

Glasgow Politics in 1832.

CROW CLUB.

NEVER was there a period in the history of Glasgow when the political cauldron boiled and bubbled with greater force and activity than during the latter half of the year 1832. For some years previous, an increasing excitement had been sustained on the question of Parliamentary Reform, and especially during the entire period of 1831—one of the most remarkable crisis in the constitutional and social history of Scotland. Extreme political partizans had been vending each his own nostrums to meet the cravings of his followers, or to decry those of his opponents. The feeling of the great mass of the people throughout the land—at once so difficult to arouse and to allay—had, from various circumstances, and through many appliances, been put on the tenterhooks of expectation; and thousands who at other times would have remained calm and placid spectators of party discussion and party conflicts, now lent their aid in favour of a measure which none but the most bigoted abettors of “the wisdom of their ancestors” had the effrontery to oppose. The fact is, that over the mind of the great majority of the nation the spirit of Reform had gained the mastery, and it was now out of the power of the King, Lords, or Commons to refuse, far less even to postpone, the just claims that were everywhere so loudly urged.

In Glasgow, political meetings and threatening processions * followed each other, so long as the cause for which the great majority of the people

* One of the greatest processions took place on the 17th May, 1832, when 120,000 persons were collected on the public Green, and where one gentleman threatened to lay his head on the block rather than Reform should not be granted!

were vociferating remained in the legislative balance. The Town Hall, the Trades' Hall, and the public Green, rang with the eloquence of the leading agitators; and illuminations were called for by the citizens, and accorded by the Magistracy, even when, by "a glorious unit," the opinion of the House of Commons was declared to be in favour of Reform!* Through the stern opposition of interested parties, the vessel of the State was thus forced to fight its way amid the strong waves of an increasing popular clamour, till at length the political right, which had been so long advocated and so long denied, was granted, and the excitement which was thereby partially soothed, was only to be again roused under another phase.†

The Reform Act for Scotland having placed in the hands of a large

* Upon the occasion of this celebrated division, which took place on 22d March, 1831, there was a general illumination ordered in Glasgow on Monday the 28th, and all cheerfully obeyed the summons, save the most bigoted Tories. Among the many transparencies which were displayed throughout the town illustrative of the Reform victory, that in front of Mr Lumsden's house, in Queen-street, on which the words of "The glorious unit—the saviour of our country!" were painted, attracted great attention and excited much amusement and cheering. The division was, 302 for—301 against—majority 1.

† So great was the excitement and anxiety for news at this time among the citizens, that certain gentlemen, and particularly Mr Thomas Aitkinson, bookseller, and Sir D. K. Sandford, the professor of Greek, frequently rode out many miles to meet the London mail; and having obtained the latest news of the state of the Reform Bill from the guard, galloped into Glasgow, and gave the wished for information some minutes even before the express edition of the *Sun* newspaper could reach the shop of Mr M'Phun, who was then the great rival bibliopole of Tom Atkinson, perhaps one of the most worthy and keen politicians of the day. The

following very clever *jeu d'esprit*, attributed to Motherwell, but really from the pen of the late Mr Joseph Reid, Town-Clerk, and first published in the *Glasgow Courier*, will at once illustrate the horsemen and their errand:—

"Tom Atkinson mounted his berry-brown steed—
Through all the west country unequal'd for speed;
And, save an odd threepence to pay for the toll,
He carried no weight but a placard in scroll!
So lightly and jaunty he eastward did hie,
With the Bill in his heart and the Mail in his eye:
He swore that for once he would eclipse the *Sun*,
And darken the shine of his neighbour M'Phun!

Camlachie folk stared, and Tollerross stood abeigh,
So rapid he rode, and the steed was so skeigh;
But Tom did not value his horsemanlike skill—
His thoughts were 'Reform,' and 'nought but the
Bill!

Yea, even in passing the scene at Carmyle, (α)
The Whig field of honour seem'd worthless the while;
For, still he expected to eclipse the *Sun*,
And darken the shine of his neighbour M'Phun!

Then onward he sped, till he came to a turn
Of the road, when the guard of the Mail cried 'Ad-
journ!'

