

Manx Notes 450 (2020)

THE MANX NATIONAL ANTHEM “CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION IS ...” (1907)

Considerable discussion is, says a correspondent, being indulged in, in local musical circles, with regard to the “New Manx National Anthem,” which was sung at the Guild Music Festival last week; and various opinions are expressed as to its merits. The argument is that a musical composition, in order to secure the permanence peculiar to a “national anthem,” should have simplicity of tune wedded to words easily committed to memory. Those are the characteristics of the British National Anthem, at all events. Its grand simplicity is its passport to favour. This cannot be said of the so-called “Manx National Anthem.” The time is an adaptation of the old Manx air, “Mylecharaine,” a tune possessing the melancholy generally considered the peculiarity of Celtic music; and the national anthem evolved from “Mylecharaine” is by no means simple. It is written in the key of “A.” (three sharps); but in three places “accidentals” are introduced, not into the melody, but in the orchestration; and then the words are too numerous—eight verses of six lines each are altogether too much of a good thing. True, the words are not so “milksoopy” and inane as the once popular “My own dear Ellan Vannin,” but I fear that Mr Gill’s adaptation of “Mylecharaine” does not possess the qualifications necessary to constitute an ideal national anthem. By the way, I noticed that, although the vast audience at The Palace, at the Guild concert, rose to their feet when the anthem was sung, Lord and Lady Raglan, who had seats in the gallery, kept their seats!!! Another correspondent adds: Those who were present at the triumphal introduction of Mr W.H. Gill’s new Manx National Anthem to the people of the Isle of Man at the Music Festival last week, will learn with pleasure that Lady Raglan has informed Mrs Laughton that she is so highly pleased with the anthem that she has decided to adopt it specially as her own, and at any public function at which she may attend would like it rendered, instead of the English National Anthem. When Lord Raglan is present, of course, the British Anthem will be sung, to be followed, Lady Raglan hopes, by her adopted anthem.

“Considerable discussion is ...,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 30 March 1907, 6f.

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