

the winter of the Irish Famine in 1846-47 the population of Ireland has halved while those of most other European countries has doubled. In 1846 Ireland had 8,000,000, of whom nearly 1,000,000 starved to death and 3,000,000 emigrated.

All Kinds of People: This is a land of a million hues of green. Green are the fences, the letter boxes, the buses, trash cans, lampposts, the front of the local pub. This, too, is the land of the leprechaun, the shamrock and St. Patrick. It's a land whose people, for all their bellicose reputations, are pious and gentle, grave and gay, wise and silly, graceful and rude. The crime and suicide rate of Ireland is the lowest in Europe. Here men slightly outnumber women, but a sixth of the population never marries, which is a far higher proportion than elsewhere in the world. Yet when they do marry, the Irish produce more babies per couple than anybody.

The Irish Problems and Bernard Shaw: About one half of the Irish continue to live on the farms which occupy 68 per cent of Eire's acreage. The Irish are not town builders. It is a historical fact that the Irish of the old Gaelic tradition never built a town and that all their towns were founded by Viking invaders. But be it in town or in the country, the Irish are wonderful conversationalists, brilliant wits and charming companions. They know the art of embellishing a fact with an anecdote. An Irishman can be at one instant glacially intellectual and at next corny and jovial. His perpetual problems are Ireland's emigration, partition, history, politics and poverty. George Bernard Shaw remarked shortly before his death: "There is nothing wrong with Ireland except that it is Irish." However, remembering that he was Irish but lived in England he quickly added: "There is also nothing wrong with England, except that it is not Irish."

Catholics Rebuilds the Abbey: Ireland's Catholicism, hardened through centuries of national resistance, is now more than a religion. It is the central factor of Irish life. It has been influencing a good deal of some of the most exalted prose in the English language written by the Irish.

Only the Irish could have the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, which was unfortunately burned out in July, 1951. And only the Irish Government could have thought nothing of allocating \$700,000 for its reconstruction. The new Abbey will, no doubt, be more beautiful than the old one was, and then all will be fine again in Dublin. But, in the meantime, on both sides of the Atlantic, which washes the shores of the Emerald Isle, all should celebrate the anniversary of the inauguration of Eire, that incomparable land of the proud and humble Irish.

A GAME OF CARDS

"Courtship," said the knowing young Galwayman, "is nothing but a game of cards. A girl has a heart. A man takes it with a diamond, and then her hand is his."

The Irish Digest

HOW IT'S DONE

You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.