

## Ireland Finds It Pays to Be Free

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IT NOW is nearly fifteen years since Ireland achieved freedom. This statement must be modified, for that freedom applies only to twenty-six of the thirty-two counties of Ireland which compose the Irish Free State. The other six are included in what is known as Northern Ireland, sometimes erroneously called Ulster, for it is only part of the area of historic Ulster.

• This area is governed by a parliament subordinate to the British parliament and is proud of its connection with the former United Kingdom. Its people differ in religion but not to any extent in race from the people of the Free State and are more largely commercial and industrial than the mainly agricultural population of the south.

• In the Free State, however, the people are as free from foreign interference as is possible apart from absolute independence. They have all the essentials of self-government. Only a few of the symbols of imperial domination remain, and they are gradually becoming mere shadows. To the Irish, however, symbols are important, and this explains the continuance of the republican aspiration and the fact, generally accepted, that the Irish people never really will be content until the last trace of British rule is eliminated.

• It is a fact that no Englishman has a word to say about the government of the twenty-six counties of the Free State. This must be modified in one particular. Under the treaty between the Irish revolutionaries and the British, by which the Free State was constituted, the British reserved control of certain naval bases.

• Small "care and maintenance parties" composed of British naval ratings retain control of the dockyard at Berehaven and of the harbor defenses at Cobh and in Lough Swilly. The British insisted that they could not afford, in the event of another European war, to allow these bases to fall into the hands of the enemy, and that they must, therefore, be assured the defenses were kept in proper order. The Irish acquiesced in this.

• There was an understanding that if in the future the Free State decided to have a navy this provision might be altered, but the Irish navy to date consists of one fishery protection boat, and the question of the naval bases never has caused any real friction. With this exception there is virtually no limit to Irish freedom.

• It is well, therefore, after a  
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