

John M. Synge (1871-1909)

2 *The 'Mergency Man*

He was lodging above in Coom,
And he'd the half of the bailiff's room.

Till a black night came in Coomasaharn
A night of rains you'd swamp a star in.

"To-night," says he, "with the devil's weather" 5
The hares itself will quit the heather.

I'll catch my boys with a latch on the door,
And serve my process on near a score."

The night was black at the fording place,
And the flood was up in a whitened race, 10
But devil a bit he'd turn his face.

Then the peelers said, "Now mind your lepping,
How can you see the stones for stepping?"

"We'll wash our hands of your bloody job."
"Wash and welcome," says he, "begob." 15

He made two leps with a run and dash,
Then the peelers heard a yell and splash;

And the 'mergency man in two days and a bit
Was found in the ebb tide struck in a net.

1908

(From *The Works of John M. Synge*. Vol. 2. Dublin:
Maunsel and Co., Ltd., 1910)