

Manx Notes 689 (2024)

THE HALLELUJAH BAND *

(1883)

SIR,—If the Hallelujah Band is going out of existence in Castletown, surely that is no reason for showing such an evil spirit towards the ministers of prosperous churches in the town and neighbourhood. On Tuesday evening, there was a meeting held in the Town Hall, for the purpose, I presume of doing good. All went off as usual until one great gun got up, who has been pushing himself to the front of late, much to the annoyance and disgust of those who know him. Well, this orator, in the course of his address, charged a clergyman residing a little distance out of Castletown, with threatening his servants with instant dismissal if they went near the meetings of the Hallelujah Band. The impression left on the minds of the audience was, that the clergyman referred to was the respected vicar of the parish. If it is true (which is very unlikely), surely the time of the Band could be occupied better than by abusing a gentleman who has done them no harm. Anyone who knows anything of the vicar, will not believe such a statement, although it came from a person of title; and he must remember that a Castletown audience will not listen to a disparaging word said against their worthy vicar, who, by his Christian example, by his liberal spirit, and by his noble actions, has endeared himself to all his parishioners, dissenters as well as churchmen. My object in penning these lines is not to bring this under the notice of the vicar (who I should hope would not demean himself by noticing such an attack emanating from such a vile source), but rather to warn the officers of the Band against such conduct, as it brings discredit on those in command as well as on the Band as a whole. I would earnestly recommend them to put a stop once and for ever to the wind-bag of Tuesday night, and they will thereby raise themselves again in the esteem and estimation of the public, and, if not annoyed by any more abuse, greater number of people will attend the meetings. I do trust the officers of the Band will take the hint, and not put an untimely end to their usefulness in Castletown by allowing such things to occur.

AMICUS.

May 30th, 1883.

Pseud [signed as “Amicus”]. “[Letter to the Editor] The Hallelujah Band.”
Isle of Man Times 2 June 1883: [3]f.

The Hallelujah Band first appeared in the Island in 1882, and was a Temperance movement that attracted adherents in the literal hundreds judging from

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contemporary reports in the Insular press and is a topic for further study. It later gained a base in Ramsey in the North, where it established an Assembly Room at the Methodist New Connexion Chapel on Bowring Road. As can be seen by the letter, not all welcomed the coming of the Band and music making can divide as well as unite.

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