

## II.

NOTICE OF THE SILVER BELL OF LANARK, A HORSE-RACING TROPHY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, WITH SOME REFERENCES TO THE EARLY PRACTICE OF HORSE-RACING IN SCOTLAND. By ALEXANDER J. S. BROOK, F.S.A. Scot.

The silver bell of Lanark (fig. 1) is a horse-racing trophy, which

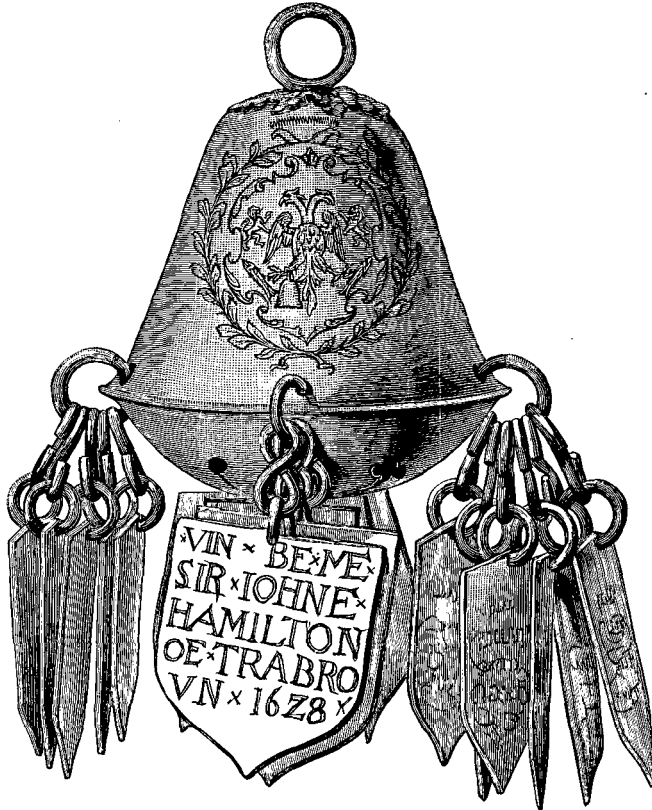


Fig. 1. The Silver Bell of Lanark (scale one-half).

tradition has described as the gift of William the Lion to the royal

burgh of Lanark in 1160. Before discussing the tradition the bell may be described.<sup>1</sup> It is of the usual form, 4 inches high, excluding the handle, and is circular at the mouth, where it measures 4 inches in diameter. The mouth is closed—similar to the bells attached to children's rattles—with a domed silver plate, in which is pierced an opening in the form of a cross, to emit the sound. The extremities of two arms of the cross terminate in a quatrefoil, and the other two in circular holes. The handle is composed of a circle of round wire, and is one inch in diameter; it rests upon a star-shaped ornament of six oak leaves. On the front of the bell are engraved the arms of Lanark, the ground within the floral wreath in which they are enclosed being gilded. Immediately above the arms is the mark where the deacon who tested the quality of the silver has wriggled off the assay piece, and to the side of this is engraved the hall-mark (fig. 2).

The first mark is that of the goldsmith who made the bell, Robert Denneistoun or Danielstoun, who was admitted a freeman of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths in Edinburgh on 23rd April 1597. His mark is found on the chain<sup>2</sup> known as "Midside Maggie's Girdle" and on several communion cups.

R X I D H.

Fig. 2. Hall-mark on the Silver Bell of Lanark (actual size).

The last mark is that of Henry Lindsay, who was admitted a freeman of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths in Edinburgh on the 17th October 1587. His mark as maker is found on a communion cup at Currie. The last mark is usually understood to be that of the deacon who tested the quality and affixed the statutory marks, of which his own was one; but there is no record of Henry Lindsay ever having been deacon. Robert Denneistoun was deacon from 1608 till 1610, and the marks may be misplaced, as occasionally happened. The centre marks, XI D, denote the quality, xj deniers, prescribed by the Acts of 1457 and 1483. There are three curious features about the hall-mark: (1) the absence of the town mark, which leads to the inference that the bell never passed through the hands of the appointed deacon. But if this was the case

