CARROLL COLLEGE

"MELODIES OF JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*"

Honor Thesis

Department of English

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INTRODUCTION

To be Irish isn't easy--there's no smug sense of being "right", such as the English enjoy, no solid identification with the Faderland, such as is held by the Germans, nor the pride in accomplishment that most Americans cherish. There's an uneasy feeling of limbo in an Irishman's heart--not quite secure in his love for his country and its traditions, passionate in his defense of its errors and pain in the knowledge of its failures. For me, half-Irish, wholly involved in love of Ireland, yet angry and dismayed by its violence, it has become less and less simple. I avoided for many years the Irish authors, too many of the things about which they wrote hurt and angered me. Becoming involved with James Joyce and his work has not been an easy experience for me--particularly since I am a descendant of a man named Thomas Joyce, from Cork, Ireland. It has been, however, a cathartic experience; over and over I recognized in his work emotions I have felt for so long: a sense of frustration, a feeling of compassion for his people and a recognition of the hopelessness of change in that troubled land. Once I had committed myself to the study of Dubliners and began to understand the things Joyce was saying, I found that I was better able to deal with my own emotions about my father's people.

In addition to the identification and caring I found in the stories, the use of music, another of my loves, fascinated me. Irish music has always seemed to me to reflect the heart of the Irishman--more often than not sad and longing, yet carrying somewhere in its mournful refrain the

overtones of sunlight, much like the golden light that suffuses the damp air of the Emerald Isle when the brief rain showers have passed. It seemed to me, then, a logical, almost compulsive thing to explore the use of music in this book which said so many important things about this land. Presumptuous as it may be, I think James Joyce and I have a lot in common in our view of Ireland!

I hope in this brief study to show that James Joyce did two things: (1) gave the world a picture of the Irish soul which is as valid today as it was over a half-century ago when it was written and (2) used a canvas on which to paint the deep Irish consciousness of melody and rhythm, theme and counterpoint which is an integral part of the character of the Emerald Isle and its inhabitants.

Before entering directly into a discussion of the book, a brief glance at the importance of music in Ireland and its place in the history of the country is necessary.

The culture of Ireland has been shaped by waves of domination from the dawn of its history. Conquered by the Celts, who superimposed their own culture on that of the native tribes, the Irish became strangers in their own land.[1] It is tempting to speculate, in the absence of written records, on the impact of this outside culture on the tribes of Ireland. All that remains to us, however, is the knowledge that the Celtic invasion brought about a time of productivity, in arts, as well as in homelier pursuits. The Golden Age of pure Celtic domination ended in the 8th century, when the fertile isle became the target for raids and eventual domination by the barbaric Norsemen. During this Golden Age, however, a firm structure of art was instituted; predominant was the tradition of song.

The misty wet climate of Ireland has not been a friend of the student of antiquity. Much of the physical evidence of early civilization has been lost, a victim of dampness and deterioration. That which remains is inconclusive, forcing the student of early Irish history to rely heavily on verbal tradition, passed down from generation to generation in poem and song.

Through folklore we learn of the "aes dana," men of art, vital to the structure of early Irish society:

> These were the men whose skill gave them a status beyond that due to birth; we might almost call them "professional men," ....the lawyer and the leech, but also the skilled wright and the jeweller, and more important still, the poet, the historian and the musician.[2]

These men would create the world which their fellows would inhabit. The musician may have been, at first, merely a story-teller or poet who told his tales in a particularly persuasive voice.

St. Patrick in the 5th century converted the pagans of the green island to Christianity, and found there artists trained to assist him in acquainting the populace with God's word. It is certain that he entrusted much of the carrying of his message to the musicians who roved the land, already beloved of the people, welcomed eagerly wherever they went and able to convince their auditors with the magic of Gaelic lore.

The domination of the Norse invaders on Ireland was broken in 1014 by the great Irish hero, Brian Boru. Over a century of freedom from foreign control ensued. During this time, poetry and its sister art, music, rose to new importance.

Eventually the Irish bards were able to add a new dimension to their singing, that of accompaniment on a small stringed instrument known variously as the lyre, lyra, cruit, chrotta, crwth, rota or rote.

How they obtained these instruments, how they learned to play them, is hidden behind a time and history barrier that we cannot breach. By the 8th or 9th centuries, however, stonemasons were carving scenes which clearly depicted musicians with the instrument which has survived as the harp. There are several examples extant on the famed Irish crosses from the 10th and 11th centuries, such as the Darrow Cross, Muiredeach's Cross and the South Cross, Castledermot.[3] Thus early in its history we find the combination of religion and music which performs, even today, vital functions in the life of Ireland. The harp has become a national symbol for a people who took its music into their very hearts and souls.

The wars of invasion and subjugation which raged over Ireland beginning in the 12th century destroyed a great segment of the oral history and musical tradition. Little of the original music has survived, but in recent years much has been done to salvage it. The government of Eire currently supports "An Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann," an organization whose first aim is "to promote Irish traditional music in all its forms".[4]

Even with the beginnings of written rather than strictly oral communication in the 15th century, the Irish were doomed to suffer in any attempt to perpetuate their national song and literature. The English, granted overlordship of Ireland in the 12th century by Pope Adrian IV, did not allow their captives to enjoy any of their own culture. By the time of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, the Penal Codes were imposed on Ireland, harsh restrictive measures, which were, according to Thomas Moore, "real efforts...to wipe out all of Irish minstrelsy."[5] That the efforts were unsuccessful can be attributed to the devotion of the Irish to their own haunting Gaelic music, which became a passive avenue of resistance and source of comfort to an oppressed people.

The so-called "popular" songs, which began to be heard across the land in the 18th century, took for their themes words which reflected the hatred and despair of the Irish under the rule of the English overlord. Such songs as "Tho' Dark Are Our Sorrows," by Thomas Moore, are eloquent testimoney to their despair;

> Tho' dark are our sorrows, today we'll forget them,
> And smile thro' our tears like a sunbeam in show'rs;
> There never were hearts, if our rulers would let them,
> More form'd to be grateful and blest than ours!
> But, just when the chain has ceas'd to pain,
> And hope has enwreath'd it round with flow'rs,
> There comes a new link, Our spirit to sink!
> Oh! the joy that we taste, like the light of the poles,
> Is a flash amid darkness, too brilliant to stay;
> But tho' 'twere the last little spark in our souls,
> We must light it up now, on our Prince's Day.[6]

Other songs of this era were simple little ditties, many dealing with the bright charms of Irish lasses or their lovesick swains, such as "Kate Kearney" and "The Dandy O!" In the mid-19th century, during the Famine and the subsequent flight of much of the population for shelter in other countries, a whole group of songs sprang up, songs of longing, for those left behind or those who had departed, lonely for the green shores which had failed them. "Peggy Bawn" and "Doubt Me Not" are good examples of this genre. "Dear Harp of My Country" and "We May Roam Through This World" (sung to the delightful tune of "Garryowen"), are patriotic songs, with a note of pain and frustration in each, for the beloved country was not free.

