on 31st October each year the Accounts are handed to him and ere sunrise on 1st November he has passed and signed the Balance Sheet !

The work of our Hon. Historian, Bro. Caledonian Miller is a labour of love we much appreciate. His painstaking efforts, meeting after meeting, in gathering the material for the publication of the Society's Chronicles, is one which is of great value to the Society. But I think that possibly the gathering of the material is outweighed by the blue-pencil sub-editing which must follow.

This toast gives me the welcome opportunity of paying tribute to our newly appointed Secretary, Bro. Caledonian George Deans. He was set a high standard in this office by his predecessor, William Miller. I'm going to suggest to you that he has well lived up to that standard and I take this opportunity of wishing him every success in his office as Secretary. (Applause.)

The toast was enthusiastically received.

In responding to this toast, Mr George Deans, the Hon. Secretary expressed his thanks to his predecessor, Mr William Miller for the latter's many kindnesses. Mr Deans continued :

Honorary Office-bearers—an intriguing phrase with several meanings—the bearer or carrier of a post, position, function and so on. But I like to think of it as the performance of an act of kindness or service. Mark you, there are times when the actions or inaction of some members is so infuriating that we are tempted to extend our function to that of Pall Bearers.

I am surprised and shocked to find that some new members have fallen into such bad habits in so short a time—not sending in their reply postcard in time or telephoning at the last minute. I hope they will mend their ways without any persuasion from me.

Well, there is much more I could say and should say, but fortunately for you and for me I have remembered in time the very wise advice which the father whale gave to the baby whale when telling him the facts of life. He said, " Remember Son, only those are harpooned that spout too much ! " (Laughter.)

On behalf of all the Honorary Office-bearers I thank you Mr President for your gracious remarks and you Bro. Caledonians and Welcome Guests for the friendly and generous way you have received this toast.

We hope with the full co-operation of all the members we may, in our humble way, continue to render service to the Caledonian Society of London, which for 124 years has upheld the customs and traditions of our native land and whose members by their generous support of the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools, have shown more than a passing interest in the welfare and happiness of their less fortunate fellow countrymen. (Applause.)

New Members.

Two new members, Mr J. C. Finlayson and Mr W. U. B. Reid were received by the President and welcomed by the members.

Mr W. Lyons sang the following songs : " Mary of Argyle," " The Lass of Ballochmyle," and " The Sons of Bonnie Scotland." The accompanist was Mr Robert Eadie, L.R.A.M.

Pipe-Major J. B. Robertson, M.B.E., gave the following selection ; " The Lads with the Kilt," " Munlochy Bridge " " Loch Carron," " Loch Leven Castle," and the Society's Strathspey.

A successful evening ended by the singing of " Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

The Annual Festival.

The Annual Festival or Ladies' Night was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, S.W.7, on Thursday, 20th April, 1961. There was an excellent attendance of members,

their wives and friends. The President, Mr James Aitken was in the chair and he was supported by many important guests.

The Caledonian Society of London.

After the loyal toasts had been honoured, Lt.-Col. John D. McGregor, M.C., proposed the toast of the Society in these words :

When your Secretary extended your kind invitation to me to propose this toast I was very greatly honoured, but when at a later date I discovered that this is only the second time in your long history that someone outside the Society has discharged this duty, then I was completely overwhelmed. I refer to myself as " someone outside the Society " but in a sense that is not quite true because being a serving member of the London Scottish then I can surely claim to be a kinsman. So in a sense this is like the grandson being asked to propose a toast to his grandfather, and I trust you, Mr President won't take this remark in its too literal sense !

I am still wondering why you have broken away from your custom and not asked your President to propose this toast and I can only assume that at some stage you had the thoughts of Robert Burns and that you said, " Oh! wad some power the giftie gie us to see oorselves as others see us."

For the benefit of my fellow guests, who may not have had the privilege extended to me of reading the Chronicles of the Society, I would like to give you some of the facts. The Society was formed in 1837, that is 124 years ago in the reign of Queen Victoria, but it can go back even further because it appears to be the direct successor to the ancient Caledonian Society of London which was formed in 1786. It interested me to note that it was formed—that is the Ancient Society—on the 25th day of December, 1786, which on my reckoning gave the President and his committee exactly a week to get the celebrations keyed up for Hogmanay. (Laughter.)

