

Manx Notes 634 (2023)

“INSULARUM OCELLUS”

(1915)

Jewel of ocean, changeling of the restless deep,
Quaint is the spell the moonlight weaves around thy brow
And conjures up dim wraiths that pace in twilight glow
Neath turquoise skies and stars that ceaseless vigil keep.

I roam thro’ realms of faëry. The “little men”
Scour as of old the cronks in noisy cavalcade;
Whip-crackings, elfin halloos echo thro’ each glade;
The tinkling, myriad music fills each misty glen.

And other fays join hands and dance in magic rings.
Guarded about by tapers lit with diamond light,
While thro’ the heather wanders many a storied sprite—
The shadow facets of my pale imaginings.

Ah! like wan dreams those memories crowd: the fragrant “scraa”
New cut to bear the golden thatch; the “tholtan” door
Ajar; the “cooish”; the “chiollagh” and the pipe-clayed floor;
The castellated crest of Cronk-ny-Irree Lhaa.

The hills enwrap in cloaks of gorse-embroidered ling;
Deep rocks a-wave with “diullish”; “houghs” a-whirr with gulls;
“Dubs” where the sea-green mermaid hides wrecked sailors’ skulls—
Memories that only whet an exile’s sorrowing.

“Insularum Ocellus.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 13 February 1915: 8d.

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