Many Irish melodies are written in a predominately minor key. Their similarity to the songs of the Welsh is great, springing from a common Celtic background. The power of Welsh music, however, is missing--there is a softness and resignation that one does not find in the sometimes

martial, nearly always stirring Welsh rhythms. This reflects the Irish character, sad and submissive. Very often the gayer songs of Ireland tend to be bawdy and easily parodied. While this may not have been as prevalent in the early 1900's, when James Joyce was writing about Dublin, one suspects that it has always been a real part of Irish music.

Irish artists nearly always leave their native shore, partly because financial rewards are so evident in other countries and lacking in their own and partly because there is a lack of recognition and acceptance in Ireland. John Sullivan, Irish tenor and good friend of Joyce, was forced to seek fame in Europe, a fact which irked and frustrated Joyce.[7] Once a reputation has been established, however, usually the Irish are happy to welcome their prodigals home!

Reluctance to recognize the talent of outstanding individuals may be explained by the fact that every Irishman regards himself as a singer *par excellence*! Rare indeed is the native of Eire who cannot sing and will not break into song at the least sign of an invitation!

> From Joyce's books we get a picture of Dublin in full song, from the "nasal chanting of street singers, who sang a come-all-you about O'Donovan Rossa," or a ballad about the troubles in our native land (*Dubliners*, "Araby"), to bel canto performed by Simon Dedalus in the Ormond Bar.[8]

During the early part of the 20th century, Dublin was the cultural center for all of Ireland, and avidly greeted all those musicians who came to regale her citizens. The Dublin Opera Society was famous for the excellence of its productions. It maintained a position of preeminence in the musical life of the city for many years, then shared honors with the Dublin Grand Opera Society. Almost a quarter of a century of excellent opera was enjoyed by the citizenry of Dublin, sparked by the rivalry between the two groups. The two societies later combined,

continuing their great traditions. Joyce was able to avail himself, then, of the offerings of famed musicians from every part of the musical world during his youth in Dublin.

Whether the heritage of song from their Gaelic ancestors has proved too strong to be eradicated or whether the Irish have adopted this means of expression when they are denied so many other freedoms are moot questions. The conclusion one must reach, however, is this: it would be almost impossible to grow up in Ireland, to live there and attend school there, without learning the words of the traditional Irish songs and their meanings--and, most important, learning, as Joyce did, to sing and cherish Irish music!

This then, is a brief resume of the development of Ireland's music and a brief explanation of the chord it strikes in me--the chord which was touched half-painfully when I visited Ireland recently. The Irish (or even the half-Irish, like me!) are suffused with a sense of the ancient, with a melancholic nostalgia for those glorious days. It is this melancholy, pervading The Dubliners, which gave me the impetus to explore the music of Eire in Joyce's strange and evocative little tales.

My principal debt in preparing this paper has to be attributed to my father, who sang snatches of Irish songs to me and who loved to hear me play Irish melodies when I had mastered a bit of piano technique. On a more practical, immediate basis, my debt is large to Sister Miriam Clare, O.S.F., Ph.D., who helped me to many insights into The Dubliners and encouraged me greatly in my efforts, to Mr. Henry Burgess, M.A., head of the English Department of Carroll College, who enthusiastically backed Sister Miriam Clare in her program, "British Life and Culture," which enabled me to sample briefly the real feeling of Ireland and to whom I owe much in personal encouragement; I am grateful to the administration of

Carroll College, which approved and assisted with the excellent study abroad program in 1974.

Among the books which I found most valuable were those volumes of _James Joyce's Letters_, edited by Stuart Gilbert and Richard Ellmann and the excellent text edited by Robert Scholes and A. Walton Litz; _James Joyce Dubliners, Text, Criticism, and Notes_.

Footnotes, Introduction

[1]"Ireland", The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia. 1960, Vol.I.

[2]D.A. Binchy, Secular Institutions in Early Irish Society, ed. by Miles Dillon (Dublin: 1954), p. 57.

[3]Joan Rimmer, The Irish Harp (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1969), pp.20-22.

[4]Charles Acton, "Notes on Irish Music", Eire, N.P.

[5]Thomas Moore, Irish Melodies (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1849), intro., pp.vii, viii.

[6]Ibid. pp. 94-95.

[7]Herbert Gorman, James Joyce (New York; Rinehart and Co., Inc. 1948), p. 346.

[8]Mathew J.C. Hodgart and Mabel P. Worthington, Song in the Works of James Joyce (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 5.

[9]Charles Acton, "Opera in Ireland, Actual and Potential", Eire, N.P.

CHAPTER I

THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC

Young, untried, intense and eager to conquer the literary world of his time, James Joyce must have felt, as he began the exciting task of selling his work, like one of his own heroes;

> Bright cap and streamers,
> He sings in the hollow;
> Come follow, come follow,
> All you that love.[1]

Singing and music are metaphors which would have occurred naturally to Joyce, a product of both a musical family and a musical country. At the outset of his career he would express himself as a singer who would lead to happiness, Pied Piper fashion, all those who loved or understood him.

Born into a large family where music was an accepted part of every day, little James soon learned an appreciation for the fine singing voice of his father, John Stanislaus Joyce, who frequently sang at home, as well as at an occasional public concert. Said to have the best tenor voice in Ireland,[2] John Joyce was not shy of using it, nor of telling his friends how well he sang! To an impressionable young boy, the song of his gay, charming, wastrel father must have been a decided influence in his own proposed musical and literary career. His mother, Mary Jane, was also a brilliant pianist and came from a family well-known for its singing ability. Wherever the family lived, even in its many descending moves, the Joyce home must have rung with song.

As the small boy grew into a shy adolescent, he was delighted to discover that he had inherited the fine tenor voice of John Stanislaus; it had brought him many moments of joy in his childhood. In his last two years at Belvedere College, when he was in his early teens, he often entertained at private parties, delighting all. That his voice never changed is an interesting sidelight;[3] he went from a boy's light tenor to a man's without any difficult transition period.

In his late teens, Joyce began ot think of more than mere entertaining at family parties. A career in music became very attractive to him. With this in mind, he entered the Feis Ceoil, the Irish national festival of music, often a springboard to a professional career for those fortunate or talented enough to win an honor in its difficult competition. Joyce entered the contest with tremendous faith in his ability to communicate with his voice, expressing his emotions joyously in song. Largely self-trained, he gave no indication of timidity or fear when his turn came, performing two songs in such a way as to create a very favorable impression on the judges. His last trial was the command to sing from a hitherto unseen sheet of music--a test which he considered to be grossly unfair, because it would not allow him to project his emotions into the song. This emphasis on the emotions would become most important later in his career, as he used song and rhythm to convey otherwise unspoken feelings. He refused the trial and as a result was awarded third place in the competition. This third place, however, was enough to win for him an opportunity to study with a renowned music master, which he rejected, choosing instead to pursue a career in literature, a talent and love he considered parallel with his fascination with music. Although he apparently abandoned a career in music, he continued to keep in close touch with the songs of his day and sang often for friends and family.

