

You can now go back to the same committee member or judge and ask what's holding the senior dancing competitions up, as he or she tries to cope with 75 to 100 little boys and girls, or you can, for a change, listen to the announcer talking to himself very loudly and maybe even learn that the ceili bands will be competing in the lower gym. If you allow yourself to be lured there on the strength of that announcement, you are sure to find some young bull roaring out "Galway Bay" to a magnificent audience of fifteen, but it's nice to sit there, cool, and virtually in the dark, after leaving all that bright sunlight. If you wait long enough, the committee man assures you, the ceili bands will compete, but by this time you've lost all interest. You go back to watch the intermediate figure dancing - or at least you find someone to talk to while the dancing is going on. Occasionally you look at the stage, making some sagacious judgments after a few seconds of close observation.

The children are getting ready to take their exhausted parents home, you notice. The sun is beginning to set in all its spring splendor;;you're hungry and the stands have run out of hot dogs. A turn or two around the field brings you to part of the family group, and one or more must be sent to find the other members - getting lost themselves in the process and having to be found by the arrivals for whom they were looking. By the time you are all together, the senior dancing competition is called (meaning it will start, really, within the hour), but everyone is more interested in dinner and a hot bath.

The seniors (including the third step-cousin by marriage on your mother's side) are left to dance in the darkening shadows for the weary, hungry, exasperated judges alone.

On your way out, of course, you can make some suggestions for improving these field days and pass the committee members just as you're telling everyone, "Merciful heavens! This was the worst-run Feis I've ever been at."

Then you can travel home together on the subway, tired and hungry, but lit by an inward glow (now now - it's not that) as you think how grand it was of you to contribute, by your enthusiasm and interest, to the spread of Irish culture. Maybe next year you'll even enter yourself...or work on the committee.