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Kuno Meyer Letters to Douglas Hyde, 1896-1919

A. On Hyde’s application for a position in Trinity College Dublin.¹

14 Belvedere,
Bath,
18. 3. [18]96.

Dear Dr Hyde,

Your letter only reached me last night, and I hasten to send you a few lines to express my full sympathy with your candidature and the hope that you will be successful. Surely, the electors will not let themselves be influenced entirely by Dr. Atkinson. I feel sure that your appointment would mean a new era for Irish studies in Dublin. If through your influence and through your pupils you could bring about a scholarly working up of the whole modern Irish material, that would be one of the greatest boons that could be conferred on Celtic research. This can only be done by native scholars, and Atkinson and others ought to see that.

Wishing you every success I remain

Yours very faithfully,

Kuno Meyer

P.S. Could you send me a copy of your ‘Three Sorrows of Story-telling’², a book which I have never seen? I am glad to hear you like our first number.³

1. On J. P. Mahaffy’s submission to the Royal Commission on Intermediate Education in Ireland

57 Hope Street,
Liverpool,

Dear Dr Douglas Hyde,

¹ Hyde applied for a Chair of Irish in Trinity College Dublin in 1896. He was unsuccessful.


³ Probably a reference to the Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie [hereafter ZCP], the first issue of which appeared in 1896.
You can hardly expect me to take seriously the extraordinary paradox of Professor Mahaffy.\footnote{John Pentland Mahaffy (1839-1919): Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, and Provost 1914-19. Distinguished ancient historian and Greek scholar.} It reminds me of the recent utterance of a Catholic Lord Rector of a Scottish University that a chair in French was unnecessary as there was no French literature.

However, the statement was made, you tell me, by the learned professor before a Royal Commission on Education, and on the authority of two unnamed Irish scholars.\footnote{Robert Atkinson and Edward Gwynn; see further notes 9 & XX below.} If Professor Mahaffy, instead of taking the opinion of two such men, had applied to his friend Whitley Stokes,\footnote{Described during his lifetime as ‘the greatest of living Celtic philologists, whom the common voice of the Continent would declare to be the greatest philologist native of these isles’, Whitley Stokes was, in many respects, a mentor of Meyer’s; see Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, \textit{Whitley Stokes (1830-1909): the lost Celtic notebooks rediscovered} (Dublin 2011), and Elizabeth Boyle & Paul Russell (eds), \textit{The tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes (1830-1909)} (Dublin 2011).} or to any of those Irish scholars whose learning and judgement are above question, he would have heard, I am sure, that Irish literature is a marvelous manifestation of the human spirit and, in its form and genius, in prose and in poetry, is a true and unique literature.

As for the value of the Irish language and literature in a programme of Intermediate Education in Ireland, I can but say:

(1) To refrain from teaching it to Irish youths who talk it as their native mother tongue I must regard as a grotesque educational blunder.

(2) The Irish language well taught I regard as a first-rate means of mental training.

(3) Why deprive in their education for life and all it means the youth of Ireland of such intimate touch with the literature of their past as they can thus acquire?

(4) What material will you provide for your University professors of Celtic Studies, if you freeze the fountain at the spring?

\textbf{[To Printer. Insert here letter beginning ‘In answer to’.]}\footnote{See next letter, No. 3.}

Wishing you every success in your endeavour to combat such false and ignorant charges against a literature to the study of which I have devoted my life,

I am,

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\[\text{\footnotesize(1) To refrain from teaching it to Irish youths who talk it as their native mother tongue I must regard as a grotesque educational blunder.}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize(2) The Irish language well taught I regard as a first-rate means of mental training.}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize(3) Why deprive in their education for life and all it means the youth of Ireland of such intimate touch with the literature of their past as they can thus acquire?}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize(4) What material will you provide for your University professors of Celtic Studies, if you freeze the fountain at the spring?}\]
Yours sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

2. Kuno Meyer to the Royal Commission on Intermediate Education in Ireland.

57 Hope Street,
Liverpool,
[n.d., but must be 24 Jan. 1899.]

In answer to those who assert that modern Gaelic is a degenerate daughter of Old-Irish, of the nature of a corrupt jargon rather than of a language, I should like to point out that this erroneous view, so far as it has any rational basis, is founded on the exploded theory of ‘phonetic decay’ taught in philological textbooks of forty or fifty years ago. The large proportion of English loan-words, which are naturally employed by Irish speakers in colloquial language, may also have helped to confirm such a mistaken view.

It is clearly wrong to draw any conclusion as to the character and nature of a language from its conversational use alone. As used by educated speakers and writers, and as it appears in the oral and written literature of Ireland, the modern Gaelic language is a natural and healthy development of the Old-Irish, remarkable alike for the raciness and wealth of its vocabulary and for its idiomatic construction. It affords, therefore, an excellent means of linguistic training.

3. On the editing of Old Irish texts.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
Cheshire,
6. 10. 1901.

Dear Douglas Hyde,

I ought to have thanked you long ago for your kind letter which I got in Dublin. But I have been either ill or very busy ever since. Now I feel a good deal better and I send you a specimen of my work — a modern story, or rather the modern version of an old story which I published in *Hibernica Minora*. I mean to edit it in the Zeitschrift, but without translation, partly because none, I think, is needed — except in the passages where the girl lets loose her tongue (*doléiced a tenga dí*, as it says in the story of Art Óenfher) and partly because the end is rather indecorous. Atkinson will rejoice to get

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hold of it.⁹ (I am making amends for publishing this by bringing out a lovely pure and tender love-tale called *Comrac Liadaine 7 Cuirithir.*¹⁰)

Would you be good enough to read my text? You see by my marks of interrogation that a good number of words and passages are more or less obscure to me. What would you say of the language? It seems to me to contain archaisms, which is but natural, as it must have been based on a long tradition. If you can at all manage it, let me have it back soon and write anything that suggests itself to you on the margin.

Zimmer¹¹ paid me a visit here on his return from Dublin and I had Prof. Strachan¹² over from Manchester to meet him. We are all good friends now after having abused each other for 20 years. Indeed we have discussed the chances of a *wissenschaftliche Celtologen Congress*¹³ in London next year, which, if it comes to pass, I hope you and other scholars from Ireland will attend.

With kind regards,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

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4. **On Hyde’s first stage play, ‘Casadh an tSúgáin’**.

6 Montpellier Crescent,  
New Brighton,  
Cheshire.

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¹¹ Heinrich Zimmer (18XX-19XX): Professor of Celtic at the University of Berlin, but a scholar also of patristic and medieval studies. See further below, n. 109.

¹² John Strachan (1862-1907): studied Classics in Aberdeen, but acquired an interest in Sanskrit and Comparative Philology when he moved to Cambridge. In 1883 he was sent to Germany to continue his studies (Sanskrit at Jena with Hans Delbrück and Old Irish with Thurneysen). He returned to Jena the following year to continue his studies. In 1885 he was appointed (at age 23) Professor of Greek at Owens College, University of Manchester. Notwithstanding this appointment, Strachan was to devote the rest of his life to Celtic (mostly Irish) Studies. He taught the first Old Irish course at the School of Irish Learning in 1903. His premature death in 1907 devastated Meyer; see letter XX below. See Breathnach & Ní Mhurchú, *Beatháisnéis (1882-1982)* 3 (Dublin 1992) 156-57.

¹³ ‘a scientific Celtic Congress’.
My dear Douglas Hyde,

Very many thanks for your prompt attention to *Inghean Ghuil*¹⁴ and the marginal notes with which you have assisted me. I wish I had had other copies to consult, of which there seem to be many. I took this from an Egerton manuscript in the British Museum written early in the last century.¹⁵ I should fancy there would be many variants.

If I were stronger and as enterprising as I was I should certainly come to Dublin next week to see your play.¹⁶ Indeed I have a great mind to do so now, if I can only find the time. Will it be played on Saturday? In any case I must get a copy. It will be a great thing to have a company of Irish actors who can then go into the provinces. Goethe once proposed this when it was a question of Germanising Prussian Poland, and drew up a scheme, but nothing was done.

Have you met Dr. Alexander Bugge, the son of Sophus.¹⁷ I told him to call on you. He is anxious to learn Irish thoroughly — in both the modern and the older languages.

With best wishes for a great success of your play,

Yours always sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

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19. 10. 1901.

B. On the Intermediate Education Board & recent Irish publications.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
Cheshire.
11. 3. 1902.


¹⁶ ‘Hyde also had the distinction of writing the first play in Gaelic, “Casadh an tSugáin” (The Twisting of the Rope), which was first performed at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, on 21 October 1901, by members of the Gaelic League Amateur Dramatic Society, with Hyde himself in the principal part’, Dominic Daly, *The young Douglas Hyde* (Dublin 1974) 134-36.

¹⁷ Alexander Bugge (1870-1929): son of Norwegian linguist, Sophus Bugge. Professor of History at the Royal Frederick University, Oslo. Edited *Caithréim Cellacháin Chaisil* (Christiania 1905), an important early-twelfth-century Irish propaganda work.
Dear Douglas Hyde,

Many thanks for your kind letter and the new instalment of your *Sgéaluidhe*. How very prettily these booklets are got up and how cheap they are! Nothing makes one realise the progress of the Language Movement better. The other day I saw some proofs of Comyn’s edition of Keating, extremely well done. I think the new generation of editors (yourself, Dinneen, McErlean and others) have advanced a considerable stage beyond the methods of O’Donovan and O’Curry — though the same cannot be said of the coming Irish scholar of Trinity, Gwynn!

I am very glad to see this outburst of indignation at the action of the Intermediate Board, and also that it is kept free from personal attacks on myself. I shall of course not accept the appointment for another year. It was interest in the subject that made me accept it, and the wish to see with my own eyes what is actually being done in Ireland for the teaching of the native language. This whole exam system is, in my opinion, a most clumsy and ill-devised machinery and, at best, a poor test. There will be no real progress in education till all this Chinese examination routine is done away with.

Your kind offer of welcome, if I should visit you, as I had hoped to do, I am very grateful for, but my plans have been rendered very uncertain by my having accepted to deliver 3 lectures at Alexandra College on early Irish civilisation (for the Margaret Stokes Memorial Committee). I shall go to Dublin about the 19th and then move slowly to Belfast, where I am due to lecture on the 25th (a lecture on Old Irish literature which Mrs Hutton has

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20 For Dinneen, see previous n and n. XX below, 000.


22 Sister of Whitley Stokes who died in 1900.

23 Margaret Hutton published a translation of *Táin Bó Cuailnge* in 1902. The wife of a Belfast industrialist and a member of the Gaelic League, she attended the summer-school of the School of Irish Learning for several years. She was a close friend of Pádraig Pearse and a keen supporter of his efforts to establish Scóil Éanna in Dublin (to which she made a donation of £50); see Diarmaid Ó Doibhlín, ‘Womenfolk of the Glens of Antrim and the Irish language’, in Eamonn Phoenix et al. (eds), *Feis na nGleann. A century of Gaelic culture in the Antrim Glens* (?Belfast 2005) 15-29.
arranged); but instead of being able to train about Ireland after that, as I had planned, I must now return here to work at the Alexandra College lectures, which are to be held in April. However, *Aufgeschoben ist nicht Aufgehoben*, and I hope soon to be over in Ireland again.

I met a Bollandist (Lemaire by name) the other day who has learnt Irish in Galway for the purpose of editing Saints' Lives &c.

With kind regards to Mrs Hyde,

Yours sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

5. *On Irish Chairs in the proposed new University.*

My dear Douglas Hyde,

I only find time now to answer your letter. You will not, of course, forget to point to the example of Wales, where they have a professor of Welsh (or Celtic) at each College. In Germany the only recognised and fully established Celtic chair is that in Berlin, just created for Zimmer. But there are several professors and *docenten* at various universities lecturing on Celtic: Windisch\(^\text{24}\) and Sommer\(^\text{25}\) at Leipzig, Thurneysen\(^\text{26}\) in Freiburg im Breisgau, Zupitza\(^\text{27}\) in Berlin are those of whom I know.

\(^{24}\) Ernst Windisch (1844-1918): Professor of Indogermanic and Comparative Philology at the University of Leipzig. Meyer did his Habilitation (2\(^{\text{nd}}\) Ph.D.) under Windisch and remained in lifelong correspondence with him.

\(^{25}\) Ferdinand Sommer (1875-1962): studied with Thurneysen in Freiburg, then taught at Rostock, Jena, and Leipzig, before being appointed in 1926 as Professor of Indogermanic Philology at the University of Munich.

\(^{26}\) Rudolf Thurneysen (1857-1940): born in Basel, he studied Classics in Leipzig and Jena, where his teachers were Ernst Windisch and Heinrich Zimmer; he succeeded Karl Brugmann in the chair of Comparative Philology at Jena in 1887. Professor of Comparative Philology at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau, in 1913 he took up a chair in Bonn, where he taught until his retirement in 1923. Well-known for his *Grammar of Old Irish* (Dublin 1943) [translated from the original *Handbuch des Alt-Irischen* (Berlin 1909)] and numerous other studies.

\(^{27}\) Julius Zupitza (1844-1905): studied Classical, Romance and German Philology at the Universities of Breslau and Berlin. Appointed first Professor and Chair of English Philology at the University of Berlin in 1871.
Lay stress on the fact that without university recognition of these studies they will always remain more or less amateurish. Sketch an ideal Irish University in which men like O’Donovan,28 Curry,29 Hennessy,30 & c., might have taught, and produced a new generation of great Irish scholars. There you will have Mahaffy with you — at least that was his wish and object, when he talked last to Zimmer and myself. He said something like this: ‘I hate all this dilettante talk about the Irish language. But I would do anything to see it put on a proper academic basis and we must do so at Trinity College’. Zimmer and I answered to that unanimously that this would only be any good if they got the right man — meaning thereby not Gwynn, or anyone like Mackinnon in Edinburgh (who, after he was elected, had to be presented by his friends with the books on his subject, as you may read in the Revue Celtique).31

I have nothing more to say — the thing is so natural and simple and you will easily make out a good case. There would be no harm in writing to Zimmer and Windisch, who would of course wish nothing better than to see these studies worthily represented at an Irish university. It would be the apex and crown of the present movement.