<sup>1</sup> The Bell was exhibited to the Society by permission of A. H. Laidlay, Esq., the winner for 1888 and 1889, and also for 1890.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xxiii., 1888-9, pp. 448-9.

it is difficult to explain how two goldsmiths' marks are engraved upon it. Irregularities in the stamping of plate are less frequently found in Edinburgh than in some of the smaller burghs, but in almost every case the goldsmith who made the article affixed his own mark alone, omitting all the others. (2) The denoting of the quality. This is a peculiarity, unique, as far as I know, in all old Scottish plate. (3) Engraving instead of stamping the mark. This was rarely done in Edinburgh; but on several medals (dating from 1672 till 1678) belonging to the Grammar School of Aberdeen this peculiarity may be noted. The probable explanation in this case may be that it would be impossible to get the anvil inserted upon which to strike the mark on account of the mouth of the bell being closed.

Regarding the quality of the silver, it may be noted that it falls short of the fineness of xj deniers specially denoted in its hall-mark, and which was the legal standard at that time. The quality, as certified by Messrs Johnson, Matthey & Co., the assayers to the Bank of England, is only .912, equivalent to 10 oz. 18 dwt. 21 grs. of pure silver to the lb. troy. A deficiency such as this is, however, a common fault of Scottish silver plate of that period, and many examples will be found debased in quality.

In the rim of the mouth there are pierced four holes equidistant from each other, in which are inserted round silver rings, from which are suspended the badges attached to the bell. Inside the bell, below the handle, is attached a clapper of thick round wire. In 1889 there were attached to the bell twenty-two silver badges, uniform in size and design. Only one of these possesses any antiquity. It bears on one side the inscription "VIN . BE . ME . SIR . IOHNE . HAMILTON . OF . TRABROVN . 1628," and on the other side the winner's coat of arms. The next badge is dated 1852.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Although a list of the winners from this date is of no archæological value it may be desirable to record their names as they appear on the badges in 1889:—1852, Capt. Key's "Little Jack"; 1853, Mr Redfern's "Testator"; 1854, Mr T. Parr's "Rob-gill"; 1857, Mr Merry's "Lady Albert"; 1858, Mr Villiers Surtees' "Maid of Derwent"; 1860, Mr William Sharpe's "The Friar"; 1861, Mr W. M. Lightbody's "Tousle"; 1863, Mr Ruddach's "Dick Swiveller"; 1865, Mr James Watson's "Deerham"; 1866, Mr Thomas Dawson's "Jura"; 1867, Messrs R. & J. Cowan's "Declaration"; 1868, Mr James Watson's "Flora"; 1869, Mr John Martin's "The Swan"; 1877, Mr James Pettegrew's "Cheveley"; 1878, Duke of Montrose's "Eminence"; 1879, Mr Robert Osborne's "Brown George"; 1881, Mr R. Walker's

The bell and badges in 1889 weighed 30 oz. 2 dwt.

The facts which the bell itself bears witness to, completely destroy and render it unnecessary to discuss the tradition which describes it as the gift of William the Lion. In all probability the tradition had its origin in the fact that King William the Lion, when resident in the Castle of Lanark, is said to have instituted the Lanark racecourse and races.

During the period of the Commonwealth, the sport of horse-racing was in abeyance; but after the restoration of Charles II. it was actively revived. In 1661 there appeared in the *Mercurius Caledonijs*, a newspaper published in Edinburgh, a notification in the following terms:—

“The horse-race at Lanark, instituted by King William about six hundred years since, but obstructed these twenty-three years by the iniquity of the times, is now restored by Sir John Wilkie of Foulden, as being loath so ancient a foundation should perish; and for that effect he hath given gratis a piece of plate of the accustomed value, with a silver bell and saddle to the second and third horse. It is to be run the third Tuesday in May.”

