

CELTIC NEWS

Bulletin of the Celtic League

Alba — Breizh — Cymru — Éire — Kernow — Mannin

AUTUMN, 1965, No.11.

+++++
A L B A
+++++
Britain = England: The celebration by the British Parliament in June of the 750th anniversary of the Magna Carta caused no end of bother in Scotland - as did the 700th anniversary of the English Parliament. No less a person than the Secretary of State for Scotland suggested in strong terms that Scots schoolchildren be given a day's holiday to observe the occasions. Like sheep, some local Education Authorities in Scotland did as they were told. The signing and sealing of the Magna Carta in 1215 and the summoning of a parliament of the insurgent barons and representatives of towns and shires by the rebel de Montfort were indeed occasions of historical importance. But Scots school-teachers and parents should emphasise that the ancient nation of Scotland also had its own (indeed older) Parliament, based on democratic ideals, and that since 1705 there has not been an English Parliament but a Parliament of the United Kingdoms.

Tax Evasion: Despite a legitimate request, the Chief Secretary of the British Treasury has refused to give details for income from taxation and public expenditure in Scotland as it would entail "undue time and effort"!

SNP Progress: It is good to report that the Midlothian Constituency Association of the SNP now has, in a period of less than 3 years, eight Branches with about 500 members. Excellent! - as is the progress made in other new

territories in Scotland where similar Associations have been formed. The climate for a truly Scottish political identity is getting better.

Good Signs: It seems that Scotland may at last be coming out of the economic doldrums. An index of production indicates that industrial productivity is rising by about 7% each year. This is 3% greater than that in England. Scotland provides about 33% of the foreign exchange... with only 10% of the U.K. population. And we subsidise our English neighbours by about £143 millions each year. To emphasise this sign of prosperity, the Scottish Council (Development and Industry) has estimated that by 1970 the slow drain of manpower from the Highland area will not only be halted but reversed with the provision of over 1,000 new jobs. But - will the English-dominated Government really allow this to come to pass?

Insult! A regular BBC programme for Scottish listeners overseas is called 'Scottish Magazine'. It has always been introduced by the appropriate tune "Scotland the Brave". Now, the BBC minions in London have requested that the BBC in Glasgow should stop playing this signature! Yet another indication of how Scottish interests are subject to interference by petty officialdom in London. (Could some Irishman have told them it is "O'Donnell Abt"? - Editor).

Highland Supremo: Prof. Robert Grieve, Scotland's leading expert on regional planning problems, has been appointed Chairman of the new Highland Development Board. Though not a Highlander, he should be able to do a good job. Despite the fact that he is full time his Board consists of part-time members; tying one hand behind the back?

Celtic Congress: Scotland recently played host to the delegates of the Celtic Congress - in Glasgow. The programme was excellent and many points raised should if followed go far to make a recognisable political and cultural identity for the Celtic Countries. There is a feeling that both the Congress and League could do a lot more to draw public

- 2 -

attention to themselves and to what they represent. The public eye is eager to receive new images; the climate in Scotland, at any rate seems to be just right to plant the seed.

+++++
M A N N I N
+++++

Aeclagh Vannin sent a team of singers and dancers to Dublin in July with a programme of Manx dances, fencing and songs in Manx and appeared on T.V. Eireann. Róisín ní Sheaghda provided

welcome Irish co-operation by accompanying two junior soloists at the studio with her harp. Boise dy-liooar, Róisín! Their Dublin programme was repeated at Peele. Colin Shimmin, Reiltagh Aeclagh Vannin, who had demonstrated the Dirk Dance of the Kings of Man, at a Manx festival in Worcestershire, organised by Mr. Stephen K. Quayle, donor of the Mananan Trophy, performed the dance again for the Peel Viking class for soloists in Manx Gaelic will be included in next year's National Music Festival in Douglas.

Yn Cheshaght Chailckagh has fostered Manx at church services and excursions. They have also supplied material for Manx the Gaelic weekly column featured by the Isle of Man Times. There will be further co-operation in a new feature "Learn your Manx a Phrase a Day". A reprint of Mr. John Gell's Conversational Manx is also contemplated.

Now their energetic president, Mr. H. K. Corlett, is recovering Ellynyn ny Gael will resume activity. He hopes to take part in the Mananan Trophy Presentation on Hollantide Day, November the 12th.

The Celtic Society sent a strong delegation under Mrs. A. J. Davidson, to the Celtic Congress in Glasgow.

Caarjyn Vannin will start its Winter session with a Mhèillea in early October.

- 3 -

Mec Vannin has lately confined its activities mainly to letters to the newspapers. Its Winter activities will start shortly under its new President, Mr. L. C. Creillin of Peel.

