

DUBLIN

I've always been fascinated by Ireland (also known as the Emerald Isle) and especially by the striking differences between North and South.

Although Ireland's struggle for independence is one of the most cherished episodes in the nation's history not all the counties wanted it. This is particularly true of Ulster, a region with a large number of people of Scottish origin. They prefer to remain part of Britain and as a result an unusual compromise was worked out.

Six of Ulster's nine counties form a principality known as Northern Ireland. The rest is called Eire with Dublin as its capital. The name Dublin derives from Gaelic: in this language "*dhub*" "*lin*" means "black pool".

Last year, thanks to my winning a scholarship, I was sent by my school on a study holiday.

Naturally I chose Ireland so that I could get a chance to see with my own eyes if everything I had read was true. I was given the choice of a college in Dublin which I greatly accepted.

During my stay in that town I had the occasion to see two of the most important monuments like Trinity College, St Patrick's Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral, and I think they're really among the finest ones I've ever seen.

If I hadn't managed to gain my scholarship maybe I wouldn't have had the opportunity to spend two weeks of my life visiting amusing places such as Temple Bar (a very popular area in town which

impressed me much). One thing which struck me most is the green places which can be found in the streets of the town. This is a very rare occurrence in Italy, where towns tend to be built up with a lot of squares instead of parks.

Apart from its nice and interesting places, Dublin gave me the opportunity to improve my English. In fact my scholarship also included an English course at CES located in the town-centre, near Liffey River.

I've been told by my teacher that Dublin gave birth to three Nobel's Prize winners: S. Beckett, G.B. Shaw and Yeats.

However, at school we have studied two important Irish writers: James Joyce and Oscar Wilde. Regarding Joyce I had the occasion to see his statue located near O'Connell Street.

I like Joyce's clear descriptions of the town, even if he's rather pessimistic about it. One of Joyce's phrases which impressed me much is the one where he said that if Dublin were demolished it could be possible to rebuild it from the pages of his novels.

My opinion is that Ireland is one of the friendliest and most relaxing places I've ever been. Maybe because of its population which is the youngest one in Europe. In fact half of the population of Ireland is under 25 years of age..



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