

CELTIC NEWS

Bulletin of the Celtic League

Alba — Breizh — Cymru — Éire — Kernow — Mannin

SPRING, 1967, No. 15.

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S.N.P., M.P.? What was always called the 'Celtic Fringe' is now well on the increase. The result in Scotland of the Glasgow Pollock by-election has proved this. The Scottish National Party came third with almost 11,000 votes. The Scottish Liberal Party candidate, advocating a pale shadow of Home Rule (devolution of Government) came a miserable fourth with less than 1,000 votes. The result was explained away by the Conservative and Labour Parties as being a 'protest vote'. But it is very much more than this. The Scots are now stirring, at seeing for themselves that London Government is doing their country untold harm. The freeze was the cause of higher unemployment, financial discrimination and falling back in house-building. Glasgow is now reported as being as far ahead with her programme as it was in 1950, and has a £25M debt round the neck to prove it. The SNP now waits for the next by-election in Scotland. It will not be long before Gwynfor Evans is joined at Westminster by a friend from Scotland.

Hand of Friendship? Following hard on the result of the Pollock by-election came an overture from the Scottish Liberal Party for an electoral pact with the SNP. It was the SNP, which, three years ago, asked the Liberals for a non-intervention pact, so that no constituency would have two Home-Rule candidates to split the vote. Then the Liber-

als refused. Now from its position of strength, the SNP are rightly cold towards this new move. Nothing but complete separation should be the Liberals' plank from now on - unless they want to see their Party waste away, the result of members defecting to the SNP.

ACT of Faith: An Comunn Gàidhealach are to produce a fortnightly bi-lingual newspaper, called "SRUTH" from April onwards. This replaces their monthly magazine "An Gàidheal", which performed a weak function for the organisation. This was no fault of the editors. The magazine was a poor medium. With a newspaper as a medium, An Comunn feel that the Gaelic language will be boosted to a position where it will be noticed by those in positions of influence, able to help the language. The General Editor of "Scruth" is F.G.Thompson, Scottish contributor to 'Celtic News'.

Highland Development: The Highlands and Islands Development Board have come up with a corker; a £50M petro-chemical complex on the eastern seaboard of the Highland area. What the effect will be on the whole of the Highland area. What the effect will be on the whole of the Highlands, no-one knows yet. But there have been one or two inspired guesses: further depopulation of already-denuded areas; cultural emasculation; social upheaval; and the large-scale introduction of an alien culture to staff the technical processes involved in the big industry proposed for Invergordon.

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M A N N I N
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The work done by a comparatively small group of active nationalist supporters has borne gratifying results. Mec Vannin, the political arm of the movement, whilst not considering itself strong enough to contest the recent House of Keys election, found that its material was seized upon by all but one of the Independent candidates and that (unsuccessful) candidate felt compelled to issue a second manifesto, dropping all references to a closer co-operation with Great Britain. The newly-

elected House of Keys has shown itself more aware of the economic advantage of greater independence.

The struggle for the language shows an increased support. Yn Cheshaght Ghailckagh (The Manx Language Society) also has increased its membership by 50% during the past year. Its sale of pamphlets, booklets, etc., to the public, during the same period has increased by 800%; this has been effected by publishing calendars in Manx, Manx Christmas cards and serviettes, biro pens with Manx inscriptions, etc., and above all by adopting a more aggressive sales policy, having stalls at fairs and agricultural shows - which have the double advantage of raising funds and of creating interest among new sections of the community. Perhaps, however, the highlight of the year's work has been the re-editing and re-publishing, with the help of Mr. R. L. Thomson of Leeds University, of the standard Manx Grammar, Goodwin's "First Lessons in Manx". The Society is also considering the possibility of publishing a magazine devoted to articles of Manx interest.

Other items of recent Manx interest are the "Aeglagh Vannin" children's Manx class started by Miss Valerie Cain and Miss Brenda Cain; and the opening of a new Mec Vannin headquarters in Atholl Street, Douglas. Since the formation of the Manx "Fainey Committee" in September 1965, 22 gold, 21 silver and numerous coloured Fainey have been awarded.

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B R E I Z H
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Political Situation: The recent general election in Franch (March 9-12) presented the various Breton national organisations with the dilemma of whether to recommend their members to vote or not. Since none of these organisations have the means to present candidates against the government and big (French) opposition parties they were reduced to recommending a list of candidates, that have shown some interest in the affairs of Brittany, from

the opposition parties. Such a situation stresses the need for all these organisations to establish a common political front or to form a strong national party, as an alternative to dependence on the good will and good faith of the French political parties.

