

*Mr. Dooley's Brogue:
The Literary Dialect of Finley Peter Dunne*

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Finley Peter Dunne's Mr. Dooley was once one of America's most popular humorous characters. Dunne's elaborate eye dialect tends to put off contemporary readers, but the Dooley essays lose much of their power and literary "flavor" when they are transcribed into standard English spelling. This study relates Dunn's respelling system to the pronunciation of Anglo-Irish and shows that Dunne's eye dialect is intended to represent many phonological features of English as it is spoken in Ireland, while avoiding other features whose inclusion would threaten readability. The authenticity of Mr. Dooley's dialect adds to the credibility of the character by giving the reader the illusion that he is listening to a real human voice belonging to a real member of a specific, historic Irish-American community.

Between 1892 and 1897 Finley Peter Dunne wrote a column in the *Chicago Evening Post* in a form of Anglo-Irish or Irish-American literary dialect, criticizing corruption in high places in Chicago city politics and commenting on society from the viewpoint of one Martin Dooley, a bachelor from Roscommon who kept a saloon on "Ar-rchey Road" (Archer Avenue) in the poor Irish neighborhood of Bridgeport. Mr. Dooley was invented because an earlier series of monologues featuring a "Colonel Malachi McNeery" had had to be terminated due to the protests of one "Colonel" Jim McGarry, a popular and sophisticated downtown Chicago pub-keeper, who was too obviously recognizable as the model for the loquacious fictional colonel (Ellis 1941, 75). As befitted someone who lived and kept shop in a poorer neighborhood, Mr. Dooley was a more down-to-earth and less learned character than Colonel McNeery. (See Fanning 1978, 25, for some of the differences between the two characters.)

Dunne ended the Mr. Dooley columns about Chicago politics and the life of the Irish-American poor in 1897. One recent critic (Fanning 1978) believes he did his best and most incisive writing in these early pieces, but Dunne did not gain national fame until he revived Mr. Dooley to comment on the Spanish-American war of 1898. The columns on the Spanish-American war were a national sensation. They were widely reprinted and quoted, leading to national syndication and to the publication of several

books of previously written pieces (Ellis 1941, 120 et seq.; F. P. Dunne 1899a, 1899b).

After that, Dunne continued to write, but his pieces, although more popular and more widely quoted, dealt with general topics and with national and international affairs. He moved from Chicago to New York, and became the friend of such men as Mark Twain and Theodore Roosevelt, who read his columns at Cabinet meetings as Lincoln had done those of Petroleum V. Nasby. (Dunne's son Philip recounts the relationship with T. R. and other Presidents in Philip Dunne 1963, 98 et seq.) He set great store by the essays he wrote in standard English in the *American Magazine* from 1906 to 1913, but these never gained the popularity of the dialect pieces. He tried to revive Mr. Dooley to comment on Prohibition, but the times were different and he did not enjoy the same success. He was a member of the Establishment now, even serving as a character witness for one of the defendants in the Teapot Dome scandal. After retirement in 1927 he wrote almost nothing. He died in 1936.

What remains today of the fame of Finley Peter Dunne's Mr. Dooley? At the turn of the century, he was a household word throughout America, the subject of plays and popular songs. He has been quoted since then (and apparently even read) by such important figures in American public life as John F. Kennedy, Felix Frankfurter, James Reston, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Dooleyisms are still known and quoted by a few connoisseurs. For example:

"Thrust ivrybody, but cut the ca-ards."

"Pollytics ain't bean-bag."

"Among men, wet eye manes dhry heart."

"If ye dhrink before sivin, ye'll cry be ilivin."

"We're a gr-reat nation. An' th' best iv it is, we know we ar-re."

Scholarly interest in Dunne continues; witness two recent anthologies of the early Chicago pieces, some of which had never appeared before in book form (Fanning 1976; Schaaf 1977), and a critical study based on them (Fanning 1978). An anthology of some of the best-known columns, edited by Robert Hutchinson, appeared in 1963 and remained in print for years thereafter.