It is possible the bell was run for at this race; but if so, no winner's badge was attached to it, or it has subsequently been lost. At any rate, from this date till 1852 the bell was amissing, and the late Mr Vere Irving of Newton<sup>1</sup> on making enquiry satisfied himself that during that long period it had been locked up in the repositories of the Town Council. With regard to Sir John Wilkie's gift of a piece of plate with a silver bell, there is nothing to show that they became the absolute property of the winners, and were not returned after being held for a year. If they were competed for annually, like the bell, they may have been the prizes described as a “silver tanker and bell” run for in June 1719. On the 23rd March of that year the Town Council appointed “their race for the silver tanker and bell to be run in the usual place upon Thursday, the 4th of June next to come, and the magistrates to

“Mother Shipton”; 1882, Mr William Stevenson's “Hesperian”; 1884, Mr William Stevenson's “Londonderry”; 1886, Mr John Martin's “Prince Henry”; 1887, dead heat between Mr James Hope's “Lady Adelaide” and Mr William Cairns' “Brian Boru”; 1888, Mr A. H. Laidlay's “Horton”; 1889, Mr A. H. Laidlay's “Horton.” Some of the badges are engraved on both sides, and thus serve for two winners.

<sup>1</sup> *Lanark in the Olden Time*, by Hugh Davidson, F.S.A. Scot.

be judges in the riding," and they also recorded in their Minutes that horse-racing "if encouraged will prove beneficial to the burgh."<sup>1</sup>

In 1720 there was advertised a race on Lanark Moor for a piece of plate of the value of £12, given by the burgh.

The Lanark bell is, with one exception, the only surviving trophy of what was the customary form of prize offered by many of the Scottish burghs for the promotion of horse-racing.

This sport has never formed a very prominent amusement in Scotland. The country and the climate were both unfavourable to it, and the state of the country—during the reigns of the later Stuart kings at any rate—caused men's minds to be occupied more with thoughts of war than questions regarding the speed and pedigree of horses.

The earliest notice of horse-racing I have met with is in the Treasurer's accounts of 1504 :—

"Item, the second daij of Maij to Dande Doule quhilk he wan fra the King on hors rynnng, . . . . . xxviijjs."

There is no reference, however, to the course on which this race was run.

Horse-racing as an amusement appears to have made considerable progress in Scotland before the end of the sixteenth century. This may be gathered from an account of the life of David Home of Wedderburn, who died in 1574. In it horse-racing is mentioned as one of his amusements.

"He collected a number of the swiftest horses, both from the north of Scotland and from England, by the assistance of one Græme, recommended to him by his brother-in-law, Lochinvar. He generally had eight or more of that kind, so that the prize was seldom won by any but those of his family. . . . He was so great a master of the art of riding, that he would often be beat to-day, and within eight days lay a double wager on the same horses, and come off conqueror. . . . He went frequently from home to his diversion, sometimes to Haddington, and sometimes to Peebles, the one of which is eighteen and the other twenty-four miles distant, and sometimes stayed there for several days with numerous attendants, regardless of expense, as being too mean and sordid a care, and below the dignity of one of his rank."

<sup>1</sup> An exhaustive examination of all MS. records in possession of the Town Council of Lanark was made by Mr Hugh Davidson, F.S.A. Scot., but no further mention of the bell was found.

The Haddington race here referred to was instituted apparently previous to 1552, as may be inferred from the following extract from the records of that burgh :—

1552, *May* 10.—The quhilk day John Forrois, burgess of Hadingtoun, came cautioner that ane worthy and mychty lord, George lord Seytoun, sall bring the silver bell that his horse wan upon the x day Maij the yeir of God 1<sup>m</sup> V<sup>c</sup> fiftie twa yeiris, to the said burgh of Hadingtoun, upon the thrid day of November the samyn yeir of God, and present the same to the provost and baillies of the said burgh of Hadingtoun, with ane augmentation lyke as the said lord pleases to augment for his honour ; and the same bell to be run for the said day, swa that the wynnar thereof may have the same again ; and for observing of thir premissis the said John Forrois has actit himself in the common buyk of Hadingtoun the said x day of May the yeir of God above specifit.

In Dumfries horse-racing was also an established sport at this time. When Regent Morton, towards the close of 1575, held a criminal court there for the trial of some offending Borderers he relieved his grave duties by patronising the turf.

“Many gentlemen of England came thither to behald the Regent’s court, where there was great provocation made for the running of horses. By chance my Lord Hamilton had there a horse sae weel bridled and sae speedy that although he was of a meaner stature than other horses that essayit their speed, he overran them all a great way upon Solway Sands, whereby he obtained great praise both of England and Scotland at that time.”

