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SKETCHES FROM MANX HISTORY
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SKETCHES FROM MANX HISTORY *

(I)

[5b] The story of the Isle of Man may be divided into three distinct periods—the Celtic, from the unknown past to the 10th century; the Norse, to the middle of the 13th century; and the Manx, to the present time. The story of our Island changes its form as we journey backwards in time. First we have written history, as recorded in State papers and official documents. Overlapping these, and often in conflict with them, we have tradition—a statement of events handed down orally from one generation to the next. Beyond this is Legend—accounts of occurrences passed down through the ages, and usually overlaid with wonder and imagination until it becomes difficult to decide which is truth and which is fancy. Farthest away, in the dim, nebulous beginning of human story telling, we find the most ancient of all records, that of myth. The wonder stories of Egypt, Greece, and Germany, are familiar to many readers, yet how few of us trouble to read the legends of our own race and land. The Celtic mythology is as wonderful, as beautiful, and has more of tenderness than the others.

We have marvellous stories of the doings of gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, druids and magicians, kings and queens, giants and dwarfs, battles of nations, wars with fiends and fairies, adventurous voyages in magic lands and seas, and even under earth and sea.

We have beautiful legends of saints and the miracles performed by them; weird stories of witches, stirring battle stories. indeed our mythological and legendary history is crammed with romance.

In the earliest times of which we have any knowledge the Isle of Man belonged to Ireland, and was peopled by the same race and talking the same language. Our legends tell us that the earliest king was Mannanan Beg Mac Lir, who was one of the most powerful of the mythical groups of gods and goddesses and heroes of the Thutha de Danaan, or the people of Dana.

It may be observed that in the legendary literature of all Celtic peoples inanimate things, as mountains, the sea, rivers, and weapons, besides living creatures, were often personified.

Lir was very similar to the God Neptune. He was the Celtic god of the sea. His deputy was our king, his son, Mannanan Beg Mac Lir, who was lord of the sea, both the waves on the surface and the rocks and caves beneath. Beyond was the Island of youth and the land of the dead, over which he ruled. He gave his name to this Island.

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He was a powerful magician, and he was the owner of many magical things. His boat was called Ocean Sweeper. This vessel obeyed the thought of him using it and carried him quickly wherever he wished to steer, without using sail or oar. His horse, called Aonbarr, carried his rider alike over land or sea. His sword, the Answerer, at his bidding cut through the hardest steel. He had two magic cows, whose milk never failed; and several magic swine, which, served to his guests and eaten one day, would appear alive and ready to be eaten again the following day. His great cloak was like the sea in its varying colour, and when enemies invaded his country they could hear him at night tramping around their camp, flapping his cloak with a noise like thunder, in his anger. His palace was at Barrule, and he ruled the Island by magic. If an enemy fleet appeared he enveloped the isle in mist hiding it from their view, the consequence being that they either passed by or were wrecked upon its cliffs. Or he would change his tactics, and make one of his men appear as an hundred so that a small army appeared a vast host to the invaders. Again, he would send chips afloat on the tide and cause them to appear as ships of war to the enemy. The only tribute he exacted was a bundle of rushes, paid him yearly at Midsummer by each householder in the Island. His wife was called Fand. He had a daughter, but her name has not appeared. The Manx traditionary ballad tells us that Mannanan reigned as king until the coming of St Patrick, when he was driven on to the sea with all his servants.

Legendary tales of Fin Mac Cool and his son, the Bard Ossian, are also found in the Isle of Man, especially in the southern parishes.

CELTIC MANN

The earliest known inhabitants of Europe are thought to have been a non Aryan race. Their weapons were of stone of a very rude form. They are termed Palaeolithic. or the people of the Old Stone Age. Of these there is no trace in Mann.

Later in time were the Neolithic people of the new stone age. Their stone weapons were polished and more highly finished. Of these people we have abundant evidence in the Island. Their presence is proved by their flints—spear or arrow heads, stone axes, monoliths (known locally as Giants' Stones), and their burial places and earth fortifications, *etc.* These people were non Aryan. They are thought to have been of the same type as the Basques of Spain. They were a small race, with long heads, dark eyes and hair.

Later came the Celtic invasion of Europe They were probably the first of the Aryan family to break away from their home in Asia. They were a tall muscular race, with broader heads than the Neolithic people, and had fair skin and hair and blue eyes. Their weapons were of bronze. The Gaelic branch of this family are represented to-day in the Scotch highlands, Ireland and Mann.

In our Island they gradually subjected the original inhabitants, and the two races eventually united. Let us take the beginning of the Christian era as a convenient starting point. This race is called Celtic.

The people were divided into families or clans. Each had its chief, and the chiefs elected a king. Their political form of Government was very similar to that obtaining here to day. The high chief, or [5c] king, deliberated with his council of chiefs, and their decision was imposed upon the freemen, who had no option but to obey. The land was held in common. The clan and their land bore the same name. Their houses were made of wood, usually of wicker work, plastered with clay to keep out the rain. The houses of the clan were grouped together into a small village, and surrounded by earthen ramparts for protection.