And about-ship went Tom, and the spur did apply,
And the *stationer* truly for once seem'd to fly!

(α) The scene of a duel, immortalised by David Bell, from having placed two bricks on the spot to mark out the distance at which the combatants fired.

body of electors, hitherto beyond the pale of political power, a privilege which, in Glasgow, had formerly been limited to the two-and-thirty self-elected members of the Town Council, it was not long before it became apparent that it was the determination of all who were now placed within the charmed circle of the electorship, to avail themselves of the new position in which the law had placed them, and, moreover, to make use of their privileges on the first opportunity which offered. While the new electoral body, no doubt doubly excited by the possession of political power and the novelty of their position, were preparing to fulfil the important duty which had been imposed on them at the first Parliamentary election, it so happened that there was no lack of applicants for the sweet voices of the Glasgow constituency. Before even the dissolution of 1832 was proclaimed, several candidates had made their appearance on the public arena; and long before the writs were issued for a new election, there were six aspirants battling for the two new seats which were placed in the gift of the electors of Glasgow.

Of these half-dozen candidates for the honour of seats in St Stephen's, only one had as yet any connection with the legislative council of the country, and he, perhaps, of the whole six, was the one who had, notwithstanding, the least chance with a Glasgow constituency. No doubt the honourable gentleman had aided by his vote to obtain for them the new privilege which they were about to exert; but he had done so, not as the representative of the self-elected Town Council of Glasgow, which, by a legal quibble, was to represent the whole community, but as that of the Town Councils of Dumbarton and Rutherglen, on whose new electors he had a better and more legitimate claim for support.* Of the other *five*, four were denizens of the City, and the other was a stranger. Of the

His Tontine constituents soon did he hail—
For near eighteen minutes he distanced the Mall!
The 'Adjourn!' was repeated—eclipsed was the *Sun*—
The shine was o'erclouded of neighbour M'Phun!
Sir Daniel K. Sandford next mounted his beast,
With its tail to the west and its head to the east,
And on like a war knight the brute did he urge,
To nose the effect of the famed 'Russell purge!'

But at Bothwell the mail guard roar'd out, 'Lost by
eight!'
When about went the prad, as it had taken fright;
Sir Dan he stuck on, and again 'clips'd the *Sun*,
To the utter confusion of neighbour M'Phun!'

* The late Mr Joseph Dixon, advocate.

citizens, two were merchants; the third, a literary professor; and the fourth, a lawyer. Of the stranger, it was told that he had held some most important British diplomatic posts in the Eastern Archipelago, and was well known as a distinguished author and determined anti-monopolist; he was, moreover, a *Highlandman*, although that latter peculiarity turned out to be his greatest fault.* The whole six candidates appeared, *credat Judæus!* in the character of reformers; and as such, testified that in such communities as Glasgow, it would have been hopeless at that time for any one to appear under any other colour. While all the aspirants had reform on their lips, it might seem, at first sight, of little consequence to the community on which of them the choice might have fallen. But when the antecedents of the whole were fairly probed and calmly considered, and the political tendencies of each were fairly balanced, it was soon found that there was enough of distinctive dissimilarity of political character and opinion in the whole to evoke a comparatively distinct party of supporters and an active committee of partisans for each, most of whom, however, split their votes, on the sound Conservative principle that nothing so new and so good should be entirely thrown away.

In consequence of the great disunion which thus necessarily took place among the constituency, and the great ignorance which prevailed among the electors and their leaders on matters connected with an election where each had a double vote, it soon became absolutely impossible, amid the canvassing of hostile committees, to know, until the very last hour, what was the real will of the constituency; or to speculate, with any degree of probability, to whom, in the contest for split votes, the majority would ultimately fall. In this state of matters, it may be easily conceived into what a political turmoil the whole town was thrown for nearly six months. While candidates, with their various leading supporters, were holding district and central meetings without end or even object, and there

* Mr John Crawford, the well-known author of a large work on "The Eastern Archipelago," and on "The Present State and Future

Prospects of Free Trade and Colonization of India."

declaring everything in favour of themselves, and everything they could tell or imagine against their opponents, there was at the same hour scarcely a social circle into which one might enter, where the demon of political discord was not evoked by some untoward allusion in regard to one or other of the Parliamentary aspirants. In good truth, the community felt as if in cold water when their own political cauldron did not "boil and bubble."