The Economic Situation in Brittany continues to deteriorate and this has been highlighted by a number of riots. On the 19th January, poultry farmers and their employees numbering some 5,000 showed their dissatisfaction with the French government's agricultural policy by ransacking the town hall at Morlaix, having previously isolated the town by cutting the telephone lines. Similar incidents occurred in this district during the following weeks. The authorities were sufficiently alarmed as to order 2,000 tons of chicken for the army and to promise to buy 500 tons each week. The visit of the French minister M. Pompidou to Kemper on January the 26th gave rise to another violent demonstration. Although access to the town was blocked by riot police, 1,000 fishermen succeeded in entering the town. They were at once attacked by the police using tear-gas and truncheons. Many arrests followed. In protest against their treatment by the police, the fishermen's organisations refused to meet the minister as previously arranged. The minister himself was booed by the crowd on his way out of town. Last October, an important agreement was signed in Rennes between two powerful trade unions, to unite in any future action in the defence of Breton interests and in opposition to the policy of depopulation for Brittany. Following the visit of the Agricultural Commission of the European Parliament to Brittany the EEC Executive Commission in Brussels asked for credits to study the problem of Brittany's economic development. The French delegate vetoed this request immediately.

An unexploded incendiary bomb was discovered by the police on the doorstep of the tax-office in Lorient, bearing the initials F.L.B. (Breton Liberation Front). It was the last of a series of incidents during a period of one year.

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K E R N O W
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There was a time, only a few years ago, when we were outraged by merely an occasional deprivation; to-day we catalogue our losses every week. 9% of the primary schools have been rebuilt since the war. The 73% pre-dating 1902 will take nearly two centuries to replace at the present rate. Of one at Porthleven, the Mayor of Helston said, "I was never so ashamed as when I went into that school"... The headmaster of Redruth Grammar School, with the largest sixth form on record, said that additions "could not transform it into a school remotely capable of meeting the requirements of the last century."

The casualty department of Redruth hospital is to be replaced by - a rota system! As 'they' are not prepared to improve the screening, the X-ray department at the East Cornwall Hospital, Bodmin, is to be closed.

Housing applications in 1965 were 22.9 per thousand of population in Cornwall, compared with 14.9 in the South West and 9.7 in England and Wales.

Looe Coastguard Station is to be replaced by part-time service.

British Railways' 'thinking' (not plans!) is currently about speeding up transit between Plymouth and Penzance by reducing the reduced main line stations to six, thereby inconveniencing two more branch lines, one of them reprieved by the Minister (who has stated his intention of developing the road which all Cornwall has repudiated, the A38 snaggd through Plymouth).

The White Fish Authority in 1966 made loans in Cornwall only 1.6% of the total for the whole country.

Several Councils are taking leave of their senses by considering housing London overspill populations without certainty of reducing their own housing lists. Some traders

forget that Big Brother is also watching for new customers.

Hence Mebyon Kernow's recent representations to the Royal Commission on Local Government for more powers.

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I R E
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Agriculture: When the new government came to power, it inherited a difficult situation on the farming front. Irish farmers have witnessed a slow improvement among industrial workers, but their own income has remained static, despite the steady increase in the cost of living.

There was a complete break-down in communications between farmers and government, so the last few months have seen the National Farmers' Association adopt 'Breton' tactics. These included the picketing of the Ministry of Agriculture, dislocation of traffic by slow-moving agricultural machinery and temporary boycott of any sale of agricultural stock or produce. Talks are now in progress. It is an opportunity for drastic re-thinking; not only regarding the farmers' actual grievances, but over the whole field of rural depopulation. Officialdom is too much inclined to listen to experts, who can generally give convincing reasons for letting events take their course rather than for shaping events.

Education: The official summary of the Commission on Higher Education Report has now been published. It is a sorry enough document which amounts to the streamlining of a system which ought rather to be scrapped and replanned. Although the taxpayer pays the piper it is the university authorities which call the tune. In an affluent society laissez-faire higher education might be feasible. In the Irish context it amounts to presenting England (or America) with a higher proportion of graduates for the benefit of their economies. The report seems to be exclusively concerned with pushing more educational fodder through the emigration-gearred sausage machine.

The Stormont authorities are apparently beginning to realise

*Ha paeet hoc'h eus ho skodenn-
oloaz d'ar C'heore ?*

In order to make easier and more efficient the Treasury task we kindly request our readers to pay their annual fees (10F), the sooner, the better, to the national treasurer for Brittany.

