



# IRISH NEWS



THE PRESIDENT AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS MEETING. THE COMING SESSION. THE  
REPUBLICAN ATTITUDE. THE PRISONERS AGAIN.

"It is generally recognised," says a journalist who was present at the meeting of the League of Nations in Geneva, "that Mr. Cosgrave struck a tone, high, thoughtful, excellent in matter and delivery. It was in perfect keeping with the spirit of the occasion. A vote of condolence with Japan on her terrible misfortune closed the proceedings. Then came one of the most remarkable incidents of the day. Before leaving the hall the delegates crowded round the Irishmen, and showered congratulations and fraternal greetings upon them. This went on for some minutes, and it was with no small difficulty that the Irish delegates were enabled to leave the hall."

On the evening of his return to Dublin the President was entertained to a banquet at the Metropole, and afterwards presented with a massive silver bowl by a representative committee. The banquet, which was the most important social function held in Dublin since the establishment of the Free State, was presided over by Alderman Alfred Byrne, T.D., and attended by many Senators and Deputies—including Captain Brian Cooper and Messrs. Thrift and Hewitt, leading members of the Independent group. The Army and the Bar were also fully represented, and many foreign consuls—including M. Goor, M. Blanche and Signor Nadamlanski, the representatives of Belgium, France, and Italy, attended. Proposing the health of the President, Alderman Byrne recalled the sufferings of Dublin during the Black-and-Tan régime, and paid tribute to the staunch support given by its citizens to the Administration in the recent civil war. They were now delighted, he declared, to have the privilege of honoring the statesman who having established the freedom of Ireland on an international basis, returned to carry on the work which had been commenced so well.

Many important problems await the consideration of the Dail, and it looks as if deputies would be kept busy all through the autumn months (writes the Dublin correspondent of the London *Catholic Times* in a special article to that journal for September 15). The immediate programme of the Government includes Bills dealing with Local Government and the Judiciary, Licensing, and Housing. Local Government reform has been long overdue, and before the date of the next municipal elections, which will be held in November or December, wide changes will be made in the structure of our local councils. At present they are far too large, with the result that many of their members, having no useful work to do, spend their time in proposing and debating resolutions on subjects with which they are not competent to deal, subjects that have no bearing on the work which local councils are elected to perform. Under the new scheme it is believed that these councils will be made much smaller; that will help to assure better administration, and will put an effective end to much idle controversy and useless waste of time. The proposed Judiciary reforms, which provide for the general decentralisation and modernisation of our legal system, have been for many months before the public, and meet with general approval; they will be proceeded with on the reassembling of Dail Eireann, and should be carried through both houses before the conclusion of the coming session. The Licensing and Housing questions must be faced as well—especially the former, in which the Labor Party takes very naturally the deepest interest. The details of the Government's Housing scheme remain well-guarded secrets, but there is no doubt that drastic reforms are contemplated, reforms which—when the financial situation becomes more normal—will do much to ease the hardships now endured by the urban and a section of the rural working class.

If cool assurance were the key to victory, the opponents of the Treaty would find no difficulty in entering into power. Scarcely were the elections over when they held

meetings in the streets of Dublin, at which leading supporters of their party (such as Dr. Con Murphy, Miss MacSwiney and Count Plunkett) delivered speeches that would have been regarded as over-optimistic had they been made by the victors at the polls. The Free State was dead, the "Republic" was triumphant, and Mr. de Valera would soon rule from Cork to Antrim; that—despite their crushing defeat in the constituencies, and the fact that they did not secure a majority of first preference votes in a single Free State county—was the burden of their song. Not to be outdone by the more seasoned statesmen of his party, Mr. O'Ruileis, a Mayo solicitor who has robed himself in Mr. de Valera's "presidential" dress, has hastened to issue a pronouncement declaring that Ireland is ours for the taking and exhorting us to take it—though from whom remains a mystery. Are we, one wonders, expected to take it from ourselves, and hand it over to the militarist minority which has "taken" so many of our bridges? I mention these outbursts of Republican extravagance to show that the General Election has not changed the strange mentality of Mr. de Valera's followers. They are just as irresponsible now as they were during the Irregular campaign, a campaign which they would renew to-morrow had they got the power to do so. This is very terrible, but nothing can be gained by imagining that they have changed, when they have not. Hope lies in the knowledge that they cannot disturb the peace on an extended scale again, and that their influence is gradually decreasing—not in a vain prospect of their political conversion.

Public meetings to advocate the release of the Irregular internees were organised by the Anti-Treaty Party in several towns on Sunday last (says an exchange for September 22). The Dublin demonstration, which was moderately attended, was held in O'Connell Street, and addressed by all the stars in the Anti-Treaty caste. The speakers devoted themselves largely, however, to general controversy, paying scant attention to the prisoners and their real or imaginary grievances. The League of Nations, the Irish press and the trade unions were vigorously denounced, and the public were gravely told that all Europe watched the struggles of Mr. de Valera's friends with breathless interest and unbounded admiration. The most entertaining speech at the Dublin meeting was delivered by Mr. P. McGinley, who maintained that schemes of reconstruction could not be carried out unless the prisoners were released, a theory which he defended eloquently amid the ruins of O'Connell Street—ruins caused by many of the men and women who are now in custody. Mr. McGinley, however, deserved some credit, for he at least spoke about the internees, giving instances of the hardships which it is suggested they endure. Thus, he stated that on one occasion boots dispatched to a youth in prison had not reached their destination, and expressed the belief that the Irish nation would be roused to indignation by such news. At the moment there are many children in this country without any boots at all, largely owing to the disorganisation caused by the prisoners and their friends; that, I think, is more calculated to rouse the people's anger than anything that Anti-Treaty orators may tell them.

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There is no holier way to prove our gratitude for what we have received than to share it with a needier brother, and the measure of our merit before Our Father in heaven will be the stinting of ourselves that others may not want.

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