It is certainly not our intention here to enter into the strength or weakness of the claims which each candidate, at the first Reform election, presented in favour of his own election; neither is it our wish to re-awaken the discordant and hostile elements which then characterised, if not disgraced, our now politically placid community. Our object is altogether for another and more generous purpose. It is our desire, at present, to convey to you, kind reader, who may not have been, like our unfortunate self, called to "rush to the poll," on the 18th December, 1832; or who may not have watched the proceedings which for some months preceded that anxiously looked for event, to make you, if possible, comprehend the depth of the excitement which then actuated certain of the political cliques or coteries in the City, and thereby to give you some idea of the causes which led to the establishment of one of the very first political Clubs which ever met within the boundaries of Glasgow. The Club to which we allude, and to which we would now introduce you, was at first known, by those who composed it, under several names: at length, however, it was best known by the dubious appellation of the CROW.

This social fraternity—which so long manifested so careful a control over the political and municipal matters of Glasgow, and which it has been gravely alleged, possessed some secret and occult influence, by means of which Provosts reigned and Bailies decreed justice—had its first meeting, during the exciting period which preceded the first Parliamentary election under the Reform Act, and was composed altogether of some of the most active members of Messrs Oswald and Crawford's committee, or of that political body which was afterwards known by the sobriquet of

“the Clique.”* It may be here stated, that however respectable the social position may have been which several of the rival candidates’ friends held in the City, it cannot be denied that, of the old steady Reformers connected with Glasgow, the most influential certainly rallied round the banner of Oswald and Crawford. A few, no doubt, from personal feelings, and mayhap from personal pique, stuck to the rather weather-beaten colours of “the old Whig,” whose consistent political life, though rather crotchety conduct, entitled him to a certain quantum of liberal support.† But when the leading supporters of these three parties

* This body of citizens, who so powerfully influenced the politics of Glasgow, was chiefly drawn from the class of the old steady Whigs, who had countenanced Fox dinners and Reform meetings during the worst of times. The following were the names of some of the more prominent leaders of “the Clique:”—

Robert Grahame of Whitehill.
James Oswald.
Colin Dunlop.
Charles Tennant.
William Stirling.
Alexander M’Gregor.
Professor Mylne.
Andrew Macgeorge.
Thomas Muir.
John Pattison.
William Gray.
Dr Scouller.
John Hamilton.
James Lumsden.
Charles Todd.
William Mills.
John Fleming.
William Craig.
Neale Thomson.
William Gilmour.
Henry Dunlop.
Andrew Bannatyne.
John Tennant.
William Lang, Jun
David Chapman.
Robert Sanderson.
William Towers.

George Stirling.
Alexander Dennistoun.
A. G. Spiers.
John Loudon.
William Bankier.
William Watson.
John Cross.
Dr Perry.
James Tweedie.
James Haldane.
Charles Gray.
John Wilson.
George Wilson.
Hugh Smith.
Walter Buchanan.
Robert Bartholomew.
Allan Fullarton.
George Crawford.
Thomas Davidson.
John Whitehead.
Patrick Murray.
Henry Brock.
Alexander Fletcher.
C. J. Tennant.
John Strang.
Alexander Denny.
Robert Watt, Jun.
Robert Jameson.
&c. &c.

† Mr John Douglas of Barloch, well known by the sobriquet of “The old Whig,” was an able man and a consistent politician. He was well read in the history of the last two or three reigns, and had a memory that could at once recall all he had ever gathered. He

were removed, there were not above two or three more of those who had ever expressed a liberal opinion in the town—until, forsooth, liberal opinions became the fashion—that were allied with the other three candidates. It must be stated, however, that to the influential individuals who had nearly all their lives given their determined opposition to every liberal measure, and who had now assumed Reform habits for the nonce, by supporting the pseudo-reformers Ewing and Sandford, as most likely to serve their purpose, belongs the honour of first raising a howl on the mode by which the Whig leaders brought forward their candidates.* Loud