M. TREMEL R., 17 bis, rue de l'Argonne — 78-HOUILLES
C.C.P. 14545.20, PARIS

This year our Annual Volume will be more substantial and more interesting than any that we have published so far. The problem is whether we can afford to publish all the material that we have now ready for the printer or that we are due to get in the coming days. The book will have over 120, perhaps 150 pages. Our 10/fee is unchanged!

Here are a few notes to give you a rough idea of the contents.

An introduction will be contributed by our President, Mr Gwynfor Evans, "the Member of Parliament for Wales".

The Welsh Language Society has been most active in the campaign to secure full recognition for Welsh; we'll have an article by one of its chief officers.

(We still have to get 3 of the Welsh contributions.)

In Ireland, the past 12 months have witnessed an increased activity on the language front: Nollaig Ó Gadhra, president of an Comhchaidreamh, reports about it.

The secretary of BUAIC, an association which has started to create a new Gaeltacht just outside Cork, invites you to join in this adventure.

Roy Johnston, vice-chairman of the Dublin Wolfe Tone Society, evaluates the reasons for the relative lack of success in achieving Irish national aims and outlines a national revolutionary program with social objectives.

Padraig Ó Conchúir tells the story of Sairséal agus Dill: how publishing in Irish was put on a commercial basis.

Padraig Ó Snodaigh, who is taking his place among the Irish historians, contributes to the commemoration of the 1867 Fenian Rising with "Fenianism and the Celtic Nations" in which he reveals astonishing evidence of inter-Celtic cooperation "in action".

Dr De Burca suggests a way to establish closer communication between speakers of Irish, or Welsh, etc. living far apart from one another.

From Scotland we have a political survey by Dr D. Stevenson, a report on Gaelic publications by Prof. D. Thomson, an account of the work of An Comunn Gaidhealach by its director, and an economic article by Frank G. Thompson, our sub-editor in Scotland.

One of Mec Vannin, J. Irving, tells of recent work for the Manx language. From Robert Dunstone, chairman of Mebyon Kernow, we have "Some thoughts on Cornwall". Royston Green tells us about the ethnical foundations of Cornwall and, in a shorter article, about the threat of his country being used to house the London overspill.

Yann Fouéré analyses the present difficulties in the Breton Movement. M. A. K. shows however that many elements in the situation are favourable to us. Youenn Olier puts the mass demonstrations of last winter in Breton perspective. We expect an article by Dr Etienne on the work being done to fully modernise the Breton language and guide its future evolution; also a portrait of the late Marcel Guieysse by Youenn Noac'h.

In this volume we are particularly interested in the problem of bilingualism. We publish almost entirely the lecture by Dr. Jack L. Williams (see C. News). In order to find out if personal bilingualism is practicable, A. Heusseff analyses conditions in other bilingual countries. Neven Henaff's contribution to the symposium at the Irish Club, London (see C. N. p. 7) should be read by all our fellow-countrymen. Olier Mordrel, from his exile in S. America, stresses the need to guide the evolution of our languages (For A Linguistic Revolution) in such a way as to develop a closer community of culture between our countries. Dr R. Raes shows that Flanders is turning away from bilingualism. Michael Keen writes about the battle to restore Hebrew.

HELP US TO PUBLISH THIS STIMULATING BOOK BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE IMMEDIATELY if you have not done so yet for 1967, MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY!

that they cannot put too much trust in Westminster. Capt. O'Neill has been most anxious to obtain assurances from Dublin. But despite frequent talk of taking the gun out of politics, Republican Clubs have been declared illegal. All in all the situation seems to be that one can subscribe to any political views, provided that they are either Unionist or Green Tory.

Language: In February, a symposium on the Irish language was held at the Irish Club in London. The most notable contribution was that of Breton Neven Henaff. Objections to the language have generally taken the line that it is an expense that the country cannot afford. Mr. Henaff made a convincing case, that on the contrary, by not opting wholeheartedly for Irish the country is committing itself to a permanent brain-drain.

+++++| Awakening: During the last four months, the Welsh awakening has been maintained. Not only have the people been enlisting in the National Party, Plaid Cymru, in increasing numbers, but intelligent people throughout the land have become increasingly "pro-Welsh"; in other words, there has been an upsurge of national self-respect. During the last four months, the London Government has merely dragged its feet on all Welsh matters; it has done nothing in the economic or language fields for Wales; but its Ministers have been voluble with empty words and promises which have roused the ire of the nation. Those who failed to see these signs were brought roughly to reality with the result of the Rhonda West by-election. Overnight, what had been considered as one of the safest Labour seats in Britain became marginal. Plaid Cymru, depicted as an essentially rural party of the Welsh-speaking areas, proved that it can gain the support of English-speaking industrial Wales. With its clear, concise interpretation of the dismal economic facts the party's new

C. Y. M. R. U

research unit proved its worth. Rhonda West (together with Pollok) has demonstrated that the English parties can no longer turn a complacent blind eye to the mounting tide of Welsh and Scottish nationalism.

