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# Education Finance And School Amenities

(By "SLIEVEARDAGH")

NO person having even a nodding acquaintance with the history of Irish education, or the part played by the I.N.T.O. in its efforts to improve the conditions in our schools or the educational lot of the Irish child, would venture the suggestion that the interest of the teachers in school buildings and their maintenance is of recent growth. In the campaign for improvement, Senator O'Connell has ever taken a prominent part, particularly since his appointment, in 1915, as General Secretary of the I.N.T.O. But even long before his advent to the profession, the environment from the aspects of both health and education was a matter of burning interest, as were the proper training of teachers, school books, scholarships, programmes, playing fields.

## HALF A CENTURY BACK.

To go no further back than half a century or so when in 1902-'03 the British Parliament voted what was called the General Aid Grant for education in England, Scotland and Ireland were awarded their equivalents of £1212,000 and £185,000, on the basis of population, which Mr. George Wyptham (Chief Secretary) stressed as "not fair, but the least unfair," to Ireland of the many cases at various times adopted for the allocation of such grants.

On the ground that "no more money could be usefully spent on Irish education," Mr. Wyndham misappropriated the Irish equivalent to smooth the financial wheels of his Irish Land Bill (1903). Despite their miserable salaries and pensions, which seven years later Lloyd George, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, described as "a disgrace and a scandal to the Empire," the I.N.T.O. claimed that this money should be expended on the school buildings, which were then, as in many cases still, a menace to public health.

## FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

Theirs, for the common good, was a self-denying ordinance. By this grant meeting the losses on the floating of land stock issued at a discount, the landlords being paid in cash, the 12 per cent. bonus, and the extension of the period of payment to 68½ years, the agreements involved payments under all heads, of 50 per cent. more to the landlords.

But while the English and Scottish General Aid Grants, for education went on increasing year by year, the Irish equivalent Grant was by the Ireland Development Grant Act of 1903-'04, stereotyped at £185,000—a case of arrested development and even that was withheld from education. The Scottish equivalent went up in 1918-'19 and succeeding years, from £212,000 in 1903, to £970,000, and over the whole period till 1921-'22 averaged £506,000.

## WHAT GRANT SHOULD HAVE BEEN.

If, however, we take the total expenditure from Imperial Grants in education, during the 19½ years ended 1921-'22 (period of Treaty), and on the basis "not fair, but least unfair," admittedly, to Ireland that of population, our aggregate grants for education should have been on the Scottish scale approximately 54 millions sterling. Instead of the 44 millions

population averaged 92½ per cent. of that of Scotland. The results will be practically the same, if equated year by year. Of the ten millions underpayment, just 3 millions would be attributed to Six-County education. Detailed statements on this matter were placed before our responsible Ministers and officials of the Finance and Education Departments in both memoranda and interviews in 1922, and a guarantee was given they should be raised in the negotiations under Article V of the Treaty.

## FIGURES FOR 19½ YEARS.

Least there should be a doubt or question about it, I give in pence per head of population our Imperial grant for Irish education over the 19½ years, the figure for Scotland in brackets: 71 (75), 73 (85), 76 (95), 76 (98), 76 (105), 77 (107), 77 (108), 89 (112), 98 (118), 100 (122), 111 (130), 111 (130), 115 (134), 117 (135), 127 (180), 135 (134), 117 (135), 127 (132), 127 (131), 140 (157), 195 (239), 280 (350), and 293 (384).

Full details were also placed before the six Ministers of the Fianna Fail Party who negotiated the financial settlement with Mr. Chamberlain in 1938. Over all the period the I.N.T.O. exposed the continuous and growing deficit in the Irish Education Vote including neglect of buildings, leading as intended to accumulated arrears of construction, at the Treaty. The writer can speak at first-hand as during various interviews with Lloyd George, Birrell, Duke, Herbert Samuel, Baldwin, Henry and Bradbury, he happened to be present, and in an interview with the Chancellor in July, 1914, the matter came up in an acute form in connection with a new grant for which we sought an equivalent.