When Joyce began to think seriously of himself as a writer, he turned naturally to the written expression closest to music. Thus, we find his first book to be a slender collection of poems, many of which embody the words associated with music; rhythm, song, chant, etc. He referred to these poems as his "music." Later in life he would speak of the "cadences" of phrases, often changing and adding words in his prose to bring about a proper musical intonation and rhythm.

There is no particular evidence that Joyce ever studied seriously the old Irish or Celtic music, although his involvement with the world of arts would suggest that he was at least exposed to it to a considerable degree. Some evidence does suggest, however, that the Celtic had little appeal for him;

> The resuscitation of what he considered dead tongues did not interest him at all; it was living languages, their evolution and possibilities, their dramatic extension into planes where the living word became the living thing itself that called to him and started him on his endless journey...And he feared, too, that a national immersion in Gaelic would cut Ireland still further off than she was from the great central current of European culture.[5]

This might lead the reader to assume that James Joyce was forward-looking only, that the past held little enchantment for him, but his command of the old legends and lays of his native land was excellent. He once recited to his daughter, Lucia, an old Celtic tale, "Fionnula," without any hesitation as to the events in the ancient story,[6] and reminded her that this was a part of her precious Irish heritage. He was absorbed in interweaving the spirit of the ancient lyrics into the fabric of his work, making them meaningful to the present time. Acquiring the knowledge of folklore and ancient music was a part of every Irish child's education. It remained for a few writers, like Joyce, to

translate that childhood fantasy land into modern symbolic form.

Joyce's love for the ancient is evident in his first published volume, Chamber Music, according to William York Tindall;

> Joyce loved Elizabethan, Jacobean and Carolinean song. Some of the poems in Chamber Music reflect derivation from Ben Jonson and from Herrick. He was familiar with madrigals and lutes. Chamber Music is more than a pleasing arrangement of sounds and rhythms for Irish tenors. It is a structure of references as well.[7]

In 1909 and 1910, Joyce had the pleasure of seeing his songs in Chamber Music actually set to music by several composers: W. Reynolds, O'Brien Butler, G. Molyneux Palmer, Mrs. Hughes and Adolph Mann. In letters to G. Molyneux Palmer he wrote:

> ...I hope you may set all of Chamber Music in time. This was indeed partly my idea in writing it. The book is in fact a suite of songs and if I were a musician I suppose I should have set them to music myself.[8]

While attending Belvedere College, an early love for dramatics enabled Joyce to become an inveterate winner of essay contests. Often he used the sums of money which attended such honors to treat his family to an evening at the opera or the theater, no small treat, since the family eventually numbered ten children and two adults! This love affair with opera and theater was to endure throughout his life. He attended every possible event in Dublin, and later, while he lived in Italy and later in Switzerland, any performance that his slim budget would allow.

That James Joyce was well-versed in the operatic tradition in Ireland is evident. Stuart Gilbert, in his study of Ulysses, comments:

> "...All of the great singers came to Dublin, and the names of Campanini, Joe Maas, Mario Piccolomini...Tietjens, Guiglini, Trebelli-Bettini and many others were household words."[9]

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Gilbert suggests that Joyce must have spent more than an ordinary amount of time in attendance at the opera while in Dublin, to have had all these names so conveniently at hand during the writing of Ulysses years later.

After Joyce's first sojourn in Italy, when he returned briefly to Dublin, he suggested to the Irish Times that he interview the great Italian tenor, Enrico Caruso, who was currently singing in Dublin. This interview would have undoubtedly been of value to the city's opera fans, for Joyce's command of Italian, added to his solid knowledge of operatic background, surely should have produced something worthwhile. The newspaper, much to his chagrin, declined the opportunity. It is worthy of note here that a newspaper in his newly adopted city, Trieste, thought more highly of his critical abilities; he reviewed Bernard Shaw's play, The Showing Up of Blanco Posnet, for the newspaper Piccolo della Sera.[10]

His later works incorporated references and themes from such operatic works as the Ring Cycle (Irish), The Mikado, Martha and composers such as Verdi and Wagner.

The tremendous hold that popular music had on the people of Ireland and Dublin and that had caught the young Joyce was further enhanced by the heart-plucking Negro spirituals that had arrived from the United States; the Christy Minstrels were the lions of the musical world in Dublin. Joyce must have attended many of their concerts and learned many of the airs they popularized, for they are to be found in his later stories. While he was a young man wandering about Nighttown with his cronies or spending a pleasant Sunday afternoon strolling through Phoenix Park, he must have lifted his voice often in concert with theirs, either in the new tunes or the great old songs. He early recognized the imaginative effects of the old melodies on the sentimental Irish, and was stylist enough to use them significantly in his work. Music and writing were inextricably bound up

in Joyce's mind; his talents in each field related. When his writing did not go well, when he needed money in his youth, he turned to music, writing to his friend, Oliver St. John Gogarty:

> I am singing at a garden fete on Friday and if you have a decent suit to spare or a cricket shirt send it or them...My idea for July and August is this--to get Dolmetsch to make me a lute and to coast the South of England from Falmouth to Margate singing old English songs.[11]

Later, near the close of his life, he wrote to his good friend Constantine Curran:

> "I would like you to exhaust this amount in the purchase of all the songs available by French, Ashcroft, Wheatly and Vosden...I know most of them, but want them, if possible, in low keys."[12]

These were all popular Irish songwriters.

When Joyce came to write Ulysses and Finnegan's Wake, the dividing line between his two talents grew even thinner. Nearly fifty Irish songs appear in Ulysses. These are Irish songs in the truest sense, composed by Irish men and women, celebrating Irish experience. They are about war, battles, nature, love, drinking, all in an Irish context. Such songs are known and sung by the Irish and by very few others.

> "Typical of the Irish songs in Ulysses are "The Shan Van Vocht," celebrating Ireland as the "Poor Old Woman," "The Boys of Wexford," "God Save Ireland," "The Memory of the Dead," etc."[13]

The structure of both Uylsses and Finnegan's Wake is tightly interwoven with musical allusions. Implicit in the use of these melodies is the knowledge of their hold on the hearts and lives of the Irish people. Without its music, sometimes bawdy, often cynical and always with an undertone of sorrow, Joyce seems to be saying, there could be no Irish nation. This is underscored in Finnegan's Wake, where all but two of

the 124 melodies of Thomas Moore are used. In every case, Joyce quotes them by title, which is usually part of the first line. Many of the songs collected by Moore have had other words set to them, and Joyce seems to be saying that the songs can only be appreciated by thinking of both sets of words, or more, if they exist. The tunes form a consistent link across the whole of Ireland, while the words reflect the individual experiences of the particular area in which they spring up. Some of the songs from Moore's Irish Melodies most familiar and enduring are: "The Last Rose of Summer," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "Eileen Aroon," "Boyne Water" and "Garryowen."[14]

Although, unlike his blithe hero in "Bright cap and streamers," Joyce knew at the end of his career that not all the world would follow, follow his singing in the hollow, he never stopped singing, never lost interest in, nor the flair for twining together words and tunes to form the peculiar kind of music that allowed his world to lift itself in song. He gave that rare reward to all those who read his works.

