

fifty cents each.²⁴ Harvey reached Nacogdoches by December, and on the seventh of that month, Adolphus Sterne wrote in his diary: "a ventriloquist named Harvey amused the people this evening with his rare powers."²⁵

Men like Mr. Harvey who toured the country, came in contact with a great many people and offered their powers of amusement to large and small communities alike. The same cannot be said about the theater; it had a decidedly limited appeal; only city folk, and usually only those in the larger cities, could benefit from this form of entertainment. The residents of small towns and the country folk had to look elsewhere for amusements, and usually found them in patriotic celebrations, and in public and private gatherings of one kind or another.

The anniversary of Texas Independence was always a day of general rejoicing, gala celebrations and festivities of all kinds. It was celebrated "by the Sunday and other schools, by the military companies, literary institutions, religious societies & the citizens generally..."²⁶ "The more humble citizens" at times patronized this day with what was known as a "Dutch Ball." The Bollaert manuscript gives an interesting description of this form of entertainment:

One dollar is the price of admittance, I paid my fee and entered. The room was small and badly lighted; the music—such as serves our other Balls. The attendance—slim; only ten or twelve Ladies and some twenty Lords. Altogether it was rather a failure in this instance. But then—this was the commencement of the season. A large ball room, music, lights, ladies—will increase & multiply, as the season advances.

²⁴ *Northern Standard*, Sept. 17, 1842.

²⁵ Sterne, *Diary, Quarterly* XXXIV, 347.

²⁶ Bollaert, *Manuscript*, II, 218.

I only aspire to a general description, and cannot entertain you with an account of how the belle was ornamented, and the beau equipped. In fact these balls are intended more for use than for ornament; for dancing than gazing. Republican simplicity is the order of the day. The women, make themselves as tidy as circumstances allow; holding a correspondence in colors, and an adherence to any particular fashion, in utter contempt. The men, I am sorry to say, carry this contempt for dress a little too far—with some exceptions.

Country dances, cotillions and waltzes, followed each other in rapid succession. Partners were rather 'scarce & in demand' but I managed to 'hold my own' among the competitors. 'In Rome etc' is my motto, and from being a dignified spectator, I soon became a jolly and eager participant. Some of the ladies made their debut 'on the light fantastic toe',... they were encouraged and prompted...and did very well.²⁷

The fourth of July was another day of general rejoicing. References to the celebration of this day are most numerous. The citizens of Danville got together at a huge barbecue with many speeches and patriotic addresses.²⁸ Houston celebrated it in such a way that the editor of the paper seemed to think it was unpatriotic: "All seemed to forget that it was the national holiday of a foreign country; all nationality was for the season completely lost, our citizens forgot that they were Texans and, transported with an unpatriotic ardor, celebrated as Americans the national festival of the parent

²⁷ Ibid., I, 39.

²⁸ Estill, Huntsville, *Quarterly* III, 267.