

*On the Fashionable Amusements and Entertainments in
Edinburgh in the last Century, with a Plan of a grand
Concert of Music on St Cecilia's Day, 1695.*

Read by W. Tytler of Woodhouselee, Esq.

IT affords no unpleasant exercise to the mind to take a retrospect of the manners and customs, and even of the amusements of the past times, and to compare them with those of the present age. In the short research which forms the subject of the following paper, I mean to go little farther back than a single century, and to take a cursory view of a few of the entertainments and amusements that were in use amongst the people of rank and fashion in Scotland towards the end of the last, and of the beginning of the present century.

In the years 1681 and 1682, while the Duke of York, then Commissioner from the King to Parliament, with his Dutchess *, and his daughter the Princess Anne, (afterwards Queen Anne), resided in Edinburgh, a splendid court was kept at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, to which resorted the principal of the nobility and gentry. The Duke, though a bigot in his religious principles, was no Cynic in his manners and pleasures. Our fathers of the last age used to talk with delight of the gaiety and brilliancy of the court of Holyroodhouse.

R r r 2

roodhouse.

* Mary D'Este, daughter of the Duke of Modena, celebrated by Lord Landford, Dryden, and other wits of the time, for her beauty and decency of manners.

roodhouse. The Princesses were easy and affable, and the Duke then studied to make himself popular * among all ranks of men.

Tea, for the first time heard of in Scotland, was given as a treat by the Princesses to the Scottish ladies who visited at the Abbey. Balls, plays, and masquerades, were introduced: These last, however, were soon laid aside. The fanaticism of the times could not bear such ungodly innovations. The masquerade was stiled *promiscuous dancing, in which all sorts of people met together in disguise* †. The vulgar gave it the name of the *Horn Order*. This profane entertainment was therefore soon given up.

The fate of the stage seems to have been equally adverse. The spirit of the times was still too much tinged with fanaticism to expect that the execrated profane entertainment of the stage would then succeed. A play-house was always held in abhorrence, and anathematized by the clergy ‡. Indeed the actors, who were part of

* Bishop Burnet, who is seldom lavish of his encomia on James, gives the following account of the Duke's deportment and government in Scotland at that time: 'The Duke (says the Bishop) behaved himself, upon his first going to Scotland, in so obliging a manner, that the nobility and gentry who had been so long trodden on by the Duke of Lauderdale and his party, found a very sensible change; so that he gained much on them all. He continued still to support that side; yet things were so gently carried, that there was no cause of complaint. It was visibly his interest to make that kingdom sure to him, and to give them such an essay of his government as might dissipate all the hard thoughts of him with which the world was possessed; and he pursued this with great temper and success. In matters of justice he shewed an impartial temper, and encouraged all propositions relating to trade: And so, considering how much the nation was set against his religion, he made a greater progress in gaining upon them than was expected'—*Burnet's Hist. Edin. edit. vol. 2. p. 322.*

† A phrase used by the fanatics, which they meant should import something very mysterious.

‡ The Duke seems to have been neither wise nor politic in his attempt to introduce such an innovation even in the amusements of such times. It was scarce two years before

of the Duke of York's company, and were considered as belonging to his household, seem not to have been the most eminent of the profession,

fore this, when those enthusiasts, the Covenanters, had collected their force, and given battle to the King's troops, commanded by the Duke of Monmouth. Although they suffered a defeat at Bothwell Bridge, and were dispersed, yet the spirit was kept up by their preachers in different parts of the kingdom. Cameron, the famous head of that sect of Covenanters stiled, from him, *Cameronians*, was killed in arms. Cargil, a distinguished Covenanter and field-preacher, having convened his followers at the Torwood, near Stirling, after renouncing all allegiance to the King and government, with great solemnity excommunicated, and consigned to the Devil, Charles, his brother the Duke of York, with the Dukes of Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes.

