

Mr ALEXANDER NISBET IMMORTAL MEMORY (1974)

Burns's insistency on human democracy and universal brotherhood ensured his popularity, said Mr. Alexander Nisbet when delivering "The Immortal Memory" in the Howff on Friday night.

Mr. Nisbet continued in this vein and then brought the concept of human democracy right up to date: "The idea that "A Man's a Man for a' that" is not only not so revolutionary as it once was - its even more true to-day."

He pointed out that Burns was frequently stung into response by the arrogance of wealth and privelege.

But in his view, Burns's most revolutionary poem was the Jolly Beggars and Mr. Nisbet recited the song, which he described as 'dynamite.'

"You might put it this way," said Mr. Nisbet, "our state of mind is not dependant on physical circumstances. Everyone, regardless of his condition in life, can remain undefeated within himself, provided he retains his zest for living "

Mr Nisbet felt that Burns was at his best in his songs. He was sure that a good tune enhanced the message; the message was thereby much clearer.

"People have written" whole books about the golden age of child-hood, the time to spare, the absorption in immediate experience. But Burns does it in four lines: "" We twa hae run about the braes, and pu'd the rowans fine, We twa hae paidled i' the burn, from morning sun till dine.""

Hr. Nisbet quoted many of Burns's songs to illustrate how much better he got his message across. And he maintained that Burns's international appeal came from his solid local base, for without this foundation he could never have written so authoritatively and effectively.