I have organised a Celtic Congress at Hamburg for next September — as a section of the Oriental Congress, to start with. I hope you may be able to come. It will soon be announced in the papers.

Command me in anything in which I can be useful to you and the cause you have at heart.

With kind regards to Mrs Hyde,

Yours always sincerely,

28 John O’Donovan (1806-61). One of the leading scholars of Irish in his time (with Eugene O’Curry). See Patrick MacSweeney, A group of nation-builders (Dublin 1913); Bráthair Críostamhail, Síoladóirí i. Eoghan Ó Comhraidhe agus Seán Ó Donnabháin (Dublin 1947) 109-250; Máire Ní Mhaolíosa, Réamhchonraitheoirí. Nótaí ar chuid de na daoine a bhí gníomhach i ngluaiseacht na Gaeilge idir 1876 agus 1893 (Dublin 1968); Ó Murchadha, Seán Ó Donnabháin agus Eoghan Ó Comhrai (Dublin 1962); Patricia Boyne, John O’Donovan (1806-1861): a biography (Kilkenny 1987); Mary E. Daly, ‘John O’Donovan and the development of Celtic Studies’, in Alvin Jackson & David N. Livingstone (eds), Queen’s thinkers. Essays on the intellectual heritage of a university (Belfast 2008) 31-44.


31 Donald Mackinnon: best known for his Catalogue of Gaelic manuscripts in the Advocates’ Library, Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1912). The Revue Celtique article referred to by Meyer XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
6. On his appointment as Examiner in Intermediate Education.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
Cheshire,
7. 2. 1902.

Dear Douglas Hyde,

You will be greatly interested, astonished and perhaps displeased to hear that I have just been appointed Examiner in Irish by the Intermediate Board. It was Mahaffy’s proposal. He wrote to ask me, and I accepted. Now I know there has been a row about this examinership, though I do not know the details, and perhaps it was unwise of me to thrust myself into troubled waters. But I hope you know me too well to imagine that I would do anything against the interests of the cause of the Irish Language and its brave and enlightened advocates, among whom I look upon you as the leader. Indeed, I am only writing to take my cue from you. For, whatever has induced Mahaffy to this step, do not imagine for one moment that he will find in me a tool to use according to his sweet will. Let me know what you think about the matter, as well as your wishes and, so to speak, your programme, on which I can set to work.

I shall be in Dublin on Tuesday next, and if you could send me a letter to the Standard Hotel, Harcourt Street, by Tuesday morning, I should know your views before I met the Commissioners, or possibly Mahaffy.

Keep the matter quiet till you hear it publicly announced. I hope you agree with me in thinking that I can do good to the cause according to my lights and humble endeavours. I should greatly like to have a meeting with you, and perhaps can manage to come to see you some time in March.

Yours always sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.


6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
Cheshire,
20. 2. 1902.

Mr dear Douglas Hyde,
I ought to have thanked you a long time ago for your kind letter which I found at the Standard Hotel. I need not tell you that I fully understand the indignation which you and all my friends of the Gaelic League feel at the action of the Board, though I am also conscious that my appointment will not do your cause any harm. I have just read O'Hickey’s letter and the ‘Insult’ article in the *Claidheamh* and do not expect that the matter will end there. When I was in Dublin I saw Father Dinneen who was equally indignant. I also saw Atkinson, who tried to impress his well-known views upon me. Since then I have been in London, and was surprised to find that Lady Gregory and others knew all about it.

Meanwhile I am composing the exam papers exactly on the lines of those set by my predecessors, which I see are also the lines followed by the French and German examiners. Mahaffy himself, who, I suppose, is at the bottom of the whole thing, had not much to say except that he wanted the exam to be on a scholarly basis.

I hope to be able to carry out my plan of visiting Ireland at the end of March — Mrs Hutton wants me to give a lecture in Belfast — and of seeing you then.

Yours always sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

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D. *On Atkinson and Hyde’s evidence at the Commission on University Education.*

New Brighton,

20. 5. 1902.

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32 Meyer’s appointment caused controversy amongst the supporters of the Gaelic League, and generated heated discussion in the Irish-language newspapers.


34 ‘Insult’ article ?????

My dear Hyde,

I am greatly obliged to Mrs Chance for her kind invitation, which I hope to be able to accept, mainly to see you — of whom I see so little at Dublin — and Mrs Hyde. I have to go to London next week and will take [in] Birmingham on my way back.

You must give yourself a good rest after that exacting week at Dublin. What a sitting! It would have killed me. I hope that you were satisfied with what was done.

I hear from various quarters that my address has been widely read throughout Ireland. Stokes approves of it on the whole, but thinks the attack on Trinity and the R.I.A. too strong. He attributes all the mischief to Atkinson alone. But he hardly knows now what is going on. Did I tell you that he is bringing out a second edition, so to speak, of his criticism of Atkinson's *Glossary,* much enlarged?

Many thanks for the two reviews.

I will let you know more definitely when I can come. I suppose your lecture on the 28th is in the evening.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

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36 In another collection of Hyde material in the Aidan Heavey Collection in Athlone (826/HYD; No. 103 in Gearoid O’Brien (ed), *Catalogue of the Hyde & Goldsmith material in the Aidan Heavey Collection* (Mullingar 2014) 27), a collection of postcards sent by Hyde to various friends and acquaintances when he was on tour in North America in 1905-06, there is one addressed to 'Miss [Ethel] Chance, Chad Hill, Edgebaston, Birmingham'. I do not know if there was any connection with Patrick Alexander Chance (1857–c.1930), born in London, but educated in Dublin at the Catholic University School and the Catholic University. A supporter of the Home Rule party of Charles Stewart Parnell, he was elected MP for South Kilkenny in 1885. At Westminster he was a close associate of T. M. Healy, and when the party split in 1890 he emerged as a leading anti-Parnellite. He resigned from parliament in mid-1894. Nothing is known of his later career, though he was apparently still living in 1919 and seems to have died in England c. 1930. He published a short pamphlet, *The Irish question: the jubilee coercion bill*, in 1887; *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, q.v. (Christopher Woods).


My dear Douglas Hyde,

I cannot tell you how I enjoyed my stay in Dublin, and how I regretted that it had to be so short. I was particularly glad to renew my acquaintance with George Moore; your charming play was a bright moment in the dull routine of life, and the many acquaintances I made or renewed were most pleasant. For all this I owe you a debt of gratitude. I often wish I had more time at my disposal to throw myself thoroughly into the whole Irish movement. If they would only make me professor of Celtic here (there is some talk and just a chance of it) I could and would do so.

Meanwhile, an idea has occurred to me. When I have written my report on the Irish examination, which will give me an insight into the extent and depth of the movement, I should like to write a long and exhaustive article on the whole subject — language and literature — for an English monthly. Such a spectacle as the Folklore Competition at the Oireachtas was enough to open the eyes of the most sceptical and unbelieving. In fact, your Oireachtas is a far more national and, if I may say so, scholarly (i.e. literda) institution than the Welsh Eisteddfod, where such things are not done, and could not be done. I could, however, not write such an article without your assistance. Perhaps, when I and my sister come to fulfil the promise which I gave to Mrs Hyde you will give me the information which I require. I hope that perhaps before the end of this month we may be able to pay you a visit.

Liadain 7 Cuirithir has just appeared and I hope to send you a copy in a few days. Would you be good enough to notice it in the Claidheamh or in one of the other papers which care for these things? I made the price as cheap as possible, 1/6. I print all these editions at my own expense.

39 George Moore (1852-1933): distinguished Irish novelist and playwright and one of the most influential members of the Irish literary ‘scene’. Moore met Meyer for the first time at a garden party at his house, at Ely Place, on 19 May, 1902. The two men struck up an immediate rapport. See Adrian Frazier, George Moore (1852-1933) (New Haven 2000) 313-14.

40 On the Chair of Celtic at Liverpool, see further below.

41 See, e.g., S. J. Barrett (ed), Imtheachta an Oireachtais 1899. Proceedings of the third Oireachtas held in Dublin on Wed., 7th June, 1899 (Dublin 1900).

42 See Seán Ó Lúing, Kuno Meyer, 1858-1919. A biography (Dublin 1991) passim, and for a brief account of Antonie Meyer’s final years, see Ó Lúing, Celtic Studies, 241-42.

43 This story, in particular, fascinated George Moore; see Frazier, George Moore, 404.
Please remember me most kindly to Mrs Hyde and tell her that I am looking forward to my visit no less than my sister, who is enchanted with the idea.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.


6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
4. 7. 1902.

My dear Douglas Hyde,

Have you seen the papers which I set? I hope you liked them? The answers have come, and I have had two days' hard work at them. I am perfectly amazed at the excellence of the composition — I have only some senior papers so far. It shows that the teachers bestow great care on getting their pupils to write and speak well. Translation from the Irish is not nearly so good; but then these difficult texts (O’Rahilly, &c.) are really above the head of most boys, and require such very careful study for which I dare say there is no time. Altogether one gets the impression that these boys and girls do not read much. Not one of them has spelt the name Cúchulín correctly, many adopting horrible anglicised forms.

Dinneen and Prof. Murphy take the Preparatory and Junior papers, I had a conference with them; they are sure to do their work well, and next year Dinneen should be the Examiner. I shall get Mahaffy to see to that.

When I have done these Irish papers I have to plunge into German ones, so that the whole of this and next month will be occupied with such uncongenial potboiling, though the Irish work has an interest of its own. Then, at the end of August, I go to Hamburg to see whether I can arrange a Celtic Congress for next year.

With very kind regards to Mrs Hyde,

Yours always sincerely,

44 O’Rahilly, etc.: the seventeenth-century Irish poet, Aodhagán Ó Rathaille.

45 Perhaps Rev. Denis Murphy, editor of Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Ui Dhomhnaill. The Life of Hugh Roe O’Donnell, Prince of Tirconnell (1586-1602) by Lughaidh O’Clerig (Dublin 1895); see Breathnach & Ní Mhurchú, Beatháisnéis (1882-1982) 1 (Dublin 1986) 90, where, however, it is remarked: ‘Meastar nach raibh cruinneolas aige ar an nGaeilge’ (‘it is judged however, that he did not have an accurate knowledge of Irish!’).
Kuno Meyer.

[P.S.] I have just seen Finck’s glossary to Donleavy through the press. It is extraordinary how little these phoneticians know of the literary language. Because of the dat. pl. starthaibh he makes the nom. sg. startha! In Eóin baiste he takes baiste as a noun meaning ‘baptist’ &c. &c.


6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
30. 7. 1902.

[No greeting on postcard]

I am writing my Report on the Exam. It will be an eye-opener to some of our friends. I wonder, and I want to consult you whether, after all, I should not take the post for another year. It might do the cause good. Perpende! I see no prospect of a visit to you or to Ireland this summer, but Mrs Hyde must not be angry with me. We go to Hamburg on the 13th of next month and shall not be back here before October. I am thinking of leaving Liverpool altogether for London, where I can get a post.

Do you remember me telling you that the Irish word for ‘sister’ was written with ph in old texts? Here it is in Saltair na Rann: na dí phiair, Lia (i.e., Leah) léir ocus Rachaid (l. 7467). Of course, it is the aspirated form.

Slán leat,

K.M.

11. On an abortive Celtic Congress in Hamburg.

Hamburg,
8. 9. 1902.

Mr dear Douglas Hyde,

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47 ‘Consider carefully!’

Many thanks for your letter and card which I got at Berlin. I am sorry to say that I have not been able to do anything here in the matter of a Celtic Congress. The only Celtologists present are Windisch, Thurneysen, and perhaps Finck and Lidén49 — none either from Britain or France. It is very disappointing. However, I’ll try again.

I am glad you got Raleigh’s poem into print.50 It deserves to be preserved.

I have had a lot of correspondence with Mahaffy, and the result is, as I saw from the outset, that I shall have to take the Examinership again. He would not hear of either Mac Neill or Dinneen; the alternative would be Zimmer (if he is well enough) or Strachan whom I proposed myself when I saw he was determined to have a non-Irish examiner. Is he then really so almighty on the Board? The outcry in the press seems to have made no impression on him. I wonder what they will do with my report.

I am going to Halle from here, so that my address for the next fortnight will be Halle a. S., Reilstrasse 88.

Yours always sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

12. On the creation of a new Chair of Celtic in Liverpool.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
28. 11. 1902.

My dear Douglas Hyde,

On Tuesday, the 17th December, there is to be a great meeting at the Town Hall here, or rather in Liverpool, to make propaganda for the creation of a Celtic Chair in our new University. The Welsh, Irish and Scotch communities of Liverpool will be well represented, but representatives from Wales and Scotland are also to be invited. For Wales we have so far Lord Kenyon,51 Rhys52 and others, mostly scholars. But our difficulty is Ireland. T.P.

49 Evald Lidén (1862-1939): Professor of Indoeuropean Philology at Göteborg University from 1899. Was interested also in folk-song and placenames research.

50 Sir Walter Raleigh (1861-1922): Professor of Modern Literature at Liverpool University (1899) and of English Language & Literature in Glasgow from 1900. In 1904 he was appointed first holder of the new Chair of English Literature at Oxford. Wrote in support of the Gaelic League’s campaign for Irish in the schools.

51 Lloyd Tyrell-Kenyon, 4th Baron Kenyon (1864-1927): served in the British governments of Lord Salisbury (1900-05) and Lloyd-George (1916-18).