Language Campaigns: The Welsh Language Society is continuing its activities. More demonstrations outside post offices are planned. (It is the Postmaster General, of all the London Government Ministers, who is the most anti-Welsh.) The Government is delaying, as long as it can, legislation to grant equal validity to the Welsh language, which was recommended by the Hughes-Parry report and which the London Government promised (18 months ago) to implement. The 1967 Celtic League Annual Volume will have a special article on the Language Society by one of its chief officers.

Gwynfor Evans, the "Member of Parliament for Wales" as he is generally considered - and he is President of the Celtic League - is widely praised for the fight he is making for Wales in the London House of Commons. His speeches, his questions and activities are as widely reported in Wales as can be expected. He is received by all manner of societies and organisations with warmth of welcome and acclamation which reflects the patriotic resurgence. Even among English societies, there is support for his presentation of the Welsh case for national freedom. Mr. Evans will be contributing an article for the 1967 Celtic League Annual Volume.

"Black Paper on Wales, 1967": Gwynfor Evans probes the Government with numerous questions which bring out the black facts of London's exploitation and mis-government of Wales. Some 80 of these questions and answers have been published by Plaid Cymru (8 Queen Street, Cardiff: 1/3d. including postage) as the "Black Book on Wales 1967". There is only space to quote here that Wales lost 750,000 of her people to England since 1921. No recognition, no amelioration of Wales' needs can be expected from any London Government: that is the booklet's conclusion. To keep abreast with events in Wales, readers

are also recommended to subscribe to the monthly "Welsh Nation" (7/6 per annum from the above address).

Breton Jail Sentence: The 3 Bretons, jailed last year, at St. Nazaire, wish to thank those from the Celtic countries, who signed a petition in their favour. The original case against them was dropped, but Cocher and Gachet were tried in October for the burning of 3 French flags. The sentence was 2 months imprisonment and 1,000 francs fine each. In Rennes last January they appealed but the sentence was confirmed. At both trials they said that their action was meant to draw attention to the political situation of Brittany, to the destruction of her language and to the neglect of her economy. By forcing Breton youth to emigrate, France was committing genocide. Those who approve of their stand might send this protest, directly, or via A. Heussaff, Celtic League General Secretary, to the French Minister of Justice, Paris: "I wish to express my support for the stand taken by Mr. Yannick Cocher and Mr. Alain Gachet, at their trials in St. Nazaire (19 October) and Rennes (1 January) (Signed)....."

Europe & America: The Annual Congress of the Federal Union of European Nationalities will be held at Aabenraa, Denmark, on May 20-22. For information write to Mr. Pol Skadegard, Rolighed, Rungsted Kyst, Denmark. An InterCeltic Meeting is planned for September in Montreal, to coincide with the "Expo 67" Requests for information will be transmitted by the C. L. Gen. Soc.

Linguists! For a copy of his "Short Scots-Norwegian Word-list" send 3/- to David Stevenson, 45 Buchanan Drive, Bearsden by Glasgow. Dr. Stevenson has kindly offered to donate money received to Celtic League Funds.

Motoring & The Motorist: Comedy! After much fuss and bother, after court cases and imprisonment, the London Govern-

ment printed a "Welsh" Motor Licence Form. (In fact they are bi-lingual). Two men filled up this form in Welsh, only to be told by the local postmaster that he was not allowed to issue the licence to anyone who filled that "Welsh" form (by orders of the anti-Welsh Postmaster General, in London and his minions). The two men then asked for the English licence Form, filled it in in Welsh and were given the licence!! In Ireland, following a reluctance of the insurance companies to give the language due recognition a new co-operative motorists' insurance company has been set up. In Brittany, the prefectural claim that "Bzh" (Breizh) motor-car plates were illegal was recently put to the test. The ruling was that the prefects' claim - see Celtic News No.14 - had no legal basis. Many Cornish motorists are now using similar 'KERNOW' plates. Mr. Ronald MacDonald Douglas can claim to have used an 'Sc' plate (with an 'Ecosse' plate, for French use - but with no 'GB') on the continent, over a period of 40 years.

