

THE ARAN ISLANDS
BY JOHN M. SYNGE

PART I ERASED



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Part I Erased

A set of erasure texts from *The Aran Islands* by John M. Synge

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Devon, UK

a murmur
which comes
dense
on
fog,
but
loosely
in
their heads
and
talked

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till I turned and made them talk to me. They spoke at first of **their poverty**, and then one of them said—

‘I dare say you do have to pay ten shillings a week in the hotel?’

‘More,’ I answered.

‘Twelve?’

‘More.’

‘Fifteen?’

‘More still.’

Then he drew back and **did not question** me any further, either thinking that I had lied to check his curiosity, or too awed by my **riches** to continue.

Repassing Killeany I was joined by a man who had spent twenty years in America, where he had lost his health and then returned, **so** long ago that he had forgotten English and could hardly make me understand him. He seemed **hopeless**, dirty, and asthmatic, and after going with me for a few hundred yards he stopped and asked for coppers. I had none **left**, so I gave him a fill of tobacco, **and** he went back to his hold.

When he **was gone**, two little girls took their place behind me, and I drew them in turn into conversation.

They spoke with a delicate exotic intonation that was full of charm, and told me with a sort

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take place here since he left the island to go to sea, to the end of his childhood.

My wife asks me how **to live** on a new island. I say I know little good of it, but that I have learned from the people who are on it, and anything I have to give them, say, if I go to bed.

I am sure I have this man **seems** a good deal of **a** word of **conceit** and is not to be trusted in his own mind, but he is not so far from the truth when he says that the people on the island are not so much interested in the Bible as in the Book of Genesis, and the Book of Exodus, and the Book of Numbers, and the Book of Deuteronomy, and the Book of Joshua, and the Book of Judges, and the Book of Ruth, and the Book of Samuel, and the Book of Kings, and the Book of Chronicles, and the Book of Ezra, and the Book of Nehemiah, and the Book of Esther, and the Book of Daniel, and the Book of Job, and the Book of Psalms, and the Book of Proverbs, and the Book of Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Song of Songs, and the Book of Isaiah, and the Book of Jeremiah, and the Book of Lamentations, and the Book of Ezekiel, and the Book of Daniel, and the Book of Hosea, and the Book of Joel, and the Book of Amos, and the Book of Obadiah, and the Book of Jonah, and the Book of Micah, and the Book of Nahum, and the Book of Habakkuk, and the Book of Zephaniah, and the Book of Haggai, and the Book of Zechariah, and the Book of Malachi, and the Book of Matthew, and the Book of Mark, and the Book of Luke, and the Book of John, and the Book of Acts, and the Book of Romans, and the Book of Corinthians, and the Book of Galatians, and the Book of Ephesians, and the Book of Colossians, and the Book of Thimo-

In spite of the charm of my teacher, the old blind man, I am on the day of my arrival, I have decided to move on to Inishmaan, where Gaelic is more generally used, and the **life is** perhaps the most **primitive** that is left in Europe.

I spent all the day with my blind guide,

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looking at the antiquities that abound in the west or north-west of the island.

As we set out I noticed among the groups of girls who smiled at our fellowship—old Maureen says we are like the cuckoo with its nest—a beautiful oval face with the singularly spiritual expression that is so marked in one type of the West Ireland women. Later in the day as the old man talked continually of the fairs and women they have taken, it struck me that there was a possible link between the wild mythology that is accepted on the islands and the strange beauty of the women.

At midday we rested near the ruins of a house, and two beautiful boys came up and sat near us. Old Maureen asked them why the house was in ruins, and who had lived in it.

A rich farmer built it a while since, they said—but after two years he was driven away by the fairy host.

The boys came on with us some distance to the north to visit one of the ancient beehive dwellings that is still in perfect preservation. When we crawled in on our hands and knees and stood up in the gloom of the interior, old Maureen took a freak of earthly humour and began telling what he would have done if he could have come in there when he was a young man and a young girl along with him.

