

Manx Notes 455 (2020)

THE MANX NATIONAL ANTHEM

“TO THE EDITOR”
PEEL CITY GUARDIAN
(20 APRIL 1907)

(I)

SIR,—I have read, with much interest, the exceedingly able exposition of Mr T. Kelly of the essentials of a national anthem. It appears to me, however, that the example he gives from the writer of the last century has many defects: its length, and the undue extension of its items being certainly against its power. There are one or two *desiderata* of a national anthem which I append, not as any criticism of Mr Kelly's theories, but as supplementary to them. The national anthem should be

1.—A prayer.

2.—While being loyal to the King it should be strong for the people, especially the poor. All kingly men would admit this point in these days.

3. It should have specific allusion to the country, and the peculiar needs of the country.

4.—It should embody a spirit of patience, courage, faith, and hope.

5.—It should, above all, be in harmony with the religion of the people, and yet be broad enough to admit all creeds.

6. It should be simple and succinct. In other words it should be brief, compact, easily comprehended, and easy to remember.

I give here some lines which I discovered to-day. The writer appears to be a person of my way of thinking:

MANX NATIONAL ANTHEM

Air: “Molycaraan,” (major key).

O, God, our King and Island save
From pestilence and war;
While earth brings forth, and oceans lave,
We still Thy children are.

When famine wrests our faith away,
And care checks all our praise,
Sustain and bless us day by day,
That we may prove Thy ways.

God bless our children fatherless,
Our homes from shore to shore;
Shelter give to the shelterless,
And our blest state restore.

In the first verse the king, the country, and the people are grouped in a dual setting where the stoutest royalists, republicans, and socialists may find no cause for jealousy.

That we have been so long without war being carried to our shores is no reason why we should not pray for a deliverance from it, especially when so many warnings of the possibility, and even the probability, of an invasion of Britain by a great continental power are published.

When we remember that for centuries we have depended on the land and the sea for the necessities of life, and that the harvest of the sea has for so long been withheld from us, we cannot but approve the pathetic note which links up the thought of the fatherhood of God with the prayer for the king, the country and the people.

The sum of human want and actual misery has greatly increased in this Island during the last two decades—hence the appeal of the second verse. The rich who may be cursed with disease can here unite with the healthy men and women who are starving; and the multitude who have both health and plenty may readily discern that the words have a future as well as present significance.

In the last verse the rhetoric expands in accordance with the principles of oratory. From every shore in the Island to every shore in the Island the homes are to be blessed; the fatherless protected; the homeless sheltered; and the lost prosperity (or the most blessed state remembered) restored, individually and nationally.—Yours, *etc.*,

CLUCAS JOUGHIN.

Onchan, April 13th, 1907.

Clucas Joughin, “[Letter to the Editor] The Manx National Anthem,” *Peel City Guardian* 20 April 1907, [6]c.

(2)

DEAR SIR,—I have been deeply interested in the discussion on the Manx National Anthem, particularly in Mr Kelly’s able opening letter. I don’t know whether Mr Kelly has heard a well sung rendering of the words, such as was given at the Manx Music Festival on March 21st. I fancy not, as if he had, he could only admire the felicitous and graceful blend of words and music. The music grows on one, and soon fixes itself in the memory, and I may inform Mr Kelly it is securing the true seal of approval—adoption by the people. Only this morning I heard the milk-boy blithely, whistling a very good attempt at the tune. The discussion has led me to place the

words of some of the world's national anthems alongside of Mr Gill's composition and after doing so, in my humble opinion he does not occupy an inferior place in the comparison. The editor has kindly allowed permission to subjoin some of these, so that readers can judge for themselves.—Yours, *etc.*,

ALPHA.

[*Example texts not reproduced here.*]

Pseud [signed as "Alpha"], "[Letter to the Editor] The Manx National Anthem," *Peel City Guardian* 20 April 1907, [6]c–d.

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STEPHEN MILLER, RBV