In Peebles horse-racing was also a popular sport at this time. The race was accustomed to take place there on Beltane-day, the 1st of May ; it is the chief surviving part of the festivities which had from an early period distinguished the day and place, and which were celebrated in the old poem of “Peebles and the Play.” An enormous concourse of people gathered together at these popular festivals, and they frequently ended in scenes of riot and bloodshed. Family feuds and personal animosities were rife in those days, and after men had somewhat inflamed themselves with liquor, mutual provocations and an immediate recourse to deadly weapons were scarcely avoidable.

So great reason was there in 1608 to fear such a scene at Peebles that the Lords of Council thought proper to issue a proclamation forbidding the race to take place.

28th April 1608.—“Forasmeikle as the Lords of Secret Council are informit that there is ane horse-race appointit to be at Peblis the            day of May nextcome, whereunto grit numbers of people of all qualities and ranks intends to repair, betwixt whom there being quarrels, private grudges, and discontentment, it is to be feirit that at their meeting upon fields, some troubles and inconvenients sall fall out amangs them, to the break of his Majesty’s peace and disquieting of the country without remeed be providit; Therefore the Lords of Secret Council has dischargit and be the tenor hereof discharges the said horse-race, and ordains that the same sall be nawise halden nor keepit this year; for whilk purpose ordains letters to be direct, to command, charge, and inhibit all and sundry his Majesty’s lieges and subjects by open proclamation at the mercat-cross of Peblis and other places needful, that nane of them presume nor tak upon them to convene and assemble themselves to the said race this present year, but to suffer that meeting and action to depart and cease, as they and ilk ane of them will answer upon the contrary at their heichest peril,” &c.

The disturbance which was anticipated must have been a local one and confined to the eastern counties, for in the west, at Paisley, in the same month of the same year, the magistrates of that burgh decided upon ordering a bell for a horse-race there.

*Act anent the silver Bell.*—April 1608. Item, it is concluded that ane silver bell be made of 4 oz. weight, with all diligence, for ane Horse race yearly to be appointed within this burgh, and the bounds and day for running thereof to be set down by advice of my Lord Earl of Abercorn, Lord Paisley and Kilpatrick.

The bell for the race thus instituted is still in existence and competed for to this day.

The conditions and arrangements for the race are fully detailed in an Act<sup>1</sup> of the Paisley Magistrates.

*Act setting downe ane hors Raiss.*—Apud Paisslay decimo tertio die mensis Maij 1620. The quhilk day Andro Crawfurde and Jo<sup>n</sup> Algeo, younger baillies of ye burghe thair of, with the counselle of the samyn being convenit in the tolbuith of the said burt, with advyce of ane nobill and potent erle James erle of Abercorne, &c., proveist of the said burghe . . . . it is now concludit and ordanit . . . . that yeirlie in tyme cuming thair bell raice salbe rwne on the saxt day of Maij in manner following, viz. . . . . that the horse and maister

<sup>1</sup> The full text of this act may be found in the *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, MDCCCXXXIV., pp. 197-200.

yairof that first comes over the scoir at the said walnuik of Paisslay, sall have the said bell with the said burghe's airmes yairvpoun for yat yeir, togidder with the rest of the gold that salbe gevin in with the said bell in maner following . . . . and sall have the said silver bell hung at his horse heid, and ye gold foirsaid. With this provisioune, that the maister of the horse or onie vtheris haifing power of him salbe actit as principall, with ane sufficient burgess man as cautioner for him conjunctlie and severallie, for productiounne of the said bell to the saidis baillies of Paislaye, als gude as he sall resave the samyn, with what augmentatioune pleist him to adde . . . . and quhatevir horse winnis the said silver bell three yeiris togithir, the maister owner yairof sall have the said silver bell to himselff, conforme to the manner of vther burrowes."

Provision is also made in this act for other prizes in the bell race and for "ane efterschot rais" with first and second prizes.

In 1610 there is an entry in the Records of the Burgh of Dunfermline relating to the bell belonging to that burgh.

