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A series of short articles on Manx Gaelic grammar, idiom, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Waiting

Fuirraghtyn rish is probably what you learned as the Manx equivalent of ‘wait for’. However, there are several different words and expressions meaning ‘wait’ in Manx, with subtly different histories and meanings. We will explore them here.

The two standard ways of saying ‘wait for someone / something’ in the Manx Bible are the verbs *farkiagh* (stem *farkee* or *fark*) and *fieau* (only as a verbal noun¹) with the prepositions *er* or *son*. *Er* is more common; *son* is possibly due to English influence². *Rish* never occurs with these two verbs (in contrast to Scottish Gaelic, where *feitheamh ri* is common alongside *air* and *airson*).

Fieau is only used meaning to wait for someone or something. *Farkiagh* is mostly used with this meaning, sometimes meaning more generally ‘wait, stay, tarry’. This is the usual sense of *fuirraghtyn*: it is used dozens of times in the Bible, but only twice (with *son*) can it be construed as meaning ‘waiting for someone’, in Exodus 24:14 and 1 Corinthians 11:33. *Fuirraghtyn rish* **never** appears in the Bible.

These words thus overlap in sense, but in summary we can say of Classical Manx that *fieau er* (*lson*) and *farkiagh er* (*lson*) are the normal ways of expressing ‘wait for’. *Fuirraghtyn son* is a possible occasional alternative. *Farkiagh* and *fuirraghtyn* can mean ‘stay’ or ‘tarry’ in a place, whether you are waiting for something in particular or not.

¹ Like *ceau* from *caith-caitheamh*, there seems to be no trace of the separate stem *feith* of *feitheamh*: the *-eamh* of the verb-noun ending has fused with the stem to make a monosyllable. In the case of *ceau*, this new monosyllabic fused form has replaced the stem, e.g. *cha geau* ‘will not throw’ (Joel 2:10) representing *cha gcaitheamh* for historic *cha gcaith*, contemporary ScG. *cha chaith*. Contrast *shass-shassoo* (*seas-seasamh*) where stem and ending remain distinct because of the consonant. Unlike *ceau*, where inflected tenses are amply attested (past *cheau*, future *ceauue*, *cha geau*, *dy geau-ym*), *fieau* seems only to be attested as a verbal noun so far as I know—no **dieau*, *cha vieau* etc., so in the absence of evidence to the contrary it is probably best to treat it as defective and inflect it periphrastically with *jannoo* (*ren mee fieau* etc.).

² Especially since the earlier translation in Phillips prayer book has several instances of *farkiagh er* where the later Bible has *farkiagh son*, e.g. Psalm 71:9, Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 1:7, though *erson* appears even in Phillips in Luke 23:51.

Here are a few examples of these three verbs:

1. *Fieau* (Ir, ScG. *feitheamh*):

Choud as v'ad **fieau er** y dooinney poosee, huitt ad ooilley er saveenagh as cadley - While the bridegroom tarried [while they were waiting for the bridegroom], they all slumbered and slept (Matthew 25:5)

Ayndoo shoh va nyn lhie ymmodde dy leih dourinagh, doail, baccee, shirgeydee, as v'ad **fieau er** gleashaght yn ushtey - In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water (John 5:3)

As haink eh gy-kione, tra va Yeesey er jeet back, dy ghow yn pobble lane boggey jeh: son v'ad ooilley **fieau er** - And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him (Luke 8:40)

As va'n pobble **fieau son** Zacharias, as yindys orroo dy row eh cumrail choud ayns y chiable - The people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple (Luke 1:21)

ny frassyn er y faiyr, nagh vel lurg aigney dooinney, ny **fieau son** mec deiney - the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men (Micah 5:7)

Fieau er can also mean 'wait on' in the sense of 'attend to, serve':

Bee ee er ny choyrnt lh'ee gys y ree ayns garmad dy obbyr snaidey: hig ny moidynyn ta **fieau urree** ayns dty enish - She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: the virgins that be her fellows [wait on her] shall bear her company, and shall be brought unto thee (Psalms 45:15)

