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SOME OLD SCOTTISH DANCES. BY A. STANLEY CARRUTHERS,
A.C.A., F.S.A.Scot.

During the last six years I have been collecting records relating to several families of the name of Carruthers, and in connection with this I recently had the privilege, through the kindness of the present owner, the Rev. W. Mitchell-Carruthers, M.A., of Kingham Hill, Kingham, Oxfordshire, of looking through the Holmains Charter Chest. Amongst the many old charters, details of which were published in the *Historical Manuscripts Commission's Sixth Report*, Appendix, and other documents relating to this old Border family, I came across an old diary kept evidently by several persons, and having entries between, approximately, the years 1675 to 1750. The entries chiefly relate to births, deaths, and marriages, and there is ample proof of the interest taken in astrology at this date. Of greater interest to the general public, however, was a note-book, similar in size and shape to the present-day penny or twopenny note-book, containing six or seven pages, closely written, of instructions for dances. In this book there are also "Rules for pronouncing y^e French."

On reading through these pages relating to the old dances of Scotland, it occurred to me that it would probably be of interest to the present generation to know of many dances, which I feel sure are now lost in antiquity, and also have details as to their execution.

I have been unable to ascertain the date of the entries. One of the dances is called "The Old Way of Killie Crankie," and it would seem therefore that they are not earlier than 1689. On the other hand, the last of the male line of Carruthers of Holmains was born in 1731, and he had several children born from 1764 onwards. The writing does not seem to be that of the same person, though at first appearance it is very similar. In my opinion the details as to the dances were noted some time about 1710 to 1720. George Carruthers of Holmains had a large family of children growing up about this time, and it would seem to me that possibly these instructions had been written for their benefit. This is purely suppositionary, however, and no definite date can be given.

The following is an exact copy of the entries relating to the dances.

GREEN SLEEVES.

First Back to B & turn down one pair, B to Back again and turn round, then arms with the 3d Woman & turn her, then your partner then reel first with the Women, then with the men, then sett & turn down the third man, & she turns up: sett again & turn round the 2d woman upwards, & she turns round the 2d man downwards, & so till they fall in betwixt the second & third pair.

CALD KALE.

1st Part.

Cross right hands & go round all four; cross left hands & go back to your place, then sett to your partner, & cast off one pair, then right and left.

2d Part.

First go down on the Woman's right side then come back to her left, & again to the right, then sett round & clap hands, & then go to the next woman.

HUNT THE SQUIRIL.

First crossover & reel with the women, & then with the men, & come to your place, then lead down the woman going foremost round the second woman & come back to her Place round the first woman while the man goes round the first man to his place; Then lead down the man going round the 2d man, & return to his place round the first man, while the woman goes to hers round the first woman. Then change places, Crossing the first man to the 2d woman's place, the 2d man to the first man's place, then clap hands round till you come to your place, then right & left, then lead down throw the 2d pair & come up again, & turn round your partner.

THE DUSTY MILLAR.

First lead down throw one pair going round the 2d man, she the 2d woman turn at the foot, then lead up the same & cast down one pair, & turn your partner, then go round the 2d woman & turn your partner, then round the first & turn your partner, then sett to the 2d woman & turn her, then to the 1st woman & turn her, then reel with the two women, & sett to your partner, & turn her.

THIS IS NOT MY OWN HOUSE.

Cross four hands & cast down one pair, cross hands again, & turn down another pair, then sett & lead up to the head, then cast down then sett, & turn your partner, then go round the 2d woman, she round the 1st man, then back to back, & go round the 1st woman she round the second man, then turn her, then set to the 2d woman, she to the 1st man, & turn, then sett to the 1st woman, she to the 2d man, & turn your partner.

ARGILES BOULING GREEN.

First sett to your partner, & cast off one pair, sett again, & she turns up & he turns down betwixt the third pair, she betwixt the 2d pair, then leads up joining three hands & meets, then 3 hands round, & reels, then he setts to the 2d woman she to the 1st man & turns them, then he setts to the 1st woman, she to the 2d man, & turn your partner, then 4 hands round with the 1st pair, & cast off, then meet and turn your partner.

THE BIRKS OF ABERGALDIE.

First sett & cast down, sett & cast down again, then lead up & cast down one pair, then right & left, then sett to the 2d woman, she to the 1st man, & turn them, then set to the 1st woman, she to the 2d man, & turn your partner, then lead down & cast up & turn your partner, lead up & cast down & turn your partner.

LENNONS (LENNOX'S) LOVE TO BLANTER (BLANTYRE).

First Cross hands and go $\frac{3}{4}$ round and cast down below the first pair then Cross hands with the third pair set below them and cast up one pair, then right & left, then sett to the 2d woman, She to the first man & turn them then to then to the 1st woman She to the 2d man & then reel the man with the two women & the woman with the two men then Sett to their partner & turn her.

THE OLD WAY OF KILLIE CRANKIE.

First the man goes by before the 1st man & round behind the 2d & then round behind the 1st to his place & then the woman does the same then they go back to B. & casts off one pair then meet & turn round & cast of another pair then meet & lead up & cast off at the

head then meet below the first pair & turn round and lead out on the man's side then meet & turn round & lead out on the woman's side then meet & turn round & then 4 hands on a breast with the 1st pair & cast off then meet & turn round then 4 hands with the 2d pair then cast back & turn your partner.

BATHGET BOGS OR PEAS STRAW.

First Sett & cast off meet Sett & cast off again then meet & lead up then cast off the first pair meet again & go B to B then turn round & lead out on the woman's side then meet & go round & lead out on the man's side meet again & turn round then take arms with the 2d woman She with the 1st man then one another then take arms with the 1st woman She with the 2d man then one another then Set to the 2d woman She to the 1st Man & turn them then set to your partner & turn her then set to the 1st woman She to the 2d Man & turns them then sett to your partner & turns her.

MISS HYDEN.

First Sett & cast off Sett again & turn your partner he sets to the man & she to the woman & turns them then Cross over & clap by turns & the next pair does the same then Dance four hands half round & back again then set to the 2d woman & she to the 1st Man then sett & turn your partner.

REEL A DOWN A MEREKEN (AMERICAN?).

First Sett & turn twice round Sett to the woman She to the man & turn them then sett & cross over & cast down one pair then right & left then Sett & turn & reel the 2nd pair & she with the 1st pair then Sett & turn & lead up through the first pair meet again & turn & lead down throw the 2d pair meet again & turn round your partner.

Since the above was written a letter has been received from Mrs Stewart of Ayr, Honorary Secretary of the Scottish Country Dance Society, stating that "only one of the dances is known now, two or three more are in an old MS. dated 'Castle Menzies 1746,' . . . and that these "descriptions will help to elucidate what we have in this MS., as the descriptions are not so clear."