

BALLYVOURNEY FEIS

(FROM OUR REPORTER.)

Macroon, Sunday.

The annual Feis of the Ballyvourney Branch of the Gaelic League was held to-day in the Gaelic League Hall, Ballyvourney. Although the weather was showery in the early part of the day, there was a very large attendance, which included many visitors from a distance. Gaelic Leaguers attended from Ballyvourney, Clondrohid, Kilnamartyre, Kealkil, Ballingearry, Glenileak, Macroon, Rathmore, Cork, Maynooth College, Aghabullogue, Killarney, Kilmurry, Bristol, Boston (U.S.A.), Tipperary, Callan, Co. Kilkenny, New Zealand, Kilmichael, and Dublin Keating Branch. There was only one literary competition, that for original poetry, for which two compositions had been received—one from Con Desmond, Ballyvourney, and the other from Andrew Kelleher, Maynooth College. The language movement was the theme of both songs. The competition was exceedingly keen in most of the other competitions.

The President (Dr. Lynch) opened the proceedings with a short address in Irish, in which he urged the people to speak the language habitually and to encourage the children to speak it. To make Gaelic the language of Ireland was the object of the movement in which they were engaged, and it rested chiefly with the people who now spoke the language whether the movement would be a success. Unless they had a separate language of their own they could not boast of a distinct nationality, as the people of France, Germany, and similar countries could. Those who were working for the revival of the Gaelic language were united by a strong bond of fellowship which made the work pleasant and interesting (applause).

The competitions were then proceeded with, and resulted as follows:—

Flute—Michael Cronin, 1st; John Crowley and Patrick Hallissey tied for 2nd. Five competed.

Four-hand Reel—Ballyvourney Branch was the only entry.

Singing (Femalo)—Margaret O'Donoghue, 1st; Mary Quill, 2nd.

Conversation (Youths under 10)—John O'Leary, Ballyvourney, 1st; Michael Murphy, Ballyvourney, 2nd.

Conversation, Reading, and Recitation—E. Twomey and Julie M'Sweeney tied for first.

Singing (Males)—J. Crowley and P. M'Sweeney tied for first.

Recitation—C. Desmond, 1st; John O'Neill, 2nd.

Oratory—C. Healy, Ballingearry, was the only competitor.

Story-telling—Con Desmond, 1st; T. Dineen, 2nd. C. Lucey recommended for a special prize.

At the conclusion of the competitions Dr. Lynch introduced Rev. Father Golden, a native of the district.

Rev. Father Golden, who was received with applause, said he had heard in New Zealand that Ballyvourney was the capital of Ireland, and to-day had been ample proof that this was the fact, and he took care to be in Dublin for the Oireachtas week, and there, too, he had proof that Ballyvourney was the capital of Ireland. More, he found people from that parish and neighbourhood speaking Irish most fluently in the Rotunda and about the city. He saw that in Dublin that parish had gained an illustrious name (applause); and worthily so, too. He also knew this from knowledge of people in America; where he found men and women from Ballyvourney speaking Irish most fluently and elegantly. Abroad generally Ballyvourney is looked up to for guidance, and example, and instruction. In America he found Irish people who were taking a very deep interest in this movement. He found there people from Bandon and other parts of County Cork, and they were not only learning the language themselves, but they were taking care that their children, and the children, generally should know it (applause). Mr. Gerald Deasy, of Bandon, told him that very soon they would have it taught in the schools there. He attended a Cuirm Ceoil in New York, at which every song sung was in the language of the Gael, and all the music Irish on Irish instruments. He asked the audience to cultivate Irish music and Irish dancing, and leave aside the dances of the foreigner. Those dances were not worth having. They spoiled the people, and customs and morals. He had said before that day that the English language was the language of heresy in Ireland. In the Irish language they would not find one word of heresy. They would find nothing in it to lead them astray from their faith or love of country. He never knew an Irish man, or woman who said their prayers in the Irish language, and continued to do so, to lose the faith or to lose the love of Ireland. The Irish language was a great gift from God. It was one of the finest languages that God ever gave to mankind, and was it not a shame for people to throw that language away and take up the language of the stranger, the language of heresy and corruption? That movement had attracted round it some of the best talent in Ireland. Some of the best men and women in the country were doing what they could to give the movement life, vigour, and vitality (applause). He had taken a great interest in the movement for many years, because he believed it would save our nationality. This would restore the industries of the country. They would keep the people in the country, and would they give up the country to the Scotchmen, Englishmen, and Jews. If the Irish people had patience, if they kept sober, they would have their own country back again and their affairs managed by an Irish Parliament in College Green (applause).

A Cuirm Ceoil was held in the hall in the evening.