A useful phrase with *fieau* is *fieau er caa*, 'wait for an opportunity':

va jees jeh shamyrderyn y ree...**fieau er caa** dy stroie ree Ahasuerus - two of the king's chamberlains...sought to lay hands on [were waiting for an opportunity to destroy] the king Ahasuerus (Esther 2:21)

As v'eh **fieau er caa** dy vrah eh - And he sought how he might conveniently betray him [he was waiting for an opportunity to betray him] (Mark 14:11)

2. *Farkiagh(t)* (Ir. *faircsin*):

Son ta'n ashlish foast son traa ry-heet, agh ec y jerrey nee eh loayrt, as cha nee ayns fardail: ga dy vel eh lhiggey shaghey, **fark er**, son hig eh son shickyrys, cha jean eh cumrail - For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry (Habakkuk 2:3)

Cre'n-fa ta shin nyn soie ayns shoh **farkiagh er** y baase? - Why sit we here until we die [waiting for death]? (2 Kings 7:3)

va troailtee Sheba **farkiaght orroo** - the companies of Sheba waited for them (Job 6:19)

Fark-jee er-y-fa shen, vraaraghyn, derrey cheet y Chiarn. Cur-my-ner, ta'n eirinnagh **farkiagh son** mess berchagh y thalloon, as t'eh **farkiagh** foddey **er y hon** - Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it [waits a long time for it] (James 5:7)

Myr shoh jimmee yn phadeyr roish, as ren eh **farkiagh son** y ree er y raad, as ren eh eh-hene gyn-yss da liorish coodagh e eddin - So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face (1 Kings 20:38)

Without a preposition:

As lurg dhyt **farkiagh** three laa, eisht hed oo sheese dy tappee, as hig oo gys yn ynnyd raad v'ou follit roie tra va'n chooish ayns laue, as nee oo **fuirriaght** liorish y chlagh Ezel - And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel (1 Samuel 20:19)

jean-jee **farkiagh**, shass-jee raad ta shiu, as cur-jee my-ner saualtys y Chiarn mêriu - set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you (2 Chronicles 20:17)

Farkiagh appears in the idiom *lhie farkiagh* 'lying in wait', which is synonymous, and may be combined, with *lhie cooyl-chlea*. It may be followed by *er* or *son*:

dy vel my vac er ghreinnaghey my harvaant m'oi, dy **lhie farkiagh er** my vioys - that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait [on my life] (1 Samuel 22:8)

t'adsyn ta **lhie farkiaght son** m'annym, coyrt nyn goyrle dy cheilley - they that lay wait for my soul take their counsel together (Psalm 71:9)

lhie ad farkiagh dy feagh **er e hon** fud-ny-hoie ec giat yn ard-valley - [they] laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night (Judges 16:2)

lhie eh farkiagh ayns y vagher - [he]laid wait in the field (Judges 9:43)

As mannagh vel dooinney **lhie farkiagh cooyl-chlea** dy varroo fer elley, agh dy nee Jee t'er leeideil eh ny raad; neem's eisht boayl y phointeil dhyt dasyn dy roie er-chea huggey - And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee (Exodus 21:13)

3. *Fuirr(i)aght(yn)*. This verb very frequently occurs, without a preposition, in a sense similar to *farkiagh* above. It means 'wait, stay, abide, remain, tarry', regardless of whether one is waiting FOR something in particular. Its connotations are fairly concrete, of staying in a geographical location (cf. ScG. *fuireach* which often means 'live, dwell'—the Manx would seem to imply less permanence / duration than the Scottish). The predominantly concrete connotation of *fuirraghtyn* contrasts with the more abstract sense of *tannaghtyn*, 'remain or continue in a state or action'.