To what degree the spirit of fanaticism prevailed in the minds of these poor people, we may see from an abstract from Cargil's excommunication, which may be esteemed a curiosity at this day. After a sermon suitable to the occasion, he thus proceeds: 'I, as a minister of Jesus Christ, and having authority from him, do, in his name, excommunicate and cast out of the true church, and deliver up to Satan, *Charles the Second*: First, For his contempt of God, after he had acknowledged his own sins, his father's sins, his mother's idolatry, and had solemnly engaged against them, &c. 2dly, For his great perjury, after he had solemnly subscribed that *Covenant*, did so presumptuously renounce, disown, and command it to be burnt by the hand of the hangman. 3dly, For his having rescinded all laws for establishing the religion and the *Covenant*, &c.

'By the same authority, *I excommunicate*, cast out of the church, and deliver up to Satan, *James Duke of York*, and that for his idolatry, (for I shall not speak of any other sins but what have been perpetrated by him in Scotland), and for setting up idolatry, to defile the Lord's land, and his enticing and encouraging others to do so.'

By the same authority, Cargil excommunicates, and consigns to the Devil, the *Dukes of Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes*. I shall transcribe part of his charges against these three last grandees. That against *Monmouth*, is 'for his leading armies against the Lord's people, who were constrained to rise, being killed in, and for the right worshipping of the true God, and for refusing a cessation of arms at Bothwell Bridge. Against *Lauderdale*, for his *apostatizing from the Covenant*; for his scoffing and droling at the Scriptures; for his adulteries and uncleanness; and for assisting the King in his tyrannies against the true religion, &c.

'And against *Rothes*, for his adulteries and uncleanness, and for his allotting the Lord's Day for his drunkenness,' &c. &c.

After denouncing this excommunication to a numerous convention of Covenanters, September 1680, they affixed it to the crosses of Dumfries, and other places. Cargil, some

profession, if we give any degree of credit to Dryden's fatirical account of this troop. It would seem, that the best part of the company had gone to Oxford, as they were in use to do, to perform at the annual public acts there. Dryden, with great humour, makes them thus apologise to the University for the thinness of the company, while they insinuate that the best remained, and that the refuse only had gone to Edinburgh.

Our brethren have from Thames to Tweed departed,
To Edinburgh gone, or coach'd, or carted :
With bonny blue cap there they act all night
For Scotch half crowns, in English 3 pence hight.
One nymph to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's lean,
There with her single person fills the scene.
Another, with long use and age decayed,
Died here old woman, and rose there a maid.
Our trusty door-keeper, of former time,
There struts and swaggers in heroic rhyme.
Tack but a copper lace to druggot suit,
And there's a hero made without dispute ;
And that which was a capon's tail before,
Becomes a plume for Indian Emperor.
But all his subjects to express the care
Of imitation, go like Indian, bare.

Dryden's *Mis.* vol. 2.

The poet's fancy was, no doubt, indulged fatirically at the expense of the Scottish theatre. It is not improbable, however, that there

some time after, was apprehended, brought to trial, and condemned, with a few of his followers, to be hanged. Bishop Burnet says, 'That they suffered with an obstinacy so particular, that though the Duke sent the offer of pardon to them on the scaffold, if they would only say, God bless the King, it was refused, with great neglect.' Such persons were truly more proper objects of pity than punishment. Accordingly Burnet continues, 'After 15 or 16 of them had thus seemingly gladly suffered for their opinion, the Duke stopt further prosecution, and appointed them to be put in a house of correction.'—*Vol. 2. p. 324.*

there might be some truth in this ludicrous description. A regular theatre, with its appendages of scenery, dresses, &c. is not to be created *extempore*.

Where this play-house was situated can only be guessed. I remember somewhere to have seen a play-bill in capital letters, advertising *the Indian Emperor* to be acted at the *Queen's Chocolate-house*. This was, no doubt, near the Abbey; but the precise situation, or the date of the advertisement, is not now known.

Another entertainment was sometimes exhibited at court, in which the Lady Anne, (the usual name given to the Princess), with other young ladies of quality, represented some of the ancient heathen mythological characters. These were called *Masks*, a sort of musical drama, such as the *Comus* of Milton, and other such pieces as we see in the works of Ben Johnson, Shirley, Davenant, and other dramatic poets of the last century. These interludes were accompanied with music, and set off with splendid dresses and decorations.—So much for the court entertainments.