Footnotes, Chapter I

[1]James Joyce, Chamber Music (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1923), p. 127

[2]Herbert Gorman, James Joyce (New York, Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1948), pp.10-11.

[3]Ibid, p.48.

[4]Ibid, p.98.

[5]Ibid, p.61.

[6]Stuart Gilbert, Letters of James Joyce, Vol. I (New York: Viking Press, 1957), p.56.

[7]William York Tindall, James Joyce's Chamber Music (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), p.37.

[8]Stuart Gilbert, Letters, pp. 66-67.

[9]Gilbert Stuart, James Joyce's Ulysses (New York: Random House, 1952), p.69.

[10]Patricia Hutchins, James Joyce's World (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1957), p.77.

[11]Stuart Gilbert, Letters, p.54.

[12]Ibid, p.393.

[13]Mathew J.C. Hodgart and Mabel P. Worthington, Song, p.7.

[14]Ibid., pp.9-10.

CHAPTER II

THE BOOK AND ITS MUSIC

An intriguing aspect of The Dubliners is the fact that the book seems to be written as much for the people of Dublin as about them. Was Joyce drawn by love or hate to these people among whom he had lived all his youth? There is careful, almost endless detail; street scenes, localities and types that only a Dubliner would recognize, are crammed into each short story. The book would probably have been equally enthralling to the rest of the world even if some of those intimate little details were omitted because the human element of the stories would have remained the same. But Joyce apparently wanted Dublin to read its own biography. Constantine Curran received a brief note from Joyce in August of 1904:

> "I am writing a series of epicleti--ten--for a paper. I have written one. I call the series Dubliners to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city."[1]

The word epicleti may be explained, as in the ritual of the Eastern Church, as the transformation of the consecrated wafer of bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ. As Joyce explained to his brother, Stanislaus:

> There is a certain resemblance between the mystery of the mass and what I am trying to do..to give people a kind of intellectual pleasure or spiritual enjoyment by converting the bread of everyday life into something that has a permanent artistic life of its own.. for their mental, moral and spiritual uplift.[2]

Epicleti has another related meaning in Greek, which Joyce many have considered.

An epiklesis can also refer to a reproach or an imputation. And epikletos can also mean "summoned before a court," or "accused." Thus the epicleti may be considered those accused, summoned up by Joyce, to stand trial as specimens of Irish paralysis. The two great priestly powers of transubstantiation and judgment of the sinful were relished by Joyce in bringing those Dubliners before us in their flesh of words.[3] The Dubliners, however, were not solely to be judged by us, the readers, but to be brought before themselves. To this end, James Joyce utilized every image, every bit of "street furniture," each thing that a Dubliner would recognize as being part of his milieu, to present them to one another. That he cared so deeply about his city is evident; that his city cared so little about him is not surprising. Who could look into a mirror held up so faithfully and be happy seeing all the wrinkles and ugliness and pain?

If one accepts the theory that Joyce wished to present Dublin's sins to its denizens, it becomes interesting to explore his methods. Surely one of the most effective techniques, aside from the aforementioned scenic devices, would be to wind round them the melodies that were a cherished part of their daily lives. The recognition of these homely tunes, heard every day, would allay their suspicions, lull them into reading deeper into the stories, until they were fairly trapped. And if the recognition were not total and instant, so much the better, for then the reader would be lured on by the teasing sense of recognition of a note, a phrase of a familiar tune, long unheard.

Varying the method of presentation for each song adds to the suspense element of the tales, Drama, pain, frustration, history and satire are all represented in the tuneful accompaniment to the stories.

Some of the songs in Dubliners appear in Moore's Irish Melodies,[4]

many are popular songs of the day, two or three are derived from operas and the rest are traditional tunes, easily recognized. The melodies from the operas, of course, came from other countries, as did "Cadet Rousselle," a French drinking song, but in the main, all the music is readily identifiable with Ireland and thus with Dublin.

The songs as they appear with their respective stories are as follows:

"I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby"................................. Araby

"Bohemian Girl" and "The Lass That Loves a Sailor"............... Eveline

"Cadet Rousselle".. After The Race

"Silent, O Moyle"... Two Gallants

"I'm a Naughty Girl"..................................... Boardinghouse

"I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls"............................ Clay

"Maritana" and "Killarney"................................... A Mother

"Arrayed for the Bridal," "Mignon," "Dinorah,"..................
"Yes, Let Me Like a Soldier Fall," "Lucrezia Borgia,"...........
"The Lass of Aughrim" (also known as "Lass of Roch Royal").......
"For He's a Jolly Good Fellow"............................... The Dead[5]

The pattern of familiar rhythms which dominates Dubliners is that of the songs in each individual story. There is another rhythmic pattern, however, that the reader soon becomes aware of, in the roughedged, half-explained stories which begin the collection. These stories are told through a child's eyes; the rhythm is sometimes halting and broken, as though the composer could not find the proper notes for a smooth sequence--or as though a child were fumbling at a piano, drumming and strumming a nursery rhyme. The tempo changes as youth gives way to adolescence and evens out a bit, with an occasional accidental note, sharp and clear, to portray a teen-ager. The middle section of the book is a dull kind of rhythm, without surprise, moving along with a kind of turgid strength.

The musical cadence flows along quietly until the very last section of the book, when it winds into a sweeping finale which incorporates intricacies undreamed of in the first little tales.

After one has become aware of the larger rhythm, the small patterns within the stories strike harmonizing chords. Thus, in "Encounter," the truant's joy, expressed in running, in patting the bridge in happy syncopation and in riding the clickety-clack rails of the train makes a gay and abandoned roundelay, with a somber note injected for contrast in the middle of the tune. For Joyce, obviously, words could be used to create rhythms, just as musical notes are used.

In "Araby," the tempo of the story is found to be a little more assured but the flow is broken by accidental notes which agitate the unity of the rhythm. "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby," from which the title is taken, speaks of a remote and distant land, beautiful and attractive, just the sort of land of the heart that the young hero wanted for himself and his unattainable beauty. The dissonances interjected by the street singers and their "Come-all-ye's" of O'Donovan Rossa were the realities which dominated this world. Not for him the far-off land of sweet song; there is only the rude carolling of street urchins. The music is used to show the opposite poles of the boy's life, the dream and the reality. Musical imagery, used in an allusive way is employed to sharpen the picture of the boy's passionate adolescent agony;

> "But my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running up the wires."[6]

In the end, the Eastern dream of fulfillment was doomed and only the realities of his home in the West, Dublin, remained.