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poteen drinking and fighting that he did in his youth, and went on to talk of Diarmuid, who was the strongest man after Samson, and of one of the beds of Diarmuid and Grainne, which is on the east of the island. He says that Diarmuid was killed by the druids, who put a burning shirt on him—a fragment of mythology that may connect Diarmuid with the legend of Hercules, if it is not due to the 'learning' in some hedge-schoolmaster's ballad.

Then we talked about Inishmaan.

'You'll have an old man to talk with you over there,' he said, 'and tell you stories of the fairies, but he's walking about with two sticks under him—it is ten year. Did ever you hear what it is goes on four legs when it is young, and on two legs after that, and on three legs when it does be old?'

I gave him the answer.

'Ah, master,' he said, 'you're a cute one, and the blessing of God be on you. Well, I'm on three legs this minute, but the old man beyond is back on four; I don't know if I'm better than the way he is; he's got his sight and I'm only an old dark man

I am settled at last on Inishmaan in a small cottage with a continual drone of Gaelic coming from the kitchen that opens into my room.

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Then he sat down in the middle of the floor and began to recite old Irish poetry with an exquisite purity of intonation that brought tears to my eyes, though I understood but little of the meaning.

On our way home he gave me the Catholic theory of the fairies.

When Lucifer saw himself in the glass he thought himself equal with God. Then the Lord threw him out of Heaven, and all the angels that belonged to him. While He was chucking them out, an archangel asked him to spare some of them, and those that were falling are in the air still, and have power to wreck ships, and to work evil in the world.

From this he wandered off into tedious matters of theology, and repeated long prayers and sermons in Irish that he had heard from the priests.

A little farther on we came to a slated house, and I asked him who was living in it.

'A kind of a schoolmistress,' he said; then his old face puckered with a gleam of pagan malice.

'Ah, master,' he said, 'wouldn't it be fine to be in there and to be kissing her?'

A couple of miles from this village we turned aside to look at an old ruined church of the Ceathar Abhainn (The Four Beautiful Persons).

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linguistic studies, particularly Gaelic studies, are the chief occupation of the outside world.

'I have seen Frenchmen, and Danes, and Germans,' said one man, 'and there does be a power of Irish books along with them, and they reading them better than ourselves. Believe me, there are few rich men now in the world who are not studying the Gaelic.'

They sometimes ask me the French for simple phrases, and when they have listened to the intonation for a moment, most of them are able to reproduce it with admirable precision.

When I was going out this morning to walk round the island with Michael, the boy who is teaching me Irish, I met an old man making his way down to the cottage. He was dressed in miserable black clothes which seemed to have come from the mainland, and was so bent with rheumatism that, at a little distance, he looked more like a spider than a human being.

Michael told me it was Pat Duane, the story-teller old Mourteen had spoken of on the other island. I wished to turn back, as he appeared to be on his way to visit me, but Michael would not hear of it.

'He will be sitting by the fire when we come in,' he said; 'let you not be afraid, there will be time enough to be talking to him by and by.'

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an eager walk in which all the muscles of my feet ached from their exertion.

The absence of the heavy boot of Europe has preserved to these people the agile work of the wild animal, while the general simplicity of their lives has given them many other points of physical perfection. Their way of life has never been altered or by anything much more artificial than the nests and burrows of the creatures that live about them, and they seem, in a certain sense, to approach more nearly to the characteristics of our aristocracies—who are bred artificially to a natural ideal—than to the laborer or citizen, as the wild horse resembles the thoroughbred rather than the hack or cart-horse. Perhaps of the same natural development are, perhaps frequent in half-civilized countries, but here a result of the refinement of old societies is blended with singular effect among the qualities of the wild animal.

While I am walking with Michael some one of us comes to me to ask the time of day. Few of the people, however, are sufficiently used to modern time to understand in more than a vague way the convention of the hours, and when I tell them what o'clock it is by my watch they are not satisfied, and ask how long is left them before the twilight.

