

CAPT. COLTHURST OR PATRICK HIGGINS?

IRISH OPINION

THE VOICE OF LABOUR

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL
AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY.

NEW SERIES. Vol. I, No. 13.

FEBRUARY 23, 1918.

ONE PENNY

Was Connolly
a Bolshevik?

Evasive Henderson.
Pastoral Pacifism.

If the Bolsheviks Came to Ireland.

By THOMAS JOHNSON.

The great gathering of Dublin citizens at the Mansion House to acclaim the social revolution in Russia, was a sign to all parties in Ireland that the people in demanding independence are not going to be satisfied with a mere political change, no matter how drastic. What they need, and are quickly coming to recognise, is a change of social and economic relations. It is not only to British authority that this is a warning; it is a call to the conservative forces of all political parties to rally to the defence of the existing social order. All those people whose prosperity is dependent upon the institutions of rent, interest or profits, or who can be persuaded that the national well being can be built only upon a basis of capitalism—"the most foreign thing in Ireland"—will be told that their own and their country's future is endangered if any countenance is given to the doctrine that Labour is king.

Labour also must take warning. We acclaim the Russian revolution, and our hearts respond to the call of the Russian people to join with the workers throughout war stricken Europe in dethroning Imperialism and Capitalism in our respective countries. But, as we asked at the meeting in the Mansion House, are we **prepared** to take action if opportunity offers? Is Labour organised sufficiently? Are our trade unions and our trades councils, our co-operative societies and our Labour parties properly supported and in close enough relations to become the centres of economic life in a new society? Are our working class leaders or spokesmen devoting time and effort in reading and study and thought to fit themselves for the duties that may be forced upon them?

The framework of the new Russia consisted of 50,000 co-operative groups in town and country, organised within the past six or seven years. The active men and women who made the revolution had devoted years to the work of propaganda, to study, mental discipline, and self-sacrificing service of the people. While Ireland has had but one Connolly, Russia has produced hundreds; men and women of great intellectual power, devoting their lives entirely to the work of organisation, education and agitation, and receiving in return no reward but persecution, imprisonment, poverty, and the love of the people.

The Soviets—the councils of workmen, of peasants and of soldiers—who are now in power in Russia, have their Irish equivalents in the trades councils, the agricultural co-operative societies, and—dare we say it?—the local groups of the Irish Republican army. An Irish counterpart of the Russian revolution would mean that these three sections, co-operating, would take control of the industrial, agricultural and social activities of the nation. Power would no longer be in the hands of the wealthy nor authority be wielded by the nominees of an Imperial Majesty. Industry would be directed towards supplying the wants of the Irish people and agriculture to providing food for those engaged in industry. Food and houses, clothing and education, these would be provided for all the people by the labour and service of all the people before any luxuries or superfluities were allowed to any. The private profit of the private proprietor would not then determine what class of goods should be produced, whether cattle should be raised or corn grown, the needs of the people would decide.

Probably, as in Russia, the first act found to be necessary would be, following the example of the capitalistic governments at the outbreak of war, to declare a moratorium ("I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word!"), suspending temporarily the repayment of debts and making illegal all interest! By this act alone the income of the workers would be increased about 25 per cent.

The land of the country would be made free of access to those who were willing to cultivate it to the best communal advantage. The Dublin housing problem would be immediately tackled, and might be made less pressing by a distribution of the congested population from the tenements over the partially occupied mansions of the suburbs.

These are a few of the things that would happen if the Bolsheviks came to Ireland. It is right that our friends who join with us in acclaiming the Bolshevik revolution should understand its implications. It means that as society is based upon labour, Labour shall rule. And that means a complete overturning from the present state wherein, though society is based upon labour, capital and property rule.

All this might have been brought into being by an orderly development, by a steady rise in the influence of the workers in democratic organisations acting through constitutional channels. But three or four years of scientific barbarism have speeded up the evolutionary process, and the workers of Europe are making a leap forward to secure the dominant position and take the direction of mundane affairs into their hands: Many things will be broken in the effort, carefully considered plans will be upset and cherished idols shattered, but Labour will risk all this, being determined no longer to be a tool in the hands of an international gang of capitalists, whose quarrels are "settled" by enticing or driving their slaves to mutual slaughter.

We are told that the triumph of the workers' revolution will mean chaos. Chaos is already here, brought into being by capitalism. What can be worse than another year of war? Russia suffered twenty million casualties, five millions being

killed. How much chaos will equal that? Dublin suffers chaos daily, as witness the lives of one-third of her people. The workers of Russia cry to the workers of Germany and England, Austria and France, Belgium and Ireland, to come to their aid, to save the revolution. They appeal to their comrades in all belligerent countries to stop the holocaust, to look at home for the enemy, to save the workers' Republics of Russia by establishing workers' republics throughout Europe.

Germany and Austria are showing signs of response, Scotland and England are fretful and feverish, France is still in bondage, Belgium stricken too low to rise, and Ireland?—she tried her strength and was forced backward but now recuperates. Be assured that when their brethren of Europe, their working class comrades of Britain call for assistance in the great struggle for the overthrow of Kaiserism, Imperialism and Capitalism, the common people of Ireland will not be backward.

PAPER REVOLUTIONISTS.

In your last issue an article on "The Revolutionists," written by E. Guff, purports to show that Sinn Fein, i.e., the movement to secure Ireland's economic and political freedom, is somehow inimical to the claims of Irish Labour. The author is entitled to his opinion, though it is not mine. I will only state that the more I read "Irish Opinion," the more uncertain do I become as to the political policy of Irish Labour.

As to the writer's attack on the Catholic Church—which he undertakes to vindicate against "the Catholic Hierarchy and priesthood"—I will only record my individual conviction that this kind of thing is needlessly offensive to Irish Catholics and is not calculated to help the cause of Irish Labour. I respect fair discussion, sincere difficulties, plain speaking. But what exactly is the object of cocksure ignorance and contemptuous banter?

However, I am asking the courtesy of your space, not to write a reply to this and some similar articles, but to point out the error of one of Mr. E. Guff's references. "We have," he says "a Catholic Social League in Cork—save the mark! Its pamphlets are published by Purcell & Co." I presume "save the mark!" is meant as an interjection sufficiently contemptuous to dispense with an argument or a definite charge. Your readers might hardly infer from this reference that the Catholic Social League, though still working under great difficulties, has been the instrument of securing cheap milk for hundreds of poor in Cork and has persuaded the guardians to make a very substantial increase in the allowances for outdoor relief. **It has published no pamphlets whatsoever.** The three pamphlets to which the writer alludes are the private venture of the editors. Curiously enough this is not the first time that allusion was made in the pages of "Irish Opinion" to these pamphlets. Had they been on Chaucer or on the Moon, they would evidently be quite blameless. But because they were published, at private expense, in order to show up the social conditions of Cork and to help Irish workers, they are evidently a fair target

for the witty contributors to "The Voice of Labour." I suppose the argument is that the editors or writers should have organised Messrs. Purcell's girl-workers. An individual, a mere middle-class person, was hardly likely to succeed where Cork Labour failed—until the recent advent of Messrs. Shannon and Houston. And what would the Typographers and the Transport Workers have said if a mere outsider meddled with Trade Union work? The promoters of these pamphlets worked gratuitously to help the workers of Cork to educate and to better themselves. Did they ever get the smallest thanks or recognition? Oh, no! They sold in Cork (under cost price) 1,500 copies of "Poverty in Cork." What did the Cork workers say? Thanks for helping to expose the sweating and the slums? Oh no! They said it was dreadful that the girls in the printing works were not in any Trade Union—which these same editors and promoters had been shouting for two years, and for which they brought Miss Maud Eden from Dublin to lecture on "The Organisation of Women Workers." Pretty straight advice that Trade Unionists should themselves do their own work and not expect it to be done for them by teachers or charitable societies.

And now comes Mr. E. Guff with the final guffaw. After stating that the girls who helped to print these pamphlets were underpaid, he asks, triumphantly: "Does Father Gaynor still feel surprised that extreme Socialism is gaining ground in Ireland?" Let me suggest very respectfully to such Socialist fire-eaters to stop all this vague rhetoric, to cease throwing mud at friendly individuals and institutions, who are sincerely and disinterestedly democratic, and to imitate those fine organisers, Messrs. Shannon and Houston, who have worked so generously and successfully for our sweated sisters.

Does Mr. E. Guff still feel surprised that in some Irish people the idea is gaining ground that no professional man can try to serve the cause of Labour without getting abused and kicked for his pains?

A. J. R.

THE REVIVAL OF FEUDALISM IN IRELAND.

To the Editor, "Irish Opinion."