+++++
B R E I Z H
+++++
Political Situation: The Mayor of Gwengamp, E. Ollivro, called a meeting of 150 other mayors of the neighbouring townships and it was decided to organise a mass meeting in the town to protest against French policies in Brittany. A telegram was sent to Pres. de Gaulle demanding "An end to the injustice which condemns Brittany to a slow death" and "the implementing of measures to enable our young people to work and continue to live in their own country". They reminded him of his statement (5 years ago) "The young people are your best hope; Brittany must progress and France must help her". Some 800 people have recently lost their employment in the district! During the meeting there were behind-the-scenes manoeuvres by the local communist leader to prevent the participation of certain Breton organisations at the mass rally of the following Friday. 18,000 people took part with the Breton organisations very much in evidence and well received by the people. Their speakers were heckled by the same communist leader and later their banner-bearers were attacked by well-organised (most probably communist) "commandos". Lately, the French-controlled communist party in Brittany has shown an unusual interest in Breton affairs, but with a marked anxiety to channel any political benefit to their own advantage. The Secretary of C.E.L.I.B. (Breton Economic Organisation) is congratulating himself on his refusal to join forces with M. Deferre, the opposition candidate in next Autumn's presidential election. Since then Deferre has withdrawn his candidature after failing to secure the leadership of all anti-Gaullist forces. A policy of support for any given French party or leader has always been a political mistake for Brittany.

Economic Situation: A new commission of Economic develop-

ment for the "region" Brittany was recently set up by the French regional prefect under orders from Paris. The prefect's report devoted much space to a study of the public investment needed in order to provide adequate housing, schools and health services; but there was no indication of the capital investment needed to implement his plans. The President of the Morbihan Chamber of Commerce stated, "Brittany remembers the time when She was prosperous and She remains convinced that Her present poverty is not due to a lack of natural resources, but to a failure to administer and utilise these resources". The commission members fear that the credits necessary for these basic requirements will not be available from the French Governmental funds. The solution seems to lie in an appeal to the E.E.C. authorities - unless such an approach is blocked by the French government!

Breton Embassy: A 3-floor Breton Centre was officially opened on June the 23rd at 196 Sloane Street, London. This centre has the support of all the local government authorities. Its purpose is primarily commercial. This Breton "Embassy" in London deserves the support of all friends of Brittany.

Cultural Activities: The Summer School for Breton speakers (children and adults) was opened in August at Rostrenen. A new weekly Breton class was started last March - at the Gwengamp Grammar School. It has been well supported and plans are being made for an extension of this class after the Summer recess. In view of the authorities' opposition to such schemes all this is quite an achievement.

+++++
C Y M R U
+++++
Celtic League Membership has increased substantially since the Annual Volume containing the "cases" for self-government to the United Nations has appeared. Ten shillings for Membership, Annual Volume and this popular little quarterly "news" is considered very good value.

"Monolithic": One new member wrote thus to the Welsh Secretary (of the Celtic League - not Jim Griffiths) "Though I am predominantly English, I have Cornish, Scottish and probably Welsh blood; also Basque blood... In view of the monolithic tendencies of the modern world, I consider it intensely important that the individuality of all the smaller races should be preserved. The Celts, in particular, I feel, have an important role to play".

New Language Report: While writing these notes the report of the Government Committee (President, Sir David Hughes-Parry) on the future of the language, has not yet been issued. Rumour has it that its recommendations are such that they should be (acceptable to all"; i.e. it is unlikely to urge any important advance in the status of the language.

Brewer-Spinks - For the Record: Mr. Brewer-Spinks, English owner of a factory at Blaenau Ffestiniog, ordered his eight workers not to speak any Welsh in the factory. Two workers, and later a third, refused; they were dismissed. The outcry against him and the ridicule, was immediate. Even the Secretary of State interfered and B-S had to withdraw his "No Welsh"! We could do with more fools of this type.

Adult Classes: There is a widespread movement by many national organisations to set up Welsh language classes for adults; it is hoped that these will number many hundreds this winter.

Eisteddfod and Plaid Summer School: The two important August national functions, the National Eisteddfod at Newtown in Montgomery, and the Plaid Cymru Summer School and Conference at Machynlleth in the same county, were both eminently successful. The spirit which they foster in the nation, was the basis of their success. Only the English parties and their prominent adherents weaken or harm this unity.

First Broadcast: The "Radio Ban" on Plaid Cymru (and on the Scottish National Party) Having been removed recently, the Plaid TV and sound broadcasts were arranged for Wednesday, September 29th. Only 5 minutes (a year) was allowed by the

London Government, while the English parties all get more than their share of time, even in proportion to General Election votes.) A New Members' Campaign was organised by the national party in conjunction with the political broadcast.