Now, the Society was born on the conviction that all Scots particularly those in exile, revel in the company of their compatriots and enjoy the opportunity of talking in their own dialect, albeit some unkind people might suggest that the Scottish brogue becomes more pronounced as the evening goes on ; nevertheless, the Society recognised that if Scotsmen could meet and in words and in verse and in song recall the glories of Scotland, that that would be a start, and so it was on this very firm foundation that the Society came into existence.

Its second point was that it would encourage the wearing of the garb of old Gaul, and in fact, in the early days in the Society, no office-bearer could hold office unless he wore the kilt. But as the years passed by I think the gentlemen from the Highlands must have realised that they were losing the great support and the great ability of those other Brother Scots, who perhaps came from the borders or the East Coast, or even from Glasgow, who had not been accustomed to wearing the kilt and so they amended the rules and regulations and allowed them to wear a kilt jacket and waistcoat with nankin breeches and long hose. That got by for a few years until, of course, came the inevitable that there were Scotsmen who had neither a kilt nor breeches, nankin breeches that is, and they were allowed to turn up in ordinary clothes, providing they were clean and decent. (Laughter.)

Now right at the head of the aims of this Society has always been the virtue of charity and from the very inception you have been noble and generous supporters of two great Scottish Societies, the Caledonian Schools who have done so much to put the young Scot on the right road in life, and the Royal

Scottish Corporation who have done so much to alleviate the hardships of the old and infirm. Because of your generosity, Gentlemen, there must be thousands of our countrymen who have had real reason to say " Thank God for the Caledonian Society of London."

I am sure you will understand why all of us who serve and have served in the London Scottish Regiment know with pride that this Society with the Highland Society of London, formed our regiment in 1859 and two years ago when we celebrated our centenary this Society presented us with the most magnificent silver mace which our Drum Major carries at the head of the battalion, an outward and visible symbol of the bond which exists between the Society and the Regiment, a bond further strengthened by the fact that so many members of one are members of the other.

There are many other things about the Society which I read in those Chronicles, but search as I could, nowhere did I find a true explanation of Caledonian Honours Three. I have asked your President tonight; I've even asked Mr Miller who knows most things that go on, and they cannot tell me, so I can only suppose that originally it was the way in which they dealt out the spare bawbees from their sporran, or a symbolical gesture of expending hospitality. But be that as it may it is like so many other customs perhaps it is better left as it is, as a mystery.

Now, I want to mention only one other thing about the Caledonian Society. When they introduced this it must have been a sensation in London, and certainly it would be a sensation in Scotland, but it was one that since that day has given great joy and pleasure. I refer, of course, to the fact that this Society was the first society in London to open its doors to the ladies, and that is something for which all we men, and I suspect the ladies too, are eternally grateful.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, there in a few words, is a picture of this very great Society—a Society which in the present world where so much value is placed on things of no value, a Society which stands for Queen and for Country, for all the things that are known to be right and proper, who are not ashamed of being Scottish and who every time they come into this room make it a part of Scotland. I ask you to join with me in congratulating them on the magnificent past and extending to them our wishes that long may there be the Caledonian Society of London. (Applause.)

The toast was drunk with enthusiasm, and in the course of his reply, the President said:

I would like to say that the Society has reached its 125 birthday and not merely passed its 124, and for that long period in peace, and I believe during at least four wars, the Society has held regular meetings in this great City of London.

In the time when Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837 until now, when we are blest with another reigning Queen, the Society has honoured the great traditions of its founders. Now, unless you are getting a wee bit alarmed, I'm not proposing a second toast to the Society. If I were to follow the practice so often in these cases, I would be telling Col. McGregor that he has been saying some very flattering things about us, but not for one moment am I prepared to do that—I would then be accusing the Colonel, I think, of insincerity. But in any case, Ladies and Gentlemen, I entirely agree with all he has said about the Caledonian Society of London. And let me say here right away, lest any of you Brother Caledonians get swalt heids, that when the proposer of this toast was speaking about the Society he was not merely praising the present membership or any individual; no, he was speaking about the great traditions of the past, he was really throwing out a challenge to you and me.