The general knowledge of time on the island

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depends, curiously enough, on the direction of the wind. Nearly all the cottages are built like this one, with two doors opposite each other, the more sheltered of which lies open all day to give light to the interior. If the wind is northerly the south door is opened, and the shadow of the door post moving across the kitchen floor indicates the hour; as soon, however, as the wind changes to the south the other door is opened, and the people, who never think of putting up a primitive dial, are at a loss.

This system of doorways has another curious result. It usually happens that all the doors on one side of the village pathway are lying open with women sitting about on the thresholds, while on the other side the doors are shut and there is no sign of life. The moment the wind changes everything is reversed, and sometimes when I come back to the village after an hour's walk there seems to have been a general flight from one side of the way to the other.

In my own cottage the change of the doors alters the whole tone of the kitchen, turning it from a brilliantly-lighted room looking out on a yard and lane way to a sombre cell with a superb view of the sea.

When the wind is from the north the old woman manages my meals with fair regularity, but on the other days she often makes my tea at

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over a wall and went up to the house to look in at the window.

I saw **a dead man** laid on a table, and candles lighted, and a woman watching him. I was frightened when I saw him, but it was raining hard, and I said to myself, if **he was dead** he couldn't hurt me. Then I knocked on the door and the woman came and opened it.

'Good evening, ma'am,' says I.

'Good evening kindly, stranger,' says she. 'Come in out of the rain.'

Then she took me in and told me her husband **was** after **dying** on her, and she was watching him that night.

'But it's thirsty you'll be, stranger,' says she. 'Come into the parlour.'

Then she took me into the parlour—and it **was** a fine clean house—and she put a cup, with a saucer under it, on the table before me, with fine sugar and bread.

When I'd had **a** cup of tea I went back into the kitchen where the **dead man** was **lying** and she gave me a fine new pipe off the table with a drop of spirits.

'Stranger,' says she, 'would you be afraid to be alone with himself?'

Not a bit in the world, ma'am,' says I; 'he that's **dead** can do no hurt.'

Then she said she wanted to go over and tell

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three o'clock instead of six. If I refuse it, she puts it down to summer for three hours in the turf, and then brings it in at six o'clock full of anxiety to know if it is warm enough.

The old man is suggesting that **I should send him** a clock when I go away. He'd like to have **something** from me in the house, he says, the way they wouldn't forget me, and wouldn't a clock be as handy as another thing, and they'd be thinking on me whenever they'd look on its face.

The general ignorance of any precise hours in the day makes it impossible for the people to have regular meals.

They seem **to eat** together in the evening, and sometimes in the morning a little after dawn, before they scatter for their work; but during the day they simply drink a cup of tea and eat a piece of bread, or some potatoes, whenever they are hungry.

For men who live in the open air they eat strangely little. Often **when Michael has been out weeding potatoes for eight or nine hours without food**, he comes in and eats a few slices of home-made bread, and then he is ready to go out with me and wander for hours about the island.

They use no animal food except a little bacon and salt fish. The old woman says she would be very ill if she ate fresh meat.

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of clumsy wicker-work, with two pieces of rough wood fastened underneath to serve as rockers, and all **the** time I am in my room I can hear it bumping on the floor with **extraordinary** violence. When the baby is awake it sprawls on the floor, and the old woman sings it a variety of lullabies that have much musical charm.

Another daughter, who lives at home, has gone to the fair also, so the old woman has both the baby and myself to take care of, as well as a crowd of **chickens that live** in a hole beside the fire. Often when I want tea, or when the old woman goes for water, I have to take my own turn at rocking the cradle.