Their food was simple and wholesome, and consisted of oatcakes, butter, cheese, onions, salt and fresh meat and fish. Water and milk were the ordinary drink, with ale as a luxury.

Their clothing was picturesque and comfortable. Next the skin was worn a loose shirt of wool called a Lheiny. This garment reached a little below the knee, and was of different colours, according to the rank of the wearer. The king had at least seven colours; the bard came next with six, and so on to the lowest drudge, who had but one of a dingy keir. Over the Lhiency was a close fitting tunic reaching to the hips, and bound around the waist by a girdle or scarf of some rich colour—in Manx called “yn Cryss.” The tunic was open at the neck to show the embroidery of the undershirt. Over the left shoulder, and fastened by a large brooch, hung a shawl or plaid. The legs in summer were bare, and in winter covered by loose trousers secured by throngs cross quartered. The men wore long hair, and the old men often plaited their long beards. The chiefs wore bracelets and armlets of gold.

The Rev. W.T. Radcliffe says, “There is no word equivalent to ‘slave’ in Gaelic.” A.W. Moore says that the lowest class of clansman, the labourer, the drudge, was an unfree man, or one without weapons.

In their private quarrels the disputants laid their case before a “Brew” (a judge). This office was hereditary. If the decision suited them, all was well; if it did not they had recourse to their weapons and their dispute was settled by

“The simple plan

That he may take who has the power.

And he may keep who can.”

These quarrels often arose, and were the cause of blood feuds between different families or clans, and a condition of constant social unrest was the result.

For purposes of national defence every freeman was trained in the use of arms, which were bows and arrows, a long handled spear, a short sword, and a shield of bull hide. Watch and ward was kept night and day upon the hills, known as “Cronkny-Arrey” (watch hills). Upon the approach of an enemy the fighting men were summoned to their appointed stations by the chief sending around a runner with the cross in daytime, and at night by lighting beacons on the mountain tops. The old men and the women and children, with the cattle and flocks, were first sent into the

mountains. Then the warriors went to meet the foe. Military service was universal upon all able bodied freemen.

Our Celtic ancestors were pagan, their religion being a form of sun worship. We have in the Island an indication of the ancient sun worship in some of our place names. Doubtless the old cairns on our mountain tops were altars used by the priests or druids. For example "Cairn y Greiney" and "Cairn y Gree" mean "Cairn to the Sun." May Day "Laa Boaldyn" was the first of the four great Celtic festivals in honour of the sun. On May Day eve fires were lighted in the fields and on the hills. Locally this was known as "Burn the Witch night." A.W. Moore is of opinion that this practice had some connection with sun worship. In the eighth century Christian Synods tried in vain to abolish this custom, and it was then described as a practice in vogue from a remote period.

They also believed in the immortality of the soul. The Romans noted with surprise that a British Celt would lend money to a friend upon his promise to repay in the next world. They believed too, in the idea of re-incarnation. Some ancient writers state that they also held the belief of transmigration. The Celtic conception of the after life was that it was a place of freedom and light. The sun was the god of the other world as he is of this.

When Christianity was introduced here we have no definite information. Possibly Saint Ninian, or some of his disciples, were the first Christian missionaries to our pagan ancestors. Ninian built a church and a school on the shores of Galloway in 370 A.D., so that he and his friends were constantly within view of our Island. His name remains in St Trinian's, which church was probably built on the site of an older keeill or chapel.

St Patrick came later, or, perhaps, some of his followers. It is doubtful whether the great Irish saint ever set foot in Mann. Authorities differ. But whether St Patrick ever came here in the flesh or not, his spirit and influence certainly did. Two parish churches and no less than seven keeills were dedicated to him. A legend is told as follows: St Patrick, by a miracle, converted a wicked robber chieftain called MacGuili, in the north of Ireland, and then ordered him to be placed, bound with manacles, in a small boat, which was pushed off to sea. The boat was cast ashore on the north-east of the Isle of Man. The key to open the iron lock of his fetters was found in the mouth of a fish. He was taken and educated by two Christian teachers, and after their death was made Bishop, and his name Maughold, was later given to the parish where he had been cast ashore.

The monastic order was introduced under the influence of St Columba. The doctrine was that common to the early Irish Christian Church. "They received naught but the doctrine of the evangelists and the apostles." Unlike the followers of St Patrick, they refused the services of women in church or domestic life. They had three orders: (1) the elder or the most spiritual brethren, who conducted the religious services, read and transcribed the scriptures. (2) The workers, or the practical

brothers. They were the agriculturalists. They tended the cattle. They were the craftsmen, the builders, the cooks. (3) The novices—youths under instruction. Probably our oldest stone buildings—the ruined [5d] Church of St Patrick and the Round Tower—both in Peel Castle—were built by these working monks at this period 500 to 600 A.D.

