

Manx Notes 313 (2018)

“MANX SOCIAL AT DERBY ROAD” *

(1905)

The young people (and divers of the elder folk) connected with the church of the Methodist New Connexion, situated in Derby-road, spent a most enjoyable evening on Easter Monday, their entertainment being dubbed a “Manx Social and Concert.” The first portion of the programme consisted of a number of Manx songs, including “Hush, little darling,” sung by Miss E. Bell; “The Maid of Purt-e-Chee,” Miss Horsley; “Gwendolen,” Miss Spence; “Ramsey Town” and “Ellan Vannin,” Mr W.L. Spence; “The Manx Weddin’,” and “Mannin Veg Villish Veg Veen,” Mr Williamson; and “Mylecharaine” (in the Manx language), by Mr T. Caine. Miss Fargher accompanied. Next followed a dialogue, entitled “The Haunted Room,” in which it is possible that some one or other of the old Manx legends may have had part, followed by what to Manxman and Scotnagh is equally welcome, refreshments. The menu was in Manx, and comprised the proverbial pinjane and bonnag, “arran-chag” (a free translation of lemon-cheese cakes), “arran ben-y-ree” (sultana cake), “arran chapit” (soda-cake), “braghtyn” (cucumber sandwiches), “arran rasa” (seed cake), and the ever-welcome “paggad of tay.” Games followed for another hour, and of all the 100 persons who presented themselves everyone thoroughly enjoyed his or herself. It may be added that a number of the ladies arranging this charming little function were attired in Manx costume.

“[Douglas] Manx Social at Derby Road.” *Manx Sun* 29 April 1905: 5f.

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Both young and old as the piece reminds us were present on Easter Monday at the Manx Social Concert held at the Methodist New Connexion chapel on Derby Road in Douglas. The turnout was an impressive one with some one hundred people in attendance. Many of the titles of the music on offer are familiar ones from the time—“Ellan Vannin,” “Gwendolen,” “Hush, little darling,” “The Maid of Purt-e-Chee,” “Mannin Veg Villish Veg Veen,” “The Manx Weddin’,” “Mylecharaine,” “Ramsey Town”—though now out of favour but resonating at the time as expressing a sense of Manx-ness. “Mylecharaine” was sung in Manx and the ever-popular “Ramsey Town” was performed, a song that also enjoyed wide popularity with the Manx diaspora. Manx folklore was seemingly featured in the dialogue of The Haunted Room. Then to top off the evening was the food with the menu in Manx and here the *Manx Sun* provides us with a handy vocabulary for navigating such a

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welcome High Tea in the future. The helpers were attired in Manx costume and this was a feature of such events which overall have not been studied at all.

STEPHEN MILLER, 2018