Sir,—Some of the evicted tenants belonging to the Ashtown estate, applied recently to the Congested Districts Board for small holdings in the Woodlawn district, and the answer was a printed form over the name of J. R. O'Brien, and the following two clauses may be of interest to all sorts and conditions of Irishmen:—

(5) "The Board, when dealing with applications for untenanted land will continue to consider most favourably any applications from **eligible** persons who have or had sons serving in the Army or Navy, or **who have themselves so served.**"

(6) "Any applications received from a person who is **not eligible**, or who is not a member of the family of an eligible person cannot be entertained."

The money advanced to buy out the savage landlords under the Irish Land Purchase Acts have no such clauses in them, and the officials of the C.D. Board should at least state when and by whom the above clauses were inserted? In view of the fact that the workers in all countries, from Russia to Galway, are demanding the land of "their fathers," and overturning thrones, grand dukes and landlords, when they try to obstruct the will of the people, it appears the height of folly for a gang of "permanent officials" to try and re-establish feudalism, and ex-military protectors, to bolster up the remains of a class who are responsible for many an empty larder and pauper's grave in Ireland and America.

The birds of the air, the fish that come into our rivers from the shores of Newfoundland, the minerals in the bowels of the earth, were all claimed as private property by the landlord class. It is time the people took a hand in the game. Time is flying and famine knocks at the door.—Yours, etc.,

"RONALD."

THE
IRISH NATIONAL ASSURANCE SOCIETY,
Head Office: 2 St. Andrew St., Dublin.

A purely Irish and First-Class Assurance Society. Invites applications for appointments from energetic Irishmen able to influence business. Prospectus and Agency terms on application.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

AMERICAN LABOUR PROTESTS.

A few weeks ago the press was filling our ears with reports of the wonderful energy and enterprise of the United States Government in dealing with the problem of coal shortage. As we mentioned at the time, ships were lying idle in American ports waiting for coal; industries were slowing down for want of fuel, just when speeding up was required; and great hardships were being suffered by the people, who were without means of heating their homes in the middle of a phenomenally cold winter. Then came the stories to illustrate the resourcefulness of the government in the face of this serious crisis. A five day stoppage of all industries, except a few absolutely essential trades, was ordered, and Monday was decreed a weekly holiday until further notice, while drastic reductions and economies were prescribed in all cases where the consumption of coal was involved. The delight of our kept press knew no bounds at this characteristic exhibition of what America could do. What it curiously omitted to mention, as is now evident from the American newspapers, is that these stoppages and holidays called forth the united protests of all sections of American workers. The friends of democracy had quite forgotten that the morality of capitalism is, no employment, no money. The American exploiter-patriot seized the opportunity to dock the workers for all days on which they were forcibly prevented from working by the government's regulations. Even Gompers foresaw this result of the coal-saving scheme, but the governing classes were too intent on the war for democracy to trouble about the conditions created at home by that war.

Getting on With the War!

The same fatal blindness which prevented the press from seeing more than was necessary to "winning the war" in the coal shortage remedy, also excluded from the current view the deduction made by "Town and Country," an American weekly, which commented upon the situation as follows: "It is absolutely impossible for us to train and ship enough men to Europe to have any decisive influence on this year's campaign. If we cannot even deliver enough coal in New York to start the engines of the ships in the harbour, how in the name of goodness are we going to ship a million men to France, with all their guns and supplies, and hundreds of thousands of service troops in addition to the fighting men?" How, indeed? We echo the question all the more readily, as we have already tried in vain to point out in this place that these disquieting interrogations are commonly heard on all sides in America. "Town and Country" mentions, for example, one detail from the mass of information of a similar character which has been disclosed by an official commission of inquiry into the work of the War Department. "General Crozier has told us that it will

be June before the much-advertised Browning machine-gun can be turned out in any quantity, and we may be sure that General Crozier is taking the most optimistic view of the situation. So that even if we had a million men in France in time to create an offensive in 1918, we could not begin to equip them with the most vital of all the weapons of modern warfare." By all accounts the Hun contemplates no such hitch in his 1918 offensive.

Pastoral Pacifism.

The volume of pastoral eloquence for which the Irish Hierarchy has made itself responsible this Lent, shows that in one commodity at least there is no war shortage. We welcome the somewhat tardy declaration of sympathy with the Pope's proposals for peace, and trust that Irish workers will note that their spiritual guardians have now followed the lead given by Labour, which had no hesitation in immediately rallying to the plea of his Holiness on behalf of civilisation. No qualms as to the possible revival of the Temporal Power have interfered with Socialist and Labour support, although that consideration was obviously at the back of that provision in the Anglo-Italian treaty to ignore Papal diplomacy. Fortunately, Labour is haunted by no Catholic bogey equivalent to that which makes it a patriotic duty to support any enemy of Viviani, irrespective of the intrinsic merits of the question at issue. Solidarity, not suspicion, is the guide for Labour in such cases, as is proved by the universal esteem in which the peace proposals of the Vatican are held amongst internationalists.

The Awakening of French Labour.

Signs are plentiful to show that the working classes in France are realising the imperative necessity of a Labour offensive, in all the belligerent countries, to make an end of the Imperialists and Knock Out Blowers, who are unable to extricate humanity from the bloody muddle into which Europe is plunged. All the Radical and Socialist papers of late have been adorned with lengthy blank spaces, indicating the passage of a more candid censorship than that to which we are accustomed. Significantly, these blanks all occur in reports of the resolutions of various Labour organisations, and are manifest proof of the revolutionary temper of the people. The "loyal" Socialists, like Sembat, Hervé and Thomas, have lost all credit with their class and are becoming wholly identified with the reactionary groups. When the Socialist Federation of the Seine met to discuss the Versailles note, and to prepare resolutions for the National Council's meeting on the 17th inst., neither Sembat nor Thomas dared to put in an appearance. Their supporters had only 1,470 mandates out of a total of 10,092, and could send only three delegates out of sixteen to last Sunday's meeting. This

represents the overthrow of the Majority Socialists, and a victory for Longuet and the Minority group, which now represents the bulk of French Socialist opinion. In terms of peace this means that French Labour favours immediate peace without annexations or indemnities, an international fund to repair war losses, and the right of self-determination for all peoples, including a referendum in Alsace-Lorraine. These terms are an immense advance on the previous proposals of the Majority group, and bring France, Germany and Austria into line with the main points in the Bolshevist programme. It is up to Henderson now to follow the lead of our Continental comrades. When will the British Labour Party get rid of its abject faith in the governing class, as witness the preposterous pretence that the demand for self-determination has been met in Ireland by the hand-picked Convention? That is the sort of thing that raises a suspicion against the possibility of any real democratic movement in England. The English have been and can be always fobbed off with some feeble substitute.

The Great Illusion.

Once more the press resounds with sonorous compliments to Woodrow Wilson on his reply to Czernin and Hertling, his nobility of mind being contrasted with the low cunning of Lloyd George. Meanwhile the American papers are filled with screams of rage against the Bolsheviks, who are accused—and rightly—of being out to destroy what is most American, to wit, unenlightened and unbridled capitalism. The eloquent doctor, as we have already hinted, does not speak without the collusion of his Allies, for how, otherwise would these alliances hold together? Consequently, it is safe to assume that when Balfour said in the House of Commons that Wilson himself could find no difference between Hertling and Czernin, he knew exactly what he was talking about, unlike the admirers from a distance of the Wilsonian dialectics. Moreover, even were the President personally the altruistic pacifist he is alleged to be, he depends on American capitalism, and what American capitalism thinks and does, its subsidised press can testify. Why then this farce of the divine inspiration of Woodrow Wilson? Wait until he starts explaining away the significance of those uplifting sentiments of his, which delight the uninitiated, as when he recently assured the American profiteers that he meant nothing serious when he spoke of "freedom of trade!"

USE "VOICE OF LABOUR RECORDS"

Poster Stamps—on your correspondence. Series of Eight now ready, each with an apt quotation from St. Ambrose, John Mitchell, Fintan Lalor, James Connolly, etc. Bundle of 32 for two penny stamps. Irish Labour Press, 27 Dawson St., Dublin

CONNOLLY A BOLSHEVIK.

Lecture by Cathal O'Shannon.

At the invitation of the Belfast Executive of Sinn Fein, Cathal O'Shannon lectured on James Connolly to a fairly large audience in St. Mary's Hall on Thursday night.

Connolly's Place in History.

If Connolly, the lecturer said, had not taken any part in the Insurrection of Easter Week his place would still be assured both in Irish history and in the history of International Socialism. This place he had won by his labours on behalf of the Irish working class by his pioneer work in the interpretation of, and his revelation of the economic factor in Irish history, by his application to Irish conditions of Socialist theory and his exposition of that theory in the light of Irish conditions, and by his contributions to both the fugitive and the permanent literature of revolution, Socialist and Nationalist.