Many monks, or Culdees, built small keeills in solitary places, as at Lag ny Keilley, and tried to win the people from Druidism to the sweeter Christian faith.

The influence of St Columba must have been very powerful, as his name is still used as a charm against fairies:

Shee Jee as shee

Shee Jee ec Columb Keilley, *etc.*

Many of our parish churches are named after the early Irish saints—St Patrick, St Germain, St Maughold, St Bridget, *etc.*

(2)

NORSE PERIOD

[3b] In 798 A.D. Viking rovers first visited the Isle of Man. After robbing the church of St Patrick, they set the building on fire and sailed away.

For nearly one hundred years the Northmen continued their incursions. They did not settle in the Island, but stayed only long enough to plunder and destroy.

At the close of the ninth century, Harold Harfagr, an ambitious chief, after much fighting, made himself king of all Norway, uniting under his crown the petty kingdoms into which the country had been divided. Many of the defeated chieftains, with their followers, rather than submit to the tyranny of the new king, left Norway and settled in the Scotch Islands and Man.

From these Islands they harassed Harold by incessantly raiding the new kingdom of Norway. The King at length determined to put a stop to these attacks, and, having collected a powerful fleet of warships, set sail for the Island which sheltered his enemies. Arriving at the Western Islands, his course was marked by destruction and slaughter. The news of his arrival quickly spread, and the chiefs and people fled in terror before him into the mountains of Scotland.

Arriving in Man King Harold found the island desolate, as the entire population with their goods and cattle, had retreated into Galloway. The King left garrisons behind him, but when the Islanders returned to their homes they destroyed the Norwegians, and, in revenge, again began their raids on Norway.

For nearly one hundred years from this time the Isle of Man had no settled government. As a consequence the Island became a buffer state between the petty Norse Kings of Ulster and Northumbria, and its fate was to be ruled by one and plundered by the other.

It is to the middle of the tenth century that tradition assigns the coming of King Orry. The story says that his fleet came to land on the sands at Jurby on a fine starry

night. The Islanders came to the water's edge to meet him, and enquired whence he had come. The Viking, standing in the bow of the vessel, with an upward sweep of his arm, indicated the "Milky Way" and answered, "That is the way to my country."

The Manxmen, sorely in need of a leader, made him welcome. He stayed, became King of Man and the Scottish Islands, and ruled wisely. He divided the Island into six ship shires, or sheadings, and introduced the legislative system-which is part of our constitution to-day.

It is doubtful whether an actual King Orry of Man ever existed. Probably at a later date, when the Manx people suffered from misgovernment and poverty, they gathered up and embodied in one heroic character the results of the wise government of a line of Norse Kings.

In 1066 the King of Norway was defeated by Harold of England. With the Norwegian fleet was several Manx warships. Those which escaped returned to the Isle of Man. On one of these vessels was a Norwegian chief named Goddard Crovan. The King of Man, Godred Mac-Styric, received him kindly, and Goddard Crovan made the Island his home. After the death of the King of Man Crovan went to Norway and collected an army and a fleet, with which he sailed to attack Man in 1079. He was beaten of, but returned, and was again driven off. In his third attack he managed by strategy to make good his landing. A battle was fought near the mouth of the Sulby river. and the Islanders were defeated. Next day Crovan gave his men the choice of settling in the Island or of plundering it. They chose to plunder it, and then the greater part of them set sail for Norway.

Goddard Crovan remained as King, and was the founder of a line of Kings which ruled in Man for nearly 200 years. He grew in power, and from his throne in Man ruled the greater part of Norse Ireland, and the Scottish Islands to the Hebrides. His Kingdom was called "Man and the Isles." After the death of Goddard Crovan, civil war arose. A battle between the north, led by Octtar, and the south under the leadership of Macmarus, was fought near Peel. The party from the south were winning, when the women from the North, rushing to the assistance of their men, turned the tide of battle and the Northerners remained masters of the field. Both leaders were slain.

Olaf, son of Goddard Crovan, was crowned King of Man and the Isles at Drontheim. He reigned peacefully for many years. While his son, Godred, was at Norway being educated three nephews came from Ireland and claimed half of his kingdom as their right. Olaf appointed a day to meet them and hear their case.

On the day stated both parties met in the open-air near Ramsey. The King sat down, and Reginald, one of his nephews, approached as if to salute him, then suddenly, with one sweeping stroke of his battle-axe, struck off the king's head.

The attendants of the King were taken by surprise, and subdued by the treacherous strangers. The nephews ruled for a short time, but the late King's son

returned from Norway and seized his cousins. Reginald was put to death, and the other brothers had their eyes put out. Godred assumed the throne as Godred II.