On behalf of my colleagues in the Society, I thank you Col. McGregor for your eloquent and amusing toast and the rather nice things you have said about us, and for your good wishes. Will you please, Sir, take back with you our very good wishes to the London Scottish Regiment. (Applause.)

Our Guests.

Mr. T. M. Munro, Vice-President, proposed this toast. He said :

The Vice-President is kept in very severe restraint during the other dinners of the session, but on the occasion of the Annual Festival he is allowed to propose the very important toast of the Guests.

My first duty is to offer a very warm welcome to all those who are attending tonight, and particularly to the ladies amongst whom it is a great pleasure to have Mrs John B. Rintoul and Mrs Abernethy, widows of Past-Presidents. Both these ladies continue to take a very keen interest in our activities.

You have already listened to Lt-Col. McGregor, who has submitted to you the toast of the Society. We are always glad to have representatives from the London Scottish Regiment with whom we have such close ties. Col. McGregor, who was born in Edinburgh, joined the London Scottish in 1939, was commissioned to the Black Watch in 1941, served in North Africa, was Intelligence Officer at the Battle of Alamein and later Training Major with the 8th Indian Division in Italy. He was in the Normandy Landings on D. Day. Much to his regret he was wounded and had to return to the United Kingdom. He took over command of the London Scottish in 1958 and under his efficient leadership the high standard of the Battalion has been well maintained. While he was with the Black Watch he was awarded the Military Cross, but he is much too modest to speak about it.

The Vice-President also welcomed Sir Charles and Lady Cunningham, Dr Caryl Thomas, B.Sc., D.Ph., Medical Officer for the Borough of Harrow, Mr R. L. McMurtie of the Harrow Caledonian Society, Mr and Mrs A. M. Blyth, the latter being the daughter of the President, and Mr Robin Hall and Mr Jimmie MacGregor, popular radio, television and stage personalities whose singing had given so much pleasure.

Finally, the Vice-President said that the Society was fortunate in inducing Mr Matthew K. Reid, O.B.E., M.A., LL.B., to respond to the toast. Mr Reid, a native of Uddingston educated at Hamilton Academy and a graduate of Glasgow University, now held an important appointment in London. (Applause.)

In replying to the toast of the Guests, Mr Reid said :

Mr President, members of the Caledonian Society, Ladies and Gentlemen, Scotsmen and Scotswomen of all nationalities, when I accepted the invitation to reply to this toast tonight I felt very honoured, but knowing the reputation of this Society I felt rather apprehensive. That apprehension increased very considerably after I had studied the Chronicles and noted the very prominent and brilliant men and women who had replied to this and other toasts in the past—in fact, I began to think I had been rather stupid to take on this job.

Well, being stupid is not a very surprising thing for me because although I am normally a very reliable and steady type, ever since I was a little boy I have been subject to fits of daftness. This used to worry my mother a lot, so much so that one day she decided to take medical advice. So she went round to the doctor and he said, " What seems to be the trouble Mrs Reid ? " " Och, its his wee heid Doctor, he's had it off and on since he was a baby." (Laughter.)

However, having committed myself, my next problem was to find something to talk about because I presume you didn't just ask me here to stand up and say thankyou and sit down again. So again, I had recourse to the Chronicles for inspiration, and from that very excellent book I discovered two things. The first thing is that when making a speech such as this you don't have to stick to the point—indeed you don't have to have a point at all—and the other thing I discovered has been referred to already this evening, that is that this Society announce with pride and a certain degree of smugness, that they are broad minded enough to allow the ladies into their functions once a year. Well, this is a very commendable and tolerant attitude, but it seems to me that because of it the ladies must be regarded as the principal guests tonight, and as they have not, according to what I believe is the usual practice, a lady to speak for them I am going to say a few words about, for, and against, the ladies. This will also enable me to display two of what seem to me to be the standard qualifications of after dinner speakers, a total ignorance of their subject and the determination to prove it. (Laughter.)

I am not entirely ignorant of women because I married one, and it may be interesting to note that I met my wife at the only other function of this Society which I have ever attended, and that was just before the war. Now, in case you think there is anything sinister in the gap between the two visits, my wife has asked me to say that she is delighted to be here tonight and no longer entertains any ill feelings against the Society. (Laughter.)

