

THE PATRIOTISM OF ROBERT BURNS.

Although in no sense a poet of the camp or field, Burns was full of the fire of humanity which goes to the making of a gallant soldier. Love of country, of home, and of justice and mercy were strong features in his character, and if duty had called him to wield the claymore he would have done it right well.

"Wha in a brulzie
Will first cry a parley?
Never the lads wi'
The bannocks o' barley."

His heart beat fast when he thought of those—

"Whose ancestors in days of yore
Thro' hostile ranks and ruined gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore."

Burns sang much of the elements—wind, frost, and snow; but he knew their combined rage was nothing in comparison to war.

"Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust!
And freeze, thou bitter biting frost!
Descend, ye chilly smothering snows!
Not all your rage as now united shows
More hard unkindness unrelenting,
Vengeful malice unrepenting,
Than heav'n-illumin'd man on brother man
bestows!
See Oppression's iron grip,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending like blood-hounds from the slip
Woe, want, and murder o'er a land!"

This year, when we celebrate the anniversary of the poet's birth,* many of us will turn to "The Cottar's Saturday Night" as being more in tune with our spirits than the favourite "Tam O' Shanter." To our prayers for ourselves and our noble Allies, for our enemies—that their pride may be abated, their malice assuaged, and their devices confounded—we who are true Scots will add:—

"O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted
heart,
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die—the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament
and guard!"

Almost obscured by mists which hang so closely round us, we see the time—perhaps yet distant, but coming surely—when:—

"Man to man the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that."

The clear vision of Robert Burns saw the triumph of the Cross.

E. A. STEVENSON.

* January 25th.

COMING EVENTS.

January 14th.—Lecture by Mr. Allen S. Walker (Hon. Secretary, British Archaeological Association) on "Glimpses at the War Area in Europe," Sion College, Victoria Embankment, 3 p.m. Tickets from the Hon. Secretary, University of London Extension, at the College. 2s. 6d. and 1s. Profits for *Daily Telegraph* Belgian Shilling Fund.
January 20th.—Central Midwives Board. Hearing of Penal Cases, Caxton House, S.W. 11.30 a.m.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

NURSES LOSE A SINCERE FRIEND.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—By the death of Dr. Ernest Wilson Stoker, M.D., F.R.C.S., on Christmas Eve, many nurses have lost a sincere and helpful friend. Also the cause of State Registration of Nurses a staunch supporter. He never lost an opportunity of giving his opinion on the subject. Well I remember his being asked: "Then you think nurses should be registered?" He replied: "I don't think anything about it; I know they should have been registered long ago." When he was interviewed a few months ago by a representative of the *Daily Express* on this matter he spoke very plainly, but two of his points in connection with the nursing of the sick poor were left out, viz., that trained nursing would not only lessen the danger to life, but would shorten the illness, therefore many days of work would be gained for the country; also a shorter illness meant less for the insurance societies to pay. So economically "Registration" was sound.

He was a great worker himself and gave of his best to everybody, even with increasingly bad health. He said so often, "I mean to work to the end." He did, for up to Wednesday morning he was doing full work; he even saw patients on that morning.

He was twenty-four hours in bed with pneumonia. His loss is deeply felt by his many friends and patients as well as by his family, who are all so well known in Dublin.

14, Hertford Street, W.

A. E. R.

TOYS FOR TINIES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I write to thank you for the kind gift of toys to the children. I was just wishing I had some more for them when your parcel arrived. They appreciated them, as all children do toys, and will you please thank those responsible for the dressing of the dolls, &c.?

With many thanks, !

I remain, yours faithfully,
N. COCKRAM

Superintendent Nurse.

Barnet Infirmary, Herts.

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