Godred fought a naval battle in Ramsey Bay with his brother-in-law, Somerled, King of Argyle. The fight was indecisive, but as a result the Manx king made over to his rival the Scottish Islands. About this time a new power arrived, the English appearing on the east of Ireland in 1170.

Godred's son Reginald succeeded him. This man was a typical Viking, It is said of him that for three years he had not slept under a roof.

To gain the friendship of King John [3d] England, the King of Man did him homage, and then fearing that his suzerain, the King of Norway, would be offended, he went to Norway and did him homage also. When King John heard of this he sent troops and devastated the Island and compelled Reginald to do him homage again. The Manx king next surrendered his kingdom to Rome, and agreed to hold it in fief under the Pope.

His Manx subjects were disgusted with his tyranny and weakness, and invited his brother Olave to become their king. The brothers and their supporters met at Tynwald Hill. A decisive battle was fought and Reginald was slain and Olave became king.

Olave II spent his reign in fighting, and regained most of the Scottish Islands his grandfather had lost. He died in 1237, and was buried in Rushen Abbey.

Harold, his son, became king. He went to Norway to marry the daughter of the King. On their voyage home to Man a severe storm drove the vessels on to the Shetlands and every soul perished.

Reginald assumed the Kingship and reigned for three weeks only. He was assassinated, and Magnus, last of the line of Goddard Crovan, became the King of Man. During his reign Alexander, King of Scotland, defeated Hakon, King of Norway at Largs. Magnus did homage to Alexander at Dumfries. He died in 1265. Next year the King of Norway ceded Man and the Islands of Scotland to Alexander. With the Norse immigration the Christian Celts in Man were overwhelmed by the followers of Odin. The social, religious, and political life of the people were changed. Both the Norse and Gaelic languages were spoken, but Norse became the language of Tynwald. The Scandinavians introduced a new mythology, and different customs and weapons. They taught shipbuilding and navigation. They sculptured beautiful stone crosses and left carved legends of Odin, Loki, Fani, Sigurd and other Norse gods and heroes. They inscribed runes in the stones, which shows how mixed the population was. Rather more than half were inscribed to Norse names and the remainder to Gaelic.

The Norsemen gave us our present constitution and open-air Tynwald. The worthiest men in the land were called to assist the King in Tynwald. They were called Taxiaki, afterwards Keys. Sixteen were Manxmen and eight came from the outer Islands. All freemen had the right to be present and express their opinion in the

deliberations; and without their agreement no judgment was valid. During this period many Manx people emigrated to Iceland.

Early in the eleventh century the Manx people came under the influence of Rome. Rushen Abbey was founded in 1134 and received lands for its support from King Olaf.

A belief that the world would be destroyed in 1260 was spread by the papal authorities. Rev. xii., 6 was interpreted to indicate this catastrophe. The result was that the people, in terror, made over to the church large estates, to secure the favour of heaven if the prophesy became true.

In 1154 the Western Islands and Man were formed into the Diocese of the Sudreys and Man and was subject to Drontheim. Reginald, a Norwegian, was the first Bishop. The King of Man acknowledged the Pope as his superior. At the Pope's orders fresh lands were made over to the church. Then a bull was issued to Bishop Symon, which decreed that all possessions of the church of Man were to remain with the church for ever.

This Bishop (Symon) began to build the present St. German's Cathedral on Peel Island, It was the Cathedral of the Diocese Bishop Symon died here, and was buried in his Cathedral.

The Abbots of Rushen and the Bishop, as Barons, did homage to the King for their lands instead of paying rent. They had ecclesiastic courts on their own property, and had power to excommunicate or condemn to death those who resided within their authority.

(3)

SCOTTISH AND ENGLISH RULE

[6c] At the commencement of the thirteenth century, the Celtic and Norse inhabitants had blended into a new race—the Manx, and probably their common speech was the Manx Gaelic as we know it to-day. The Manx did not readily submit to their new rulers, and continual disorder was the result.

In 1274 Allen, the Scottish Governor, a harsh and tyrannical man, by his cruelty and intolerance, forced the Manx into open rebellion. They gathered what forces they could, and, though only indifferently armed, determined to drive their Scottish oppressors out of the land.

Before the two armies met, Mark, the bishop, interposed, and suggested that, to save needless waste of life, thirty champions, selected from each side, should fight, and the winning side should rule. This was agreed to, and the champions fought until thirty Manxmen were killed. The Scots lost twenty-five, so the Manxmen lost the day. Allan, the cause of the trouble, was crushed to death by the crowds who witnessed the fight.

Soon after, Edward I of England took the Island from the Scots. It was retaken by Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, who, while on the Island, lay siege to Castle

Rushen. The place resisted for six months. It then surrendered and was demolished along with all the other fortresses in the Island. In this defenseless state the Island was plundered by the French and Irish freebooters, and many were killed. During the wars between England and Scotland the helpless Island changed its rulers many times. Whichever side happened to be in power the "Little Manx Nation" suffered.