Nevertheless, Dunne's dialect pieces are not nearly as widely known and read today as the work of his older contemporary Mark Twain, who used dialect extensively in *Huckleberry Finn*. There are also dialect elements in the dialogue of Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*, a work roughly

contemporary with the early Chicago pieces, which is still in print, read, and loved; but Dunne's work, which was once as widely known and as popular as theirs, is now the province of a few specialists and fans.

There are several reasons for this. Dunne's work may not have the intrinsic literary merit of Mark Twain and Stephen Crane, although he did rise above conventional American dialect humor in such tragic pieces as "On the Popularity of Firemen" and "The Idle Apprentice." Another possible reason for lack of current interest in Mr. Dooley is that many of the names and events mentioned no longer mean anything to the general reader, especially those in earlier pieces which refer to Chicago politics and long-forgotten Chicago politicians.

One of the greatest barriers to contemporary enjoyment of Dunne's Mr. Dooley articles is the language in which they were written, a literary dialect based on the Anglo-Irish spoken by the Chicago Irish working class. Unlike the dialects used by Mark Twain and by Stephen Crane, the language of Dunne's writings has no roots in popular American English, but belongs to a quite different dialect system.

Dunne, like most writers of dialect literature, did not speak the dialect he wrote. Neither did he speak a more socially prestigious dialect from the same region, unlike such writers as Mark Twain and Joel Chandler Harris. His son said he spoke "pure Chicagoese" (Philip Dunne 1963, 49). Nevertheless, Dunne had heard Anglo-Irish dialects all his life, as his father was from Queens County (now Laois County), Ireland, and his mother was from Kilkenny (Ellis 1941, 6). He was raised in the middle-class Irish Catholic neighborhood around St. Patrick's church on the near west side of Chicago, not in proletarian Bridgeport where Mr. Dooley held forth, but he must have heard as he was growing up what he later called "all the various accents of Ireland, from the awkward brogue of the 'far-downer' to the mild and aisy Elizabethan English of the southern Irishman, and all the exquisite variations to be heard between Armagh and Bantry Bay, with the difference that would naturally arise from substituting cinders and sulphuretted hydrogen for soft misty air and peat smoke" (F. P. Dunne 1899a, viii).

An excerpt from *Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War*. Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1899.

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF
CERVERA'S FLEET.

[These comments were made by Mr. Dooley during a strike of the stereotypers, which caused the English newspapers of Chicago temporarily to suspend publication.]

"I HEAR," said Mr. Hennessy, "that th' stereopticons on th' newspapers have sthruck."

"I sh'd think they wud," said Mr. Dooley. "Th' las' time I was down town was iliction night, whin Charter Haitch's big la-ad was ilicted, an' they was wurrukin' th' stereopticons till they was black in th' face. What's th' news?"

"Th' What Cheer, Ioway, Lamp iv Freedom is on th' sthreets with a tillygram that Shafter has captured Sandago de Cuba, an' is now settin' on Gin'ral Pando's chest with his hands in his hair. But this is denied be th' Palo Gazoot, the Macoupin County Raygister, an' th' Meridian Sthreet Afro-American. I also see be th' Daily Scoor Card, th' Wine List, th' Deef Mute's Spokesman, th'

Morgue Life, the Bill iv Fare, th' Stock Yards Sthraight Steer, an' Jack's Tips on th' Races; the on'y daily paper printed in Chicago, that Sampson's fleet is in th' Suez Canal bombarding Cades. Th' North-western Christyan Advycate says this is not thru, but that George Dixon was outpointed be an English boxer in a twinty-r-round go in New York."

"Ye've got things mixed up," said Mr. Dooley. "I get th' news sthraight. 'Twas this way. Th' Spanish fleet was bottled up in Sandago Harbor, an' they dhrew th' cork. That's a joke. I see it in th' pa-apers. Th' gallant boys iv th' navy was settin' out on th' deck, defindin' their counthry an' dhrawin' three ca-ards apiece, whin th' Spanish admiral con-cluded 'twud be better f'r him to be destroyed on th' ragin' sea, him bein' a sailor, thin to have his fleet captured be cav'lry. Annyhow, he was willin' to take a chance; an' he says to his sailors: 'Spanyards,' he says, 'Castiles,' he says, 'we have et th' las' bed-tick,' he says; 'an', if we stay

