

DR JOHN CLAGUE

COOINAGHTYN MANNINAGH
MANX REMINISCENCES



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BY

DR JOHN CLAGUE



Edited
by
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Chiollagh Books
2005

This electronic edition first published in 2005 by

Chiollagh Books
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Onchan
Isle of Man
British Isles
IM3 IEU

Contact by email only:
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Originally published in 1911
with facing Manx and English text

This edition reproduces the English language text only

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ISBN 1-898613-18-4

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INTRODUCTION

On the 16 June 1908, Sophia Morrison wrote to Karl Roeder and closed her letter:

You may be interested to know that Dr Clague is writing a book on Manx things—Manx names of plants, stars, place names etc—Manx proverbs & folklore. He has been engaged writing it for the past 18 months, & hopes to publish it sometime in Spring. The book will be brought out in parallel columns—Manx and English—Mr T. Moore, Port Erin, being responsible for the Manx.¹

Clague was to die that year, not that long after the date of the letter, on 23 August. He had been suffering from heart disease for several years.² The book was later to appear in 1911, under the title of *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences*.³ The introduction was written by Rev. John Kewley, later Archdeacon and Rector of Andreas, but then the incumbent at Arbory.⁴ Kewley was a great personal friend to Clague, and he wrote to Sophia Morrison, “I shall miss him very much indeed as I used to see a great deal of him. Only three days ago before his death he spent between 2 and 3 hours here with me.”⁵ He continued:

He has left an enormous quantity of Manx in the way of many scores of note books &c. I have been with Mrs Clague 5 or 6 days already sorting them out from among his papers. I fancy that some of them are practically ready for publication, but it will be some time before I shall be able to report on them.⁶

These notebooks are once again mentioned in his introduction:

His notes were afterwards carefully transcribed in volumes, of which he has left about thirty behind. The material for most of these was put into shape at Brookfield, where almost daily he spent many happy hours at the work with Mr and Mrs Moore.⁷

¹ Sophia Morrison to Karl Roeder, 16 June 1908, Manchester Central Library, Manchester City Archives, M277/12/1–141.

² “Death of Dr Clague,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 29 August 1908: 7 col. a.

³ Dr John Clague, *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* (Castletown: M.J. Backwell, n.d. [1911]). For a reprint of the English text only, see Dr John Clague, *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences* (Douglas: Hospice Care, 1991). For the Manx only, see Dr John Clague, *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh*, ed. Phil Kelly (n.p.: Privately, by the Editor, n.d. [1994]).

⁴ J.D. Qualtrough, “Archdeacon John Kewley, 1860–1941,” *Journal of the Manx Museum* v.65 (1941). See too, Rev. John Kewley, “Rambling Memories of a Manx Sexagenarian,” *Ellan Vannin Magazine* i (1923).

⁵ Rev. John Kewley to Sophia Morrison, 8 September 1908, Manx National Heritage Library (MNHL), MS 09495, Box 3.

⁶ Rev. John Kewley to Sophia Morrison, 8 September 1908, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 3.

⁷ Rev. John Kewley, “Introduction,” *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* (Castletown: M.J. Backwell, n.d. [1911]) x.

Kewley wrote that, “[t]his volume of ‘Reminiscences’ was the last, and was only just completed at the time of his death.”⁸ Twenty-four of these notebooks are now in the Manx National Heritage Library, but the one containing the text of the “Reminiscences” is not amongst them.⁹ Evidently, it appears that a number of these notebooks must have remained in Kewley’s hands and, subsequently, are now lost.¹⁰ However, the original rough notes for the music and folklore sections of *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh* remarkably do survive. These were noted down into a blank diary for 1892.¹¹

Clague’s papers and personal library passed to Kewley, and they were sizeable in the extreme:

We had to take to our house, as far as I can judge, 6 or 7 tons of books & papers, & our house is only a small one. Consequently with books, papers & so many other things we scarcely have room to move among boxes, hampers, drawers & piles on the floors.¹²

According to Kewley, the collecting of the material copied up later into the notebooks had first commenced after 1901:

After a severe illness in 1901 he had more leisure than previously, and he spent a great deal of time with many of the old Manx folk, obtaining and writing down on the spot everything he could draw from them which threw light on the construction of the language.¹³

He had started earlier than that, however, as he wrote to G.W. Wood in 1899:

I am merely a collector and preserver of the spoken language, and I have taken down thousands of colloquial expressions which would otherwise have been lost. I have at least five hundred proverbs in addition to those you have collected.¹⁴

⁸ Kewley, “Introduction,” x.

⁹ Deposited as MNHL, MS 450/1–2.4 A. They are described, and the contents discussed, in George Broderick, “Manx Traditional Songs and Song Fragments: II, Manx Museum MS 450 A,” *Béaloides* 50 (1982).

¹⁰ As regards his folk song collection, rough notes made available to A.G. Gilchrist by Kewley have not been found. Broderick, “Manx Traditional Songs and Song Fragments: II, Manx Museum MS 450 A,” 2–3.

¹¹ “Manx Folk Lore,” notes compiled by Dr John Clague, undated [1892 or after], MNHL, MS 952 A. Clague’s handwriting is such that in places one needs to refer from time to time to *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh* to make out certain words or phrases. There is nothing to suggest that these were notes as taken down in the field, rather the opposite. The thematic nature of the notes show this is a grouping together of existing material, compiled to aid in drafting material for what was to become a number of chapters in *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh*.

¹² Rev. John Kewley to Sophia Morrison, 1 May 1911, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 3.

¹³ Kewley, “Introduction,” x.

¹⁴ Dr John Clague to G.W. Wood, 10 May 1899, MNHL, MS 1399 A (undivided). The reference is to G.W. Wood, “On the Classification of Proverbs and Sayings of the Isle of Man,” *Folk-Lore* v (1894). Wood’s wife was related to Clague.

The previous month he had written in a similar vein to Edmund Goodwin, “I have written down thousands of colloquial and idiomatic sentences of all kinds, in fact so many that it is difficult to get fresh ones.”¹⁵ Moreover,

Every expression has been taken down from the older generation of Manx speakers—those who in early life not only spoke Manx but also thought in it. I have also a great number of tales, fairy tales, ghost stories & in Manx. I have simply written this to tell you the kind of material I have, and the kind of work I have been doing. I am very much obliged to you for your kind offer in allowing me to write to you for sources of words and turns of phrases and I shall be pleased to avail myself of your offer.¹⁶

This does not exhaust the detail of this letter:

The colloquial expressions that I have taken down in reference to Folk Medicine, charms &c would make a fairly large book. When I was collecting the Manx Songs,¹⁷ I took down everything that was spoken in Manx, as I can write it—and spell it correctly—just as readily as English. I have collected four or five hundred genuine Manx proverbs in addition to those ~~in~~ interspersed through Cregeen’s and Kelly’s Dictionaries.¹⁸

One of the strengths of *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh* is its chapter on folk medicine, which includes thirteen charms alone, amongst other well-observed detail.¹⁹

Goodwin passed this letter on to Morrison for her to read:

You will see by D^r Clagues letter what successful rescue-work he has done in saving from utter loss such extensive remains of the Manx Music and language. He has done work that but for him could never have been done.²⁰

In this letter, Clague also assesses his own competence in *speaking* as opposed to writing Manx:

¹⁵ Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, 4 April 1899, MNHL, MS 2147/2 A.

¹⁶ Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, 4 April 1899, MNHL, MS 2147/2 A.

¹⁷ For Clague the folk song collector, see A.G. Gilchrist, “Songs from the Isle of Man (Part i),” *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* vii.28 (1924), “Songs from the Isle of Man (Part ii),” *JFSS* vii.29 (1925), “Songs from the Isle of Man (Part iii),” *JFSS* vii.30 (1926). See too, Robert Corteen Carswell, “Music Collected in the Isle of Man in the late Nineteenth Century: ‘Rescue Archaeology’ and the Published Results,” MA dissertation, University of Liverpool, 2001.

¹⁸ Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, 4 April 1899, MNHL, MS 2147/2 A.

¹⁹ Before *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh* appeared, the only piece on Manx folk medicine was A.W. Moore, “Folk-Medicine in the Isle of Man,” *Yn Lioar Manninagh* iii.vi (1898). This is a reprint of a two-part article from the *Isle of Man Times*. Only part two can be traced, A.W. Moore, “Folk-Medicine in the Isle of Man [Part 2],” *Isle of Man Times* 13 November 1897. Part one cannot be found, at least not in the issues for 1897.

²⁰ Edmund Goodwin to Sophia Morrison, 10 April 1899, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 2, (in bound green volume).

I should tell you that I am able to speak Manx fairly well, that is, I can converse with any one on any ordinary subject, but I should not like to make a very long speech, though that would be due to want of practice. My chief practice in speaking is on matters relating to my own profession, as I always speak in Manx to those who understand it.²¹

Composition proper in Manx, however, as opposed to noting material down, was a different matter. Edward Faragher of Cregneash wrote to Karl Roeder in January 1899 that:

Dr Clague sent me a letter in Manx the ather day the first that ever I received in the language he wants me to try and write some manx rhymes and I was trying to make a few verses and I think I would get on with a little practice.²²

“I am only learning Gaelic, therefore you must not make fun of me,” was how one line of the letter read, as Faragher translated it for the benefit of E.S. Dodgson visiting him in 1901.²³ Faragher was a fisherman who composed verse in both Manx and English.²⁴ Cregneash had long been on the tourist itinerary and Faragher was part of an informal itinerary for some as he often wrote at length to Roeder, the following extract a typical one:

I am kept very busy answering young ladies letters ones that I never saw. There was a scottish man came to our cottage one day last week. whoever told him about me I cannot tell. But he said he was a professor of galic²⁵ and wished to know if I had composed anything in manx there was three ladies with him I shewed him some of my poetry and one of the fables in manx and he took a copy of the fable The ladies and himself were surprised at my writings and wondering that one of cregnaish

²¹ Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, 4 April 1899, MNHL, MS 2147/2 A.

²² Edward Faragher to Karl Roeder, 4 January 1899, MNHL, MS 1135 A. Karl Roeder (1848–1911) was a German national who was resident in Manchester. He made regular summer visits to the Island, the purpose of which was to collect folklore. At some date, he came across Edward Faragher (1831–1908) who lived at Cregneash and who earned his living at that time as a fisherman. Roeder befriended Faragher and the two wrote to each other frequently.

²³ Dr John Clague to Edward Faragher, [27 December] 1898, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Bodl. MS Manx e.1, 5v; for the translation, “(as translated by the recipient, Edward Faragher when I visited him at Cregneash, 27 August. 1901.)” see 5r. A copy of the letter is in one of the notebooks compiled by Clague, see MNHL, MS 450/12 A. Reproduced in Edward S. Dodgson, “A Manx Letter,” *Peel City Guardian* 7 September 1901. Dodgson took away the letter (and other written items by Faragher) and later gifted them to the Bodleian Library. The Taylor Library at Oxford also received a number of printed items relating to Manx from Dodgson. For a short biographical note of E.S. Dodgson (1857–1922), see Georges Lacombe, “Edward Spencer Dodgson,” *Revue Internationale des Etudes Basques* xvi (1923).

²⁴ For further on Faragher see George Broderick, “Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy: Translation and Notes,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 39 (1982), “Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 38 (1981).

²⁵ Dr Anja Gunderloch, Department of Celtic, University of Edinburgh, suggests that he may well be Donald MacKinnon who was the Professor of Celtic at Edinburgh, 1882–1914.

people could do them. he took down my address and he said he would tell all about me to their society. we were talking in galic but I could not understand him as will as he understood me.²⁶

Clague had already obtained from Faragher some of his writings in Manx, and was to receive considerably more.²⁷

Like all of the folklore collectors and language revivalists who appeared in this period, none of them were native speakers, instead their Manx was self-taught. “Began studying Manx in the Autumn of 1893 from Dictionary and Scriptures” was the note Goodwin, born in 1844, two years after Clague, made on one of his workbooks.²⁸ Clague at one time had a somewhat grandiose plan for reviving Manx in Cregneash, as Faragher wrote to Roeder:

I heard yesterday that Dr Clague was proposing to get up a school in Cregneash to teach the people manx he is a good manxman himself. but I sopose it is only talk but he is collecting all the manx writing he can get [...] ²⁹

*

“I am medical practitioner in Castletown, and have extensive practice both in that town and the neighbouring parishes” Clague declared in 1879, “My practice carries me through the parishes of Santon, Rushen, Arbory, and Malew.”³⁰ J.E. Quayle, later the Clerk of the Rolls, recalled Clague so:

A round, somewhat portly figure, rather below medium height, with a keen fresh-coloured face, clean shaven, except for the usual side whiskers, stiff hair brushed straight up, firm well-shaped and sensitive hands (real surgeon’s hands), a hearty friendly manner, with a keen sense of humour and an infectious laugh—altogether a very human personality. He was a physician of almost uncanny gifts, and a man of many interests; the Manx language, folk lore, folk songs, theology, mechanics and music all came within the circle of his orbit. My earliest recollections of him go back to a time when I was a small boy, I used to see his familiar figure seated in a high dog-cart, and always smoking a large pipe, being driven around by his man,

²⁶ Edward Faragher to Karl Roeder, 18 September 1896, MNHL, MS 11064, Box 2. Faragher was engaged in translating *Æsop’s Fables* into Manx, a selection of which later appeared in 1901. Charles Roeder, ed., *Skealyyn Æsop*, (Douglas: S.K. Broadbent, 1901). “I saw my name in the ‘Examiner’ and the ‘Manx fables’ to come out in Book form.” Edward Faragher to Charles Roeder, 19 December 1900, MNHL, MS 2146/5 A.

²⁷ Now deposited as MNHL, MS 431 C. See Broderick, “Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy”, “Manx Traditional Songs and Song Fragments: II, Manx Museum MS 450 A.”

²⁸ Notebook compiled by Edmund Goodwin, undated but mid-1890s, MNHL, MS 2260 A.

²⁹ Notebook compiled by Edward Faragher, undated, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 6.

³⁰ Isle of Man Government, *Medical Aid and Poor Relief Commission (Isle of Man): Report and Evidence, with Appendices* (Douglas: Printed (by Authority) by James Brown & Son, 1879) 61 col. a, 62 col. a.

Charles who was, in his own way, an original like his master—the dog-cart was succeeded by a kind of pill box on two wheels, which I have always thought must have been designed by himself, as I have never seen its fellow.³¹

Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh contains two photographs of Clague, and the one used for the frontispiece, taken in 1906, does indeed show “[a] round, somewhat portly figure,” while the other, taken in 1887, shows the younger Clague, with an impressive set of “side whiskers” on display.³²

His coachman was Charles Clague, who was his second cousin, and also a singer who contributed to Clague’s folk song collection. The pair had a shared interest in growing and exhibiting chrysanthemums, where they inevitably swept the board of prizes.³³ Clague himself also had a passion for wrought ironwork.³⁴ He was forced to give up playing the violin due to a slight accident to one of his hands.³⁵

John Clague was born 10 October 1842, the son of Henry Clague, a tenant farmer of Ballanorris, Arbory³⁶ His mother was Elizabeth, the niece of Archibald Cregeen, the “Kirk Arbory Lexicographer.” He was educated at Ballabeg school before attending, first the Old Grammar School in Castletown, and then King William’s College, just outside the town, as a day boy.³⁷ His obituary reported that his education at KWC had been paid for by Rev. Harrison of Jurby, a rumour that also extended to the financing of his medical studies.³⁸ Kewley set the record straight in a letter written to J.E. Quayle in 1939:

Some years later the Doctor and his father were much hurt by a report that he had been sent to King William’s College and to Guy’s Hospital by money which Parson Harrison had provided for this purpose. There was no foundation for this unkind gossip. The Doctor was educated entirely at his father’s expense.³⁹

³¹ J.E. Quayle, “Manx Music,” *Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society* iv.ii (1937): 241–42.

³² Clague, *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* frontispiece, plate facing 128.

³³ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

³⁴ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

³⁵ Quayle, “Manx Music,” 243. No reason is given but one wonders if it resulted from his metal working.

³⁶ The farm was, in fact, in family hands, being owned by his brother. For a history of the Clague family, see H.S. Cowin, “The Clagues of Ballaclague, Arbory,” *Isle of Man Family History Society Journal* ii (1980). See too, Rev. John Kewley to J.E. Quayle, 16 January 1939, MNHL, MS 1397 A.

³⁷ See “Entrances in January 1854.” K.S.S. Henderson, *King William’s College Register*, 2nd ed. (Glasgow: Jackson, Wylie & Co., 1928) 67.

³⁸ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

³⁹ Rev. John Kewley to J.E. Quayle, 16 January 1939, MNHL, MS 1397 A. This was written to correct mistakes that Quayle had made in his article from 1937. See Quayle, “Manx Music.”

A quarterly report for 1858, the year before Clague left KWC, survives.⁴⁰ His General Work was deemed “very satisfactory,” as was his Euclid. His performance in Arithmetic and Algebra was recorded as “Satisfactory,” but his French was only “quite satisfactory.” He did not study German, but later he took up “the study of German in order to be able to read Theological Works in that language.”⁴¹

A medical career did not beckon at first, Clague working for many years on the family farm. The catalyst for his medical career, as he wrote himself, came one harvest when there was an accident:

When the last load was brought home it was called the “stook of brimmin,” and if there were two or three carts in the field together they would strive with one another which would be first, because they did not like to be called the “stook of brimmin.” It was an accident in this strife to a young man who fell off a cart and broke his leg when he was driving across a clash that was the cause of my being a doctor.