"Develop ALL Wales": Plaid Cymru is also campaigning in favour of developing ALL Wales, and against the idea of a big new town as a Birmingham overflow in mid-Wales. Once again the prominent spokesmen of all the English parties are in favour of the "scheme" which would "plant" 60,000 Birminghamites in mid-Wales and leave all west Wales a desert. But it seems that the people favour the Plaid policy of developing All Wales and are opposed to the new scheme.

+++++
E I R E +
+++++
"Come into my Parlour!" For over two months a printers' strike has been evidenced by the absence of the national newspapers. Already some printers and journalists have emigrated and according to rumour one newspaper is in danger of liquidation. At this time when one of the main outlets for voicing public opinion is closed, it was unfortunate that tentative discussions were held regarding a Great Britain-Ireland Free Trade Area. The benefits of such a Common Market were enjoyed throughout the 19th Century! The Scots have benefited from it for an even longer period!

Test Case: Deastn Breatnach was charged with not having his car insured. Although he had applied to the Norwich Union (Could Mr. Brewer-Spinks be on the Board?) but they had only been prepared to issue him with a typewritten acknowledgement of his payment. Deastn refused to accept anything but an official document, every bit as imposing as the version in English. Two of the charges against him were dismissed, but he was fined 20/- on each of two

other counts. He has no intention of paying this fine which amounts to a mockery of the 1916 objective "Free... and Gaelic". In Belfast, dropping of the one Sunday Mass in Irish roused a small hornets' nest, Protests have been ascending the hierarchical ladder and will go as far as Rome, if necessary.

Bright Spots: Corus Iompair Eireann (The Irish Transport System) a semi-state service body has decided that bus destinations will be written in Irish.

We tend to think of Irish-Americans as earnest devotees of Stage-Ireland, complete with shamrocks, harps and lepre-hawns. Foras Chultúr na nGael Meiriceánach has effectively demonstrated that illusions are not restricted to the other side of the Herring Pond. Each year Foras is to award £3,500 for writing in Irish; by Irish they do not mean shamrock-English! This generous endowment cannot fail to give a strong impetus to Irish writing.

Scottish Gaelic does not enjoy any official patronage. In view of this it would seem that annual prizes of this nature would be even more beneficial in Scotland than in Ireland. The new full-time director of An Comunn Gàidhealach, Mr. Donald MacKay can perhaps be considered the official spokesman for Gaelic Scotland. If he could use his influence to induce some of the Overseas Scottish Organisations to contribute similar literary awards for writing in Scottish Gaelic, it would augur well for his tenure of office.

The Senior Gold Medal for an article in English or French, in the competition organised by the Council of Europe was won by Gaertidin ni Fhloinn. Her entry was in English, although she attended a school where all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish. So much for the narrowing, insular effect of choosing to foster our own languages!

Some More Equal... Despite the strong case for McGee College, Derry being made the nucleus of the new northern university, it is to be built at Coleraine. Whatever arguments are advanced for development in the most suitable areas it is evident that the criterion is rather whether or not there is a local Unionist majority, than whether or not the geographical conditions are suitable. Even the younger element among the Unionists are beginning to feel that the faceless men have too much influence.

+++++
KERNOW
+++++
Mebyon Kernow's warning a year ago that the growing climate of regional organization would mean more alien control has this year been fulfilled by attachment to Bristol, 170 miles away, with inadequate representation, suggestions of local meetings, and no sub-regional concessions.

Meanwhile the Whitehall bureaucracy continues its remorseless suction. At Camborne in W. Cornwall, mining created a world-famous School of Mines, which now needs expensive modernisation. The Government will make an appropriate capital grant if the school is moved over the border to the campus of the projected College of Advanced Technology, at Plymouth. The Governors are still trying to keep the School, one of the few intrinsically Cornish institutions, by getting help from other countries, including newly-independent ones, which send students.

Defiantly, Cornwall has asserted her traditional activities and ceremonies throughout the year - Hurling at St. Columb, the Silver Ball Game at St. Ives, Padstow Obby Oss, Helston Furry, Crying the Neck at Godolphin, amongst others. "Bara an Gwella Dyworth Kernow" on Co-operative Bread wrappers is another public assertion of the language. The "West Briton" (2/9/65) points an editorial moral: "There are now more people able to under-

F.U.E.N. Congress (9-12 June) was held at Ljouwert, Friesland, fifteen nationalities being represented. J. E. Jones lectured on the situation in Wales. As in Wales, the number of bilingual Schools in Friesland is growing. Now there are 84 with teaching entirely in Frisian in the kindergarten and during the first 2 years.

