

perfect and elaborate rhymes. It was not done in other countries for two centuries later. The Irish gave the lead to Europe in that matter.

The bards flourished equally with the Church. When the Danes came there was a change. For nine or ten centuries they were permitted and then the distinction between bards and files died out. They were all poets. There is a parchment containing a poem written then by a poet who saw in battle the passing of the great king, Brian Boru. The parchment has never been edited. We have no university where it could be edited, and no one will give us such a university. Imagine what a great stir there would be if a manuscript poem by King Alfred, who was contemporaneous with this poet, should be discovered. What a stir it would make in universities, and how scholars would work upon it. Nothing is done with this manuscript I speak of, though, because we have no university, as I have said. The only universities we have are colleges of the English language, maintained and controlled by a people to whom the very name of Irish is loathsome and everything pertaining to Irish is distasteful except it be Irish rents.

We may consider how in those early days the Irish poets revealed a love of nature. Humboldt has called attention to the fact that not until Christianity leavened Europe did writers indicate a feeling of sympathy or admiration for nature. This was not so in Ireland. I have extracts from those old Irish poets, written at the time Humboldt speaks of, wherein nature's beauties are written of in most appreciative and sympathetic words.

The early Irish thrilled with emotion. The grandeur of nature thrilled them. They sounded it in their writings. It is a unique distinction of Irish poets of any other nation of Europe. Well, what became of the poets? It is a myth, we know, that King Edward I. slew the Welsh poets. It is no myth, but a stern reality, that the Irish bards were slain by an alien people. The English killed them, authorized to do so by a law which described the bards as inciting, by their writing, rape and other dreadful violence. I know that the law which thus described the writing of those poets was written by the lying Ministers of Queen Elizabeth, than whom there were no greater liars in Europe. I have read the works of those bards at that time and there is nothing of the sort advocated by them. Spenser let the cat out of the bag when he wrote that the condemned Irish bards were "desirous of their own lewd liberty." That they were, and I think them the better for it.

People now sometimes think of these bards as pipers. That is a ridiculous notion. They were poets and knew their business. They did nothing else but write poetry, just as much so as Tennyson or any other poet we know.

The Irish had their own peculiar framework for their poetry. The Irish divided the consonant into seven groups. Any one of these groups was allowed to rhyme with any other group. It was based upon a system of acoustics.

The complexities of the meters used by the ancient Irish poets were discarded, however, in the seventeenth century and the Irish poetry was then revolutionized. It was no longer swathed or swaddled. It suddenly stepped forward like a maiden clad in all the colors of the rainbow. Then the populace burst into passionate song. There was a sensuous attempt to convey music into poetry. They attained the perfection of harmony, using collocations of vowels in amazing combinations.

When the Irish began to make English verses a century ago they worked on these models. The secret of that kind of versification which was in danger of dying out ten years ago lies in no such danger now, thank God. It is here to stay. I may also say that no poet in Ireland now who uses the English models may expect recognition. I speak feelingly, for I once tried it with unpleasant and unprofitable results.

At the conclusion of Dr. Hyde's address Dr. J. Maher, of Oakland, a