"Eveline," title and also name of the trapped and emotionally helpless

heroine, is a sad little song, with a dreary refrain broken briefly by a few trills which cannot sustain the story. The actual music used by Joyce, "The Bohemian Girl" and "The Lass That Loves a Sailor," are songs which speak of escape, but escape not unmixed with pain. The tunes played by the organ-grinder, although not named, must have been siren-songs of another land, warmer, more fortunate than Ireland. The symbol of music used here is clearly related to the east, the sea and escape. The bell and whistle of the quayside are musical pleas for movement and life. The best-known melody from the opera, "The Bohemian Girl," is probably, "Then You'll Remember Me," a refrain that speaks of separation, sorrow and "other lips and other hearts." Eveline recognizes her fate, even while deluding herself for a brief time that escape was possible; escape and joy were not to be hers. Her love would someday taste other lips and then remember her, alone in her paralysis--in Dublin.

In "After the Race," Jimmy becomes the prototype of the Irishman seeking release from the deadly dull, provincial life of Dublin. He longs for excitement and glamour; the flashy, smooth-talking men from the Continent seem to promise him all this. He is shallow and eager, anxious for approval, prostituting himself and his money for these visitors from the East, who seem to bring life and excitement with them. The gay French drinking song, "Cadet Rousselle," symbolizes for him movement out and away from his life. Later, dancing to the music of other countries, the waltz and square dance, he feels that he has reached the peak of joy. Amidst the feverish gaiety of the dancing and eating and drinking, he feels that he is breaking out of the shell of Dublin. The quiet music strummed on the piano as he steadily loses his money and just as steadily regains a consciousness of himself as a fool is in direct contrast to the gay tunes which have

gone before. Once again mood and tempo have been set by the music-master, Joyce, and this movement of his symphony has provided a jazzy interlude, then a quiet reprise to bring us into the next set of harmonies.

For the first time in the series, Joyce now makes use of a very old traditional song in the "Two Gallants." The contrast between Lenehan and Corley, corrupt and cunning, and the great old Irish melody, is pointed. They represent the depths of degradation, the worst of Dublin society, unable to discern right from wrong. The melody, on the contrary, is full of trust and hope, with the conviction that right will eventually prevail;

> Silent, O Moyle, be the roar of thy water,
> Break not, ye breezes, your chain of repose,
> While, murmuring mournfully, Lir's lonely daughter
> Tells to the night star her tale of woes.
> When shall the swan, her deathnote singing,
> Sleep, with wings in darkness furl'd?
> When will heav'n, its sweet bell ringing,
> Call my spirit from this stormy world?
>
> Sadly, O Moyle, to thy winterwave weeping,
> Fate bids me languish long ages away;
> Yet still in her darkness doth Erin lie sleeping,
> Still doth the pure light its dawning delay.
> When will that day-star, mildly springing,
> Warm our isle with peace and love?
> When will heav'n, its sweet bell ringing,
> Call my spirit to the fields above?[7]

The pathos of the ancient song, harking back to the pre-Christian era of Ireland, when the lonely Fionnuala, daughter of the sea-king, Lir, was changed into a swan, doomed to wander over certain lakes and rivers of the isle until Christianity ruled, is intensified by the decrepit harp on which it was played. The song calls for hope, but the harp is old and tired, like poor Ireland. A strong contrast is drawn here, with the old song of faith and the new standards of morals meeting head on--causing a discord in the

full and honest melody of the harp.

When the two men separate, one to enjoy his adventure, the other to torment himself with thoughts of envy, the weak Lenehan finds himself recalling the notes of the song, so sacred to the hearts of Irishmen. It intensifies his loneliness, breaks through the barriers of salacious talk and excitement;

> "His gaiety seemed to forsake him, and, as he came by the railings of the Duke's Lawn, he allowed his hand to run along them. The air which the harpist had played began to control his movements."[8]

This suggests the helplessness of the Dubliner, caught between poverty, despair and the longing to escape. Doomed not only by the circumstances of his personal life, but the tragedy of his captive country, the man is controlled by forces greater than he is able to combat. That the forces are evil on one side and good on the other induces a state of paralysis. Not knowing where to turn, he digs in his heels and confronts his world with a sullen apathy. The rhythms in this story are strong, played in pulsing bass chords, in a broken meter, bringing no sense of smoothness or continuity. Ending on an incomplete phrase, the tale leaves the auditor with a sense of incompleteness. The contribution to the movement of the whole is forceful, yet seems not to advance the symphony.

In "The Boarding House," there is little of hope or honesty. The melody Joyce brings us is tinny, played on a piano out of tune. The story is thin and anaemic, falling on the ear with a series of sour notes. There is a lack of depth, of sympathy with any of the characters. Warned early in the game by the dim, amoral girl, "I'm a naughty girl, You needn't sham, You know I am," poor Bob Doran still blunders into the trap set for him. It is

almost as though Joyce is saying that, even though warned, these Dubliners are so resigned, so apathetic, they cannot save themselves. The silly little tune seems in keeping with the silly little story. Curiously, this is one tale which might be transplanted almost anywhere and find itself at home. It brings a sense of recognition to all who read it. The contribution to the whole broad composition is slight, a mere strumming of the strings as a relief from the deep rhythms which had gone before.

In slower tempo now, Joyce brings us the opposite of his stupidly wicked heroine of the preceding story-kindly, helpful little Maria. This gentle little heroine of "Clay" cries out for sympathy--the heart goes out to her, and yet somehow she palls. Is the ignorance real? Is it self-delusion? Set aside, ignored by life, has she chosen to withdraw from it, to content herself with little concentric movements? She becomes a perfect example of nothingness--not understanding her life, moving always in a repetitious circular pattern, without accomplishment. Her pitiful little rendition of, "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls," is sad and poignant. Her repetition of the first verse serves to accent it to her listeners. Ending with the words, "But I also dreamt, which pleased me most, That you loved me still the same,"[9] she calls attention to her plight in a way that her spoken words or actions could never have done. The double edge to this is that Maria is not aware that she has sung these words twice, that she is truly unloved, that all her pains and trouble for her family are really unappreciated; in short, her life is meaningless. She cuts through the shell of uncaring briefly, but only through the medium of the song. Once the song is ended, one realizes, she will revert to her old status in the eyes of the relatives and revert to her old circular life of nothingness in the laundry, a building full of women with no future. Maria's contribution to the larger

score is a lackluster, yet hauntingly sweet little interlude, with just the suggestion of a minor note. The reprise of Maria's sorrow is provided by Joe, as he tries to drown his sense of guilt in alcohol; he is sad but ineffectual; his wife must find the corkscrew for him before he can drink away his sorrow.

Like a modern composition, "A Mother" is full of discordant notes which are curiously overlaid with the traditional and sentimental. All the points Joyce has made thus far concerning the deep spiritual impact of music on Dublin society are brought into question by the crass behavior of the mother. Is music really the food of the soul, the outcry of lonely hearts or oppressed people, or is it just a means to fame and money for the true Dubliners? The tale leaves doubt in the mind of the reader, and, true to the author's usual style is never fully resolved.

