

Manx Notes 390 (2019)

“MISS MORRISON AT THE WHEEL” (15)
MANX CONCERT (1907) (2)

MANX CONCERT
TO BE HELD IN A
MANX KITCHEN
IN THE
ALBERT HALL,
ON
JULY 27th.
CHAIRMAN:
Prof. W. Boyd-Dawkins, D.Sc., F.R.S.
Programme:
Recitations from “Cushags’s” Poems.
Dialect Stories. | Fairy Dances.
Carvals. | Character Songs.
Manx Readings. | Folk Songs.
Proceeds to be given to the Manx Music Competition
Prize Fund.
PRICE OF ADMISSION 1/- & 6d.
Doors open at 7-30. Concert to begin at 8 o'clock.
A few reserved seats 6d extra.

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MANX CONCERT:
SPEECHES BY PROFESSOR BOYD DAWKINS
AND MR P.M.C. KERMODE

[3a] For the special delectation of a number of interested persons at present staying in Peel, and incidentally for the entertainment of all and sundry, a repetition of the successful Manx Christmas concert was given in the Albert Hall on Saturday evening. Through the goodness of many friends, and by much trouble on the part of Miss Morrison and Mr Ambrose Kelly, the stage was picturesquely and faith fully

arranged as an ancient Manx kitchen. The Hall, while not overcrowded, was filled with an appreciative audience, which included Professor and Mrs Boyd Dawkins, Miss Boyd Dawkins, Miss Laughton, Mrs J. Fred Gill, Miss M.L. Wood, and Mr P.M.C. Kermodé, of Ramsey, the well-known antiquarian expert. Professor Boyd Dawkins was the chairman, and added much interest to the proceedings by his ready remarks. In opening the Chairman said he was there to preside over an entertainment which had been arranged by ladies then present, largely aided by those who had helped to make such a great success of a concert and exhibition of old Manx things last Christmas. Before beginning he would just say a few words about the meaning of all this to the visitors, because the great majority of the natives were fully acquainted with most of the things to be seen in that room that evening, and with the music and songs to which they should listen. But he doubted very much whether many of the visitors—and he claimed to be a visitor here of very old standing—really understood what kind of an Island this was that they of the north country used at this time of the year as a playground. He thought that before they would have left that building they should have arrived at a very high idea of what was to be seen in the Island, and of the extraordinary interest which attached to the old customs and habits which still lingered. In the programme they would have examples of folk songs—one of them at all events which had only been taken down that day. They would have an example of old Manx music, and a remembrance of the fact that the fairies [3b] had not yet forsaken the Island (laughter). The professor proceeded to describe the old Manx kitchen represented on the platform. He said the various articles there displayed had been collected from various places. There was the old spinning wheel, and amongst the many more things which were to be found in all well-regulated kitchens of the olden days was the dresser. These dressers were for the most part adorned with collections of china which many collectors would almost give their eyes to get hold of (laughter), and which their possessors valued so highly that they would not allow any stranger to come and carry them away, and so here they were to illustrate the old times. That day, when he saw this kitchen for the first time he at once asked where was the warming pan, and he was informed that the Manx people of the olden time were so hard that they did not want their beds warmed at all (laughter), so that one of those articles common in England was conspicuous by its absence.

The following was the programme, the greater part of it, as will I be seen, being in the mother-tongue: Greeting, “Fastya gennal erriu,” Willie Prescott; reading, “Bannit ta’n Dooiney” (first Psalm), Mrs Corkill; song, “Mraane-y-Jiass,” Mr Jack Cregeen; song, Miss A. Collister; fragments of folk songs, Masters S. Callow and John Gorry; temperance cooish, Mrs Comaish and Mr Jos. Moore; song, “King of the Sea,” Mr Jack Sayle; song, “Ellan Vannin,” Miss Laura Collister; fiddle solo, “Manx Tunes,” Mr S. Robinson (encored); Spinning-wheel song, “Snieu, queeyl snieu,” Miss Mona Kelly and fairies (seven little girls); “Traa di liooar” (recitations from “Cushag’s”