One of the largest duns, or pagan forts, on the islands, is **within** a stone's throw of my cottage, and I often stroll up there after a dinner of eggs or salt pork, to smoke drowsily on the stones. The neighbours know my habit, and not infrequently some one wanders up to ask what news there is in the last paper I have received, or to make inquiries about **the American** war. If no one comes I prop my book open with stones **touched by** the Bir-bolgs, and sleep for hours in the delicious warmth of the sun. The last few days I have almost lived on the round **walls** for, by some miscalculation, our turf has come to an end, and the fires are kept

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Pat told me a story of an unfaithful wife, which I will give further down, and then broke into a moral dispute with the visitor, which caused immense delight to some young men who had come down to listen to the story. Unfortunately it was carried on so rapidly in Gaelic that I lost most of the points.

This old man talks usually in a mournful tone about his ill-health, and his death which he feels to be approaching, yet he has occasional touches of humour that remind me of old Mourteen on the north island. To-day a grotesque twopenny doll was lying on the floor near the old woman. He picked it up and examined it as if comparing it with her. Then he held it up: 'Is it you is after bringing that thing into the world,' he said, 'woman of the house?'

Here is his story:

One day I was travelling on foot from Galway to Dublin, and the darkness came on me and I ten miles from the town I was wanting to pass the night in. Then a hard rain began to fall and I was tired walking, so when I saw a sort of a house with no roof on it up against the road, I got in the way the walls would give me shelter. As I was looking round I saw a light in some trees two perches off, and thinking any sort of a house would be better than where I was I got

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the neighbours the way her husband was after dying on her, and she went out and locked the door behind her.

I smoked one pipe, and I leaned out and took another off the table. I was smoking it with my hand on the back of my chair—the way you are yourself this minute, God bless you!—and I looking on **the dead man** when he opened his eyes as wide as myself and looked at me.

‘Don’t be afear’d, stranger, said the dead man; ‘I’m **not dead at all** in the world. Come here and help me up, and I’ll tell you all about it.’

Well, I went up and took the sheet off of him, and I saw that he had a fine clean shirt on his body, and fine flannel drawers.

He sat up then, and **says** he:

‘I’ve got a bad wife, stranger, and **I let on to be dead** the way I’d catch her goings on.’

Then he got two fine sticks he had to keep down his wife, and he put them at each side of his body, and he laid himself out again **as if he was dead**.

In half an hour his wife came back, and a young man along with her. Well, she gave him his tea, and she told him **he was** tired, and he would do right to go and lie down in the bedroom.

The young man went in, and the woman sat

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rock, a strip of surf, and then a tumult of waves.

The slaty limestone has grown black with the water that is dripping on it, and wherever I turn there is the same grey obsession twining and wreathing itself among the narrow fields, and the same wail from the wind that shrieks and whistles in the loose rubble of the walls.

At first the people do not give much attention to the wilderness that is round them, but after a few days their voices sink in the kitchen, and their endless talk of pigs and cattle falls to the whisper of men who are telling stories in a haunted house.

The rain continues; but this evening a number of young men were in the kitchen mending nets, and the bottle of poteen was drawn from its hiding-place.

One cannot think of these people drinking wine on the summit of this crumbling precipice but their grey poteen, which brings a shock of joy to the blood, seems predestined to keep sanity in men who live forgotten in these worlds of mist.

I sat in the kitchen part of the evening to feel the gaiety that was rising, and when I came into my own room after dark, one of the sons came

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fro, and bending her forehead to the stone before her, while she called out to the dead with a perpetually recurring chant of sobs.

All round the graveyard other, wrinkled women, looking out from under the deep red petticoats that cloaked them, rocked themselves with the same rhythm, and intoned the inarticulate chant that is sustained by all as an accompaniment.

The morning had been beautifully fine, but as they lowered the coffin into the grave, thunder rumbled overhead and hailstones hissed among the bracken.

In Irishman one is forced to believe in a sympathy between man and nature, and at this moment, when the thunder sounded a death-peal of extraordinary grandeur above the voices of the women, I could see the faces near me stiff and drawn with emotion.

When the coffin was in the grave, and the thunder had rolled away across the hills of Clare, the keen broke out again more passionately than before.