possessed wit, and could wield the powerful weapon of sarcasm with a masterly and gentlemanly hand. If he was not a powerful, he was at least a most fluent speaker; and from possessing perfect self-possession and abundance of boldness, was never put out, and not often put down. In addressing a democratic assembly, there were few could equal and far fewer could surpass him; while, for ingenuity and cleverness in reply, in dexterity of fence, and in seizing on the weak points of his opponent's argument, he had, in Glasgow at least, no rival. The chief faults of his character lay in his inordinate love of approbation, and personal vanity; and to this unfortunate peculiarity of temperament may in a great measure be attributed the loss of the political influence to which his talents might have otherwise raised him. By too often indulging in his political and literary crochets, he not unfrequently injured the cause which his abilities as a speaker could have materially advanced; and hence he was never looked upon as a safe leader, or one in whose hands the destinies of a party could be wisely confided. He had also the unpleasant power and inclination, while advocating or supporting the political party with whose leading principles he was always agreed, to throw an occasional bomb-shell into their ranks, and thereby to create disturbance and dissension among those who ought to have always pulled together. He was, therefore, regarded by the more prudent class of Liberal

politicians with more fear than respect. From this latter circumstance he, during his after-life, became much estranged from the early political associates by whom he was once much courted, and being thus deprived of the high social status which many of these held, he was obliged to content himself by becoming the cock of a small coterie, who flattered his vanity and pandered to his weakness. Had he only maintained his primeval position, he might have easily obtained a seat in Parliament; and, once there, he would perhaps have had a better chance of success as a speaker than many of his Scottish competitors, and would have thereby gained renown to himself and respect for the City which he had chosen as his home. Mr Douglas long practised as a writer in Glasgow, and was latterly appointed to the office of Clerk of the Peace for Lanarkshire. He died at the age of about seventy-four, having eschewed both the pleasures and the cares of matrimony. As a table companion and conversationalist, there were few equal to Mr Douglas.

* Mr James Ewing was born in Glasgow in the year 1774, and was consequently fifty-eight years of age when he became a candidate for Parliamentary honours. He had previously filled many important public offices, having been long a City Councillor, twice Dean of Guild, and at the moment Lord Provost of the City. Indeed, Mr Ewing's whole life had been linked with the progress and welfare of his native City; and his talents

and long they bellowed against the right which any junto of the citizens had to dictate to the electors what they should do—forgetful of their own private assemblies for the same purpose—publicly sneered at the important conclave of Liberals who had first met in Messrs Tennant's warehouse,*—and taxed them for being as much the abettors of the

for business, and benevolent and active character, had justly placed him in the first rank of his townsmen. He was an extensive West India merchant, when that business was in the heyday of prosperity, although at the time we speak of he was experiencing the first throes of its downfall. In addition to those advantages of position, he was a well educated man, and possessed many accomplishments, besides being a good public speaker, and moreover liberal and even princely in his public charities. Bred as he was in the school of old Toryism, however sound he might be in some of his opinions, and far in advance of his party, he could not think of breaking altogether with his first political love. As a politician and public man, he was consequently deficient in the fixity of principle and decision of character required by the times, and was therefore shunned by the more decided Reformers; although, from private friendship and respect for his talents and his worth, he had a considerable amount of support even from them. To these peculiarities of character and position, he owed his return at the first election for Glasgow under the Reform Bill, and his being placed, as he himself said, "so high on the head of the poll!" Notwithstanding the opposition of the general Liberal party to the return of Mr Ewing, it is but fair to add, that his Parliamentary conduct was generally acceptable to the community. His kindness to his native City, however, during his life, was far surpassed by what he exhibited at his death. His munificent bequests to the leading institutions of Glasgow, and particularly to the Merchants' House and Royal Infirmary, entitle him to the grateful remembrance, not only of the present, but likewise of the future inhabitants of the City.