He fell off the cart when it was late in the afternoon, and he was carried home, and I set the bone. On the morrow I went for my friend William Clucas, The Strang, a bonesetter of great repute. He advised my father to send me to Guy’s Hospital, London, and I went the same week that the young man was for getting out of bed.⁴²

In these early years, Clague had been acting as a folk healer, “[i]ndeed there are people yet living who remember the youth treating his fellows with the simples to be found growing in the fields and hedgerows of Kirk Arbory.”⁴³

Clague was educated at Guy’s Hospital, London, where he was First Prizeman and Exhibitioner in 1870. He was admitted as L.S.A. (Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries) in 1872,⁴⁴ as L.R.C.P. (Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians) in 1873,⁴⁵ and, that same year, as M.R.C.S. (Member of the Royal College of Surgeons).⁴⁶ According to Sir William Gull, “Clague was the cleverest man who had

⁴⁰ “King William’s College, Isle of Man. Quarterly Report from 1858. Master Clague,” MNHL, MS 1534 A.

⁴¹ Rev. John Kewley to G.W. Wood, 30 June 1911, MNHL, MS 1185/2 A

⁴² Clague, *Cooinaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* 79, 81.

⁴³ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

⁴⁴ “The following gentlemen passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise, on Thursday last: [...] On the same day the following gentlemen passed their primary professional examination: John Clague, student of Guy’s Hospital.” “Apothecaries’ Ball,” *The Times* 20 January 1872.

⁴⁵ “The following gentlemen were on Monday last admitted Licentiates of the College [...] Mr John Clague, Castletown, Isle of Man, having passed in medicine and midwifery, will receive the College licence on his obtaining a qualification in surgery recognised by the College.” “Royal College of Physicians,” *The Times* 18 December 1872.

⁴⁶ “The following gentlemen, having undergone the necessary examinations for the diploma, were admitted members of the College at a meeting of the Court of Examiners on the 23d

passed through Guys while he was at the head of that institution.”⁴⁷ His medical education did not come cheap, his studies reportedly costing his father the considerable sum of £1,000.⁴⁸

He returned to the Island in 1873 and began to practise from the family farm at Ballanorris.

At first he had uphill work, In those days there was a big colony of one-horse aristocrats in Castletown, and they were disposed to look down upon or ignore the modest practitioner who had practically come from the plough, and whose forebears were so well-known in the neighbourhood.⁴⁹

He married that same year, Margaret Eliza, the only daughter of Henry J. Watterson of Colby, Captain of the Parish, and one-time member of the House of Keys for Rushen Sheading. They were no children from the marriage.

It was with departure of Dr Thomas Wise in 1874 that proved to be Clague’s opportunity.⁵⁰ He managed to succeed to many of his appointments, becoming the medical officer at his old school, King William’s College, the surgeon to the Castle Rushen Goal in Castletown, the medical officer to the garrison in the town, the surgeon to the Royal Naval Reserve, and, eventually, Surgeon to the Household.⁵¹ He was also the doctor to a number of Friendly Societies. At his funeral, “[a]ttired in black sashes, a deputation from the Harbour of Peace Lodge of Oddfellows (Port St Mary) walked in the procession,” Clague having been their medical officer for close on seventeen years.⁵² Clague moved to Castletown and established a practice that ranged over the southern parishes of the Island. He was also a consulting physician and his patients came from all over the Island.

“I had intended to write a long letter, but I am obliged to go at once to the College,” this in a letter to Deemster Gill in 1894,⁵³ “I had intended to write more, but I am obliged to go out on duty,” in a letter in 1899 written to Goodwin.⁵⁴ These show the sudden interruptions that were a doctor’s lot, added to which were the difficulties of having a rural practise, namely the poor quality of roads, often impassable in winter, and the accompanying inclement seasonal weather.

Agnes Herbert remembered one of his visits:

inst., viz. [...] John Clague, L.R.C.P. lond. and L.S.A. Castletown, Isle of Man, of Guy’s Hospital.” “Royal College of Surgeons,” *The Times* 24 January 1873.

⁴⁷ Quayle, “Manx Music,” 243.

⁴⁸ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

⁴⁹ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

⁵⁰ “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. a.

⁵¹ In other words, the Lieutenant Governor’s doctor.

⁵² “Death of Dr Clague,” 7 col. c.

⁵³ Dr John Clague to Deemster J.F. Gill, 30 October 1894, MNHL, MS 09702, Box 2.

⁵⁴ Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, undated [1899], MNHL, MS 2147/1 A.

I can remember being in a little hovel at Fleshwick, divided into two compartments with a window (save the mark!) in either, when the late Dr Clague, the Manx worthy, came to pay a visit to a sick child. The mother wanted “a bottle,” just a bottle—that is how the Manx always speak of medicine; but the child needed air, only air, and there was none in all the room. The wonderful understanding medico looked at the frame of ever-and-ever Amen variety, and then—methodically knocked out all four infinitesimal panes one by one.⁵⁵

Thomas Taggart made a note in his diary in during October 1877, “Dr Clague in the schoolhouse vaccinating 48 done to.”⁵⁶ Earlier in the year, he had called on Taggart, “[t]he Dr. Clague came this morning and examined Robby & Isa,” and left his windows intact as it was only medicine that had to be obtained.⁵⁷

Eventually Clague succumbed himself to a severe illness in 1901 and resigned from all of his official appointments. In 1903 he was unable to attend the annual general meeting of the Manx Language Society, “I have not been able to get to Douglas during the summer, and I shall not venture to do so during the cold weather.”⁵⁸ Though even after 1901, he continued to see patients and hold consultations as Sarah Gelling noted in her diary for 1902:

[...] afternoon, went with Lizzie Kennaugh, Annie with us to get Dr Clague’s opinion about Mr Clucas & operation. he seemed to think it was the proper thing to do, but seemed doubtful of success owing to his age.⁵⁹

In fact, on the very day he died, “[h]e had interviewed and prescribed for a patient only a few minutes before he was suddenly called away.”⁶⁰

*

Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences appeared in 1911, published in Clague’s hometown of Castletown and under the imprint of M.J. Backwell, a jobbing printer, although it was printed and bound in England, where Cyril Paton, of Streatham College in London, “rendered much kind and valuable assistance in seeing the sheets through the press.”⁶¹ Sophia Morrison had written to Roeder, “[t]he book will be brought out in parallel columns—Manx and English—Mr T. Moore, Port Erin,

⁵⁵ Agnes Herbert, *The Isle of Man* (London: John Lane, 1909) 243.

⁵⁶ Entry for 19 October 1877, diary kept by Thomas Taggart, Ballarobin, Malew, MNHL, MS 1498 A.

⁵⁷ The entry continues, “I went to Castletown this evening to get medicine for Rob.” Entry for 7 June 1877, diary kept by Thomas Taggart, Ballarobin, Malew, MNHL, MS 1498 A.

⁵⁸ Dr John Clague to Sophia Morrison, 4 November 1903, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 1.

⁵⁹ Entry for 8 September 1902, diary for 1900–03 kept by Sarah E. Gelling (1874–1951), Glentraugh, Glen Glentraugh, Santan, MNHL, MS 9229/1/2.

⁶⁰ Kewley, “Introduction,” x.

⁶¹ Kewley, “Introduction,” xi.

being responsible for the Manx.”⁶² It did indeed appear as stated, Manx on the verso page, English on the recto. According to Edward Maddrell,

The notes for the work were made in English and translated into Manx with the aid of a friend. [...] For the published edition a literal English translation was made, seemingly without reference to Clague’s notes.⁶³

The work of revision fell to Thomas Moore and his wife as Kewley mentioned:

It [i.e., the text] has been very carefully revised by Mr and Mrs Moore, and it is hoped that students may be able to gather from it an idea of what Manx was when first it became a written language. The English translation is, as far as possible, a literal one.⁶⁴

Coinaghtyn Manninagh has a very uneven texture, some chapters being nothing other than close on a succession of one-line paragraphs, and with a trivial topic, the chapter “Tynwald” being a case in point. This chapter also raises another issue, namely Clague’s vogue for etymological explanations that are either absurd or truly absurd.⁶⁵ And then there are “observations” along the lines of, “[e]very vowel is pronounced in Manx, and I think that is the reason the Manx love music. It made them observant,” or “[t]he Manx have kept (preserved) the Dorian mode better than any other nation.” It is difficult to see eighteen months worth of work in its composition as mentioned by Morrison, and the contents give the impression of a core of material being padded out with other, perhaps earlier material, from a time when Clague was learning to compose in Manx. This was, of course, the conceit of the book: “[...] it is hoped that students may be able to gather from it an idea of what Manx was when first it became a written language.”⁶⁶ This is why we do not see the “tales, fairy tales, ghost stories & in Manx” that Clague mentioned to Goodwin, nor the material sent to him by Edward Faragher.

The most satisfactory chapters are those which are truly “reminiscences” and reflect Clague’s own interests in music and folklore, namely custom and belief, food, and folk medicine. Chapter ix, “Charms and Cures,” is a well-executed piece of

⁶² Sophia Morrison to Karl Roeder, 16 June 1908, Manchester Central Library, Manchester City Archives, M277/12/1–141.

⁶³ Edward Maddrell, “The West Gallery Tradition in the Isle of Man,” *West Gallery* 3 (1992): 7–8.

⁶⁴ Kewley, “Introduction,” x–xi.

⁶⁵ As a prime example: “Sauin or Baal Sauin was the chief god of the Gauls. The Gauls came from Asia, and the root of the word ‘sauin’ came from ‘saue’ and ‘an,’ and they are to be understood as ‘Circle of the Sun.’ They were not willing to name his name (Baal Sauin), and they called it the Sun.” Clague, *Coinaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* 63. He had once wrote to Goodwin, “Philology is one of my pet subjects.” Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, undated [1899], MNHL, MS 2147/1 A.

⁶⁶ Although Dougie Faragher was so dissatisfied with Clague’s Manx that he produced his own version, see Douglas C. Faragher, “Manx Reminiscences by Dr J. Clague [in 20 pts],” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 15 March–30 August 1973.

writing. Besides the thirteen charms it gives, along with other folk cures and practices, it describes a number of encounters of the young John Clague with the world of the “fairy doctors,” the folk healers of the countryside. It shows here that Clague was a capable author, and it makes one wish there was more of it on display, rather than having to read about “Port Erin Breakwater,” which is one of the chapters on offer. Chapter xi, “Music and Singing,” again has excellent detail, although concerned largely with West Gallery music,⁶⁷ and not that much, sadly, about folk song. All in all, *Cooïnagh̃tyn Manninagh* still remains a thin book in terms of content, although thick in appearance due to a considerable amount of white space on each page.

Given the discrepancies in style between any of the chapters, the question is raised about how much is truly Clague’s writing and how much of the passages in Manx may be down to rewriting by the Moores. If it was all truly authored by Clague himself, one wonders how he could have been content with the shape of the final manuscript. There is also, and surprisingly, no introduction or prefatory note by Clague himself, which does suggest a lack of completion about the enterprise.⁶⁸

*

“Everything is in type now & paged so I expect to see the book almost immediately,” wrote Kewley to Morrison in May 1911.⁶⁹ The planned print run was for a thousand copies:

Mr Cubbon says he thinks they can guarantee 200 copies of “Cooïnagh̃tyn Manninagh” over & above the 500, so I think I can get 1000 printed—500 to remain in sheets until required.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Maddrell, “The West Gallery Tradition in the Isle of Man,” discusses this chapter in detail. He does warn, however, that, “[the] English translation can create problems for anyone relying on it. For example, Clague did not like the so-called ‘Lancashire solemnisation’ [...] but his strictures make no sense at all in the English translation.” Maddrell, “The West Gallery Tradition in the Isle of Man,” 8. For this reason, the Manx text of this chapter is reproduced as an appendix. Incidentally, Clague collected from Maddrell’s great-grandmother: “My grandmother’s childhood memories include vivid recollections of Dr Clague arriving in a top hat to make notes from the stories of my great-grandmother.” Maddrell, “The West Gallery Tradition in the Isle of Man,” 7.

⁶⁸ The last passage in *Cooïnagh̃tyn Manninagh*, “The Burial Urn,” starts so: “On the twenty-first day of May, in the year nineteen hundred and eight, we were at Ballacross digging an old urn out of an old burial ground.” Clague, *Cooïnagh̃tyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* 265. This does show how close indeed to his death that work on the manuscript was still ongoing. It was on this occasion that Clague fell ill. “He caught cold that day & he seemed never to have got over it properly. He was kept to the house 3 or 4 weeks [...]” Rev. John Kewley to G.W. Wood, 24 August 1908, MNHL, MS 1185/1 A.

⁶⁹ Rev. John Kewley to Sophia Morrison, 1 May 1911, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 3.

⁷⁰ Rev. John Kewley to Sophia Morrison, 1 May 1911, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 3.

Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh went on sale in September 1911, priced 3/6, postage 4d extra.⁷¹ “I should be glad to take two copies of Dr Clague’s book if the price is anything under 5/- [each] otherwise one copy will have to do me,”⁷² wrote Edmund Goodwin to Morrison in 1911. At 3/6, two copies were indeed affordable:

Glad to see Dr Clague’s book. I enclose 7/- for the two copies. My only disappointment with the book is that there is not more of it. Clague wrote me that he had material for a book of 400 pages gathered from the lips of all sorts of people of “the older generation—those who thought and dreamt in Manx.” I should have liked to have seen at least twice as much again of the native “yarns.”⁷³

According to Kewley, “[i]t will sell well in the United States, I feel sure, if it can be brought to the notice of the Manx folk there.” J.R. Moore from Lonan, who had emigrated not to America, but to New Zealand,⁷⁴ read it and was disappointed, as he wrote to William Cubbon:

I get an occasional letter from my dear Friend Miss Morrison of Peel from whom I have received Mr J.J. Kneens Direct Method, Mr Faraghers Aesops Fables, Dr Clague’s Reminiscences in which Im greatly disappointed. I expected something more racy from the genial old Doctor. And a few days ago The folklore collection of that grand old salt Bill Cashen.⁷⁵

William Cashen’s Manx Folk-Lore,⁷⁶ published in 1912, the year after *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh*, was more to his taste, as he wrote to the person who had gifted it to him, namely Sophia Morrison:

I have again to thank you for sending on to me dear Old Bill Cashen’s Folklore with a portrait of the grand old salt. [...] To my mind his folklore is more racy reading than that of Mr Moore and is nicely spiced with Gailck.⁷⁷



Reproduced here are a number of letters concerning Dr John Clague, which have been discussed above. The first is the letter in Manx that he sent to Edward Faragher

⁷¹ “*Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences*,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 2 September 1911.

⁷² Edmund Goodwin to Sophia Morrison, 6 June 1911, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 2.

⁷³ Edmund Goodwin to Sophia Morrison, undated [June/July 1911], MNHL, MS 09495, Box 2. He may be referring to the letter from 1899, where it reads as “the older generation of Manx speakers—those who in early life not only spoke Manx but also thought in it,” but given the quote marks, he may be quoting from another letter rather than shaky recollection; also, the 1899 letter has no mention of “400 pages.”

⁷⁴ J.R. Moore, “[A] Manxman’s Voyage to New Zealand,” *Manx Quarterly* 10 (1911).

⁷⁵ J.R. Moore to William Cubbon, [21 March] 1913, MNHL, MS 2355/1 c.

⁷⁶ William Cashen, *William Cashen’s Manx Folk-Lore*, ed. Sophia Morrison (Douglas: Manx Language Society, 1912).

⁷⁷ J.R. Moore to Sophia Morrison, 17 March 1913, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 3.

INTRODUCTION

of Cregneash in 1898, “the first that ever I received in the language,” as its recipient commented. This is followed by the three letters from 1899, the two sent to Edmund Goodwin, and the third to G.W. Wood, where Clague describes his collecting activities and his ability in Manx. Next comes a pair of letters from Rev. John Kewley to G.W. Wood, the first one (from 1908) dealing with Clague’s recent death, the second (1911) with his personal papers. Finally, a letter from Kewley again, but this time to J.E. Quayle in 1939, giving some background to Clague’s family.

STEPHEN MILLER

VIENNA, 2004

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge thanks to Roger Sims, Archivist and Librarian, Manx National Heritage Library, for granting access to the various manuscript materials in his care. Closer to hand is Peter Scepan at the ÖAW who has again kindly helped by processing the various photographs that appear here.

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“DR CLAGUE SENT ME A LETTER IN MANX”

28

(1)

LETTER TO EDWARD FARAGHER

(1898)



(1)

Crofton, Ballacashtal, Ellan Vannin,
Laa'll Eoin 'syn Ullick, 1898.

Edward Faragher.

Vainsther Veen,—Gur eh mie oo son yn Skeaal Manninagh as yn “Drane.” S'liak lhiam ad dy mie. My ta veg dy screwnyn Gaelg elley ayd, veign booiagh my yinnagh oo cur ad dooys. Ta mee cheet dy chur shilley ort reesht. Ta mish ynrican gynsagh Gaelg, myr shen cha nhegin dhyt yannoo faghid j'eem. Dy firrinagh ayds,

FER LHEE CLAGUE.

Clague yn fer lhee, “yn dooinney shen ta pooar echey dy varroo.” Ollick ghennal ort, as Blein Vie Noa.

(2)

Ballacashtal | Ellan Vannin
Laa'll Eoin 'syn Ullick 98

Edward Faragher | Vainsther Veen,

Gur eh mie oo son yn Skeaal Manninagh as yn Drane.

S'liak lhiam ad dy mie.

My ta veg dy screwnyn Gaelg elley ayd, veign booiagh my yinnagh oo cur ad dooys.

Ta mee cheet dy chur shilley ort reesht.

Ta mish ynrican gynsagh Gaelg, myr shen cha nhegin dhyt yannoo faghid j'eem.