Raad erbee dy jed shiu stiagh ayns thie, **fuirree-jee** ayn derrey aagys shiu yn ynnyd shen - In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place (Mark 6:10)

As deie Jonathan lurg y yuilley, Jean siyr, dy tappee, **ny fuirree** - And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not (1 Samuel 20:38)

Trog ort, gow yn lhiannoo as e voir, cosne royd gys Egypt, as **fuirree** ayns shen derrey ver-yms fys hood - Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be [stay] thou there until I bring thee word (Matthew 2:13)

Dooyrt Yeesey rish, My she m'aigney's eh eshyn dy **uirriaght** derrey hig-ym, cre ta shen dhyt's? Eiy'r uss orrym's - Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me (John 21:22)

Cur-my-ner, yinnin eisht cosney roym foddey jeh: as **fuirraght** ayns yn aasagh - Lo, then would I get me away far off: and remain in the wilderness (Psalms 55:7)

There are a couple of examples in the Bible of *fuirraghtyn* with a preposition, but it is not *rish*:

Shen-y-fa, my vraaraghyn, tra ta shiu cheet cooidjagh dy ee, **fuirree-jee** yn derrey yeh **son** y jeh elley - Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another (1 Corinthians 11:33)

Fuirree-jee ayns shoh **er nyn son**, derrey hig mayd hui reesht - Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you (Exodus 24:14)

An idiom involving either *fuirraghtyn* or *farkiagh* is *fark ort!* / *fuirree ort!* equivalent to English 'hold on! hang on! wait a moment! wait there!'. It is a prepositional reflexive verb, in which the prepositional part agrees with the subject, like *cur lhiat*, *troggal ort*, *cosney royd* etc. but is only found in the imperative.

Eisht dooyrt ee, **Fark ort**, my inneen, derrey hee mayd kys hed y chooish: son cha bee fea er y dooinney derrey vees eh er y laa shoh er chooilleeney e yialdyn - Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day (Ruth 3:18)

Caïd nagh bee jerrey er nyn ghoan? **fuirree-jee erriu**, as ny lurg shen nee mayd loayrt - How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak (Job 18:2)

fuirree ort - wait! (Thomas Christian, *Handbook of Late Spoken Manx* p. 180)

Kelly in his *Grammar* also gives *Agh fuirree ort* as an conjunction 'yet, but still', presumably referring to the idea of saying 'hold on, wait a moment' to signal a change of thought or topic in a conversation.

Late Spoken Manx:

In the recordings of Late Spoken Manx, the patterns of usage of the three verbs are basically the same as in the Bible. In Broderick's *Handbook of Late Spoken Manx* dictionary, only *fieau* (with preposition *er*, *son*, or, perhaps abnormally, *da*) is used for 'wait for': *farkiagh* has only one example, *fuirraghtyn* several, and they have a similar usage to what is found the Bible. They do not appear with prepositions (although the reflexive idiom *fuirree ort* is recorded, see above).

All the following examples are from the *Handbook*:

1. fieau

ta mee **fieau ort** - I am waiting for you (JW)
 ta mee fieau **son echey** - I'm waiting for him (JW)
 neeym's **fieau dhyt's** - I will wait for you (HK)

2. farkiagh

my nee oo **fark** aynshoh marym's - if you stay here with me (NM)

3. fuirraghtyn

cha ren eh **fuirraght** feer foddey ayn - he didn't stay very long there (JK)
 t'ad goll dy **fuirraght** ayns Rhynsaa - they're going to stay in Ramsey (NM)
 cha row ad **fuirraght** un vinnid - they didn't wait one minute (JK)
 foddee dy bee ad **fuirraghtyn** gaa ny tree laghyn - perhaps they will stay two or three days (HB)
fuirree, bwa, yiowym's oo foast - wait, boy, I'll get you yet (TT)
 ny **fuirree** aynshoh - don't wait / stay here (TC)

Fuirraghtyn rish

Fuirraghtyn rish seems to be conspicuous by its absence from the Bible and the corpus of native speech. It is attested, though, in Early and archaic Manx:

In Phillips prayer book:

Furrigi anayn **rish** anayn elle (Fuirree-jee unnane rish unnane elley) - tarry one for another (Thursday before Easter, 1 Corinthians 11:33)

In *Pargys Caillit*:

ayns shen va Chaos myr ree freayll e chooyrt,
 as e choonceil ghoo trooid-[y]-cheilley loayrt;
 cha row fockle **fuirragh' rish** fockle elley,
 as ayns y dooid cha row ad fakin shilley
 - there Chaos as a king kept his court, / and spoke his black counsel confusedly; / no word waited for another word, / and in the darkness they did not see a sight (*Pargys Caillit*, Thomson ed., ll. 2640-3, my literal translation)

Agh cur ansoor gys shen ny hirr mee ort;
cha veeu lhiam **fuirraght'** arragh **rhyt** dy loayrt.