52 Sir John Rhys (1840-1915): first Professor of Celtic in Oxford University.
O’Connor will come, but he must be well supported. I have, of course, thought of you in the first line. But will you and can you come? It would be splendid if you could. Might a great movement here not react on Dublin and other places? Indeed, I should think it is most opportune on the top of the inquiry of the Royal Commission. Perhaps you can also tell me whom else to ask. Would Lord Castletown be any good? Perhaps his name might be of value. Or any of the Catholic bishops? And if you decide on any, would you be our spokesman? The Gaelic League branches here should, of course, also take part. Your help there would be very valuable. Who is the man in Liverpool to approach? Burke we know, and he will come. Scotland is also a difficulty. There are few prominent men. Mackinnon is no good. Can you advise us there?

By a curious coincidence, Mahaffy is coming here next week to be dined at a local Literary & Philosophical Society. I have offered him hospitality, and am curious to know whether he will accept it.

I have been asked to examine in Irish with you and Hogan for the Royal University. I suppose the work is not heavy. I have accepted. Shall we have to meet?

Stokes’ criticism on Atkinson’s law glosary seems to have created quite a stir. To those who know, this new exposal of his superficial, half-matured work is, of course, no surprise. I have at present the great law code H. 3. 18 here, and am collating and collecting new material. All the publications are terribly deficient, even more so than Stokes imagines. The whole end, e. g., of

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53 T.P. O’Connor (1848-1929): elected M.P. for Galway in 1880 and for Liverpool Scotland in 1885, which he represented until his death.

54 Bernard Edward Barnaby FitzPatrick, 2nd Baron Castletown (1849-1937). Chancellor of the Royal University of Ireland, 1906-1910, and subsequently admitted to the Irish Privy Council. Castletown was particularly interested in matters to do with Celtic heritage, and was among the founders of the Celtic Association, an organisation concerned with the preservation of the languages, literature, music, dress and customs of the Celtic peoples. In 1900, the Celtic Association was set up in Dublin, with Castletown as president. The Association is mainly remembered for the three Pan-Celtic Congresses it organised: the first in Dublin in 1901, the second in Caernarfon in 1904, and the last in Edinburgh in 1907.

55 Edmund Hogan, SJ (1831-1917): Pioneer scholar and editor, inter multa alia, of Onomasticon Goedelicum . . . an index, with identifications, to the Gaelic names of places and tribes (Dublin 1910); he gave Eoin Mac Neill his first instruction in Old & Middle Irish.

56 ‘The Royal University was established by the Royal University Act of August 1879. It was not a university in the accepted sense of the word, but rather an examining body. It was abolished by the National University Act of 1908’, Daly, Young Douglas Hyde, 210 n. 36.

57 See n. 38 above.
the *Críth gablach*, that most ancient and valuable text,\(^{58}\) has been left out. Sheer carelessness!\(^{59}\) And no one ever thought of looking at the manuscript.

Let me soon hear from you and, if you possibly can, say you will come. We shall give you a *ceud míle fáilte 7 gach maitheas archeana*, as the old stories say.

Yours always,

K.M.

13. **On a Liverpool Public Meeting re the proposed new Chair of Celtic.**


My dear friend,

Many thanks for your letter of instruction, which I appreciate all the more as you wrote it on the eve of so important an event as your sister's marriage — *quod dii bene vertant!*\(^{60}\)

The meeting has been put off till the New Year, which will enable the organizers to arrange everything at greater leisure. I will give your list of names to them, and perhaps, after all, we may see you here. You could do what, so far as I know, none of the others can, carry the audience with you. The best Welshman we have is William Jones, M.P.,\(^{61}\) whom I have heard repeatedly with great admiration. I shall write again when the plan of campaign is more advanced.

I read the *Géagán glas* article\(^{62}\) with great interest and amusement, and had it actually in my pocket this morning when I met Mahaffy, who has come here to be entertained at dinner by a local society. He thinks I have been far too lenient as an examiner, but I doubt it very much. I certainly did not mean to be so. What may have influenced me somewhat was the fact that I had just

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\(^{60}\) ‘Whom the gods may look on kindly!’

\(^{61}\) William Jones (1859-1915): Elected Liberal MP for Arfon in 1895; served as Chief Whip in the government of Herbert Asquith from 1911 to his death.

\(^{62}\) *Géagán glas* art. ????????
been through hundreds of absolutely worthless papers in German from the
English Girls' High Schools.

I send you a trifle which will interest you. I am always glad when I have
an opportunity of protesting against this silly notion of Celtic barbarity.63

Yours ever,

Kuno Meyer.

14. About Trinity College & 'Cáin Adamnáín'.

New Brighton,
10. 3. 1903.

Many thanks for card and paper, which I have read with much interest and
forwarded to Strachan. I hope soon to send you the other nature poems in my
little book.64 How long will you be in Dublin? I hope to run across during the
Easter vacation, and Strachan is coming too. I am printing Cáin Adamnáín.65 Es
wundert mich, dass in der Campagne gegen Trinity College, die scheussliche
Ausgabe des Gelben Buchs von Lecan, für die Freund Atkinson doch
verantwortlich ist, nicht herangezogen wird. Es war der reine Schwindel und
Betrag — darin sind alle Gelehrte einig.

Ich schreibe dies mit zwei Fingern, da ich den Mittelfinger nicht gebrauchen
cann, den ich mir verletzt habe.66

Is not cruaidh used in the sense of 'land'? It was so used in older Irish and
in the Highlands they say urchair cruaidh and the like.

Stets der Ihrige,67

K.M.

63 I have not been able to trace Meyer's reference to 'Celtic barbarity'.

64 Kuno Meyer, Four songs of summer and winter (London 1903).

Oxoniensia, Medieval & Modern Ser. 12 (Oxford 1905).

66 ‘I’m surprised that, in the campaign against TCD, the dreadful edition of the Yellow Book of
Lecan, for which our friend Atkinson was responsible, wasn’t mentioned. It was a pure
swindle and fraud — every scholar is agreed on that. I’m writing this with just two fingers,
because I can’t use my middle finger, which I’ve injured’. See Robert Atkinson (ed), The
Yellow Book of Lecan (Dublin 1896) and the criticisms in ZCP 1 (1897) 493-96 and ZCP 12
(1912) 432-34. The facsimile was one of the first to be done by collotype reproduction of
photographs from the original manuscript, but the quality was very poor.

67 ‘Always yours’.
F. On recent travels in Ireland & publication plans.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton, 
29. 4. 1903.

My dear Douglas Hyde,

Your satirical play, which I found this morning on my return from Ireland, has greatly amused me. It is a most ingenious plot. I should like to see it on the stage. Well acted it could be irresistibly comic.

I have been spending 4 weeks in Limerick, where a kind friend has made me undergo a “cure” consisting mainly in dieting, which has already worked wonders and promises to relieve me greatly, if not to cure me entirely. He believes, and I am only too willing to adopt his belief, that I am not suffering from arthritis at all, but from some muscular and nervous disease, rheumatic or gouty, or both. I am determined to go on with this cure and to take the advice of Victor Horsley as to this muscular affection. The latter has put right a similar and worse case than mine within a few weeks.

I paid a short and delightful visit to Corkaguiney, near ventry, Gallarus, Kilmalkedar, and heard and talked as much Irish as I could, though the Munster idiom was at first very strange to me. I am going to take a young Irish-speaking lad into my service with whom I shall continue to practise. I met many enthusiastic Gaelic Leaguers and Father Lee at Limerick, 68 who accompanied me to Dingle, and Canon O’Leary 69 in Dingle itself, and others. Would that the movement spread more and more in the Irish-speaking districts!

I am thinking of publishing an open letter addressed to the Commissioners of the Brehon Law publication. 70 They seem to think their work is finished! The fact is that the most valuable documents still remain inedited. No one since O’Curry’s and O’Donovan’s time has taken the trouble to look at them! And yet they are to be found in Trinity College and their existence must be known to Atkinson.

I have also two other plans which I hope to carry out sooner or later. One is an edition of Mac Liag’s poems from the Book of Hy Maine and other

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68 I have not managed to identify this individual.

69 Perhaps Canon Peter O’Leary (An tAthair Peadar Ó Laoghaire), for whom see above, 00.

70 Charles-Edwards, ‘Whitley Stokes and early Irish law’, 161-74. The Commission was established on 11 Nov. 1852, but only four volumes had appeared up to 1879; the fifth and sixth did not appear until 1901.
The other an edition of the Irish Triads. I mean to publish them in Ireland, print them in Irish characters, and as cheaply as I can. Would the Gaelic League undertake the publication? If not, I will make a private arrangement.

I was very sorry not to be able to include a visit to you in my stay in Ireland. But there was no time. Perhaps we may meet in May in Dublin.

With very kind regards to Mrs Hyde,

Yours always sincerely,

Kuno Meyer.

C. On a Dublin lecture re a School of Irish Learning, Literature, etc.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton.
2. 4. 1903.

My dear Douglas Hyde,

I am thinking of running across to Dublin during the Oireachtas week and should like to read a paper some afternoon or evening there on the necessity of a School for Irish Learning, History, Philology and Literature. Is it too late to organise this? I should come any day that would be most convenient. It would be a crushing indictment of both Trinity College and the Academy. Perhaps this plan might be carried out with little or hardly any expense. Any audience would be good enough for me — as I mean to print the lecture afterwards. I hope you will be able to help me. I don’t think I could do a better service to the cause at this moment. I had a long talk about it with Bishop O’Dwyer of Limerick. Sir Anthony Macdonnell might be asked to come to it. Nay, even

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Mahaffy, who once asked me what had become of the old schools of Irish law, medicine, &c., which the English were ‘falsely accused’ of having destroyed. This would be my answer.

Do try to organise this. All I need would be a room and the advertisement, either in connection with the *Oireachtas* or independently, but at a time when people would come.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

15. ‘On the Necessity of a School of Irish Philology in Dublin’.

New Brighton,
7. 5. 1903.

A chara dhílis,

I am delighted to hear that the Committee consented. Many thanks to you. Does not the *Oireachtas* begin on the 18th? Then any day in that week — afternoon or evening — would suit me except Monday itself. Would you be so good as to tell them this? When I meet you I will tell you a more special and private reason I have for giving the address. It would take too long to write.

I sent your satire to Stokes to read. He says it made him laugh more heartily than he had done for a long time. The only thing he regrets is that you turn salmon’s name into Gammon. *Eó fis* or *ambfís* would have been more harmless.

The 4 poems are very difficult. They literally cost me years of labour. I never let the first one out of my mind since I published it in 1881. I ought to have put them a good deal earlier than the 10th century. 9th at least, if not 8th.

I was glad to hear you met the Lodges. They were good old friends of ours before he was the great man he is now.

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74 Sir Anthony MacDonnell, Under Secretary at Dublin Castle, a Governor of the School of Irish Learning from its foundation; see 00 above (Letter No. Y) and Ó Lúing, *Kuno Meyer*, 31-2, 34, 36.

75 Presumably, the Gaelic League Committee had consented to Meyer addressing a meeting of the group.

76 I have not managed to track down this ‘satire’.

77 *Eó fis* or *ambfís* are a play on the Irish words, ‘salmon of knowledge’, or ‘of ignorance’.

78 *Four songs of summer and winter* (London 1903).
Did I tell you that Zimmer is quite prostrate? I see in a German paper that he does not lecture this term ‘wegen schwerer Erkrankung’.\textsuperscript{80} It is now almost 2 years since he was first laid low. Excuse this torn sheet. I have come to an end of my letter paper.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

[Added at beginning:] The title of my lecture: ‘On the Necessity of a School of Irish Philology and History in Dublin’.

\textbf{16. On the composition of a Committee for the School of Irish Learning.}

New Brighton, 20. 5. 1903.

My dear Hyde,

I arrived safely and punctually last night, and was delighted to find the enclosed letter from Father Hogan. The Committee is now the next thing and I propose: him, you, me, Dr O’Dwyer,\textsuperscript{81} Mrs Green,\textsuperscript{82} Charles McNeill.\textsuperscript{83} I hope the latter will serve as Hon. Secretary or Treasurer. We should then issue an appeal and a programme. But first for Mrs Green. I shall stay with her on Monday and Tuesday (14 Kensington Square, 9. W) and lay as regular a siege to her as Uncle Toby to the widow Wadham.\textsuperscript{84} Fancy if she headed the list by an annual subscription of £600! But this is too much to hope.

Remember me very kindly to Mrs and Miss Chance\textsuperscript{85} as well as to your wife. I enjoyed my stay with them and you very much, and only regretted that it had to be so short.

Yours always,

\textsuperscript{79} I have not succeeded in identifying this ‘great man’.

\textsuperscript{80} ‘because of severe illness’.

\textsuperscript{81} See n. 73 above.

\textsuperscript{82} Mrs Alice Stopford Green (1847-1929): principal benefactor of the School of Irish Learning while it lasted; see R. B. McDowell, Alice Stopford Green, a passionate historian (Dublin 1967).

\textsuperscript{83} Charles McNeill (1862-1958): elder brother of Eoin Mac Neill. He served as sometime Treasurer of the School of Irish Learning.

\textsuperscript{84} A reference to Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy.

\textsuperscript{85} See n. 35 above.
17. **On a meeting he had with Alice Stopford Green to solicit funds.**

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
4.6.1903.

My dear Hyde,

Many thanks for your letters and the interesting cuttings. I saw Horsely, who approves of Mr Gibson’s treatment, pronounces my disease pure arthritis and advises baths and rubbings, which may check and even stop it. On the whole, not so satisfactory as I hoped, but still not quite so bad as I feared.

Now for something more important. I saw Mrs Green and found her most enthusiastic and ready to help to any extent, though false deliacy prevented me from asking for a definite sum. She suggests an appeal to be widely signed. In fact we drew it up together. You will get a copy shortly. We will send it to the following to sign: Lord Edward Fitzgibbon, General Butler (whoever he is), the Bishop of Limerick, Whitley Stokes, Hogan, Coffey, Edward Martyn, Dr St Clair Boyd, Peter O’Leary, John Sweetman. Would you

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86 Lord Edward Fitzgibbon: an error for Lord Walter FitzGerald, as Meyer points out in No. X below.