The golf*, and playing at tennis†, were the favourite amusements of the gentry of those times. The Duke of York was frequently seen

* King Charles I. is said to have been fond of the exercise of the golf. The following anecdote I have been told of him: That, while he was engaged in a party at golf on the Green or Links of Leith, a letter was delivered into his hands, which gave him the first account of the insurrection and rebellion in Ireland. On reading which, he suddenly called for his coach; and, leaning on one of his attendants, and in great agitation, drove to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, from whence next day he set out for London.

† The game of tennis, which is now entirely given up in Scotland, was an exercise much in vogue all over Europe in the last century. In every large town there was a tennis court. Some remains of them are yet to be seen in Edinburgh; one, in particular, at the Water Gate, nigh to the Palace. I have heard it said, that the famous John Law of Lauriston, afterwards comptroller-general of the finances in France, and James Hepburn, Esq; of Keith, were most remarkable players at tennis.

seen in a party at golf on the Links of Leith, with some of the nobility and gentry. I remember in my youth to have often conversed with an old man, named Andrew Dickson, a golf club maker, who said, that, when a boy, he used to carry the Duke's golf clubs, and to run before him and announce where the balls fell.

On the rejection of the exclusion bill, the Duke being recalled to London, the courtly entertainments at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, of course, were no more.

Private balls and concerts of music, it would seem, were now the only species of public entertainments amongst us. With regard to the compositions performed at these concerts, who were the performers, and on what musical instruments they performed, I am pleased that I have it in my power to gratify the curiosity of the *dilettanti* of the present time, by exhibiting the original plan of a grand concert of music performed at Edinburgh on St Cecilia's day, anno 1695. This curious paper was given by James Christie, Esq; of Newhall to my worthy friend William Douglas of Garwall-foot, and by him to me.

The

The Order of the Instrumental Music for the Feast of St Cecilia, 22d November 1695.

	First Violin.	Second Violins.	Flutes.	Hautbois.	Basses.
Clerk's Overture.	Pitmedden Tho. Pringle Will. Cooper Tho. Brown Will. Gordon Sir Jo. Pringle John Stewart	Ja. Hamilton Fra. Toward Adam Craig Henry Burn Sir Tho. Nicolson	Lord Elcho Sir Jo. Erskine Jo. Falconer of Fefdo Jo. Russell Jo. Corfe Sir Al. Hamilton	Will. Carfe Mat. M'Gibbon	James Christie of Newhall Mr Ro. Gordon Mr Sinkholm Ja. M'Clachlan Henry Crumbden Jo. Middleton
Torrelli's Sonata for 4 violins.	1st Violin. Pitmedden Tho. Pringle Ja. M'Clachlan	2d Violin. Ja. Hamilton Adam Craig Will. Cooper	3d Violin. Will. Carfe Mat. M'Gibbon Sir Jo. Pringle	4th Violin. Henry Burn Fra. Toward Will. Gordon	Basses. Ja. Christie Mr Ro. Gordon Mr Sinkholm Dan. Thomson
Barrett's Trumpet Sonata.	1st Violin. Sir Jo. Pringle Will. Gordon Adam Craig Henry Burn Will. Cooper Tho. Kennedy	2d Violin. Pitmedden Fra. Toward Ja. Hamilton Tho. Pringle Tho. Brown Will. Carfe	Hautbois. Mat. M'Gibbon	Trumpet. Dan. Thomson Tenor, John Wilfon	Basses. Ja. Christie Mr Ro. Gordon Mr St Columb Ja. M'Clachlan
Pepuifi for 2 flutes and 2 violins.	1st Flute. Pitmedden Newhall Fr. Toward Fefdo Jo. Middleton Sir Jo. Erskine	2d Flute. Sir Jo. Pringle Will. Gordon Ja. Hamilton Mat. M'Gibbon	1st Violin. Tho. Pringle Adam Craig Ja. M'Clachlan	2d Violin. Henry Burn Will. Cooper Will. Carfe	Basses. Ut antea
Finger for 2 flutes and 2 haut.	1st Flute. Mr Crumbden Ja. Hamilton Pitmedden	2d Flute. Tho. Pringle Fra. Toward Jo. Middleton	1st Hautboy. Mat. M'Gibbon	2d Hautboy. Will. Carfe	Basses. Ut antea

