Old Mayneen's back is double bent;
She's stooped, as if the days she spent
In picking praties, held her there;
Or sweeping earthen cabins where
Her children played, or hens picked up
The scattered crumbs, and the spilt sup
Of milky gruel, or praiseach husk,
As gathered by the turf-fire dusk,
She gropes and lights the candle-wick
And Time stands still tho' seconds tick...
I wonder what her life has been,
What worldly things those eyes have seen...
Her hands are gnarled as a bough,
That saw the new, now rusted plough
With stiffened limbs attend the sod,
To mould those gifts sent us by God.

Her wrinkled skin is creased with care,
While laughter adds its jovial share,
Her eyes, alive and keenly true,
Were they grey, once, or deeper blue?
Her 'Yankee' head-scarf hides her hair,
I wonder was she dark or fair?
Her calloused feet hug the green earth
Or nimbly thread the sodded hearth,
Her clothes are tattered, old as Time,
Her dudeen rank with handled grime.
She speaks with music in her voice,
And Gaelic is her envied choice.
I look at Mayneen, nodding low,
And feel a radiating glow
Of peace, contentment, love and God,
And truth, affirmed in every nod.