

prominent member of the committee which has welcomed Dr. Hyde, spoke in thanks, representing the audience, and assuring Dr. Hyde of its appreciation of his work, and also thanking President Wheeler, of the University, for his services and kindness in the matter. Professor Charles Mills Gayley, in conclusion, paid a tribute to Dr. Hyde, and said he hoped at before the departure of the distinguished guest there might be formulated a plan which for sixteen years had been in his own mind, the establishment of a chair of Irish literature in the University of California.

Now, in Ireland there were two classes of poets, the "file" and the bard. There were two classes of bards, too, the free and the unfree, and eight ranks of each of these classes. The meters that each rank might use was regulated by law. It was as though Yeats could now be prosecuted for using the meters of another poet, or as though he should be constrained by law to use only the one or the two sorts of meters.

The file was paid three milch cows for one poem, and the bard but one calf. The file were seated by law at the side of the prince or bishop. There were seven grades of the file, and the top grade was only to be reached after twelve years of study. Then he could make verse in three hundred different meters and know three hundred and fifty prime tales of Ireland, and about one hundred and fifty secondary stories. Imagine what you were in for if you were seated at dinner by one of those files.

Those books of olden time I spoke of gave the names of each meter and specimen of each. In the Danish and Norman invasions, then wiped out, you will see a civilization as complete and intricate and perhaps as interesting as that of Babylon. It is by pure good luck that these books I mention exist now.

The poets then in those days were entitled to be judges. They lost that right when a certain king, hearing two poets dispute for the right to wear a coat of feathers, intended for the chiefest of the poets, found he could not understand what they said. He decided that if they were of that sort they were not fitted to be judges, and ordered that the distinction thereafter be denied to all poets unless qualified.

In the first century after Christ there were one thousand poets in Ireland. Each poet had a retinue; the head poet of thirty persons; and then on down. They were all a heavy burden on the soil of Ireland. The producers finally arose, and with perhaps a touch of Americanism surveyed these poets and perhaps said: "Are they doing any business, or doing any good? We should not support them," and they got rid of the poets, who fled away to the north, where the king sheltered them. In the sixth century it was found that one-third of the well-born people were poets, and again the poets were driven out, the people wearying of them. Again they were protected by the king of the north.

And here I think I find the first clear indication in history that a nation's mental characteristics of a race, cling to it and cannot be got rid of. I find the first clear indication of the tendency, in history, that drives the Irish into honorable rather than into lucrative professions; a tendency that drives them now into the press, the bar, the bench or medicine, rather than into—well, you know what lines are lucrative in America.

Well, when Charlemagne was trying to recover the rude ballads of his Norse ancestry thousands of Irish poets were studying in universities more than three hundred meters and reciting a multitude of epic poems. In the next century the poets became incredibly audacious. In bands they roved over the land, levying a species of blackmail. They carried a silver pot, hung with bronze chains, and their spears were held in the links of this chain and thus carried to the house of some man whom they proposed to meet. The pot was called the Pot of Avrice. The chief poet, upon arrival at the selected