87 William Francis Butler (1838-1910): following a distinguished career in the British Army, Butler became a member of the Irish Literary Society, London, from 1901. Here he became friendly with Alice Stopford Green, who gave him chapters of her book, *The making of Ireland and its undoing*. He read and liked Meyer’s publications on early Irish literature. The Reports of Sessions of the School of Irish Learning (in the early numbers of *Ériu*) list his generous financial contributions. He was a member of the Commission responsible for the Irish Universities Act 1908, and was a member of the Senate of the NUI from 1908. (Information kindly supplied by Prof. Donnchadh Ó Corráin.)

88 Edward Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick; see n. XX above.

89 See n. 58 above. Hyde acknowledged Hogan’s assistance with the history of the Irish language in his *Literary history of Ireland* (Dublin 1899), Preface, p. xl.


91 Edward Martyn (1859-1923). Joint founder (with Lady Augusta Gregory and W.B. Yeats) and benefactor of the Irish Literary Theatre (later the Abbey Theatre) in 1899. He founded the Palestrina Choir in Dublin in 1902, and appears also to have helped fund the Dublin Orchestral Society throughout its early existence. He was first President of Sinn Féin; see Brian Lalor (ed), *The Encyclopaedia of Ireland* (Dublin 2003) 698-99, and Frazier, *George Moore*, 99-101.
give me any other influential names and their addresses? How about Archbishop Walsh? Can you give me the addresses of Dr Boyd, Sweetman, Martyn, Peter O’Leary?

We hold very strongly that the Executive Committee should consist only of the teachers of the School. I hope Charles McNeill will act as Secretary & Treasurer. The name of the School should be simply School of Irish Learning. Would Árdsgoil na Gaoidhilge be good Gaelic for it?

Kindest regards to your wife,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

18. From Coole Park, about Lady Gregory and Yeats

Coole Park,
Gort,
Co. Galway.
[1903?]

My dear Hyde,

I am smoking one of your Indian cigars in my room here, have just finished correcting proofs which have found their way here, written a number of

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92 Dr John St Clair Boyd (1858-1918): gynaecologist, surgeon, first President of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (‘RBAI’ or ‘Inst’) and first President of the Belfast Gaelic League.


94 John Sweetman (1844-1936): an Irish nationalist politician who served as an anti-Parnellite MP for East Wicklow in the Irish Parliamentary Party in the 1890s. Later chairman of Meath Co. Council and Chairman of the Committee of Lay Catholics, he was a founder-member of Sinn Féin and was the party’s second President from 1908 to 1911 (having succeeded Edward Martyn in that position); see R.F. Foster, Vivid faces. The revolutionary generation in Ireland 1890-1923 (London 2014) 43 (there described as ‘the well-off Sinn Féin supporter’).

95 William Joseph Walsh (1841-1921): Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin from 1885. ‘He was a committed nationalist, and his political views almost prevented him from being elected to the archbishopric of Dublin’, Lalor, Encyclopaedia of Ireland, 1119 (Oliver Rafferty).
letters of thanks to donors to the School (among them Mr Geoghegan with £5, and an anonymous friend with £100!), and while Lady Gregory is typewriting, and Yeats — for, as you said, he is staying here — poetising, I cannot do better than write to you how I have got on so far.

On my arrival I found a large party awaiting me before the house, who had come from Tullyra — I thought it was Tulaigh ráith or something like it, but they pronounce it Tullyra; are they right or is it a case of Kiltyma? — among them Miss Purser, who was in great spirits.

It is a most curious coincidence that I should have come here on the very day when my article in the Quarterly appears. I hope it won’t arrive while I am here. Still, I had a long talk with Lady Gregory and Yeats last night about the shortcomings of her Cuchulain, and I said pretty much what I have printed.

The Breton publication which I mentioned to you bears the title:

_Pétition pour les langues provinciales au Corps législatif de 1870. Paris, Picard & fils. 1903._

A collection of Breton war songs in it will interest the author of the pro-Boer war-songs.

We are going to drive to Dún Guaire this afternoon. I wish I had been able to stay longer in this neighbourhood. The sight of the Burren hills has greatly fascinated me, as it was quite unexpected. They are one of the _Trí Aimréidhe na hÉrenn_.

96 W. P. Geoghegan is listed as one of the Trustees of the School of Irish Learning in the Reports of its various sessions. He was head-brewer at Guinness’; see Stanley Dennison & Oliver MacDonagh, _Guinness 1886-1939: from incorporation to the Second World War_ (Cork 1998) 21 and 31.

97 Lady Isabella (Augusta) Gregory, née Persse (1852-1932): famous dramatist, folklorist and translator. Founded (with W. B. Yeats & Edward Martyn) the Irish Literary Theatre (later the Abbey Theatre).

98 Sarah Purser (1848-1943): a distinguished portrait-painter. She was the first woman member of the Royal Hibernian Academy; see Michael Purser, _Jellett, O’Brien, Purser and Stokes. Seven generations, four families_ (Dublin 2004) 64, 91, 114-22, 173, 185-88, 201, 206.

99 Meyer published a review of Lady Gregory’s _Cuchulain_ in the _Dublin?/Quarterly Review X_ (1904) 00-00.

100 _Cuchulain_: Lady Gregory published two collections of epic literature, _Cuchulain of Muirthemne_ (1902), which is the work mentioned here by Meyer, and _Gods and fighting men_ (1904).

101 Kuno Meyer, _Triads of Ireland, 6-7, §58: Trí haimréide Érenn: Breifne, Bairenn, Bérre: ‘The three uneven places of Ireland: Breffny, the Burren, Beare’._
I had a cup of coffee at Claremorris as I came up and was strangely moved to read in the *Freeman of Henley’s burial*. I had not even heard that he was ill. A few weeks ago he wrote to me most enthusiastically about the ‘Four Songs’ and said he would write about them. I wonder whether he did put down anything.

With kindest greetings to your wife and renewed thanks for your friendly hospitality.

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

[P.S.] In the fell clutch of circumstance
He has not winced or cried aloud.
Beneath the bludgeonings of chance
His head was bloody, but unbowed.\(^{103}\)

19. *On the composition of the School of Irish Learning Committee.*

*[6 Montpellier Crescent, New Brighton, c. 11. 6. 1903.]*\(^{104}\)

Mr dear Hyde,

The mistake was mine. We never thought of asking that bad traitor and evil man, FitzGibbon. It was a bad *lapsus* for Lord Walter Fitzgerald.\(^{105}\)

All the new names which you mention are good and excellent. But the idea of this first list was to get together representative names of the most diverse kind, such as represent the Gaelic League (first & foremost), Native Scholarship (Hogan), English Scholarship (Stokes), Maynooth (Dr O’Day),\(^{106}\) The Episcopate (Limerick), The Catholic Laity (General Butler),\(^ {107}\)

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\(^{102}\) William Ernest Henley (1849-1903): a popular poet.

\(^{103}\) The second verse of Henley’s poem, ‘Invictus’; see Louis Untermeyer (ed), *Modern British poetry* (New York 1920), added later by Meyer.

\(^{104}\) No date on the letter, but must be shortly after previous one, No. 18.

\(^{105}\) Lord Walter Fitzgerald (1858-1923):

\(^{106}\) William O’Dea (1858-1923): Vice-President of Maynooth College from 1894. He made a submission to the Royal Commission on University Education in 1903. Presumably the name was pronounced ‘O’Day’.

\(^{107}\) See above (Letter X).
Protestant Laity (Dr Boyd), The Colleges (Galway, Cork, Belfast, aye, and Trinity, e.g., E. Gwynn). Lastly, the Fitzgerald name.

Can you help us with the Colleges? Is there any one at Galway or Cork (not Bergin, by the way; when a new growth of native scholars springs up under Strachan’s ferule what feuds there will be! Zimmer’s and Windisch’s will be nothing to them!) whom you can think of?

I hope to send you our document to-morrow. Did I tell you that Strachan will hold an Old-Irish course in July, 2 hours every day, and that Mrs Green has guaranteed the money for it?

Moore’s attack on Mahaffy explains much to me. Many thanks for having sent it.

Yours go deifireach,

Kuno Meyer.

P.T.O.

[Note:] I send you two copies of our appeal which I hope will appeal to you.

Please sign it and let me have any further suggestions. Also send a copy to some one at Cork or Galway to sign. We should like to have the documents back by Monday so that we can send them to the press.

K.M.

20. On a recent fire at Heinrich Zimmer’s home in Berlin.

New Brighton,
6. 7. 1903.

I cannot get away from here before Wednesday, so shall not be with you before the end of the week.

108 Osborn Joseph Bergin (1873-1950): ‘The Prince of Native Scholars’, studied at Queen’s College, Cork, the School of Irish Learning in Dublin, in Berlin under Heinrich Zimmer, and in Freiburg, under Thurneysen. See Gerard Murphy, ‘Osborn J. Bergin’, Studies 34 No. 156 (Dec. 1950) 385-94; D. A. Binchy, Osborn Bergin, Osborn Bergin Memorial Lecture 1 (Dublin 1970). Meyer became more and more exasperated with his meagre rate of publication, especially after his appointment as Professor in University College Dublin, and in the end was thoroughly disillusioned with him.

109 Zimmer was once famously described as ‘the Ishmael of Celtic studies, whose hand was against every man’; see James F. Kenney, Sources for the Early history of Ireland, 1: ecclesiastical (New York 1929; repr. Dublin 1973, 1993) 77.

110 A notorious incident, in which George Moore joined in the debate between Hyde and Mahaffy, accusing Mahaffy of being an ignoramus and a ‘squireen’; see W. B. Stanford & R. B. McDowell, J. P. Mahaffy and Adrian Frazier, George Moore, 301-2.
I have just heard a terrible news from Berlin. Poor Zimmer’s house has been burned down and his whole library and collections destroyed! How he will bear the shock with his shattered nerves I tremble to think. I am trying to think how we could help him and cheer him. Do you think the Gaelic League might present him with a complete set of their publications? You know he was a regular subscriber to every Irish publication. Such an attention would greatly cheer him. But the intimation should reach him soon. Can you take it upon yourself? His address is Vogler’s Sanatorium, Braunlage i. Harz.

K.M.

21. On the opening session of the School of Irish Learning.

New Brighton, 20. 7. 1903.

My dear Hyde,

I found the class in Dublin hard at work, and Strachan as satisfied as he could be. I must now get money for a house and furniture. In September Sweet\(^\text{111}\) will lecture on Phonetics, and I will take a class in reading of manuscripts.

I send you and Mrs Hyde a photograph taken from a portrait by a German painter.\(^\text{112}\) Like yours it pleases some people and doesn’t others. I hope you will be among the former. But if you don’t like it I will send you a photograph done from the original.

George Moore was hard at work on a new tale. I brought Strachan to see him.

A Committee is being formed in Berlin to collect subscriptions for Zimmer.

I find a lot of work accumulated here.

With kindest regards to all of you,

Always yours,

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\(^{111}\) Henry Sweet (1845-1912): pioneering scholar of phonetics, he was appointed Reader in phonetics at Oxford in 1901 and was involved in the early history of the Oxford English Dictionary. He taught for several years at the School of Irish Learning.

\(^{112}\) A portrait of Meyer was sold at auction in Dublin a number of years ago; Prof. Liam Breathnach, Director of the School of Celtic Studies in the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, tells me that it may be the one that now hangs in the Institute building at No. 10 Burlington Road.
Kuno Meyer.

F. On an upcoming trip to Norway & donations to the School of Irish Learning.

New Brighton,
2. 8. 1903.

My dear Hyde,

I am leaving on Friday for Norway, whence I shall go direct to Dublin (like an old Lochlannach) where I hope to arrive on the 1st of September. My class will begin on the 2nd, and I should indeed be proud and pleased to see you among its members. I shall stay at the Standard where Sweet also will put up.

Lord Castletown has given us £20, Lord Rosse 113 £10 — a great achievement — Sir Martin Conway 114 £5, Norman Moore 115 £2. 2. &c.

I wonder at Dottin 116 tackling the Tenga Bithnúa. 117 It is one of the oldest and most difficult texts we have. But I don’t know his version. The one in the Book of Lismore is the best I know.

I cannot find references to the Irish Vision of Paul. The Vision in Leabhar Breac of which I spoke is one ascribed to St. Bernard. It is only a small fragment.

What you say about my portrait is true. I will some day supplement it by a proper photograph.

With best greetings and kindest regards to Mrs Hyde and the children,

Yours always,

113 Presumably Capt., later Sir John of Bladensburg, Earl of Ross, a prominent Catholic layman.

114 I have not identified this Martin Conway.


116 Henri-George Dottin (1863-1928): Professor of Greek at the University of Rennes, where he succeeded Joseph Loth, from whom he also acquired his interest in Celtic philology. His 2-vol. Manuel d’Irlandais Moyen (Paris 1913) was a pioneering study of Middle Irish.

Kuno Meyer.

22. On the establishment of the School of Irish Learning 'on a sure footing'.

The Standard Hotel,
81 & 82 Harcourt Street,
Dublin.
11. 9. [1903?].

A chara dhílis,

I am very sorry you cannot come up. You ought to live in Dublin. The classes give both Sweet and me great satisfaction. Before I leave I hope to put the School on a permanent footing. I had several interviews with Sir Anthony McDonald.\(^\text{118}\) And last night dining with him at the Lodge I sat next to Wyndham,\(^\text{119}\) who practically promised government support. But this is confidential. Meanwhile the students themselves are busy looking for suitable premises. They will form themselves into a society or association. Lord Castletown was here just now calling on me. He is full of enthusiasm. Mrs Green, who is staying at this hotel, is also busy with schemes for the School. In short — ça marche.\(^\text{120}\)

I return the manuscript\(^\text{121}\) with explanatory notes. I am afraid if your friend does not understand these passages he will not be able to make much of the rest. Could he not publish it in a photographic reproduction, with or without translation? That would be the best thing. The medical manuscripts are very valuable from a lexicographical point of view. I wish I could go through more of them. Meanwhile I am completing my collection of Mac Liag's poems.\(^\text{122}\)

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\(^\text{118}\) Sir Anthony Macdonald: Meyer seems to have intended Sir Anthony MacDonnell (1884-1925): Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwestern Provinces of India, subsequently worked in the UK Treasury. Secured a grant of £100 per annum for the School., who was a Governor of the School from its foundation; see Ó Lúing, Kuno Meyer, 31-2, 34, 36.