Dy firrinagh ayd's | “Fer-lhee” Clague

[Clag^{ue}] yn fer lhee, “yn dooinney shen ta pooar echey dy varroo.” | Ollick ghennal ort, as Blein Vie Noa.

(3)

St John’s Day in Christmas.

Dear Master,—Thank you for the Manx tale and the poetry. They like me very much. If you have any more Gaelic writings I shall be happy if you will give them to me. I am coming to see you again. I am only learning Gaelic, therefore you must not make fun of me. Truly thine,

DOCTOR CLAGUE.

Clague the doctor, “the man who has power to kill” (from the Aprocrypha). A merry Christmas to you and a good new year.

[As translated by the recipient, Edward Faragher, when I visited him at Cregneash, 27th August, 1901.—E.S. DODGSON.]

Source: (1) Letter from Dr John Clague to Edward Faragher, [27 December] 1898, in Edward S. Dodgson, “A Manx Letter,” *Peel City Guardian* 7 September 1901: [2] col. g. (2) Copy letter from Dr John Clague to Edward Faragher, [27 December] 1898, MNHL, MS 450/12 A. (3) Translation of (1) by Edward Faragher and noted down by E.S. Dodgson, 27 August 1901. Source as for (1).



(2)

LETTERS FROM DR JOHN CLAGUE

(1899)



(1)

4. Ap 99.

Mr Goodwin,

Dear Sir,

I beg leave to thank you for your most interesting letter, but more especially for your paradigms of the Manx irregular verbs.¹ You write—“if of the slightest interest to you” ʎ&cʎ—I have not the slightest hesitation in stating that you could not possibly have sent me anything that could have afforded me greater pleasure. I am also very much pleased with your annotated O’Growney Part ii.²

I have had four parts of O’Growney “Lessons” for some time, but I had looked only casually through them before Miss Morrison sent me your annotated Part i.³

Previously to that, I had arrived at the conclusion that O’Growney’s system ʎwas the oneʎ on which Lessons in Manx should be founded.⁴

I should tell you that I am able to speak Manx fairly well, that is, I can converse with any one on any ordinary subject, but I should not like to make a very long speech, though that would be due to want of practice. My chief practice in speaking is on matters relating to my own profession, as I always speak in Manx to those who understand it.

The colloquial expressions that I have taken down in reference to Folk Medicine, charms &c would make a fairly large book. When I was collecting the Manx Songs, I took down everything that was spoken in Manx, as I can write it—and spell it

¹ “I am still working at idiomatic Manx and the Irregular Verbs.” Dr John Clague to Sophia Morrison, 16 March 1899, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 1.

² Eugene O’Growney, *Simple Lessons in Irish*, 3 pts (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, 1894–96).

³ He had written to her in March that year, “I soon left off looking at O’Growney as I found it was interfering with my Manx.” Dr John Clague to Sophia Morrison, 16 March 1899, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 1.

⁴ A subscription list was started in order to print the teaching materials, the so-named “Blackboard Lessons,” devised by Edmund Goodwin for the Peel Manx Language Society. See, “Peel Manx Language Society,” *Peel City Guardian* 25 March 1899: [2] col. f, “[Untitled],” *Peel City Guardian* 1 April 1899: [2] col. e. “[...] you can put my name down for two guineas.” Dr John Clague to Sophia Morrison, 16 March 1899, MNHL, MS 09495, Box 1. They were to appear in 1901 as Edmund Goodwin, *Lessoonyn ayns Chengey ny Mayrey Ellan Vannin* (Douglas: S.K. Broadbent, 1901).

correctly—just as readily as English. I have collected four or five hundred genuine Manx proverbs in addition to those ~~in~~ interspersed through Cregeen's and Kelly's Dictionaries.

I have written down thousands of colloquial and idiomatic sentences of all kinds, in fact so many that it is difficult to get fresh ones.

Every expression has been taken down from the older generation of Manx speakers—those who in early life not only spoke Manx but also thought in it. I have also a great number of tales, fairy tales, ghost stories & in Manx. I have simply written this to tell you the kind of material I have, and the kind of work I have been doing. I am very much obliged to you for your kind offer in allowing me to write to you for sources of words and turns of phrases and I shall be pleased to avail myself of your offer.

I have about 150 Manx Airs that have not yet been published, but I do not know when they will be published. You know more about Cregeen's genders when compared with their Irish & Scotch representations than I do, but I find there are several variations of the genders of the same nouns in the Bible.

There are variations even in the Northern & Southern Manx "Clagh vane" in the South is "Clagh bane" in the North &c I agree with you that Kellys Manx-English part is not of much use—it does not give the genders of the nouns. You mention something in reference to the pronunciation of the key words &c I am more in favour of O[']Growney's system. Rhÿs is far too elaborate. You mention t & d.—Have you used as examples [']'th" in tithe. scythe. thither?

Final ey _{1&c} sound like er in shuttē(r) the r not trilled? The broad o in for—slo(r)thē(r) the "r's" not trilled? The e in fern—fe(r)n—the r not trilled?

These are only suggestions. It will afford me great pleasure to receive any of your philological discoveries. Could you let me have the verb "Foddym" and its changes? Also your annotated O[']Growney P^e iii?

With kindest regards & thanks Yours faithfully JClague

(2)

Dear Mr Goodwin,

When one gentleman writes to another on his own business he should enclose a stamped envelope. I have always acted on this policy, and I have enclosed a cheque to repay,—and pay you,—to a small extent, for any writings you may send me. If you will not allow me to do this, I really cannot ask you for further information. I have no right to ask you to spend time and money for my sake. Philology is one of my pet subjects, and any hints that you can give me on the structure of our own language will be exceedingly interesting to me. Thank you for the paradigm of "foddym," and especially for the origin of "trooid"—it has caused me a good deal of trouble. I began to think it must be a corruption of "tar royd" = t'r royd.

I am obliged to you for O'Growney P^t iii annotated. I shall return P^t ii in a day or two.

I am still adding to my colloquial phrases—taking down something every day when I am going my “round,” and it is by this method I have been able to make so large a collection. I am sorry to state that it will take some time before they are properly arranged.

Can you give me some hints on the various uses of the particle “ny”?

I had intended to write more, but I am obliged to go out on duty.

Kindly send any philological ‘hints’ that you may think interesting. I wish you to understand that no person in this island appreciates your work more ‘highly’ than I do[.]

With Kindest regards | Yours faithfully | JClague

(3)

10 May 99.

Dear Mr Wood,

I beg leave to thank you for your kind offer of the first edition of Kelly’s Manx Grammar, but as I already have a copy of it, it would not be right for me to accept it. This does not make the slightest difference in my estimation of your kindness. There is one favour which I should like to ask you, but if you do not see your way to grant it, please do not take any notice of it. I should like to see “Leo’s Manx Grammar[”]—either the German copy, or your translation of it—only for my own satisfaction.⁵ I am merely a collector and preserver of the spoken language, and I have taken down thousands of colloquial expressions which would otherwise have been lost. I have at least five hundred proverbs in addition to those you have collected.⁶ There is a gentleman at Peel of the name of Goodwin, who is taking up

⁵ Heinrich Leo, *Ferienschriften: Vermischte abhandlungen zur Geschichte der deutschen und keltischen Sprache*, 2 vols (Halle: E. Anton, 1847–52); specifically, “Grammatik des auf der Insel Man gesprochenen Dialectes der gaelischen Sprache oder des Manxischen,” i, 117–242. See, G.W. Wood, “A Manx Grammar in the German Language,” *Mannin* 3 (1914): 181–82. After Clague’s death, a handwritten copy was found amongst his papers by Rev. John Kewley: “Among the late Dr Clague’s MSS there is a Manx Grammar written in German. Mr Cyril Paton saw it when he was here last week. I thought the Doctor had written it himself, for he had taken up the study of German in order to be able to read Theological Works in that language.” Wood must have lent Clague his personal copy of Leo’s work, which had not been returned. “I had no idea that this MS had been copied from a printed book. I had not noted this book up to the present, but I shall keep it in mind, and I shall forward it to you as soon as I find it.” Rev. John Kewley to G.W. Wood, 30 June 1911, MNHL, MS II85/2 A.

⁶ G.W. Wood, “On the Classification of Proverbs and Sayings of the Isle of Man,” *Folk-Lore* v (1894): 229–74.

the grammatical structure of the language, and he is fully qualified to do so, as he understands Gaelic (Scotch) and Erse ₁(Irish)₁ as well as Manx. He is taking as his basis “O’Growney’s Lessons in Irish,” and I am really surprised at the similarity between Manx & Irish. In fact the syntax of the Irish language can be easily adapted to Manx. His book will soon be published.⁷

With kindest regards to you and Mrs Wood and again thanking you for your very kind offer

I am | Yours faithfully | JClague

Source: (1) Letter from Dr John Clague to Edmund Goodwin, 4 April 1899, MNHL, MS 2147/2 A. (2) —, undated [but 1899], MNHL, MS 2147/1 A.* (3) Letter from Dr John Clague to G.W. Wood, 10 May 1899, MNHL, MS 1399 A.



⁷ It was to be much later as already seen, *Lessoonyn ayns Chengey ny Mayrey Ellan Vannin* appearing in 1901.

* Despite their call numbers, it can be seen that the order here is the correct one.

(3)

LETTERS FROM REV. JOHN KEWLEY TO G.W. WOOD
(1908 & 1911)



(1)

24 Aug. 1908

Dear M^r Wood,

You will be sorry to hear that D^r Clague died suddenly yesterday.

He was here on 21st May witnessing the digging up of some cinerary urns.¹ He caught cold that day & he seemed never to have got over it properly. He was kept to the house 3 or 4 weeks, but he got out again and drove about a good deal. He was here at the end of June, but as I was busy all July he did not come again until the 6th of this month. He was not at all well that day. His breathing was not good & he had a touch of cardiac asthma & palpitation. He had not been able to take any breakfast. After this he kept to bed for about a week to rest his heart. He came here on Thursday last & spent 2 or 3 hours, but had no energy for Manx as usual, though he said he was much better. He was out again on Friday & Saturday, & was bright on Sunday morning & prescribed for some patients who called, but in the middle of dinner he uttered an exclamation of pain & immediately became unconscious. His man was called in at once & performed artificial respiration which he continued for 10 minutes when Dr. Hanning injected some strychnia. It had no effect however & he died about 5 minutes after. He never recovered consciousness. The cause of death was failure of the heart's action. He is to be buried here on Wednesday morning—the funeral to leave Crofton at 11. 30.

We shall all miss him dreadfully.

With kinds regards to M^{rs} Wood.

Yours sincerely, IJKewley

G.W Wood Esq | Streatham. S.W.

In your article in the Manx Church Magazine, October 1896. p. CXLVII you give "AS eshyn" as an error for "dooyrt eshyn": but I have come across the same

¹ The last passage in *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh*, "The Burial Urn," starts so: "On the twenty-first day of May, in the year nineteen hundred and eight, we were at Ballacross digging an old urn out of an old burial ground." Dr John Clague, *Cooïnaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences By the Late Dr John Clague* (Castletown: M.J. Backwell, n.d. [but 1911]), 265.

expression “as eshyn” I should think quite a dozen times = said he. It appears to have been a regularly recognised idiom & in no way an error. See Cregeen’s Dictionary page 20 “as adgyn”

(2)

30 June 1911.

Dear M^r Wood,

I have received your letter this morning.

Among the late D^r Clague’s MSS there is a Manx Grammar written in German. M^r Cyril Paton saw it when he was here last week. I thought the Doctor had written it himself, for he had taken up the study of German in order to be able to read Theological Works in that language.

I had no idea that this MS had been copied from a printed book. I had not noted this book up to the present, but I shall keep it in mind, and I shall forward it to you as soon as I find it.

There are several German works among the Doctor’s books, but being ignorant of the language, I did not examine them.

I have not yet been able to get the books into order, as I am short of shelving, & of room for the shelves. I had a fairly large collection of my own to start with, and now that a second lot has come, I find great difficulty in finding room for them as this is only a small house.

I shall be very glad indeed to see you if you come over this year.

I am glad that you are pleased with “Cooinaghtyn Manninagh.” It is a pity that M^{rs} Clague did not live to see it published, as she was continually thinking and talking of it.

With kind regards, | Yours sincerely, | JKewley
G.W. Wood, Esq. | Rossholme, | Streatham | S.W.

Source: (1) Letter from Rev. John Kewley to G.W. Wood, 24 August 1908, MNHL, MS 1185/1 A. (2) ———, 30 June 1911, MNHL, MS 1185/2 A.

(4)

LETTER FROM REV. JOHN KEWLEY TO J.E. QUAYLE
(1939)



74, Malew Street | Castletown, | Isle of Man.

16th January 1939.

Dear M^r Quayle,

I have received the Proceedings of the I.O.M.N.H and A. Society. Vol IV. No II. containing your paper on Manx Music which I have read with very much interest and pleasure.¹

I think you may be interested to know that the Doctor was born at Ballanorris, not at Ballaclague.

His parents on their marriage went to live at Ballanorris with John Cubbon, his mother's uncle.

On the evening of 9th October 1842 Cubbon had some sort of a fit in a house at the Three Roads. He was taken home and he died during the night[.] The Doctor was born next morning, the 10.th Before he died Cubbon was able to make his will.

Some one asked the question, "Was Cubbon's will signed much time before he died?" A. ["Aw no; he was dead when the will was signed?"]; Q. "What?["]!!! A. "He was dead when his will was signed, but it was all right, it was all right."

Of course, it happened to be all right then. It was a nuncupative will, and as you know such wills held good up to the passing of the Wills Act, 1869.

The Doctor's grandfather, Charles Clague, was generally known as "Jed." He was given by one of the Clagues a small plot of land, part of Ballaclague for a house and a garden. The house was the first one past the School, but on the opposite side of the road. It was called the "Thie Slate," because it was the first house in that locality to have a slate roof, all the others being thatched. I do not think it has been occupied for many years. It passed from Jed to his eldest son Charlie, from Charlie to his eldest son "Jem Charlie" from Jem Charlie to his eldest Charles, the Doctor's Coachman.

Jed's son, "Billy Chalse" farmed Ballaclague when I was a boy at Arbory School 70 years ago. The only connection that the Doctor's father ever had with Ballaclague

¹ J.E. Quayle, "Manx Music," *Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society* iv.ii (1937): 240–50.

LETTER FROM REV. JOHN KEWLEY TO J.E. QUAYLE

was as agent for the landlord, the Rev. J.E. Harrison, Vicar of Jurby, who died suddenly intestate on 2nd November 1858.

Some years later the Doctor and his father were much hurt by a report that he had been sent to King William's College and to Guy's Hospital by money which Parson Harrison had provided for this purpose. There was no foundation for this unkind gossip. The Doctor was educated entirely at his father's expense.

I trust that you are keeping well during this trying weather.

With our united kindest regards and all good wishes for 1939.

Yours sincerely | JKewley

J. E. Quayle, Esq, Mus. Bac. | Summerland | Brunswick Road, | Douglas.

Source: Letter from Rev. John Kewley to J.E. Quayle, 16 January 1939, MNHL, MS 1397 A.



DR JOHN CLAGUE
(1842–1908)



COINAGHTYN MANNINAGH
MANX REMINISCENCES



COOINAGHTYN MANNINAGH

MANX REMINISCENCES

BY THE LATE

DR. JOHN CLAGUE

CROFTON, CASTLETOWN, ISLE OF MAN

MANX AND ENGLISH

PUBLISHED BY

M. J. BACKWELL

Bookseller

CASTLETOWN, ISLE OF MAN

[Entered at Stationers' Hall]

(1511)

TA NY COOINAGHTYN SHOH
ER VE CHAGLYMIT COOIDJAGH LIORISH
FERLHEE JUAN Y CLAGUE
JEH
CROFTON
BALLACHASHTAL
ELLAN VANNIN
RISH NY JEIH BLEEANAY AS DAEED GOAILL
JERREY AYNS YN NUYOO CHEEAD YEIG BLEIN
NYN JIARN
TRA V'EH CLIAGHTEY CUR RISH FERLHEEYS AS TA ER VE SCRUIT AYNS
CHENGEY NY MAYREY ELLAN VANNIN
LESH COONEY E CHARREY
THOMASE MOORE
BROOKFIELD
SKEEREY SKEILLEY CHREEST RUSHEN
ELLAN VANNIN

THESE REMINISCENCES
HAVE BEEN GATHERED TOGETHER BY
DOCTOR JOHN CLAGUE
OF
CROFTON
CASTLETOWN
ISLE OF MAN
DURING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY OF OUR LORD
WHEN HE WAS PRACTISING AS A DOCTOR
AND HAVE BEEN WRITTEN IN THE
MOTHER TONGUE OF THE ISLE OF MAN
WITH THE HELP OF HIS FRIEND
THOMAS MOORE
OF THE PARISH OF KIRK CHRIST RUSHEN

INTRODUCTION

In *King William's College Register*, under the heading "Entrances in January 1854," is the following:

CLAGUE, JOHN, born Oct. 10th, 1842. Left Midsummer, 1859. Son of H. Clague, Ballanorris, Arbory, I.O.M. Day boy. First Prizeman and Exhibitioner Guy's Hospital, 1870. L.S.A., London, 1872. M.R.C.S. ENG., 1873. L.R.C.P. LOND., 1873. Surgeon to Household, 1888-1901. Surgeon, Castle Rushen Goal, 1874-1901. Medical Officer in charge of Troops, Castletown, I.O.M., 1874-1896. Surgeon to R.N. Reserve, 1884-1901. Medical Officer, K.W.C., 1874-1901. Joint Compiler of the *Manx National Song Book*. Crofton, Castletown, I.O.M.