Nationalism, Socialism and Revolution.

The sources of his Socialism were to be found in his deep study of Socialist theory, particularly of Marxism, in his own personal experience, and in his reading of the historical struggle of the Irish people. So too the sources of his Nationalism were to be found not only in his Irish origin and all that origin implied, but as well in the study of Irish history and in large measure in his Socialism, for to Connolly Socialism meant, not only happiness, peace and bread, but liberty as well. His whole life, thought, teaching and activity had thus two aspects, Socialist and Nationalist. He was a true revolutionist, not merely a revolutionary Socialist but a revolutionary Nationalist, not only a revolutionary Nationalist but a revolutionary Socialist. Some Socialists could see in him only the Socialist, some Nationalists only the Nationalist. Both were short-sighted views, for without considering him in his twofold aspect no one could arrive at a whole or complete view of Connolly. Equally erroneous was the idea that his Nationalism was the growth of his last years, for in truth from his first public activity in Ireland in 1896 until his last and final act in the great adventure of 1916 Connolly was all the time openly and defiantly Nationalist, Socialist, Republican and Revolutionist, and in fact he was the first to advocate that the Irish Republicans should form a definite political party and claim the representation and suffrages of the country, a policy that the Republicans had only begun to carry out within the past twelve months.

Nationalism and Internationalism.

In summary both his Socialism and Nationalism were to be found in the declaration of principles of the old Irish Socialist Republican Party and the original "Workers' Republic" as they were to be found in "The Harp," in his pamphlets and books and in the "Workers' Republic" of 1915-1916. At this and other stages the lecturer quoted extensively from Connolly in illustration of his argument. Connolly's interpretation of Irish history, continued the lecturer, was to be found in his "Labour in Irish History." He found that the conquest of Ireland was not only political but economic as well, not only economic but political as well. Freedom, then, must mean revolution and the re-conquest of Irish liberties must mean not only a political reconquest but an economic re-conquest, a re-conquest that would ensure liberty to every man, woman and child in Ireland. Nationalists must recognise that and so must Socialists. Connolly thus found nothing incompatible between his Socialism and his Nationalism, and in this he had the support of a Socialist authority whose internationalism could not be called in question, for Karl Marx himself had said that the Irish question was not only political and economic but national, that Irish freedom indeed was essential to the emancipation of the English working classes, for Ireland always blocked England's way, particularly in Russia and the United States (that might have been written, added the lecturer, of 1916-17-18 instead of 1869), and England could hold Ireland only by the most ruthless oppression and the most odious tyranny. Connolly was a good internationalist who recognised that without nationalism there could be no real internationalism.

Connolly and the Bolshevik Republic.

Then what kind of freedom, what kind of republic did Connolly work and fight and die for? For the Socialist Republic. He was a class conscious Socialist who recognised the class war or the class struggle. The class struggle had indeed become familiar to us through its German name, Klassenkampf, but just as it was the Irishman Thompson who was the direct predecessor of Karl Marx, so it was with an Irishman, the Chartist, James Bronterre O'Brien, that the conception of the class struggle had originated, being, of course, amplified and elaborated by Marx and Engels. The lecturer then proceeded to show how Connolly proposed to marshal the working class in an insurgent army in the

struggle against capitalism and imperialism. The republic he wanted was not a republic like those of France and America but in literal fact like that of the Bolsheviks in Russia. And indeed Connolly was a Bolshevik if ever there was one. For as the Bolsheviks had handed the land back to the people and the industries back to the workers, so would also Connolly. It was important that the similarity of ideas between the Bolsheviks and Connolly should be understood. This similarity was particularly striking in their conception of the work and place in history of the Constituent Assembly or in general of what were called representative institutions. Connolly held that representative institutions were not an end in themselves but only a means to an end, a stage in transition of the evolution of society, and the duration of that transition would be determined by circumstances. So with the Bolsheviks. The Constituent Assembly, they saw, had outlived its function and its abolition was right, necessary and essential. The next stage was that found in the Soviets, the state desiderated by Connolly and the Socialists' government, not by territorial but by industrial representation. Here again the lecturer quoted at length from Connolly's writings and directed his hearers' attention to the similarity of ideas in Connolly's "Socialism Made Easy," and in the extract from Lenin's speech on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, as quoted in the previous week's "Irish Opinion." It was this that explained why, as Litvinoff had told the Irish Labour delegation, Lenin was so much interested in Connolly and in his works. As the natural allies and friends of Connolly were the Lenins, Trotskys, Liebknechts, aye, and Dittmanns, so Connolly would have fought for his ideal of liberty as stoutly in Russia last year, in Germany and Austria this year, in Great Britain next year, if the English or Scotch workers have the stuff of revolution in them, as he did in Ireland at Easter, 1916. For Connolly was the dauntless friend of liberty the world over, the rebel and the revolutionist everywhere and at all times, though he was happiest when fate staged the scene for him in Ireland.

Several interesting replies to E. Cuff's article, "The Revolutionists," will see the light next week.

Ask your newsagent to keep "Irish Opinion" for you. Many Readers were disappointed last week.

LABOUR IN IRELAND.

Dublin Laundries.

Negotiations have taken place between the I.T.W.U. and the laundry owners, of whom the latter pleaded that the subsidised competition of the institutional laundries prevented them giving such increases to their workers as they would desire. Surely representations to the authorities of these institutions could secure a re-arrangement.

Dublin Grocers.

The Dublin Grocers and Vintners Employers' Association has refused to recognise the Assistants' Union. We have every confidence that Mr. Hughes and his Committee will proceed on sound lines in their subsequent actions. Meantime, the workers of Dublin know what to do. Demand from every publican a declaration that he is prepared to recognise the Union. If he does not agree—go else where. Hit Bung in his pocket.

Boland's Clerks.

A strike of the clerks at Boland's Mills has taken place, after long and fruitless negotiations to enforce a demand for an increase of 15/- per week. Boland's best offer was 5/- per week for two men out of 35. One of the clerks with very responsible duties is enjoying 25/- per week after 29 years' service.

Belfast Notes.

I suppose never in the history of our country has there been the same desire for working-class organisation as exists to-day. Here in Belfast among the men, at any rate, it is only a small minority who are outside the trade and labour unions, and as for the many thousands of women-workers here, not one-fourth of them are in the labour unions, but in spite of this fact, it is very encouraging to see how they are joining up to-day; they are simply flocking into the "Textile Operatives' Society," "The Workers' Union," and the other labour unions which cater for them in this district.

"The Workers' Union" and the "National Amalgamated Union of Labour," the two big Unions here who embrace the unskilled and semi-skilled, are taking a vote just now with the idea of converting these two big Unions into one. There are branches of these Unions in every part of Ulster. One branch I know of in Belfast has a membership of 5,000, all engaged in engineering since the outbreak of war. The members of this branch have secured increases of over a hundred per cent, and in many cases considerably more, since the outbreak of war. By the power of organisation they have secured shilling for shilling along with their highly-skilled brethren.

The spirit of organisation which is in the air to-day is increasing the membership of the I.L.P. Many of the young men are beginning to realise that the cry of "No Home Rule" won't solve the poverty question; the cry of an "Irish Republic" won't solve the poverty question. An economic boycott or blindly fol-

lowing Sir Edward Carson and Lloyd George is playing the game of the profiteers and re-establishing the Irish and British Huns in power. So come in your thousands and join the I.L.P. or S.P.I., as Socialism is the only remedy for poverty and all social wrongs.

Belfast and Coal Prices.

The Belfast Trades Council held a special meeting last week to discuss the recent advances in coal prices. Alderman Wheeler and Mr. T. G. Ward were present, and gave some information regarding how the workers are being fleeced. Alderman Wheeler has for a year and more done his utmost to force the Government to take over the shipping engaged in the coal traffic between Great Britain and Ireland. He has been turned down at every point, and has had little or no support from his fellow-corporators. Mr. T. G. Ward is a coal merchant who has tried to fight the local coal ring, and in the fight has been severely hit. It is not part of the Trades Council's business to take sides in a quarrel between merchants or capitalists, but it is very useful to get first-hand information from one who knows the business as to how the profits are distributed. Mr. Ward told us that the price fixed for coal at Garston is 25/6 per ton; the price today fixed by the Coal Committee, in conjunction with the importers, is 51/- per ton. For freight and distribution we pay 25/6 per ton, and out of this the ship-owner gets 15/-. Pre-war freights were about 5/- or 6/- per ton. A steamer carrying 600 tons would make easily three trips a fortnight (more likely four and sometimes five). Taking three cargoes of 600 tons each at 15/- a ton, and we have £1,350 freight. Allowing 33 1-3 per cent. for expenses, a very liberal allowance, leaves the ship-owner £900 net profit for a fortnight's work of one ship. A similar state of things exists in regard to the Scotch trade. The freight is fixed at 9/6, and a boat can do three or four trips a week. The fact is, as Alderman Wheeler pointed out, that by means of the excess profits tax the Government taxes the poor consumers from threepence to sixpence for every cwt. of coal bought, and allows the ship-owners and merchants a commission of 20 per cent. for collecting the tax. They fix prices and freights which are exorbitant, the excess profits are taxed to the extent of 80 per cent., the poor must pay the exorbitant prices, and out of the excess the Government squanders 80 per cent. in the machinery of slaughter and the ship-owner wallows in scandalous luxury out of the 20 per cent.—the share of the plunder he is allowed to retain.