\(^\text{119}\) George Wyndham (1863-1913): he was closely involved in Irish affairs at two points: having been private secretary to Arthur Balfour (‘Bloody Balfour’) during the years around 1890, when Balfour was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and when Wyndham was himself made Chief Secretary in 1900. Best-known for his 1903 Land Act (hence known as ‘Wyndham’s Land Act’), the most radical change in land-holding in modern Irish history.

\(^\text{120}\) Ça marche = ‘things are going well’.

\(^\text{121}\) ‘the manuscript’: I have not been able to identify this text.

\(^\text{122}\) See n. XX above.
I sent my copy of *Ceisniomh Inghine Guill* to F. N. Robinson, 123 who is working at the piece. Lady Gregory will perhaps let him have her copy. Stern wishes most pleased about the loan of your manuscripts.

I look forward to getting your Raftery. 124

Kindest regards to your wife. This weather is enough to make an ox feel rheumatic.

*Go deithfireach,*

Kuno Meyer.

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23. Meyer letter to the Governors of the School of Irish Learning.

6 Montpellier Crescent,  
New Brighton,  
14. 12. 1903.

Dear Mr Governor, or Dear Governor,

There will be a meeting of the Governors of the *Sgoil Áirdléighinn* some time in January when funds come in in answer to our appeal. I hope you will be there. Meanwhile let me congratulate you on having joined Shaw-Taylor’s Board. 125 Please let me know when you are going to meet as I should like to time my visit to Dublin so as to be there. Also my friend Professor J.M. Mackay 126 is very anxious to have a talk with you on University matters.

The Treasury has not yet consented to the grant for the School. Sir Anthony McDonald 127 writes in despair that he cannot allocate a £5 note in Ireland without the clerks of the Treasury having a say in the matter. Our appeal, however, will be out in two or three days and I hope will bring in more funds. Thomas Kelly 128 has after all housed us in Clare Street where we have a large drawing room for 100 persons and two smaller rooms.

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123 Fred Norris Robinson (1871-1966): a noted authority on Chaucer, he was appointed Professor of English at Harvard in 1906. In 1895 he spent a year at Freiburg, studying Celtic philology with Thurneysen. Regarded as the Founding Father of Celtic Studies in the USA, a field of studies that he actively supported.

124 An Craoibhín Aoibhinn (ed.) *Abhráin atá leagtha ar an Reachtúire* (Dublin 1903); see n. 112 above (Letter No. Y).

125 Shaw-Taylor's Board: I have not identified this institution.

126 J. M. Mackay (1861-1931): Rathbone Professor of History at the University of Liverpool.

127 See n. 118 above.

128 In a ‘Report of Sessions 1915-1923’ of the School of Irish Learning (Ériu 9/2 [1923] 187-90: 190), the following occurs: ‘The Governors and Trustees renew their grateful thanks to
Kindest regards to your wife.

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

[Note:] Zimmer is apparently recovering his health.

24. On the Todd Professorship in the RIA & facsimiles of Irish manuscripts.

New Brighton,
25. 12. 1903.

My dear Hyde,

Many thanks for your letter. I defer my visit to Dublin till I hear from you. George Coffey has asked me to apply for Membership of the R.I.A., which I have resolved to do. The Todd Professorship(129) will be vacant next year and I might, under certain conditions, have a try at it.

Did I tell you that the Delegates of the Clarendon Press have agreed to publish collotype facsimiles of the most important Irish manuscripts in the Bodleian? Rawl. B. 502 will be the first, the price to be 6 guineas.(130) I am very glad to have brought this about. It will set a good example to the R.I.A. and other bodies.

Una’s and Fionnuala’s(131) card has just come, a fine example of their Irish scholarship. May they grow up — pace Mrs Hyde — to rival Miss Faraday.(132)

Mr. Thomas Kelly, of New York, who so generously provided the School with commodious rooms from its foundation down to the year 1919. According to Seán Ó Lúing (Kuno Meyer, 32), he was a partner in the New York legal firm of Kelly & Gatty. Charles Gatty was a visitor at George Moore’s Ely Place home; see Adrian Frazier, George Moore, 325.

The Todd Professorship was instituted in the Royal Irish Academy in 1879 to honour a former President and Celtic scholar, James Henthorn Todd (1805-69). Todd was the founder of the Irish Archaeological Society and in 1852 was appointed Librarian of Trinity College Dublin. The holders of the Todd Professorship undertook to give lectures and publish various Old & Middle Irish texts while they held the position. The first holder of the chair was William Maunsell Hennessy (appointed 1 Dec. 1879) and the first lectures were delivered in 1882. The first volume in the Todd Lecture Series was Hennessy’s Mesca Ulad (1889). Meyer himself published several in the series. As it happens, he was the last holder of the chair.

In fact, 200 copies of the facsimile were sold by subscription, at a price of £4. 4s. (i.e., 4 guineas) each.

Úna & Fionnuala were Hyde’s two daughters.

Lucy Winifred Faraday was a graduate student of John Strachan’s in Manchester and a niece of the famous scientist, Robert Faraday; see further 00 below (Letter No. X). Whitley
and Miss Hutton! I hope my little parcel arrived safely. I owed you the photograph as you did not care as much for that of my portrait.

As to stanzas of more than 2 lines, I don’t know what to say. I would give 4 lines at any rate if that shows the metre, or give only 2 and state the metre.

I hope we shall get money enough to enable us to publish. I can always get anything printed in Germany, but really it is time that Irish literature should be published in Ireland in the first place. Mr Best is preparing a very accurate edition of the *Leabhar Oiris* and Miss Byrne has made a good translation of the dialogue between the *préachán* of Achill and Fiontan. Besides, we have not a huge collection of A-stanzas. If you could add to them from your own collections and deposit them with Mr Best, you would help us greatly.

When will Raftery appear? I am hard at work finishing my edition of *Cáin Adamnáin*.

With best wishes to all of you,

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

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Stokes, in a letter of x.y.z. to Ernst Windisch, described her as ‘a learned and able woman’; Leipzig, Universitätsarchiv, Windisch Nachlaß, MS. 2.515.20.

133 Margaret Hutton: see 00 above (Letter no. 7).

134 Richard Irvine Best (1872-1959): studied Old Irish in Paris with Henri d’Arbois de Jubainville; appointed Assistant Director of the National Library of Ireland in 1904. A noted palaeographer and Celtic scholar, he is principally remembered for his invaluable *Bibliography of Irish philology and of printed literature* (Dublin 1913) and the companion vol., *Bibliography of Irish philology and manuscript material. Publications 1913-1941* (Dublin 1942). He was appointed Senior Professor in the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, at its foundation in 1940, and was Chairman of the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1948-56. He was President of the Royal Irish Academy 1943-46.

135 Was Meyer confusing the *Leabhar Oiris* with *Leabhar na hUidhre*, or had he in mind the text subsequently ed. by Tadhg Ó Donnchadh as *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (Dublin 1940)? Best did prepare ‘a very accurate [facsimile] edition’ of LU, that appeared in 1929.

136 Mary E. Byrne (1880-1931) worked with Carl Marstrander on the Royal Irish Academy’s *Dictionary of Old & Middle Irish* and catalogued some of the Academy’s Irish manuscripts; see Breathnach & Ní Mhurchú, *Beatháisnéis (1882-1982)* 3 (Dublin 1992) 17.


138 See above, n. 121.

139 See n. 67 above.
[Note added in pencil:] An t-Athair Mac Diarmada (in another hand).

25. On a recent Glasgow Lecture.

Old Waverley Temperance Hotel,
Edinburgh,
Jan. 23. 1904.

My dear Hyde,

Many thanks for your letter and the mottoes. I like Is treise gliocas,¹⁴⁰ etc.,
best. I am on my way to Glasgow for the second lecture.¹⁴¹ I had a very small
audience, about 30 or 40 people, at the first, mostly professors nd their wives
and daughters, and a sprinkling of theological students. I tried to stir them to
do something for Gaelic, but the people in authority are too old and the
promotion of a particular line of studies to them means a large endowment of
some (in)competent person (who as soon as he has been installed will cease
to work, in case he has ever worked before), and for the student prizes and
admissions, this curse of British Education. However, I am going on with my
propaganda.

Do you know Stokes’ poem ‘How Ailill won the peace of God’?¹⁴² I think
that ought to be in any collection of Old-Irish literature. I prefer the ‘Four
Songs’¹⁴³ to ‘King & Hermit’,¹⁴⁴ at least parts of them. Also parts of ‘The Old
Woman of Beare’,¹⁴⁵ and as an example of bardic poetry, ‘The Song of

¹⁴⁰ Is treise gliocas ná neart, ‘smartness is greater than strength’, a traditional proverb.

¹⁴¹ Ó Lúing, Celtic Studies, 279-81 (Appendix III) prints the text of the address that Meyer
gave in Glasgow, published in the Glasgow Herald of 23 February 1904.

¹⁴² Whitley Stokes, ‘How Ailill won the peace of God’, Fraser’s Magazine 63 (1861) 684. It was
anthologised by Stopford Brooke & T.W. Rolleston, A treasury of Irish poetry in the English
language (London1900) 347-48; see Ó Crónín, Whitley Stokes, 143-44 (Appendix 2).

¹⁴³ See 00 above (Letter X).

¹⁴⁴ See 00 above (Letter Y).

¹⁴⁵ Much anthologised, Meyer published his edition in Otia Merseiana 1 (Liverpool 1909) 121-
28.
Cerball’s Sword’, 146 or the like. Selections from O’Grady’s Catalogue 147 and Silva Gadelica, 148 but there is no end once you begin to quote.

Give my kindest regards to Lady Gregory.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

26. Meyer reports from his sanatorium in Hungary.

Pöstyén (Hungary),
Deákogasse 5,
5. 6. 1904.

My dear Hyde,

A greeting from this eastern-most fringe of Europe to the island in the west! I got your card and letter and the proofs, for which many thanks, and I should have answered sooner, but have deferred it from day to day out of sheer laziness. This is a place where you must be lazy. There is nothing to do but to breathe the delicious air, to bask in the sunshine, and when it gets too hot to change to some shady arbour. The climate is indeed perfect, and I fancy it will do me quite as much good as the baths. These are a horrible looking, evil smelling substance, tough hot mud below, and a thick sauce above, in which men and women sit promiscuously in long wide bathing costimes and stew. As the whole thing is in a deep dungeon-like cellar we look like unfortunate prisoners or criminals, and the effect is most depressing, especially as one has to undergo this procedure on an empty stomach at 5 o’clock in the morning! However, it does not last long, a quarter of an hour is sufficient for me, then a douche to get rid of the foul stuff, and after another sweat of half an hour in clean linen and blankets one is carried home in a sort of sedan chair at a quick trot, breakfast is ready and bed for another hour or two. Then the day’s work is over. It is too early to say whether these baths do me any good, but I have already seen wonderful cures. In any case I hope to be back to work in Liverpool by the end of September much improved in health.

146 Meyer, ‘The Song of the Sword of Cerball’, Revue Celtique 20 (1900) 7-12; repr. in the Gaelic Journal/Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge 10 (1900) 613-16.

147 Standish Hayes O’Grady, Catalogue of the Irish manuscripts in the British Museum 1 (London 1926). Though published posthumously (together with vol. 2), the text of vol. 1 was available before then in galley-proofs to interested scholars.

I like this place and the people very much. The native language in this part of Hungary is Slovak, but everybody speaks more or less Hungarian and German as well, though it is a very funny kind of German. I am learning a little Hungarian for fun. It seems an easy language and is pronounced so distinctly, every vowel and consonant so clearly audible, that one has no difficulty in following. The *schwebende Accent*\(^\text{149}\) contributes much to this, while our strong expiratory accent is bound to make us slur over unaccented syllables. Such distinctness lends distinction and dignity to the commonest word in the mouth of the commonest people. Take a word like *törölközö* for ‘towel’, with accents beautifully distributed over the 4 syllables. Some of the words have quite an Etruscan look, as *Ulm Pompepr*, a sort of Schnaps, which like Tokay wine and all other generous drinks I am alas! forbidden to touch. But how can you learn to know and love a people without studying their favourite drinks?

The costumes of the common people are a most picturesque sight. Everyone wears top-boots, even little pig-tailed girls. The men have fine embroidered jackets and trousers, the women bodices and skirts and scarfs and ribbons in all the colours of the rainbow, and everything of marvellous cleanness and neatness.

I read of your doings at the Wexford *Feis*, etc., in the Irish papers, which are forwarded to me here. Reading is about the only more serious pursuit I am inclined for. But I have taken a little work with me and hope one of these days to finish for the *Revue Celtique* a very pretty inedited story of ‘Finn and the Man in the Tree’, as I call it, very old and curious.\(^\text{150}\) I should like to have put it into Ériu, but the first and second numbers are already ‘full up’. There is room for another and yet another Irish periodical! Stern\(^\text{151}\) is busy printing the *Cúirt [an] Mheán Oidhche*, which, with his translation and notes, will take up a whole number of the *Zeitschrift*. I shall try to make arrangements that it can be bought separately. It is a pity that his translation is not in English.

I hope you are having a good time at Enniscrone, where I imagine this will find you. Kindest regards to your *bantighearna 7 na páistíní*.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

27. *On lessons to be learned from the Hungarian Language Movement.*

\(^{149}\) ‘level accent’.


