Account of speeches at the presentation to James Backhouse Walker at the Working Men's Club.

15th July, 1872.

J. B. WALKER, ESQ.

A complimentary tea meeting was given to the above-named gentleman on Monday evening last, by the members of the Working Men's Club, as a token of their appreciation of the zeal and ability which he has shown in forwarding their interests during his 8 years' secretaryship of the Club. The tea meeting took place in the reading-room of the Club, which was crowded almost to excess by the members, their wives, and friends. The refection was provided by Messrs. Haywood & Sons in their usual satisfactory way, and the other arrangements were carried out by a committee of the Club's members in that practical manner characteristic of these "horny-handed sons of toil" who engage in a work which merits their attention. Among the many friends of Mr. Walker present were the Hon. W.R. Giblin (Attorney-General), President of the Club; Hon. P. O. Fysh, Vice-President; Henry Dobson, Esq., Treasurer; and Charles Crosby, Esq., first Vice-President, and promoter of the late successful Industrial Bazaar. On the entrance of Mr. Walker the company evinced their good will towards him by prolonged and hearty applause. After the tea and viands had been discussed, the President of the Club ascended and took a seat on the platform, where he was supported on his right by the Hon. P. O. Fysh, on his left by the guest of honour Mr. Walker, when no person would have prophesied that the weakly plant it then was would expand into the vigorous tree they saw it now. Much of this success was due to Mr. Walker, but he would not take the wind out of the sails of the "old member," Mr. G. Brown, who would read the address.

The President said he would not long detain them—to advocate Mr. Walker's merits no long speeches were required. The familiar faces he now saw around him carried him back to the first days of the Club, when no person would have prophesied that the weakly plant it then was would expand into the vigorous tree they saw it now. Much of this success was due to Mr. Walker, but he would not take the wind out of the sails of their "old member," Mr. G. Brown, who would read the address.

The members of the Committee then advanced to the platform, and Mr. G. Brown said it would only be presumption on his part, after such an eloquent speaker as the President had addressed them, if he were to detain them by a long speech. He felt honored at presenting this address, and it was scarcely possible for him to express the amount of good feeling evinced by the members to Mr. Walker, who had set an example of zeal and assiduity to the other officers. He hoped Mr. Walker would still remain with them, and trusted the hearty and natural well wishes with which he had worked on such pleasant terms for a long time. He concluded by reading the following reply:

To the Committee and Members of the Working Men's Club.

Gentlemen,—I hardly know how to thank you truly for the expressions of regard which your address contains, and for the generous and substantial manner in which you have this evening further shown that regard by the handsome present you have just made me.

It is very pleasing to me to know that you value so highly—though, indeed, at a value far above their real worth—the endeavours I have made as Secretary to be of service to the Club. Whatever I have done has, as you know, only been done through the hearty and willing co-operation of many others. Your kind expressions are therefore even more welcome, as I took upon them not only as personal to myself, but as evidencing your attachment to our Working Men's Club.

It is still more gratifying to me to be assured that during my eight years close connection with you in the work of the Institute, I have been fortunate enough to win your good opinion and goodwill. Your gift will often serve to remind me of your kindly feeling—it, indeed, a reminder were necessary of that—to which all your behaviour towards me during my term of office has borne constant witness.

I thank you very sincerely for your good wishes for my success in my new profession; the change in my life will make no change in my warm interest in the Working Men's Club, for which, I hope, I may be able to work with you, and can heartily assure that any labour in that cause will always be to me a pleasure and a delight.

Believe me to remain,
Yours very sincerely,
JAMES WALKER.

Hobart Town,
16th July, 1872.

The President then said they they had a pleasant practice in the Club of presenting testimonials to their officers when they entered the мурпal state. Unfortunately, however, in the case of Mr. Walker they were denied that gratification. (Laughter.) They all knew that Mr. Walker had for years efficiently filled an important post in the Savings Bank. That position he had resigned, and he was now studying law in the office of Mr. Dobson—in fact entering a new apprenticeship—and unless Mr. Dobson gave him permission to marry the testimonial must remain wrapped up in tissue paper for an indefinite period in one of Mr. Walker's strong boxes. (Laughter.) Even, though he said he was eight years younger, it would be some time before the tea service was put to its proper use by Mrs. James Backhouse Walker unless Mr. Dobson's heart was moved.

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Mr. Walker was deeply obliged to them all for the kind reception they had given him, and especially he was very heartyly thanked by the members of the club for their present and for their address. The present was valuable in itself, but when he looked upon it as a sort of embodiment of so much kind feeling towards him on the part of the members, he could assure them he would prize it very much and value it very highly. They had spoken in the address of the work he had done for the Club. He had been thinking he had and was entirely taken by surprise when the address was delivered to him. He had been surprised, indeed, and called upon him a few days back, asking him to attend the meeting that night such a tea meeting as that. After all he had only been one of the members for about 2 months and he had been so delighted with the Club that he had written his address in that short time, with the hope that he might see it often in the future, that he made him feel eight years older, and took him back to those first meetings held in the Board school-room where they had started the Club, and to their first seed beginnings in the old house in Barrack-street. It was then preceded by many that a few months would see the end of the Club, but they had stuck together and worked together, and faiied the prophetics, and now were one of the established institutions of the town. They had cleared a good deal, but there was more to be done yet, a little more energy, a compulsory spirit of co-operation amongst the members, and they would achieve more things in the future. He thanked them very sincerely for their good wishes for his success, and was touched by their expressions of personal regard towards him. They had often before, and in many ways, shown their kind feeling towards him, and he assured them that the record was mutual, not only as to the Club as a body, but personally, as to the individual members with whom he had worked and worked on such pleasant terms for a long time. He concluded by reading a letter of reply —

"The Committee and Members of the Working Men's Club.

Gentlemen—I have heard you to thank you for the expression of regard which you have contributed, and for the services and advice which you have given me.

J. B. WALKER.

The President of the Working Men's Club was that which every one wished to see—an exemplification of self-help. It was also a popular institution in the homes of the members, and he had seen the presence of their wives and children when they were absent. Mr. Fysh then alluded to the Penny Savings Bank of the Club, and said that an institution was established to make a child less of a spendthrift than he would otherwise be. Many of those good results could have been achieved through the efforts of Mr. Walker, who was an able follower, a thorough chaff off the old block. One could not turn over the records of the Club with the feeling of surprise that Mr. Walker, his father, and so it would be with their guests, who would occasionally among them. Mr. Fysh also bowed testimony to the worth of Mr. Benn, who was the perfection of self-denial, and worked for the Club not only with his hands, but his heart also. There were many kind words again of Mr. Broome's in the Club, who were always doing good, instead of flittering away their time. (Applause.)

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turn words were associated—"too" and "talk" and acting upon that principle he was glad to take some

Mr. Walker had done for the Club, and many good things he had done for the Club. Though these were not, as a rule, a good name for charity, yet he was quite a gentleman—knowing Mr. Walker's high—heart— that he would do some good for his fellow men, more for himself. The company must not suppose he would be too glad to refuse permission to marry. Mr. Dobson thence paid a compliment to Rev. Mr. Bromley, who was an observant visitor to the Club. Mr. Fysh said that he was deeply bow.

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