財団 全国商業高等学校協会主催

第 2 回パソコン入力スピード認定試験 練習問題 (20.2.9) 【英語部門】

I recently had the opportunity to visit Ireland. It's a two-hour train ride from Ireland's capital of Dublin to Belfast, Northern Ireland's main city. If you gaze out of the window at the rural scenery, such as sheep grazing on grass, the journey is over before you know it.

I purchased an excursion ticket for the city's tourist bus, and got off in western Belfast. This is a tension-filled district where armed conflicts between the pro-British Protestants and the pro-Irish Catholics were once a part of everyday life. However, this conflict has now become "history."

Now that a Northern Ireland parliament has been established and there is peace, this region where armored British military vehicles once patrolled has now become just another tourist spot.

The male guide on the bus explained to us that terrorist attacks once occurred along the roadside here. A special walking tour is also available. The guide stated, "The guides are former fighters from the armed factions." Apparently, they do this as part of a project to reintegrate into society. This surprised me.

Having to deal with the inconvenience of two different currencies used on one island was really aggravating. Since the euro hasn't been adopted in the United Kingdom, the pound is the only currency in the north, so I reluctantly exchanged a small amount of yen. Though this is unavoidable, it was still pretty annoying as I had become used to paying for things using euros.

I had very little money remaining in my pocket. Taking my return to Dublin into consideration, I changed money twice, from yen to pounds then euros—a two stage process that hit my wallet hard. I'm sure a feeling of truly living on the same island will finally emerge if the United Kingdom ever adopts the euro.