here much longer,' he says, 'I'll have to have a steak off th' armor plate fried f'r ye,' he says. 'Lave us go out where we can have a r-run f'r our money,' he says. An' away they wint. I'll say this much f'r him, he's a brave man, a dam brave man. I don't like a Spanyard no more than ye do, Hinnessy. I niver see wan. But, if this here man was a — was a Zulu, I'd say he was a brave man. If I was aboard wan iv thim yachts that was converted, I'd go to this here Cervera, an' I'd say: 'Manuel,' I'd say, 'ye're all right, me boy. Ye ought to go to a doctor an' have ye'er eyes re-set, but ye're a good fellow. Go downstairs,' I'd say, 'into th' basemint iv the ship,' I'd say, 'an' open th' cupboard jus' nex' to th' head iv th' bed, an' find th' bottle marked "Floridy Wather," an' threat ye'er-silf kindly.' That's what I'd say to Cervera. He's all right.

"Well, whin our boys see th' Spanish fleet comin' out iv th' harbor, they gathered on th' deck an' sang th' naytional anthem,

'They'll be a hot time in th' ol' town to-night.' A lift-nant come up to where Admiral Sampson was settin' playin' sivin up with Admiral Schley. 'Bill,' he says, 'th' Spanish fleet is comin' out,' he says. 'What talk have ye?' says Sampson. 'Sind out some row-boats an' a yacht, an' desthroy thim. Clubs is thrumps,' he says, and he wint on playin'. Th' Spanish fleet was attackted on all sides be our br-rave la-ads, nobly assisted be th' dispatch boats iv the newspapers. Wan by wan they was desthroyed. Three battleships attackted th' converted yacht Gloucester. Th' Gloucester used to be owned be Pierpont Morgan; but 'twas converted, an' is now leadin' a dacint life. Th' Gloucester sunk thim all, th' Christobell Comma, the Viscera, an' th' Admiral O'Quinn. It thin wint up to two Spanish torpedo boats an' giv thim wan punch, an' away they wint. Be this time th' sojers had heerd of the victhry, an' they gathered on th' shore, singin' th' naytional anthem, 'They'll be a hot time in th' ol' town to-night, me

babby.' Th' gloryous ol' chune, to which Washington an' Grant an' Lincoln marched, was took up be th' sailors on th' ships, an' Admiral Cervera r-run wan iv his boats ashore, an' jumped into th' sea. At last accounts th' followin' dispatches had been received: 'To Willum McKinley: Congratulations on ye'er noble victhry. (Signed) Willum McKinley.' 'To Russell A. Alger: Ye done splendid. (Signed) Russell A. Alger.' 'To James Wilson, Sicroty iv Agriculture: This is a gr-reat day f'r Ioway. Ar-re ye much hur-rted? (Signed) James Wilson.'

"Where did ye hear all this?" asked Mr. Hennessy, in great amazement.

"I r-read it," said Mr. Dooley, impressively, "in the Staats Zeitung."

ON A LETTER TO MR. DEPEW.

"I USEN'T to know," said Mr. Dooley, "what me frind Gin'ral Sherman meant whin he said that thing about war. I've been through two iv thim, not to speak iv convictions an' prim'ries, an' divvle th' bit iv har-rm come to me no more thin if I was settin' on a roof playin' an accorjeen. But I know now what th' ol' la-ad meant. He meant war was hell whin 'twas over.

"I ain't heerd anny noise fr'm th' fellows that wint into threnches an' plugged th' villyanious Spanyard. Most iv thim is too weak to kick. But th' proud an' fearless pathrites who restrained thimsilves, an' didn't go to th' fr-ront, th' la-ads that sthuggled hard with their warlike tindincies, an' fin'ly downed thim an' stayed at home an' practised up upon th' typewriter, they're ragin' an' tearin' an' desthroyin' their foes.