Dr Clague continued to act as a medical and surgical practitioner in the southern district of the Isle of Man up to the time of his death, on Sunday, August 23, 1908. He had interviewed and prescribed for a patient only a few minutes before he was suddenly called away.

From his earliest days he was deeply interested in everything connected with the land of his birth.

He collected a large number of almost forgotten Manx songs and airs, many of which have been published in the *Manx National Song Book* and the *Manx National Music Book*, which he helped to compile, along with the late Deemster Gill and Mr W.H. Gill.

The inauguration of the Manx Language Society specially appealed to him. He saw that the mother tongue was rapidly dying out, and he was anxious to secure and place on record something that would show it in its purest style.

After a severe illness in 1901 he had more leisure than previously, and he spent a great deal of time with many of the old Manx folk, obtaining and writing down on the spot everything he could draw from them which threw light on the construction of the language.

His notes were afterwards carefully transcribed in volumes, of which he has left about thirty behind. The material for most of these was put into shape at Brookfield, where almost daily he spent many happy hours at the work with Mr and Mrs Moore.

This volume of "Reminiscences" was the last, and was only just completed at the time of his death.

It has been very carefully revised by Mr and Mrs Moore, and it is hoped that students may be able to gather from it an idea of what Manx was when first it became a written language. The English translation is, as far as possible, a literal one.

Mr Cyril Paton, of Streatham College, has rendered much kind and valuable assistance in seeing the sheets through the press.

CHAPTER I

CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR

THE MYRRH

Were you ever watching to see the myrrh coming into flower? I was watching one night, fifty years ago, to see it. It was the right kind of myrrh, growing in Big John's wife's garden, and she said that she had seen it flower many a time. Many boys and girls went to her house about eleven o'clock on Christmas Eve. It was freezing, and there was not much moonlight. John's wife was a very religious woman, and we were singing Christmas Carols to pass the time. John's wife showed us where the "herb" was growing, and she scraped the mould from the herb, for it was not much above the ground. She had a lantern, and she went out to see how it was getting on every ten minutes or quarter of an hour.

It was a very uneasy time with her when we went after her at midnight. But we could not see any change. We waited another hour, thinking it was not the right time. The old woman wondered much what had come over it, for she said she had seen it many a time. We went all home hoping and disappointed.* But, on the morning of the next day we heard that when Big John's wife had gone into the garden next morning, she saw that the myrrh had flowered after all. She sent word to some of the young people, and they were all satisfied. After all the others had gone away, I went again to the garden with another, and opened the sheath of the flower and I saw the new leaves.

Many years after this I did the same thing to the herb in John Cannell's garden, on the morning of the eve of Old Christmas Day, and I saw the new buds at that time. The flowering of the myrrh is opening of the sheath at the top, and the new bud appears. Some of the flowers were brought to me from The Howe on Old Christmas Day, but they were new leaves like the others.

Old Christmas Eve that year was on a Saturday, and on Old Christmas Day in the chapel a person said it must be the right day, because the myrrh had flowered last night (night before). The man who opened the sheath of the bud, when he heard it, was frightened, and he said he was so ashamed of himself that he did not know what to do.

*

I have been keeping watch on (watching) the same night the bees coming out, but they would not come out without hitting the hive.

* i.e., with disappointed hopes.

I have heard people say that the bullocks go on their knees at the same time, but they do not do so but when they are bothered, and only some of them do it then.

THE QUAALTAGH
(FIRST-FOOT)

The first person who comes on the sole of the door in the new year in the Isle of Man is called "The Quaaltagh" (meeter). It is the first person not of the household, and on his own work (business). The old people took notice (view) if the person was dark or fair, his instep high or low, if he were rich or poor, to foretell their luck. A drink of ale, or of other strong drink, or some of anything that was going, bread, potatoes, and herring, was given to him. Any person who did not keep up the old custom by giving something was considered very mean. It has come to be a bad custom, for some people go about from house to house, and they get drunk.

They used to put turf ashes, or ashes of coal, on the hearth. They looked for a footmark. A footmark going out was a sign of death, and a footmark coming in was a sign of marriage.

THE DESERVING

They said that they were going on the "deserving." "Anything you wish to give us."

At first it was the payment given to the fiddler for his services at burials, wakes, marriages, and feasts, and it was as cheerfully given to him as the payment of the parson. After that it became anything customary, which you deserved.

It was often paid at the time, but if it was not, he came again to the house to get it. When it was paid it used to be a piece of silver.

In the North* they called it "The Wandescape."

The "White Boys," the "Hunt the Wren Boys," and "Quaaltaghs" received the "desert." I have heard my grandfather say that the deemsters were paid by the "deserving." The law at that time was breast-law. The deemsters are the last of the Druids.

HUNTING THE WREN

There was once an old story that the noise made by the wren on the end of a drum, when the English soldiers and Manx (fencibles) were in Ireland, which woke up the man who was keeping watch (sentry), saved them from being taken unawares by the Irish, in the Irish Rebellion, and was the cause of hunting the wren on St Stephen's Day. It was the belief that it would bring good luck that made old men and young boys run after it, over hedges and ditches, until would be caught. The man who caught it was the great man of the day at that time, and it brought him

* Of the Island

good luck the whole year. The little bird was carefully kept, and brought on board the boat to the herrings (herring fishing) for good luck.

Some of the feathers were given to other people, and some kept a feather in their purse.

The little wren was placed on a stick between two boys, on a piece of fir tree tied with ribbons, for a sign of their good going (success), and in remembrance of the good luck it had brought in days long ago. There was a third boy, and he was covered with a net, and his face made black, and a bunch of leeks tied together to make a tail behind his back. He carried a long pole for a stick, and he kept time with the tune. The wren was hunted in Ireland for (because) they thought he was a "buitch" (witch).

*

At Christmas young boys used to go about with their faces made black, and women's white caps and aprons on them, dancing and singing, "Run! John Tommy's wife."

THE GIENSE

The "Giense" was a feast kept at night, where young men and young women met for dancing. The root of the word was "gien," a woman, and "oieys" night. It may be that the root of "unnysup" comes from the "ob," or "obbyr" (work) done by the fiddler at the "giense" (nightly feast), baptisms, marriages, wakes, funerals, and feasts. "Gien," "oieys," and "ob" or "obbyr," that is "giense ob" or "unnysup." He got a piece of silver for his work, as little or as much as they would like to give him.

The master of the feast was the person to choose the partner at the dance. Sometimes the master was told to put the wrong pairs together, for that he would get a price (bribe), and this was a cause of uneasiness and heartsickness, for each one was wishful to get his own girl, or the one he liked. "Listen, hearken, and take notice. N. and M. are partners for this year, and longer if they can agree. Praise and enjoy, press and eat your fill."

The giense was held on the eve of Old Christmas Day, and whoever was the partner the master gave to one, he was thought to keep her for the whole year.

There is a story about John Sam's great-grandfather. He was at a wake at Ballacriy. He was a greedy eater, and he ate so much that he fell off the stool he was sitting on, and he became very sick. All the people in the house thought he was going to die.

The hostess said to the fiddler, "Didst thou get the 'unnysup' (thy deserving) from the cooper this year?" "I did not," said the fiddler. "Now is thy time. Open his purse and take it now."

The "unnysup" was that what people gave to the early callers (waits), mummers, White Boys, Quaaltags, Hunt the Wren Boys, and Hop dy Nai. "If you are going to give us anything, give us it soon, or we shall be away with the light of the moon."

It might be ale, salt herrings, fish, bread and cheese, a butter cake, or anything you liked to give them. It came afterwards to be anything you deserved,* for they said when any person did anything wrong, "I will give thee the 'unnysup' (what you deserve)."

The eve of the twelfth day of the first month of winter (November) is the beginning of the year of the Celts.

Young boys used to go about on that night singing an old song and rhyme "Hop ta'n Nai."

An old man, called William Duke, who was learned in all old Manx stories, told me, about fifty years ago, that he thought the words were "Tonight is the night," and that it was joy for the coming in of the new year. For the evening and the morning were the first day, and the evening was the beginning of the day.

It is like "Happy New Year" in English. The day is called Hollantide Day.

We do not know who was Souney, but he must have been one of the saints.

The time of the year is called Martinmas in English, and "souney" may have been the name of "Martin," for Martin is one of the six oldest names in the Isle of Man.

In Scotland the night is called Hallow E'en.

The Celts believed that things to come cast their shadows before them beforehand, and the Manx were fond of getting fortunes told to them, and on this night they used all the methods they knew.

They used all the old customs mentioned by Bobby Burns, in his poem "Hallow E'en."

"Tonight is the night" must be very old, for the tune is in the Dorian Mode.

I took it down from the singing (voice) of Thomas Kermode, Bradda. He lost the sight of his eyes after smallpox when he was very little, and he was obliged to use his ears in place of his eyes.

He had a wonderfully good memory, and he was good to sing, and he knew the Manx language very well.

The greater part of the words and songs that I have are taken down from his singing, and I spent many happy hours in writing them down.

Although he was blind, he continued at his work as a fisherman for many years.

He had great intelligence, and I owe him a great deal for the knowledge he has given me of the life of the Manx at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He deserves this to preserve his memory.

HOP! THE NIGHT. TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT

Hop! ta'n oie. Tonight is Hollantide Night.

Hop! ta'n oie. Tomorrow is Hollandtide Day.

* Punishment

Hop! ta'n oie. Cock and hen.
 Hop! ta'n oie. Supper of the heifer.
 Hop! ta'n oie. What heifer shall we take?
 Hop! ta'n oie. The little spotted heifer.
 Hop! ta'n oie. Quarter in the pot.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I tasted the broth.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I scalded my throat.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I ran to the well.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I drank my fill.
 Hop! ta'n oie. Then coming back.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I met a pole cat.
 Hop! ta'n oie. He grinned.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I ran.
 Hop! ta'n oie. I ran to Scotland.
 Hop! ta'n oie. What news there?
 Hop! ta'n oie. The plough was ploughing.
 Hop! ta'n oie. The harrows were harrowing.
 Hop! ta'n oie. A young woman was cutting cheese.
 Hop! ta'n oie. The knife was sharp.
 Hop! ta'n oie. She cut her finger.
 Hop! ta'n oie. She wrapped it in a cloth.
 Hop! ta'n oie. She locked it in a chest.
 Hop! ta'n oie. It made stock and store.
 Hop! ta'n oie. Three brown sheep
 Hop! ta'n oie. Had William the grandson."

If you give me anything,
 Give it me soon,
 For I want to go home
 With the light of the moon. Hop! ta'n oie.

On Hollantide Eve boys went into gardens and fields, and pulled cabbages and cabbage stalks, and then went about beating the doors.

Young girls and young boys gathered together to make a spree, and they used to try different ways of finding out fortunes. When they had tried all the ways (methods) they knew, the girls went to bake the dumb cake. Nobody was to speak one word, and every one was to help in making the dough. It was baked on the ashes, or on the bake stone (griddle). When it was baked, it was broken up, and each girl had a piece of it. She went to bed walking backwards, and she would see a sign of her lover in a dream.

When they did not bake the dumb cake, they ate a salt herring, in the same way, and it would do quite as well.

The custom of putting ivy, holly, and bayleaf in the houses at Christmas comes from the Druids.

They thought that the spirits, that kept them green without withering, would keep the houses, and those that were living in them, safe for the winter.

The foreign nations kept their high feast at the shortest time of the year, and they called it "saturnalia."

It was at the time the sun seemed to be losing the victory, and then it began to rise again.

This feast was the beginning of Christmas. The Christians began to keep their feast at the same time, and they all took holiday together in the old times.

Candles were burnt all day on Christmas Day, as a sign of the light of the world, mentioned by Saint John the Evangelist.

The makers of candles gave candles to the people who bought them regularly, and that was the beginning of Christmas Boxes.

* The Yule log was carried home to make a big fire to roast the animals at the feast.

* There was a boar's head, a roast pig, a "baron" of beef, and a dish of peacock, used at the present day by the royal household, and at Queen's College at Oxford. The "baron" of beef is always taken from the stock (animals) of the King.

* The Yule log was lighted by a piece taken from the Yule log of the last year.

* The boar's head has a crown of holly about it, and its big teeth (tusks) are polished.

The "White Boys" and the "Run John Tammy's Wife" are the remains of the players at the "saturnalia."

* In England they are called the "mummers." The Christmas Tree and the Maypole come from Scandinavia.

* The Maypole is an emblem of the foundation of the tree of time. Its roots go to heaven where the frost giant dwells, and to the place where is the great serpent, and under its roots is the place of the dead.

* The Christmas Tree comes from Germany. About eight years before Queen Victoria came to the throne, on the twenty-ninth day of the middle month (December) of winter in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-nine, it was in a pot, and placed on the table with three rows of wax candles, coloured, and it was covered with toys (ornaments).

A fish dinner was eaten by Roman Catholics on Christmas Eve, as a fast.

The eel (river eel) was the chief dish.

* These Customs are not Manx

Except young children, no Roman Catholic could go to bed until he saw the sun rise on Christmas Day morning.

The mistletoe grows on the apple tree and on the oak tree, and it never touches the ground. That is the reason it was so sacred to the Druids.

Ivy flowers were dipped in lime water to make them white.

The kissing bush was part of the "saturnalia."

Candles were especially made for the Eve of Mary, and the candles were often made in three branches. People who were well off carried their own candles to the "Oie'l Voirrey."

CHAPTER II

THE CALENDAR

The Manx divided the year into two parts, summer and winter.

Summer began on May Day and winter on Hollantide Day.

The summer and the winter were divided into spring or sowing time, and harvest or reaping time. Each season had three months, the first month, the middle month, and the last month.

Feasts and feast days were kept, set by the church. A fair was kept (held) on a feast day, and people brought their goods to the fair to sell. I remember myself wool, woollen thread, webs of cloth, dried fish, salt herrings, and leather, sold on the twenty-second day of the middle month of the summer, on St Columba's Day, in the parish of Arbory.

At the feast of St Columba's Day at the Ballabeg, I have seen as many as twenty tents for selling ale between the two bridges, and also on the twenty-eighth day of the last month of the harvest (Feast of St Simon and St Jude).

The tents and ginger-bread tables are all that remain of the old feast, and a tent has not been in this neighbourhood for years.

*

There was an old story about Katherine, heiress of Colby Mooar. She was not married, and she wished her name to be remembered in times to come, and to do this she gave a piece of a field for a fair-ground for the feast of St Katherine, whose church was on her estate, and hen was to be killed, and plenty of ale to be drunk at the feast.

There is another story, that before there were any attorneys, the people of Colby Mooar put aside all their fallings out that were between them at the feast of St Katherine, and that each party would peel (pluck) some of the feathers and bury them, and the case was settled.

I have heard an old man say that his mother kept a public house, and she had told him that the men and young boys of the neighbourhood would kill a hen, and they would walk two and two, holding the hen between them, and other persons would walk two and two through the fair with their hats off, as if they would be at a funeral, and sing,

“Katherine's hen is dead.

You take the head and I shall take the feet,

And we shall put her under the ground.”

They would then go to the public-house and get plenty of ale.

A wake was kept (held) over the hen, and early the next day the men went to “peel the hen.”

The head and the feet were cut off, and they were buried. It gave them an opportunity to get a little drop on the next day. Anyone who went to the public-house (tavern) on the day after the fair, people said “He is going to peel the hen.”

CHAPTER III

MAY DAY

Witches were thought to have full power on May Day (Old), and they used to try all the power they knew to do harm to other people. They have been seen standing outside of houses early on May Day morning, and working their arms to draw the good luck from other people.

On the eve of May Day the young boys would have a cross of mountain ash (kern) in their caps, and a cross would be tied on the tail of cattle, or any other animal that would be in the house.

The right way to make a kern cross is to split one stick and put the other stick (piece) through it, and thus bind them together.

May-flowers (king-cups), rushes, and flags were placed before the doors of the houses and cow-houses, to keep them from harm and bad spirits.

Flowers and plants were placed on the door side, and window seats, in the houses to keep fairies away.

Water was always kept in the crock (large water dish) at night for the fairies.

Mugwort was worn in the coat, and sometimes in the caps, on the eve of May Day, and on the eve of St John's Day, fires were lighted, and fire in the hedges, and gorse was burnt to frighten away the bad spirits. They made the hedges look like walls of fire. That is the meaning (root) of the word, "Boal Teine," Wall of fire. Young boys jumped through the fire, and the cattle were sometimes driven through the fire, to keep them from harm for the whole year.

Slide-carts of mugwort would be drawn from place to place, to drive the bad spirits away.

Mugwort was thought to keep off every kind of disease put (caused) by bad spirits, for they were very fearful of it. The right way to keep the herb was to pull it up by the roots on the eve of St John's day, in the middle of the night. If it was pulled up in that way, it would keep its use right for the whole year.

Some people called it the white herb, owing to the white colour under the leaves.

Horns were blown through the night, and "dollans"* were struck (beaten, played).

People have forgotten that bells were used at first to frighten away bad spirits from the church.

*

People were saying that on May morning soon on the day (early in the day) Kerry Mac Mollagh† was 'drying the cows and killing the calves.'

* Hoops with sheepskin stretched on them.

*

After the horns were blown, the bells rung, the skin drums played, the May-flowers, rushes, flags, and primroses placed before the doors, and the kern crosses in the caps of the boys, and on the tails of the cattle, and the sliding carts of St John's wort drawn from place to place, the bad spirits driven away, and people and cattle had walked through the fire, then the fields were ready to put the cattle on the grass.

The folds were the place for the cattle in the night.

On May Day a great feast was held in Castletown, and people from every part of the Island used to come in their holiday clothes.

A sham fight was held, a sign of the fight between summer and winter.