* Mr Charles Tennant, in whose warehouse this meeting took place on 10th July, 1832, was one of the leading members of the Reform party in Glasgow. Perhaps no man did more for practical chemistry than the creator of the great works at St Rollox, which are unequalled in the world, and to none is Glasgow more indebted for its marvellous progress than to this earnest and indefatigable promoter of economical improvement. His intense energy of character and clear intellect, placed him among the foremost of that class which, by wedding science to manufactures, has at once extended their field of action, and elevated them to the rank of a liberal profession. Mr Tennant was, indeed, a man of true genius, but like many such, was, in his disposition, singularly mild and retiring. He had, in fact, a constitutional nervousness, which prevented him taking a prominent part on the political platform; but this peculiar idiosyncrasy was attended with that sensitiveness to the beautiful, which is usually its concomitant. Mr Tennant was all his life a Reformer, and of him, as of Mr Colin Dunlop, it may be truly said, that he steadily maintained to the last those political opinions with which he set out. To uphold and extend these was his greatest pleasure, at all times and under all circumstances, a grateful and sacred duty. His purse, his leisure, and his great influence in society were all freely, judiciously, and indefatigably employed in the furtherance of liberal principles and opinions, in the progress and practical application of which he believed the best interests of society to be chiefly concerned. Firm in maintaining his own opinions, he was benignant and tolerant to those of others, and ready at all times, when no sacrifice of principle was required, to waive his own

“hole-and-corner system” as the most rabid supporters of the “old lady of self-election;” while “the old Whig” himself, with his couple of stout henchmen, joined in the sneer, and, by holding out his hand in amity and his flag in concord with the new fledged knight and equally new fledged Reformer,* imagined he might thereby break the band which united the real true friends of the people so closely together. In spite of all this bitter opposition, and with what is more astonishing to recollect, with the whole newspaper press against Oswald and Crawford’s pretensions (although certainly some of their editors silyly gave an equivocal support to the former), the committee of their supporters never lost heart, and never failed to meet to encourage each other in what they considered the bounden duty of all true Reformers in this great political contest.† Much

views and opinions for the sake of conciliation, and to increase the general strength of the common political interest. Setting political considerations aside, Mr Tennant was an enterprising and public-spirited citizen, who carried into every public undertaking in which he was concerned the masculine and vigorous judgment with the temperate and unrelaxing energy which, from very moderate beginnings, had gradually raised him to the rank of one of the first mercantile men in Scotland. In private life, Mr Tennant possessed a quiet and unassuming simplicity of manners, with great kindness of disposition, which, being associated with unspotted integrity, made him equally beloved and admired. The late public recognition in Paris of the value of St Rollox Works to the world at large, by conferring on his son a Medal of Honour and a Cross of the Legion of Honour, is a compliment to his father’s memory, and to his successor’s manufacturing perseverance. Mr Tennant died on the 1st October, 1838, in the seventieth year of his age.

* Sir D. K. Sandford, although a first-rate scholar and an eloquent speaker, was never known as a politician till a few months before the passing of the Reform Bill. One of his first appearances in the political arena, was on the occasion of a meeting called to oppose

the Irish Education Bill in Glasgow, where he made a most eloquent appeal in favour of the proposed measure. This took place on the 1st May, 1832. By old Reformers, he was looked upon as a time-server and Liberal for the nonce; and, consequently, had the support of very few of this stamp. By the power of his eloquence he, however, gained the sweet voices of many of the Radical electors, and of the Reformers, like himself, of yesterday. At the Glasgow poll he held a high place; and on Sir John Maxwell resigning his seat for Paisley, he was thereupon returned to Parliament for that town. In that most fastidious assembly he, in spite of his eloquence, proved a failure. Wearied with excitement, and disgusted with his Parliamentary position, he ere long resigned his seat, and returned to the more fitting and congenial calm of the cloistered University, where, unfortunately for it and the literary world, he was too early cut down by fever.

† In consequence of the position in which the Liberal parties of the newspaper press had placed themselves, through private friendships for certain of the candidates, there was not one who advocated the out-and-out claims of “the Clique.” To meet this want, a small Saturday paper, entitled *The Friend of the People*, was established during the six

public toddy and many yards of toasted cheese were therefore discussed,—and all for the good of the nation! These were the times when to drink was a constitutional duty, and a water-consuming patriotism unknown; men having found out that they had political principles—a discovery some few of them had much reason to be proud of, on account of its unparalleled novelty. For many weeks a committee-room in the Eagle Inn, Maxwell-street, was open to all those who could bring any support or information which could aid the cause; and, as the *dry* business-like apartment in the “Eagle” was but a short distance from the *wet* and convivial Club-room in the “Vine”—where it was certain that some of the most active partizans were nightly to be met with—it soon followed that a conclave of social politicians were there congregated, who continued to meet, not only in harmony, during the long preparations of that first Parliamentary election, but during many future contests, and proved themselves political companions for years thereafter.*

