

Manx Notes 269 (2017)

THE REVIVAL OF THE MANX LANGUAGE (11) THE AGNEASH MANX CLASS CONCERT (1899)

On Thursday evening an entertainment of an exceptionally novel and interesting character took place, under the auspices of the Manx class, at Agneash, Lonan, in a large barn kindly lent for the occasion by Mr Clague, Ballacregga. The affair proved an unqualified success. The audience, which numbered about 200, and included both young and old, grave and gay, was drawn from every part of the parish. A "flock of mob-beg" from the Glen also graced the proceedings with their presence, but their behaviour did not, on the whole, cause serious annoyance. Mr Wm. Kermeen presided, while Mr H. Jane acted as musical conductor, and Miss A. Clague (Agneash) as accompanist.

The programme, which comprised some twenty items, opened with a hymn by the choir. This was succeeded by a short but pointed address in Manx by the Chairman, who by the way also used the vernacular in introducing to the meeting the subsequent performances in the programme. Then followed the glee, "O gently breathe," by the choir. Mr R. Kissack next recited in good style the Manx version of the "Prodigal son," Mr R. Corkill following with a creditable rendering of the song, "When you and I were young, Maggie." Mr James Kewley read with effect the 20th chapter of Romans in the native dialect, after which the choir rendered "The village blacksmith." The style in which Mr R. Kissack sang the "Manx wedding" evoked the highest appreciation, the building and its internal surroundings combining to impart to the words of the song a reality and effect that would have been quite impossible under other circumstances. Miss M. Moore, a girl of tender years, recited in charming style an original Manx composition entitled "Bainney-gear," after which came Mr James H. Kelly with a fine Manx rendering of the ballad "Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey." The choir gave the glee, "Let the hills resound," after which Mr R. Kissack amused the audience by reading Will Carleton's humorous poem, "Betsy and I are out," and also its sequel at a later stage of the meeting. Mr H. Jane's excellent rendering of "The white squall" afforded another proof of his capabilities as a singer. Mr James Kewley sang with great effect the Manx version of the hymn, "God of all majesty." Mr Kelly read in a creditable manner the 1st and 35th Psalms, and Mr H. Quayle sang in pleasing style "The Vicar of Bray." Mr J.R. Moore followed with a first-rate reading of "Pingyn yn Ommidan," and after a glee by the choir, also read amid much merriment another Manx poem. The choir then gave "Hail Smiling morn," after which a vote of thanks to the performers, the chairman, and Mr Clague for the use of the room, brought a most enjoyable meeting to a close. The proceeds amounted to £2 0s 3d, and it is contemplated to hold another meeting at an early date.

"[Laxey] Manx Concert." *Isle of Man Examiner* 18 November 1899: 4e.