"Apud Dunfermling decimo nono die Aprilis ano dni millemo sexcente<sup>mo</sup> decimo coram Ione Andersoun et Jacobo Mochrie ballievis de burgi.

"The qlk day in prnce of ye saids baillies comperit personally mr James dugles the schoolmaster burges of ye said bur<sup>t</sup> and upon his awin propre confession actit him his airs exe<sup>ts</sup> and asgns as cau<sup>r</sup> and sourtie ffor David Boeswell broyer german to S<sup>r</sup> Johne Boeswell of ballmuto kny<sup>t</sup>. That ye said David or yuers in his name Sall exhibit and produce Befoir ye provest and bailleis of ye said bur<sup>t</sup> In ye tolbuith yrof upon the fourt day of apryll In ye yeir of God sixteen c<sup>t</sup> and eleven yeirs next to cum at ten houris bfor noon. The sylver Race bell double overgilt his majesties name and arms gravin yrupon Weyand . . . . perteng to ane noble lord alex<sup>r</sup> erle of Dunflynne lord fyvie and urqhat heich chancelure of Scotland Baillie hera<sup>bl</sup> prin<sup>le</sup> of ye regal<sup>tie</sup> of Dunfermling delyverit this day to ye said David In custodie and keiping unto the said day Be command and ordinate of ye said noble erle Be resson of ye said David's blak hors wyning the custody and keiping yrof be rining frae conscience brig to ye brig of urquhat in companie w<sup>t</sup> uyer twa hors, viz., ane dapil gray hors blong<sup>s</sup> to S<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Monteth of Kers, Kny<sup>t</sup>, and ye uyer ane broun hors blong<sup>s</sup> to Lues Monteth his broyer german and wan frae yame ye race. And that the said David Boeswell sall delyver and produce the said bell in the lyke and also gud state as he nou resaves the sam under ye pains of fyve hundret merks mn<sup>v</sup> scots to be payit be ye said cau<sup>r</sup> to ye said noble erle in case of failyer, and the said David Boeswell compereand personally demittand his awin jurisdiction and duly submitting him in this case to the jurisdiction of the provest and baillies of ye said bur<sup>t</sup> of his awin confession actit him to freth and relive the said M<sup>r</sup>

Cautionry for production of the Race Bell upon the fourt day of apryll 1611.

9to Aprilis 1611. This act deleit be resson David Boeswell prduct the hors race bell inducie this day. Johne Anderson, Baillie.



James Dugles his cau<sup>r</sup> of this present cau<sup>rie</sup> betwin hym and the said baillies and of uyer penalties. The said baillies interponit yair autor<sup>y</sup> yrto and ordains execution of poynding and warding to pass heirupon in case of failyer of production of the said bell at the day and in manneir above spee<sup>t</sup>."

The Lord Dunfermline here referred to was Alexander Seton, first Earl of Dunfermline, who was appointed Lord Chancellor of Scotland in 1604. The owner of the winning horse was David Boswell of Craigin-cat, youngest brother of Sir John Boswell of Balmuto, who appears to have died in 1611, at the age of sixty-four. The race-course was on the Stirling road, immediately to the west of the town, and must have been upwards of two miles long. "Conscience Brig" is still in existence and the "Brig of Urquhart" is at the farm of that name, close to Dunfermline.

Early in the seventeenth century the passion for horse-racing had made such progress that it called for the interposition of Parliament. The preamble of Stat. 1621, chap. xiv., is in these terms:—

"Considering the monyfold evillis and inconvenientis whiche ensew upoun carding and dyceing and horse races, whiche ar now over mucche frequented in this cuntrey, to the gryit prejudice of the liegis; and becaus honest men ought not expect that anye wyunning hade at anye of the games abone writtin can do thame guid or prosper," &c.

The statute proceeds to limit all wagers upon horse-races to the sum of one hundred merks, under penalty of forfeiture of the surplus to the poor of the parish.

About the very time when this statute was passed we find the Earl of Abercorne, with whose assistance the Paisley baillies drew up the regulations for the horse-race there, in open breach of the enactments of the statute, becoming a party to the following indenture:—

ANE INDENTOUR OF ANE HORSE RAISE BETWIX MY LORD MORTOUN  
ABERCORNE AND BOYDE.