\(^{151}\) Ludwig Christian Stern (1846-1911): having studied Romance and Oriental Languages in Göttingen, Stern subsequently became an expert also in Egyptian hieroglyphics, Coptic, and Celtic Philology. He was appointed Director of the *Handschriftenabteilung* of the Royal Library in Berlin in 1905. His edition of *Cúirt a’ Mhéan Oíche* (‘The Midnight Court’) appeared as ‘Der mitternächtige Gerichtshof’ in *ZCP* 5 (1905) 193-415.
My dear Hyde,

Many thanks for your *Righ Seamus*,\(^{152}\) which has amused me greatly. I see from the papers that they are already acting it. We have left Hungary and come here, where my mother is taking the baths. Kudowa is a small border town of Silesia, only half a mile from the Austrian frontier, pleasantly situated among the spurs of the *Riesengebirge*. The weather continues as fine as ever. Such a summer has not been seen for many years, but the drought is great. There is hardly any water in the upper reaches of the Elbe and Oder. Even at Dresden people walk in the bed of the river and find long concealed treasures of all kinds.

I want to write to you about an idea which has occurred to me in reading the history of the language movement of Hungary. There are many points which would be most useful for the Irish leaders to know and to imitate, especially as regards the dialects and the *Schriftsprache*.\(^{153}\) It is perfectly marvellous to me how the Hungarians have native words for everything. Indeed, except old loanwords which are not quite maggiarized they have no foreign words in their language. But what struck me most was the deliberate way in which they set about the creation of a national language, and here the greatest and most beneficial event was the creation in 1825 of an Academy for the single purpose of developing the language, ‘*zum Ausbau der ungarischen Sprache*’.\(^{154}\) If you consider that the language which needed such an *Ausbau* has almost immediately produced poets like Petöfi and a novelist like Jokai, and further that the Academy considered its task done in 1869 and was then changed into an institution for general scientific purposes, you will see the value of such a step. It has always been my opinion that a movement like yours can only succeed if it is guided by chosen men of literary and *wissenschaftliche Bildung*,\(^ {155}\) who must work together and be for a while dictators. There is as much to be done that cannot be left to chance. Besides, you want money for the most various publications, and that would only be given to such a body.

I have been asked by the *Coisde Ceantair* of Liverpool to deliver a lecture to them next session, and have chosen ‘The Future of the Irish Language’ for


\(^{153}\) ‘Standard written literary language’.

\(^{154}\) ‘for the reconstruction of the Hungarian language’.

\(^{155}\) ‘scientific education’.
my subject. I mean to develop these ideas. Meanwhile think them over and let me know your thoughts. An Irish Academy on the lines of the old Hungarian one, containing the foremost writers and scholars of the movement, but only these, would do far more authoritative and effective work than the Gaelic League, which is too vast an organisation. I will try to get the statutes, etc., of the Hungarian Academy and translate them into English.

With kindest greetings,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

28. On versions of the ballad ‘Lord Randal’ in Irish and German.

6 Montpellier Crescent,
New Brighton,
31. 1. 1905.

Mr dear Hyde,

There are several versions of your ballad in German. I subjoin the one from ‘Des Krahen Wunderhorn’, which Goethe characterised as ‘tief, rätselhaft, dramatisch vortrefflich behandelt’.

_Grossmutter und Schlangen Köchin._

Maria, wo bist du zur Stube gewesen?
Maria, mein einziges Kind!
Ich bin bei meiner Grossmutter gewesen,
Ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!

Was hat sie dir dann zu essen gegeben?
Sie hat mir gebackne Fischlein gegeben.
Wo hat sie dir dann das Fischlein gefangen?
Sie hat es in ihrem Krautgärtnlein gefangen.

_Womit hat sie dann das Fischlein gefangen?_

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156 Douglas Hyde, ‘An Irish folk-ballad’, _Ériu_ 2/1 (1905) 77–81; see also nn X and Y.

157 ‘Deep, puzzling, and handled exceptionally well in dramatic terms’.

158 ‘und’ (ampersand) add. above the line. The German title is usually given as _Großmutter Schlangenkochin_ (i.e., without the _und_).

159 Footnote added: ‘In other versions it is "Nachbarin"’. 

160 Footnote added: ‘Repeated after every line’.
Sie hat es mit Stecken und Rüten gefangen.
Wo ist dann das Übrige vom Fischlein hinkommen?
Sie hat ihrem schwarzbraunen Hündlein gegeben.

Wo ist dann das schwarzbraune Hündlein hinkommen?
Es ist in tausend Stücke zersprungen.161
Maria, wo soll ich dein Bettlein hinmachen?
Du sollst mir auf den Kirchhof machen.
Ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!

I wonder what the Irish version is like. Probably quite a different treatment.

In haste,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

[Note at bottom:] My next Todd Lecture is fixed for the 16th February.

29. On the summer session of the School of Irish Learning.162

New Brighton,
5. 2. 1905.

I am delighted to hear that you are in all likelihood coming to Dublin when I shall be there. I shall arrive on Saturday next (from Glasgow) and put up at the Shelbourne Hotel. Quite a number of Glasgow students are coming for the summer session of our School. I am trying to get scholarships for one or two of them.

I know no German ballad like 'Lord Randal'. But one might find one from Child's edition.163 Stern has done his work wonderfully well.164 George Moore wishes for an English translation of the whole. Who will have the courage (moral and philological) to do it?

K. M.

161 'zersprungen' corr. from 'gesprungen'.
162 Postcard.
163 Francis James Child (ed), The English and Scottish popular ballads. 5 vols (Cambridge, MA 1882-98) 1, 151-66; An Irish version of the ballad ('from the recitation of Ellen Healy, as reported to her by a young girl at "Lackabaim", Kerry, Ireland, about 1868', ibid, 162). It is puzzling why Meyer should have remarked that he knew of no German version.
164 A reference to Stern's edition of Cúirt a' Mheán Oíche, in the Zeitschrift.
[Note:] Will you not come here too? I find it no more expensive than the Nassau Hotel, which Mrs Green had recommended to me, but which I did not like at all.

G. On scholarships for students at the School of Irish Learning.

The University,  
Glasgow,  
4. 3. 1905.

My dear Hyde,

The young Mac Donnchadha must certainly get a scholarship. There will also be some scholars this year from Scotland and Wales. I have just given my last lecture here on the lyrical poetry of Ireland, in which I quote largely from your Lovesongs,\(^{165}\) which the audience liked greatly. Raftery's Mise Reachtaire an file created quite a furore.

I have to thank you for the ballad which Miss Young sent me. Will you not publish it in Ériu with a few introductory remarks?

I hope to see you in Dublin about the 16th when I give my last Todd lecture. The other day I missed you just by a few hours. You had gone to Cork, I was told.

With best greetings,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

30. On the death of his mother.

New Brighton,  
7. 5. 1905.

My dear Hyde,

I have just returned from a sad journey. My good old mother died while we were together in Battaglia (near Padua), where she hoped to find health

\(^{165}\) Douglas Hyde, The lovesongs of Connacht (Dublin 19XX).
and strength after the illness in the winter. She stood the long journey remarkably well, and indeed everything seemed at first to go well. The weather could not have been finer. But whether she caught a slight chill, or whether after all the journey had over-fatigued her, a few days after our arrival in Battaglia her old ailing, bronchitis, came on again, and after a few days’ suffering she died peacefully and painlessly in my arms. We buried her in the pretty little cemetery of the place. She had every help and care — there was a good German doctor on the spot, and we got a good nurse from Padua, with whom she could talk French. But it was all of no avail.

I wish you and your wife had known her. She was a rare woman, and so generally esteemed and loved that our friends mourn for her as for a relation. As one of them said: ‘A smile from her was worth more than all others had to give’.

I send you back your ballad in the hope that you will add a few words of introduction and send it to R. I. Best, 28 Clare Str., for Ériu.166

When I passed through Paris I visited poor old D’Arbois167 in his bed, where he has been confined now for 6 months with phlebitis. But he can read and write and seemed quite cheerful. Not so Gaidoz,168 who has aged very much and on parting said: ‘Ich freue mich, Sie noch einmal in meinem Leben gesehen zu haben’.169 A great contrast to Stokes, whom I found in London as vigorous and busy as ever.

Did you hear that Dinneen attended Strachan’s Easter course?

Kindest regards to your wife and the páistíní.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

31. On his RIA Todd Lecture & Peadar Ó Laoghaire’s ‘Craosdeamhan’.

New Brighton,
16. 5. 1905.

My dear Hyde,

I thank you most warmly for your kind expression of sympathy in our bereavement. I find the best consolation in work. I am preparing an edition of all the oidheadha of the Ulster heroes,\(^{170}\) the best manuscripts for which are, curiously enough, in Edinburgh.

I am disgusted with Father O'Leary's modern version of *Mac Conglinne*.\(^{171}\) It is what we would call a *Verwässerung*\(^{172}\) of the original, of whose spirit nothing or little seems left; needless omissions, additions and distortions on every page. How silly his remark in the opening sentence about the Saxons.\(^{173}\) Has he never heard of *Maigh Eo na Sasan*,\(^{174}\) or the Saxon Third at Armagh, etc.? There was much friendly and little hostile intercourse between the Saxons and the Irish. It was the Normans (*Frainc* in the Annals) that were the culprits.

I wish I could go to America with you.\(^{175}\) You might stir up the Universities too. Everything seems favourable there now.

Kindest regards to your wife,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

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32. *On Hyde’s application for a professorship in Cork*\(^{176}\)

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\(^{172}\) ‘*Verwässerung*’, lit. ‘watering down’.

\(^{173}\) The offending remark occurs at the beginning of the book: *Tamall mór ó shin, tamall ana mhór ó shin, na ceadta bliaghan sar ar chuir aon tSasanach cos ar thalamh na b-Éireann ach cos go raibh laincis iarainn uirthi ...* (‘A long time ago, a very long time ago, hundreds of years before any Englishman set foot in Ireland, save for a foot that was in an iron manacle . . . ’).


\(^{175}\) Hyde was about to set off on a speaking-tour of North America that saw him bring back $64,000 (c. €11,000 in today’s money). See Úna Ní Bhroiméil, *Building Irish identity in America*, 1870-1915 (Dublin 2003) 58 ff. For an interesting account of the effect that Hyde’s public speaking had, see Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *James F. Kenney on Early Irish History as a field for research by American students*, *Eolas* [Jnl of the American Soc. of Medieval Irish Studies] 8 (2015) 123-34: 124-25.
My dear Hyde,

Will the enclosed do? I think Windisch’s name would have more influence. His address is Universitätstrasse, Leipzig.

How would it do to ask Mrs J. R. Green for a testimonial? She has a great reputation as a historian. Her address is 36 Grosvenor Road, Westminster.

I am sorry that you have to think of leaving Ratra, and equally sorry to hear that your wife has been suffering through the climate, as I know so well how trying that is. At Cork you will be nearer to your friends, and surely able to do far more — if that is possible — for the Gaelic Cause. I have often regretted that you, of all men, should not be in the position to directly influence the youth of the country by your teaching and a closer contact. This you would be able to achieve far better in Cork.

I shall be in Dublin from about the 8th July to the 12th. On Monday the 10th I open our summer session by an address ‘On the Making of the Irish Language’, of which not a word is written yet. We are looking forward to a good attendance. Mrs Green and Dr Sweet are coming with me. We shall stay at the Shelbourne. Strachan, of course, will be in Dublin too. Is there a chance of your coming?

With best greetings to Weib und Kind.

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

33. Letter of recommendation for Hyde from Meyer to Queen’s College Cork.

The University,
Liverpool,
June 28th 1905.

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176 Curiously, Ann & Dermot Keogh, the authors of Betram Windle. The Honan Bequest and the modernisation of University College Cork, 1904-1919 (Cork 2010) 70, remark: ‘originally, in 1905, Windle thought that Douglas Hyde might fit that job [the Chair of English]. He was not interested . . . ’; Meyer’s letter and testimonial would seem to suggest otherwise. Hyde and Windle were contemporaries in university and good friends; see ibid., 16.

177 See next letter, No. 30.

178 ‘Weib und Kind’, ‘wife and child’ (one would expect ‘Kinder’, ‘children’).
I have much pleasure in stating that I consider Dr Douglas Hyde eminently qualified to fill the vacant Chair of English Literature and History in the Queen’s College, Cork. Others will testify with greater authority to his high attainments as a literary critic and historian, to which besides so many learned works from his pen bear eloquent witness. I should like to dwell more particularly on his rare and sound linguistic and philological knowledge, which comprises both the classical and the most important modern languages and literatures. Nothing can be of greater value in the academic teaching of literature and history than the acquaintance at first hand with the originals and sources, and a familiarity with those linguistic and philological studies upon which so much literary and historical work depends. In this respect it would be difficult to find a better equipped teacher and scholar than Dr Hyde.

Nor must I omit to mention his rare qualifications as a lecturer with which I am personally familiar. With a clear and forcible delivery, which in itself compels attention, he combines a lucid and impressive style with that sympathetic feeling for his audience which is the mark of the born teacher.

I am persuaded that the appointment of Dr Hyde to a Chair of English Literature and history would redound to the credit and honour of any university.

Kuno Meyer,
Professor of German and Honorary Reader in Celtic
at the University of Liverpool.

34. On the idea of an Academy of Irish Learning.

Villa Hungaria,
Pöstyén,
Hungary.
29. 8. 1905.

My dear friend,

Is it true what O’Keeffe tells me, that the Gaelic League have adopted my idea of an Academy? That would be splendid news and a great step forward. There is no lack of men, no lack of work to be done, but how about the funds? Are you making a grand appeal? I shall be delighted to subscribe, but of course it can be only a trifle, and this is a matter of many thousands.

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Indeed you must ask for a huge sum. You want a fine building, a large library, etc. It must be the visible sign to the world of the union and strength of Gaelic Ireland. The fewer members you have at first, the better. There must be no cranks among them. Will you go to America? Are you in relations with Mrs Green, who was anxious that I should go too? But of course this is out of the question, for the present at any rate. Neither my health nor my time will allow it. I am taking baths again, and just as last year, I find them very exhausting and must have an after-cure of several weeks.