The summer company of ladies and gentlemen was led by the prettiest young woman, she was called the Queen of Summer; and the winter party of working men and working women were dressed in a queer way, and in any way they liked, for fun and play, and the leader was called the King of Winter. The last man who was King of Winter was Captain Tyldesley of Beemakem.

The winter party was driven by the summer party on the road to Scarlett, and when they reached as far as Scarlett, the fight was over, a sign that the sun had gone down in the west.

Then the company had meat and drink, and after that there was dancing and games of every kind.

They used to get as many fiddlers as they could, and people who were acquainted with each other made themselves into small companies, and enjoyed the company of each other in the best way they could.

† Kitty (daughter of) the Son of the Rough—a reputed witch about whom the above saying became traditional.

CHAPTER IV

TYNWALD

The Four-and-Twenty (House of Keys) held their meeting at Tynwald at St John's, when they wore St John's wort about their heads, on the fifth day of the last month of summer.

The root of this word is "Ting Voayl," that is "Chengey Voayl" (the place of the tongue), or "Tiengey Voayl" (place of fire). Perhaps it is "Tien Vaal" (Baal's fire), or perhaps "Tiengey Voal" (fiery wall).

Witches were said to be taken to the mountain of St John's Court (Slieau Quayleoin*), and placed in a barrel, and nails driven into the barrel, and they were rolled to the bottom.

All cases were settled at that Court by the deemsters, and all breast laws read out to the people three times, and they are not law yet until that is done.

The Four-and-Twenty are called "Keys," for they made the "keeshyn" or taxes.

At the present time the service is held in St John's Church. Then they walk in this order, two and two, from the Church to the Tynwald Hill.

Four sergeants of police,
The Six Coroners,
The Captains of Parishes,
The Clergy,
The High Bailiffs,
The Keys,
The Council,
The Sword-Bearer,
The GOVERNOR,
The two Government Chaplains,
The Surgeon to the Household,
Soldiers,

and then as many people as wish to go after them. Rushes were spread on the steps of the Tynwald for a sign of giving obedience.

Every parish gathered earth to make Tynwald Hill at the beginning.

On Tynwald Day people come from every part of the Isle of Man to hear the laws pronounced. The six old coroners deliver their rods to the Governor, and the first Deemster swears the new coroners in. Then every coroner kneels down before the Governor, and takes his rod (wand) from the hands of the Governor. The coroner of Glenfaba reads the laws in Manx.

* Slieau-whallin.

CHAPTER V

SUN AND MOON WORSHIP

Sauin or Baal Sauin was the chief god of the Gauls. The Gauls came from Asia, and the root of the word "sauin" came from "saue" and "an," and they are to be understood as "Circle of the Sun." They were not willing to name his name (Baal Sauin), and they called it the Sun. His name was as his soul. They thought it was a person, for they said "she* gets up" and "she goes to bed."

When the boats were "at the herrings"† on the Big Bay, they called the place where it rose the "Hill of the Rising Day."

The Gauls were not under a mistake, for every thought we take and every thing we do, we owe to the sun.

The truth of that is to be seen in this. If a man be caught in a fall of snow, if he would not keep walking, he will lose the power (feeling) of his feet and hands, and he will come to sleep, and he will never wake any more. He will not think or move. There would not be anything alive on the world but for the heat coming from the sun. The Jews did not believe in the resurrection of the dead until after they had been in captivity, and they learnt it there from the rising of the sun.

*

The sun rose up from under the ground in the east, and went down in the west. They were not sure whether it was the old sun that came up again, or a new sun coming up every day, but they went to worship her the first thing in the morning when the sun rose, and they do that yet in that country.

The Jews thought the earth was flat like a dish, and there were points (ends) on it, and the land was gathered together in one place, and the water was under it, and under the water the depth without end (abyss). The whole surface of the earth was covered over with the air or heaven as a dish-cover, and in the air were put the sun, the moon, and the stars to give light, to rule the day and the night. The waters above the air were divided from the waters under the air. There were windows in the air, and when they were opened the rain came down. They thought they could build a tower to reach up to heaven, and they thought that ladders could reach up also.

They called the tower "Babel," that is "the Gate of the Gods." The root of the word "Baal" is master, or lord, or strongest one, and each country had its own "Baal."

* The sun is feminine in Manx.

† At the herring-fishing.

They were not to make any image of the Lord God, nor the likeness of anything in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or of anything under the water.

All fire comes from the sun, and in old times they used to burn the bodies of the dead to allow the spirits to go back again to the sun.

People must have worshipped the moon and also the sun, for they did not like to look at the new moon for the first time through glass. They were pleased to have money in their pockets, and to turn the money with their hands in their pockets, and wish to get plenty of money, and they have that custom at the present time. They would have come out of the house that they might not see the new moon through glass, and I have heard people say when they would see it, "Blessed be the new moon, and blessed be me." They thought that when people went out of their senses it was owing to the moon, and they thought also that they were often worse at the change of the moon. They thought that all women were under the power (influence) of the moon, and that the weather and tides were under it.

There is well of water at Ballalhionney in Bradda, called Chibbyr Bolthane ("Baal's Well," or the "Well of the Ditch"), and its water is good for sick people. It is at the top of the Abbey, on the south side of Fleshwick Bay. The cairn is surrounded (round about) with stones, a place where they worshipped the sun, Cronk yn Irree Laa ("Hill of the Rising Day") is east of the top of the Abbey, the place where the sun rises. When the sun rose they worshipped her. There is another cairn outside, a place (to which) it is thought they drove the cattle, to keep them from harm for that year.

CHAPTER VI

THE HARVEST

The name of the corn god was “Lug,” or “Luan,” and his feast was kept on Lammas Day. To make the land easier to sow seed and to reap the corn, it was divided into butts, a little more than two yards, and the first furrow the plough made was called the opening, or “bye,” and the last furrow was called the “clash.”

This made it easier to sow, for there would not be any “misses.” “Do not make a miss of good ground” was an old common saying.

When a band of reapers went into the field, there were two reapers on each butt, and the first man, or best reaper, was called the “furriman,” and the last one was on the “gart.”

Each reaper had a sickle, and after he had cut a handful of corn, he put a knot on their heads, and thus made a band, and then he put the band on the ground, and put handfuls of corn on the band until there would be enough at him (he had enough) to make a sheaf. When that would be done he would make another band. Another person would come after them, and tie the sheaves, and then set up the sheaves in a stook.

If the “gart” would get through his portion first before the “furriman,” he was said to give a “blow” to the “furriman.”

In the middle of the afternoon they would get a pint of ale, or milk and bread and butter, and it was called the “little dinner.”

When the corn was all cut, the last piece was carried home, and the stalks tied and plaited, and it was kept for an offering to the Corn God. It was called the “mheillea.” The band of reapers went home, and put off their working clothes, and then put on better clothing, to come to the supper of the “mheillea.”

After supper there would be dancing, and a fiddler at them (they would have a fiddler) to keep time with the dancing.

When the last load was brought home it was called the “stook of brimmin,” and if there were two or three carts in the field together they would strive with one another which would be first, because they did not like to be called the “stook of brimmin.” It was an accident in this strife to a young man who fell off a cart and broke his leg when he was driving across a clash that was the cause of my being a doctor.

He fell off the cart when it was late in the afternoon, and he was carried home, and I set the bone. On the morrow I went for my friend William Clucas, The Strang, a bonesetter of great repute. He advised my father to send me to Guy’s Hospital, London, and I went the same week that the young man was for getting out of bed.

THE HARVEST

People went on the first Sunday of harvest, or on the first day of the first month of harvest, to make an offering to the Lug or Luan, the Corn God. They went to Baroole, the highest mountain, to gather branches of heather and bilberries. They walk to Baroole still to get the berries, but they do not know what for (why) they do it.

CHAPTER VII

THE BOAT SUPPER

I happened to see a crew (boat's company) after the crew's supper in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five.

The supper was taken in the house of the master of the boat. His name was "Thomas Joss," and the name of the boat was the *Swan*.

They were dividing the shares, and hiring the crew for the next year.

At the side of the house was a field of grass, and the crew had a piece of nets, a barrel, and an oar.

The master put the oar in a hollow in the hedge to steer.

Two men went over the hedge, and the nets were put over the hedge.

The two men took hold of the net, and carried it out in the field as far as it could go.

Two men were on the back, and one on the lint, and another was casting out the buoys.

Before they had begun to shoot out the net, they were talking about the sailing to the herring ground.

Johnny Dan said that she was going slowly.

"There is a crab on her bottom today, I believe."

"It is too soon to shoot."

"It is time enough," said another.

"The sun is not down yet."

"I can see the nail on my thumb yet."*

"Now, my boys, let us take a berth, and shoot" (the nets).

"I am willing," said one, and "I am willing," said another.

"We have a good sign."

"Did you see the porpoise?"

"I saw him."

"Were you proving there, boy?"

"I was."

"They refuse to mesh."

"How much art thou willing out of the pair?"

"About a hundred."

After a while the master called to another man "Were you proving a second time?"

"I was, boy."

* The nets were not to be sown (shot) as long as a man could see the nail of his thumb when his arm was stretched out (at arm's length).

“They are refusing to mesh.”

Another said, “It is quite as well for us to prove again.”

“There is herring enough here.”

“Let us shake and put it out again for an hour.”

After it had been shot for an hour: “It is quite as well to put on board; it is looking wild,” and the net was all on the ropes and we put pole stones on the net.

“It is blowing very hard.”

“Let us put up the mast.”

“Tighten the lug sheet to keep her head to the sea.”

“Put the sail to the mast quickly; the sea is running very heavily.”

And the first thing we tied three reefs in the mainsail, and went for the port. When we were going we heard a shout, “There is a man overboard.”

“A boat! A boat!”

“Love of God.”

“I shall be drowned.”

“Put out the yawl.”

“Make haste! Make haste!”

“Thou wilt be too long.”

“Where is he?” “Where is he?”

“I see him.”

“Where is the boat hook?”

“Throw a rope to him.”

“Has he it?”

“Has he got it?”

“Throw a buoy to him.”

“He is going down a second time.”

“I have him. I have him.”

“Here he is.”

“Catch hold of him by the hair of the head.”

“Grip him by the neck.”

“Hold him sure.”

“Lift him on board.”

“Turn him on his back.”

“Put him across the barrel, and allow the water to run out.”

“Is the breath in him?”

“He is half dead.”

“Is he breathing?”

“He is coming to.”

“He breathes.”

“There is no fear of him yet.”

“He is recovering.”

“The worst is past.”

“He was almost drowned.”

“He was near death.”

“A man will not be drowned if he is to be hanged.”

“Let us go and take the ‘jough y dorrys’ (drink at the door, stirrup cup).”

All is well that ends well.

I never saw acting in a play-house as good in my life. It was a true Celtic play.

CHAPTER VIII

CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH MARRIAGE AND DEATH

The night before a wedding horns were blown during the night.

The bride's party came from her house, and the bridegroom from his house, and they often went each a different road to the church until they would meet one another, and then shake hands, and bow their heads.

The bride went with her brother, or nearest relation, to the church, and the bridegroom with his sister, if the like was at him (if he had one), or the nearest of kin.

Sometimes there would be fifteen or twenty gigs. Persons in the gigs would be anxious (desirous) of showing off their horses.

Among the labouring people the ring was often lent for the day, and sometimes they would use the key of the church door.

I have heard of a ring that was lent for a marriage and lost, and found many years after.

It was not considered good luck to lose the ring, or let it fall to the ground.

In old times people came to the wedding on horseback, and sometimes there would be as many as sixty horses.

The Manx ponies were very small, and they used a pack-saddle made of cloth and straw on their backs. Sometimes the bride would sit behind the bridegroom on the pack-saddle.

When the wedding was over they galloped home as quickly as they could to the bride's house. Who(ever) would reach the house first would often try who would catch the slipper off the bride, or her garter, when she was going into the house.

A portion of the wedding cake was broken in little pieces, and scattered over the head of the bride when she was entering the house coming from the church.

The fiddler was valued just as much as the parson was, and he got the "deserving" (what he deserved*). Dancing was kept up until a late hour, and there was plenty of ale for every one.

If a younger sister was married before an elder one, the elder sister had to dance in her "stocking feet" (with her slippers taken off). When the guests were going home at night the stocking of the left foot of the bride was put through the window, and the young woman that was unmarried who would catch it was reckoned the next one to be married. A piece of the wedding cake was put through the ring and given to the

* i.e., his fee.

young girls and the young boys to put under their pillows, to see would they see their lovers in a dream.

Mistress H— was married in a riding habit of white “dimity.”

An old lady told me that when she was a child she was at a wedding, and the bride was from Sulby Glen, and the bridegroom from Jurby.

There were about one hundred guests, men, women, and children, some on horseback, some in gigs, some others in carts, and they were firing guns all the way to the church.

They kept them sometimes with a rope across the road, to make them pay a reward (a footing), a thing common at a wedding.

A barrel of ale was put on the top of a hedge outside of the house, for the people who were not at the wedding.

If a man would offend against public opinion by committing adultery, they would often take the law into their own hands.

I remember a man who was called “— the Christmas,” of Beemakem. About thirty or forty men came after him to Ballanorris, on a holiday. They took a gate off the hinges, and they put him on the top of it, and they brought the gate with him on the top to the house of his wife.

They were shouting, and singing, and calling him nicknames, and asking what he had been doing. His clothes were torn, and he was almost naked before he got home to his wife. Some of them were beating him with sticks. Then they all went to the tavern to get ale over it. A thing that one or two men were themselves afraid to do, they were not afraid when they were all together. They called it “putting a man on the stang.”

The stang was a long pole on which people who transgressed were put to ride, on a wooden horse, and then they were whipped on the pole.

On this occasion a gate was used, because many men could stand under it to bring the man home.

*

In old times corpses were covered with a sheet for the dead (winding-sheet), and it was kept in the house for the funeral. It was always ready, and it was sometimes kept in the house for many years.

A dish of salt was put on the dead body, and often a green sod and salt were put under the bed.

They had great belief in salt, for it was thought to keep fish and fiesh from going rotten. They put salt into milk when it was sold, or in any other goods that would be lent, or given away.

They believed that things that were going to happen gave a sign of the things which were going to happen.

Some of the signs of death were thus:

A bird flying against the window.

A cock crowing in the night, and his feet cold. If his feet were warm it meant a wedding.

The dead bell (watch) in the room.

Sparks coming up through the chimney outside of the house.

Breaking any glass as long as a person was sick.

A hen crowing.

When a winding-sheet was on the candle.

Children playing at making a funeral.

Dressing or nursing a child in a dream.

Dreams were thought to go against (by contraries).

When a body was dead, the windows were covered, and kept so until the body would be going away from the door, and then the coverings were taken off. They were to be taken off lest there should be another funeral in a short time.

A watch or wake was kept over every body, and there was a feast every night as long as the corpse would be in the house.

Every night the neighbours and relations of the dead person came to spend the night with them. There would be ale and food, pipes and tobacco, for anyone who would make use of them. There would often a fiddler, and they would sing and play through the night. Sometimes the singing would be very mournful. Candles would be kept burning with the dead body, and the looking-glass, and every kind of glass (vessel) would be covered with a white cover. At the time of the funeral all the people who would come from a long distance, or the neighbours, would get food, and wine or ale, and it was offered to people outside of the house, if they would not come in.

When the box of the dead (coffin) was placed on the bier, a funeral tune was sung, and kept up when the company was leaving the door. This was done at the beginning to keep bad spirits away. They would sing all the way to the church. This was the reason the bell was tolled when anyone was dead, and also the reason it was struck (toll) when the funeral was coming to the church, to drive away evil spirits. If the singing was not good, it was thought to be a sign of another funeral in a short time. It was necessary for the funeral to go on the road the person used to go to church. The funeral must go on a church road, and they would go through valleys before they would go any other road.

It used to be the law in the Isle of Man, if a woman had a child before she was married, if the man would marry her at any time after, the child would be heir to the land or any goods he might have.

It is yet the law, that the child can inherit if the father and mother are married within two years after the child is born.

— has done wrong to the Isle of Man, since he has not made clear this law in his book. It gave people in other parts of the realm of England a wrong view of the

morals of the Isle of Man, for some explanation of this law should have been given in the book for this law especially belongs to this Island.

It was a law of justice.

CHAPTER IX

CHARMS AND CURES

Manx people believe in charms, and these are a prayer, or hymn, put down from time to time in a certain way, and it must be carefully done, or the charm will lose its virtue.

The belief now called Christian Science took beginning (was instituted) by Mrs Eddy in America. It is the same thing as the old charms in the Isle of Man. It was a secret (silent) prayer to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, or to the angels, or saints, to heal the man. They believed that God would do it if it was his wish, and it was indeed faith-healing.

Jesus Christ said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

"And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

The charm goes by heirship, and if there is not an heir, the nearest person is to get it, or the next of kin.

I remember an old man, John Kelly. He was making a charm to stop blood, and he came to me, when I was a boy, and he gave the charm to me, and he said I was the nearest relation to him. He gave me a piece of paper, and the charm was written on it. He said to me, "Write it out, and do not show it to anybody." If I should be wanting to give the charm to any other person, I must do the same, and I must not give it to any *man*.*

I did as he wanted me, and I have the charm yet. He said he had used it many a time.

The charm works by faith. As a man thinks in his heart so is he. Anything that will make the mind peaceful (restful) will heal (cure). The charm will not work (act), if it will not give peace (rest) to the mind. Fear is a cause of disease, and it will make every disease worse. Fear makes the heart go (beat) quicker, and faith (belief) makes it go slower. That is the way it stops the blood. All diseases last for a time. Some take a long time, some a short time. The doctor is like a steerer (helmsman). The steerer will not quell the storm, but he will tell you how to steer, and how much sail to carry, and how to keep off the rocks, by knowing where they are.