The erle of Mortoun obleissis himself to produce George Rutherfuirdis Barb Naig:

The erle of Abircorne obleissis him to produce his gray Naig:

My lord Boyd obleissis him to produce his bay horse:

Upone the conditiounis following. They are to run the first Thursday of November nixtocum, thrie mett myleis of Cowper raise in Fyff, The waidger

to be for euery horse ten dowbill Anegellis, The foirmest horse to win the hail thretty. Ilk rydare to be aucht scottis stanewecht, And the pairtie not comperand, or refuissand to consigne the waidger, sall vndergo the foirfaltour of this sowme, and that money foirfaltit salbe additt to the staik to be tane away be the wyunner. Forder, we declair it to be lesum to ony gentilman to produce ane horse and the lyke waidger, and thay salbe welcum. Subscryuitt with all our handis. At Hammiltoune, the fyfteine day off August 1621.

MORTON.

ABERCORNE.

BOYD.

In the *Diary of Fife*<sup>1</sup> the Cupar horse-race is said to have been instituted in 1621, being the same year as the preceding indenture and also the prohibitory statute.

It may be interesting here to note that horse-racing was regularly established in England much about the same period as in Scotland.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *Diary of Mr John Lamont*, printed at Edinburgh, 1830, pp. 135, 160.

<sup>2</sup> The matching of one horse against another appears to have been in vogue in England as early as the reign of Henry II., when races were run between horses exposed for sale at West Smithfield, to determine their value. It was also common as a private sport among the nobility; but it is not till the reign of Henry VIII. that we meet with the establishment of a regular horse-race. It had been customary upon Shrove Tuesday for the Company of Saddlers of the city of Chester to present to the Drapers a wooden ball, but in the thirty-first year of the reign of Henry VIII. this ball was changed into a bell of silver, valued at three shillings and sixpence, or more, "to be given to him that shall run the best and furthest on horseback before them on the same day." These bells were afterwards known as "St George's Bells." (*Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, by Joseph Strutt, p. 33.) Races somewhat similar to these are described by Butcher in his *Survey of the Town of Stamford*, first printed in 1646, as practised in the vicinity of Stamford, in Lincolnshire. Running horses are also frequently mentioned in the registers of royal expenditures. It is said that King John was so fond of swift horses and dogs for the chase that he received many of his fines in the one or the other. In the reign of Edward III. the running horses purchased for the King's service were generally estimated at twenty marks each, and some of them as high as twenty-five marks ("Bernado de Nictum pro uno cursorio hardo empto de eodem, xxv marc," *Compot. Garderobe*. An xj. Ed. III. MS. Cot. Nero. c. viij. fol. 219). It is also recorded that the King of Navarre sent him as a present two running horses ("Michali de la Were Scut. Regis Navarr. presente domino Regi duos equos cursores ex parte dono Domini sui, de dono Regis, C. sol.," *Ibid.*). Race-horses were prized on account of their breed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as appears from one of Bishop Hall's satires (Lib. iv. Sat. 3). In the reign of James I. and VI. public races were established in many parts of England, and they then began to be known as "bell

form of prize was also the same in both countries, and there are still preserved the two bells presented for competition at Carlisle. Both of these are spherical in form, and in this respect differ from the Lanark bell. The larger is said to have been given to the Corporation of Carlisle by Lady Dacre, the wife of William Lord Dacre, of Gillesland, governor of Carlisle in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It is of silver gilt, and has engraved on a band around the circumference this couplet, "THE . SWEFTES . HORSE . THES . BEL . TO . TAK . FOR . MI . LADE . DAKER . SAKE." The smaller is of silver, and is engraved "1597. H. B., M. C."—the initials being those of Henry Baines, Mayor of Carlisle.<sup>1</sup>

During the Commonwealth, as has been noted, the horse-races previously held in the different burghs appear to have been discontinued, but after the Restoration they were actively revived.