- But give an answer to that which I asked you; / I deign not to wait anymore for you to speak (ibid. ll. 2694-5)

Foast cha **duirree'**n sp'ryd **rish** yn giat y ghoail
agh, myr v'eh maarliagh, harrish lheim eh'n voall';

- Still the spirit did not wait [for] to take the gate / but, as he was a thief, he jumped over the wall (ibid. ll. 3226-7)

On this evidence, it would appear that *fuirraghtyn rish* is an archaic form; however, I have found one example of it in a Late Manx text, in the story *Saggyrt as ny Shellanyn* written down by Edward Faragher:

agh cha jeanagh eh **furriagh rish** piagh erbee gys hooar eh gys y hie dy ghoail ny shellanyn as y chroosyn³ - He didn't wait for anybody till he got to his house to take the bees out of his trousers ('Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy', George Broderick ed., p. 160)

This may suggest that *fuirraghtyn rish* was still in natural use in the Late Manx of the nineteenth century, but since this is apparently a traditional tale, the use of *furriagh rish* may well be an archaism passed down in the oral transmission of the story.

How then do we explain the preponderance of *fuirraghtyn rish* in revived Manx and the disappearance of *fieau* and *farkiagh*?

Goodwin's *First Lessons* gives *fuirraght* in its vocabulary (§28), but gives no indication of how to say 'wait for'. As far as I can see there is only one translation exercise with this verb, *ny jean fuirraght ec y dorrays; jeigh yn dorrays*, where *fuirraghtyn* is used appropriately in its usual Classical and Late Manx sense. *Fieau* and *farkiagh* are not mentioned anywhere in the book. Thus anyone in the last one hundred and ten years who learnt Manx using this book, excellent though it generally is, would not have learnt systematically how to say 'wait for', and any exposure to *fieau* and *farkiagh* would probably be accidental, by encountering them in the Bible, or possibly from native speakers.

J. J. Kneen has the following entry for 'wait' in his English-Manx Dictionary (first published in 1938):

wait, fuirree (furee) 13. Wait for me, fuirree rhym.

Again *farkiagh* and *fieau* do not get a look-in (although *fieauder* is given in the next entry for 'waiter'), and the example gives *rish* definitively as the preposition that goes with the verb, without any alternatives. Probably Kneen was influenced by the other languages, which sometimes use *ri* (or *le* in Irish, where *rish* and *lesh* have fallen together), and by the use of *fuirraghtyn rish* in the archaic texts. It is clear that Kneen believed in going back to earlier, in his view purer forms of the language; compare how he tries to shoehorn Manx nouns into Irish declensions in his grammar.

³ agh cha jinnagh eh fuirragh rish peiagh erbee gys hooar eh gys e hie dy ghoail ny shellanyn ass e hroosyn

By the time of Gell's *Conversational Manx* in 1954 *fuirraghtyn rish* had apparently become orthodoxy, and in Lesson 7 we find the following:

9. Dy jarroo ta, jean oo fuirraght rhym?
9. Indeed yes, will you wait for me?

And the notes state authoritatively:

7. Note the preposition 'da' with verb 'insh'.
9. Similarly, 'rish' with verb 'fuirraght'.

From these beginnings, this distortion of the language in favour of an obscure archaism, along with the forgetting of the expected usual forms, appears to have spread far and wide. Fargher's dictionary does give *fieau* and *farkiagh*, but they would appear to little known and little used nonetheless.