poems), Mr W. Meyrick (encore, "Visit of the King"); folk songs, "Tar dys Mannin" and "Bahie Veg," Masters S. Callow and J. Gorry; recitation, "121st Psalm," Willie Prescott; cradle song, "Ushag veg ruy," eight girls; recitation, "Oie Vie," Mr Cæsar Cashen; cradle song, Miss Collister; song, "Mylecraine," Mr J.J. Kneen; vocal dance, "The Rival Cockades," eight girls (encored); recitation from "The schoolmasters" (T.E. Brown), Mr W. Meyrick (encore, Cushag's "Oie Vie"); Hollantide song, "Hop-tu-naa," Messrs Stephen Callow and John Gorry; step-dance song, "The Manxman and the King," Mr J. Sayle.

The accompaniments were ably played by Miss Mona Hunt and Mr S. Robinson.

In an interval in the programme Mr A.H.C. Kelly, for the benefit of the visitors present, lucidly described the various articles in the kitchen, with their uses.

Mr A.H.C. Kelly proposed a hearty vote of thanks to those who had taken part. It meant, as they could see, a great deal of work to all who had taken share in it. He proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Professor Dawkins for coming to preside over this meeting, and for the interest he had taken in it. Miss Morrison, whom Peel people knew well, had worked like a Briton. The getting up of the kitchen meant a great deal of work to her, and he (Mr Kelly) had enjoyed every item as it had gone along. As for their other two friends (Miss Hunt and Mr Robinson) they were proud they belonged to Manxland, and they thought a lot about them coming there and assisting them. It was not easy for them to play violin, without accompaniment. They had showed themselves champions on this occasion. They were truly thankful to everyone who had assisted in every way, including those who had lent articles to make up the kitchen.

[3c] Mr P.M.C. Kermode seconded, not that he thought himself the proposition required seconding, but that he appreciated the compliment paid him in asking him to support the vote. With respect to Professor Boyd-Dawkins and his amiable family, they had grown so accustomed to seeing them year by year that they regarded them as of their own selves. If such a thing were possible as the conferring of the freedom of the Island upon any person, he was sure the votes of Manxmen would be unanimous in conferring such a distinction upon their chairman of that evening (hear, hear). It was pleasant to think that he identified himself with the Isle of Man when he did come over here, and that he showed his interest in what we were doing in such a manner as he had done that evening. With regard to the work of organising and arranging this very charming entertainment which they had all so thoroughly enjoyed, he could not find words to express his feelings of admiration for Miss Morrison in what she had done (applause). The whole idea was so charming, so interesting. It was a matter of not a little importance to try and preserve what could still be saved of the old Manx folk music and airs. To him it seemed far more important to discover and preserve these ancient simple airs, than to attempt to harmonise them. When discovered that was a thing which might be done by any person in any place, but to collect and preserve them—in fact it is almost too late

now, because they had already lost so very much. To see the little children coming forward and singing these little Manx carvals and airs in the original music was a treat. He regretted that the gifted lady who wrote these little poems over the name of “Cushag” was not present that evening as she had hoped. She had been unexpectedly called away, and was now on her way to Canada to nurse a sick sister, otherwise she certainly would have been there, and it was a great disappointment to her that she had not heard those Manx pieces. He wished himself that she could have heard Mr Meyrick’s rendering of one or two of them that evening. Concluding, Mr Kermode thanked Mr Kelly for his explanation of the Manx kitchen.

The motion was carried with applause.

The Chairman thanked them for their acknowledgement of a stranger’s small services, which it had been his pleasure to perform that evening, and on the part of Miss Morrison thanked the visitors for the manner they had received this entertainment. Speaking as a visitor, he felt under a deep obligation to Miss Morrison for the work she was doing there. He should like to say that it was no common work—but work of the highest importance, in the sense that it was encouraging the idea of patriotism—centring the patriotism of the Islanders on the Island, and he should like to say that the higher patriotism could only be of any use by being local, and as it produced to the higher idea of patriotism to the empire at large.

“Manx Concert: Speeches by Professor Boyd Dawkins and Mr P.M.C. Kermode.” *Peel City Guardian* 3 August 1907: 3a–c.

STEPHEN MILLER 2019