The house in which this Club first met was the property of one of the most active partizans of the two candidates, who were humorously called “the Siamese Twins;” while its landlord had long been the trusty servant of the brother of Mr Oswald. Although the period of the year was summer when this Club was instituted, so great was the excitement at the time, and the enthusiasm of the more active members of Oswald and Crawford’s committee, that it may be truly said that scarcely a night, except Sunday, passed over that could be called a *nox non*, or that a Club

weeks that preceded the election, which did its best to counteract the fierce onslaughts that were ever and anon made on Oswald and Crawford’s committee. The paper was edited by Mr John Strang; and the chief contributors to its columns were Messrs Thomas Davidson, Charles R. Baird, John D. Bannatyne, Walter Buchanan, John Crawford (the candidate), and several others. With the election this paper ceased; but the want of an organ for the Clique party having been much felt, it was soon after resolved to establish a newspaper upon the joint-stock

principle; and on the 18th February, 1833, the *Glasgow Argus* made its appearance, under the able editorship of Mr William Weir, advocate.

* The following was the final state of the poll on the first Reform election:—

Ewing,	3,215
Oswald,	2,837
Sandford,	2,168
Crawford,	1,850
Douglas,	1,341
Dixon,	905

meeting failed from want of a sufficient number to "constitute a house." And when the character and capabilities of the men who first formed the meetings of this fraternity are remembered, it does not at all appear wonderful that it was so. If one only thinks of the once uncontrollable activity of James Lumsden and John Wilson—of the courage of Henry Brock and George Crawford—of the perseverance of William Craig and William Bankier—of the energy of Thomas Muir and David Chapman, and of the enthusiasm of Thomas Davidson, Dr Perry, Charles Baird, William Lang, Allan Fullarton, and a host of others, who ever and anon brought their peculiarities to bear on the Club, it will not appear strange to say that the meetings of this fraternity might well be regarded as one of the most stirring, animated, delightful, and intellectual brotherhoods of all the social brotherhoods which then met in the City. One thing is certain at least, that in politics, whatever they might have been in other matters, they were most cordially united; and if we look to the future political career of those who composed that social fraternity, it is only truth to state that not one of the members has deserted his *first* love. Among the political tergiversators and vacillators that once belonged to the Old Whig party of the Clique, it is consolatory to think that not one of them ever belonged to the Crow Club; and that, whatever may be thought of the political tenets which the members of the Crow Club held and always advocated, no one can turn round and say to any one of them, "You are a traitor to the opinions you once maintained!"

During the electioneering period of 1832, when this brotherhood was nightly assembling round the comfortable mahogany of Mr Powell of the Vine Tavern, it may be easily conceived that the evening's sederunt wanted no further excitement than the subject matter which so deeply interested all the parties present. At any time a Parliamentary contest elicits many curious sayings and doings; and on this occasion never did a night pass that there was not some odd tale of the six-fold canvass narrated, or some striking illustration given of the characteristics of the several candidates, during the daily perambulations that were being made

ex-pede or *ex-noddy!* Had these been only caught as they fell from the lips of the narrators, and whipped into shape by some cunning penman, what a most valuable memento of an almost-forgotten contest would have been preserved! and which might have served, besides, as no insufficient *vade mecum* for all future parliamentary aspirants to consider and con over. From this repertory, at least, it would not have been difficult to elicit the fact that, for every one who may place himself in this ambitious position, there is never wanting an abundant supply of animadversion and abuse; and should, peradventure, the candidate have the misfortune to live in a glass house, he would there find that it would be his best policy to avoid throwing stones!