I hope that you will also realise from my reference to the war, and looking at my wife, that we were married very young, and as is quite common among Scots people, my wife was good enough to go out to work so that I could continue with my studies—so this is known as taking your degree by the " sweat of your frau." (Laughter.)

I have, however, other qualifications for talking about the lassies. I am in favour of women. I appreciate their beauty and their charm. I am grateful for their sympathy, their kindness and companionship ; I acknowledge the sacrifices they make for their husbands and families ; I accept the fact that they are never, under any circumstances, wrong. I find them sometimes intensely irritating, but I love the idea of there being two sexes and I freely admit that woman is the superior one. My greatest handicap, however, is that I don't understand them (laughter), with the result that I have always been rather afraid of them, which has enabled me to live a pure but rather dull life. (Laughter.) I am, however, comforted in my unhappy state by the knowledge that for a man to pretend to understand women is bad manners, and really to understand them is bad morals. (Laughter.)

At this point my wife asked if she could read the few notes I had made. So I handed them over, and after she had read them she told me she was positive she could do better. Of course, we men know that when a woman is being positive she is just being mistaken at the top of her voice. However, I told her to go ahead and see what she could do, so the next bit is from her.

It is addressed to married men. She said : " Gentlemen, you ought to sit back and take stock of your shortcomings and resolve that from now on you are going to be better husbands. I am sure you ladies will agree that men change completely after marriage, and it is not long before you fail to recognise all those qualities in them for which you married them. Before men get married they lie awake thinking of something you have said, after marriage

they fall asleep before you have finished saying it. (Laughter.) Before marriage you cannot get them to go home, after marriage you can't get them to stay home. (Laughter.) And what happened to all those presents, the chocolates, flowers and all the rest ? Now if you get them they are not love tokens any more, they are peace offerings." (Laughter.)

Now, ladies, do your husbands play golf ? My wife extends to you her deepest sympathy. To her golf is an invention of the devil. Consider the golfer, he rises early in the morning and disturbeth the whole household ; mighty are his preparations. He goeth forth full of hope and when the day is far spent he returneth smelling of strong drink and the truth is not in him. (Laughter.) That's a short extract from the gospel according to my wife and there's lots more, believe me ! Ladies, do you think your husbands drink too much ? Well, my wife has some advice for you too—or it is advice to husbands really. They should set up a bar in their own homes—if he is the only customer he won't be the last. He gives his wife £21 with which she buys a case of whisky, that's 192 doubles. (Laughter.) She serves these to him and his friends at 4s. 6d. each and 12 days later when the case is finished his wife has £43 4s. With this she buys another case and puts £22 4s. in the bank and starts all over again. Now, in 10 years time when you die in your boots, your wife has got £6,600 on deposit. (Laughter.) That's enough to bury you, bring up your children, pay off the mortgage on the house, marry a decent man and forget she ever knew you. (Laughter.)

My wife's finished now, she has had her say and I'm going to have the last few words in defence of men. Now we men believe the unkindest thing we can do to a woman is to deprive her of a grievance (laughter) so, by neglecting our wives to play golf, go fishing, watch cricket, or whatever we do in our spare time, being untidy in the house, refusing to do the washing up, by forgetting anniversaries and all those irritating little habits which we men have, we are really trying to keep our wives happy by giving them plenty to criticise. Now, I wouldn't say this publicly, but I think women ought to realise that we know they are not as perfect as they would have us believe. We've all got things we don't like about women. I don't want to catalogue them, it wouldn't be in place, but my pet aversion is woman in trousers, or are women in trousers, I should say.

" She decks her lower limbs in pants
Yours are the limbs my sweeting
You look divine as you advance
But have you seen yourself retreating ? " (Laughter.)

Finally, ladies, if you don't think much of your husbands, you take a good look round at what the other girls got landed with. (Laughter.)

Now, Mr Miller, with true Scottish consideration, gave me this quotation :

" I love a finished speaker
I really truly do
I don't mean one who's polished
I just mean one who's through." (Laughter.)

Well, I'm through with the introduction to my speech and now I am coming to my speech proper. It is going to be very short and to the point, and that is on behalf of all the guests here tonight to thank you, Mr President, and all members of the Caledonian Society for the rapturous, wild and inequitable pleasure of eating and drinking at someone else's expense. We appreciate your generous hospitality and your good companionship and most of all the warmth of your welcome. I think we will all agree that it has been the most delightful evening, and I hope you'll ask us back again. (Loud applause.)

