

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S ANNUAL SUPPER

PRESENTATION TO MR D.G. GLEN

On Friday night last, the annual supper of the Largs Horticultural Society was held in Mr McCartney's Hall. It was intended to have held the supper in the Mr McGibbon's Rooms, but owing to the large increase in the company, this was found impossible. Mr David Jamieson occupied the chair: Mr Samuel Becket was croupier, assisted at the other corner by Mr A. McGibbon: and there were upwards of fifty gentlemen present.

After supper (of the excellence of which the fact that Mr Mackay was purveyor is sufficient guarantee). The CHAIRMAN proposed "The Queen" and "Prince and Princess of Wales" &c., and Mr McGIBBON the "Army, Navy, and Volunteers," the later toast being appropriately acknowledged by Messrs Field and Simpson.

Mr McGIBBON said there had been a toast left out of the list – viz, "The Burgh Commissioners." There was no doubt that since Largs had been made a burgh, great strides had been made in the way of improvements, and the town was in a much more favourable condition. He thought they would all admit that the ratepayers had chosen good men to represent them in the Commission. He would couple the toast with the name of Commissioner Peter Morris.

Commissioner MORRIS, in reply, said he had no idea that he would have to reply for the Commissioners. The Commissioners had got some things done which there was no doubt had added much to the amenity of the town; and, what was more, they attended to economy as well as to improvements.

Mr R.H. REID proposed prosperity to the Horticultural Society, saying it required no eloquence on his part to make them give a hearty response to the toast. The competitions were begun in 1841, and had gone on improving since then, and the last show, if not the largest, was decidedly the best that the Society had ever held. He was glad to see several of the oldest members of the Society present tonight. Mr Beck, Mr Jamieson, Mr Morris and Mr Blyth, had been members since the formation of the Society.

Mr BECK replied to the toast, and said that he had been a competitor since the first, and when they began competitions everything was of open air growth, the only glasshouses being at Hawkhill, and there being very few frames in the district.

The CHAIRMAN said that, on rising to discharge the duties which devolved upon him, he had to express his heartfelt and sincere thanks for the very high honour conferred in requesting him to preside at that friendly meeting. He regarded it as a marked complement, and he had much pleasure in acknowledging the deep sense he entertained of the honour they had done him. He most sincerely wished, however, that their choice had fallen on one more able and accustomed to discharge the duties, and better qualified to fill the office as chairman. At the same time, he made bold enough to say that no one present could cherish a greater or more intense feeling of regard than he bore towards; them all; and therefore, while he would do all he possible could to promote their social feelings and comfort, he threw himself entirely on their sympathy and indulgence for any shortcomings or failings which might occur on his part. The chairman then proceeded –

We are met here this evening to do honour to Mr David Glen, who is well known to you all, and to present him with a small token of our regard and esteem. I may observe that our worthy guest stands in a very important position in Largs. Neither death nor birth occurs without Mr Glen receiving intimation and no person can go to the hymeneal alter without applying to Mr Glen. He is also a member of the School Board to see that the young may be trained to what is right. Mr Glen has been secretary of our society for the last three years, and it has prospered very much under his superintendence: in fact, the society has never been in such a prosperous state, and our worthy secretary has been at a great deal of trouble without fee or reward. We are met here this evening to show that we appreciate his services and that we are grateful to him for what he has done, and, if spares, for what he may yet do for the Society. Before presenting Mr Glen with this small token of esteem and regard, I feel very much what the great Marshal Blucher did when sent by his countrymen to present a sword of honour to the Duke of Wellington. Having arrived in London and all the necessary arrangements having been made, the party had assembled, and Blucher, with tearful eye and trembling lip, rose to say a few words on the occasion, and all that he could say was – "That's the sword." And the Duke with his characteristic wit, replied, "Is that the sword!" So I say to you, Mr Glen, with the best wishes of the subscribers for your temporal and spiritual welfare, that is the watch (handing it to Mr