A mass meeting was arranged for Saturday afternoon last, but owing to heavy rain it was postponed until Wednesday night. If the people of Belfast are dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs in regard to coal they have a chance now to show their mettle. Or are they still content to be led by the nose?

Blacksmiths and Ironworkers.

The amalgamation of the Associated Blacksmiths and Ironworkers' Society and the United Smiths' Trade Union, of Dublin, has now been completed. This combination is due mainly to the untiring efforts of Mr. John Beatty, the Executive member and District Secretary for the North of Ireland. Up to recently the smithy workers in the industrial centres of Ulster were practically an unorganised body, but to-day, thanks to Mr. Beatty's active work, he can count upon over six hundred members, which fact, to those conversant with the conditions of this industry, speaks volumes.

Not content with the work of organisation in the North, the District Secretary has latterly directed his attention to the smithy workers further South, with a view to united action. Since June, 1915, discussion has been taking place between the Associated Society represented by Mr. Beatty and the United Smiths of Dublin relative to the desirability of amalgamation, with the result that the fusion has been practically completed, thereby more than doubling the numerical strength and immensely increasing the fighting power of the combined Unions.

Now that the amalgamation question is settled, efforts are being made to reach all the scattered units in the outlying districts around Dublin. Mr. Beatty expects within the next few weeks to pay an organising visit to Dublin for this purpose, and then to proceed further to Cork, Limerick, Galway, and other towns to attempt to gather in to the Trade Union fold the unorganised smiths, hammermen, and forge workers of those places. With a compact organisation there is no reason why the conditions prevailing throughout Ireland should not be raised to level of the best.

We bespeak for Mr. Beatty a cordial welcome, and wish his Union success.

Portarlinton.

We are glad to learn that a meeting has at last taken place between Messrs. Russell's and the representatives of the I.T.W.U. We hope this is a prelude to a settlement. The Union is in a position to carry on this dispute indefinitely, and we suppose Russell's could also put up a long fight. The folly of such proceedings is apparent, and we suggest that a policy of give and take on both sides would bring peace. We learn that Messrs. Russell's strongly resent the inference that might be drawn from a previous paragraph, that they connived at the arrest of the I.T.W.U. Organiser, Mr. Dowling. We had no intention of suggesting that Messrs. Russell's were in any way responsible for the action of the police.

Tullamore.

The threatened strike of agricultural workers has been postponed pending the meeting of the Wages Board this week. We would advise estate agents to adopt a more conciliatory attitude to the workers. Trades Unionism has come to stay. The Scottish Farm Servants' Union we learn, is claiming for ploughmen a minimum wage of 45/- per week.

Notes and Comments

Limerick Housing.

Evidently the workers of Limerick are now thoroughly aroused to the importance of the housing conditions under which they live. For some time a housing association has been working to rouse the workers on the one side and the authorities on the other to an adequate recognition of the horrors of Limerick slums. The slums of Limerick, Mr. M. J. O'Connor pointed out at a recent meeting, if they do not cover so large an area, are as bad as anything in Dublin. We are familiar with what Limerick tolerates in the way of slums and we are of the opinion that the problem in Limerick is greater in proportion to population than that which Dublin must solve. As Mr. Stevenson, the chairman of the Limerick Housing Association, pointed out at the Town Hall meeting, only 191 houses have been built in Limerick in the past thirty years, and at this rate, he said, it would take about 300 years to solve the slum problem in Limerick alone. To properly rehouse the people of Limerick will require nearly 2,000 new houses, which number the housing association is of opinion should be erected as part of a great national scheme of rehousing the workers. The solution of the agricultural housing problem was undertaken as a national question and there is no reason whatever why the same basis should not be taken for a solution of our urban slum problem. Mr. M. O'Callaghan stated at the Limerick meeting that owing to the lack of new houses the corporation was unable to enforce the sanitary law. That this is a very serious state of things few will deny. The slums, the courts, the alleys, the roads of Limerick are a disgrace to any city or any country with any pretensions to the title of civilized. Some of them are worse than the worst Dublin can show, and the effects of slums, in death rates and infantile mortality are apparent in Limerick as they are in Dublin. To improve the horrible conditions under which so many of our fellow citizens live, is work we commend to all who seek a happier and healthier Ireland.

A National Question.

In Limerick, as in Dublin, and in fact in all of the older Irish towns, the great barrier to immediate housing reform is lack of the necessary money. To attempt a thorough reform in Dublin will require several millions of pounds, in Limerick alone, £800,000 will be required. To bring about the great change, now so proudly pointed to, in the housing of the rural worker, has already cost about four and a half millions of pounds. To solve the problem of our city and town slums will be an immensely more costly business. The owners of houses and the owners of land in our cities and towns desire to make the greatest possible profit out of any scheme for the abolition of slums. The difference in the so-called land values in town and country makes the urban housing problem one of great cost. These land

values are the result of concentration of population upon a small area. The people who hold the land have in most cases added nothing whatever to the primary value of the land, yet the demands they make are so exorbitant as almost to prevent all efforts at slum elimination. The whole question in all our towns and cities will have to be taken as one problem, and we trust that a national housing policy will result from the conference, summoned for Easter Monday in Dublin, by the Limerick Housing Association. We trust that an integral part of that policy will be the provision of allotments of at least one-eighth of an acre with each house. The whole question of town growth and extension, "virgin soil" housing, town planning, and adequate transit facilities must be considered as part of one great problem. We hope that the conference will fully consider the lessons to be learned from the experience of Germany and Belgium. These two countries have much to show us, and we trust our housing reformers will seek the knowledge.

British Labour and Ireland.

The "Labour Leader" of February 14th, publishes an article by Mr. Noel Buxton, on "Labour's War Aims," in which he shows, what we have already pointed out, that the British Labour Party's peace terms do not differ essentially from those of the Imperialists. Continental opinion has been quick to grasp the point and to make the most of it. We have pointed out before that what British Labour seems to aim at is not a League of Nations, but a League of Empires. In Henderson's recent leaflet, scattered gratuitously throughout Great Britain and this country, that gentleman states the aims of British labour to be "the absolute freedom and integrity of Belgium, Serbia, Rumania and Montenegro and the establishment on a firm basis of a league of nations and people for international co-operation, disarmament and the prevention of interne warfare." Nothing here about the "principle of the right of every people to determine its own destiny," to which the war aims memorandum of the British Labour Party professed adherence. When the war aims memorandum was published we challenged the British Labour Party to state definitely its attitude towards this country. The only reply was Henderson's recognition of the Convention. We stand by the right of self-determination and we demand its application to Ireland. At the end of Mr. Buxton's article the "Labour Leader" prints an extract from this paper declaring that right for our country. Our point is analagous to that raised by Mr. Buxton, but we are met by the reply: "The I.L.P. has never wavered in its allegiance to Irish self-government." That is not enough. British Labour says it accepts the right of each nation to determine its own government. We ask for an explicit and definite statement that Ireland, with others, will have

that right. To say that "the I.L.P. has never wavered in its allegiance to Irish self-government," does not go far enough. We want to know if the principle adopted by the war aims memorandum is to apply to us, and if not, why not?

The Agricultural Labourer.

