

ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
COMPETITION OF PIPERS,

*Held at Edinburgh, 28th July 1813.*

THE Annual Competition for Prizes given by the Highland Society of London, to the five best performers on the Great Highland Bagpipe, was held in the Theatre-Royal here, on Wednesday, (28th July 1813,) in presence of a Committee of Judges appointed by the Highland Society of Scotland, and a numerous and highly respectable audience.

The first prize, being a handsome Pipe of excellent tone and workmanship, properly mounted and adorned with a silver plate, upon which there has since been engraved the proper inscription, with 40 merks in money, was adjudged to FINDLAY MACLEOD, a native of Glenmoriston, Inverness-shire, and piper to the 79th (Highland) Regiment.

The second prize, being 60 merks, was voted to ROBERT MACKAY, from Lord Reay's country.

The third prize, of 50 merks, was given to KENNETH LOGAN, piper-major to the 71st Regiment.

ALEXANDER MACGREGOR, from Fortingal, Perthshire, obtained the fourth prize of 45 merks.

And the fifth prize, of 40 merks, was bestowed on FRANCIS MACNICOL, second piper to the Scots Royals.

The Right Honourable Sir JOHN SINCLAIR was Preses of the Judges on the occasion, and was assisted by Sir A. MACDONALD LOCKHART, Mr LAMONT of Lamont, General GRAHAM STIRLING, Colonel MACGREGOR MURRAY, Mr GRANT of Corrymony, and several other Highland Gentlemen, eminently skilled in pipe-music. Sir JOHN, in delivering the prizes to the preferred Competitors, addressed them respectively, in presence of the audience, in highly energetic, elegant, and appropriate terms. To FINDLAY MACLEOD, who obtained the first prize, the patriotic Baronet, so far as we could collect, stated,—

“ That the Committee of Judges appointed to attend this Competition, were apprehensive that some circumstances might have rendered it hardly equal to former exhibitions of a similar nature.

“ In the first place, it is well known, that almost the whole of our regular forces are now employed on foreign service; and, in such a case, it could neither be desired nor expected, that ‘ corps of Highlanders,’ who have so much distinguished themselves on all occasions, should be left at home, when their brave comrades were so successfully fighting abroad the battles of their country. The pipers attached to these corps of course accompanied them, some of whom might otherwise have been present at this competition; but they were better employed, in animating, by their martial strains, the spirit of their countrymen. The valorous conduct of those warlike corps does not require any additional eulogium. It may be sufficient to remark, that there is no sound which the immortal WELLINGTON hears *with more delight*, or the marshals of France *with more dismay*, than the notes of a Highland pibrach.\*

“ Another circumstance has also tended to diminish the number of competitors at this time. A rule has been fortunately established for interchanging the militias of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in consequence of which our Scots corps of militia are guarding Cork and Portsmouth, and other places of consequence in our sister kingdoms, whilst two most respectable corps from England, (the counties of Norfolk and Northampton,) and the gallant sons of Antrim, in Ireland, are garrisoning the metropolis of Scotland. The system of interchange is much to be approved of; for it will extinguish any remnant of ancient prejudice, and will soon cordially unite, *by affection as well as by law*, three nations, formerly under distinct governments, but now consolidated into one great empire. This system of interchange, in other respects so desirable, is not favourable to this competition.

“ Farther, some corps of Highland local militia have been embodied about this time, whose pipers might otherwise have attended upon the present occasion.

“ Under these disadvantageous circumstances, the Committee have seen with pleasure that so many competitors have appeared; and they rejoice to find, both from the number of candidates who have entered the lists, and from the attendance of so respectable an audience, that a spirit for preserving the martial music of their country continues unabated. The Committee have listened to the performances of the several competitors with much satisfaction and interest; and, after full deliberation, they have directed me to deliver the prize pipe to

\* A Pibrach means a Highland march, peculiarly calculated for the bagpipe.



you, though not without a considerable diversity of opinion. You have already received, at former exhibitions, premiums of an inferior description; and I have now much pleasure in delivering to you this last and greatest object of your professional ambition. It is a source of additional satisfaction to the Committee, that this prize has been bestowed on one who, besides his merits as a piper, (the great object to be attended to at this competition,) has, since he gained the second prize, been wounded four times in the service, with that excellent corps, the 79th, a regiment commanded by a brave and hardy veteran, General ALLAN CAMERON of Erracht.

“I now deliver you this pipe, with which you are only to play upon great occasions; and I have no doubt you will hand it down with pride to your posterity.

This speech was much applauded, in particular the allusion to “The immortal WELLINGTON,” and the advantages which are so likely to result from interchanging the militias.

From the great improvements made by performers since this Annual Competition has taken place, the judges had the satisfaction to find that, in general, all who appeared were good players.

Besides those who obtained the prizes, ALEXANDER BRUCE from Skye, piper to P. C. BRUCE, Esq. of Glenelg, was particularly marked as a superior performer; but, from his having formerly gained the second prize, by the rules upon which the Competition is conducted, he could only compete for the prize pipe. In stating this to BRUCE, the Preses announced the intention of the Committee of rewarding his merits in a suitable manner.