The *Mercurius Caledonius* for the first week of March 1661 contains this advertisement:—

"The famous Horse Course of *Couper* in *Fyfe*, which by the iniquity of the times hath been so long buried, to the great dissatisfaction of our Nobility and Gentry, is to be run, conform to the institution, upon the second Tuesday of *April*: There is a considerable number of Horses to carry on the work of the day; among others a *Waywood* of *Polonia* hath a Tartarian horse. This noble Gentleman was pleased to come to this Nation to congratulate our happy restauration; And it is to be desired that such curious Gallants as comes from Forreign Nations to see the Course, that they do not, as others formerly did, sleep in the time of the Solemnity. It is now clearly made to appear by a frequent concourse of Gentry in these Fields, that the report of the Horse Infection was an absolute aspersion."

It does not appear, however, from the following report that the meeting of 1661 was graced by the novelties promised: "*April* 30, 1661.—The laird of *Philiphawch* his horse wan the race att *Cuper* this yeire, and *Stobs* horse surnamed *Scot* was second. Onlie thir two ran."

courses," because the prize was usually a silver bell. In 1607, however, the bell for the race at York was of gold. At the latter end of the reign of Charles I. races were held at Hyde Park and at Newmarket. After the Restoration Charles II. revived and encouraged the sport, and honoured the race-course with his presence. For his own amusement, when he resided at Windsor, he appointed races to be run in *Datchet Mead*, and at Newmarket he entered and ran horses in his own name.

<sup>1</sup> These bells were exhibited at the Sports and Arts Exhibition, London, 1890; and are figured in *The Field*, No. 1943, 22nd March 1890.

In this same year the Lanark race was also revived.

Horse-races at Leith are also advertised in the *Mercurius Caledonius* in March 1661, as for example—

“Our accustomed recreations on the sands of Leith was much hindered because of a furious storm of wind, accompanied with a thick snow; yet we had some noble gamesters that were so constant at their sport, as would not forbear a designed horse-match. It was a providence the wind was from the sea; otherwise they had run a hazard either of drowning or splitting upon Inchkeith! This tempest was nothing inferior to that which was lately in Caithness, where a bark of 50 ton was blown 5 furlongs into the land, and would have gone further, if it had not been arrested by the steepness of a large promontory.”

In Dumfries, the treasurer of the burgh was ordered, in a Town Council Minute dated 15th April 1662, to obtain a silver bell, four ounces in weight, as a prize, to be run for every second Tuesday of May by the work-horses of the burgh “according to ancient custome,” the regulations being that whenever the bell was borne away by one rider and one horse three consecutive years it was “to appertain unto the wooner thereof for evir.” About two years afterwards the Council offered “a silver cup of ffourty unce weght or thereby,” to be run for at the ordinary course within the burgh by the horses of such noblemen and gentlemen in the county as were duly entered for the race. It was also the custom at that time, every first Monday in May, for the day-labourers and servants of heritors to parade the town on horseback, and afterwards to run for a silver “muck-bell” belonging to the burgh, the winner receiving five merks in addition to the honour of holding the prize for a year.<sup>1</sup>

In 1664 the Town Council of Stirling offered the prize of a silver cup for a horse-race, and in 1684 there is the record in the Banff Council Minutes of a horse-race there and of a town prize given for it: “1684, *April 26th*.—The said day it is to be remembered that the silver cup prepared for the horse race, and run for this year, wes gifted back be My Lord Huntly, winer theiroff, to the toune.”

In 1706 and 1707 the Town Council of Stirling included horse-races among the annual burgh sports.

<sup>1</sup> *History of Dumfries*, by William M'Dowall, second ed., p. 308.

“*Apr.* 16, 1706.—The councill appoints intimatione to be made upon the next May ffair, and the two Fridayes before . . . . that there is . . . . ane horse race for ane fyne sadle and furniture, to the value of twelve poundis fourteen shilling, to be ridden for the said day at one o'clock in the afternoon, betwixt the burrowes gate and William Shirrayes in Cambusbarrone, back and foir, value of each horse to run not to exceid sixty pound.”

“*Apr.* 21, 1707.—The councill appoints ane horse race to be run at Stirling upone the            day of May next for ane silver mug, to the value of which is to bear in great letters STIRLING PRIZE.”