The efforts now being made to organise agricultural labour look like meeting with great success. In every part of the country, north, south, east and west, the process of organisation is in being. The Irish Transport Workers' Union has been doing excellent work for many years and now several other organisations are also doing the work. The wage at which the agricultural labourer was forced to work in pre-war days was a disgrace to our country. How it could be expected that these men could live, and rear families, on an average wage of twelve shillings weekly, passed our comprehension. Even the wages fixed by the new Wages Board, as Mr. Mallon pointed out in a previous issue, cannot be regarded as satisfactory. The labourer in the country, like the labourer in the town, must learn and must understand that it is only by trade union organisation that his working conditions can be improved. There is a difficulty in the country against which our urban workers have not to contend. Our town workers are in constant and continuous touch with each other, they live in close proximity and have opportunities of meeting and discussion. These are denied to the rural labourer, who often is separated by miles from his fellows. Energy, determination and enthusiasm can overcome all obstacles, even that of distance, and we hope these qualities will not be found wanting in our agricultural labourers. The Tipperary and King's County labourers, in addition to trade union organisation, are organising co-operative stores. This is a step in the right direction. There is small use in having an increase in wages if that increase goes merely to the enrichment of local shopkeepers. To the workers of Roscrea and Tullamore we wish every success in their trade union and co-operative organisation. The two should always go together, as by such a combination we shall be more quickly in a position to control industry and to develop our industrial resources upon a co-operative basis.

"Forward" on Murphy.

Boss Murphy in Dublin runs the tramways and rather unnecessarily announces that his company did not "profess to be philanthropists" ("Irish Independent," 6/2/18). He hints at an increase in fares to bring his dividend up to 6 per cent., and says that on every other tramway in the Kingdom as far as he can find out, the fares have been raised.

Wrong, Boss! The Glasgow Municipal tram fares have not been increased.

And this shows how cheaply he takes the public of Dublin.

IRISH OPINION

THE VOICE OF LABOUR

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY.

EVERY THURSDAY, ONE PENNY.

Literary communications should be addressed to the Editor, and business communications to the Manager, at the Office, 27 Dawson Street, Dublin.

Matter intended for publication in the following issue must reach the Office not later than Monday forenoon.

Subscription Rates.—13 weeks, 1s. 8d.; 26 weeks, 8s. 3d.; 52 weeks, 6s. 6d., post free in Ireland and Great Britain, payable in advance. Cross cheques and p.o.'s and make payable to "Irish Labour Press," 27 Dawson Street, Dublin.

Advertising Rates may be obtained from Advertising Manager, 65 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin.

The Greatest of Crimes.

"It's as I've always heard," says Hyacinth Halvey in Lady Gregory's play of that name, "that the greatest crime of all is to obstruct the police in the discharge of its duty." It seems that this statement, which has times without number excited the laughter of Abbey Theatre audiences, is literally true. It is possible to take the lives of many people and escape what is legally called punishment, but nobody can assault or interfere with the police with impunity. Captain Bowen Colthurst was proven to have been the cause of many deaths. He ordered the shooting of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and other prisoners from the guardroom of Portobello Barracks. He shot a boy named Coadé in the public street. He did all this in the sacred name of authority, in the name of law and order. He was a soldier in command of armed soldiers, and he used his position in such a manner as to constitute himself a danger to the community. From him few were safe, and it was only the mercy of God that saved many others from the fate of Sheehy-Skeffington. The man who went to London to make representations to Kitchener on the subject was relieved of his command. He was degraded, and attempts made to disgrace him, while the alleged lunatic was retained in his command. No reparation has yet been made to Sir Francis Vane. And now Bowen Colthurst is free. He has been discharged from the Broadmoor Asylum, where he was interned, and is now being treated in a convalescent home. The homicidal maniac has been cured and is now once more a free man. His rapid cure will reinforce the scepticism of those who believed he was merely homicidal and not a lunatic, to those who believed his shootings had their reasons in politics and caste rather than in lunacy. But he was interned as a lunatic during "his Majesty's pleasure." He has not been punished for his killing, and now the pleasure of his Majesty is that this man-killer is a fit and proper person to mix freely with his fellows. It is surely ironic!

To turn to another case, that of Patrick Higgins. Higgins did not belong to the landlord class. He was

never an officer in the British Army. He never shot or was the cause of shooting anyone. He was never certified as a lunatic. Patrick Higgins was merely a Dublin labourer, and was consequently fair game for all that calls itself authority in this country. Higgins was a striker—a striker in the great strike of 1913-14. During the course of the strike when the police were running amok, he assaulted a policeman, and was savagely sentenced for several years to penal servitude. He has been in gaol now for nearly four years. He has borne his punishment, even though that punishment be undeserved and savagely vindictive. The time has come when Higgins must be released. Had he been a landlord or a capitalist with influential wire-pulling friends and acquaintances, his release would most certainly have been effected several years ago. But being merely a labourer, merely a member of the mob, he was without these influential connections, and has continued to serve his term of penal servitude. Since his incarceration Dublin has had little time to think, events have followed each other with too great a rapidity for Patrick Higgins' sufferings to be remembered. We hope they have not been entirely forgotten. His fellow-workers, his fellow-strikers in the famous fight of 1913, 14, must now wake up to the fact that he is in jail. An immediate demand must be made for his release, and we must insist that our demand is listened to and acceded to.

The glaring difference between the treatment of Bowen Colthurst and that of Patrick Higgins illustrates for us the comparative importance attached to the social status of each by those in whose keeping is legal justice. Abstract justice demands equal treatment for all, no matter to what class they may belong. But the administration of legal justice is in the hands of the landlords and the capitalists. Legislation also is in their hands; legislation is in their hands because economic power is in their hands, and the political power is used always in the interests of the class. Patrick Higgins was treated so harshly, not so much because he assaulted a policeman, as because he was part of a great army threatening the economic supremacy of the capitalists and the landlords, whose representative on the Bench of Justice sentenced him to penal servitude. Higgins was not judged by his peers; Bowen Colthurst was. Higgins was visited by all the pent up desire for vengeance on the part of the employing class, while Bowen Colthurst, for infinitely greater offence goes unpunished. There is a lesson in all this for the workers of our country. They must have Patrick Higgins released; that will be merely incidental to the great campaign. The great campaign will be for the control of industry, for the abolition of wage-slavery, and for the economic freedom of our workers. Before the workers reach the victorious end that must culminate this campaign, it is probable that many new crimes will be made by our governing classes. These crimes will be mercilessly punished, but if our trades unions are strong—better still if we have only one union for all—we can march on assured that victory must ultimately be ours. Meanwhile the release of Patrick Higgins must be hastened. His crime is the greatest crime of all—he was a worker in revolt.

Artful Arthur's Evasions.

To the Editor "Irish Opinion."

Sir,—The man who issues a programme of his Party aims endorsing this principle for oppressed nations beyond the British sphere of influence and denies its application to nations held in subjection by British force, is a fit rival to that expert in verbal camouflage, Lloyd George, which, perhaps, accounts for his relegation to the doormat. The Prime Minister was not likely to tolerate such a promising star in his own special orbit.

Although he falsely asserts to the contrary, he is well aware that the most definite, the largest and best organised section of Irish opinion is not represented on the Lloyd George Convention. He knows also that this combined Sinn Fein and Labour element has, without qualification, accepted the principle to which he pays lip service as the only basis upon which a real peace with Ireland can be secured.—Yours truly,

M. M'NAMARA.

"The Leader of the Labour Party,
House of Commons, S.W.

"Dear Sir,—As your Party's programme accepts the principle of self-determination for subject peoples, it follows that you must consider Ireland as a case in point where it could be most readily applied.

"According to Press reports you seem, however, to regard the Government-nominated Convention as a fulfilment of this principle in the sense that its decision will be representative of the national will. I should be obliged if you will kindly inform me

"(1) If you are accurately reported

as holding this view, and, if so, in what respect such a Convention differs from that which the German Leaders proposed in regard to the future governments of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland, and which Trotsky rejected with scorn.

"(2) If the principle of self-determination is to become something more than diplomatic jargon for imperialistic uses, would you advise your Party to support the Irish people in the event of their having determined by plebiscite what form of government they desire to live under?—Yours faithfully,

"M. M'NAMARA."

*(Copy).

"The Labour Party,
1 Victoria St., S.W.,
8/2/18.

"Dear Sir,—Replying to your favour, I beg to intimate that the position of the Labour Party with regard to the principle of self-determination is set out in their published Memorandum. The references to the Irish Convention were the expression of my personal opinion, having regard to the fact that all sections of the Irish people had accepted the Convention as a means of securing a settlement of the Irish difficulty which might be acceptable to the Irish people. Until we have the results of the Convention by the production of a scheme or the admission of failure, I am not prepared to commit myself as to the next best step to be taken with a view to the settlement of this long-standing difficulty.—Yours sincerely,

"ARTHUR HENDERSON."

only practical thing this precious Bumble has done since it was nominated. It is refreshing to note, however, that the local Co-operative Society has effected to counter this philanthropic (?) action of the Committee by importing milk which they sell (three days a week) at 1/10 per gallon.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A PURGING MEDICINE REQUIRED.

To the Editor "Irish Opinion."

