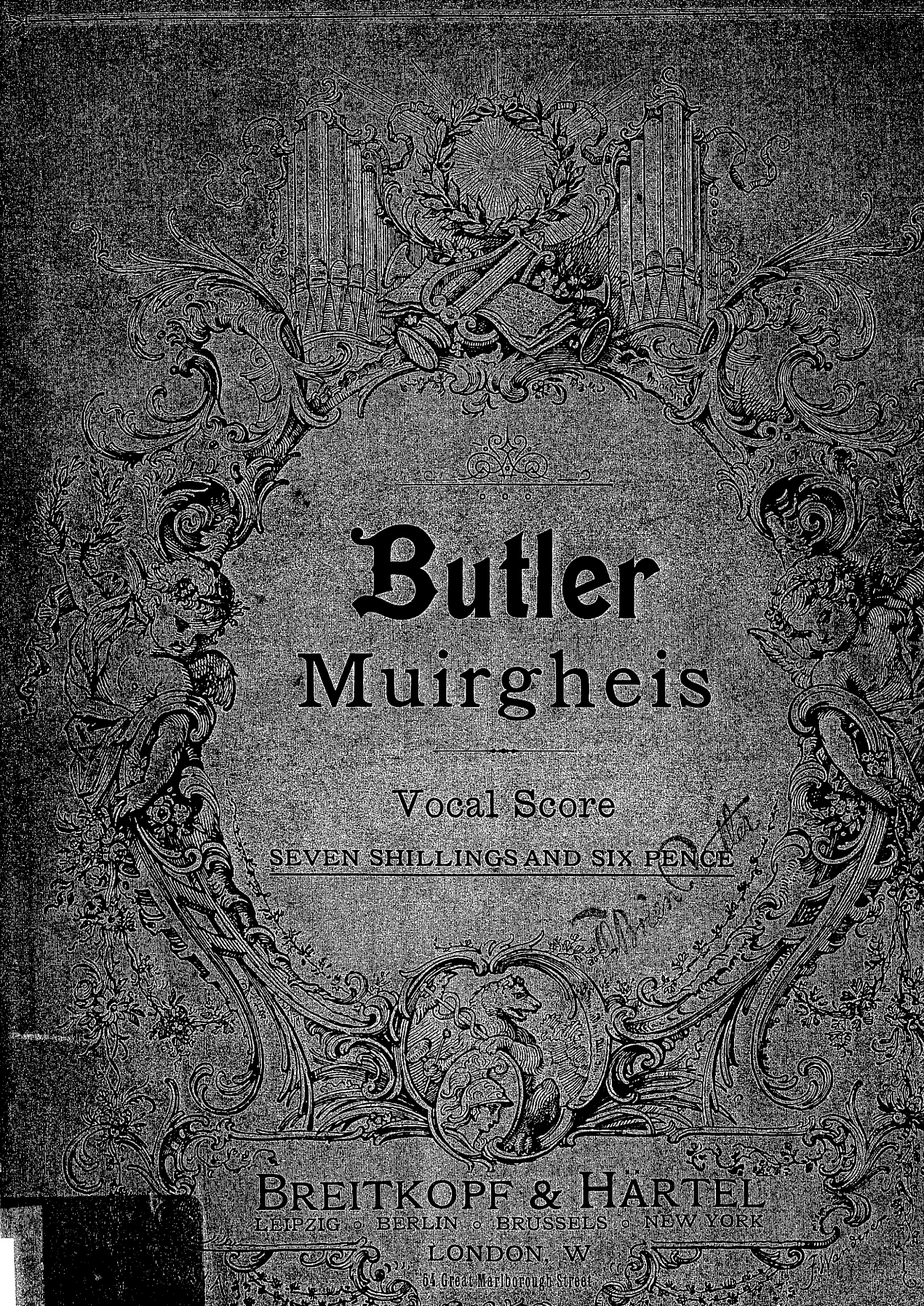


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**Butler**  
**Muirgheis**

Vocal Score

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∞  
**MUIRGHEIS**

(THE FIRST IRISH OPERA)  
IN THREE ACTS

ENGLISH WORDS BY  
**NORA CHESSON**

IRISH TRANSLATION BY THADGH O'DONOGHUE

MUSIC COMPOSED BY  
**O'BRIEN BUTLER**



NOT MORE THAN TWO NUMBERS FROM THE OPERA  
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## ARGUMENT.