Salute to the President.

At this stage in the proceedings the Past-Presidents saluted the President, and Mrs A. M. Blyth, the President's daughter, presented the gold badge of the Society to the immediate Past-President, R. A. McWilliam.

The Toast of the President.

The toast of the President was proposed by Past-President John R. Aldridge in these words :

I am highly delighted, for two reasons, that I should have been invited to propose the toast of our President this evening.

Firstly, it means the Council is speaking to me again, after a lapse of several years, due to my dropping a frightful brick when proposing the toast of the Guests. Considering the term " Guests " quite inappropriate for such a gathering of friends I blithely started off by addressing the meeting as " Freends and Fella-Cairters." After the meeting I was taken on one side, told about the uses and abuses of tradition, and relegated to the back-benchers.

Mr President, Mr Vice-President, Brother Caledonians and Welcome Guests, you will have noted that I now toe the Party Line and I hope all is forgiven.

My main delight, however, is that I am given the opportunity of telling you something about President James Aitken—not very much, I am sorry to say, because of his innate modesty, which defeats his biographer more than somewhat.

The President's trial began last November, and after a long and careful hearing he was found guilty of the following charges.

1. That he had been a very good President, upholding all the traditions associated with his office and carrying out his duties with acceptance to the members.
2. That he had seen to it that most interesting Sentiments were given during the season by experts in their subjects, thus adding to our knowledge and education.
3. That he had procured from among the members, gentlemen to propose the toast of the Guests, and from among the guests, gentlemen to reply, who were obviously first-class after dinner speakers who added greatly to our enjoyment of the season.
4. That the standard of entertainment he supplied us with by way of singers and instrumentalists was of the highest, and lastly, that he kept the members and office-bearers in order when trouble broke out between the Campbells and everybody else.

Having found him guilty of all these charges, sentence was postponed until this evening so that we might hear something about his background and if he had any previous convictions. The Probation Officer's report is a bit sketchy, but our President was born at the Tail of the Bank which, to the uninitiated, is Greenock. He is quick to claim that this does not make him a Banker of whom he considers there are far too many in this Society, and he hopes he has brought a touch of humanity to some of them during his year of office.

From the High School at Greenock he came to London in 1911 and eventually became a qualified Accountant without disclosing that he is a descendant of Rob Roy.

He devoted himself to commerce and became chairman or a director of

several successful private Companies. Among his previous convictions two outstanding ones are his Presidency of the Burns Club of London and his Presidency of the Ilford Scottish Association. He is a leading authority on our National Poet and has given Immortal Memory toasts on more than 60 occasions covering every important Burns' Club throughout the length and breadth of this country and to clubs on the Continent of Europe.

One of his great feats, as I remember, was when he turned up as a guest to hear Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe—now Lord Kilmuir give the toast of the Immortal Memory at an annual gathering of the Burns Club of London. At the last moment Lord Kilmuir was unable to turn up and our President, at twenty minutes' notice, deputised for him to the acclamation of the large audience present. (Hear, hear.)

His favourite song is " The Lass o' Ballochmyle " ; he shakes his head over " Man's inhumanity to Man," but perks up at the thought that in time we will " brithers be for a' that."

We find you guilty, Mr President, of having added lustre and prestige to our Society during your term of office which has been a memorable one, and would ask the Company to stand and drink a toast to President James Aitken, wishing him many more happy years of association with us. (Applause.)

Mr. James Aitken in reply, said that of all the toasts to which he had listened tonight, that of Past-President Aldridge had made him most uncomfortable as he did not quite know what Mr Aldridge was going to let out of the bag. Apparently, however, he, the President, had got away with it again !

