

verdant surface. Then shall be answered hopefully that apostrophe of the poet McGee:

"What shall be, fall the ancient race?
Shall all forsake their dead birth-place,
Without one struggle strong to keep
The old soil, where their fathers sleep;
The dearest land on earth's wide space,
Why leave it so, O ancient race?"

A. T. S.

The Origin of Rime.



It is a remarkable fact that in all the classical Greek and Latin literature we find neither rime* of consonants, nor rime of vowels, nor except occasionally as a figure of speech—alliteration. Yet in the ecclesiastical Latin literature of the fifth century, we find all three. And, what is more curious, they are there used with a skill that would ordinarily suppose centuries of previous development. That the decadent Romans would produce a miracle of this kind shocks our sense of historical evolution. We must suppose some outside influence.

Now the men who were writing Latin then were of many nations. It would be but natural to suppose that assonant and consonant rime, and the alliteration system were introduced into Latin by men who had been accustomed to employ them in their own language.

Of the few literatures which have come down to us from that early period, Irish stands out prominently. And of all the ancient literatures we know, Irish alone possesses, rime, assonance and alliteration. When we remember that there were certainly Christians in Ireland at least in the fourth century (that is before the appearance of the new prosody in Latin) and that commerce between Ireland and the Greek and Latin-speaking Gauls had been kept up ever before the Christian era, we can readily see the possibility of con-

* There is a tendency to revert to the original proper spelling—rime.