"Did ye see what me frind Alger wrote to Chansy Depoo? Well, sir, Alger has been misthreated. There's a good man. I

In the 1890's all these varieties of Anglo-Irish were widely spoken in the United States, especially in the big cities of the Northeast and the Great Lakes. The respelling system that Dunne used to represent Mr. Dooley's pronunciation would have given Americans of that era enough hints so that they could fill in the gaps from their own knowledge of "Irish dialect." If Dunne had tried to transcribe Anglo-Irish accurately and in detail using the conventional alphabet, even his contemporaries would have been unable to read his columns with any enjoyment.

Dunne himself was a talented mimic who amused his club friends with his imitations of Irish dialect (Fanning 1978, 13). He applied his talent of mimicry and his own powers of observation to create an orthographic system which, judging from the popularity of the sketches with both readers and dialect comedians (Ellis 1941, 95), must not have formed a serious barrier either to oral interpretation or to reading. However, as the older generation of Irish-Americans passed away, no new waves of immigration came from Ireland, so that fewer and fewer Americans were familiar with the sounds of Anglo-Irish.

In 1963 Philip Dunne believed that the dialect spelling represented "an insurmountable hurdle to the modern lay reader." He favored having his father's work transcribed into standard English so that it could reach a wider audience. In an appendix to his loving memoir of his father, he presented several examples of this own "translations," as he called them, of some of his father's best-known essays. To the reader familiar with the original dialect form, the transcribed versions (Philip Dunne 1963, 270-307) lose much of their "flavor" and force. Fanning (1978, x) paraphrases Robert Frost to say "the flavor of Mr. Dooley is what gets lost in the translation."

In this study I intend to show two things: (1) Finley Peter Dunne's literary dialect is an accurate representation of certain features of Anglo-Irish speech which would stand out when heard by a speaker of Middle Western American English. (2) The Mr. Dooley pieces obtain a particular force and authenticity from being written in Anglo-Irish dialect.

The comments on the language of Mr. Dooley that follow are based on the first two Dooley collections, *Mr. Dooley in Peace and War* (1899a) and *Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of His Countrymen* (1899b), which include many of the most popular and typical essays, written when Dunne was in vintage form. I will also compare Mr. Dooley's brogue with that of his predecessor, Colonel McNeery, to show that Dunne became more selective, simplifying and dropping a few dialect features, as he gained experience in writing literary dialect. Finally, examination of an earlier dialect passage, which

Charles Fanning thinks may be attributed to Dunne, shows that its accurate phonetic transcription of all the features of Anglo-Irish speech definitely causes a deterioration in comprehensibility.

In what follows I shall try to compare the language of the Mr. Dooley pieces to Anglo-Irish as described in Hogan 1927; to a lesser extent I have also relied on Brook 1963, Gregg 1972, and, for the influence of Irish Gaelic on certain features of Anglo-Irish, on Greene 1966. Two native speakers of Anglo-Irish also helped me by reading an earlier draft of this paper and confirming or commenting on certain features. Both are Dubliners, but have travelled in all parts of Ireland and been in contact with people from many different backgrounds.

The vocabulary of the first two books of Dooley articles contains few items that are specifically Irish. Notable among these are a few words borrowed from Irish Gaelic: *avick*, used as a term of affectionate or jocular address from one man to another, from Irish *a mhic* (*mh* is pronounced *v*) 'my son'; *omadhaun*, Gaelic *amadán* 'fool,' and *soggarth*, Gaelic *sagart* 'priest.' These are used in contexts where their meanings are easily deduced—*soggarth*, for instance to refer to the officiant in "The Wedding of Two Great Fortunes"—so they merely add a touch of local color, rather than any serious suggestion that Mr. Dooley's first language was Irish Gaelic. Discernable Gaelic influences on Mr. Dooley's grammar are few, although he once uses *does be* for *is*, ostensibly in imitation of the Gaelic habitative (Cf. Greene 1966, 47).

Grammatical characteristics of Mr. Dooley's speech include doubly marked past tenses: *hurted*, *attackted*, *ownded*. Other past tenses include *ast* for 'asked,' *thrun* for 'threw,' *kilt* for 'killed,' *heerd* for 'heard,' and *et* for 'ate.' My informants have heard all these except *attackted*, but they think that only *thrun* is specifically Irish. *Et* is the usual British pronunciation.