The Antient Concert Rooms, where the performances are held, was prominent in Dublin Cultural circles. To have performed there in any capacity was an honor much sought after by the artistically inclined. Joyce suggests subtly that the honor of performing there outweighed any true musical considerations. Mrs. Kearney, in her eagerness to present her daughter to the public, certainly reinforces this suggestion.

Small details in the story, all involving the lesser characters, are designed to show that although Dublin pretended to love music, there was a falsity, a pretense. The bass, uneducated , from a poor background, had aspired to grand opera, but ruined his chances with a vulgar gesture. The soprano, aged and colorless, had chosen to sing a national song of great beauty and meaning to the Irish people, "Killarney," but sang it so poorly as to render it almost a travesty. The concerts failed to attract many people. Where were the crowds of music lovers who were supposed to follow

all musical events in Dublin with devoted attendance? Not here! The implication is, of course, that the concert was too small, too provincial to bother about. After all, these were only Irish performers! Suddenly, the whole picture of Dublin as a truly music-loving city, devoted to Irish music, is out of focus. The musicians are wholly interested in themselves, the audience is impolite, the mother is money-mad. Music, instead of being the bond which drew Dubliners together, becomes the wedge which forces them apart. The story leaves the reader with a sense of unease and contempt for these so-called music lovers. The music in this instance is so discordant that we must perforce agree with those souls who refused to pay their money to hear these dismal performers.

At first, it would seem as though Joyce's total symphony had faltered in its design, nothing in "A Mother" relates to the pattern--or does it? As a device for accenting some of the sentimentality in such stories as "Clay," it certainly is effective. Much as modern music utilizes sounds of factory whistles and shouts of protest, the music of this story takes the reader out of the accepted musical frame and brings him into the discordant behind-the-scenes rivalry, destroying any concept of music as an art, making it rather crassly commercial.

Thus far in the "series of epicleti," Joyce has used many types of musical expression, evoking sorrow, excitement, patriotism. Interwoven with these, he has established a rhythm which impels the reader along from one story to the next, creating a whole from many related parts. But there is more to The Dubliners than that. The remaining stories complete what Joyce has set out to do - show Dubliners to themselves as paralyzed, as dead.

Footnotes, Chapter II

[1]Robert Scholes and A. Walton Litz, editors, Dubliners, Text, Notes and Criticism (New York; Viking Press, 1969), p.259.

[2]Ibid,pp.255-56.

[3]Ibid, pp.255-56.

[4]Moore, Irish Melodies.

[5]Mathew Hodgart & Mabel Worthington, Songs, p.3.

[6]James Joyce, Dubliners, p.31.

[7]Moore, Irish Melodies, p.16.

[8]James Joyce, Dubliners, p.56.

[9]Ibid, p.62.

[10]Ibid, p.106.

CHAPTER III

"THE DEAD" AND ITS MUSIC

Had James Joyce really been composing a symphony, expressing the life of Dublin in music, he would have planned it to end just as he did when he expressed it in words; all that had gone before would reach a great culmination, utilizing themes that had been lightly touched upon in other movements, playing back familiar strains, yet creating a new work within the finale. "The Dead" becomes a logical conclusion because all the threads which have preceded it are found here and because a true realization of life, an epiphany, occurs, the major one in the collection of sketches.

From the beginning of the story, with the hurry-scurry of the preparations for the dance, the reader is precipitated into the rhythm of Christmas festivities. Strains of music form the background for the action and the dialogue. The very physical environment becomes involved, as the ceiling of the pantry quakes in response to the dancing feet above. That the dancing feet will also introduce a discordant note is apparent when they are heard by Gabriel, who discovers them to be "clacking heels and shuffling soles."[1] This discordant note is continued through the story of the dance and dinner, and becomes a motif which accentuates the monotonously smooth routine of the affair, an annual bore.

Each new theme in the story is introduced by music, though the melody is not always explicitly stated. The waltz ends, there is a pause, the

quadrilles begin. Music carries the action of the story forward, creating the necessary impetus for every scene. It is used here as a device for the casual mingling of the sexes, with the recruitment of partners for the quadrilles. The intensity is heightened during Gabriel's dance with the thorny Miss Ivors and culminates with the overpowering scene between Gabriel and Gretta at the conclusion of the book.

The playing of the "academy piece" by poor Mary Jane calls attention to the stilted and frozen interpretation of music by the so-called intelligentsia of Dublin. Joyce uses it in a symbolic way, to epitomize the general state of the arts in Dublin, hemmed in by the conception of pretended culture which prevented the Dubliners from truly realizing art as a force in their lives. On the other hand, it cleverly mirrors the character of the guests at the dance. Though recognized by them to be "good" music, they are unable to understand it. Gabriel is pictured as the most cultured person there, yet the composition has "no melody" for him. It illustrates what we have seen in preceding stories, the gap between the supposedly ardent music-lovers of Dublin and the true appreciation and knowledge of music. This is a short, yet very sharp comment on the real degree of sophistication of a society which regarded itself as very well-bred, indeed. The artificiality of the music, with its stereotyped ending, is recognized by Gabriel and the young men who have absented themselves from the drawing room while the academy music was in progress. They all, however, join in the applause, just as if they had truly understood and appreciated the exhibition of virtuosity. Their action only serves to underline Joyce's indictment of the basic falseness of their characters.

Familiar dance music is used as the background for the next high point of the story as Gabriel dances with ultra-nationalistic Miss Ivors.

Automatically he performs the complicated steps of the dance while wrestling with her derogatory remarks. This seems to represent his deep entrenchment in habit, the routine movements of continuing in spite of the distracting influence of her barbed statements. The author uses this to show the static condition of Dubliners in general, particularly with regard to their vassalship to another country. Gabriel becomes, in that moment, a classic depiction of the Irishman, hating his servitude, yet unwilling and unable to remove himself from its conditions. He has assumed a facade, a facade which is splintered, if only briefly, by his sudden revulsion against his circumstances; "O to tell you the truth--I'm sick of my country, sick of it!"[2] Music is seen by Gabriel as a refuge, a pleasure to be enjoyed. In spite of being a teacher, he is confused by words, inept at communication. He thinks of a phrase he has written, "One feels that one is listening to a thought-tormenting music,"[3] and is comforted. He has managed to express this well, he feels, and can rely on it again. This is a negation of the intellectual, falling back on a thoughtless emotive response to music.

The ancient aunt, Julia, singing an old Irish melody, "Arrayed for the Bridal," confronts the reader with two interesting situations. The first, most obvious, is that of the old lady, with her dead face, singing a song which abounds with hope and gaiety. There seems to be no thought of incongruity in her listener's minds, as they are enthralled by her still excellent voice and presentation (or her abundant hospitality!), but do not seem to realize that the song is most unsuitable for her. The second is a much more subtle jibe; here is a representation of Ireland, grey, flaccid, fading away from a thwarted life, yet singing of youth and beginnings. Self-delusion operates and Aunt Julia becomes, for a moment, <u>Cathleen ni</u>

Houlihan, a bride without a bridegroom, Ireland without a savior. Even the extravagant praises heaped upon her become part of the picture, as she shrugs them off with remarks about thirty years before. This is Dublin, living unconsciously in the past, attempting a youthful face.