We, who live in the cold, black North (Derry), have found a vast number of citizens, including a few alleged labour men, with a temperature, metaphorically speaking, reaching about 120 degrees in the shade.

The cause of this sudden change was—what? The Town Improvement Bill? Not at all, it was brought about by political strategists utilising the passage of the Bill for their own party purposes.

A large body of workers now plainly discern that, while these old political platitudes are non-beneficial to labour, they are a continual menace to that solidarity and enthusiasm which is vital to the life and progress of the Labour movement.

The workers would be well advised to treat with silent contempt the piffle, cant and humbug raised by these political issues, and Labour leaders should make straight, honest and fearless use of them for the purpose of showing the rank and file the hollowness and fallacy of the old political strife, which has always (consciously or otherwise) been instrumental in dividing the workers of Ireland.

Let the workers take special notice of the economic power which can be and is used by large employers of labour to enforce their political views.

Is it not proof, if proof is required, that the possession of economic power can win and maintain real political power for democracy. The Mayor in his speech at the public meeting held in the Guildhall on the 4th February, said, "The workers will suffer most." He might and could have truthfully said, the workers always suffer most.

Where are the men in Derry able and willing to administer a purging medicine in doses large enough to convince the citizens that they must clear out of the Corporation the factionists, the capitalists, the landlords, the owners of slum property and other vested interests, replacing them with stalwart and powerful Labour advocates.

The medicine must not merely be of a laxative nature, it must cleanse thoroughly the minds of the people.

Let us stand shoulder to shoulder, working, planning and scheming to bring about the social and economic freedom of our class.

ANGLO.

Food Question in Waterford

The co-ordinated efforts of the Waterford Trades Council and the Sinn Fein Club have at last concentrated public opinion in the city upon the grave dangers of a food shortage. Following a conference at the Trades Hall, a committee was appointed to devise ways and means of giving effect to one or other of the two schemes submitted by Prof. M. J. Wheeler—viz., that the Corporation guarantee a sum of money from the rates for the purchase of oats, potatoes, and other commodities, or, that a number of private guarantors be secured in the city for an amount sufficient to cover the purchase of those commodities. At the same time, a deputation was appointed to enlist the support of the Corporation, and amongst those who waited on the latter body were such genuine friends of democracy as Rev. J. Kelleher, S.T.L.; Dr. V. G. White, Prof. M. J. Wheeler, St. John's College; and E. Dalton, President Trades Council. The Corporation were apparently sympathetic to the scheme,—though many of them did not at all like to gulp down a beneficent project that was fathered by two such common or gar-

den democratic bodies. But the spectre of an indignant public opinion is a powerful expedient for stirring up the dying embers of conscience. They, however, declared they had no power to pledge the rates, but appointed a Committee to consider the question. That Committee has signalled its altruism by asking the Department of Agriculture for particulars as to the quantities of potatoes, oats, pigs, etc., in the country, and whether that body could suggest a way out of the present food crisis. I fear such circumlocutionary methods will avail little. It is a time for hustling, not "resoluting." It is pleasing to hear that Dr. White and Prof. Wheeler (Sinn Fein Club) have already secured the names of a number of guarantors, through whose munificence the scheme of purchasing food may be facilitated. The Trades Council Committee is very energetic, in the meantime.

I am sorry to say that since last I wrote the local Food Control Committee has yielded to the demands of the "Milk Ring" by raising the retail price from 1/8 to 2/3 per gallon, and the wholesale price by 1d. to 1/7. This is actually the

HOW TO HELP.

Loyal Support.

We asked our comrades of the Trade Union movement last week to give us a big push. We want this week to ask them to give us regular support, to order their copies definitely for so many weeks from one newsagent. The agent can place a firm order with his wholesale house and the buyer will be sure to get his copy.

This week a number of increased orders reached us after the paper was printed and took up every single copy. We believe a number of Dublin readers were unable to obtain supplies.

So order early and order in advance.

Trade Union Education.

In Scotland and England in recent years great progress has been made in the direction of providing for the members of unions opportunities of studying the principles and history of the working class movement. The Bolshevik Consul at Glasgow, John MacLean, M.A., has for several years conducted large classes for the study of economics and industrial history. The Plebs League organises classes in South Wales and elsewhere throughout England.

The time is ripe for a similar development here, but as a first step we should like to see in every trades council and trades union branch a literature committee selling to the members labour papers, pamphlets and books.

If the Irish working class is to play its proper part in the future of the nation it must educate itself. The material is to hand. Connolly's writings alone—all available in cheap and handy form—constitute a useful study course. Set up a literature committee and to start it in business let it secure orders for these books and pamphlets:—

LABOUR IN IRELAND, by James Connolly, with introduction by Robert Lynd. Cloth, 4/-, or the two parts separately.

LABOUR IN IRISH HISTORY. Paper, 1/-.

RE-CONQUEST OF IRELAND. Paper, 1/-.

THE NEW EVANGEL. Paper, 2d.

SOCIALISM MADE EASY. Paper, 2d.

THE LEGACY AND SONGS OF FREEDOM. Paper, 3d.

BLIGHT, by "A. and O." Paper, 1/-.

HUNGER, by James Esse. 1/-.

AN ULSTERMAN FOR IRELAND, by John Mitchell. 1/-.

"The Herald" and "Irish Opinion" every week.

Other papers might be added to the weekly list as desired. All the above could be ordered through a local newsagent or from the Irish Labour Press.

How It Goes.

The last minute orders for "Irish Opinion" were somewhat disconcerting. We like to know that every copy printed last week was sold.

Our customers in Limerick are growing in number thanks to Comrade Byrne's steady pushing and the general support of the Trade Union movement.

Liberty Hall went up two dozen last week.

Kenmare had another dozen.

Extra parcels for Belfast. We could do more business if the I.L.P. comrades would push "I.O." in the yards. It is the right dope for the local Henry Dubbs.

Mitchelstown drapers asked for a bundle of "specimen copies." If you do the same, you won't be refused. We pay carriage.

A Derry man wants a purgative medicine for sections of local labour. We prescribe increasing doses of "Irish Opinion."

Social Revolutionary Pamphlets.

"The State,"—Its historic role.

"Anarchist Morality,"

By Peter Kropotkin, 2d. each.

"The Anarchist Revolution,"

By Geo. Barrett, 1d.

"Freedom," The Anarchist Monthly, 1d.

Of all Dublin News-agents who sell Socialist Literature.

"TINORI" AGAIN!

Some weeks ago we asked Mr. Eugene MacSweeney, M.P.S. (Lon.), M.P.S.I., F.S.M.C., F.I.O., Diplomas by Examination, to explain why he asked an applicant for a situation, "if you are a member of the Chemists' Assistants' Association?"

He has not explained, but he has renewed his advertising in the press, notably in Mr. Murphy's press organs. One of his customers has sent us a copy of a letter recently addressed to Eugene:

Cork, February, 1918.

Sir,—I beg to enclose cheque to settle account.

In a recent issue of "Irish Opinion," there were certain statements made, in consequence of which I feel it best to ask you kindly to regard my account as closed.—Faithfully yours,

Mr. Eugene MacSweeney, M.P.S.

Socialist Party of Ireland.

Cumannacht na hÉireann.
(Founded by James Connolly.)

Object:

An Industrial Commonwealth based upon common ownership of the land and instruments of production, distribution, and exchange, with complete political and social equality between the sexes.

Funds are Urgently Needed to Propagate Socialism.

Statement of Principles drawn up by James Connolly and Particulars of Membership will be sent on application to

THE SECRETARY, S.P.I.,

Room 3,

LIBERTY HALL, DUBLIN.

The Irish Transport & General Workers' Union

[Founded January, 1909.]

Head Office:—Liberty Hall, Dublin.

Affiliated to the Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, and with all local Trades Councils. Reg. No. 275. Approved Society No. 52.

THIS organisation was established in order to provide for the workers of this country a Trade Union with headquarters in Ireland, having its affairs managed and controlled by Irish Workers, and its policy and programme based on Irish conditions, so as to secure for all workers in Ireland higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions of employment, improved housing, a higher standard of living, and a fuller and freer life for all who labour.

A Live Union for Live Workers.

Forty-five Branches. Over 20,000 Members.

Join Now! He who hesitates is lost!!

If there is no Branch in your district, write to:—

THOMAS FORAN, General President, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

THE MARY STREET

PICTURE HOUSE

(The "Mary-O.")

Star Pictures Always.

THE ELECTRIC THEATRE,

TALBOT STREET.

First in Dublin

and

Still the Best.

A
BATTLE
HYMN.

Inspiring Song by Countess Marcievicz (Dedicated to the I. C. A.) with photos of James Connolly and Michael Mallin. Complete with Music and Piano Score, 1/1 post free.