Other grammatical phenomena include the sporadic use of *yon* as a demonstrative meaning 'over there,' as opposed to *this* 'near me' and *that* 'near you.' This is characteristic of many dialects of British and Irish English (Wakelin 1972b, 116). Moreover, *ye* is used for standard *you* universally, as subject, object, or object of a preposition. The possessive is always *ye'ers*. Additionally, *it's* is used side by side with the more "Irish" *'Tis* as the contraction of *it is*. Other contractions, such as *he don't*, *they'se*, *he ain't*, are just as much part of colloquial American speech as they are of Anglo-Irish.

Before discussing the systematic graphemes (letters, combinations of letters, spelling procedures) that Dunne used to give an overall impression

of Anglo-Irish pronunciation, it is helpful to distinguish these systematic procedures from the sporadic respellings of individual words, such as *babby* 'baby'; *med* 'made'; *anny, manny* for 'any,' 'many'; *wan* for 'one' or *minyits* 'minutes.' Such divergences from standard English as the addition of a *t* in *wunst* 'once,' *twict* 'twice,' and *chanst* 'chance' or the loss of one in *Kep* 'kept' or *nex* 'next' are phenomena involving individual words, not Dunne's systematic respelling procedures, and are beyond the scope of this article.

I shall first discuss how Dunne's respelling of the vowel sounds suggests the way Anglo-Irish speech impresses the Middle-Western American ear, then discuss the respelling of consonant sounds, and finally the way respelling suggests the rhythm of Irish speech.

Vowels

1. *ai, ay, a* before consonant and silent *e*, for Standard English spelling *ea*; *ray-* for *re-* as a prefix. This represents the retention of the historically older [e] as in *day, way* for the spelling *ea* in such words as *easy, mean, tea* (Hogan 1927, 65-67). The pronunciation President Reagan insists on for his name is an example of this. Dunne extends this vowel to words like *tajious* 'tedious,' *conganial* 'congenial,' and *aven* 'even,' as well as to the *re-* prefix in *raymimber* 'remember,' *rayport* 'report,' etc. "This was regarded in the nineteenth century as one of the most noticeable features of Irish pronunciation, but it is now dying out." (Brook 1963, 112) My Anglo-Irish informants assure me that is far from dying out, especially in the West of Ireland.

2. *i* for Std. *e*, when Std. *e* is pronounced like the vowel of *bet*, in examples like *whin* 'when,' *tinnis* 'tennis,' *iver* 'ever,' *dacint* 'decent,' often but not always before an *n*. Hogan (1927, 65) describes this vowel as "somewhat raised in Anglo-Irish." Dunne's spelling suggests that he heard it as raised from his [ɛ] in *bed* to [ɪ] in *bid*. One of my informants has this pronunciation, but the other does not.

3. *oo, u* for Std. *o*, *oa, ou* pronounced like the [o] *poach* or the [ɔ] of *score*, in examples like *gold* 'gold,' *coorse* 'coarse,' *befure* 'before,' *soord* 'sword.' Hogan mentions such pronunciations (1927, 66-7) as "still" heard in Anglo-Irish. My informants find it rare.

4. *aw* for *ow* in *know* and for *o* in *John, God*, suggests a low back vowel [ɔ] as in some pronunciations of *thought, caught*, contrasting with Dunne's (probable) [o] in *know* and [a] in *John, God*.

5. *u* for *oo, oul*, in *fut* 'foot,' *cud* 'could,' *shud* 'should,' *shtud* 'stood,' *tuk* 'took.' My informants have a vowel in these words which is higher and more fronted than Middle Western [U].

6. *a* plus doubled consonant for *al* in *Pammer House* 'Palmer House' suggests a fronted [a[<]], as in Standard British English (Wakelin 1972b, 86).

7. *on-* for Std. prefix *un-* in *onaisy* 'uneasy,' *onless*. Phonetically, it is probably a low back vowel, [a] or [ɔ]. My informants do not recognize this pronunciation.

8. *ar* or *ur* for Std. *er*, *ear*. Examples with *ur* are *turr'ble* 'terrible,' *purl* 'peril,' *hurtage* for 'heritage'; with *ar*, *larn* 'learn,' *resarve* 'reserve.' One of my informants considers pronunciations like [ʌ] in *peril*, *terrible* as typical of Dublin.

