

Deserved Tributes Paid To Post Office Workers

DESERVED tributes were paid to the Limerick Post Office staffs at the annual re-union dinner of the City Branch of the Post Office Workers' Union (indoor section) in Cruise's Hotel last night. The function was one of the most successful held for many years.

THE members of the Limerick Branch of the Post Office Workers' Union held their annual re-union dinner and dance in Cruise's Hotel last night. Mr. Michael Casey, chairman, presided, and the guests included the Mayor (Ald. J. Carey, T.D.) and Mayoress; Mr. M. J. Keyes, T.D.; Mr. W. Bell, Deputy Secretary of the Union; Mr. Ed. O'Neill, Postmaster, and Mrs. O'Neill; Dr. A. Crehan, Medical Officer to the Branch, etc.

The function, which was a brilliant success, was attended by 120 guests following the dinner a most enjoyable dance was held. The Chairman, in a felicitous speech, welcomed the guests and said that the presence of the Mayor was in keeping with the public nature of the postal service. The Post Office, he said, was the servant of the people and it was only fitting that public representatives should be associated with the officials on social occasions.

DEPUTY KEYES. Mr. M. J. Keyes, T.D., proposing the toast of the Post Office Workers' Union, said that it was one of the most efficiently administered trade Unions in the country. That Union, however, had never abused the great power it wielded to gain its ends. For that the Union and the members deserved well of the people. Despite wonderful advances made in securing improvements in the service in many directions much more remained to be done. The Post Office workers were very badly paid but it was to be hoped that this very unsatisfactory state of things would be remedied before long.

Mr. Keyes appealed to the members to be loyal to their Union and stressed the fact that without a strong organisation behind them no real progress could be made in securing their reasonable and just demands.

CLAIM FOR WAGE INCREASE. Mr. Bell, having congratulated the Limerick Branch on its flourishing condition, said that a claim for a wage increase based on the services rendered by the staffs to the public, had been lodged with the Department. This claim would be dealt with very soon by the Department in conjunction with representatives of the Union. He was not without hope that on this occasion the Department would take advantage of the Conciliation Council to remedy the long-standing grievance.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S UNION MESSAGE



Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States of America, delivering his State of the Union message (January 7th, 1954), to the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives meeting in a joint session at the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Seated on the rostrum behind the President are Vice-President Richard M. Nixon (left) and Joseph W. Martin, Jr., Speaker of the House of Representatives.

OLD MAN INJURED SAVING CHILDREN
Three 24 ft high wooden supports holding a lamp standard in position, crashed and trapped Aristic Lafitte, 70, of Grafton Way, St. Pancras outside Warren Street Underground Station, Bloomsbury, yesterday. He might have saved himself, but stopped to push two children with him to safety. Workmen helped to free him and he was detained in hospital.

PAPAL HONOUR FOR THREE CITY CHORISTERS

A VERY happy and inspiring scene was witnessed in the Redemptorist Church, Limerick, yesterday, when prior to the Solemn High Mass at 12 o'clock, three members of the choir were made by Very Rev. G. Reynolds, C.S.S.R., Rector, and the recipients were Messrs. John F. Spencer, Charles O'Connor and Christopher Higgins, who joined the choir in their early youth.

The Solemn High Mass, which was specially offered for the intentions of the trio, was sung by Redemptorist Fathers. The celebrant was Rev. Edward McLaughlin, deacon, Rev. P. O'Boyle, and the sub-deacon, Rev. F. Dunne. The master of ceremonies was Rev. P. O'Donnell, C.S.S.R.

The choir under the direction of Rev. John Torney, C.S.S.R., was in full choral dress, and on this special occasion occupied a place of honour in the sanctuary. They sang the Mass during which the soloists were Rev. Sean Conolly, C.S.S.R., and Master T. Brennan.

CONGRATULATED BY RECTOR. Addressing the congregation after the First Gospel, Very Rev. G. Reynolds, Rector, said that the ceremony was held before the Solemn High Mass was the presentation of special Jubilee Medals to three members of the choir. In the name of the Redemptorist Community he congratulated the three jubilarians on their 50 years membership of the choir. "This means more than appears at first sight," said Father Reynolds. "Great sacrifices had to be made during all these years. Visits to friends were upset, games and amusements had to be postponed or given up in order that the choir practices might be attended. For this loyalty and fidelity we thank them publicly to-day and decorate them with Jubilee Medals specially blessed by the Holy Father in Rome." He also congratulated the jubilarians who are also honouring the choir. This choir has an honoured place among choirs in the city. The integrity, the purity of tone and the excellent intonation have not been attained without great trouble. Church music well sung and well chosen has always been a mark of achievement. The perfection of the choir depends so much on the consistent drudgery of practice. Few of us realise the amount of hard work which goes into the production of a single Mass. That the organists and choir have not shirked their task the results can tell. The Sundays and feasts come round in the liturgical cycle and the choir is ready with its appropriate music.