Strachan and everybody writes greatly pleased with the success of the School. Indeed, Strachan was quite sorry when it was all over. We are getting up a scholarship for O'Neill\textsuperscript{180} to go to Manchester for 2 years. Bergin will go back to Berlin.\textsuperscript{181} He is now working at the Academy. The new number of Ériu should be out at once. In some ways it will be the best we have had yet. I wonder did you put in the ballad?\textsuperscript{182}

If you will write to me, address here. If I should be gone it will be forwarded. Perhaps you will send me a paper with the resolution of the League. I would like to make it known here in Hungary, as the proposal took shape here.

Remember me very kindly to your wife and the children. When are you leaving Ratra?

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

P.S. Next year will be the centenary of Zeuss’ birth.\textsuperscript{183} I am endeavouring to get the University of Munich to celebrate it. I wish they would found a Celtic chair and put Thurneysen in it.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[180] Joseph O’Neill (1878-1952): born in Tuam, Co. Galway, but spent his early childhood on the Aran Islands. After graduation at Queen’s College, Galway, he went to Manchester to study under Strachan, before moving on to Freiburg, where he continued his studies under Thurneysen. Though obviously singled out for a career as a Celtic scholar, he disappointed his mentors by joining the Department of Education as a schools inspector. See Henry Boylan, A dictionary of Irish biography (Dublin 1988) 307; Ó Lúing, Kuno Meyer, 57-58.
\item[181] On Bergin, see above, 00.
\item[182] See 00 above, n. 112 (Letter X).
\end{footnotes}
My dear Hyde,

I congratulate you on your safe return — both you and Mrs Hyde. I read an account of your triumphal progress home in the *Freeman* and learned from it that, among other things, you have brought £50 for our School. Well done! It will help us over a difficult period, as we have had to stop *Ériu* for want of funds. If it were not for Mrs Green the School could hardly exist, at least we could not do one fourth of what we are doing now.

On the 21st of this month is the centenary of Zeuss’ birth. It will be celebrated at Bamberg in Bavaria, where he taught at the Lyceum and wrote the *Grammatica*. I have been invited to deliver the Festrede, and I shall also deposit a laurel wreath on his grave in the name of the School. I have not heard that Trinity College — nor the R.I.A. — is taking any notice of the event, though I wrote to Gwynn about it. It would be all the better if the Gaelic League — in the name of Ireland — was to send some token of remembrance. As I am a member, I might be entrusted with it. Or it might be sent to the Rector of the Lyceum, Bamberg. I shall be here till the 17th, the *Bamberger Hof*, Bamberg. If you wish me to deposit a wreath I will order it, if you send an inscription. Many other Academies, etc., will be represented, Paris, Berlin (though not by Zimmer, who is too ill), Munich, etc.

I am revelling in hot mud, sunshine and *far niente*.187

With kindest regards,

Yours always,

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185 See 00 above (Letter No. X). Meyer must have been a little disappointed that the School received only £50 of an estimated $50,000 raised during Hyde’s tour.


187 ‘*doing nothing*’. 
My dear Hyde,

Your letter has been forwarded to me here. I leave for Dublin tonight. I shall stay with George Moore, and, if I possibly can, will await your coming on the 4th. I have caught a bad cold, which I hope to get rid of in Ireland.

I am not quite clear about this Intermediate business. Fancy asking Rhys (who knows Irish of any stage very imperfectly). As to Strachan, he likes to go his own way and can be very obstinate. But when I have a grasp of the matter I will do my utmost to prevent him from playing into their hands. He is of course but little au fait in the whole affair.

If the Intermediate Board wishes to encourage the study of Old- & Middle Irish, one can say nothing against that. It would be like putting Anglo-Saxon and Early English on their programme. And if they do so, of course books even harder than the Agallamh will have to be put on. But surely, this goes beyond Intermediate teaching. I don't understand. It would be the work of a grade above the Senior. Please enlighten me.

Strachan has told me nothing. It appears he has also been asked (by Gwynn, probably) to attend a meeting of the R.I.A. Committee on Irish Manuscripts, etc. Of this also I have only heard by accident. I wish he were a little more confidential on matters in which he and I should work together.

I hear your Religious Songs are out. I must get a copy in Dublin. They will probably help me greatly with the older religious poetry which I am now

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188 New Examiners for the Intermediate Education Board had been announced.

189 See above (Letter No. Y).


studying. I am going to publish it bit by bit. The *Book of the Húi Maine*[^192] is the great repository for it. I send you a proof of some, in which I have marked the worst difficulties. If you can help I am sure you will do so.

Mrs Green is, I believe, now with you, i.e., she will probably just be leaving when you get this letter. I hope to see her on Monday in Dublin. Where would our School be without her?

Give my kindest regards to your wife and the children, who are, I suppose, rapidly developing into young ladies.

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

37. *On the RIA invitation to become Todd Professor.*

New Brighton, 13. 5. 1904.[^193]

My dear Hyde,

I have meant to write to you ever since I missed you at the Vegetarian Hotel[^194] after your interview with Sir Anthony. But many things intervened, and now I am starting on a long journey to Hungary, where, at a place called Pöstyén, on the river Waag, I mean to try what a good climate and the very powerful anti-rheumatic baths there will do for me. I shall be away several weeks, if not months, for I mean to make a thorough cure of it this time. So perhaps I shall not be back in Dublin for my July course. But the School is in good hands with Strachan.

Write me a line in Pöstyén (*poste restante*) to tell me how you got on with Sir Anthony and what is most likely going to be done.

I am very glad that the R.I.A. honoured me by their invitation to the Todd Professorship.[^195] Among the work — not much — that I take with me are the


[^193]: Written on *Sgoil Árd-Leighinn na Gaedhilge / School of Irish Learning* headed notepaper.

[^194]: Vegetarian hotel: 'there were at least two such establishments in Edwardian Dublin', according to Roy Foster, *Vivid Faces. The revolutionary generation in Ireland, 1890-1923* (London 2014) 8; he mentions a vegetarian restaurant in Westland Row, but does not name the other.

[^195]: Todd Professorship: see above.
two texts on which I hope to deliver my first lectures: *The Triads of Ireland*, and Mac Leag’s poems.

York Powell’s death was a great blow to me. He was a good friend to Ireland and a warm admirer and student of Irish literature. Perhaps his last service to our studies was his joining with me to urge the Clarendon Press to publish photographs of the Bodleian Irish manuscripts. I am going to dedicate my forthcoming edition of *Cáin Adamnáin* to his memory.

Farewell. Remember me most kindly to your wife and the children.

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

[P.S.] I will write to you from Pöstyén. I wonder what sort of place it will be.

38. *On the role of Irish in the New University.*

41 Huskisson Street, Liverpool, 27. 12. 1908.

My dear Hyde,

Many thanks for your friendly letter. I return your good wishes and hope the next year will bring about an increase of wealth and strength. I too was very sorry always to miss you in Dublin, more particularly as there are many things which I wished to discuss with you. I cannot find that anyone has a very definite plan as to staff and equipment for Irish in the new University. And no one seems to have thought of our School in the matter. I am afraid the *Lehrplan* in the new University will be, as in Trinity and the older English

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196 See n. 00 above.

197 See n. 00 above.

198 Frederick York Powell (1850-1904): succeeded James Anthony Froude as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford in 1894, and was a member (later President) of the Folklore Society. Wrote in support of the Gaelic League’s 1899 campaign for Irish in the schools.

199 The dedication reads: “TO THE MEMORY OF MY FRIEND / FREDERICK YORK POWELL / THE ARDENT CHAMPION OF IRISH LEARNING / I INSCRIBE / THIS LITTLE BOOK”. There follows: “A pháirt dom ní áirmhím ná a oibhe / gé fuair mé ’na mhéin tar mhílthibh, / a éagmáis ghnáth, a grádh ’s a chion ’s a dhioghrais, / a chion ’s a chogar, a chomann, ’s a choiine. / SEATHRÚN CÉITINN”.

200 The National University of Ireland was established in 1908.

201 ‘*Lehrplan*’ = ‘curriculum’ or ‘syllabus’.
universities, entirely influenced by the constant examinations, in which case no or little real scholarship will be the outcome, and the unfortunate teachers will have to spend all their time in cramming and examining. I should be sorry to see Bergin or any good scholar waste his energies on such work. There will be as much need of our School as ever. Next year I hope we shall be able to have regular teaching in Welsh and in comparative philology, both of which are so much needed and provided for nowhere else in Ireland. Have you thought of affiliating or recognising our School in any way? I had some talk about the matter with Baron Pallas, but he knows too little about these things.

I have got leave of absence till the end of April and am going to the Pyrenees, where I was last year. Before I go, probably on Jan. 9th, I must finish my edition of *Tecosca Cormaic* and the Rawlinson facsimile with an index of thousands of tribal and personal names.

With warmest regards to your wife, yourself and the children,

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

**H. On the offer of a Chair of Celtic in Dublin.**

41 Huskisson Str.,
Liverpool,

My dear Hyde,

At last I find the leisure to write to you. I have been greatly rushed ever since I landed in England a fortnight ago. As you may have heard (though of course it is unofficial and confidential) the Commissioners sounded me whether I would take a Chair of Celtic with a salary of £800. This I had to refuse, as I cannot undertake all the routine teaching which it would demand, also a permanent residence in the relaxing and rheumatic climate of Dublin would not suit me. Besides I think I can serve the University better. So I

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204 Rawlinson facsimile: see 00 above (Letter No. X).

205 ‘relaxing’ seems an inappropriate choice of word, in the circumstances, but I cannot think what else Meyer might have meant. He may have used the word ironically, of course!
formulated my wishes, as follows: The School of Irish Learning to be
recognised by the University for preparing students for the higher degrees
&c., as you know from my circular, and I to give one term’s teaching with
general supervision &c.

This I could not do unless Bergin were associated with me. I also sketched
a scheme of other chairs, one of which I hope you will take, while another I
believe will go to John Mac Neill. To all this the Commissioners heartily and, I
may almost say, enthusiastically agreed. It was well put to them by Dr Delany
and Mrs Green.206 On the question of ‘recognition’ we also had the support of
my colleague Professor Mackey, who is the founder of several allied schools in
our University, and who explained the working of it to our Board of
Governors. Many thanks for the hearty support which you gave to the scheme
by your telegram. I hope to see you ere long in Dublin, where I have to go
soon for 2 Todd lectures. I shall hold a course at the School in June, on Irish
metrics and early poetry.

Stokes’ death is a great personal loss to me.207 I hope to secure his valuable
library for our School.208

With warmest greetings to your wife, the children and yourself,

Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

I. On a manuscript of ‘Duanaire Finn’:

41 Huskisson Str.,
Liverpool.
5. 5 [19]09.

My dear Hyde,

I was very glad to get your letter. Will you not, as you are copying them, let
us have the list of initial lines or quatrains of those poems for Ériú? It would
be a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of a dark period in Irish
literature, for which I have always had a special interest. Your manuscript
was evidently copied for the same man as the Duanaire Finn, viz. Captain

206 See Morrissey, Towards a National University, 353.

207 Whitley Stokes died on April 13, 1909.

208 On the unfortunate later history of the Stokes Library, see Dáibhi Ó Cróinín, Whitley Stokes, 22-
25.
Sorley Mac Donnell.209 See John Mac Neill’s preface, p. xx. Mac Neill has blundered badly on pp. xviii & xix in translating *anocsdin* by ‘now’! It means ‘in Ostende’, and perhaps your *anosdrain* may be meant for the same place. Or is there a place *Ostrand*? I wish you could get some one to transcribe those poems for publication.

With kind regards

Yours always,

Kuno Meyer.

[P.S.] You will be glad to hear that the government is going to give a pension of £80 to Strachan’s widow.210

39. *On the editing of Irish texts.*

41, Huskisson Street,  
Liverpool,  
1. 6. 1909.

My dear Hyde,

It is splendid that you are going to do this work. We are slowly getting to know what Irish literature in the 13th to the 16th century really means, and I am stirring up everybody who can help to do so. I hope that Tadhg Ó Donnchadha211 will soon be able to do some useful work, and Quiggin’s catalogue of the O’Reilly manuscripts at Cambridge will be very important.212

As to the questions you ask, I would use Roman letters so as to mark the more important or doubtful expansions and contractions in italics. E.g., I would print the line you quote as follows:


210 See the account of the events leading up to this statement in Emrys Evans, ‘John Strachan and the University of Manchester School of Celtic’, 23-25 (forthcoming). I am grateful to Prof. Parick Sims-Williams (Aberystwyth) for a copy of this very valuable memoir of Strachan.

211 Tadhg Ó Donnchadha (1874-1939): known also by his pen-name ‘Tórna’ (which he adopted in 1897). Editor of *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 1902-09. Studied Old Irish in Heidelberg with Ludwig Mühlhausen. Professor of Modern Irish at University College Cork from 1916.

Gan é go hurlamh oirne. Cunnradh Dé ‘nar ndeghaidh-ne\textsuperscript{213}

I think there can be no doubt as to your scribe’s using the open \textit{a}, which is almost exactly like \textit{u}. The LU\textsuperscript{214} scribe, e.g., nearly always uses it. He makes it like this: \textit{cc}, but sometimes it is exactly like \textit{u}.

I would not mark the \textit{i}'s with an accent unless the vowel is really long. The accent was so often merely used like our dot to distinguish the letter from among other digits. And I would supply accents.

The opening quatrain and the number of stanzas in the poem would be all that is required. I would write the quatrains in couplets (two verses in one line, as above) as that will save space. As regards \textit{C}, I think it means \textit{e} simply, not \textit{ea}; but you will see that best from the scribe’s habits.

