

**THROUGH THE TURF
SMOKE: LOVE,
LORE AND LAUGHTER OF
OLD IRELAND**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649501458

Through the Turf Smoke: Love, Lore and Laughter of Old Ireland by Seumas Mac Manus

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

SEUMAS MAC MANUS

**THROUGH THE TURF
SMOKE: LOVE,
LORE AND LAUGHTER OF
OLD IRELAND**

Through the Turf Smoke

6

Through the Turf Smoke

Love, Lore, and Laughter of Old Ireland

BY
SEUMAS MAC MANUS
(“MAC”)

AUTHOR OF “THE HUMOURS OF DONEGAL,”
“THE LEADIN’ ROAD TO DONEGAL,” ETC.]

LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
Paternoster Square
1901

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE, - - -	9
THE WISDOM OF DARK PATRICK, - - -	28
WHEN MYLES MAGUIRE MELTED, - - -	50
PATRICK'S PROXY, - - - -	78
THE CADGER-BOY'S LAST JOURNEY, - - -	93
THE BOYNE WATER, - - - -	113
CONDY SHERRAN'S COURTIN', - - -	131
BILLY LAPPIN'S SEARCH FOR A FORTUNE, -	151

TO MY READERS

TRAGEDY and pathos *go leor* there are in our lives, toilsome struggle and patient suffering; but when we gather around the turf fire—old and young, boys and girls—care slips like a cloak from our shoulders; the oldest is for the hour a child, gaiety crowds the cabin, and merriment fills all hearts. The wand of wit is laid upon us: the joke, the banter, and the merry story, pass; and the folk-tale, old as the babble of our streams, and still as fresh and sweet, is listened to by ears that hearken for the hundredth time as fondly as they did for the first. Alike grey old pows and yellow little curly locks shake in sympathy for the sorrows of the hero, and wag with delight for his devilment and drollery. The same hearts that rang out a little peal of childish laughter beneath a smoke-blackened Irish roof-tree have afterwards, on red fields, often raised a *rann* that fluttered the folds of the defiant and triumphant Stripes and Stars.

In my remote and mountain-barred Donegal, the people, for a niggard living, strive with a surly sea and wrestle with a stubborn soil; they are poor as paupers, and hospitable as millionaires. But the wit, the imagination, the poetry, the virtues, the soul, of the most miserable amongst them the wealth of Cræsus couldn't purchase.

Civilisation (with its good and its ill) has not yet quite felt itself at home amongst us; books are few; so there the shanachy, the teller of tales and the singer of songs, still gathers—in his old-time glory; on long winter nights the world comes and seats itself, spell-bound, at his feet. From early childhood I, with my little tribute of admiration, sat by his feet. The glory of him dazzled me, and I dreamt of one day faring forth and conquering worlds for myself.

—I was a child, I said, and dreamt dreams.

SEUMAS MAC MANUS.

Through the Turf Smoke

THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE

FAIX, it's a good long when of years since it happened now. It was ould Jimmy Higgerty, that was uncle to Mickey across there, reharsed the passage to me. An' it was ould Jimmy himself, more betoken, that was the cause of the whole affair—for Jimmy, ye know, was what we call a canny man, very knowin' intirely, an' up to all sorts of saicrets that you nor me nor one belongin' to us, thanks be to Providence, knows nothin' at all, at all about. Jimmy was right-han' man with the fairies; an' if ye'd believe all the stories ye hear goin' he come through some quare things, too, in his day—used to be out, they say, as reg'lar as the sun set, an' away ridin' aist and waist with the good people, an' gettin' insight into their ways of workin'; an' sure it's meself that rec'lects

10 Through the Turf Smoke

if there was only a bit of a year-oul' calve sick from one end of the barony to the other, it was nothin' but post-haste for Jimmy Higgerty to cure it—an', sure enough, when Jimmy put the charm on it, it either lived or died affther ; there was no middle coorse.

Well, howsomiver, in Jimmy's day there was in Doorin' a one Solomon Casshidy ; an' the same Solomon in his young days was a thrife wild—the fact is (to kill the hare at a blow), Solomon was the completest rascal iver run on two feet, an' was a parable for the counthry. Christenin', weddin', wake, funeral, pattrern, fair, or market niver wint off complete without Solomon Casshidy ; dance, raffle, or spree of any sort, shape, or pattrern niver missed Solomon Casshidy, who, by the way, was the very life an' sowl of the gatherin's ; an' people would as soon think of doin' without the fiddler at one of these merry-makin's as without Solomon Casshidy. An' that just put me in mind that Solomon was the dandy hand at the fiddle ; the bate of him wasn't to be got between cock-crow an' candlelight the longest day in June. He would charm the heart of a whin-bush ; arrah, good luck to your wit, man, he'd