Even in matters of religion, where music should be a unifying element, where all should gather together for the glory of God, these Irish are ultimately divided. Poor Aunt Julia has been turned out of her life-long commitment to her church choir. Her music has failed her. This is a representation of Ireland, needing its religious commitment desperately, yet unable to find a real place in the church; she is torn, confused between duty to God and the practical aspects of church labor. Here is disunity.

As the party progresses and supper is served, it seems for a time as though music will cease to be the vehicle for movement. This is soon found to be untrue, as the conversation revolves around the opera presently being sung in Dublin. The one really professional musician among the company is contradicted when his opinions do not correspond with those of one of the guests, but this is only a preliminary joust. The musician is soon challenged on another front, the ability of a black burlesque singer. His avoidance of the subject, and that of the general company, serves to illustrate another aspect of Dublin society, its prejudice and snobbishness.

When the conversation shifts back to opera again, the rude interruption successfully ignored, the present-day opera is found to be lacking the quality music had in past days. The evident nostalgia for times gone by serves to illustrate the kind of paralysis Joyce felt was endemic in Dublin. Nothing is as good as it once was, everyone prefers to dwell in the past; fear of the future prevents any kind of vision. The old operas, Dinorah and Lucrezia Borgia, both imported from other countries, are praised. Again,

the implication is that age and foreignness impart a particular value. Only Aunt Kate swerves aside from this general view, with her memories of an Irish tenor who was better than any foreigner, but her opinion is brushed aside as having little value.

As long as music was the subject at table, the conversation had moved along well, with everyone participating. Its shift to religion and sin brings all communication to a halt. Joyce seems to be saying that any subject which required thought and conviction was not acceptable at a polite table, a clear example of the paucity of conviction on the part of the Dubliners.

The rhythm of the story has bogged down a bit here, as though the composer is improvising, trying to find another way to get back into the swing of his melody.

A neat little device takes care of the transitional problem, not true music, but a gentle hand-clapping, the insistent rhythmic call for Gabriel's speech. Thus the feeling of cadence is maintained without the actual performance of formal music. As he arises and begins to address the company, melody from the waltz in the main room filters through--life going on at a different tempo, but providing a background to the words he has carefully prepared.

As Gabriel speaks, he uses some musical terms to weave his words into the fabric of the musical tapestry which is the evening, and refers to the three spinsters as the "Three Graces of Dublin."[4] This cruel travesty of the real meaning of grace seems not to occur to anyone; Aunt Julia with her grey face, Aunt Kate with her easy tears of old age, Mary Jane with her narrow little life. If these are the best that Dublin has to offer as graces, then the city is indeed in a dire case! The company's acceptance and joy in

the comparison serves to show further the lack of perception which Joyce felt to be so much a part of the life in Dublin.

At the end of the table scene, with the singing of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," suitably adapted to fit the feminine recipients of the tribute, the gay mood of the beginning of the story returns once again. The tempo of the tale picks up and the reader is caught up in the joy of the group, feeling a little hopeful that a happy ending will ensue. On this high note, the party begins to draw to an end; the swelling notes of joy are muted, just as the reader feels that the composition has reached a logical conclusion and is waiting for the final chords to be struck.

The haunting melody which is heard next is unexpected, almost ignored by the assembled group, gaily exchanging banter and stories in the hall as they prepare to leave. Finally, only Gabriel is left to wonder at the sound of the piano and the faint sound of singing from above. Then, he sees in the shadows above another auditor, his wife Gretta. Her pose and attitude of listening are characterized by him as "Distant Music,"[5] which suggests more than the merely listening attitude she had struck, bringing to mind a separation of time or space between husband and wife, a separation he only dimly recognizes, even while seeing her as removed from him; another example of the obtuseness of the so-called clever mind of the intellectual strata of Dublin.

As the old Irish song drifts down over the company, all but Greta seem insensible to the meaning of the words they heard,

> "O, the rain falls on my heavy locks
> And the dew wets my skin,
> My babe lies cold..."[6]

all are incensed that the elusive tenor is singing, now that the party is

over. They hear, not the words and meaning of the plaintive old melody, but the fact of the voice; they care not for the meaning, only for the pleasure they would have received from any tune performed by the professional singer. The meaning of the old Irish song is lost upon them in their greediness for recognized "culture." Gretta, however, is visibly shaken by the plaintive melody, "The Lass of Aughrim." It seems to have touched her in some way unexplained to the others. In the setting apart of Gretta, to be alone influenced by the song, Joyce is preparing the stage for dramatic action. The reader is made aware that his plaintive little melody will have an impact on the whole composition, but there is no clue as to what it may do to the gay ending envisioned just a brief paragraph or two before.

One of the first things that the song accomplishes is to bring the wife, Gretta, more sharply into focus. All through the first part of the story she has been at best an attractive adjunct to Gabriel, at worst a fuzzy assistant to the two aunts. But from the moment Gretta is discovered lingering on the steps listening to the limping rendition of the folk melody, she becomes a new, cleanly delineated person, with a vigor which brings life to her previously lackluster image. Strangely, the reality of Gretta as it emerges from her shadowy picture, detracts from the reality of Gabriel. He becomes aware of this, when, upon their return to the hotel, he sees himself as a "well-filled shirt-front...(the) face whose expression always puzzled him when he saw it in a mirror and his glimmering gilt-rimmed eyeglasses."[7] So Gabriel, the best-educated of all the party-goers, the cosmopolitan accustomed to travel in other lands, the soignee man-about-Dublin, becomes a straw man of little substance--Joyce's conception of the Dubliner.

Joyce has used the evocative strains of a melody to present two pictures; the simplistic image of Gretta, yearning after a lost and tragic

love, foolishly grieving for something which never really was; an unrealized love affair. He has, bound up in his little tale, painted the infinitely more complicated picture of Irish youth, wasting itself away, indeed, destroying itself for an ideal. The waste is doubly poignant in simple terms, since it includes both poor Michael Furey, dead because he loved a bright-haired lass at seventeen, and also Gretta, who has never loved her husband completely, whose life cannot be said to be a complete loss, but yet is sadly only partly-lived. Now the paralysis of those two blighted lives is extended to include the husband as he recognizes the sham and futility of his life.

Going beyond the sad little story, Joyce makes us see, in the futility of Michael's song, the futility of all Irish youth, who sing instead of act, who have little regard for their lives, their loved ones, or their world. He seems to be saying, "Of such stuff is the Irishman made--dreams and songs and idealistic folly."