This grief of the keen is no personal complaint for the death of one woman over eighty years, but seems to contain the whole passionate force that lurks somewhere in every native of the island. In this cry of pain the inner consciousness of the people seems to lay itself bare for an

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instant, and to reveal the mood of beings who feel their isolation in the face of a universe that wars on them with winds and seas. They are usually silent, but in the presence of death all outward show of indifference or patience is forgotten, and they shriek with pitiable despair before the horror of the fate to which they all are doomed.

Before they covered the coffin an old man knelt down by the grave and repeated a simple prayer for the dead.

There was an irony in these words of atonement and Catholic belief spoken by voices that were still hoarse with the cries of pagan desperation.

A little beyond the grave I saw a line of old women who had recited in the keen sitting in the shadow of a wall beside the roofless shell of the church. They were still sobbing and shaken with grief yet they were beginning to talk again of the daily trifles that veil from them the terrors of the world.

When we had all come out of the graveyard, and two men had rebuilt the hole in the wall through which the coffin had been carried in, we walked back to the village, talking of anything and joking of anything, as if merely coming from the boat-slip, or the pier.

One man told me of the poteen-drinking that takes place at some funerals.

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men feel

it a great wonder

there is

strength and timidity

in

the same

spoken

moment

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without knowing, most of **the** time, what they are saying.

Apart, however, from this primitive babble, the dexterity and **power of the men** are displayed to more advantage than in anything I have seen hitherto. I noticed particularly the owner of a hooker from the north island that was loaded this morning. He seemed able **to hold up** a horse by his single weight when it was swinging from the mast-head, and preserved a humorous calm even in moments of the wildest excitement. Sometimes a large mare would come down sideways on the backs of the other horses, and kick there till the hold seemed to be filled with a **mass of struggling** centaurs, for the men themselves often leap down to try and save the foals from injury. The backs of the horses put in first are often a good deal cut by the shoes of the others that arrive on the top of them; but otherwise they do not seem to be much the worse, and **as** they are not on their way to **a** fair, it is not of much **consequence** in what condition they come **to** land.

There is only one bit and **saddle** in the island which are used by **the priest** who rides from the chapel to the pier when he has held the service **on Sunday**.

The islanders themselves ride with a simple halter and a stick, yet sometimes travel **at least**

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has bidden me good-bye. He met me in the village this morning and took me into his hut, a miserable hovel, where he spends the night.

I sat for a long time on his threshold while he leaned on a stool behind me, near his bed, and told me the last story I shall have from him—a rude anecdote not worth recording. Then he told me with careful emphasis how he had wandered when he was a young man, and lived in a fine college, teaching Irish to the young priests!

They say on the island that he can tell as many lies as four men; perhaps the stories he has learned have strengthened his imagination.

When I stood up in the doorway to give him God's blessing, he leaned over on the straw that forms his bed, and shed tears. Then he turned to me again, lifting up one trembling hand, with the mitten worn to a hole on the palm from the rubbing of his crutch.

'I'll not see you again,' he said, with tears trickling on his face, 'and you're a kindly man. When you come back next year I won't be in it. I won't live beyond the winter. But listen now to what I'm telling you; let you put insurance on me in the city of Dublin, and it's five hundred pounds you'll get on my burial.'

This evening, my last in the island, is also the

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the man, which was making matters of the
but the fact by the way. The man had had their share of sorrow
was naturally a delicate individual. The
the fact had already been said. The
of them to make up for it. The
of the fact that was a sad thing.
They told me that in 1841, the
to the island to me now. The
long account of what happened
in the year, and of their
The fact is hard enough for a man to
said one of them. The fact was that
and they were all dead. The
of me. A man will have to pay
and a pound of money will be
and I am thinking the man will
enough out of them. The
strong and will be man of the
I make a man who the
belonged to
fact. The man was a
belonged to Miss — and she is
The man was a
have a man who the
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The man was a
and I am thinking the man will
dream
The man was a
few of the island sleeping up
the