9. *i* for unaccented *e* pronounced like [ə] in the second syllable of *soda*, indicates a higher unaccented vowel than [ə], probably [ɪ] or [i̇]. Examples include *iv* 'of,' the second syllable of *tillygraft* 'telegraph' and the first syllable of *ilict* 'elect.' This is characteristic of British dialects in general (Pyles 1952, 238).

10. *ie*, *i*, *y*, for *oi*, as in *tiolet* 'toilet,' *hist* 'hoist,' *injin* 'enjoying,' *ile* 'oil.' In the earlier Colonel McNeery sketches, Dunne also used the opposite procedure, substituting *oi* for Std. *i*, *y*, in words like *moi* 'my,' *oye* 'eye.' Hogan points out that *oi* and *i* merged in Anglo-Irish (1927, 70). They both were pronounced [əi], like the vowel in *white* in Virginia (Gregg 1972, 128). Dunne may have found it confusing to render this merger by "crisscrossed" graphemes, or he may have found them too annoying for the reader.

11. *ru* before consonant or *lu* before consonant for Std. *r* or *l* before consonant, as in *goluf* 'golf,' *worruk* 'work,' *wurruld* 'world.' Hyper-corrected forms also occur, such as *purl* 'peril,' *Hur-cane* 'hurricane.' Brooks mentions epenthetic vowels occurring in Anglo-Irish between *r* or *l* and a following *m* (Brooks 1963, 113), but they apparently also develop in other environments. The use of this spelling is evidence that *rr* or *r-r* represents a flapped or trilled apico-alveolar consonant, rather than the retroflex vocoid of Midwestern American English. (See remark 5 under Consonants below.) My native informants recognize the pronunciations with epenthetic vowels.

Consonants

1. *th* for Std. *t*, *dh* for Std. *d* almost always occurs before *r* or *er*, as in *sthreet* 'street,' *betther* 'better,' *laddher* 'ladder,' *hundherd* 'hundred,' but sometimes in other positions as in *sthore* 'store.' Irish Gaelic has dental *t* and *d* pronounced with the tip of the tongue at the base of the upper teeth, (Brooks 1963, 112; Hogan 1927, 71), while English has alveolar *t*, *d* pronounced on the shelf behind the upper front teeth and interdental *th* [θ, ð]

with the tip of the tongue just beyond the edge of the front teeth. Both Brooks and Hogan, in the passages just cited, note the tendency of these two series of consonants to merge to a single dental series in Anglo-Irish. The auditory difference between a dental and an alveolar [t] is not very great. Dunne seems to note it only when [t] is in contact with [s] or [r] (Cf. examples cited above).

2. *gy* for *g* in *gyard* 'guard.' Hogan notes that [k,g] are "fronted," i.e., palatalized before the [a] of Anglo-Irish, attributing this to the influence of Gaelic (Hogan 1927, 75).

3. *sh* for *s*, as in *shtud* 'stood,' *shtrappin* 'strapping,' *rayshumed* 're-summed.' Hogan (1927, 76) says that English [s] is most often levelled with [ʃ] in Anglo-Irish and cites similar spellings from Irish dialect writings. The form *rayshumed* provides evidence of the devoicing of [ʒ] to [ʃ] also noted by Hogan (loc. cit.).

4. *n*' for *ng* is nearly universal, as in the tradition of American dialect writing, with occasional hypercorrections for humorous effect, such as *round robbing* for 'round robin.'

5. *n*' for *r* in *hear-rt*, *ar-rmy*, *hor-rses*, *r-rough r-riders*. Hogan says that Anglo-Irish [r] is usually "reverted," i.e., retroflex like American [r], but Dunne's deliberate respelling suggests a different sound, such as the tongue-tip trilled [r] of Southern Ireland also mentioned by Hogan (1927, 75).

6. *y* for Std. *i*. Some of these substitutions, such as *bullyon* 'bullion,' *Spanyard* 'Spaniard' are simply eye-spellings, but others, such as *glorious*, *Presbyteryan*, *Uniteryan* may represent what Hogan describes as a more tense [j] sound than in English, more like the German [j] (1927, 77).

