

* Introduction *



MUSIC IN HAMILTON

A brief glance at the history of choral and instrumental music in this city may, perhaps, prove interesting. One of the first concerts given here in which both chorus and orchestra were engaged was that organized for the benefit of the Patriotic Fund, March 13, 1855. The concert took place in the old Mechanic's Hall, and Mr. St. George B. Crozier was the director, with Mrs. Allan and Mr. Valentine at the piano. The orchestra played an overture and Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony. The Hamilton Philharmonic Society was afterwards organized, with Mr. Edward Hilton, a most enthusiastic and energetic musician of that day, as conductor, and on May 26, 1858, "The Creation" was performed. The chorus numbered about 90, and the orchestra 25. Among the soloists were: Mrs. Dr. Hunter, Mrs. Chas. Freeland, Miss Caddy, Miss Wyatt, Miss M. Wyatt, Mr. C. Freeland, Mr. James Hilton, Mr. E. Hilton, Mr. Templeton Brown, of Peterboro, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Wm. Herald. In the orchestra were some first-class players. Among the members of the orchestra were: Messrs. Burgess, Holland, Frier, Brydges, Findlay, Boettger, Fischer, Rudolph, and four or five German gentlemen from Buffalo. The performance was repeated a short time after, with about the same performers. A great event in the history of the old Philharmonic Society was the concert given in honor of the visit of the Prince of Wales. At this concert, which was held on Sept. 18, 1860, Part I. of "The Seasons," by Haydn, was performed with a large chorus and orchestra, the second part of the programme consisting of miscellaneous selections. Mr. Hilton was again the faithful drill master, and Carl Adam, of Buffalo, was the conductor for this occasion. The audience was very large; the Mechanic's Institute hall being packed to the doors. The week's festivities resulted in the exhaustion of the musicians, so that when, on the Friday following, (Sept. 21), the whole of "The Seasons" was given, the rendition lacked the necessary vigor. In the season of 1861-2 the Philharmonic Society did a great deal of work, the programmes of three concerts given comprising Bennett's