

New Swimming Bath for Glasgow

“We observed the other day, from the Great Western Road, a new building of peculiar construction on course of erection at the end to Arlington-street, Woodlands-road. Impelled by a laudable spirit of inquiry and an equally laudable anxiety to furnish our readers with something more than war news we made further investigation, and found that a want long felt in our city was at length about to be supplied. The inhabitants of the West-end of Glasgow have hitherto had but few courses open to them if they wished to indulge in swimming or to acquire a knowledge of that exhilarating and useful art. There were only the distant baths near the Green and the still more distant Firth of Clyde - Helensburgh being the nearest point at which the water did not taste a good deal worse than salt. The new bath erecting in Arlington-street is, as we learn, to be 70 feet long by 35 feet broad, lined with white and black glazed bricks, which are in many respects superior to the usual tiles. The depth of the water will vary from 3 feet 6 inches for boys to 9 feet for men. There are also to be warm, cool and shower baths, together with a comfortable smoking room to cool in during winter, As the water is to be kept at about 70 degrees all the year round this will be found a useful and salutary adjunct. The baths is being built by the Glasgow Bath Company (Limited) This company ranks among its members many of our most distinguished citizens together with a larger number of younger men, who have formed themselves into a club for the purpose of availing themselves of that admirable building. Indeed, to the *elan* and persevering energies of the latter the success of the undertaking seems to be mainly due. We have examined the rules of this club, and have observed that residents of Glasgow who are not members may not be introduced oftener than once in two months. This is, we think, rather strict, but many clubs are still more exclusive in their regulations; while to strangers not resident in or within thirty miles of Glasgow, the rules are abundantly liberal. The election of candidates is in the hands of committee of fifteen, chosen annually by the members; and by way of extending the usefulness of the club it has been arranged that the children of members are to be admitted to the used of the swimming bath at a merely nominal charge. It is also, we understand, contemplated to set apart the bath on Mondays from ten to four o’clock, exclusively for the use of ladies, when a properly qualified female will attend for the purpose of giving instructions in swimming. The annual subscription of 40s, is at present rather high, but we learn that the committee will arrange that the older members will have compensating advantages in future years, when the subscription comes to be reduced to a fair figure. In the meantime the object is to get a good beginning, both as regards members and funds. An inducement is held out to those who are holders of one or more shares in the Company, by the amount of subscription in to the club in their case being made less. In the erection of this spacious bath, which is from designs by John Burnet, Esq. architect, we recognise not only a legitimate desire on the part of rising generation to provide themselves with healthy recreation, but a due appreciation of the important part which swimming, as a physical exercise, should hold in the educational system of the country. We are authorised to add, that Henry Lamond, Esq. 64 West Regent-street, hon secretary of the Bath Company, or R,. Dalglish Jun. Esq., secretary of the Swimming Club will be happy to give, on application, any further information which may be required in reference to both branches of the undertaking rapidly approaching completion in Arlington-street, and the formal opening and inauguration of which we hope to be able on an early day to announce.”

[Article in the *Evening Citizen*, Tuesday, September 20 1870]

ARLINGTON SWIMMING CLUB

GENTLEMEN desirous of becoming MEMBERS of this CLUB are requested to furnish their Names and Addresses to any Member of the Committee, who will submit them for approval at the next Meeting.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT for the year 1870-71

F.W. Allan, 120 Buchanan Street
T.S. Anderson, 15 St Vincent Place
Robert Boyd, 10 Somerset Place
Wemyss O. Buffey, 41 West George Street
A Colville, 123 Hope Street
John B. Cowan, M.D., 159 Bath Street
W.J. Fleming, Clober, Milngavie
William Graham, 71 West Nile Street
J.B. Higginbotham, 157 West George Street
R. P. Lamond, 64 West Regent Street,
John Marshall, Jun., 168 St Vincent Street
Donald Matheson, 32 Exchange Square
S.H. Schwabe, 146 West George Street
W. Sloan, 34 Bothwell Street

R Dalglish, Jun., 29 St Vincent Street, Secretary.

[Advert in *The Star*, 19 October 1870]

GOSSIP FROM GLASGOW

“In such a night as this.” As Lorenzo says in the play, the first thing that naturally suggests itself is a bath – a swim in that Loch Ketturin which the genius of Mr Bateman has made “familiar in our mouths” than even that of Sir Walter Scott. Yet, strange to say, although we are never tired of boasting that from the far distant lake of Roderick Dhu and Ellen Douglas, we enjoy the best water supply of any city in the world, cheap. Convenient, and comfortable bathing is still almost as far removed from Glasgow as is the scene of Scott’s poem. In every other respect, the abundant supply has been largely taken advantage of. It fills alike the factory boiler and the domestic kettle, flushes our sewers, waters our streets, washes out our alleys. Fire-plugs are now more plentiful than lamp posts, and swan-necks are in even the Goose-dubs.* But of public baths – in a large industrial community like ours, almost a public necessity – we have nothing worthy of the name. Towards the removal of this reproach among the first efforts – “the Glasgow Swimming-bath Company,” and for which handsome premises are to be opened on 1st of August. The cost of the building will be about £2,500; the shares are £5 each; the annual subscription for those who are shareholders before opening-day is 30s, and for others 40s with 20s of entry-money. The bath measures 70ft by 35ft ; slopes from south to north, its depth at the northern side being 7ft 3in, and at southern between 2ft and 3ft ; and the height from the water-level to the wall head of building is 27ft 6in. The sides and floor of the bath are lined with white glazed bricks, jointed with red cement, and along the upper edge of the sides is a border of two lines of black. Along the north and south walls are ranged the dressing-boxes, and to within a few Inches of the water are suspended from the roof trapezes, swings, iron rings, ladders and various other gymnastic “means and appliances.” Besides the swimming there are Turkish and hot baths, and a smoking room 24ft by 18ft 6in. Little more need be said than that the building is alike most handsome and comfortable ; that the style of architecture is Italian slightly flavoured with Greek ; and that when one “wealthy curled darlings” of our city are fairly afloat it is to be hoped that the “unwashed artificer” will shortly follow.

*one of the meanest parts of the city

[*Building News and Engineering Journal*, 28 July 1871]