When I was a little boy, I was sent to Balladoole to see a man who was cutting the herb for the "little tongue."† My sister had a sore throat for a week, and my mother and my sister thought it was better to get the herb cut, for it did good to many

* The charm must always be given to one of the opposite sex otherwise it will lose its power.

† Uvula.

people. I went on the road, intending to go, but I met two or three comrades, and I forgot all about the message.

When I got home the first news I heard was that I had been away but half an hour until my sister was better, and it was about the time the herb had been cut. The gathering broke. I never said a word (either) good or bad, and they believed that it was better because the herb had been cut. All is well that ends well.

The man who cut the herb used to "say the word," and go out into the field, and bring it into the house, and put it in the chimney on the "hook," and as the herb was drying, the disease melted away. It was the herb of (for healing) the "little tongue."* (Devil's Bit Scabious) "It would have cured every disease if the little piece† had not been cut off."

*

There was a man who was living in a little croft near our house, and he was keeping a horse and cow. The cow had been sick for days, and I had been going into the cowhouse to look at the cow. One evening, as I was going past his house, I saw the man, and he had a dish and a cup raising some of the liquor and pouring it back again. He heard my steps, and he took up the dish and the cup and shut the door, and put the bolt on the door. I stood, and I did not say or do anything, but walked on. I heard the next day that he had been at "Nan Wade," and I was the person who was going past when the herb was boiling, and he was thinking I was the person with the "evil eye."

But as I was passing his house about the same time every evening during the summer, I did not think there was anything in it. He would never allow me to go into the cowhouse, for he used to come out and shut the door. I have cut a mountain-ash cross off the tail of his cow, and I have taken May flowers‡ and flags from the door of his cowhouse for fun many a time on Old May Eve.

Evil to him that evil thinks.

I once saw a man with his foot cut very deep (badly) by falling before a horse machine for reaping. He at once sent for a man who had a charm to stop blood. He was not able to do it, and the man and the charmer came on as fast as they could to the doctor. The charmer "said the word" two or three times, but the blood would not stop. I tied the artery, and that did better than the charm. The man who was cut felt better because the charmer was with him, because he was not so afraid.

I knew another man (who) had cut his hand badly with a sickle when he was cutting some grass. He went to another charmer, who had the charm to stop blood. He worked all day to see if it would stop, but it would not stop. A bandage properly put on stopped it at once.

* Uvula.

† Of the root.

‡ Kingcups.

When anyone went to the man at Ballawhane,* he was obliged to give his name, and tell him the parish he was living in. The charm would not work out of the parish. He "said the word" over the cut herbs, and then he divided them into three parts, about a small handful in each part. Each part of these was divided into three other parts, and to each part of them a cup of boiling water was put, and then left to draw for nine minutes. The man who was sick was to take nine teaspoonfuls of the stuff, or (else) to put the teaspoon nine times to his lips. This small part was to be put into use every third night until the whole nine parts were used. The length of time give him time to get better. Then his face and every part of his body was to be washed with the leavings, and if there was any over it was to be cast into the fire.

I went into a house in F—, and I saw a man going through the work of the charmer. He was drinking part of the substance of the herbs out of a cup, and he was standing naked in a big tub in the middle of the floor, and the charmer washing his body with the boiling of the herb. I went out as soon as I could go.

*

When I was a child about six or seven years (of age), I went to Port St Mary to see a woman from Ballawhane who dwelt in Port St Mary. She was a woman of great repute. She lifted my head a time or two in the week. I was suffering with a sick head, and my neck was crooked. I was compelled to drink part of the liquor, and my body was washed all over with the other part. I hated it so much that I got better at once.

My sister had scarlet fever when she was two years of age, and she took the rose in her face and head, after the fever.

She was attended by our own doctor, but my mother and her nurse thought it would be better to get a charm put on her.

They sent for an old man who had a charm for the rose.

He came into the room where my sister was lying. There was a cup of hog's lard without salt in his hands. In the hog's lard were nine pieces of straw, cut off at the first joint. He went down on his knees and said the word over the lard, and he stirred the melted lard with the straws.

The straws were taken out and put into the fire, and hog's lard was put on my sister's face, and head. She was very ill, and she died next day. I took wonder (was surprised), many years after that, to hear the great doctor Erasmus Wilson about (for) diseases of the skin, say that he never got anything better than hog's lard for erysipelas.

* A noted charmer.

CHARMS AND CURES

CHARM TO STOP BLOOD

“O Lord, hear my prayer in Thy righteousness.
Give ear to my prayer in Thy faithfulness.
Sin first began in Adam and Eve
And in Thy sight I now charge
This blood to be stopped.
Amen.”

I got this charm from John Kelly, Cronk-shynnagh, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty, for I was his nearest relation.

He told me he had proved it hundreds of times, and that the blood always stopped. I thought it would have stopped whether he would have “said the charm” or not. It gave an easy mind to the person whose blood was running.

CHARM FOR SPRAINED JOINTS

Say the Lord’s Prayer.

Now say three times, “In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Christ went to the rock
To heal a sore neck;
And before Christ reached the ground
The sore neck was better.

Be whole each vein, and be whole each sinew, and be whole each sore, and be whole each nation of the world, and may that part be quite as well as any foot there was not anything doing on it.*

Lord give a cure. God give a cure to him.”

*

CHARM FOR AN ENLARGED GLAND

Nine pieces of iron put across each other over the swelling nine times, saying, “Melt away as mist on the mountains, and as the sea on the shore. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

CHARM FOR THE MUMPS, OR LITTLE TONGUE

Say the Lord’s prayer.

Now say three times, “In the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Ghost.

If it is the mumps or sore throat,

* i.e., there was nothing the matter with it.

Or the little tongue,
I will lift thy head, I will lift thy head.
God will lift, Mary will lift, Michael will lift.
Me to say, and God to do it.
Thus Christ went on the bridge.
I will lift up thy joints, sinews and blood.”

*

CHARMS FOR WARTS

There was a piece of woollen thread, and a knot was put on it for every wart, and placed in a grave.

“Funeral, funeral, going to the church.
Bring my warts with thy own warts.
In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

CHARM FOR THE RINGWORM (FIRE OF GOD)

Nine knots (joints) of barley straw, dried and ground (crumbled) by the finger, and then mixed with fasting spittle, and put on the ringworm three times.

“Split ringworm, hot fire of God.
Don't spread any more, don't spread any wider.
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

*

CHARM FOR A STYE

The stye was to be touched easily about it with a big yellow brass pin, against the sun when the first part of the charm was said, and with the sun when the last part was said (repeated). The charm was repeated three times.

“Stye one, stye two, stye three, stye four, stye five, stye six, stye seven, stye eight, stye nine.”

“From nine to eight, from eight to seven, from seven to six, from six to five, from five to four, from four to three, from three to two, from two to one, from one to nothing.”

TO STOP RUNNING BLOOD

Three religious men came from Rome—Christ, Peter and Paul.

Christ was on the cross, and His blood was shedding, and Mary on her knees by Him.

One of them took the man charmer in his right hand, and drew a criss-cross ✕ over him.

Three young women came over the water.
One of them said, "Up."
Another said "Wait."
The third one said, "I will stop the blood of man or woman."
I to say, and Christ to do it. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Three Maries went to Rome, the spirits of the church, and the spirits of the houghs, Peter and Paul.

One Mary of them said, "stand."
Another Mary of them said "Walk."
Another Mary said, "stop this blood, as the blood stopped (which) came from the wounds of Christ."
I to say it, and the Son of Mary to perform it.

CHARM FOR THE KINGS EVIL

"I divide it in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.
Whether it be the evil, or the king's evil, divide this evil, spread this evil on the sands of the sea."

*

CHARM TO GET BLOOD

"Springing back the black blood as the short black looseness. I will take it, and I will have it. I shall see it, and I shall not give heed to it any more."

*

CHARM FOR LOOSENESS

Philip was king of peace, and Bahee his wife, and she would swear to God that he would never want young or old. I will take the true sprite and cast from me the black short looseness, and I will take it, and I will have it, and I will never be sick of the painful looseness.

In olden times they thought that diseases could be given to another, or taken from him.

I know of people trying to give a disease to other people, to get rid of it themselves. They did not know that diseases last a certain time, nor that they would get better; and that all diseases would take a short time to hatch (incubate), for a great many diseases come from eggs, or small animals (microbes) or spores. In that case, the man who had the charm was willing to take it from the other man. He supposed he would be able to deal with it better than the other, because he had the charm.

Lifting the head was done for any kind of pain in the head, and the charm was said when they were doing it.

One hand was placed in the mouth of the sick person, and the other hand behind (back of) the head, and then pressing the hands together. Sometimes the hands were placed on each side of the head, and then pressed together.

VARIOUS CUSTOMS

Pins were rubbed over boils, and stye on the eye, and allowed to rust, and they got better.

A bracelet or jewel was worn about the neck, for a charm to keep away sore throat.

A band about the neck of the hand (wrist), ankle, and neck, to keep away evil spirits.

Rings made of two metals for rheumatism, or for weakness.

Yarrow in a pipe, for toothache.

Smithy dust in water, for poverty of blood.

Gunpowder, for the same thing.

Beads and rings were worn to keep bad spirits away.

A stone with a natural hole in it was worn about the neck to cure "fits."

A shilling was taken out of the church box, and a hole put through it, and then tied about the neck to keep away fits.

Putting the hand of a dead body on a birthmark would cure it. The hand of a man was put on a boy, and hand of a woman on a girl.

Rings were worn in the ears to keep away evil spirits.

*

Sucking a wound to make it clean.

Licking the belly of a frog, to be able to "take the fire out of a burn."

Putting the foot, or hand, that has lost power, in the entrails of an animal directly it is killed.

Creeping down the stairs head first three Sundays in succession, during church hours, for poverty of blood.

Lifting the breast, or the breast down, for pain in the stomach.

A small piece of candle was placed on a penny and lighted, and put on the pit of the stomach, and a tumbler placed over it, and the breast was raised up as the air was burnt.

Stooping down and putting a spit under a stone, for pain in the side, to displace the flatulency in the colon.

The sign of the cross made on the side answered for the same purpose.

A child was placed in the hopper of the a mill, and allowed to sleep, for whooping cough. It is expected to frighten the child from coughing.

Mouse broth, given to a child, to keep the child from wetting the bed. Perhaps it was to frighten the child.

Things used by the Manx from the animal kingdom.

Thick cream put into a cloth and put under a stone, to squeeze it, used to soften wounds and for sunburn.

Burnt butter, without salt, used to soften.

Fat of the mesentery used in the same way.

Tallow of goats.

White of egg, flour, and vinegar, mixed together and put on a cloth, to make a stiff bandage.

Snail spit used for sore eyes.

Cleanings of butter always fastened on the wall after milk had been churned

Fasting spittle was put on sore eyes, ears, and lips.

A slug was put on a wart, and put in a cloth on a thorn tree, with a thorn through the slug, and the wart would go away.

Urine was used to harden and to soften.

*

Snail broth, used in disease of the lungs (consumption).

A poultice of snails is used to heal a sore.

Cow dung used for burns, and cuts.

Goose dung, the white part, boiled in ale, for jaundice.

Things used from the vegetable kingdom.

Brewers' grains, poultice for dead (mortifying) flesh.

Chickweed, groundsel, and marsh-mallow, bruised between two stones, poultice for bruises.

Boiled cabbage leaves, good for sore breast.

Poultice of bruised potatoes, good for sore throat.

Boiled turnips, good for poultice.

Carrots boiled, good for poultice.

Parsley bruised, good for bruises.

Penny-walls* bruised, with lard, good for erysipelas.

House-leek, good for sore eyes.

Briar leaves boiled, for sore eyes.

Yarrow, good for every kind of disease.

Linseed, good for a poultice, and for a cold and cough.

Dock leaves, for a poultice, and for nettle stings.

Plantain, the leaf to be spread on a sore leg.

Ribwort (all-heal), bruised between two stones, to stop blood, and for bruises.

* Wall pennywort.

Vervain was used to keep away bad spirits from man or beast. It was often given to pigs.

A bunch of nettles, and a piece of yarrow good to keep one from evil spirits and fairies.

Comfrey scraped, and bandaged about the small of the leg or the ankle, or about the neck of the hand (wrist), to make a kind of "cere cloth."

Healing Plant, or mugwort, to keep away evil spirits.

Evil spirits were the cause of fits, and the herb of healing or mugwort would cure them.

It was used for fits, or for epilepsy.

Pulled up by the roots at midnight on (the night of) St John's Eve (July 4th), it would keep its virtue for the whole year.

The White Herb is the same as mugwort, for it was white under the leaf, or white on the lower side.

The Cattle Herb (Angelica), was given to calves.

Herb for cattle, or Alexander, for sore mouth in cattle, and for toothache.

CHAPTER X

SUPERSTITIONS AND SORCERY

Bread and cheese were carried in the pocket, by the woman carrying the child to the church, and given to the first person she would meet, to prevent the evil eye.

It was not thought to be a right thing for any person to take the covering off the face of the child to look on it.

Bread and cheese were often given to the first person he would meet, by anyone who had been kept at home from church by sickness, or any other cause, when a person went to church again for the first time.

People believed that a child could be changed, if it would be left alone in the house.

The fairies, and the bad spirits, were afraid of iron; and in the place the child was left alone, the poker and the tongs were placed across the cradle, to make the sign of the cross. This was a great power (protection).

The fairies could not go through water, nor go over it: even the least sprinkle of water would do. One could therefore see the use of holy water. It was used at the beginning, to keep away bad spirits. Very often young girls, and young boys, were sprinkled with water, when they were going home from dancing, to keep them from bad spirits.

Elder trees were grown about houses, to keep away bad spirits. There was a special witch, and she often took the form of a hare, and she was called the "elder hare." She could be taken, by letting off (firing) a gun with a piece of silver in it.

I remember, when I was a child, an old woman lying in bed for seven years. People said she had been fired at (shot), because she was a witch.

Brushing the dust at the head of four (cross) ways, and putting the dust over man, or beast, was thought to take away the evil eye. I have heard people speak about an old woman from Ballachrink, who swept the road at Colby Bridge, and put it on her man, for she thought an evil eye had been on him. She used to go down to the Bridge with the wing of a goose, and brush the dust into her apron with the wing.

I have heard of another old woman, at C—. They were thinking that she was a witch, and after she had been in the house of a neighbour, they swept every place where she had been sitting, with the wing of a goose, and then threw the dust out of the house. This was done to keep them from her evil eye.

A bad spirit is one anxious to do evil, and it is worse when other people think he is able to do it.

These are some of the things wizards or witches made use of:

Knots were made on woollen thread, and then put under the thatch, under the sods of the house. Before they put them there, a part of the burial service was read, when they were tying the knots.

Bringing home some of the Sacramental bread, and making crumbs of it, and a black beetle would come and eat it.

Blood and oatmeal were mixed in a dish, and a bush of gorse put over it, and then putting (setting) the gorse on fire, the witch would come and put out the fire.

A piece of flesh would be buried, and go rotten, (in order) to do harm to man, or beast.

Sometimes they took the heart of an animal, or bird, and put pins in it, and then the heart was taken and burnt, or put on the ashes. That was thought to do much harm.

Some of the hair of a newly-born child was placed in a tree, and if the hairs were carried away by a singing bird to make her nest, the child would be a musician.

A piece of iron would be put under the nest of a goose, or under a turkey's nest, or (the nest) of any other bird when they were hatching, to prevent the evil eye.

It might have been to keep the eggs warm, when the bird was off the nest.

Daffodils* were not to be brought into the house as long as the geese were hatching. They were thought not to bring good luck.

Chickens coming out of the eggs at Easter were thought not to be lucky.

*

The Bible, or part of her husband's clothes, was placed in the bed when a woman was going to be confined, to keep away bad spirits. Another portion of his clothing was placed in the cradle, to take care of the child.

It was necessary to eat bread and cheese, or to drink something, that you would not take away good luck.

*

When the child was born, if it was a boy, he was put into some part of the man's clothing, and if it was a girl, she was placed in some of the mother's clothing, very often a petticoat.

They thought that births and deaths frequently happened at the changing of tide.

When a man was out of his senses, he was sometimes carried out in a boat, and a rope was put about his neck, and then he was thrown out into the sea, and drawn after the boat, to see if he would come to himself. They thought that people who would be frightened out of their senses, would be frightened into their senses again.

People out of their wits were kept in Castle Rushen, for there was not any other place to put them in. There was a story written by a man named Peacock about a

* Lit. "goose-herb."

man who was out of his mind at Ballakillowey, and that was the reason that the asylum was made in the Isle of Man.

If there was not good luck at the fishermen, a bush of gorse would be put on fire, and carried to every part of the boat, to get done with (rid of) bad spirits.

The fishermen would send a man to Glion-y-Eiy, to the witch-doctor, to get the herbs, and then each man of the crew drank a drop apiece of the boiling,* and then the remainder of the boiling was sprinkled on all the nets, and throughout the boat.

* i.e., the water in which the herbs had been boiled.

CHAPTER XI

MUSIC AND SINGING

The first man, of whom I have heard, who taught music in parts in the Isle of Man, was Master Harmer.

He taught in the parishes about Ramsey, but especially in the parish of Maughold. There is very little to hear about him, but a story has been told he was at a supper with the singing company (choir), at the house of one of the farmers of the parish, and the mistress of the house said to him, sitting at the head of the table, when the people were going (about) to begin to eat, "Touch (carve) the cock, Master Harmer."

The next person there is history (record) of teaching music in parts, was Master Shepherd.

