SCOTS HONOR ROBERT BURNS

La Grande People Join in Paying Homage to Poet Idol on Birthday Anniversary.

Each year when January 25 rolls around Scotchmen assemble in all parts of the world to do honor to their national idol, Robert Burns, the poet who is loved by every Scotsman. This year the La Grande members of the race made famous by Burns assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Walker. J. McKenzie Meldrum made the principal address on "Rantin' Robin," the name by which the Scotch poet was known by many in his time. Mr. Meldrum's address, in part, follows:

"There is no nation or country whose people have not something to boast or at least be proud of. Greece boasts an Alexander, while Rome places the olive wreath upon Caesar's brow and proclaims him the greatest man the world has ever known. France may well be proud of that great and mighty man of iron nerve who marshalled his legions on the banks of the lovely Rhine and like the eagle's lightning swoop or like some treacherous tidal wave or heaven-born pestilence he swept across the plains of Europe leaving naught but death and devastation on his track.

"But, honorable fellow countrymen, I come before you, not to herald the valor of my countrymen, for their fame is like their enemies after a charge—it is scattered to the four winds of heaven. But I come to tell you of a hero whose highest aim and noblest aspiration was to write and sing the songs of his native land. Robert Burns, the Scottish plowboy, the soul of wit and humor, was born of poor and humble parents in the year 1759. Although born poor he was richly endowed, for he had all the pluck and manliness that is characteristic of a true son of Caledonia. It seems to me that if we could learn but one lesson from that great but ill-fated poet it would be a lesson of pluck blended with the true spirit of altruism. See him as he toils from morn 'til night digging a drain, building a dyke or walking behind the plow, for under such uncongenial circumstances did this great genius labor. In his own language he says, "The poetic genius of my country found me as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha at the plow and threw her inspiring mantle over me as she bade me sing the love and joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my native soul in my native tongue." I can see him as he strays across the daisy-covered lea singing, "my love is like a red, red rose," or chanting his immortal lines to "Mary in Heaven," while the lark that soars above his head falters in his tuneful melody and stays his upward flight as if to catch the sentiments of the song below and bear them aloft above the clouds and sing them to the angelic hosts of heaven. Burns was indeed a horny-handed child of labor, a dusky visaged man of toil; all day working, lest his children starve the while, disappointment in his bosom, clouds of care upon his brow. He did not abandon the plow in order to become a poet, but in order to become a gauger in the excise department and thereby earn a steady income for his wife and family, whom he loved dearer than his own life. I have spoken of his pluck and manliness, now I shall speak of the altrusim with which it was blended. Burns was, by no means, the first poet who graced the earth, for Shakespeare, Pope, Bacon and a host of others had lived and died long 'ere "that blast o' Januar win blew Hansel in on Robin." But they had devoted their energies to writing and singing the praises of kings and queens and martial heroes of the past, touching the poor only when necessity compelled them and often then only to paint some blackened picture in their drama. It has been said Pope had no room in his finished verse for the struggling poor, the scholarly Gray had written of them with refinement and taste, surrounding them with a certain poetic halo. But Robert Burns was one of them and within his manly breast there beat a heart in sympathy and unison with poor suffering, down-trodden and oppressed humanity, as is seen in his immortal lines, "A man's a man for a' that." He raises the poor man from the low level of serfdom and places him on an equality with the patrician lords, and declares that a "king can make a belted knight, a marquis duke and a' that; but an honest man's aboon his might, Guid faith he maunna fa' For a' that and a' that, their dignities an' a' that, An' this coming yet for a' that, when man to man the world o'er, shall brothers be for a' that."

He was indeed the poor man's poet for he placed upon the pages of undying literature the greatest poetic declaration of human equality that the world has ever known not does he sympathize with man alone but like the sun that sympathizes with all creation so Burns sympathized with the created world. It was he who shed tears over the fate of the "puir wee modest crimson tipped flower," and applying to humanity its untimely end he has given to the world an undying picture of the end of immortal man.

This was the sympathetic nature and disinterested benevolence of Robert Burns made manifest to the world with the stirring lines of his patriotic war songs and the tender pathos of the "Cotter's Saturday Night," he has touched the heartstrings of his countrymen and today in undying vibration they sound his praise in every clime.

"In protesting against the more rigid forms of Calvinism, he no doubt goes beyond the bonds of modern etiquette. But the close student of his marvelous productions must admit that the predominating tone of his verse is reverential and today his works stand before us as a living monument of true poetic genius and the fact that his memory cannot be removed from the hearts of his countrymen nor his writings from the minds of men proves that he is and will be a sparkling gem in the coronet of Enterpe. Shakespeare may dazzle in the eyes of man as the dramas sire, Milton may long be regarded as the prince of epic poets but the fame of Robert Burns shall continue to live in the hearts and minds of men and his praises shall be sung by generations yet unborn."

