




# IRISH NEWS

CONCILIATION—JOHN DEVOY IN IRELAND—THE BOUNDARY QUESTION—THE TAILTEANN GAMES OPENED:

A profound impression has been created by the speech made recently by Mr. Austin Stack, T.D., at Tralee. It was a sincere and touching appeal to his followers to put an end to bitter feelings and to recognise that their opponents have been sincere and honest in their intentions. This speech, coming after that of Mr. de Valera's in the Mansion House asking for a return to the spirit of 1917, is regarded by many as evidence that the big figures who have now come out of gaol are not anxious to continue the campaign of bitter denunciations pursued by some of their lieutenants. No doubt Mr. Stack thoroughly realises the need for good feeling and unity at a time when, judging by all the signs, we are approaching a great crisis that will once more put Ireland's political future in the melting pot.

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Mr. John Devoy has sought little publicity since his arrival in Dublin. I saw him (says a writer in a Home paper) taking a stroll the other afternoon and he appears quite active, considering his great age. His sight is a little dimmed and his hearing is also somewhat affected, but otherwise he bears his years well. It is a little amusing to observe the anxiety of all political parties to seek his patronage but he has so far made little advance to any party. Although he has declared that he will not make any political pronouncements during his stay it is believed that he will depart from this attitude. The truth is that the veteran Fenian does not quite see eye to eye with any of the political parties of to-day and though he could himself prove very bitter in political controversy he is deeply grieved by the bitter dissensions of to-day. Many people have expressed regret that Mr. Devoy intends to return to America in September, for they feel that an effort should be made to induce him to spend his last days in the land for which he worked and lived and in which he wishes that his body will take its last rest.

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Friends of Ireland in London are talking about the manner in which some London evening papers announced that the Government of Northern Ireland had accepted an invitation to state its case before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. They added the curious words:—"This decision has been taken without prejudice." What they imply is obvious—that whatever the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council may decide as to the law of the Constitution Northern Ireland will continue to resist, even though the decision may be that the Government has lawful power under Article 12 to carry out the Boundary revision over the heads of the Northern Cabinet and Parliament. It is not likely that any suggestion of that kind would be put in the acceptance of the invitation. The Judicial Committee has merely to answer the legal questions put to it. The Imperial Government will do the rest, either by using its ascertained legal powers or by legislation. The words in the papers referred to were most probably contained in a semi-official statement by the Ulster Association. This Association is most active in the work of propaganda, and it is only too true that some of the London papers accept the pap with which they are fed from this source without question, and sometimes, as in this case, without the exercise of much care. Statements detrimental to the interests of the Irish Free State occasionally find their way into the London press through the same channel, and when they are challenged there is no satisfaction. That is the advantage of having a permanent publicity office at headquarters, and the Northern Government are making the most of it. We can remain pretty confident, however, that the thing will be overdone, and in due course the London papers may find it advisable to give the Ulster Association and its "semi-official" communiques the freedom of the waste-paper basket.

Aonach Tailteann opened in a blaze of triumph whose splendor seemed touched with the fire of the heroic age.

No happening in recent Irish history was at all comparable to the scene in Croke Park, where the serried ranks of Irish youth, clean-limbed, clear-eyed, fresh and bright, paraded for the service of the ancient games.

Assuredly the Irish capital has never witnessed such a hosting of the Gael, not merely from the Motherland, but from across the seven seas.

Owing to the absence of the President in London, in connection with the Boundary Problem, his place was taken by the Director of the Games, Mr. J. J. Walsh, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

Notable visitors were his Highness Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, his Highness Prince Mirze Riza Khan, Persian Delegate to the League of Nations; Sir John Lavery, the distinguished painter; Mr. Compton MacKenzie, the novelist.

A great reception was accorded to Mr. John McCormack, the world-famed Irish vocalist.

A particularly enthusiastic welcome was given to the veteran Fenian, John Devoy, who, now in his 82nd year, is still filled with the old enthusiasm of his early manhood.

The grand rally, the march past, and the alignment of the sections in their various columns was all faultlessly executed.

The Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, as he stood there bareheaded, holding his silk hat in his hand, must have felt a proud man as these legions of brawn and brain and muscle marched before him carrying the dream of a world-wide Aonach Tailteann from the region of debate and conjecture into that of fact and reality. It was indeed a moment to thrill the heart and fire the imagination of even those least responsive to the appeals of history, humanity, sport and the pride of nationhood. For all these things were truly represented in that gallant array. It was inspired by age old memories, it was the Treaty pledge of the present to the future that those old glories would shine untarnished through the ages.

Manliness, courage, generous rivalry, and a loyal comradeship were all written large across the rally of brave young Ireland. A group of famous Irish athletes of the older generation led the van. Tom F. Kiely, the veteran ex-world's champion, who made Ireland's fame in athletics before many of the onlookers were born, fittingly carried the standard; by his side marched Captain Tom Byrne, the Marshal of the great event. Close behind were Peter O'Connor, of Waterford, the celebrated long jumper; Leahy, of Charleville, the high jumper; Maurice Woulfe, of tug-o-war fame; the Davins, of Carrick, and others of the old guard. The skirl of the pipes and the swing of the kilts announced the St. Laurence O'Toole's Piper Band, followed by the Australian contingent proudly carrying the flag of that far-off Dominion. Past following marched the Americans, sturdy hurlers and athletes, with the Star-Spangled Banner waving proudly over them in the summer breeze. Then followed a kaleidoscopic passing of competitors swinging by with military precision, and representing every phase of the many-sided Aonach—archery, arts and crafts, athletes, bands, billiards, boxing, camogie, clay pigeon shooting, chess, dancing, cycling, hurling, football, golf, handball, motor cycling, rowing, tennis, swimming, tug-o-war, yachting, gymnastics, to say nothing of the boys of the Artane Industrial School, the St. John Ambulance, and a team of Scottish hurlers or shinty players.

Mr. Walsh, with Sir Henry MacLoughlin and Senator Yeats on either hand, took the salute as the advancing athletes filed by and marched into column formation before the delighted spectators. This spectacle was the crowning triumph of the day, and one likely to be long remembered by those who had the good fortune to behold it. In its rarity, interest and color it unfolded a picture unprecedented in this country, and viewed in the mass it was a spectacle of which any nation might be proud.

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