What are we to say to all this? It seems *fieau er* and *farkiagh er* 'should' be the standard expressions for 'wait for' taught to learners; *fuirraghtyn rish* is strictly speaking correct, but archaic: we don't go around using other Phillips forms such as *gy vel*, *gy mie*, *ta mee credjue* (for *credjal*) etc., so why should we say *fuirraghtyn rish*? Even if the evidence from Ned Beg is taken into account, and the possibility admitted that *fuirraghtyn rish* remained current in speech but evaded attestation, it is probably safe to say that *fuirraghtyn rish* should not by rights be the *default* form.

In actuality *fuirraghtyn rish* has become so prevalent that it would probably be undesirable and counterproductive to try to get rid of it; it is certainly not outright 'wrong', and I am aware that this sort of thing is open to the charge of nitpicking. There is some merit in the argument that languages change and this should just be accepted; sometimes errors and misunderstandings gain the upper hand and become the received norm, even in languages in a natural state. However, it certainly cannot be a bad thing for those who are interested to know the facts, and have the free choice to use the other forms if they wish. It would also be a great shame for *farkiagh* and *fieau* to fade away and be forgotten, since they are *not* strange, obscure, old-fashioned forms from the Bible; they were used by the likes of Ned Maddrell!

Other words related to the sense of 'waiting'

As noted above, while *fuirraghtyn* means 'wait, stay, remain' in a mostly concrete sense, *tannaghtyn* (in Phillips *fannaghtyn*) tends to be more abstract, and to imply greater duration:

Ayns e wannal ta niart **tannaghtyn** - In his neck remaineth strength (Job 41:22)

dy vod gloyr **tannaghtyn** ayns y cheer ain - that glory may dwell in our land (Psalm 85:9)

dy vod mad **tannaghtyn** dy yanoo shen gys jerrey nyn seihll - that...we may continue to do so unto our lives end (*Plain and Short Directions and Prayers*, p. 18)

Nee yn slught echey **tannaghtyn** son dy bragh - His seed shall continue for ever (Psalm 89:35)

Farraghtyn is ‘last, endure’:

Son cha vel e chorree **farraghtyn** agh meekey sooilley, as ayns y foayr echey ta bea: foddee trimshey **farraghtyn** son oie, agh ta boggey cheet 'sy voghrey - For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye, and in his pleasure is life: heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psalm 30:5)

Cumrail as an intransitive verb means ‘wait, tarry, linger, dawdle, procrastinate’; in the latter senses it is synonymous with *lhiggey shaghey*:

Son ta'n ashlish foast son traay ry-heet, agh ec y jerrey nee eh loayrt, as cha nee ayns fardail: ga dy vel eh **lhiggey shaghey**, fark er, son hig eh son shickyrys, cha jean eh **cumrail** - For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry (Habakkuk 2:3)

As va'n pobble fieau son Zacharias, as yindys orroo dy row eh **cumrail** choud ayns y chiamble - And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple (Luke 1:21)

As choud as v'eh **cumrail**, haare ny ainlyn greme er e laue, as er laue e ven, as e ghaa inneen - And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters (Genesis 19:16)

Soie-jee seose yn mergey lesh Zion: reue-jee, ny jean-jee **cumrail** - Set up the standard toward Zion: retire [go forth], stay not (Jeremiah 4:6)

As a transitive verb, *cumrail* means ‘hold up, delay, hinder’:

Cre'n-oyr ta'n fainagh echey fuirriaght choud? cre ta **cumrail** queeylyn e ainagh? - Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots? (Judges 5:28)

Ny jean-jee m'y **chumrail**, fakin dy vel y Chiarn er choyr speedeil mie da my chooish - Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way (Genesis 24:56)

Jerkal rish ‘expect’:

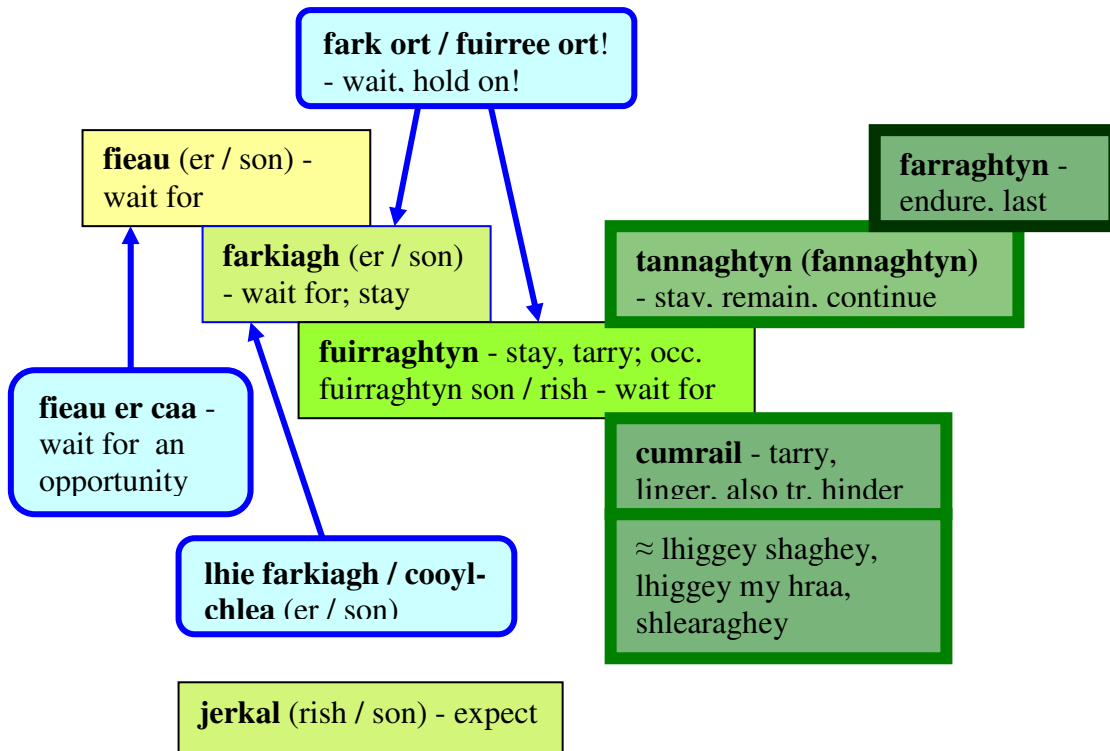
As ghow eh tastey jeu, **jerkal rish** red ennagh y gheddyn voue - And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them (Acts 3:5)

Jeeaghyn son ‘look (out) for’:

ta shin **jeeaghyn son** livrey-ys, agh cha vel eh cheet - we look for judgment [deliverance], but there is none (Isaiah 59:11)

The following diagram illustrates the various words and idioms, and how their senses overlap:

Waiting, staying, continuing, enduring, expecting
- words and expressions in Manx



Cha row dy niart oc

This was raised at the recent Forum ny Gaelgey. The following idiom appears twice in the Bible:

cha row fort ayndoo dy yannoo shickyry yn chroan; **cha row dy niart ayndoo** dy skeayley yn shiaull - they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail (Isaiah 33:23)

Cuir-jee magh yn lieen er y cheu-yesh jeh'n lhong, as bee eh eu. Eisht chuir ad: as nish **cha row dy niart oc** yn lieen y ghoaill stiagh va lhied y thummyd eeast ayn - And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes (John 21:6)

This is probably *dy* as in *jeh* 'of', so 'they did not have of strength to take in the net > they did not have enough strength...'. This idiom is common in Gaelic, where it can be used with any noun, but it appears to have been fossilized in Manx with *niart*. Compare Scottish Gaelic:

chan eil **de dh'airgead** anns an t-saoghal a phàigheadh gus na h-Eileanan a dhìon bhon Chuain - there is not enough money in the world to pay for protecting the Islands from the Ocean (The Scotsman, 31 July 2005)

Proverb of the month:

Eaisht lesh daa chleaysh eisht jean briwnys. - Listen with two ears then make judgement.