As this first Parliamentary contest under the Reform Act approached its crisis, the Club meetings became more numerous and animated; and as political creeds became the order of the day, so did they become topics for the night. Among the many creeds promulgated for candidates to adopt, and which were discussed at the Club, none excited more fun and sarcasm than the one drawn up by Mr David Prentice, the editor of the *Chronicle*. Like Justice Midas, he thought

“His word,
Though absurd,
Must be law;”

so he set himself down to concoct *five-and-twenty* pledges, to be taken by every one who might offer himself for a seat in Parliament,—calling on the constituency to insist on the candidates swallowing his box of pills, bitter though they must have proved to the taste of every independent man. Like every other creed and confession that has been framed since the days of the Councils of Trent and Nice downwards, the *Creed of Gotham*, as it was nicknamed, at once produced dissension and disunion. It was considered by its framer to be a clever bait for catching political gudgeons, but it was swallowed, alas, by none save “the old Whig” and his most rabid followers! It may be supposed that there was no lack of squibs and placards against and in favour of the various candidates

nightly exhibited, discussed, and laughed at in the Club-room. Of these, however, there are happily few remembered, except perhaps one, which certainly at the time created a more than ordinary interest. This squib, which appeared in the shape of "A New Election Song," had been given to a professed ballad-singer, who roared it through the streets, and by this means obtained for it no little notoriety. The song, as a picture of the exciting times and as a memento of the Club in which it was first read, if not sung, was entitled "The Laird of Barloch." It was printed in a coarse Saltmarket type, and was ornamented with a rude wood-cut effigy of the candidate. As both the laird and the author of the song are now gone to that country from which no traveller returns, we feel no compunction in presenting it here, as a tolerably faithful picture of the one, and by no means a bad specimen of the comic lyrical talent of the other:—

"The Laird of Barloch has got razor and saip—
The Laird of Barloch can baith lather and scrape—
He has cobbled his chin an' has made himsel' braw—
He's into his noddy an' trintlin' awa !

O whar's the Laird gaun at this time o' day,
Wi' his face sae weel wash'd an' his brown wig sae gay ?
Though I'm no vera rich, I will wad a bawbee,
He's aff to the hustings the voters to see.

O when he got there he joukit fu' low,
An' what was his errand he sune let them know—
For he rear'd back his head, stuck his hauns in his trews,
While his breast was blawn out like a proud cunshiedoo's.

'I'm a man o' great talents; now voters,' quo' he,
'One so fit for your Member you never will see;
So I stand on my strength,* on my own pretty feet,
In hopes you will grant me a Parliament-seat.

'I'm an honest Reformer, as all of you ken;
For, like my friend Dieky, I ne'er stole a hen;
An' in thus coming forward I merit your thanks,
For a man o' mair genius ne'er stood on twa shanks !

'I've more judgment than Fox, and for Sheridan, poh
Compared with myself he was really no go !

* Mr Douglas used to repeat, during this election contest, "that he stood on his own strength, and on no other man's weakness."

For clearness of head, an' for intellect soon',
I look up to no man—save the man in the moon!

' I'm great as a lawyer—I'm great at the pen—
As a wit and a punster I'm first of all men!
As a cook, too, I'm sure I could make a fair show,
For I have *dish'd* two three dinners,* as all of you know!"

The Laird he look'd round for the wonted applause,
But soon stood aghast at their hums and their haws;
For the voters began all to shuffle and cough,
And would stand nae mair bam frae the Laird of Barloch!" †

The next political matter which created a stir among the members of the Crow Club was the Paisley election, which took place on the resignation of Sir John Maxwell. The members of the Club on that occasion may be said to have formed the Glasgow committee in favour of their formerly defeated candidate, Mr Crawford; but here, as formerly, all their efforts, and they were not few, proved ineffectual. Sir Daniel Sandford carried the day, and Mr Crawford and Mr Douglas were once more defeated. It may now be confidently asserted that, if the choice of the Crow Club had been countersigned by the Paisley electors, no such Parliamentary failure as that which soon after ensued would have been experienced, rendering it necessary, ere many months, to look out for another representative.

Preparation for the first Municipal election, under the Burgh Reform Act, was the next important matter which called for the exertions of the Crow Club; and with the result of that election, which took place on the first Tuesday of November, 1833, which at once placed the leading men of their party in power, they were fully and perfectly satisfied.

