

# Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

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## The Limb of the Law

The Limb of the Law

(Brian O'Higgins?)

You can tell by my feet I'm a limb of the law  
The people of Dublin for me have no gra;  
The hiss me and boo me when I pass them by,  
"Sinn Fein", "Up the rebels" you'll hear them all cry.  
Now you may think that's bad, but there's one thing that's worse  
This grand Irish language on my soul 'tis a curse.  
Wid' their yibberin and yabberin like an old asses' bray,  
The Castle expects me to know what they say,

chorus: With "Ochone" and "Mo Bhroin" you'll hear them all say

"An dtuigeann tu me?" and "Sinn Fein, hooray!"

"Is doigh liom go bhfuil is doigh liom nach e"

"Ach ta me ag foghlaim na Gaeilge."

Now I've a friend on the force and he's courting a cook  
And what do you know but she bought him a book,  
With Irish on this side and English on that.  
So small I could carry it round in my hat.  
Oh first learn the letters and then the whole phrase.  
I'll have it all off in a couple of days.  
Then their yibberin and yabberin I'll soon understand.  
Such larnification will stagger the land.

Chorus

Now this book I procured and to learn I must try  
"An bhfuil me?" means "Are you?", "An bhfu'il tu?" means "Am I?"  
"Is doigh liom", I think that I do understand  
"Mo lamh" is my foot and "Mo chluas" is my hand.  
"Ta me ag foghlaim", I'm learning, you see  
If I keep on like this, an inspector I'll be.  
I'm getting so big that I don't know the cat,  
My head is two sizes too large for my hat.

Chorus

Now with larnification I'm bloody near dead,  
I lie on the floor 'cause I can't lie in bed  
I am walking and talking when I'm fast asleep.

When I hear "Up the rebels! " my flesh starts to creep  
My friends all have left me, I've now just a few  
I'm walking around like a wandering Jew '

Chorus

Note: Dublin police, in the period from 1916 to about 1920, were ordered to prosecute Irish rebel leaders who preached sedition. Unfortunately, those preachments were in Irish, which the Polis didn't understand. Orders were issued for Dublin cops to learn Irish so that they could hunt out traitorous utterances. For some reason, the populace found this amusing.

More Notes: Sorry, there are accent marks in Gaelic that don't show up in ASCII.

Still more notes: O-chone (gutteral ch): Oh woe!

Mo Bhron (Mo Vrone... long o): my sorrow.

An Dtuigeann tu me (On diggan too may): Do you understand me?

Is doigh liom (iss doughey lum) : It is my opinion

The sentence is, roughly "I believe that it is; I believe that it's not, but I'm learning Gaelic"

An bhfuil me (on fwheel may): Am I?

An bhfuil tu (on fwheel too): Are you?

Mo lamh (Mo lahv): my hand

Mo chluas (gutteral ch): my ear

Tame ag foghlaim (Taw may egg follam): I am learning

Translation and transliteration thanks to P. Heinlein

From Songs of Dublin, Frank Harte