SUSPECT DIES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 28.—A man who said he was Martin W. Wilson, owner of a large orchard at Bend, Oregon., died at police headquarters today, apparently from heart trouble.

He was arrested on "suspicion," but after his death it was discovered that a warrant had been issued charging him with complicity in passing certain checks.

RECEIVES THREAT

YOUNGSTOWN, O., Jan. 27. — An armed bodyguard is staying close to Mayor George L. Oles day and night, as a result of threatening letters received by the mayor, it was learned Wednesday. Reports have been current for a week that threats have been made by members of the lawless element to "bump off" Mr. Oles because of his activity in attempting to clean up the city.

PROJECT IS TO BE BUILT

(By Associated Press)

DULUTH, Minn., Jan. 28—Satisfaction that the international joint commission could not have found otherwise than that the lakes-to-the-ocean project is feasible; belief that congress, convinced by the west's unshakable determination to gain its rights will authorize the improvement, and confidence that the alleged "eastern interests" said to be fighting the scheme, will be swept aside in the ensuing wave of governmental approval, is contained in a statement made at headquarters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Tidewater Association here. The statement followed announcement from Washington that the state department would submit to congress the report of the international joint commission.

"We have known for months," the statement continues, "that the favorable report was coming, even since the hearings, when the engineers submitted their findings. Still, it is good news to these eighteen states banded together in the association to promote the interests of this project. This news comes as a relief after many unavoidable delays, and in the face of other delays that have been avoided. It is a culmination we have been working for these two years.

"Formation of a legislative program by the friends of this project in congress will be eagerly expected. In the main, the course is clearly marked; detailes have to be agreed upon.

"It means a fight. Twenty-five years ago the interests which are trying to hold the country to a single gateway were fighting this same movement on the ground that the Erie canal was large enough for our needs. They urged the west to wait till they deepened the canal from seven feet to nine—it is now almost twelve—and they won for twenty-five years. They will try to put us off for another generation.

"Opponents of the project say we are attacking New York, when we really are fighting against economic waste. We believe that it won't hurt New York to have the country grow, that it will injure New York if the west is not allowed to grow.

PLATONIC LOVE.

NEW YORK, Jan. 28—The platonic love of a burglar for a married woman was disclosed as the cause of a slaying today at the trial of William Grubb for first-degree murder.

Taking the stand in behalf of her husband, Mrs. Mary Agnes Grubb testified that George Corcoran, whom Grubb is charged with killing, used to visit her frequently, bringing her presents of silk stockings, gloves and other finery taken in his night prowlings.

Then, she testified, Grubb surprised the burglar in their home one night and shot him.

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WALCOTT GETS RELIGIONS

(By Associated Press)

WALCOTT, Ia., Jan. 28.—Walcott is looking up in a religious way. This village, whose chief executive, Mayor Strohbien, no less than three months ago boasted that it had never had a church within the limits of the community in the last 65 years now has a Sunday school.

According to Leroy Coffman, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Davenport, Ia., the Sunday school was established as a result of the influence of a little girl who had attended vacation Bible school at his church. Dr. Coffman states:

"The mayor was opposed to its existence but the written permission of all other members of the school board of this city of Walcott in response to general sentiment to its favor, obtained the school building for the Sunday school and it is now an established fact."

Dr. A. Frank Houser, pastor of the Calvary Baptist church of Davenport recently made an inspection of this village and reports that: "Some weeks ago a Sunday school was started in Walcott, perhaps the first in all the history of the town now in its 65th year. There was no decided objection to the Sunday school being started by the young people and children of the village but in case a church was started the Mayor threatened to close it.

"We looked into the educational conditions and found that the regular school only this year was advancing to an intermediate grade preparatory to a high school course, which some of the students take in Davenport, twelve miles away. The town is sixty-five years old and has never sent a person to college from its immediate village precinct. Several have taken to academic and normal courses at Cedar and Iowa Falls, but no one entered college. There have been three from the country or farm houses who attended Ames Agricultural college, but I could only learn of one that took the full course."

Dr. Houser also reported that almost the entire community located here are known to have immigrated to this country from Holstein and the Danish Schenish borders about 1848. This village, during the world war was known as "Little Berlin."

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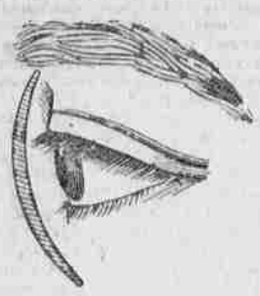

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