There is a story, he continued, of two Scots driving on the West Coast of Scotland—I am no allowed to tell you what their politics were. When I told this story to an old lady she said, " Och, I ken fine what they were, they were communionists." (Laughter.) The two were travelling along there and one was an aggressive fellow and he said to his companion, " Willie, Willie, d'ye see all these big hooses we are passing by—well, when the glorious day of liberty and freedom dawns you will be living in one of these big hooses." They went along a bit further and he said, " Willie, Willie, d'ye see all these big cars running about the road there, these big Rolls Royce and Bentley cars ; well when the glorious day of liberty and freedom dawns you'll be riding in one of these cars." Wee Willie was getting a bit anxious and he said, " Here, wait a minute, I don't want to live in one of they big hooses, and I'm no ridin' in one of they big cars." The aggressive one replied, " Look here, Willie my lad, just you listen to me, when the glorious day of liberty and freedom dawns you'll damn well dae as ye're telt." (Laughter.)

Well, as President during the past year I claim no laurels because I was just " daeing as I was telt." Past-President Aldridge has therefore been too good to me with his eulogy, for which I thank him. (Applause.)

Musical Programme.

The musical programme was contributed by Mr Robin Hall and Mr Jimmie Macgregor, who with great acceptance to the members sang many songs from their extensive repertoire.

The Pipe-Major's selection consisted of " Lady Dorothea Stewart Murray," " Lady McKenzie of Fairburn," " Mrs

MacPherson of Inveran " and " Mairi Bhan Og " (Fair Young Mary.)

A most enjoyable evening ended with the Society's Strathspey, followed by "Auld Lang Syne " and the National Anthem.

The Annual General Meeting.

At this meeting, held at the Society's headquarters on the 1st November, 1961, the President, James Aitken, took the chair.

He noted with deep sorrow, which was shared by all the members, the loss through death on 4th April, 1961, of Sir Alexander Roger, K.C.I.E., on 9th July, 1961, of Past-President James Thomson, F.R.S.E., and on 13th August, 1961, of James R. Chalmers, B.L.

The financial statement submitted by the Honorary Treasurer Mr Robert Jardine, showed a satisfactory position and £50 each was voted to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools. Expressing the Society's deep gratitude, the Honorary Treasurer also reported a gift of £100 from Past-President James C. Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., and his brother William Thomson in memory of their father, Past-President James Thomson.

Two new members, Mr D. M. Kennedy and Mr W. A. Tweddle were elected to the Society.

It was decided to print and issue as soon as possible a volume of the Society's Chronicles covering the five years' sessions up to 1961.

On relinquishing his appointment, the President thanked the members for their loyal support during his year and welcomed his successor, Mr T. M. Munro, whom he invested with the insignia of the Presidency.

Mr Munro gratefully acknowledged the honour the members had done him and moved that his predecessor be awarded the gold badge as a mark of appreciation of his services to the Society.

Mr William Millar was appointed Vice-President and all the other Honorary Office-bearers were re-elected.

Obituary Notes.

Since the volume of the Chronicles covering the period up to 1956 was published, 18 members have died, and of these 5 had occupied the high office of President.

FOSTER BROWN, a member since 1930, died on 3rd January, 1958. Until he retired, he held an important appointment with the Royal Exchange Assurance Company.

JAMES R. CHALMERS, B.L., who was the Manager in London of one of the Scottish Banks, died on 13th August, 1961. He had been a member since 1954. He was a native of Rutherglen.

WILLIAM S. COBB, died on 23rd October, 1959. He had been a member from 1934 and, on many occasions, had served on the Council. Until he moved his residence to Chelmsford, he regularly attended the monthly meetings, and at all times showed a lively concern for the Society's welfare.

A. D. DUNCAN, was a member for only about four years up to the date of his death on the 9th August, 1959.

SIR ALEXANDER GIBB, G.B.E., C.B., F.R.S., a native of Broughty Ferry, died on 21st January, 1958. He had been a member since 1929. He was the founder of the firm of Sir Alex. Gibb & Partners, Consulting Civil Engineers. During the European War he gave distinguished service which was recognised not only by this country, but by many foreign countries.

W. O. HUNTER, died on 26th October, 1960, after a membership stretching over a period of twenty-five years. Mr Hunter, until stricken down by illness, was a member of the London Stock Exchange. He took a very keen interest in the Royal Scottish Corporation, of which he was a Life Managing Governor. For many years he was an Elder of St Columba's Church.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD, C.B.E., who died on 6th October 1958, had been a member since 1913. He was Honorary Treasurer in 1926–27, and President during the year 1933–34. An outline of his career will be found in Chapter IV of the 1931–38 volume of the Chronicles. After he retired he was appointed a member of the War Damage Commission, and for his service was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

SIR MURDOCH MACDONALD, K.C.M.G., C.B., a member

since 1924, and President during the year 1937–38, died on 24th April, 1957. For twenty-eight years he represented Inverness in the House of Commons. A report of his distinguished career will be found in Chapter VIII of the 1931–38 issue of the Chronicles.

