

# Manx Notes 639 (2024)

“HEAR WHAT DUTIES I HAVE BEEN  
OBLIGED TO DISCHARGE” \*

(1834)

[3c] SIR,—Doubtless you have heard the anecdote of the boy, who, when asked by his schoolmaster how many cases there were, answered, nineteen, sir. The master, willing to try him further, said, very well—let me hear them? A clock-case, sir, a pillow-case, sir, a book-case, &c., until he made out eighteen, and then paused. And which is the nineteenth, my boy? My case, sir. And what is your case? A frightful one, sir. I dont much like flattery, Mr Editor; but to tell you the truth, and as a true Hibernian would add, and it is not a lie, that I am going to say your independent paper is a real acquisition to our little Island, for through its medium all our pitiful cases are made known; and I would advise you not to take any notice of that *boght* of a paper, as the old country people say, the *Manx Sun*. I have heard that a fat Rector once said, when he was busy raking up off the table some hundreds of pounds which had just been. counted down to him, that the Church of England was the best Church in the world.

[3d] Really, Sir, I cannot say so; but quite the reverse. I fearlessly say, that she is the worst Church in the world, and am sure you will agree with me when you hear how ill she has remunerated me. I have been a subaltern in her service in the teens of years. Hear what duties I have been obliged to discharge: On the the return of every Sunday, besides other Holydays, to have the Church doors opened in proper time,—the bell rung at the hours of 8, 9, and 10 forenoon, and twice in the afternoon, to put the surplice on the clergyman,—mark the lessons for him, raise the tunes and sing the Psalms, at times when almost out of breath with ringing the bell, &c. All the compensation I receive, Sir, is but a few shillings,—say, fifteen or sixteen yearly, while his reverence the parson, who has not half the toil, receives his hundreds of pounds,—lives upon roast beef and plum-pudding; and poor Mr Amen faring sumptuously upon potatoes and butter-milk. I am sure you are ready to exclaim, very unfair, it is high time to complain, and something ought to be done for

A POOR PARISH CLERK.

Point of Ayre, April 16.

Pseud [signed as “A Poor Parish Clerk”]. “[Letter to the Editor] Sir, ....”  
*Mona’s Herald* 2 May 1834: 3c–d.

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“Hear what duties I have been obliged to discharge.” Amongst them, raising tunes and singing the Psalms, despite “when almost out of breath with ringing the bell.”

Stephen Miller RBV

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