

courses for higher education, I find it very hard to believe that students now need a degree to nurse. I doubt very much that the nursing profession could improve any more by going through university. It is a known fact that nurses brought through the old system - i.e. being taught on the wards from the start - are far more confident and knowledgeable than some doctors.

I would like to know why the system is now designed to make it more difficult to enter this great profession at a time when our hospitals are crying out for nurses. - Yours, etc.,

JOE HARVEY,
Glenageary Woods,
Co Dublin.

MEMORIAL TO GARDA McCABE

Sir, - I was very pleased to read in the papers of the intention to have a memorial unveiled in Adare, Co Limerick to the memory of the late Det Garda Gerry McCabe, who was so brutally slain.

I feel it is high time that all persons, both State and civilian, who have been killed by terrorists in this country since 1922 should be duly honoured. For too long have the perpetrators of evil acts been lauded and even glorified while the upholders of decency and honour have been defamed and demeaned. - Is mise,

CHRISTY CALLANAN,
Kilcass,
Clonmel,
Co Tipperary.

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the least economic railway routes, whose magnificent engineering was consigned to the scrapheap. And since then there has been the neglect of the remaining rail system, leading to its uniquely limited service.

A second airport south of Dublin was turned down in favour of the increasing horror of Collins-town.

To deal with the Dublin gridlock, which had been widely foreseen at the beginning of European largesse, a proper underground system was turned down in favour of a hybrid scheme which many think will actually make matters worse.

Having failed with the M50 (which itself may soon be inadequate), the policy is to drive motorways in all directions through virgin country, causing anguish, for want of a stronger word, along each route. It is supposed that improving existing roads, with

good. But is it? Where was the debate? This proposed ruthless spoliation has happened before - when the railways were built.

Why do it twice? Cannot the railways, which at least connect the major towns and cities in the most direct fashion, be the routes for more trains and also for motorways (some of whose traffic might be induced to roll on and off)? Of course that would involve great expense. But, where it is a possibility, has there been any comparative costing?

A major route-system taking rail, road, pylons, telecommunication, sewerage and gas mains, would be an innovative environmental example and might also perhaps save our most precious and dwindling asset - very beautiful land. - Yours, etc.,

DAVID GIBBS,
Bellmount,
Cullahill,
Co Laois.

LEARNING IRISH

Sir, - M.A. Walker's letter (August 20th) about Mr Higgins's children and their linguistic preference promotes the view that somehow children know something about what should be on the school syllabus.

Is he suggesting that we should have Ken and Barbie and *Big Brother* on it? Several points need to be made.

1. For most people, the learning of a continental language is a waste of time from the practical point of view. I speak reasonably good French and have never made a cent from it, nor will I; but I enjoy speaking it when I can.

2. I also speak Irish very well and get even more pleasure out of being able to do so, as does everybody who can who has not been directly or indirectly inoculated with anti-Irish language prejudice. Such prejudice was inculcated into the Irish by several centuries of language oppression and cultural vandalism.

3. There are only a few places in the world where the populations are ashamed of their language. In all such places (Ireland, Brittany, Scotland, Corsica) there has been a systematic suppression of the language.

4. Language prejudice is just like racism. It is not intrinsic. A very nice lady in my place of work who is virulently anti-Irish language told me that her children hated it. She was taken aback when I told her that they undoubtedly learnt this attitude from her. She had to admit that they probably did.

It is, of course, possible to learn hatred of a subject from frightful teaching.

5. I did not like Latin in school, but am now so glad I learnt it. - Is mise,

GEAROID Ó LAOI,
Merlyn Lawn,
Bishopstown,
Cork.

DEATHS ON THE ROADS

Sir, - In many recent letters the causes of carnage on the roads have been highlighted, and several remedies recommended. Who is going to produce the solution, and when? I travelled from Limerick to Dublin recently on a Sunday afternoon. I was one of a small minority keeping the speed limit. By now, most drivers know where the hidden cameras are located,

were completed in Ireland. In fact, towards the end of his life he simply couldn't write in England at all and hastened to return to Kenmare to continue his work.

I feel passionate about Moeran's piano music in particular. Nowadays it is rarely heard - so much so that I have recorded a CD for release this autumn. It has taken the best part of seven years to bring this project to fruition. All credit to the Arts Council and the Black Box recording company for believing in the idea and making it possible.

Just a few weeks ago I played Moeran's music at King House in Boyle, Co Roscommon, probably the very location where Moeran wrote his first published piano works between 1917-19. They include "The Lake Island" - surely a representation of the beautiful, nearby Lough Key - and "At a Horse Fair" - possibly at Boyle or one of the surrounding towns.

Of course some of Moeran's music depicts his childhood home in Norfolk, but a significant proportion was directly inspired by Ireland, its people and its countryside. He was clearly an able composer; his larger works feature fine orchestration while his small-scale pieces, including the piano works, are original, beautifully crafted and evocative.

Why, then, is his music so neglected in Ireland? God knows we have few enough composers we can lay any claim to, particularly one of this calibre.

All the same, I feel encouraged by a renewed interest in Moeran, still a composer waiting to be discovered by the musical world at large. - Yours, etc.,

UNA HUNT,
(Pianist),
Ramsey,
Isle of Man.

and headlights flash warnings to other drivers when there is a police car on duty.

Surely the cost of a much larger team of motorcycle "cops" can be justified. Secondary roads and highways could then be more easily patrolled. - Yours, etc.,

MAEVE GANNON,
Mount Merrion,
Co Dublin.

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