

Manx Notes 698 (2024)

THE MINORCA CHAPEL BLUE RIBBON ARMY *

(1883)

(1)

Shadows of coming events are visible on the walls and in the shop windows of Lonan in the shape of numerous announcements of Anniversaries to be held shortly at various dissenting chapels in the district and of an important demonstration, tea-party, and public meeting, in Captain Rowe's warehouse, on behalf of the Minorca chapel Blue Ribbon Army and other advocates of teetotalism.

"[Laxey] Shadows of coming" *Manx Sun* 2 June 1883: 4d.

(2)

The members and friends of the Minorca Chapel Blue Ribbon Army, falsely called "The Gospel Temperance Mission," held a public demonstration on Saturday evening last, and headed by "Happy Jim," and the Laxey Brass Band walked in procession up the glen and along the New-road to the Queen's Hotel, from thence returning to the mines, up the Ramsey-road, and down Minorca to Capt. Rowe's warehouse, where a substantial teetotal tea was provided; the trays being laudably presided over by the Misses Fargher, A. Fargher, Sayle, Callow, Boyce, Killey, Duggan, Starkey, Armstrong, and Bateman. After tea an adjournment was made to one of the upper rooms, and a miscellaneous concert was given, the opening hymn being "Boston," by the choir. The Rev J. Kewley followed with prayer, after which the Rev T. Dickinson, P.M., who occupied the post of honour, addressed the meeting on the work and prospects of the corps, remarking that though it had only been formed a few months, some 200 persons had already joined it, and he expected good results would follow in due course. The band then gave a selection, after which Mr H. Jane sang "The Pilgrim of Love"; the glee, "See our ranks," was next sung by the choir; and Mr H. Cubbon followed with a speech in that style which is peculiarly his own. The duet, "Come o'er the moonlit sea," was nicely rendered by Misses Bateman and Kewley, as was also the song, "The White Squall," by Mr Sam Orr. A dialogue entitled "That nasty pipe," was next recited by Miss Emms and Messrs Kelly and Fargher, and no wonder if they gave it their "blessings," for a nasty pipe is an abomination but a clean pipe is a very different thing. The nasty pipe should have been washed in the "Crystal Fountain," which was next sung by the choir. After this James the happy made a speech, and was followed by an overture from the band. The remainder of the programme comprised the song "I wonder why he comes not

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home,” sung by Miss Killip; recitation by Mr Robert McCaa; song, “The old sexton,” by Mr J.R. Kelly; duet, “The minute gun at sea,” by Messrs Orr and Jane; speech by the Rev J. Kewley, P.M.; song, “Little green leaf in our Bible,” by Miss Bateman, and finally the National Anthem, by the band.—Owing to the day being “pay-Saturday,” the entertainment was well attended, and proved a decided success.

“[Laxey] Teetotalism.” *Manx Sun* 9 June 1883: 4e.

The importance of Methodism cannot be overstated in the Island, nor that twin force of Teetotalism. Here we see Minorca Chapel in Laxey forming its own Temperance body, namely the Blue Ribbon Army, and aided in its effort by the Laxey Brass Band. Music making was an integral part of Manx life in the period and few events passed without it occurring.

STEPHEN MILLER RBV

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