At last, in 1333, under Edward III, English rule became permanent, and the King of England granted the Isle of Man and its people to Sir William de Montacute. This man's son, of the same name, sold the lot to Sir William le Scroope, with the right of being crowned with a golden crown as its king. Scroope was beheaded by Bolingbroke, who became Henry IV. It was then given as a gift to the Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy. This King of Man in turn was banished from England and deprived of the Isle of Man.

Henry next gave it to Sir John de Stanley in 1406. Thus was our Island and its wretched people tossed carelessly from one great feudal lord to another.

The Island had been plundered and ravaged in turn by the English, Scotch and Irish. Warfare, famine and poverty had greatly reduced its population, and the few wretched people that remained seem to have become dispirited, and had lost all sense of national independence.

THE STANLEYS

Sir John Stanley never visited the Isle of Man. His wife's father was Sir Thomas Latham, who as a baby, was said to have been found in an eagle's nest. Stanley took as his family crest the picture of an eagle with a child in its nest. This is a familiar design on old Manx coins.

John, his son, in 1417, held a Tynwald Court at Cronk keill ean—St John's. This Stanley curbed the power of the Barons. He ordered all the Ecclesiastic Barons to pay him allegiance at Tynwald. Those who did not obey forfeited their lands. This was the beginning of the Reformation, and of the decline of the power of the papacy in Man.

In 1430 was held a "Court of all the Commons in Man." It was composed of thirty-six men—six men elected from each Sheading. The names of those representing Glenfaba were: Ffinlowe Mackey, Gybbon MacQuantie, Patrick MacJohn, Andro Jenkin Lucasone, Doncan MacSheman, and Neven MacQuayn.

The next Stanley was Thomas, lord of Man, 1432–60. His son Thomas II, was created first earl of Derby. Neither of these great English lords ever visited the Isle of Man. It was ignored, except for its revenues, which were farmed for them by their governors.

In 1505, Thomas, grandson of Thomas II, succeeded to the title of Earl of Derby and King of Man. This Stanley relinquished the title of King of Man, "preferring to be a great lord than a petty king." This Stanley visited the Island in 1507. He was a typical example of a feudal lord.

Cutar MacCulloch, a Galloway chief and rover, had often swept the Isle of Man and carried off all that was not “too hot or too heavy.”

Under the leadership of Thomas Stanley, the Manxmen collected their forces and ravaged Kirkcudbrightshire, and after spoiling the country returned without losing a man.

Henry Derby, 7th Lord of Man, ruled next. He was one of the Commissioners at the trial of Mary Queen of Scots. He died in 1594.

His sons, Ferdinand and William, in turn ruled Man. Ferdinand, the elder, died, and left three daughters, who disputed their uncle’s claim to the lordship of the Island. A lawsuit followed, which lingered on for years. At length a compromise was effected between the disputants. The nieces sold their rights to their uncle, and, in 1610, by Act of Parliament, the Island was settled on William and his heirs.

In 1637 William resigned his dignities to his son, James, 7th earl of Derby, who had married a French lady, Charlotte de la Troumaile. Owing to jealousy and suspicion Derby was displaced from his military command in the north of England, at the commencement of the struggle between Charles I and the English Parliament. He was banished to the Isle of Man, upon pretence of holding it for the Royal cause, as the people were known to be in sympathy with the Parliament.

Debarred from fighting in the Royal cause, the Lord of Man turned his attention [6d] to the government of his little kingdom of Manxland. Here he endeavoured to establish despotic rule, according to the methods acquired from the study of the principles laid down by Machiavelli in *The Prince*. Arriving here he found the people in a state of open rebellion. For generations the miserable people had been crushed between the tyrannical laws of Church and State. These institutions, organised for the welfare of the people, had become instruments to debase and stultify. The Church authorities possessed great power, and used it pitilessly. Taxes, in the form of tithes, were imposed at every possible opportunity. Taxes were claimed at birth, marriage and death. There were taxes for writing and probate of wills. No man was allowed to write his own will—it was a privilege of the church. Tithes were imposed on cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, poultry and eggs. The herring and cod in the sea and the trout and salmon in the rivers were taxed. Beer in the brewery, grain and flour at the mill, corn in the field, all paid tithe. The wages of the artisan, the profit of the merchant, smoke from the chimney, all were taxed. Payment was taken in money or in kind, at Ecclesiastical Courts. Defaulters were punished by money fines, penances, and even by excommunication. Nonconformity was punished by imprisonment in the dungeon under St German’s Cathedral, or by banishment. The Manx proverb “A man without children has the greed of seven persons,” shows that the people had learned a severe lesson.