So the rhythm which has varied from movement to movement is changed now, is bringing us to an end, not in the gay and frolicsome vein of the dinner party, but on a sad and minor key of isolation and alienation.

The melody is sufficiently poignant, yet seems somehow incomplete--and so it should seem--for it changes now from a small pianissimo note to a more urgent theme--the urgency stemming from Gabriel's vision of himself, yet an extension of the minor song of Michael. Played now more and more insistently, the minor key builds up into a crashing finale, changing to chords that clash against one another, then, softly, fade as Gabriel fights, then accepts his self-recognition. He is, at this moment, more an extension of the author than of the true Dubliner, aware of his entrapment, unable to flee from his Irish heritage and finally accepting his destiny.

Joyce has given us a true Dubliner, caught in a dreary round, accompanied by his music, music which struggles and tries to sound a happy note from time to time, but is never able to rise above its sad and mournful refrain. Like the poor old horse, Johnny, the Dubliner and his music are doomed to go nowhere but around and around.

Footnotes, Chapter III

[1] Joyce, Dubliners, p.179.

[2] Ibid, p.189.

[3] Ibid, p.192.

[4] Ibid, p.204.

[5] Ibid, p.210.

[6] Ibid, p.210.

[7] Ibid, p.218.

CHAPTER IV

CODA

It is no accident that nearly all of Joyce's work is interwoven with melody. From infancy, he heard songs sung and played in his own home, and later, in the streets of that city which was to honor him as a youth and reject him as a man.

His understanding of music may be said to have been both extensive and curiously limited. He was in this, as in all things, his own man, and acquired knowledge of only the music which truly interested him. Stuart Gilbert, friend and biographer, tells us:

> "Pure music," as one might call it, had little interest for him, he vastly preferred operas to symphonies and I was often struck by his indifference to, indeed ignorance of, modern instrumental music."[1]

Obviously, he was well-versed in music which was written for the singer, particularly if there happened to be a good part in it for a tenor! This interest never flagged. In 1935, just a few years before his death, he wrote in excitement to his daughter-in-law, Helen Joyce, to tell her of some excellent German lieder which he had heard, and of purchasing the score for this music.[2]

His musical background gave him a rare feeling for the cadence of words, an attribute without which the poet cannot hope to function, the prose writer hardly less. In a note to himself he once jotted down the following:

> Rhythm seems to be the first or formal relation of part to part in any whole or of a whole to its part or parts, or of any part to the whole of which it is a part...Parts constitute a whole as far as they have a common end.[3]

As he lived his music, then, he was conscious of its profound effect on his thinking and his writing.

Joyce was, above all things, a modern man. He thought for himself, lived the kind of life which declared his individuality over and over, and chose from his heritage only that which he felt was important to him.

He made a conscious choice not to wallow in the sentimentality which many Irishmen find irrestible. In keeping with this, he rejected the study of Gaelic music and of Gaelic language, which he was convinced was dead. It is, then, strange to find so much of that music reflected so faithfully in his work. To say this his knowledge of Gaelic music and its hold on him was atavistic may be supposing too much. Yet, in the words of Harry Stone:

> "We walk through ourselves...but always meeting ourselves," words of Joyce spoken through Stephen Dedalus. In his writings Joyce was always meeting himself--in ways which must at times have been beyond his conscious ordinance.[4]

Cannot this be at least partly interpreted to include his wide command of his country's melodies?

The prevailing interest in opera in Ireland during Joyce's youth certainly influenced him. He went, sometimes with family or friends, sometimes alone, to hear most of the great singers who favored this attendance, nor that the old names were written with such assurance, his exposure to them was wide.

Popular songs (including many imported from other countries) formed a large part of the gay night-time entertainment in the Dublin of Joyce's

youth. The young man, attending university, larking about with his friends, must have spent many an hour singing these ditties. That he was able to incorporate them into his stories is not a question of excellent memory, but of the talent of the man, as he wove them into organic parts of his tales.

As the careful reader explores the stories of Dubliners, he is soon involved in the many facets of these deceptively simple little tales of "everyday" life. Small wonder that the production of these stories took so many years; they are polished and refined to the very last degree! Frank O'Connor has said of them:

> Why did he (Joyce) not write another story after "The Dead"? Is it because he felt that he was not a storyteller or that he believed that he had already done all that could be done with the form?[5]

They myriad details, the distillation of emotion and life in the stories suggests that Joyce felt that he had done all that could be done with the form as it existed at that time. That he was well in advance of other short-story writers of his hour makes these tales even more interesting, both in their polished clarity and in their symbolic content.

Not the least among the many facets of the stories is the level which weaves into the fabric of some of the tales of musical motif. Touching upon music as an auxiliary theme, as in "The Boarding House," or making it the springboard for a whole story, as in "Araby" and "The Dead," Joyce utilized symbols and metaphor in as sophisticated a form as any author before or since. In the individual tales where music either supported lightly the main theme or where it served to carry the action, it becomes an essential part of the presentation.

There is literally not a false note in the musical themes as they are developed, nor any sense of them being extraneous to the story. Indeed,

the music adds a verisimilitude to the tales which serves to make them more believable, more a part of the real life as it was lived in Dublin.

Motion and direction are given to the whole book by the use of musical devices. Joyce has written his epicleti with all the care of a composer setting down note to harmonize with note, lending to the finished book a sense of unity and cohesion, of orderly progression.

All the foregoing would have been enough for the average writer, perhaps, but James Joyce goes beyond even this, allowing the music to perform its obvious duties, then extending it further, into a realm of cynicism which is sometimes frightening. He uses music, which is generally regarded as entertainment, perhaps uplifting, perhaps diverting, to carry the burden of tragedy. We see reflected the inability of the Dubliners to move out of their pre-ordained round of futility, each aborted essay into freedom outlined in musical terms. Every tune, no matter how innocuous it appears, has a double meaning; always the hidden meaning reflects the degradation or stasis of Ireland.

In the last of his stories of the Dubliners, music is allowed to take upon itself the whole burden of the action. The accompaniment becomes sometimes the melody, as he moves through gaiety, disdain, anger and finally pain, all through the medium of song. "The Dead," lyric, urgent, is almost too painful to be borne. It is at once tragedy and rebirth, life and death, each emotion expressed in its music. It, more than any other story in the group, moves from rhythm to rhythm, from movement to movement, and is the one which most truly expresses Joyce's idea of relations of the part to the part and the part to the whole.

Writer-musician, musician-writer--either characterization or appellation could be given to James Joyce. Neither pure music nor pure language,

his songs/stories reach a degree of sophistication in each medium which brings to the fortunate reader a double enjoyment, a rare and exciting experience in literature.

Footnotes, Chapter IV

[1] Stuart Gilbert, Letters, p.36.

[2] Ibid., p.356.

[3] Herbert Gorman, James Joyce, p.98.

[4] Harry Stone, Text, Criticism, etc., p.345.

[5] Frank O'Connor, Text, Criticism, etc., p.304-305.

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