7. *choo*, *joo* for *tu*, *du* does not represent a specific characteristic of Anglo-Irish, but of British and Irish English generally, because of the tendency of the first element in the [ju] diphthong in *duty*, *tune* to palatalize the preceding consonant, as in Mr. Dooley's *jooty*, *chune*. Dunne is not always consistent here, sometimes writing *dooty* and *dood* instead of *jood* 'dude,' implying the Middle Western vowel [u] and no palatalization.

8. Treatment of *h*. Hogan says "The Anglo-Irish aspirate is the same as in English. It is used in all positions as in Std. English" (1927, 77). This is reminiscent of one of Mr. Dooley's few metalinguistic comments, when he is trying to convince his skeptical friend Hennessy that he is related to Admiral Dewey, who had just won the battle of Manila Bay, "We dhrop a letter here and there, except th'haitches — we niver dhrop thim —."

My Anglo-Irish informants confirm the existence of the consonant pronunciations mentioned in points 1, 2, 5, and 6. They consider 3 (*sh* for *s*) typical of rural Ireland. In general, they believe that Mr. Dooley's language, as I have described it here, is not particularly characteristic of any one region of Ireland, certainly not of Mr. Dooley's Roscommon. They feel it shows a blend of Dublin, Midlands, and Southern features such as might have been heard from any random group of speakers in an Irish-American neighborhood.

Representing the Irish Lilt

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Anglo-Irish speech is an intonation pattern, the so-called "Irish lilt." People who are familiar with Anglo-Irish speech recognize the "lilt" when they hear it, but it would be very difficult to describe linguistically and at first glance it would seem impossible to represent in written language. Nevertheless, I believe that certain spellings and punctuations in the Mr. Dooley sketches are an attempt to suggest certain aspects of the rhythm and stress pattern of Anglo-Irish.

According to Pyles (1952, 238), one of the differences between American and British English is that the speaker of British English stresses accented syllables more strongly and unaccented syllables more lightly than does the American speaker. The Irish lilt apparently includes, among other intonation phenomena, an even greater difference between the length of accented and unaccented syllables than in British English.

The main evidence of lengthened syllables is the spelling *a-a* for *a*, whether it represents the [a], of *la-ads* or the [e] of *pa-apers*. The *a-a* often occurs before *r* in *ca-ars*, *wa-ard*, but hyphens between syllables that would be inexplicable, as far as the pronunciation of individual sounds is concerned, may be an attempt to portray a slowing of tempo on accented syllables in words like *or-chesthry* 'orchestra,' *projick-tyles* 'projectiles.' They may also represent a shift in stress toward the first syllable of the word in *see-gar*, *con-cealed*, considered by my informants as typical of Anglo-Irish.

Evidence for shortening or even eliminating vowels in unaccented syllables includes such spellings as *sicrety* for 'secretary,' *hishtry*, *victhry*, *cimithry*. Spellings of unstressed words with apostrophes abound in Mr. Dooley's dialect: *f'r* 'for,' *fr'm* 'from,' and constantly recurring *th'* 'the.' Some of these spellings may indicate complete ellipsis of the vowel, but in a spelling such as *nic'ssry* 'necessary,' where the ellipsis of one vowel is not marked in any way by spelling, the apostrophe must indicate a very short,

light vowel. If not, the word would be unpronounceable according to the usual rules of English.

Study of the Colonel McNeery sketches and some other dialect materials Dunne wrote prior to beginning the first Mr. Dooley series shows that he was experimenting and changing his respelling code. Sometimes he dropped procedures, such as *moi* for 'my' (usually spelled *me* in the Dooley work), or *oye* for 'eye,' presumably because it was confusing to the reader. Sometimes in the Colonel McNeery sketches he fails to write dialect at all for sentences at a time, something which never happens later with the less well-educated Mr. Dooley.