The Lord and his officers complete the story of rapacity and plunder. The soldiers of the Lord were quartered upon the people, who had to provide them with board and lodgings and arms free. Supplies were also sent to the Lord’s household in

England. These consisted of fat oxen, oil, wine, salted herring, and thousands of salted puffins. For these the people were paid with their own money. Labour for the Lord was forced. Fishermen paid for permission to fish in the sea. Hand mills were broken and the people forced to pay for having their meal ground at the Lord's mills. But the principal grievance of the people was with regard to the new land laws which had recently been forced upon them. The Manx landholders held their farms by a custom known as "the Tenure of Straw." They held that they owned their farms, and might will or sell them. The Lord, through his lawyers and agents, claimed that they were his tenants, and that he might dispossess them of their farms at any time. Derby claimed the absolute ownership of all farms, upon inheritance of the rights of the conquest of Goddard Crovan in 1079. This absurd claim was enforced by the force of arms and trickery of lawyers, and as a result agriculture was neglected. The land went out of cultivation, and, as a consequence, seasons of great scarcity occurred. The year 1649 is recorded as a time of "great dearth and scarcetie," and "great numbers of the poore sort of people have not bread to eat, or any other victual to sustain nature withall, by means whereof great numbers of them are already dead."

Edward Christian took up the people's cause. He was seized by the Earl of Derby and imprisoned in Peel Castle. There is not space to tell the story of his fight for justice and democracy. Edward Christian was a brave man. He was imprisoned without trial, and, after lingering more than ten years in Peel Castle, died a martyr in the cause of Freedom in 1661.

Residing as guests with Derby and his family were a number of refugee English cavaliers and their armed followers, who spent their time idly in Castle Rushen or Peel Castle, while England was torn by civil war. The presence of these strangers stiffened Derby's authority and power in the Island.

In August, 1651, Derby was summoned by Charles II to meet him in Lancashire on his march from Scotland. Derby left the Island with the cavaliers and 300 Manx soldiers. Charles was defeated at Worcester and Derby was taken prisoner. The news soon reached the Island. It was also known that a Parliamentary army was preparing to reduce the Isle of Man.

The Manx were favourable to the Commonwealth, though their ruler was for the King. There was no affection between the Manx people and their English rulers. They were of different nationalities, they spoke different languages, their interests were contrary. There was no sympathy between them, they had no ideas in common. The Manx people were not loyal to Derby—they were openly in revolt, and were only kept in subjection by military force which was harshly used. The Manx people therefore looked hopefully for the arrival of the Commonwealth fleet.

It was well known that the Countess was making terms with the Parliament, and the people felt it was time they should guard their own interests. Representative Manxmen met at Ronaldsway, the residence of William Christian, Receiver-General, to consider how they could best protect their liberties. Illiam Dhone—William

Christian—was appointed to present a petition to the Countess from the people asking for redress of their grievances. She signed the paper in agreement, but a rumour circulated that her ladyship scornfully declared that if it suited her she would sell all the Manx people for twopence or threepence a head. The people were furious at the insult, and with bitter memories of Derby tyranny, and with the horror of late famine caused by their misrule and land grabbing fresh in their minds, were ripe for rebellion when the Parliamentary Army arrived in Ramsey in forty-four ships. The chief men of the Island gave it up upon condition of preserving their ancient liberties, to Colonel Dunkinfield, the officer in command.

It was now learned that Lord Derby had been executed at Bolton for treason, on October 15th, 1651, and Derby rule ceased in Man. The Island was given to Lord Fairfax.

At the restoration of Charles II the Isle of Man was restored to the Derby family. Charles, their Lord, in revengeful spirit, after a mock trial, imprisoned those who were responsible for the handing over the the Isle to the Commonwealth, and confiscated their property. The Manx ballad says: [6e]

“Thy pardon, ’tis rumoured, came over the main,
 Not late, but concealed by a villain ingrain.
 ’Twas fear forced the jury to sentence so foul,
 And thy fate, William Dhone, it sickens my soul.”

Christian’s estates were seized by the greedy Earl. Christian’s sons, George and Evan, appealed to England for justice, with the result that all concerned in the murder of William Christian—Derby, the Governor, Deemsters and jury—were brought to London for trial. It was found that the Judges ought to have taken notice of the Act of General Pardon. All were punished in varying degrees, and all confiscated property was ordered to be restored, and compensation for any loss sustained to be paid.

Illiam Dhone’s action of surrendering the Island to the Commonwealth has been termed either patriotism or treason, according to the sympathies of the reader for Parliament or King. His family had suffered by Derby rule. He was not faultless, but he seems to have been an honourable man, who tried to do his duty when placed in a difficult position. He was forced to take sides, either with a hated ruler or with his own oppressed countrymen. He obeyed his own conscience, and threw in his lot with his own people, and endeavoured to preserve for them the ancient liberties they claimed. Officials and snobs still call him traitor, but Manx people continue to preserve his memory, and still honour the name of Illiam Dhone.

(4)

[2b] Charles, son of the great Earl of Derby, died in 1672, and was followed by his son. William. This Lord of Man resided for some time in Castle Rushen.