PRISONERS
OF
WAR. Memories of Frongoch, Wakefield Jail, etc. (with Camp and prison illustrations). Just published 1/6. By Post 1/8.

THE ART DEPOT, 6 Mary St., Dublin.
TRADE SUPPLIED WHOLESALE.

DRAOITHEACT NUA.

Le Liam P. O Riain.

Deirunt liom féin go minic go mbíod an iomarca piannuioctá i nÉirinn le linn na meádon-aoireann. Na manaig féin bíodh an-tugta d'piannuioct fá leic. Uirgeáilte ra leabair bpeac agus a leicéir; rseáilte i dcairib earbog agus manac agus ban maáilte agus donairín naomta, cuimh i gcumhne dom úntaí dá faib i ndán do'n féinn ar a mbíod cónnuí "i ndáimhain luictmair lán-aoibinn laigeanh." Ni faib téora le léir-máctnamh bpoitead in na haoirib úo.

Ar bPlatón Féin.

Ói go maic. Ac ba móp an érua náir lean cumadóirí clirte áiríte d'feallramnact agus d'filióct pmaoin-óuil agus d'ealadóin, san bsead le fian-rsealúioct. Náir móp an iuro é ar bPlatón féin nó ar bPlatónor féin do beic, dáp d'pneóru: nó piú feallram do bead leat có haigeanta le ceactar oíob? Páiríor, an t-érgear ba mó bpi dáir eirig i nÉirinn ina meádon-aoirib .i. Seán Scotur Émugena, ra Larion do pióm pé a curo éigre. Ni dóig lion sup táitnig feallramnact fíor-dóimín le n-a lán éiréannac le linn na n-aoireann úo. Cuiméad Saedilg ar an "Aenér" ve Densilur nom A.D. 1400, ac an iuro ip feallramanda dá bpuil ann (i leabair a VI.) págáó amac é.

Dante ar Iarraidh.

Dála filióctá bíod méinn agus léir-máctnam na héiréann in na meádon-aoirib có piolmair bpiómair le méinn agus léir-máctnam na hlovéile, agus ionda nio náir reandur naomta táro coráil le píreanna Dante. Ac níor eirig ra bfoola don file do bi paoileac dian-traoépac díl-ealadóanta piolmair ar nóir údair móir na "Divina Commedia." Nuair do bíod intinn ná héiréann lán-bao agus an Saedilg i n-áiro-féim ní bíod ar n-áiréacá lán-oilur dá ndécar int leacta. Bíodh pó-aerac uair, pó-puiméac uair eile, suagáó go minic.

Fiannuiocht Aois.

Mar pin fáim bi pí-éiré ar a d'péiré, agus reácar an líríóct ba cumapac a paotair ve óiméil éagrúla tpuá liom san áir meanna do beic. có beo'dac agus do bíod a meanna-pan, tpuá liom san pin-ne a beic có doimín ar rsealúiact ar ar

filióct agus do bíodh ve gnát. Ni baogal go ndéanpac piannuioct féin puinn doéair dúinn; ní hatálaró ac a' malairt. Óo péir deallram bíonn curo agus do'n gnát-tuairim. Ceir an bíó, ceir tuairpóail, agus a leicéirí, ip mó a bíor ve éuram óramn. Cuiméann an-curo dinn buairt-puim i n-eacrairó náire, ac tá Capall an Siolla Déacair, san tráct ar an líac Macá, dearmadóca agus, dearmadóca slan.

Fionn agus Hindenberg.

Ni bíonn ácar ná úntar le r-áiríú i meánmair luict paotair. Ni téro ar tuirar go tír na nÓg ó ceann ceann na bliana. Ni heol doib bóca míorbáile ná dánta píde, mar ba heol do luict paotair i n-áilóo. Do deapóing éoin Mac Néill sup iad na pó-daoine do ceap agus do coiméad il-treandur na féinne. Tá pé imite slan ar cumhne ar bpuimóir inoiu. Tá Hindenberg ar eile i n-áit Finn agus O'Gair agus O'iamurda. Tiseann báro-pá-cuinn ioir ar pún-páóac agus na poicé ip pídiúla ar oll-muir Manannain.

Ollsacht 'nar Measg.

Ar an tSaoib eile de'n rseal tá draoiteact nua as tuar i n-áigne luict paotair na héiréann. Bíonn oirdeanaí bpeagta dá nspíorad. Ip seal leo nálla na Saoirre agus áruir éile dá óiméal. Tá maó-ran có hántac leo agus do bíod áimá na féinne le na pinreara nómpa, sí sup beas an tráct a bíor acá oíca i rsealúioct ná i b'filióct go póill. Bíonn rspíó-neoirí luict paotair pó-cáitail. Ni bíonn pé ve mírheac oíca tagairt do déanam do puóal doimne na meannan. Do-geirim loct móp oíca uime pin. Ip míro doib a púin do épaob'páóilead agus do éanad. An loicéanac, Séamur Ó Conáile, agus a sco-táoirí nac otiocpad maó oimúnac do rsealúioct agus d'ábránuioct agus d'épopée? Níor éas an láócar i n-éroteact Finn agus na féinne.

Oisín na mBocht.

Sead, go vireac. Nomépor luict paotair, Oisín na b'pó-daoine, támuio as panúim leo. Puadúigead. Neteré na paotruite, 'pé pin, áilleact a paogail. Tá an tpoio ar piudal go dian ar a ion. Ni gá le "Nomépor" beic 'na tórc go oí lá na buairde. Agus dála "Oisín" ar láoi a pún-

eactarí ar muir na meannan móre agus i d'áir na nÓg féin: páro áca p áro-anmair! Nac bpuil a gúra lá buailte linn? Oir nac léir dúinn go bpuil anama luict oirre, i n-áonac le Máir Cinn Oir (Spuro an ácar ar an fáir) as d'puroeamair le n-a ndécar éana féin? Eirig, a Oisín na b'pó-daoine!

APARTMENTS furnished, with or without attendance and board. Well recommended. 7 Palmerston Place, Broadstone.

BELFAST INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY.

Sunday, 17th February. LABOUR HALL, 77A. Victoria St. 3.0 p.m.—Mr. A. Robertson, M.A., Glasgow. Subject—"Reconstruction." 7.0 p.m.—Mr. J. McGuinness. Subject—"The State and Justice." North Hall, Langley Street (off Tennant St.) 7.30 p.m.—"Aspects of the War."

ACITATE. EDUCATE. ORGANIZE.

A Real Irish Studio

Irish Talent, Spinning Wheel, Harp and Fancy Costumes. Old or faded Photos copied. Enlargements from 5s.

The Studios for the People

THE CENTRAL STUDIOS,

13 North Earl Street, Dublin.

ESTABLISHED 25 YEARS.

WORKERS! EDUCATE!!

"FREEDOM'S ROAD FOR IRISH WORKERS."—By Ronald.

"A PLEA FOR SOCIAL EMANCIPATION IN IRELAND."—By Rose M'Kenna.

"SOCIALISM MADE EASY."—By James Connolly.

2d. each, post free.

"CHRISTIE'S" LABOUR SHOP, 11 ARRAN QUAY, DUBLIN.

BREAD AND GROCERIES

FOR THE WORKERS

At the Lowest Possible Cost, —can only be secured by—

CO-OPERATION in their purchase.

Call at any of our Branches and test us for Quality and Value.

INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY (DUBLIN), LTD.,

17 Annesley Bridge Rd., 132 Thomas St., 32 Drumcondra Rd., 19 Bath St., 62 Sitric Road.

NOTES FROM KERRY.

Workers' Representation.

Tralee workers failed in getting direct representation on the Urban Council at the last meeting of that body. An official of the Trades Council was put forward for co-option but received only 2 votes. Now that the workers are well organised it is confidently expected that the majority, if not all, of that class-selfish body, Tralee Urban Council, will "walk the plank" at the next election and that Labour representatives will, as they are entitled to, take the place of shopkeeper representatives.

Gierks Organising.

Remarkable is the only way to describe the big increase in membership as disclosed in the annual report of the working of Tralee Branch Drapers and Allied Trades Assistants Union, all the houses being well organised save one hardware firm. There is not a single assistant of this firm's in the association, and it is hard to understand how they are so far forgetful of their duty to themselves, their class, and their country as to remain in these days of enlightenment outside its ranks. Substantial advances in salaries have been obtained through the instrumentality of the Union, and in all ways 1917 has been a successful year for the branch.

Profiteering.