Bilingualism To-day: Prof. Jac L. Williams gave a lecture on this theme, to an audience of a thousand, in Dublin, last January. In his lecture, under the joint auspices of Comhdáil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge and of the Celtic League, Prof. Williams outlined a scheme by which 80% of the people of Ireland and Wales could be bilingual by the year 2,000. The text of this lecture will be included in the C.L. Annual volume. Important meetings like this are worthwhile and necessary. Help us to increase this type of activity by renewing your subscription (through your national secretary) and by recruiting more members!

Modern Breton Art & Handiwork Exhibition will be held at Josselin (Central Brittany) from July 1 - Sept. 15, organised by the new Association of Breton Artists and Artisans. There will be much to interest and entertain exhibitors & visitors. Further information from Alain Guel, 21 rue du Commerce, 22-St-Quay-Portrieux, Brittany.

The Liverpool Manx Society set a lead in organising a Celtic Reunion, last February; Manx, Welsh, Irish and Scots (in

numerical order) in attendance numbered 150. Each element there made its contribution to what was a very pleasant evening. Other Liverpool Celtic societies are expected to follow the Manx example with similar functions.

The Personal Touch: Members wishing to correspond with members in another Celtic country should write to its National Secretary or to the Gen. Sec.

Philatelic Section: A Short answer for Cornwall (from Hansard): Mr. N. Nott, M.P. for St. Ives, asked the Postmaster General "whether in commemoration of St. Piran's Day on Sunday he will give consideration to the production of a Cornish stamp, Cornwall being the only Celtic country in the United Kingdom without its own postage stamp?" Mr. Edward Short: "No." (Mr. Short figures also in the Welsh section).

Compulsory Breton! The French Attorney-General was highly displeased because the petitions on behalf of Arvor, Cocher and Gachet were in Breton, with an English translation. It is a truism accepted by all Frenchmen worth their salt that French is the civilised language par excellence. The pre-election statement, also in Breton with an English translation, issued by the Breton Branch to members and to the press, was a further affront to French dignity, as far as the press was concerned.

"The Dragon's Tongue" (study of the History of the Welsh language and of the recent efforts to secure official recognition) is available from the Gen. Sec. at 8/- per copy. From the same address a few copies of Dr. Stevenson's Scots-Norwegian Wordlist are also available.

Celtic League Addresses. Mr. Jack Irving, Tynwald Grove, Peel, will be taking over from Miss. Mona Douglas as Manx Secretary and Sub-Editor. We would like to thank Miss Douglas for all the work she has done for the League since 1962, despite a formidable number of commitments.

Mebyon Kernow: Have now formed a branch in London. Both Plaid Cymru and the S.N.P. already have active branches there.

Pollution: We could not accuse the British Govt. of indifference to this scourge which has hit Cornwall. It does appear however that the old illusions of grandeur associated with London as a financial centre meant that fear of antagonising international finance inhibited decisive action to destroy the tanker and its contents in the early stages.

Saving the West (of Ireland): The growth of Dublin, Cork and Limerick must be set off against the steady decline of population in the West. "Dóchas" (hope) is an organisation formed to help the small farmers to help themselves by raising funds for loans to western co-operatives with viable schemes. A similar organisation has been formed to raise money for this purpose among the Irish in Britain: Save the West, 14 Quex Rd., N.W.6. Their supporters' badge shows the W. of Ireland with the word "Slán", signifying a West healthy and vigorous and was designed by.... a Welshman, Celtic Leaguer, Michael Keen.

National & District Secretaries: Scottish Secretary: Girvan Mackay, 16 Marywell Farm, Checkbar by Aberdeen. London Sec.: Bean Uí Chéin, 27 Munster Road, S.W.6. Gen.Sec.: A. Heusaff, 9 Br. Cnoc Sion, Dromchonnach, Baile Atha Cliath 9. Editor Celtic News: P. O Conchúir, 82 St. Alban's Avenue, Bedford Park, W.4.

Alba(see above). Breizh: R. Tremel, 17bis Rue de l'Argonne, Houilles (Yvelines), S.et O. Cymru: J.E.Jones, 1 Heol Esgyn, Cyncoed, Caerdydd. Eire: Gen.Sec. Kernow: R. Green, Travellers Rest, Illogan Downs, Redruth. Mannin: J. Irving, Tynwald Grove, Peel. London(see above).

Subscriptions DUE should be sent to your National or Regional Secretary. Give this bulletin to a friend, asking him to return this form: I wish to become a member of the Celtic League and to obtain the 1967 Yearbook and the quarterly Celtic News. I enclose (minimum 10/-).....

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ADDRESS

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