A comparison with other Chicago newspaper representations of Irish dialect in the same era will reveal something about the skill and judgment with which Dunne used dialect spelling. In particular, a passage which Fanning thinks may be attributable to Dunne from the *Chicago Times* of January 9, 1889 (cited in Fanning 1978, 11) shows a much more elaborate dialect style, closer to a phonetic transcription:

"Begobs!" ejaculated Officer P. Quinn to his friend Officer Weissnicht as they stood in Matt Connelly's saloon, next door to the station, looking at the red liquor in their glasses preparatory to engulfing it. "Begobs! 'Tis a gret note, indeed, fin the peppers does be joompin' on the pollis in thish sthyle. Didn't the two av us arresht tin thramps ashlope in a box-car lasht night but wan? . . .

"Be the Powers!" declared P. Quinn, "tis in mortal terror I am the whole livelong day, for fear the captain 'll git onto me pluckin' a banandy from the Dago's shtand beyant theer. Fur he's in the divil's own timper now, forbye the peppers does be clemmin' he meks more than his salary, shnoopin' things fin they coom handy. Oh, wirrashthru, 'tis no shnap a poor copper has these days at all, at all."

This is certainly more "Irish" than the dialect of the Mr. Dooley sketches, as it uses lavishly spellings like *sh* for *s* and grammatical devices like *does be* to translate the Gaelic present habitative which Dunne used only with great discretion, as well as items which Dunne seldom if ever used, such as *gret*, *peppers*, *clemmin'*, *meks* to indicate a closer or less diphthongized vowel than in Middle Western, *oo* for *u* in *joompin'*, *f* for *wh* in *fin* 'when' (Cf. Hogan 1927, 74), hypercorrections like *theer* for 'there' (as in Hogan 1927, 66), exotic vocabulary items like *beyant*, *forbye*, *wirrashthru*, *banandy* and Irish turns of phrase like *'Tis in mortal terror I am* (See Greene 1966, 41-42 for similar construction in Gaelic.)

It is also fatiguing to read for someone who is not intimately familiar with the more Gaelic-influenced varieties of Anglo-Irish and probably would never have gained the wide audience of the Mr. Dooley pieces. I do not think it is by Dunne because it lacks his wit and because it uses in a short sample of text devices to indicate dialect which he never or almost never used in the first two books of the Mr. Dooley sketches.

Conclusion

The comments I have made above about Dunne's choice of language and his repelling system show that they are both based on accurate observations of features present in a variety of Anglo-Irish dialects. The language he uses adds to the credibility of Mr. Dooley as a character, because it constantly reminds the reader that Dooley represents the urban Irish-American poor, with all their history of cultural alienation and fragmentation, and with the physical and spiritual hardships entailed by immigration (See Fanning 1978, 233). Mr. Dooley's dialect is the guarantee of his right to speak for them.

Charles Fanning, in his recent perceptive study of Dunne, points out that "Dunne's ear for the rhythms, contractions, and occasional rolled "r's" of Irish American common speech is everywhere remarkable. His ability to transfer these tones still living onto the page is central to the perennial freshness of the Dooley pieces; even in the least successful of them, we hear a real human voice" (Fanning 1978, 221). He asserts that Mr. Dooley differs from earlier characters in American dialect literature such as Hosea Biglow, Artemus Ward, and Petroleum V. Nasby because "he is a fully developed character who has been placed in a definite social and geographical context; in this he is unlike the isolated, shadowy figures — little more than disembodied rural voices — of his predecessors . . . Mr. Dooley is the first thoroughly localized community member in the American dialect tradition . . ." (Fanning 1978, 219).

Fanning argues that the effectiveness of the Mr. Dooley pieces derives in part from their being strongly grounded in a sense of "place" — the poor Irish neighborhood of Bridgeport in Chicago in the 1890's, a living community whose people and landmarks were well-known to Dunne's earliest contemporary readers. With the exception of Langston Hughes' Jesse Semple (Simple) in the Harlem of the 50's and 60's, very few American dialect humor heroes have had such strong roots in a community (Fanning 1978, 229-30). Clearly, Dunne's ability to sustain the literary illusion of an authentic, human, "Irish" voice — of a specific human voice in a specific

time, place and social milieu — is founded in part on his success in forging an eye dialect which gives a convincing impression of being authentic Anglo-Irish speech without trying to be a phonetic transcription.

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