At Tynwald, in 1696, was repealed an ancient law which forbade "our enemies the redshanks (Scots) or other aliens to be resident in the Isle of Man." Many Irish families took advantage of this change, and settled here to escape the disturbances in Ireland.

William died in 1702, and was succeeded by his brother James, who became the 13th Lord of Man. He died in 1736, leaving no children to inherit his title, and with him ended the direct line of the Stanley Kings or Lords of Man.

By the power of arms, by military force, and that only, those feudal lords of another race had ruled Man for 330 years. Walpole, in summing up the rule of the Stanleys in Man, writes, "They failed to identify themselves with the fortunes of the people, or to sympathise with their lot. From first to last they had been great feudal proprietors rather than wise sovereigns, and they had displayed the faults of a landlord rather than the virtues of a ruler."

Owing to the oppressive land laws, agriculture was neglected, and, as a consequence, the lord's rents fell rapidly. William, the last Lord of Man, tried vainly to come to terms with the farmers. They, however, left their farms to the care of their women and went to sea, and divided their time between fishing and smuggling, which they found more profitable.

At length, owing to the influence of Bishop Wilson, "The Act of Settlement" was passed in 1704, and the Manx land question was finally settled. This act has been called "The Manx Magna Carta," because of its great importance to Manx people. By this law the persons then in their farms became owners of their land, on condition of paying annually a small "Lord's rent," and a fee when the farm was sold or passed to the next heirs. As the Lord's rent was fixed at an amount never to be increased, owing to the increased value of the land now-a-days this charge has become merely a nominal payment.

THE ATHOLLS

By the law of inheritance the Isle of Man, including its men, women and children, revenues, tithes, fines, and all other privileges, passed to James Murray, a Scotchman, whose grandfather had married Amelia Sophia, daughter of James, 7th Earl of Derby. This James Murray, Duke of Atholl, became Lord of Man in 1736. In 1764 he was succeeded by John Murray, Duke of Atholl, who became Lord of Man by right of his marriage with his cousin, the daughter of the late Lord of the Island.

The Isle of Man at this time was almost entirely given up to smuggling. Tea, silk, wines, sugar, rum, tobacco and other goods were shipped to the Island, where the customs duties were very low. These goods were stored in warehouses and cellars in the Manx seaports, and when opportunity offered were, by fast coasting vessels smuggled into England, Ireland and Scotland. The loss to the British revenue was estimated at £350,000 annually.

To prevent this leakage the British Government decided to buy from the Lord of Man his sovereign rights. This canny Scotchman, however, professed to have sentimental reasons which forbade him to part with his Island. He haggled and hesitated so long that at last the Imperial Government brought a bill into Parliament to assume authority over the Manx customs. The greedy Duke, fearing he would lose his Island and get nothing, decided to offer it for £299,733. The authorities advised him to accept £70,000 for his regal rights and the Insular customs, and he readily accepted the Government suggestion. In addition the Duke and his wife were to receive jointly, and to the longest liver, an annuity of £2,000. This continued to be paid to 1805, when the Duchess died.

The Keys sent commissioners to London to endeavour to guard the interests of the Manx people, but at that time Parliament consisted almost entirely of landlords, who gave little attention to the rights of the people, and the Manxmen were practically ignored. The Isle of Man was sold, its people were not even considered, they were sold with it, and their lord, the Scotch Duke, pocketed the money. This was called the Revestment. At noon, June 21st, 1765, the Manx flag flying from the tower of Castle Rushen, was hauled down and the British flag hoisted in its place. The Island was partially annexed to England.

The next Lord of Man, John, Duke of Atholl, complained that the price which had been paid his father was much too small, and urged that he was the loser by several thousands a year. He had the impertinence to apply to Parliament in 1780, for further compensation. A deputation from the House of Keys was heard in opposition. The Duke's claim was refused. In 1790 he tried again, and presented a similar claim to Parliament, a Bill being brought in by a relative, another Murray. This attempt also failed. On this occasion also counsel for the House of Keys against the Bill was heard.

In 1793, the Lord of Man was appointed Governor by and for the British Government.

In 1801 he was again appealing for more money to the Privy Council, and, after a lengthy and contentious discussion, in 1805, it was decided to grant to the Duke and his heirs for ever one fourth of the revenue of the Isle of Man—about £3,000. This transaction was opposed in the House of Lords by Lord Ellenborough as “one of the most corrupt jobs ever witnessed in Parliament.”

[2c] The Bishop had died in 1814, and the Duke, the Governor of Man, kept the Bishopric vacant until his nephew, George Murray, had retained the age required by the Church, when he was appointed. Various well paid offices were in this way filled by the poor Scotch relatives and friends of the Duke.

