

**BESIDE THE FIRE: A
COLLECTION OF IRISH
GAELIC FOLK STORIES**

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Beside the fire: a collection of Irish Gaelic folk stories by Douglas Hyde & Alfred Nutt

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DOUGLAS HYDE & ALFRED NUTT

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BESIDE THE FIRE

A COLLECTION OF

IRISH GAELIC FOLK STORIES.

EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED

BY

DOUGLAS HYDE, LL.D., M.R.I.A.,

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MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF THE GAELIC SPEAKERS AND WRITERS OF
SCOTLAND, &c.

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES

BY

ALFRED NUTT.

Tá siar mairtín ar siarú na h-éirí-
blanleap ar to gáil léis gairín. — DEAN MANN.

"They are like a mist on the coming of night
That is scattered away by a light breath of wind." — O'DONOVAN.

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DEDICATION.



To the memory of those truly cultured and unselfish men, the poet-scribes and hedge-schoolmasters of the last century and the beginning of this—men who may well be called the last of the Milesians—I dedicate this effort to preserve even a scrap of that native lore which in their day they loved so passionately, and for the preservation of which they worked so nobly, but in vain

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P R E F A C E.

IRISH and Scotch Gaelic folk-stories are, as a living form of literature, by this time pretty nearly a thing of the past. They have been trampled in the common ruin under the feet of the *Zeitgeist*, happily not before a large harvest has been reaped in Scotland, but, unfortunately, before anything worth mentioning has been done in Ireland to gather in the crop which grew luxuriantly a few years ago. Until quite recently there existed in our midst millions of men and women who, when their day's work was over, sought and found mental recreation in a domain to which few indeed of us who read books are permitted to enter. Man, all the world over, when he is tired of the actualities of life, seeks to unbend his mind with the creations of fancy. We who can read betake ourselves to our favourite novelist, and as we peruse his fictions, we can almost see our author erasing this, heightening that, and laying on such-and-such a touch for effect. His book is the product of his individual brain, and some of us or of our contemporaries have been present at its genesis.