PARENTS THANKED. Father Reynolds went on to thank the parents of the choir boys who co-operate and teach their boys to realise the honour of singing in the choir and seeing to it that they are faithful to their practices. "For it is certainly an honour," said Father Reynolds, "to be allowed to sing in the choir and to take part in the ceremonies of the Church. Music has been well called the handmaid of the liturgy. The organist by his sacred music and the choir by their voices contribute very much to the dignity and beauty of the Church service." Concluding, Father Reynolds said that the three jubilarians had been 50 years in active co-operation with the service of the Holy Church. The congregation, he added, was also under a debt of gratitude to them and should pray for them that day during the Holy Mass, which was offered for their intentions.

Mr. John F. Spencer, one of the jubilarians, and a brother of Rev. Joseph Spencer, C.S.S.R., Clapham, London, is well known in music circles and has produced and sung in circles as a member of local operas. He and Mr. Charles O'Connor were distinguished members of the old Limerick Operatic Society. The third jubilarian, Mr. Christopher Higgins, is a native of Belfast.

Motor Rests On Top Of Hedge

Although West Limerick received the full force of the severe storm which raged throughout the county on Thursday and Friday, no damage to property or injury to person was reported in the area. During the height of the storm on Friday morning the passengers of a small car travelling between Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale had a narrow escape at Berragh Station Bridge, when the vehicle left the road and mounted the hedge. The car came to rest on top of the hedge and the occupants, who escaped uninjured, had to climb out the upturned doorway. Branches were blown down at a number of points, but there was no interruption of traffic on telephone lines.

Goals Factors Vitrally Affecting Irish Primary Education

(By "GALTEEMORE")

RECENTLY a leader writer in one of the Dublin dailies, whose leaving untouched the cause, referred to the alleged backwardness of our national schools as compared with those of 50 years ago. It is not clear whether he had regard to the time and effort devoted to the revival of our national language, or its value in offsetting the supposed loss in other respects. But it may be of interest to examine briefly the reasons for what we will assume as the absence of attainable progress.

ALL LAW INVOLVES COMPULSION. Compulsory Irish is reasonable and right, as is the teaching of other subjects through the medium, whether Irish or English, best known to the children. In school programmes obligation is everywhere. All law, including the moral law, is compulsion. Compulsion even enforces attendance to learn obligatory subjects. One may presume to say, with the greatest respect, that the Decalogue itself is a great and salutary coercion act. But compulsion justified neither by law, nor reason, nor even expediency is simply compulsory nonsense. It is as futile as talking a mule into a sieve, as useless and irritating as, in sea-slang, "securing the anchor."

On educational as well as patriotic grounds compulsory Irish needs no defence. But trying to teach other subjects through its medium to children who have little knowledge of the language is repugnant to reason, and educationally undesirable. By setting the normal child an impossible task, programmes plant incipient hatred, kill interest, waste time and damp all possible enthusiasm. Teaching in Irish does not create interest, the desire to study, the ambition to overcome difficulties which lies at the root of all genuine learning and progress. In the words of the great dramatist:

"No profit goes where there's no pleasure taken; In brief, sir, study what you most affect."

Rousing enthusiasm, inspiring, encouraging, aiding, Pearse, who favoured bilingualism, would attain what he termed the hardening of the fibre—moral, physical, intellectual—on which he rightly laid such stress without resort to the methods of what he styled "the murder machine."

IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT COUNTS. Education concerns character, the personality, the varying development of children, rather than cramming and the storing of scraps and snippets for retention. Here it might be permissible to quote from that delightful French tale, "Sylvester Bonnard": "The whole art of teaching is the art of evoking the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards, and curiosity itself can be vivid and wholesome only in proportion to the interest it creates and happy. Those acquisitions crammed by force into the minds of children simply clog and stifle intelligence. In order that knowledge be properly digested it must have been swallowed with a good appetite." It is the spirit that counts. What a wealth of untapped interest in our Irish proverb and poetry, or in such books as "Ballads of Irish Chivalry," "Old Celtic Romances," "Lays of a Western Gael," local names, traditions and all that concern the child's environment, not merely as an end, but as a step to wider knowledge of Ireland and elsewhere for "little they know of Ireland who only Ireland know."

PROGRAMMES MATTERS FOR THE PEOPLE, METHODS FOR THE TEACHERS. In education, it is the spirit, the outlook, the interest, the "sinn" to achieve that count, never forgetting the personality of the teacher. Instead of Ireland expending too ambitious programmes, doses of grammatical niceties, petty peculiarities of dialect, the didactic tactics of a few higher-civil servants, competent as clerks, but lacking teaching experience, profoundly ignorant of educational principles, and perpetually imposing what they deemed superior methods on trained teachers who spent their own money on their own quarter decks. What should be taught was a matter for the people or their representatives; but how it should be taught was one for trained and experienced and disinterested teachers. It is a matter of the spirit, the interest, the "sinn" to achieve that count, never forgetting the personality of the teacher.

RELATIVE EXPENDITURE ON IRISH EDUCATION. In education, as in other spheres, if you want a good teacher, you must pay for it and as to vocations, more than the spiritual sense to the Gospel, in the last 25 years expenditure on Irish education has fallen as a percentage of all public expenditure has fallen by a third, while for primary education the decrease is nearly half per head of population. We now spend annually on education from all public sources 85/- per unit, the Six Counties, 145/-, and Great Britain, 185/-. Our alleged financial plight is certainly not due to education.