The European Federalist Movement held a Seminar organised by its Breton Branch, in Brest (9-14 August). Regions and subject nations of the Atlantic Sea-Board were represented. Participants were of the opinion that: (a) The division of Europe into two or three economic areas with tariff barriers was against their interest; (b) planning should be carried out at regional level and co-ordinated at European federal level; (c) UNESCO's principles for the teaching of languages should be applied everywhere; (d) regions should have a "German Laender status"; (e) co-ordination and control should be exercised by a universal suffrage European Parliament, a chamber of regions and a Social and Economic Council. The French government was condemned for harming the interests of farmers and taxpayers by breaking up the Brussels EEC talks on June the 30th.

Canadian citizens of Breton origin sent a memorandum to the delegations of the UNO, last March. It drew attention to the "country's economic difficulties, the emigration organised by the French government's policies, the systematic killing of the Breton language, the violation in 1789 of the 1532 Treaty of Union which results in Brittany being again de jure an independent state although de facto under French domination".

The Celtic League Memorandum on the cases of Brittany, Wales and Scotland for self-determination or international protection is ready to be forwarded to the United Nations. Preparations are being made for simultaneous press conferences to be held in three capitals at the time of its release. 1,000 copies will then be distributed to the

press and information agencies. C. L. Secretaries will gladly receive addresses of people to whom copies could usefully be sent.

Brewer-Spinks (see Welsh section) apart from the storm caused in Wales was the occasion of protests from the Celtic League and from a number of individual Celtic organisations.

The 1964-65 Book of the Celtic League has been sent to all members. It is helping to achieve the membership targets adopted at Cardiff. We wonder if the 800 printed should not have been a 1,000. Anyone who has received a defective copy should return it to the Gen-Sec. for replacement. Corrigenda: Please amend your copy: P.16, 5th last line "with its own state"; P.19, 3rd last line "specialising"; middle of P.27 "Fr/kilocalory"; fr/kcal: p.33, 18th line "over 80% of the population"; P.49, 1st line "national".

William Wallace: On the 22nd of August the London Group of the SNP organised a commemoration, at the plaque erected on the wall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, near where he was butchered. Besides the Scots there, all the Celtic Countries were represented. Although they were all invited, no Scottish MPs saw fit to pay their tribute to the memory of the man who was appointed "Guardian" of Scotland. Perhaps their very attendance at Westminster would have made their presence a little incongruous. Their conspicuous absence was pointed out in a press hand-out headed, "Scots Wha Hae frae Wallace fled!"

Psychological Study? The attitude of those same MP's would provide an interesting subject for a post-graduate thesis. A number of them protested against an official House of Commons Christmas Card; it depicted a Scottish king doing homage to the English king. Although the concept is objectionable, it merely illustrates the present day relationship of the two countries. Objections to the Christmas Card would have been more pertinent had they been accompanied by a re-examination of

their own vassalage to the English political parties.

"Ulster Attitudes" can be even more bizarre. The Royal Ulster Constabulary are to send three police-women to Edinburgh for "Ulster Week". One of them confessed that she intends to tell people that she is from Gracehill instead of Ahoghill, because "people have great difficulty in pronouncing 'Ahoghill' and in spelling it". And her name? Cameron!!

The Dragon Stirs: Three Welsh people living in London went to the National Eisteddfod. The Union Jack flying proudly there jarred on their aesthetic sense. Naturally, when charged with stealing the flag they were able to please, "Not Guilty!" with a clear conscience.

Welsh Radicalism? Unfortunately, not all the Welsh in London are of the same metal as our three Eisteddfod visitors. The "Welsh Radical Group" are anxious to further the Birmingham Industrial Plantation scheme for Mid-Wales. Although there is a strong radical tradition in Wales this group can hardly claim to have inherited it. "Welsh Death-Wish Group" would seem a more appropriate title.

Corrigendum: Readers of the last edition will have wondered why they were sent a "back number"? In fact "Summer, 1964, No.7." should have read: "Summer, 1965 No. 10."

CELTIC LEAGUE ADDRESSES:

Treasurer: Dr. N. Davies, Coolagad, Greystones, Co. Wicklow.
Gen-Secretary: Alan Heussaff, 9 Br. Cnoc Sion, Dromchonrach, Baile Atha Cliath 9, Eire.

National & District Secretaries:

Alba: G.H. Thompson, Kirkland Street, Dalry, Castle Douglas.
Breizh: ~~G. Le Goff, 6 Rue de la France Combattante, BP48 Brest~~
Cymru: J.E. Jones, 1 Heol Esgyn, Cyncoed, Cyncoed.
Eire: General-Secretary. Kernow: R. Green, Travellers Rest, Illogan Downs, Redruth. Mannin: Miss M. Douglas, Thie-ny-Garee, Laxey. London: Paul Dyer, 57 Star Street, W.2.
Celtic News: Editor & Irish Sub-Ed. Pádraig O Conchúir, 82 St. Albans Avenue, Bedford Park, London, W.4.

Breizh: E. Gwalereg. % Kerlann - KerVreiz. 43 rue St Placide. Paris VI