He came from Cumberland, and he taught church choirs in the parish of Maughold, Kirk Christ Lezayre, Kirk Patrick, and I believe in different other parishes in the Isle of Man. At the end of the year eighteen hundred and nine Shepherd the psalm-singer came first to Kirk Christ Rushen, and the good old parson entered into the singing with all his heart and soul. Shepherd went away, and he came again in the year eighteen hundred and sixteen, and he taught church choirs in Kirk Christ Rushen and in Kirk Arbory.

When he came the second time, the old parson, whose name was John Clague, was on his death-bed, and Shepherd taught the church choir to sing a funeral psalm for the parson: "My life's a shade, my days."*

The tune was not made for the parson, for it had been sung for the first man in Kirk Arbory church choir, when he died. His name was Dick John the Grandson. I have the tune yet, written by Shepherd in his own hand.

He had a way of his own to teach church choirs. He made all the singers "sol-fa" the tune for themselves, and keep time with the tune, with the open hand on the first beat of the bar, in common time, and the shut fist on the second beat.

In time, three beats in the bar, the hand was put down on the little-finger side of the hand for the first beat, for the second beat the points of the fingers were put down, and for the third beat the wrist of the hand was put down.

His teaching was in this rhyme:

Above your "mi" twice "fa, sol, la,"

Below your "mi" twice "la, sol, fa."

* This is the first verse: My life's a shade, my days / Apace to death decline: / My Lord is life, / He'll raise my dust again, e'en mine. / Sweet truth to me! I shall arise, / And with these eyes my Saviour see.

Thus “mi” comes in twice.

“Mi” was the seventh note of the octave, and it did for major or minor scales. He was only sure of one note of the octave, for there were two “fas,” two “sols,” and two “las,” so that he could not know one note from the other.

He placed the singers in two rows, with their faces to each other. He taught each part of the singers separately, and they all came together when they knew it. They did not know what they were going to sing, until they were all together. He would not give leave to (allow) one set of singers to hear the other, until they knew their own part.

He wrote the music himself, and he used a pen with five points to make the stave. His fee in money for a quarter of a year was ten shillings, and another shilling for the book. Each singer had a book for himself.

The deemster, and the other gentlemen of the parish of Rushen came to the singing teaching. The gentlemen took off their hats, and put their gloves in them, and the ladies took off their bonnets.

Shepherd used a music (pitch) pipe to begin (start) the tune. He gave it to the best singer in the church choir at Kirk Arbory, and I have it now.

During the day Shepherd was steward to Deemster Gawne, at Ballacurrey, to gain his living.

He liked a drop of good ale better than anything else, and he used to leave the singers in Kirk Christ Church, and go to the tavern at the head of the Four Roads, while they were singing one of the tunes.

He was acquainted with Caley, the organist at St Mary’s Chapel, at Castletown. He came down in the world, and Caley gave him leave at times to sleep in the church seats (pews), when he could not get lodgings in any other place.

He died in poverty at Castletown, and he was buried in Malew churchyard.

I do not think much of his way of teaching, for he had names for only one note, that was “mi.” “Fa” would have done quite as well for all the others.

I never heard of anybody who could sing from his “sol-fa,” after he was dead, except his pupil William Duke.

William did not begin to teach a church choir until the year eighteen hundred and twenty-six. He did not understand the “sol-fa” very well, and people were saying that he used to lie on his back, when he was after the sheep in the mountain, and try to gain to learn it, (gain instruction).

He also placed the singers in two rows, with their faces towards each other. The first row with their backs to the people. The female singers in the choir sang the alto and tenor, and the male singers the treble and bass.

William Duke was a shoemaker by trade, and he lived at Ballagarmin. He was highly instructed in (herbs) botany, and he had names for all the common herbs of the field. He believed in charms, and he gave them all to me, and told me how to use them.

He was parish clerk in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-nine, and he taught a choir at Colby at that time. It has been told to me by my friend John Cubbon, marble mason, that he was born at that time, and on the night he was born William came into his mother's house, and put the music book into the hand of the child, in order that he would come to be a man of music. Cubbon became a singer in William's choir, and after that he took his place as teacher of the church choir.

William taught a choir at — about the year eighteen hundred and forty and he made the big man (squire) angry, by singing:

“Though wicked men grow rich and great.”

This was all they got sung. The big man came out, and drove them all away from the house. The singers had gone there, thinking to make big (a great deal) of him.

He was made parish clerk the second time in the year eighteen hundred and fifty, and I heard him singing some of Shepherd's old tunes, with as many of the old singers as he could get together.

In the year eighteen hundred and sixty the last time he was parish clerk, I heard him singing, at the Oie'l Voirrey, one of the most beautiful old carols.

After the Oie'l Voirrey was over, I asked him if he had the music for it. He said to me, “There is no music to it.” I took it down after from his singing, and it is the carol “We happy herdsmen, we.”

William used to come to my father's house about some sheep my father was keeping for him, and when I was a little boy he used to bring me herbs of every kind, and ask me if I knew what they were. It was his stories, and charms, that first put into my mind the desire to be a doctor. He died when I was learning for a doctor at Guy's Hospital, London, and I am in great debt to him for the knowledge of the (folklore) medicine of the Manx people a hundred years ago.

The Manx love music, and it took a good share in their feasts. Songs were sung in the taverns, to spend the time.

It was a common work in the houses, in the winter, to make nets. Anyone, who had a new song, was the big man of the house.

Young girls, and young boys, met together in the farmhouses, to sing and dance at night.

New songs would be sung at their feasts, and a ballad-singer would come to sing new songs.

The ballad was often on bad paper, and when the paper would be folded, and kept in the pocket for a long time, there would be holes in the ballad, and the ballad-singer was obliged to stop.

The oldest Manx songs are very sad, and they are in the Dorian Mode. If you will take the key D on the piano, and play only on the white keys, you will play in the Dorian mode.

The songs are like a tune of eight bars, and I think that many of them have been taken from the monks, spread throughout all the Isle of Man. All music, at the

present time, is written in the Ionian mode, or Major mode, or in the Æolian mode, or Minor mode.

My friend, W.H. Gill, told me that there was a musical pipe found in a grave in Egypt, and it was played by a man in London at a musical meeting, and it made the same kind of musical notes as a pipe (flute) would give at the present time. It was thousands of years old.

The Manx have kept (preserved) the Dorian mode better than any other nation.

CHAPTER XII

FOOD

Some days they all took the same kind of food.

Hollantide Eve: bruised potatoes, fish, and parsnips.

Shrove Tuesday: "sollaghyn" for dinner, broth and chicken for supper, pancakes.

Good Friday: flitters* for breakfast, eggs and fish for dinner.

Holy Thursday†: "should eat flesh even if one had to eat a piece of his own arm."

Most of the farmers made their own brewing.

There was a brewing house in each parish for itself.

Wort: ale before the malt is put in.

Syllabub: warm ale and eggs put into it.

Ale warmed by putting the red poker into it.

Ale warmed and pepper put in it.

Pot liquor: water with flesh-meat before it comes to the boil.

Amvlass: hot water and buttermilk.

Sowin: Oatmeal was put in water, and then kept two or three days, and then put through a sieve; then the liquor was boiled and eaten with sweet milk.

It was often taken for supper, or "mrastyr beg."

It might be made of groats in the same way.

"Sollaghyn" was made of porridge oatmeal, and the liquor of boiled meat, and the liquor was eaten with the porridge.

"Sollaghyn Gharvain": Groats boiled in the liquor of boiled meat. When they are thick as porridge, put them into a dish, and take the liquor with them.

"Broish": oat bread steeped in broth, and eaten with it.

Butter would be eaten with porridge when milk was scarce.

"Cranchyn": Melt the fat, and the mix groats with it.

Haggis: the stomach of a sheep, filled with meat cut small, potatoes, onions, and groats, and boiled for a long time.

Kytshen: anything eaten with bread; such as butter, cheese, or milk.

White meat, tasty meat, delicacy, wheat bread, barley bread, oat bread.

Crammylt was a variety of a kind of pea, steeped for a night in milk.

Barley was dried on a hot hearth, or stone, heated over a turf fire, and then was ground in a quern (hand-mill), or mill-stone made of granite.‡

* Limpets.

† "On this day you must not look as far as you would (be able to) see."

‡ In the year sixteen hundred and forty-seven, Lord Derby ordered all hand-mills to be broken, and people were obliged to go to the lord's mill.

FOOD

Dough was made, and then it was baked on a hot hearth. They were called cakes. The last one was often thicker than the others, and it was called a “bonnag.”

FURMITY

Take shelled barley, and boil it in water about an hour. Then put some sweet milk in it, then stir a little flour in cold milk, and put them in the pot, and stir them till they will be brought to boil, and boiled well.

Potatoes and herring.

Broth of fowl, beef or mutton, boiled with shelled barley, and turnips, carrots, cabbage, parsley, and pot-herbs, all chopped up into small pieces.

Boiled fowl, and a piece of ham or pig's cheek.

*

Bread and milk.

Binjean (curdled milk): milk warmed, and liquor of rennet put into it, and left about half an hour to get thick (set).

Flour, and eggs and milk, mixed together, and boiled in a linen cloth.

Dumpling: flour, suet, and water mixed together, and boiled in broth.

Potatoes, large beans, cabbage, boiled together, and bruised.

“A good pot of boiled milk, with a brave shake of barley bread,” and “a cake of barley bread with the thickness of the palm of the hand of butter on it.”

CHAPTER XIII

PARISHES

The Isle of Man is divided into seventeen parishes.

Each parish is divided into Treens.

Each Treen is divided into quarterlands.

There was a church in each Treen.

A hermit, or monk, lived in the church.

They buried people about the church, so that they would be near the monk.

The church and the monk were thought to be holy, or kept apart.

The graves were made of flat stones, set on edge, and they were only a foot or two under the ground. There was always space left between the stones, for the spirit to go out and in. They often buried the body with its face to the east, for they were worshippers of the sun.

The north would be on the left hand, and the south on the right hand, and the west would be behind.

When a man was on the north side, or the left side or left hand, he was away from the right side, the sword side; he was taking care of himself.

“Be on thy north,” that is, “Be on thy guard.”

When he was on the right side he was on the strong side, or on the side one could take care of him, and that was the place of more honour, the right hand.

They had no conception of the North Star, but they knew where the sun rose, and where it set.

They often buried money, beads, or swords, and hatchets, in the grave for the use of the spirits.

The monk or hermit, often had spells or charms, and by them he could keep away evil spirits, or unclean ones,

They also thought that he could do harm to them, if they would do anything he did not like them to do.

The Isle of Man is also divided into six sheadings, or divisions for vessels.

There are three parishes in five sheadings, and two parishes in one sheading: that is Garff, the parishes of Lonan and Maughold.

Each sheading has coroner, and he has a man under him called the lockman.

Each parish has a parson, and a house for him to live in.

There are three rectors, in Kirk Bride, Kirk Andreas, and Ballaugh.

There is a bishop ruling over the parsons, and he lives at Bishop’s Court.

There is an archdeacon for the whole of the Isle of Man.

One of the old fathers of the Church says that an archdeacon will never be saved.

There was a parish clerk in every parish, and he had a small glebe.

In the parish of Maughold he had a large glebe.

He was paid for his services at feasts, weddings, funerals, and baptisms, and he got the plough groat, and smoke penny.

There was a sumner in every parish. It was his duty to attend every Sunday to keep dogs from entering the church, and after the church service was over, he had to call at the churchyard gate, and publish executions against people to sell their goods.

He had also to go to all the houses where there was a death, and without a will made at (by) them. He had to take account of all their goods, and sell them, and divide the value between the nearest kin, and pay himself out of the first end (first of all).

He had another perquisite, the sumner's sheaf. A man who kept a pair of horses had to give six lengths of corn, as much as he could tie, and then in comparison for all others.

Tom Callister, Port St Mary, was the last sumner in Kirk Christ Rushen.

A place was specially built for him at the steps at Arbory Churchyard, for him to stand upon, when the people would be going out of church.

The sumner used to go out as quickly as he could to publish it, before the people would come to him out of the church.

He was taking shame (ashamed) of it.

He would say softly, "The goods of —," and then go away.

The rent of the common land is taken to pay the lord's rent of the Manx parishes. It pays the lord's rent once in three years.

The year the trustees pay the lord's rent, the moar does not lift the lord's rent, but he keeps his appointment until the next year, and then he gathers the lord's rent of the parish.

The Baron Court is held twice a year, and the moar is obliged to give notice to people who have bought land, or come into inheritances or by will, to have their land entered in the lord's book at the Baron Court.

The moar is obliged to give notice to people four times, the year the trustees pay the lord's rent, and also the next year.

The moar is the man set out and sworn by an officer to gather the taxes of the lord, and to enter the names of the people before their properties. The moar is obliged to give notice to all people to bring their papers of purchase to the foreman of the Setting Quest, a fortnight before the Baron Court.

The moar is not to gather the rent of the Abbey Lands, or customs. There is a special officer to gather the rent of the Abbey Lands, and they are worked in the same way.

They both used to be paid to the Abbot, but now they are paid into the realm of England.

Almost all the land in Malew is Abbey Land, because the Abbey was at Ballasalla.

When the abbeys were plundered the rents went to the realm of England.

The moar is the man in the quarterland that pays the most lord's rent.

The moar is obliged to pay the lord's rent on Hollantide Day.

The moar is not obliged to give change, unless it is coin of the realm.

There are some people and they have to pay the eighth part of a penny. Some others a farthing. These all usually pay a halfpenny, the smallest coin of the realm. Some others charged at three farthings have to pay a penny.

*

There were fourteen pence in the Manx shilling, and after the value of the money was changed from Manx money to English money, the amount seems to be greater, for there are only twelve pence in the English shilling.

The difference can be seen best in small amounts.

To bring Manx money to English money, you must bring the money to pence, then multiply them by six and divide them by seven.

The Manx sixpence is short the seventh part of the English sixpence.

Before the year eighteen hundred, when Ireland was not under the rule of England, the Irish intended to take the Isle of Man for themselves, and the Manx kept watch on the "Watch Hill" of The Howe, and the "Watch Hill" in Bradda. They were very frightened in those times. They had a method of their own to send a message through all the Isle of Man. They had a burnt cross, for one man to give to another, and go from man to man, through all the Isle of Man, to give the news to them if the Irish should come. They raised a long pole in the day, and lighted a fire in the night, on the north side of Cronk ny Irree Laa, or the south side of Cronk Arreyder (Watchman Hill) according to the side they would see the boats. The burnt cross was about two feet in length, and the end was burnt, for a sign what the (Irish) raiders would do to them, that is, burn all their goods.

Sometimes a sword was made like a cross on the doors, to summon the people to fight. The burnt cross was left at (with) the farmer whose turn it was to keep watch.

Bells were also rung, when they were in haste to spread the news.

*

The friars of Beemakem, in Kirk Arbory, wore grey clothing, and they had no place belonging to them, but they paid rent, and they walked the houses for alms, for they could not keep land themselves.

The monks of the Abbey, Ballasalla, were white monks* and had their own lands, and the lord of the Island had nothing to say to them.

There is the holding by the straw.

The seneschal is judge in the Baron Court, and he is helped by the setting quest.

* Cistercians.

In old times, before there was any writing for contracts, when a man was selling land, or his goods, to another person, he went to the Baron Court, and, in the presence of the Court, the seller gave his right in the land to the buyer, by delivering a straw to him, in the presence of the Court. Then the Court put in writing the agreement between them both, and it was a true right, and agreement, in law, and it was kept in the books of the realm.

When the coroner comes to get pawn from a man that is in debt to another man, he wants pawn. Perhaps the man who is the debtor gives something to him, which is at hand. It may be a straw, a stone, or a potato. That is called "giving up pawn," or giving up something you take possession of (possess) that had been your own.

CHAPTER XIV

PORT ERIN BREAKWATER

The foundation-stone of the Breakwater at Port Erin was laid about the year eighteen hundred and sixty-four. William Milner was the chief man in the cause.

A whole bullock was roasted for the great day. He put up a tent, in the Rowany field, for the people of the parish and others to enjoy the good things provided for them. Tubs of ale or good beer were here and there in the field, for every one to drink of. Each one was to bring a vessel to drink out of, and then they were to go through the tent, one by one, after each other. They got two slices of bread and a slice of roast beef, and then they could go out on the other end of the tent, to the tubs of ale, and drink their fill. At night they had another feast on James Archie's loft, for every one who would come to take it.

Governor Loch, William Milner, and one or two others had procured sixty-eight thousand from the Commissioners in London, to make a breakwater at Port Erin. They did not get much money to pay on interest, but a few pounds a year. The Commissioners wanted the money to be paid back again. Governor Loch brought the case before the House of Keys to pay the money. They said to him that they had never been asked about it, therefore they were not liable for it. Then a committee was chosen out of the House of Keys, and the Council, to go to London, to make an agreement. And they agreed thus:

They were to pay about twenty-one thousand to the Commissioners.

For that they were getting the taxes (customs) on all the stuff (goods) coming into the Island for the Island, and letters every day,* and power to raise taxes on land. Put all together it is about four thousand in the year to the Island. Therefore Port Erin is not owing any money to the Island.

For this reason, Governor Loch dissolved the old House of Keys, and then the people were to elect the House of Keys for themselves, to make the House of Keys liable for the taxes (customs) of the Island.

* That is, a daily mail to and from England.

CHAPTER XV

MISCELLANEOUS

MANNIN

I have heard an old story, that long ago there used to be a great deal of kids on top of the mountains, or on the headlands of the Isle of Man, and the raiders called it the “Island of Kids” (mannanyn).

The kid might have been the holy animal, or “totem” of the Manx.