The audience were also much pleased and entertained by Highland dances and reels, introduced between the acts. The strathspey, or *twosome*, which was danced in good style by two Highlanders, was highly relished by the audience.

From the increased support which not only those connected with the Highlands, but in general the company who are in town at the Races, are pleased to give to this annual competition and exhibition, the Committee had the satisfaction to find, that besides making additions to several of the prizes, they were enabled to make a handsome distribution among the unsuccessful candidates, some of whom had come from a great distance, to encourage them in a farther exertion and improvement in this ancient, warlike, and national music, and also among the Highland dancers.

## GAELIC TRANSLATION.

### COMH-DHEUCHAINN NAM PIOBAIREAN GAEDHLEACH.

AN Dun-Eudainn air an ochdamh la thar fhichead de mhios mu dheireadh an t-samhraidh, bha Comh-dheuchainn air son nan geall tha air an tabhairt gach bhliadhna le Comunn Gaedhleach Lunduinn, do'n choignear a b'fharr a chluicheadh air a phìob mhoir Ghaedhleach air a cumail anns an tigh chluich rioghail, am fianuis Roinn-shonruichte de luchd-breitheamb, chaidh a thaghadh le Comunn Gaedhleach na h-Alba, agus am fianuis cuideachd lionmhoir agus urramaich.

Chaidh an ceud geall, piob-fhonnhor, ro innealta, ann an deagh ghleus, agus air a h-nim-eacheadh le airgid, air an do chuireadh o'n àm sin sgrìobh freagarrach agus da fhichead marg-airgid a thabhairt do Fhionnladh MacLeoid o Ghleann-Moriston, ann an Sioramachd Innernios, piobair do'n naoi freiceadan deug thar trì fichead.

Chaidh an dara geall trì fichead marg a thabhairt do Raibeard MacAoidh o dhuthaich Mhic Aoidh.

An treas geall leth-cheud marg, do Choinneach Logan, ceud piobair an aon fhreiceadan deug thar trì fichead.

An ceathramh geall, coig marg thar da fhichead do Alastoir Mac Ghriogair a Fartar-chill ann an Sioramachd Pheairt. Agus,

Chaidh an coigeadh geall, da fhichead marg a thabhairt do Fhrancis MacNeacail, dara piobair do'n fhreiceadan rioghail Albanaich.

Bha an Ridire ard urramach Iain Macna Cearda, na riaghl-ear air na breitheanaibh 's an àm so, agus bha lathair maille ris, an Ridire A. MacDhonnail Lockart, MacLao-main Na h-Airde, Ceann-feadhna Graham Sruileadh, Ceann-feadhna Mac Ghriogair Muire, Tighearna Coir 'a Mhonaidh, agus roinn mhor do dhaoin' uaisle gaedhleach eile, tha fìor-eolach mu cheol na pioba. Air do'n ridire ard urramach na geill a luithair dhoibhsan a bhuaidhaich, labhair e ris gach aon fa leth, ann am fianuis na cuideachd mhor bha lathair, ann an ard-chainnt, bhrioghar, laidir, fhreagarrach. Co fhada 's a b'urrainn duinne a thabhairt fainear, thuir an Ridire mathasach ri Fionnladh MacLeoid a fhuair an ceud gheall.



“ Bha an luchd-breitheamh chaidh a shonrachadh gu feitheamh air an deuchainn so, fo eagal a thaobh nithe araidh, nach bitheadh an deuchainn so, co-maith air a frithealaidh 's a b'abh-aist di.

“ Air tus, tha dearbh-fhiosrachadh againn, gu'm bheil a chuid as mò do fheachd na rioghachd aig an am so ann an duthchana eile, agus uime sin, cha bu dugh dhuinn, agus cha b'aill leinn, gu'm bitheadh na freiceadana gaedhleach, fhuair cliu co-mor anns gach aite air am fagail aig baile, nuair a tha an co-shaighd-eara treuna ag cogadh co-buaghar air son maith an duthcha. Chaidh an piobairean fein maille ris gach freiceadan gaedhleach, agus uaithe sin, cha robh e comasach dhoibh bhi lathair aig an deuchainn so; ach bha iadsan ri treunadas as mo' 's an àm so, ag toirt misnich do an luchd-duthcha, agus le ceol na piob mhoir ghaedhleach 'gam brosnuchadh gu cath an aghaidh an naimhde dian fuileachdach. Cha' n urrainn neach air bith moladh ni 's mò na so a thoirt do 'n deagh-dheanadas. Is leor e ri radh nach 'eil fuaim as tainnich an cluais WELLINGTON a bhitheas ainmeil air feadh gach linn, no as fuath-aiche *le feachd na Frainge*, na sgal osgarra ard na piob mhoir.