The young bishop, if not holy, was decidedly avaricious. He attempted to raise, instead of tithes in kind, an annual payment of £6,000. His plan failed. Next he tried to raise a tithe on green crops. This tithe had not been collected since the time of Bishop Wilson. The Bishop had the authority of the Manx Court, and even of the

Privy Council, to collect this tithe, but when his agents proceeded with carts to collect the potatoes the people revolted. In Patrick, at Balelly bridge, the men first gathered, and marched to oppose the tithe collectors. At Shenvala an agent of the Bishop, Kennedy, a Scotchman, struck one of the men, saying they had collected potatoes and next year they would come for butter. Then the trouble began. His haggart was set on fire. The crowd gathered, and, at Ballaquayle, found the Bishop's carts with the tithe potatoes. The potatoes were scattered, and the carts broken and burned, and a large body of 5,000 men marched on to Bishop's court. It is said that the Bishop and his servants had collected a great quantity of stones at the top of the house to defend themselves against the rioters, but were overawed by their numbers.

Other riots occurred in various parts of the Island, and the greedy Bishop was forced to abandon his claim. Soon after he was transferred to the see of Rochester. Two of the rioters were afterwards hanged. The Duke, the Bishop, and their compatriots and relatives in office, after this found themselves so detested by the Islanders, that the Duke left the Island soon after, and never again visited it. In 1829 he parted with his remaining feudal privileges to the English Government for £417,144. Previous members of the same family had already pocketed £199,600 for their regal claims. Altogether these greedy ducal cormorants had seized £616,744.

Walpole comments on the sale of the Island, "The price of course was absurdly extravagant, but the Crown did not lose by it. Justly, or unjustly, it continued to pay the surplus revenue of the Island into the Consolidated Fund, and from this source it derived an adequate return for the money which it had invested in purchasing its sovereignty."

A.W. Moore claims that the Manx surplus revenue, after paying the cost of the Insular Government, from 1766 to 1886, has completely paid off all the money advanced to the Atholls, and that at the very lowest estimate, a balance of £110,000 is yet owing to the Isle of Man. The only part which the Manx people seem to have had in these transactions, was to provide the money for which they were sold. In 1866 Manx affairs were re-organised. The House of Keys was made elective, Tynwald gained a measure of control of the Insular revenue. The English Government stipulated that it should receive £10,000 yearly. This it claimed as interest on £220,000 alleged to have been paid the Duke of Atholl for Manx customs. In addition, it receives annually about £8,000 from Royalties, duties and rents from the Crown Lands.

Thus the Isle of Man contributes about £18,000 yearly to the English Government, which is generally understood to be the Manx contribution to the Army and Navy of Great Britain—though this has not been definitely stipulated.

Having purchased the Isle of Man and all that it contained, the British Government appoints an official to represent it.

This deputy, known as the Lieutenant Governor, has succeeded to all the power and prerogative of the ancient kings and lords.

He has power of veto on all expenditure. He summons and dismisses Keys, Council and Tynwald at his own sweet will. His approval is necessary to all laws and taxation. He is head of the military and police. As head of the military the present Governor has during the war incurred a debt of from £10,000 to £20,000. His power is practically despotic. He has infinitely more power in the Isle of Man than King George has in England.

The House of Keys, the so-called representatives of the Manx people, have little power. A majority of their whole number is needed to pass new laws or new taxation. Their consent is necessary before the disposal of the surplus revenue. They chiefly compose the administrative boards, such as the Harbour, Education and Highway Boards. But apart from this they have no financial control of Manx revenue.

Recently Mr Ambrose Qualtrough, H.K., speaking at a public meeting in Peel, said that the House of Keys had not power to spend a penny to buy a bottle of ink.

This is Manx Home Rule. Unfortunately the majority of the members of the House of Keys represent land and property rather than the physical and moral welfare of the men, women and children of Man.

Adam Smith, in *Wealth of Nations*, writes on Taxation, "The subjects of every state ought to contribute towards the support of the government as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities; that is in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State." Yet in the Isle of Man there is no direct taxation of wealth. Practically the whole of the Manx revenue is raised by indirect taxation on the whole people.

Here are no death duties, estate duties, income tax, house duty, land tax, or stamp duties. Wealth is sacred, and does not directly contribute to the revenue

[2d] The workers, the labouring men and women, are penalised for being Manx. For them only, of all the rest of the British Islands, there is no attempt at modern social legislation.

In Manxland there is no state insurance, no workmen's compensation, no factory laws, and for the aged worker, when poor and feebly tottering to the grave, no old age pension. Rightly has the Isle of Man been called "A paradise for the rich but a purgatory for the poor."

The Manx working men are losing faith in the present one-sided legislation, and are asking for annexation, so as to share in the juster British laws. In opposition there is a strong national sentiment, anxious to preserve what still remains of our nationality.

If this patriotic sentiment is true and real it will develop along modern progressive political lines. Sentimentality alone will not prevent annexation, it must interest itself in the affairs of the people, and become constructive and economic, or the present generation may see the extinction of the "Little Manx Nation."