Tunes.	1st Treble.	2d Treble.	Hautbois.	Trumpet.	Basses.
2 Trumpets.	Tho. Pringle Will. Gordon Ja. Hamilton Fra. Toward Tho. Kennedy	Adam Craig Pitmedden Henry Burn Tho. Brown Sir Jo. Pringle	M. M'Gibbon Will. Carfe Chorus.	Dan. Thomson Tenor. Jo. Wilfon	Omnes.
Pepuifi, 2 violins, and 2 haut.	1st Violin. Adam Craig Will. Gordon	2d Violin. Mr Toward Ja. M'Clachlan	Scena 3tia. 1st Hautboy. Mat. M'Gibbon	2d Hautboy. Will. Carfe.	Basses. Omnes
Baffani Sonata.	1st Violin. Tho. Pringle Adam Craig	2d Violin. Fra. Toward Will. Gordon	Harpfichord. Henry Crumbden Scena 4ta.	Schollars Dan. Thomson's boy	Songs and Motetti of Baffani
Correlli's Sonata.	1st Violin. Mr Toward Will. Gordon	2d Violin. Tho. Pringle Adam Craig	Sonata, Lord Colville Harpfichord		
Fingers Trumpet Sonata.	1st Violin. Sir Jo. Pringle Pitmedden Henry Burn Will. Cooper Ja. M'Clachlan	2d Violin. Tho. Pringle Fra. Toward Ja. Hamilton Will. Carfe Jo. Stewart	Hautboy. Mat. M'Gibbon	Trumpet. Dan. Thomson Tenor. Jo. Wilfon	Basses. Omnes
Torelli's Sonata.	1st Treble. Will. Gordon	2d Treble. Adam Craig			Bass. Omnes
Chacon.	Divifion. Will. Gordon Ja. M'Clachlan Mat. M'Gibbon	Plain Part. Dan. Thomson Fra. Toward Henry Burn	3d Part. Pitmedden Sir Jo. Pringle	Tenor. Jo. Wilfon	Bass. Omnes

Solo by Adam Craig.
— by John Middleton.
Grand Chorus.

(Signed) JAMES CHRYSTIE of Newhall, PSES.

S: s 2:

Upon

Upon this curious piece I shall make a few observations.

It appears from this plan, that, a hundred years ago, there was a general taste for music in our metropolis, that could exhibit a public concert, with an orchestra, consisting of above 30 performers, of whom were 19 gentlemen of the first rank and fashion, supported by 11 professors, or masters of music*.

In the opening piece, or overture, we see 7 first violins, 5 second violins, 6 flutes, 2 hautbois. The bass consisted of a harpsichord (Crumbden) and 5 violincellos, and viol de Gambos, to which we may add a viola, or tenor. Such an orchestra at this day would be respectable.

The music, indeed, seems little accommodated to the taste of a modern audience; but it consisted of the compositions of some of the best masters of the time. The Motetti of Bassani, and the Sonatas of Corelli, it is believed, will still give pleasure to a genuine taste that is not vitiated by fashion †.

Such,

* The masters, as far as I have been able to trace, or could learn, were the following:

Mr Henry Crumbden.	Mr Thomas Brown.
Mr St Columb.	Mr Henry Burn.
Mr William Cooper.	Mr Matthew M'Gibbon.
Mr Adam Craig.	Mr Daniel Thomson.
Mr Francis Toward.	Mr John Wilson.
Mr James M'Clachlan.	

The rest were gentlemen performers.

† The following particulars relating to the performers may perhaps gratify some musical readers.—I begin with the gentlemen performers.

Lord Colvill, it is said, was a thorough master of music, and understood counterpoint well. He played on the harpsichord and organ.

Sir

Such, from the above plan of the music performed on St Cecilia's Day in 1695, appears to have been the state of music, and the musical

Sir John Pringle, and his brother Mr Thomas Pringle writer to his Majesty's Signet, and Mr Seton of Pitmedden, were esteemed excellent performers on the violin.

