

## BY JOHN T COLLINS

reached the capital sooner than I expected. As I was being directed to Dr. Lynch's house, the Doctor himself bore down on us and carried me off.

"The evening passed with a dance in the New Hall, and a ceilidhe in which Tadhg O Cruadhlaoidh was the sole artist, and good he was.

"Ballyvourney is almost on all fours with the Galway Claddagh. The grown-up people habitually speak Irish, while the children, though understanding Irish, speak English among themselves. But there is a sturdy spirit abroad, and the parents are once more speaking Irish to the children.

"Dr. Lynch has rekindled and nurtured the literary interest of the people. The Doctor has built this hall, which would do honour to a town. He gathers the young folk in here for dance, song and study. He has brought the children and younger people up to Dublin to compete at the Oireachtas.

"The rise of Ballyvourney is the most striking example in the language movement of the influence of a personality on the community.

"From Ballyvourney, a switchback road threads through the hills to Ballingearry. (So Patrick Pearse cycled along the 'Mouth of the Glen' road.)

### *Ballingearry schools*

"As I neared the village the children going to school greeted me lustily in Irish. The Ballingearry schools, presided over by Mr. and Mrs. O Scannail, are the premier schools in Ireland so far as the teaching of Irish is concerned.

"I spent a pleasant hour in Ballingearry school. The children sang charmingly in Irish, and the infants recited the prayers in a way which would do credit to their grandmothers. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of a very juvenile Ni Scannail in the person of a little girl of fourteen months who lisps Irish delightfully. (Her brother is now (1963) the worthy President of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation.)

From Ballingearry, I went on to Gougane Bara, through what is probably the most Irish speaking district in Co. Cork. The people salute the wayfarer in Irish as a matter of course, and the children shout Irish at him from the road side.

"In due time I reached Gleann Gairbh Gaedhealach. The Glen certainly is, but in the village, which consists entirely of hotels the tourist blight is heavy.

"Returning from Glengarriffe Pdraig O'Shea shortened the road with me as far as Ballylickey bridge, from where on I rode alone to Bantry.

### *Infested by tourists*

"Bantry is infested by tourists, who seem addicted to wearing tennis costumes in all classes of weather, and to carrying tennis bats instead of walking sticks.

"In Youghal I only stayed long enough to observe that the National Anthem there is 'Dolly Gray.'

"The most heartening place I visited was Fermoy, where Irish has long since ceased to be spoken.

"Like many other English-speaking towns, it is throwing itself into the language movement with an energy one looks for in vain in Irish speaking districts.

"Fermoy has a strong Irish citadel in St. Colman's College. The young priests there — the whole professional staff from the president down seem to be composed of young men—are enthusiastic to a man.

"Irish is taught—cricket has been banned—the bats and balls are for sale—and the caman now rules the playground.

"The boys wear jerseys with the legend 'Ar gColaiste Fein.' A piper is to be introduced to teach the boys Irish music and to march at the head of the hurling team.

"St. Colman's undoubtedly deserves to rank with Newbridge as a real Irish college."