To secure any grant for the heating and cleaning of schools meant a long and formidable fight; as Treasury representatives said it should come from local rates.

## PRESENT GRANTS HOPELESSLY INADEQUATE

The grants are hopelessly inadequate for the maintenance and also for the provision of books for national schools, only 3/- per pupil annually as against nearly £14 on the average for full-time vocational students. Who can justify this? Apart from educational aspects, primarily the children and teachers suffer, but ultimately the nation in its health and health services.

Hitherto, only the school managers and teachers have shown any real interest in this vital matter. As a ratio of total public expenditure less and less has been spent on education year by year till it has sunk to about two-thirds of what it was in the thirties. With much published ceremonies, a number of urban palatial schools are opened from time to time.

## THE RURAL SCHOOL.

But with all the professed desire to keep people on the land, what of the rural school, which for the majority must be primary, secondary and university? Why, despite the strenuous and persistent efforts of an active clergyman, you will find children still huddled in an old Co. Dublin school, without water or proper sanitary accommodation, and covered with sheet

THOUGHT IT NO DEATH  
HARM: THE LAW LIMERICK  
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OTHERWISE

**B**RENDAN O'DONNELL, farmer, of Brooklawn, Killee, gave Patrick Conside, of Parnly, Doonbeg, the use of his tractor and trailer to bring a load of seaweed to Kiltrush for sale. When charged in connection with this at Kiltrush Court, Mr. M. J. McMahon, solicitor, defending, told Justice Gordon Hurley that defendant thought what he did was no harm.

## THE LICENCE DUTY.

The licence duty paid on the tractor was only £8, whereas for the conveyance of seaweed for sale it should be £31 10s. As a result of this transaction O'Donnell was summoned for permitting the vehicles to be used and not being covered by insurance, which covered owner driving only. Conside was summoned for driving without a licence.

The Justice pointed out that if O'Donnell had used the tractor and trailer himself for conveyance of the seaweed his insurance policy would be effective.

Supt. J. Dawson, prosecuting, agreed that it would be.

## TO PAY HIGHER RATE.

Mr. McMahon said that since the case Mr. O'Donnell had taken steps to pay the higher rate of duty and was also having his insurance policy amended.

The Justice imposed fines totaling £3.

**Shannon Fisheries:  
New Plan For  
Ardnacrusha**

The E.S.B. annual report for 1954-'55 has just been issued. Under the heading of "Fisheries," it contains the following:

"On the Shannon Fisheries the sales of salmon, eels and oysters, the leasing of angling rights and miscellaneous income amounted to £26,268 as compared with £24,086 the preceding year. There was a deficit of £5,490, partly due to writing off non-recurring expenditure of £3,255 on stake weirs and oyster planting.

"A programme aiming at the rehabilitation and development of the salmon fisheries in the whole Shannon system has been initiated. Investigations are in progress to ascertain, more closely than heretofore, the potentialities of all rivers involved with a view, in particular, to the rehabilitation of tributaries which had at one time been good salmon rivers. Plans are in preparation for the provision of a large modern salmon hatchery, with a capacity of 2 to 3 million eggs. To improve the angling on the middle and upper reaches of the Shannon, new stretches of spawning ground and rearing waters will be stocked. It has been decided to erect a modern fish pass at Ardnacrusha to enable fish to ascend the river through the head race.

"The recorded run of salmon through the Thomond Weir was 13,629, nearly 4,000 less than last year, but the quantity of eels taken was more than doubled.

"On the River Eire the recorded run of salmon through the fish counter at Cathaloe's Falls was 2,593. Some experimental fishing was carried out to assess the potentialities of the fisheries following the hydro-electric development of the river."

IT is with the that we ch of one of Coun known personal Thomas Grene Ballyneety. The red at his re morning in his been in falling months past.

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