“ Tha ni eile re thoirt fainear, a lughdaich aireamh an luchd-deuchainn aig an àm so. A reir riaghailtean na rioghachda tha e air a shonrachadh, gu'm bith luchd-dionaidh ar duthcha air an sgaoileadh air feadh gach earrainn do na tri rioghachdan. Leis an riaghladh so, tha freiceadana Alba, dionadh Chork agus Phortsmouth, nuair tha da fhreiceadan shasganach, (Norfolk agus Northampton,) agus aon freiceadan Eirinneach, laoich threun Antrim, dionadh ard chathair na h Alba. Tha 'n t-arrachadh so ro-thaitneach do'n duthaich gu h-iomlan, oir cuiridh e as do dh'aon seann fhuath no falachd a bh'eatorra, agus tha e dh'aon inntin ag aontachadh nan tri rioghachdan, ann an deagh-ghean agus fo aon lagh, gu bhi nan aon Iompaireachd mhoir agus chumhachdaich. Ach ged tha an riaghal so ro-thaitneach agus chum maith nan uile, cha 'n'eil e co-iomchuidh do'n deuchainn bhliadhnail so.

“ Gidheadh, thug na breitheamhna fainear le mor thoileachadh an roinn de luchd-deuchainn a thainig air an aghaidh, agus tha iad faicinn aig an àm cheudna le mor sholas, bho aireamh nam piobairean, agus na cuideachd mhor tha lathair, nach'eil an tlachd ann an ceol an sinnsireadh agus an duthcha dol an lughaid. Dh' eisd na breitheamhna ri ceol an luchd-deuchainn fa leth le mor thaitneachd agus aire, agus an deigh mion-smoineachadh, dh' aithne iad domhsa a phìob-gheil a liuthairt duitse, ach cha'n ann gu h-aon-sgeulach.

“ Fhuair thu aig deuchainnaibh roimhe so geill bu neo-luachmhoire, agus tha nise mor thlachd agam ann an liuthairt duit a gheill so as airde, ris an ion duit finthair a bhi agad a thaobh ealadhain. Tha anabarrach toilleachaidh aig an luchd-riaghaidh, gu'm bheil an geall so air a bhuileachadh air aon, a bharr air a chliu, mar phìobair (a chuis a tha feumail ri thoirt-fainear aig an deuchainn so) chaidh, o'n choisin e an dara geall, a leonadh ceithir uairean ann an mathas a Rìgh, maille ris a bhuidheann ainmeil sin an naoi freiceadan deug thar tri fichead do'n ceann-feadhna an laoch treubhach cruadalach FEAR NAN EARRACHD.

“ Tha mi nise a liuthairt na pioba so dhuit, leis nach 'eil thu gu bhi cluicheadh ach air amaibh sonruichte, agus cha n' eil teagamh air bith agam nach liuthair thu le uaill thairis i do d'shliochd.”

Thaitinn a chainnt so ris a chuideachd gu h-iomlan, gu h-araidh na bhui do'n ard cheann-feachd WELLINGTON, agus an tairbhe tha cosmhuil ri eiridh o luchd-dionaidh duthcha, gu bhi air an atharrachadh do dhuthchana eile.

Leis an leasachadh mor a rinn an luchd-cluicheadh, o thoiseach na Deuchainn Bhliadhnail so, thug na breitheamhna fainear le mor thoileachadh gu'n robh am bithdheantas gach neach a thainig air an aghaidh 'n an deagh luchd-ciuil. A bharr orrasan a fhuair na geill bha ALASTOR BRUCE o'n Eilean-Sgiathanach piobair do P. C. BRUCE, tighearna-Ghlinn-Eilg, gu comhruichte air a shonrachadh 'na rogha piobaire, ach a chionn gu'n d'fhuair e an dara geall roimhe so, cha'n fheadadh e a thaobh riaghailtean na deuchainn so, ach cluicheadh air son a cheud gheill. Le so mhineachadh do BRUCE, chuir an fear-righlaidh an ceill da, gu'n robh rùn air na breitheamhnaibh luach-saothrach a thoirt da, co-lorg a thoilteanais.

Bha an luchd eisdeachd air an toileachadh gu mor le damhsadh gaedhleach, eadar puirt nam piobairean. Bha na puirt-dheise chaidh dhamsadh gu clis le dà ghaedheal ro-thaitneach leo. O'n bharrachd comhnaidh uathasan a bhuineas do'n Ghaeltachd; ach gu coitcheonn o'n chuideachd a tha ann sa' bhaile an àm na co-ruith, bha toil-inntin aig na breitheamhnaibh gu'n robh e 'n an comas leasachadh a dheanamh air cuid do na geill, agus cail eigin a bhuileachadh orrasan nach d' fhuair iad, agus a thainig am fada, chum am brosnuchadh gus an tuille oidhirp a thoirt air fàs ni's fearr ann an cluicheadh, seann cheol gaisgeil an duthcha, agus mar an ceudna do na damhsairean.

*Dun-eudainn, 3 do cheud mhios*  
an Fhogharaidh 1813. }



The first of these is the fact that the population of the country has increased very rapidly since the year 1850. This is due to a number of causes, the most important of which are the following:—

1. The discovery of gold in California and the consequent immigration of thousands of Americans and Europeans to that country.

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