Glen) and I hope it may assist you to time your journey through the path of life, and when you look upon it for the last time, and see that your time is up and that the thread of life is come to an end, then may you receive the blessed welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of the Lord." Hoping that you may be long spared to enjoy this small token of our esteem and regard, and that when you are done with it I trust it may be handed down as an heirloom in your family to show how much you were respected when alive. And I fondly hope that the remainder of this evening may be spent in such a manner as will leave no cause for regret, and as we may all never again meet in this world, may we all meet in that happy land where sin and sorrow and suffering shall be for ever unknown. I ask you to drink a bumper to "The health of Mr David Glen, and his ain fireside."

The toast having been drunk in an enthusiastic manner,

Mr GLEN replied, saying he had not words to express the gratification that he felt at the manner in which they had responded to the toast given by Mr Jamieson with such eloquence that it had fairly floored him. A handsome testimonial had been placed in his hands by the Society, and their kind treatment of him had struck him dumb. The intercourse that he had had with the gardeners over the business of the Society, and the many pleasant friendships that he had formed in this way, more than repaid him for the trouble which he had had, and no other recompense was necessary or thought of by him. He had not intentions of deprecating his services to the Society, nor on the other hand of making too much of them, but such as they were they had been given freely, and he had no thought of other pay than the pleasure he took in the work. He hoped he might be long spared to fill the post he now filled if such was the wish of the Society. The shows had been a great source of pleasure to him since he was a boy in short clothes and he should never forget the delight with which he used to look forward to these gala days. Since that time great improvements had been made in plants and flowers, but to his mind the fruit and vegetables were not so good as those shown years ago. He felt quite overcome in endeavouring to thank them for the handsome watch placed in his hands and for the many kind words and wishes expressed by the Chairman in presenting it. He hoped, as Mr Jamieson had said, that while he was spared it might be of use in timing his actions aright and he was sure that it would be preserved with pride after he had ceased to use it. He had thought that the pleasure of performing the duties of his office was ample payment, but he thanked them one and all from the depths of his heart for this expression of their friendship and good will.

Mr McGIBBON proposed the health of the Treasurer, remarking that Mr Morris had performed his important duties in an unexceptional manner, and had greatly contributed to the success of the society.

Mr MORRIS, in reply, said that he had been connected with the society for 30 years, and during that time he had performed the duty of ticketing the prizes. He thanked them for their kindness, and had no objections to pocketing the money – especially now, when the funds were in such a flourishing condition.

Mr ATKINSON proposed the health of the successful competitors at the last show, and remarked on the great advance in the Society's shows made during the last few years.

Mr JOHN WILSON, of Blackdales, being the most successful competitor at the late show, replied in suitable terms, and stated that he had been promised a silver medal by a gentleman whom he had seen that day for the best hand bouquet at the next show.

Mr JOHN PORTER proposed the "Donors of Prizes," to which Mr McGIBBON replied, in the absence of Mr W. McCartney.

Mr Graham proposed the "Amateur Competitors," and Mr FIELD, in replying, warned the gardeners to look after their laurels.

Mr DOUGLAS proposed the "Market Gardeners," to which Mr BLYTH replied, remarking that it was 25 years since he had first been at a supper in connection with the society.

The other toasts were – "The Ladies," proposed by Mr Beck, and replied to by Mr Lindsay; "The Press," proposed by Mr Muir, and replied to by Mr Reid; "The Chairman," proposed by Mr Glen, and "The Croupiers," proposed by Mr Field, and in replying to the last toast, Mr Becket said that he had been highly pleased with the fine turn-out, and read a list of names of those who had sent in letters of apology for absence.

The proceedings were agreeably varied by the performance of Mr Murdoch Morrison on the pipes, as well as by the capital singing of Messrs John McKellar, C. Field, John Atkinson, and McDougal.

Several bouquets on the table belonging to different members of committee were put in competition, with the result of Mr Wilson, Blackdales, and Mr Douglas, Crescent Lodge, carrying away the honours in the different classes