PETER N. MCFARLANE, F.R.S.E., a member since 1920, Honorary Secretary from 1924 to 1930 and from 1935 to 1945, and President during the year 1931–32, died at his home in Ballater on 23rd March, 1959. Until his return to Scotland he was an ardent member who devoted himself wholeheartedly to the promotion of the Society's objects. A record of Mr McFarlane's achievements will be found on pages 38–40, Chapter II of Volume 1931–38 of the Chronicles. Soon after war broke out in 1939, Mr McFarlane joined Lord Alness when the latter was appointed President and Chairman of the Scottish Savings Committee. On one occasion Lord Alness publicly acknowledged " the great national service which Mr McFarlane rendered to the War Savings Movement in Scotland." When hostilities ceased Mr McFarlane was appointed a Trustee of the MacRobert Trust and continued to serve in that capacity until his death.

ARCHIBALD MACMURCHY, who had been a member since 1927, died on 1st February, 1960. For some years he had lived well out of London and for this reason had been unable to attend dinners or meetings.

A. G. C. ROBERTSON, was a member for almost twenty years up to the date of his death on 3rd September, 1959. Like his father before him, he was a member of Council for many years. He was not only keenly interested in the Society, but he was a Life Managing Governor of the Royal Scottish Corporation to which he gave valuable service.

SIR ALEXANDER ROGER, K.C.I.E., a native of Rhynie, joined the Society in 1949 and died on 4th April, 1961. Sir Alexander was Chairman or Director of many Telephone Companies, was Deputy Chairman of the Midland Bank Limited, and had a long and distinguished business carere. During the European and World Wars he gave outstanding service to the Government. He was a liberal contributor to the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools.

WILLIAM SCOTT, a Morayshire man, who died on 6th April, 1959, was a member for thirty-one years. He loyally supported the Society and ardently promoted its objects. For many years

he was on the Council and was also a member of the Committee of Management of the Royal Scottish Corporation.

SYDNEY B. TAYLOR, B.Com., F.C.I.S., M.Inst.T., who died on 3rd June, 1960, had been a member for only two years. He was the Chief Secretary of the British Transport Commission.

JAMES THOMSON, F.R.S.E., who was a native of Leith, died on 9th July, 1961. He had been a member since 1926 and was President during the year 1939–40. An outline of his career will be found in Chapter II of the 1938–45 volume of the Chronicles. His son, James Currie Thomson, M.B.E., T.D., during the year 1958–59 occupied the same high office as his father.

JOHN WEIR, O.B.E., J.P., F.S.A.(Scot.), a Dunbartonshire man, died on 16th November, 1957. He had been a member for forty-three years. Not only was he deeply interested in the Society but he was a generous supporter of the Royal Scottish Corporation and the Royal Caledonian Schools.

WILLIAM WILL, C.B.E., who gave long and devoted service to the Society, died at the age of 91, on 4th February, 1958. Born at Huntly, Aberdeenshire, Mr Will began his journalistic career on the local newspaper and from there went to Aberdeen. Later, he came to London as News Editor of the *St James's Gazette*; subsequently he became a Director of Allied Newspapers which he served from 1924 to 1938 when he retired.

Soon after the outbreak of war in 1939, he was appointed Chairman of the Newspaper and Periodical Emergency Council and in that capacity did valuable liaison work between the Government and the Newspaper industry. He was awarded the C.B.E. in 1945.

At a Memorial Service held on 18th February, 1958, the lesson was read by Lord Burnham and the address was given by the Rev. Dr Joseph Moffett. The Ministry of Labour and National Service was represented, as was the Central Office of Information. Amongst the large congregation were many friends from London Scottish bodies, as well as from the Press.

R. TWEEDIE WILSON, M.I.Mar.E., M.I.N.A., has been a member for twenty-four years at the time of his death on 16th November, 1957.

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