

Manx Notes 525 (2021)

“THE PROJECTED PUBLICATION OF A MANX DICTIONARY” CREGEEN’S MANX DICTIONARY (1833)

Sir,—Some time since I observed an advertisement in your’s and other papers, announcing the projected publication of a Manx Dictionary, and also having heard much of the matter since, I ventured to enquire, and found that its appearance was only delayed in consequence of a sufficient number of subscribers being yet unobtained;—that being the only reason, I venture to predict that *Ellan Vannin* will not long remain without a Lexicon, for surely out of her population of 43,000, two hundred may be found with zeal and good feeling enough to promote so laudable an undertaking.

Indeed it is something remarkable that the Manx is the last of any of the Celtic dialects, recognised by and used in law. In Wales, in Ireland, in Biscay, in Brittany, and elsewhere, all civil affairs are transacted (through the medium of an interpreter) in the prevailing language of the governing nation, yet more remarkable still no Dictionary of the Galck has ever yet appeared. In 1804 Dr Kelly produced his Grammar of 74 or 75 quarto pages, and subsequently issued proposals for the publication of a Dictionary of Manx and English; his death, which happened in 1809, put an end to the affair, and the work now lies in M.S. with his son, Mr Gordon Kelly, recorder of Colchester, in Essex.

The Grammar is very scarce in England (if not every where else.) The late Lord Sidmouth begged the last that Mr Kelly possessed, from whom it passed to the late King George IV, and is now to be found in the library of the British Museum. It was originally meant as an introduction lo the projected Dictionary. Wales and Ireland have possessed dictionaries for the last 200 or 250 years,—*Gaelic Scotland* possesses half a dozen, although the first was printed only 50 years since; the kindred dialects of Biscay, the Walloon, Wendish, and Cornish, also possess theirs, the MANNANEE alone, are without the necessary evidence of their existence as a distinct nation.

Douglas, Oct: 17, 1833.

BRETNAGH.

Pseud [signed as “Bretnagh”]. “[Letter to the Editor] To the Editor of Mona’s Herald.” *Mona’s Herald* 10 April 1833: [3]c.

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