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attempts was begun in the middle of a crowd of natives who looked on in absolute silence, broken only by the wild imprecations of the woman of the house. She belonged to one of the most primitive families on the island, and she shrieked with uncontrollable fury as she saw the armed men, who spoke a language she could not understand, driving her from the hearth she had brooded on for thirty years. For these people the outrage to the hearth is the supreme catastrophe. They live here in a world of grey, where there are wild rains and mists every week in the year, and their warm chimney corners filled with children and young girls, glow into the consciousness of each family as a wife it is not easy to understand in more civilized places.

The outrage to a tomb in China probably gives no greater shock to the Chinese than the outrage to a hearth in Bushmaan gives to the people.

When the few trifles had been carried out and the door blocked with stones, the old woman sat down by the threshold and covered her head with her shawl.

Five or six other women who lived close by sat down in a circle round her, with their sympathy. Then the crowd moved on with the police to another cottage where the wife

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was a slight scuffle, and then the pigs continued their mad rush to the east, leaving three policemen lying in the dust.

The satisfaction of the people was immense. They shrieked and hugged each other with delight and it is likely that they will hand down these animals for generations in the tradition of the island.

Two hours later, the other party returned driving three lean cows before them, and a start was made for the ship. At the public-house the policemen were given a drink, while the dense crowd that was following waited in the lane. The island bull happened to be in a field close by and he became wildly excited at the sight of the cows and of the strangely dressed men. Two young islanders sidled up to me in a moment or two as I was resting on a wall, and one of them whispered in my ear.

'Do you think they could take ones of us if we let out the bull on them?'

In face of the crowd of women and children, I could only say it was probable, and they slunk off.

At the ship there was a good deal of bargaining, which ended in all the cattle being given back to their owners. It was plainly of no use to take them away, as they were worth nothing.

When the last policeman had embarked, an

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old woman came forward from the crowd and, mounting on a rock near the slip, began a fierce rhapsody in Gaelic, pointing at the bailiff and waving her withered arms with extraordinary rage.

'This man is my own son,' she said; 'it is I that ought to know him. He is the first ruffian in the whole big world.'

Then she gave an account of his life, coloured with a vindictive fury I cannot reproduce. As she went on the excitement became so intense I thought the man would be stoned before he could get back to his cottage.

On these islands the women live only for their children, and it is hard to estimate the power of the impulse that made this old woman stand out and curse her son.

In the fury of her speech I seem to look again into the strangely reticent temperament of the islanders, and to feel the passionate spirit that expresses itself, at odd moments only, with magnificent words and gestures.

Old Fat has told me a story of the goose that lays the golden eggs, which he calls the Phoenix.

A poor widow had three sons and a daughter. One day when her sons were out looking for

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she comes in

men are lolling

dreamy

waves

old men

fond of

anecdotes

about

passion

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court and swear against each other till they become bitter enemies. If there is a conviction the man who is convicted never forgives. He waits his time, and before the year is out there is a cross summons, which the other man in turn never forgives. The feud continues to grow till a dispute about the colour of a man's hair may end in a murder, after a year's foreing by the law. The mere fact that it is impossible to get reliable evidence in the island—not because the people are dishonest, but because they think the claim of kinship more sacred than the claims of abstract truth—turns the whole system of sworn evidence into a demoralizing farce, and it is easy to believe that law dealings on this false basis must lead to every sort of injustice.

While I am discussing these questions with the old men the curaghs begin to come in with cargoes of salt, and flour, and porter.

To-day a stir was made by the return of a native who had spent five years in New York. He came on shore with half a dozen people who had been shopping on the mainland, and walked up and down on the slip in his neat suit, looking strangely foreign to his birthplace while his old mother of eighty-five ran about on the slippery seaweed, half crazy with delight telling every one the news.

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for

morning had

luxuriance

with

nakedness

yielded

to remain quiet

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scale, and having a resonance as searching as the strings of the 'cello.