I am in love with a most fascinating Irish \textit{Life of Colmán mac Luacháin} (in the Rennes MS.)\textsuperscript{215} which I am just copying from a photograph left to me by Whitley Stokes.\textsuperscript{216} It is written in such excellent Middle-Irish and full of interesting matter. I also found a poem addressed by \textit{Erard mac Coise} to \textit{Mór inghean Donnchadha} († 985), the wife, I think, of \textit{Mael-Sechlainn II}, consoling her on the loss of her pet goose.\textsuperscript{217}

With kindest greetings,

Yours ever,

Kuno Meyer.

40. \textit{On women students at the School of Irish Learning.}

41 Huskisson Street,
Liverpool,
2. 7. 1909.

My dear Hyde,

\textsuperscript{213} I have not managed to identify the poem from which this line is taken.

\textsuperscript{214} LU = \textit{Lebar na hUidre}/\textit{Leabhar na hUdhr}; se R. I. Best & Osborn Bergin (eds), \textit{Lebar na hUidre. Book of the Dun Cow} (Dublin 1929).

\textsuperscript{215} Kuno Meyer, \textit{Betha Colmáin maic Luacháin: Life of Colmán son of Luachan}. RIA Todd Lecture Ser. 17 (Dublin 1911).

\textsuperscript{216} On Stokes’ gift of his photographic collection to Meyer, see Dáibhé Ó Cróinín, \textit{Whitley Stokes}, 23.

\textsuperscript{217} See Meyer, \textit{Fianaigeacht, being a collection of hitherto inedited Irish poems and tales relating to Finn and his Fiana}. RIA Todd Lecture Ser. 16 (Dublin 1910) 42-45.
I am afraid we shall not see you at the School to-morrow. I am glad that we have got these new premises, quieter and more comfortable, and only half as expensive as the old.

Is not Robert Gibson a fine fellow? His ointment is indeed a panacea, and if he would or could only advertise it it would be the source of a large fortune.

What has become of the O’Mulrenin bequest? Is it, after all, not available for the School? Or do you want a more definite scheme? How would it do to use it for bringing out editions of the classical poets of the later middle ages? There are several students of the School, Miss Byrne, Miss Knott, Miss Joynt, who together might devote themselves to such work for a few years and thus enrich Irish literature.

With kind greetings,

Kuno Meyer.

218 Robert Gibson (?1880-1914): inventor of Gibson’s Universal Antiseptic Ointment, a cure-all for eczema, ringworm and other complaints. ‘Perhaps the only Irish-born person to openly call himself Buddhist in Ireland in the 101 years between the first census returns of 1871 and D. A. Marks in 1972’: Tadhg Foley, in a rev. of Buddhism in Ireland: from the cults to the counter-culture and beyond, by Laurence Cox, in the Dublin Review of Books No. 69 (July 2015).

219 O’Mulrenin Bequest: ‘In 1904, the prominent philologist Dr. Kuno Meyer, wrote to MacNeill that “Nothing in my opinion is more needed than good editions of the bardic poems of the Middle Ages. If the O’Mulrenin bequest which you . . . offered to the school some time ago can be used for this purpose [translation] . . . I would set some our best students . . . to work on them”: Claire E. Clancy, ‘Eoin Mac Neill and the Recovery of Irish Identity’, a paper submitted for an honors degree to the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, MA 2009, 14 n. 37 (citing ‘MacNeill Papers, National Library of Ireland’, but without an exact ref.).

220 See n. XX above (Letter Y).

221 Eleanor Knott (1886-1975): although associated initially with An tAth. Peadar Ó Laoghaire and the promotion of Modern Irish (she published a vocabulary to one of his best-known works (Fooclíir d’Eisírt, 1910), she was persuaded by R.I. Best to attend classes at the School of Irish Learning and appears to have developed an interest in bardic poetry as a result. Her ed. of the poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (3 vols, for the Irish Texts Soc., 1922-36) established her reputation as one of the foremost authorities in the field; see Breathnach & Ní Mhurchú, Beatháinséisí (1882-1982) 2 (Dublin 1990) 46-47.

222 Maud Joynt (c. 1868-1940): spent her early years in India (where her father was Asst.-Principal Doctor in the Indian Medical Service), and after schooling in Dublin she gained a B.A. & M.A. from the Royal University. She spent a year in Paris, Heidelberg and Florence, after which she attended the School of Irish Learning in 1906-07, where she studied Old & Middle Irish and Breton. From 1909 she worked on the RIA’s Dictionary of the Irish Language. Translated Louis Gougaud’s Les chrétientés celtiques, as Christianity in Celtic Lands (London 1932) and the Vita Sancti Galli of Walafird Strabo (1927) & was the author of numerous articles in the Celtic journals.
41. **Thanking Hyde for his congratulations on Meyer’s appointment to the Berlin Chair of Celtic**

Gross-Lichterfelde W.
Mommsenstrasse 7.
31. 9. 1911.

*A chara dhílis,*

*Fuair do litir mé annso.* Many thanks for your kind congratulations. It is a unique honour of which I am very proud. We are house- or rather flat-hunting here, no pleasant task in this terrific heat. To-day I am going to see a great authority on radium emanations, to find out from him whether they could do any good. I hope to be back in Great Britain and Ireland in September and October, when I trust we shall meet again. Wales and the Welsh and their language will be most interesting to you.

Kindest greetings to your wife and the children.

*Gyda chofiou aynhes.*

K. M.

42. **On the Old Irish poem on the archangel Gabriel.**

New Brighton,
25. 11. 1911.[?]

*Lieber Freund,*

*Vielen Dank für Ihren Brief und das freundlich übersendete Samhain, das ich mit grossem Interesse und Genuss gelesen habe. Wieder ein Beispiel für die wunderbare Kontinuität der irischen Litteratur! Das Gedicht von dem Erzengel, unter dessen Schutz die Wochentage stehen, finden Sie in älteren Form auf p. 128 in dem Druckbogen, den ich Ihnen neulich zugeschickt habe:*

*Gabriel lim i ndomnaigib, etc.*

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223 Translation.

224 ‘Dear friend, Many thanks for your letter and for the [copy of] Samhain that you kindly sent, which I read with great interest and pleasure. Another example of the wonderful continuity of Irish literature. The poem about the Archangel, under whose protection the weekdays stand, is found in an older form on p. 128 of the proofs that I sent to you recently: *Gabriel lim i ndomnaigib,* etc. You must have it from a modern manuscript — or do you in fact have it from an oral source? Yours always. K. M.’. *Samhain* was an in-house magazine produced sporadically by the Abbey Theatre; some of Hyde’s plays (with translations by Lady Gregory) were first published in its pages: *Casadh an tSúgáin* in Oct. 1901, *Teach na mBocht* (‘The poorhouse’) in Oct. 1903. See R. W. Foster, *Vivid Faces*, 80-81, 83, 87, 105.

225 *Gabriel lim i ndomnaigib:* where is this published?? (Not in McNamara, *Apocrypha*).
43. Meyer reporting on his convalesce in San Francisco after an accident.

German Hospital,  
Fourteenth & Noe Sts,  
San Francisco, Ca.  
2. 10. 1915.

A chara dhil dhílis,

This morning Father Yorke, who often comes and visits me, brought me your kind letter of Oct. 14th. Many thanks to you and all who remember me in my searglighe.226. I am still on my back and shall be so, I am afraid, for a long time. Though I was not dangerously injured, the shock was tremendous and my worst injury, a large number of sprained and lacerated muscles all over my back, will take months to heal. It is as if you had a hundred lumbagos. The flesh wounds were not serious and are now quite healed. I have the very best doctors — German specialists — and every care and attendance. For 5 weeks I was in a pretty country hospital at San Rafael on the other side of the Bay, in a most delicious climate; but as the doctors want to have me near them for daily observation I was brought over here, a huge place like an hotel. From my porch, as they call a balcony here, on the 5th floor, I have all San Francisco at my feet. Unfortunately, the accident has stirred up my old complaint, so that matters altogether are very complicated. I am treated, among other things, with diathermy, electric baths, massage, etc., but after all nature will have to do it and rest and patience are necessary.

I was just going for a series of lectures in Portland and Seattle, when the accident happened. Of course I have had to put off all engagements for months to come. I feel disinclined for my work or even reading, and writing is still difficult for me. But when I feel particularly at my ease I write out some of the Old Irish poems for vol. ii of my Älteste Dichtung.227. What a lot there still are, all 7th century. I enclose one on Bran Find, King of the Déisi, † 671. One

226 Lit. ‘sick-lying’; a Brehon Law term.

227 Kuno Meyer, Über die älteste irische Dichtung II. Rhythmische alliterierende reimlose Strophen (Berlin 1914).
has to search for them, but they are there. This one, e.g., in LL 327 g & h, unfortunately in a very fragmentary condition? I suppose the new Heft of the Zeitschrift has not reached you. It is one for these warring times. Thurneysen is now seeing the next one through the press. If you or any one has a contribution send it to me c/o L. Guengil (?), 332 South Michigan Ave, Chicago, which is always my best address.

1. **Bran Find Femin fúath slúaig**, slúind Máel na n-Ochtrag *húaid*.  
3. **Amra inna febda fecc** : Nià, Brión, Eogan Brecc.
4. **Bid imsceol scél n-úag**, Artchorb *artmhif* múad.
5. **Mes[sin] Corbb múchd[a ár]**, Mes Gegra guinech grád már.

I get nothing but good news from all quarters now. My old Liverpool friend, Prof. Young, the mathematician, paid me a visit of several days just before the accident, on his way to India.

Remember me very warmly to your wife and the páistíní and all other good friends.

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229 ‘a shape like a host’ added above *fúath slúaig*

230 leg. *húaid*? add. in marg.

231 *artmhif*: ‘a warrior like a bear’ add. in marg.

232 an leg. *fúaireid úath*? add. in r. marg.

233 Prof. Young: I have not been able to identify this individual, presumably a former university colleague of Meyer’s.
Always yours,

Kuno Meyer.

44. On editing Old Irish poetry & a recent visit from Julius Pokorny.

Berlin,
Nassauische-Str. 48b,

My dear Hyde,

Now that the ways are open once more, I will not delay sending you and Mrs Hyde a friendly greeting after so long a time. I should write more fully if I knew for certain that it would reach you. Let me know whether you receive this and whether the censor is still at work. I hope that the various publications which I have sent you from time to time via neutral countries have reached you. You will have seen from them that I have been busy as usual. I am just seeing a large collection of early Irish lyrical fragments through the press. This is a wretchedly cold summer, so that home is the best place. Pokorny is with me at this moment and sends his greetings. We are just finishing No. 1 of vol. XIII of the Zeitschrift. The solution of the puzzle of Partholón will amuse you. The name Bartholomaeus is said to mean 'filius suspendentis aquas', which the framers of Lebor Gabála applied to the Deluge!

My wife also sends her regards unbeknownst.

Yours always,

K. M.

45. On Alice Stopford Green & on the meaning of the name Partholón

Nassauische-Str. 48b,

A chara dhílis,

I was delighted to get your letter straight from Ratra. I will try to make up the loss of the various papers I sent. The explanation of Partholón and how the authors of Leabar Gabhála came to make Bartholomaeus the first settler after the Deluge is not by Pokorny, but by your humble servant. Hieronymus-


Isidore\textsuperscript{236} give this interpretation of the name Bartholomaeus — \textit{filius suspendentis aquas}. So the Irish authors, taking \textit{aquas} in the sense of Deluge, brought the `son of him who made the waters cease' to Ireland.\textsuperscript{237}

I had a long letter from Mrs Green, who seems to be working with Mac Neill at ancient Irish history.\textsuperscript{238} You have not answered my question about \textit{Agallamh Beag}.\textsuperscript{239} Meanwhile Miss Müller is going on with her edition.

Kindest greetings.

K. M.

\textit{46. On editing texts and the identification of a placename.}


\textit{A chara dhílis,}

Your letter of the 25th has reached me as you see very quickly. My pupil will now of course give up the idea of an edition,\textsuperscript{240} though naturally with much regret. I must get her some other text to work on. Fortunately there is no lack of material.


\textsuperscript{238} Alice Stopford Green published several books on Irish history, including \textit{The making of Ireland and its undoing, 1200-1600} (London 1908) and \textit{The Old Irish World} (Dublin & London 1912), in both of which she acknowledged the assistance of Mac Neill. See Dónal McCartney, ‘MacNeill and Irish-Ireland’, in F. X. Martin & F. J. Byrne (eds), \textit{The scholar revolutionary. Eoin MacNeill 1867-1945 and the making of the New Ireland} (Dublin 1973) 77-97: 84 n. 29: ‘In a letter, Green to MacNeill, 30 Jan. 1911 (MacNeill Papers, NLI), acknowledging the “extraordinary amount of trouble” MacNeill had taken in helping her with her book [\textit{Irish Nationality} (1911)], she wrote: “It would be so much more honest for all this to come from you than from me”’. See above n. X and Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ‘The history of an Irish book’, passim.


\textsuperscript{240} ‘Her edition’; Ō Lűing, \textit{Kuno Meyer}, 159, 165, and 203 (a letter of 8 Aug. 1919 to R.I. Best): ‘My best student now is also a lady, a Miss Miller [sic, elsewhere Müller], who before the war began her studies with [Robin] Flower ... Miss M. is working at the \textit{Agallamh Beg} (Book of Lismore)’. 
Is Father Hogan still alive and able to work? He would be interested in my little discovery that the river *Uissiu*, on which is *Uisen-glen*, which he did not know where to locate,\(^{241}\) is now the *Fushogue*, the tributary of the Barrow.

With greetings

Always yours,

K. M.

[Note:] the home of the poet *Dubhlitir*.\(^{242}\)

*This is the last of Meyer’s letters to Hyde. He died in Berlin on 11.10. 1919.*

\(^{241}\) See Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Dublin 1880) 678. Hogan had died in 1917.

\(^{242}\) A reference to the poem *Rédig dam, a Dé, do nim*, attributed to Dublitir Ua hUathgaille; see Dáibhé Ó Cróinín (ed. & transl.), *The Irish Sex Aetates Mundi* (Dublin 1983) 41-48, 97-108, 177-80.