

Manx Notes 648 (2024)

“PRETTY HEDGE-ROWS OR SOD FENCES” (1871)

With the introduction of improved stock into the Island our old apology for the thievish propensities of the native cattle can no longer be accepted in their favour. They might have been absolutely necessary in the days when our cows were as shaggy and as wild as the buffaloes of the prairie, and our pigs were each nothing more than four lean hams conjoined; but those days, happily for us, have long passed away, and our present generation of milkers, strippers, and heifers belong to a better bred and much more refined race of animals, who are quite above the low pastimes of romping and rampaging across country; while the porkers of the period, if less athletic than their predecessors, certainly approach more nearly to the standard of education of “Toby the well-learned pig.” We have heard a farmer in the good old times aver that many of his thorough-bred gruntes could clear a five-feet dyke at a bound. Like the English prize-fighter, however, these celebrated jumping pigs have disappeared, and we know of no valid reason why we should not increase the attractiveness of our Island by substituting pretty hedgerows for our present unsightly sod fences.

“Pretty Hedge-Rows or Sod Fences.” *Mona's Herald* 25 October 1871: 4e.

Stephen Miller RBV

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