Of all the political, parliamentary, or municipal contests, however, in which the Clique or the Crow Club was engaged, there was none which excited the enthusiasm of either, or which rewarded their social labour so much as the occasion when Oswald and Dunlop were returned Members

* The dinners here alluded to were those given to Mr Hume, Mr Thomas Campbell the poet, &c., the preparations for which Mr Douglas, not having got his own crotchets carried as to the toasts, did everything in his

power to spoil, and in which effort he partially succeeded.

† This song was written by the late J. D. Carrick, the author of the *Life of Sir W. Wallace*, *Whistlebinkie*, &c.

for Glasgow. On this occasion political parties were fairly pitched against each other. It was an honest combat in support of different and opposing political principles; and the victory which was at that time won by the progressive Reform party, settled the political faith of Glasgow for many years.*

The Club continued its sittings—eating, drinking, jesting, and joking—in the Vine Tavern, until its active and attentive landlord died. Strange to say, the last meeting which this fraternity held in Maxwell-street, took place on the very night on which poor Powell breathed his last. We believe it was just as the door shut on the Club, that the poor landlord's eye shut on this wicked world. After this event, the Club for a short season met in the Cossack in Jamaica-street, but under circumstances so disagreeable, as soon to force the members to pitch their tent in what was then far more comfortable, the Crow Tavern in George-square—where, for a long period, they continued to canvass the politics and the gossip of the City, and to watch over and direct not a few of those schemes which

* Mr Colin Dunlop was the eldest son of James Dunlop, Esq. of Garnkirk, and was born in 1775. After passing through the regular curriculum of the University, and studying law, he passed Advocate, but never practised at the bar. At an early period he returned to Glasgow, took the management of the large commercial affairs in which his father was engaged, and continued at the head of the Clyde Iron Works till the day of his death. Along with Mr James Oswald, Mr Dunlop was ever found the stern advocate of liberal measures; and was, for a long time, regarded as one of the chief leaders of the Reform party in Glasgow. From his known character as a politician, he was selected by a large body of the constituency as a candidate for the representation of Glasgow, and after a hard struggle, was elected Member of Parliament, on the 16th January, 1835. Mr Dunlop was possessed of a clear, searching, and highly cultivated intellect. His disposi-

tion was cheerful, kindly, energetic, and honourable. In all his acts and doings he was particularly straightforward. Like his friend, Mr Charles Tennant, he was a most zealous Reformer; and it may be truly said, that he fell a martyr to his devotion to the cause of Liberalism, seeing that his infirm frame sank beneath the anxious concern which he took in the election of Lord William Bentinck and Mr John Dennistoun, which took place on the 27th July, 1837. It was, in fact, on the morning of the election of those gentlemen to represent Glasgow, and in the preliminaries of which he took so ardent an interest, that he died. Impressed with a just sense of the private worth and public character of Mr Dunlop, a large body of citizens joined his funeral procession, on the 1st August, at the Cross, on its way to the Necropolis, where his remains lie buried, and over which a granite monument has been erected to his memory.

produced such unexpected results.* However powerful this Club long proved itself, in support of the political party in this City, whose cause it so ably advocated and maintained, it is certain that for some years past, at least, it has been in a state of great decrepitude, and may now be said to be almost, if not altogether effete. The fire of its youth has been long extinguished, and the energy of its chiefs has been either dulled or gone. Many of the most active of them already sleep under the verdant turf, while the few bald-pated brethren who remain are contented to leave the present and the future of politics to others, and to glory only in the recollections of the past. The once powerful Clique, of which this Club was the active and working committee, has been also for some time broken up. The spirit which bound its many influential members together has fled—the banner under which they so long fought and conquered is furled—the leaders are either dead or superannuated—the political command has fallen into other hands, and nothing now remains for the few heroes of the Clique or Crow who still tread this changing world, but to keep each his own snug elbow-chair at home, and when there recalling either the labours of the Clique or the libations of the Crow, to exclaim, as we assuredly are bound to do at present, “Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory has departed!”

* The Crow Tavern took its name from the rookery which surrounded Mr Ewing's house on the north end of Queen-street and George-

square, which continued in that quarter till the establishment of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway station in that locality.