The six oldest Manx names are

Mylecraine Mylchreest

Morrison Mylrea,

Mylvartyn Mylvreeshey

“Mayl” or “Myl,” a servant.

The word in Manx is “mayl.”

Some people say that it was “moylley,” praise. It is thought that they came from the Point of Galloway (Mayllagh), for the Island can be plainly seen from there.

HANGING

Long ago they hanged a man for stealing sheep, or any other goods, that would be worth more than fourpence halfpenny.

It is recorded of a man who took the ploughshare off a plough from a place near Colby to Ballarobert. The share was found on his plough, and the price put on it by the jury was fourpence halfpenny, and he was hanged. The place is called Ballacriy.*

Costain, the great-grandfather of John Juan yn Oe (John John the grandson), was the first man who went against the law.

There was not any market for barley, but to make ale of it, and a man stole a sack of barley, Costain was on the jury, and he put the price of fourpence on the barley, and the jury divided into two divisions, and the man got off. The deemster asked Costain (son of Steven), How many sacks of barley he would sell at that price? “As many sacks as the dead you could make alive after they were hanged.” Lord Athol changed the law.

SONG OF THE THRUSH

“Big Robin, Big Robin,

Take a smoke, take a smoke, take smoke,”

“I have no smoke, I have no smoke.”

“Buy, buy, buy.”

* i.e., Gallows Farm.

“I have not a penny, I have not a penny, I have not a penny.”

“Go on trust, go on trust, go on trust.”

*

THE PLOVER

The plover was a bird of the lowlands, and she was enticed by the blackbird to change places.

“Blackbird, blackbird, art thou coming, art thou coming?”

“Ugh! I am not. I shall never come.”

THE VOWELS

Every vowel is pronounced in Manx, and I think that is the reason the Manx love music. It made them observant.

There are more vowel sounds in Manx than in any other language.

A. Gives satisfaction. That is it.

E. Listening. Eh?

I. Agreement, leave.

O. O! Lord, strange, innocent.

U. Pain, wound, swear, ugh (difficulty of breathing).

Ogham writing is a kind of Gaelic writing. At first it was little branches of different kinds of trees. Each letter had its own tree.

YARDING

At a certain time of the year, the young men and young women (of the Island) were summoned to Castletown, and the Governor, deemsters, coroners, and other officers, could choose anyone he liked, for eight shillings a year and their keep. They were going amongst them like choosing a cow at a fair, and the boys, or girls, the coroner would put his rod (or wand) upon, they were obliged to serve for that year, whether they were willing or not. The great-grandmother of my father was taken for the deemster by the “rod,” and she went to London with the wife of the deemster in a travelling coach, and on the road they met robbers, who took what they had from them. The great-grandmother was the servant, and the deemster’s wife had told her to put the purse in her breast (bosom) under her clothes, and so the money was saved.

FIRE

Before there were matches, it was difficult to get a fire lighted. People used a steel and flint, and gave leave (allowed) to the sparks to fall on the burnt linen or tinder, and then blowing on the tinder to make it go on fire. Sometimes it would take a long time to get fire.

If they would see smoke of any house they would go a long way to get fire.

The linen was rolled together, and then they lit the cloth in the fire, and putting it about with the hand, to make it keep on fire, until they would get home.

The turf would be placed carefully on the fire at night, and then somebody in the house would arise early to keep the fire going. Sometimes a man would come half a mile to get fire (a light) for his pipe.

WINTER FODDER

It was very difficult to keep enough fodder for the cattle in the winter. They had not much store of winter food, and they bruised gorse with mallets, in a stone trough, made of rough stones placed on end about a stone lying (flat).

I have seen two men bruising gorse for the cattle many a time.

Sometimes, at the end of the winter, the cattle would be so weak that they could not rise up, and they would be covered with clothes to keep them warm.

On Candlemas Day they had an old saying:

“On the day of Mary of the Candle
Half fodder and half fire.”

Half of the turf-stack, and half of the fodder, should be left (remaining) to reach (last) to May-day, the first day of summer.

THE FODDER JURY

The fodder jury was summoned by the coroner, to look after people who had cattle. If there were more cattle at a man (if a man had more) than he had food for three months for, the jury carried as many of the cattle as he had not food for and brought them to the town, and sold them at the Market Place* by auction. Then they paid for their labour, and if they had any money over, they gave it to the man who owned the cattle. The reason of this was to keep them from stealing from their neighbours. Any man could make the coroner summon a fodder jury.

THE BURIAL URN

On the twenty-first day of May, in the year nineteen hundred and eight, we were at Ballacross digging an old urn out of an old burial ground.

A man was ploughing in the field, and the plough came against a flat stone which was on the top of the urn. The urn was made of burnt clay, and there were ashes of a dead person in it. The urn was about a foot in height, and about another foot across the mouth, and its bottom was rounded like a beehive. The flat stone was about two feet in length, and it was on the urn for a lid. The urn was made steady by other stones about it, to keep it from moving. It was bruised by the other stones, and its

* Lit. “at the cross.”

MISCELLANEOUS

side was put in. The urn was about a foot under the surface of the earth, and there are signs of other urns in that field.

APPENDIX



CABDIL XI

KIAULLEEAGHT

Yn chield ghooinney, ta mee er chlashtyn jeh ren gynsaghy kiaulleeaght ayns aynryn ayns Ellan Vannin, va Mainshter Harmer.

V'eh gynsaghey ayns ny skeeraghyn mygeayrt Rumsaa, agh er l'heh ayns Skeerey Vaghal. Ta feer veg dy chlashtyn my-e-chione, agh ta skeeal er ve inshyt dy row eh ec shibbyr marish yn cheshaght-kiaullee, ec thie fer jeh ny eirinee yn skeerey, as ren ben y thie gra rish, soie ec kione y voayrd, tra ren yn sleih goll dy ghoaill toshiaght dy ee, "Benn rish yn chellagh kiark, Mainshter Harmer."

Yn nah phyagh ta recortys jeh gynsaghey kiaulleeaght ayns aynryn, va Mainshter Shepherd.

Haink eh voish Cumberland, as ren eh gyn saghey sheshaghtyn-chiaullee ny killagh ayns Skeerey Vaghal, Skeerey Chreest ny Heyrey, Skeerey Pharick, as ta mee credjal dy row ayns caghlaaghyn skeeraghyn elley ayns Mannin. Ec kione ny bleeaney hoght cheead yeig as nuy, haink Shepherd yn chiaulleyder-psaum hoshiaght dys Skeerey Chreest Rushen, as ren yn chenn haggirt mie gentreil ayns yn chiaulleeaght, lesh ooilley e chree as annym. Hie Shepherd ersooyl, as haink eh reesht ayns yn vlein hoght cheead yeig as shey jeig, as ren eh gynsaghey sheshaght-chiaullee ny killagh ayns Skeerey Chreest Rushen, as ayns Skeerey Chairbre.

Tra haink eh yn nah cheayrt, va'n chenn haggirt, ennym echey Juan y Clague, er e lhiabbee baase, as ren Shepherd gynsaghey sheshaght-chiaullee ny killagh dy chiaulleeaght psaum oanluckee yn taggyrt: "My vea scadoo, ta sheese."*

Cha row yn arrane jeant son yn taggyrt, son v'eh er ve chiaulleeaght son yn chield ghooinney va ayns sheshaght-chiaullee ny killagh Skeerey Chairbre, tra hooar eh baase. Va'n ennym echey Dick Juan yn Oe. Ta'n arrane ayms foayst, scrut liorish Shepherd ayns yn laue echey hene.

Va agh echey lesh hene dy ynsaghey she shaghtin-chiaullee ny killagh. Ren eh cur er ooilley ny kialleyderyn "sol-fa" yn arrane daue hene, as cummal traa lesh yn arrane, lesh laue foshlit er yn chield woailley jeh'n var, ayns traa cadjin, as yn doarn jeight er yn nah woailley.

Ayns traa three bwoaillaghyn ayns y var, va'n laue currit sheese er cheu yn vair veg jeh'n laue, son yn chield woailley, er son yn nah woailley va baare ny meir currit sheese, as, er son yn trass woailley, va mwannal laue currit heese.

Va gynsaghey echey ayns yn drane shoh:

* Shoh yn chield ring:— "My vea scadoo, ta heese | Gys baase dy siyragh roie, | Yn Chiarn nee bioghrey reesht | Yn joan aym as yn oaie. | Ayns maynrys vooar neems girree seose | As fakim ny Haualtagh bee."

Erskyn euish “mi” daa cheayrt “fa, sol, la.” Fo euish “mi” daa cheayrt “la, sol, fa.”

Myr shoh ta “mi” cheet stiagh daa cheayrt

Va “mi” yn chiaghtoo note jeh’n octave, as ren eh jannoo son scaleyn major, ny minor. Cha row eh shickyr agh jeh un note jeh’n octave, son dy row daa “fa,” daa “sol,” daa “la,” myr shen cha voddagh fys ve echey yn derrey yeh veih yn jeh elley.

Hug eh ny kiaulleyderyn ayns daa strane, lesh ny oaieyn oc lesh y cheilley. Ren eh gynsaghey dagh aynr jeh ny kiaulleyderyn er lneh, as ren ad ooilley cheet cooidjagh, tra va fys oc er. Cha row fys oc c’red v’ad goll dy chiaulleeagh derrey v’ad ooilley cooidjagh. Cha jinnagh eh cur kied da un aynr jeh ny kiaulleyderyn dy chlashtyn ny feallagh elley, derrey veagh fys oc er yn aynr oc hene.

Ren eh screeu yn chiaulleeaght eh hene, as ren eh ymmyd jeh pen lesh queig baareyn er dy yannoo yn stave. Va’n eeck echey ayns argid son y chiarroo aynr jeh blein jeih skilleeyn, as skillin elley son yn lioar. Va ec dagh fer kiaullee lioar echey da hene.

Ren yn vriw, as ny deiney seyrey elley jeh’n skeerey Chreest cheet gys yn ynsagh kiaulleeaght. Ren ny deiney seyrey goaill nyn idd jeu, as cur ny lauenyn ayndoo, as ny mraane seyrey goaill nyn vonnady n jeu.

Ren Shepherd jannoo ymmyd jeh feddan bingys dy ghoaill toshiaght lesh arrane. Ren eh cur eh da’n reih kiaulleyder va ayns she shaght-chiaullee ny killagh Skeerey Chairbre, as t’eh ayns ec y traa t’ayn.

Ayns y laa va Shepherd stiurt da Briw Gawne, ayns Ballacurrey, dy chosney e veaghey.

Bliack lesh bine dy jough vie ny share na red erbee elley, as v’eh cliaghtey faagail ny kiaulleyderyn ayns keeill Skeerey Chreest, as goll gys yn thie oast, ec kione ny Kiare Raaidyn, choud as v’ad kiaulleeagh nane jeh ny arraneyn.

V’eh oayllagh er Caley, cloieder yn ghreie kiaullee ec Cabbal Noo Moirrey, ec Ballachastal. Haink eh sheese ayns y theill, as ren Caley cur kied da ny keayrtnyn dy chadley ayns soieaghyn chillagh, tra nagh voghe eh aaght ayns boayl erbee elley. Hooar eh baase ayns boghtnyd ayns Balla chastal, as v’eh oanluckit ayns rhullick Skeerey Malew.

Cha vel mee coontey monney jeh’n aght v’eh gynsaghey, son nagh row ennym echey agh son un note, va shen “mi.” Veagh “fa” er ny yannoo kiart cha mie son ooilley yn feallagh elley.

Cha ren mee riau clastyn jeh pyagh erbee voddagh kiaulleeagh voish yn “sol-fa” echey, lurg da v’eh marroo, er lhimmey yn schoillar echey Illiam y Duke.

Cha ren Illiam toshiaght dy ynsaghey carree chillagh, derrey yn vlein hoght cheead yeig as shey as feed. Cha ren eh toiggal yn “sol-fa” feer vie, as va sleih gra dy row eh cliaghtey lhie er e ghreeym, tra v’eh geiyrt er ny kirree ayns y clieau, as streeu dy chosney dy ynsaghey eh.

Hug eh myrgeeddin ny kiaulleyderyn ayns daa strane, lesh ny oaieyn oc lesh y cheilley. Va’n chieid strane cheu chooylloo gys yn sleih. Va ny mraane kiaullee ayns

yn charree chillagh kiaulleeagh yn alto as tenor, as ny deiney kiaull ee yn treble as bass.

Va Illiam y Duke greasee liorish keird, as v'eh cummal ec Ballagarmin. Va ynsagh ard echey ayns lossereeyn, as va enmvn echey son ooilley jeh ny lossereeyn cadjin ayns y vagher. V'eh credjal ayns feashtnaghyn, as hug eh ad ooilley dooys, as dinsh eh dou cren aght dy yannoo ymmyd jeu.

V'eh cleragh skeerey ayns yn vlein hoght cheead yeig as nuy as feed, as v'eh gynsaghey sheshaght-chiaullee ayns Colby ec yn traa shen. Te er ve inshit dou liorish my charrey Juan y Cubbin, masoonagh marmyr, dy row eh ruggit ec y traa shen, as er yn oie v'eh ruggit, haink Illiam stiagh ayns thie e vummig, as hug eh yn lioar chiaullee ayns laue yn oikan, er yn oyr dy darragh eh dy ve fer kiaullee. Haink Cubbin dy ve kialleyder ayns sheshaght-chiaullee Illiam, as lurg shen ren eh goaill yn voayl echey myr fer-ynsee yn cheshaght-chiaullee ny killagh.

Ren Illiam gynsaghey sheshaght-chiaullee ec — — mysh yn vlein hoght cheead yeig as daeed, as hug eh yn chorree er y dooinney mooar, lesh kiaulleeagh:

“Ga dy jean deiney mee-chrauee gaase berchagh as mooar.”

Va shoh ooilley ny hooar ad kiaullit. Haink yn dooinney mooar magh ass, as deiry eh ad ooilley ersooyl voish y thie. Hie ny kialley deryn gys shen, smooïnaghtyn dy yannoo mooar jeh.

V'eh jeant cleragh skeerey yn nah cheayrt mysh y vlein hoght cheead yeig as jeih as daeed, as cheayll mee eh kiaulleeagh paart jeh ny shenn arraneyn Shepherd, lesh whilleen shenn chiaull eyderyn as oddagh eh geddyn ry-cheilley.

Ayns yn vlein hoght cheead yeig as three feed, yn vlein s'jerree v'eh cleragh ny skeerey, cheayll mee eh kiaulleeagh, ec yn Oie'l Voirrey, nane jeh ny shenn charvalyn s'bwaiae.

Lurg yn Oie'l Voirrey va harrish, vrie mee jeh row yn chiaulleeaght echey er y hon. Dooyrt eh rhym, “Nagh row kiaulleeaght erbee hug gey.” Ren mee goaill sheese eh lurg shen voish yn chiaulleeaght echey, as t'eh yn charval “Shinyn bochillyn maynrey shinyn.”

Bollagh Illiam cheet gys thie my yishig mychione paart dy kirree va my yishig freayll da, as tra va mee my ghuilley beg, v'eh cliahtey cur lesh hym lossereeyn jeh dy chooilley horch, as briagh jeem row fys aym c' red v'ad. Ve ny skeealyn echey, as feaishtnaghyn, ren hoshi aght cur ayns m'aigney yn yeearree dy ve fer-lhee. Hooar eh baase tra va mee gynsaghey er son fer-lhee ec Hospital Guy, Lunnon, as ta mee ayns lhiastyns mooar da er son yn tushtey jeh'n saase-lheihys jeh sleih Manninagh keead blein er-dy-henney.

Shynney lesh ny Manninee kiaulleeaght, as ghow eh ayrrn mie ayns ny feaillaghyn oc. Va ny arraneyn kiaullit ayns ny thieyn oast, dy cheau yn traa.

Va'n obbyr cadjin ayns ny thieyn, ayns yn gheurey, jannoo jeebin. Fer erbee, va arrane noa echey, va'n dooinney mooar jeh'n thie.

Va ny 'neenyn aegey, as ny guillyn aegey, meeteil cooidjagh ayns thieyn eirinee, dy chiaulleeagh as daunsey ec yn oie.

Veagh arraneyn noa kiaullit ec ny feaillaghyn oc, as harragh bannag arraneyderyn dy chiaul leeagh arraneyn noa.

Va bannag dy mennick er drogh phabyr, as tra veagh yn phabyr fillit, as freaylt ayns yn phoggad son traa liauyr, veagh tuill ayns y vannag, as va'n vannag-arraneyder eignit dy scuirr.

Ta ny arraneyn shinney Manninagh t'ad feer hrimisagh, as t'ad ayns yn Mode Dorianagh. My ne shiu goaill yn ogher D er yn piano, as cloie ny lomarcán er ny ogheryn baney, nee shiu cloie ayns yn Mode Dorianagh.

Ta ny arraneyn goll rish caayn jeh hoght barryn, as ta mish smooínaghtyn dy vel mooa rane jeu er ve goit voish ny abbotyn, va skeaylt trooid ooilley Mannin. Ta ooilley kiaulleeaght, ec y traa t'ayn, screeuit ayns yn Mode Ionianagh, ny Mode Major, ny ayns yn Mode Aeolianagh, ny Mode Minor. Ta my charrey W. H. Gill, er n'insh dou dy row feddan-kiaullee feddynit ayns oaie ayns Egypt. V'eh cloiet ec dooinney ayns Lunnon ec Meeiteil Kiaulleeaght, as ren eh cur yn un horch dy noteyn kiaullee as yinnagh feddan cur ec y traa t'ayn. V'eh thousaneyn dy vleeantyn dy eash. Ta ny Manninee er reayll yn Mode Dorianagh ny share na ashoon erbee elley.