Mr Carse, collector of his Majesty's , was a fine player on the hautbois.

Mr Chrystie of Newhall, Prefes of the Concert, I remember in my youth to have heard play. His instrument, I think, was the viol di Gambo, on which he was an excellent solo performer.

Mr John Middleton, afterwards General Middleton, played on different instruments. In the above plan, we see him marked as a bass and as a flute performer. He sung, as I have been told, a song with much humour, which he sometimes accompanied with the key and tongs.

Lord Elcho, afterwards Earl of Wemyss, Mr Falconer of Phefdo, Mr John Russell writer to the signet, and Mr John Corse keeper of the records of the low Parliament-house, were good players on the flute. Mr Russell I have often heard play. He read and understood music; and, in his younger days, it was said he had a good voice, and sung an Italian air with taste. The flute a-bec was the only flute used at that time. The German, or traverse, of modern invention, was not then known in Britain. I have heard, that Sir Gilbert Elliot, afterwards Lord Justice Clerk, who had been taught the German flute in France, and was a fine performer, first introduced that instrument into Scotland about the year 1725.

These gentlemen performers were supported by the masters mentioned in the above plan or order of music. Of these last, I shall mention such particular anecdotes as I have been told concerning them.

Mr Henry Crumbden, by birth a German, was long the Orpheus in the music school of Edinburgh. He was a fine performer of lessons on the harpsichord, and taught singing and the thorough bass. He greatly promoted the spirit and taste for music by giving benefit concerts, which were much frequented. In these concerts, several young ladies, his best scholars, used to perform. Two of these I remember to have heard with rapture in my younger days, Mrs Forbes of Newhall*, and Mrs Edgar †. They were both fine performers on the harpsichord. Their excellence, as far as I could then judge, lay in the genuine performance of Scots songs, which they sung in a plain, but fine taste, and accompanied with a thorough bass, in such a stile and manner

* Grandmother of the present Countess of Dumfries.

† Mother of James Edgar, Esq; one of his Majesty's Commissioners of the Customs in Scotland.

cal taste at Edinburgh, near a hundred years ago. To draw a comparison between it and the languid spirit and taste for music in the metropolis at present, affords, I am afraid, not a very agreeable reflection.

Topographical

manner as, in my judgment, there are only two or three of the present time can come up to.

Matthew M'Gibbon was esteemed a good performer on the hautbois. He was the father of William M'Gibbon, well known and celebrated in his time for his great execution on the violin. William was sent early to London by his father, and studied many years under Corbet, then reckoned a great master and composer. Corbet's sonatas for two violins and a bass were esteemed good, and often played as act-tunes in the Play-house. His scholar William M'Gibbon was for many years leader of the orchestra of the Gentlemen's Concert at Edinburgh, and was thought to play the music of Correlli, Geminiani, and Handel, with great execution and judgment. His sets of Scots tunes, with variations and basses, are well known. As he understood composition, he likewise composed a set of sonatas or trios for two violins and a bass, which were esteemed good.

Adam Craig was reckoned a good orchestra player on the violin, and teacher of music. I remember him as the second violin to M'Gibbon, in the Gentlemen's Concert.

Daniel Thomson was one of the King's trumpets, and was said to have understood music, and to have been a good performer of the obligato, or solo parts, in the trumpet songs of Purcell's Opera of Dioclesian, Bonduca, and other theatrical pieces then exhibited on the stage. The two-part song of *To Arms*, and *Sound Fame thy brazen trumpet*, accompanied with the trumpet, were long great favourites with the public.—His son, William Thomson, the boy mentioned in the above plan, was early distinguished for the sweetness of his voice, and the agreeable manner in which he sung a Scots song. He went to London; and, at the time when the Opera, and the compositions of Handel, were at their height, the sweet pathetic manner of Thomson's singing a Scot's song, which he accompanied with a thorough bass, became a fashionable entertainment at court, where he often performed. He published an excellent collection of Scots songs, with the words and thorough bass, which was patronised by Queen Caroline, to whom he dedicated his book, and obtained a large subscription. I have been told that he taught some of the Princesses to sing Scots songs.