In the course of 1720 the following races were advertised:<sup>1</sup>— a race at Cupar in Fife; one at Gala-rig, near Selkirk, for a piece of plate given by the burgh of £12 value; a race on Lanark Moor for a piece of plate of £12 value given by the burgh; a race on the sands of Leith for a gold cup of about a hundred guineas value, and another for a plate of £50 value, given by the city of Edinburgh; finally another race at Leith for a silver punch-bowl and ladle of £25 value given by the Captains of the Trained Bands of Edinburgh, the bowl bearing the following inscription—

“Charge me with Nantz and limpid spring,  
 Let sour and sweet be mixt;  
 Bend round a health syne to the King,  
 To Edinburgh captains next,  
 Wha formed me in sae blithe a shape,  
 And gave me lasting honours;  
 Take up my ladle, fill and lap,  
 And say: ‘Fair fa’ the donors.’”

In Aberdeen about the year 1790 the Northern Shooting Club commenced horse-races on the Links, with an intention to hold them annually in the month of October; and to encourage the sport, the members of the Club voted a piece of plate of fifty guineas value to be run for. The magistrates also for several years gave a purse of thirty guineas for the same purpose; but, owing to various circumstances, these races after a few years were discontinued.

From the extracts which have been quoted it appears evident that a silver bell was the earliest form of a horse-racing prize, and that it was not till about the middle of the seventeenth century that cups and other pieces

<sup>1</sup> *Dom. An. Scot.*, vol. iii. p. 454.

of plate were introduced. It is also evident that the Lanark bell was a larger and heavier specimen of this class of prize than any other of which the details as to weight and size have been preserved. Without the badges attached to it, it weighs 5 oz. 18 dwt., while the Paisley and Dumfries bells are quoted in the Minutes as weighing 4 oz. each. It is also larger than the Carlisle bells, and must have been considerably larger than the St George's bells at Chester, the value of which is given at about three shillings and sixpence each.

The practice of attaching badges to the trophy was common in Scotland in other sports besides horse-racing. In archery and golfing trophies it was very common, but in these sports the badge appears to have been supplied at the expense of the donors of the prize, while in the horse-racing prizes, if we may trust some references in the Council Minutes of two of the burghs, the addition of a badge was optional, and the expense was borne by the winner. This may possibly account for so few badges of an early date being attached to the Lanark bell.

It is also worthy of note that the establishment of horse-racing as a regular sport is coincident with the establishment of several other popular sports in Scotland. The "Siller Gun," a shooting trophy, was presented to the Seven Incorporated Trades of Dumfries by James VI. in 1598. The Musselburgh arrow bears a medal dated 1603, and several undated ones of even earlier date. (Curiously, that which is supposed to be the oldest is in the form of a small silver bell.) The oldest medal on the silver arrow belonging to the University of St Andrews is dated 1618, and that on the Peebles arrow 1628.

Horse-racing at first seems to have been considered a liberal pastime, and was practised originally for the sake of exercise or by way of emulation, and, generally speaking, the owners of the horses were the riders. It does not seem to have been connected with gambling, but was ranked with hunting and hawking as opposed to dice and card-playing by an old Scottish poet,<sup>1</sup> who laments that the latter had in a great measure superseded the former. But as early as 1621 excessive wagers in connection with it became so common as to call for the intervention of the Scottish Parliament, and in England, at the end of the

<sup>1</sup> "Poem of Covetice," quoted by Warton, *Hist. English Poetry*, vol. ii. p. 316.

seventeenth century, Burton writes sarcastically, "Horse-races are desports of great men, and good in themselves, though many gentlemen by such means gallop quite out of their fortunes."<sup>1</sup> From a ballad called "New Market" in D'Urfey's collection of songs published in 1716, the sport would appear to have degenerated still more, as may be inferred from the following extract:—

"Let cullies that lose at a race  
Go venture at hazard to win,  
Or he that is bubb'd at dice  
Recover at cocking again ;  
Let jades that are founder'd be bought,  
Let jockeys play crimp to make sport.—  
—Another makes racing a trade,  
And dreams of his projects to come ;  
And many a crimp match has made,  
By bubbing another man's groom."<sup>2</sup>