The scene of the opera is laid in Waterville on the Coast of Kerry, Ireland at the dawn of Christianity. Muirgheis and her foster-sister Maire are both in love with Diarmuid, a neighbouring chieftain. Diarmuid returns the love of Muirgheis, and Maire filled with jealous hate, calls upon Donn of the Sand Hills a fairy King of the seacoast, to carry off Muirgheis to Tir-na-n'og (Fairyland). Donn consents, but warns Maire that if she asks another request of him it will involve her own death. He gives Maire an enchanted branch of quicken and tells her that if Muirgheis touches it even with finger tips she comes immediately under his power. Maire weaves this branch into a wedding wreath which she places on Muirgheis' head at the Marriage feast, whereupon Muirgheis is carried off by Donn. Diarmuid is in a passion of despair, but refuses to be comforted by Maire, who seeing her efforts fruitless, is stricken with remorse.

She again calls upon Donn, knowing the penalty she incurs, and requests him to restore Muirgheis. Donn consents, but enraged at the action of Maire, he dooms her to be changed after death, into a sea-wave. Muirgheis is restored, but her mind is blank, for it is a tradition in Kerry that if people return from Fairyland they are soulless and without memory until they shed tears. Diarmuid approaches, but she does not greet him. All her friends try in vain to awaken her recollection. At length the name of Maire seems to penetrate the spell. The dead body of her foster-sister is brought in and Muirgheis bursts into tears and her soul returns.

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## NOTE.

The plot of this opera was planned by the Composer himself, the idea being to weave the story of his first opera around the scenes of his childhood, in and about his Native place, with all the local colour possible. The plot was further developed by the late Nora Chesson, and Mr. George Moore. The Composer is indebted to Mr. Alexander Moring for permission to use the English words with the Irish translation, in concert programmes, book of words, and public performances of the opera, as well as in the vocal score. The opera was first produced at the Theatre Royal Dublin, with great success, the composer conducting, on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec., 1903.

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# Muirgheis

The first Irish Opera in three Acts.

English words by Nora Chesson.  
Irish translation by Thadgh O'Donoghue.  
Music by O'Brien Butler.



## Overture.

*Allegro vivace.*



*cresc.* *f*

*p*

**Allegro vivace.**

*sf* *sf*

*stringendo* *sf* *cresc.*

*a tempo* *ff*

**Andante.** *p espressivo* *tr*

*cresc.* *rit.*



The musical score is written for piano and consists of eight systems of staves. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two flats, and a common time signature. The score features various musical elements such as chords, arpeggios, and melodic lines. Dynamics include *p*, *cresc.*, *f*, *mf*, and *rit.*. Performance instructions include *Più mosso.* and a section marked with a dotted line and a fermata. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5, and articulation marks like accents and slurs are present. The score concludes with a *p* dynamic marking.



mf

Allegretto.

mf

mf

cresc.

mf

Moderato.

p

con tenerezza

p

The first system of music consists of two staves. The treble staff begins with a series of eighth notes, followed by a half note. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present in the final measure of the system.

The second system continues the piece. It features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes in both staves. Dynamic markings of *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano) are used to indicate changes in volume throughout the system.

The third system shows a change in tempo and dynamics. The tempo is marked *Allegro*. The music is primarily in the bass clef, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The notation includes chords and moving bass lines.

*Allegro.*

The fourth system is marked *Allegro* and features a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The music is characterized by a strong bass line with chords and some melodic fragments in the treble staff. A dynamic marking of *sf* (sforzando) is also present.

The fifth system shows a change in key signature, indicated by the appearance of sharps in the notes. The music continues with a focus on the bass line and chordal accompaniment.

The sixth system includes first and second endings, marked with '1.' and '2.'. The first ending leads to a repeat, while the second ending concludes the section. The notation is dense with chords and moving lines.

The seventh system concludes the piece with a final cadence. It features a series of chords in the bass staff and a final melodic flourish in the treble staff. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present.

6 meno mosso

ff f p

p

tr ff 5 5 ritard.

rit.

Allegro Vivace.

mf

f p Presto.

cresc. f ff f