Then the luring excitement became more powerful than my will, and my limbs moved in spite of me.

In a moment I was swept away in a whirlwind of notes. My breath and my thoughts and every impulse of my body became a form of the dance, till I could not distinguish between the instruments and the rhythm and my own person or consciousness.

For a while it seemed an excitement that was filled with joy; then it grew into an ecstasy where all existence was lost in a vortex of movement. I could not think there had ever been a life beyond the whirling of the dance.

Then with a shock the ecstasy turned to an agony and rage. I struggled to free myself, but seemed only to increase the passion of the steps I moved to. When I shrieked I could only echo the notes of the rhythm.

At last, with a moment of uncontrollable frenzy, I broke back to consciousness and awoke.

I dragged myself trembling to the window of the cottage and looked out. The moon was glittering across the bay and there was no sound anywhere on the island.

I am leaving in two days, and old Pat Dirane

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and grate upon my ankles. We stagger and groan beneath the weight, but at last our feet reach the slip, and we run down with a half-trot like the pace of barefooted children.

A yard from the sea we stop, and lower the curragh to the right. It must be brought down gently—a difficult task for our strained and aching muscles—and sometimes as the gunwale reaches the slip I lose my balance and roll in among the seats.

Yesterday we went out in the curragh that had been damaged on the day of my visit to Killyonan, and as we were putting in the oars the freshly-tarred patch stuck to the slip, which was heated with the sunshine. We carried up water in the bailer—the ‘cuppen,’ a shallow wooden vessel like a soup-plate—and with infinite pains we got free and rode away. In a few moments, however, I found the water spouting up at my feet.

The patch had been misplaced, and this time we had no sacking. Michael borrowed my pocket scissors, and with admirable rapidity cut a square of flannel from the tail of his shirt and squeezed it into the hole, making it fast with a splat which he hacked from one of the oars.

During our excitement the tide had carried us to the brink of the rocks, and I admired again the dexterity with which he got his oars into the

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Has hidden me good bye. He took me to the village this morning and took me into his little miserable hovel where he spends the night.

I sat for a long time on his threshold, while he leaned on a stool behind me, near his feet and told me the last story I shall hear from him — a tale one dare not work revelation. I had he told me with careful emphasis, now he has wondered when he was a young man, and lived in a fine college, teaching Irish to the young priests.

They say on the island that he can tell as many lies as John Bull, perhaps the stories he has learned have strengthened his imagination.

When I stood up in the doorway to say that God's blessing he leaned over on the stool that forms his bed, and shed tears. I took his hand to the brain, lifting up one trembling hand, with the mitten worn to a hole on the palm, and in rubbing of his crutch.

"I'll not see you again," he said, with tears trickling on his face, "and you're a kindly man. When you come back next year, I won't be able to. I won't live beyond the winter. But I'll say now to what I'm telling you, let you put his name on me in the city of Dublin, and it's five hundred pounds you'll get on my head."

This evening, my last in the island, is also the

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evening of the Pattern—celebrated after the
the "gardons" of Brittany.
I waited specially to see it, but a piper who
was expected did not come, and there was no
amusement. A few friends and relations came
over from the other islands and stood about the
public house in their best clothes, but without
dancing was impossible.

I believe on some occasions when the piper
is present there is a fine display of the local
extraneous, but the Galway piper is
old and is not rarely induced to

Each night, St. John's Eve, the fire
burned and boys ran about with pieces of
burning turf, though I could see and hear the
noise of hitting the house fires from the boat.
It is still found on the island.

I have come out of an hotel full of tourists
and commercial travellers to walk across the
side of Galway Bay and look across the
direction of the islands. The sun of yesterday
I feel towards these towers, which are so easily
across. This town, that is usually so full of wild
human music, is steep in the present mood, a
tawdry medley of the a is against the modern
the nullity of the rich, and the power of
the poor, who are in some sense of social