Quite a number of profiteering grocers have been fined what were comparatively small sums for overcharging and short weights in Tralee. It is hoped the new food inspector will continue discharging his duties on behalf of the long-suffering poor of the town, which he has begun so well. High prices and poor quality in food are met everywhere by the worker and do not make his or her lot an enviable one, but when these are reinforced by the profiteer, the situation calls for drastic action. In Killarney prosecutions have also been brought, but the traders there have succeeded in getting postponements on two or three occasions. Killarney has started to deal with the food shortage question and Tralee has now fallen into line by appointing a Food Conservation Committee, in which Trades Councils' representatives are co-operating with Sinn Féin merchants and local clergy. The committee is late in starting, but better late than never.

TRALEE.

CLARE, CORK AND NOTTINGHAM.

A Fir Eagair,—It would be unfair both to "Irish Opinion" and to its readers (and critics!) to let the articles in last week's issue, by E. Guff and Tadhg de Barra, pass without the correction of certain errors in point of facts into which their writers have fallen.

The Catholic Social League in Cork has not published any pamphlets through Purcell & Co., or through any other firm for that matter. Purcell & Co. are the printers, and one of the firms publishing the "University and Labour Series" of pamphlets, but as is well known it is several university men in Cork who are respon-

sible for the pamphlets. The pamphlets are excellent in their way, and were used with good effect in the girls' battle against the firm before Christmas!

The Irish Labour Party, through the mouth of its chairman, has repudiated Arthur Henderson's attitude on the Lloyd George Convention, but his voice could scarcely reach from the Mansion House to Cork in these days of censors. At all events, Tadhg ought to know very well that the Irish Labour Party was not represented at the British Labour Party's Conference at Nottingham. Certain representatives of the Irish Labour Party were sent to meet the Continental and International delegates to the Conference, and did meet them at Nottingham. The nature of the meeting was explained (too abundantly, I thought!) in a recent "Irish Opinion." On the Irish question the Irishmen (and many Englishmen) were not "good boys," nor did they "keep quiet."—Yours,

CATHAL O'SHANNON.

TRANSPORT UNION IN DUNGARVAN.

Waterford County is coming well into line with the Labour movement and here again the Irish Transport Union is the pioneer in organisation. In the very progressive town of Dungarvan, thanks to the energy of Mr. L. A. Veale and a willing band of helpers, a strong branch of the Union has been established and Dungarvan bids fair to rival Bandon in its thoroughness.

In Dungarvan people of different views and even of different classes have welcomed the coming of the Union, and with the goodwill of the whole community and the loyalty of the workers, the Dungarvan branch is already making sure of success.

PROGRESS OF LABOUR IN TIPPERARY.

A few of the victories gained by Tipperary Workingmen's Benefit and Protective Society this year:—

At the Tipperary Gas Works, the yardmen had 24s. per week and the stokers 35s., but in two weeks the stokers should work 145 hours. Now all is changed, for the present rate is—Yardmen, 37s. per week of 60 hours; stokers, 45s. per week of 60 hours, overtime pro rata.

Messrs. Suttons, Ltd., coal merchants.—Their men had 30s. per week and a half holiday; should they work the half-holiday they would get 2s. extra; no time limit at night. They asked the society for help, with the result that they are paid 30s. per week and a half-holiday; should they work the half-holiday they get 4s. for it, and a seven o'clock stop, or overtime.

Mr. L. J. Dalton, corn and coal merchant, was paying his men 25s. per week and half-holiday, or 2s. if they worked it; no special time to stop at night. Now he pays 32s. 6d. per week, 4s. for half-holiday, if they work, and a seven o'clock stop.

St. Valentine's Day was signalised by a great victory in a large factory where

TREASURE TROVE.

Passages of Prose and Poetry. Chosen by G. M. GIBSON. 2s. net; cloth, 3s. 6d. net; postage 3d. Aims at illustrating the life of Man in passages from the literature of many centuries. It takes account of the emotional and intellectual history of the individual and of those problems of education and of social and political reform which recur in all ages.

THE WIDE GARDEN

And other Poems.

By Herbert Tremaine, Author of "The Feet of the Young Men." Cloth, 3s. net. "Have a pleasant touch of Irish humour, but the more characteristic, go in largely moving strains of an eloquent standard English. They give musical voice to a feeling of the desolation of war-time."—*The Scotsman*.

FOR LIBERTY.

An Anthology.

6d. net; postage 1d. More than 200 literary mines have been worked to make this amazing encyclopædia. The best minds of all the centuries here speak as one man, as the real mind of humanity.

THE MEN WHO DARED.

The Story of an Adventure. By STANLEY B. JAMES. 1s. net; postage 2d. The story and the defences of Conscientious Objectors, illustrated by quotations from letters written by C.O.'s in guard-rooms, prisons, or on journeys.

LONDON:

C. W. Daniel, Ltd., 3 Tudor St., E.C. 4.

A POST CARD ONLY.

You cannot hold your own in life's battle if weak, worn, or easily jaded. Attacks of moodiness, languor, depression, and groundless fears mean nerve troubles and lead to brain fog, impaired memory, and unfit one for study, business or pleasure. The chosen ones in every walk of life are the alert, the bright, the intelligent, nature's natural gift, but marred for lack of a little knowledge. A post card to the Useful Knowledge Publishers, P.O. Box 24, Bradford, will bring you a book, neatly bound, of valuable information, post paid free of charge if you mention "Irish Opinion."

A little knowledge saves much medicine.

[Copyright.]

KEEP IN TOUCH

With Modern Agricultural Economics by Reading

THE IRISH HOMESTEAD

A Weekly Journal Founded by SIR HORACE PLUNKETT, and

EDITED BY "Æ."

Subscription 10/- a year, 5/- half year, Post Free

Obtainable only from

THE IRISH HOMESTEAD, LTD.,
18 South Frederick Street, Dublin.

Have you yet tried the

NATIONAL LAUNDRY CO.?

If not, you will be well advised to do so. Postage Paid one way on Country Parcels.

NATIONAL LAUNDRY CO.,

60 South William Street, DUBLIN.

wages were advanced from 25s. for a 60 hour week to 32s. 6d. for 54 hours.

THE SCRIBE.

TO BOOKSELLERS AND
NEWSAGENTS.
TWO QUICK SELLERS.

THE NEW EVANGEL. Connolly's
Message of Hope and Freedom. 12
Pages, Tinted Wrapper, with Portrait
of Author. (Now Ready.) Retail 2d.
Sample Copy, post free 2½d.

CONNOLLY'S SONGS. "The
Legacy and Songs of Freedom," in-
cluding "The Watchword of Labour,"
"The Call of Erin," "The Rebel Song,"
etc. 26 Pages in Art Wrapper, with
Portrait. Limited Edition to sell at
3d. (Ready Shortly.) Trade Orders
being booked now.
Sample Copy, post free 3½d.

Order through Wholesale or from
IRISH LABOUR PRESS,
27 DAWSON STREET, DUBLIN.

Wear the "I.V." Shirt,
The "Emer" Underclothing,
And Support Home Industry.
Wholesale only from
**The "Connolly" Memorial
Workrooms,**
31 EDEN QUAY, DUBLIN.

FRENCH ARMY BOOTS,
Hand-Sewn. Sizes, 7 to 12.
16/11 per pair; worth 30/-

SMALL PROFIT BOOT STORE,
78 Talbot St., Dublin.

J. T. LEMASS,
HATTER and OUTFITTER,
2 and 3 Capel Street, Dublin.

Irish-made Goods a Speciality.

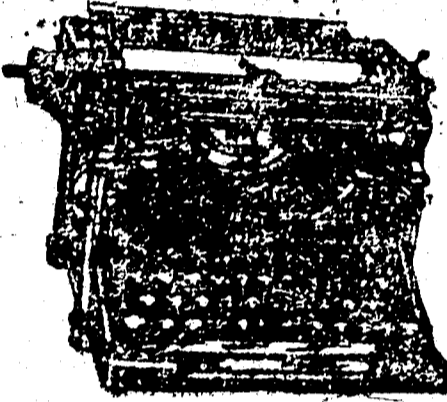
Est. 1855. Phone 4150.
J. C. KEARNEY,
Tobacconist and Up-to-date Newsagent.
Labour and Irish Ireland Literature a
Speciality.
69 UPPER STEPHEN STREET.

"THE NEW WAY"
A MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR
IRISH RAILWAYMEN

**PURPOSEFUL
USEFUL
PUNCHFUL
POWERFUL
PRACTICAL
PAPER**

2d. MONTHLY.
Yearly Subscription 2/6 Post Free.

F. W. CROSSLEY PUBLISHING CO., Ltd.,
28 South Frederick Street, Dublin.



For everything
in the Type-
writer and Dup-
licator line.

FOLEY'S
25 BACHELOR'S
WALK.

BYRNE'S STORES

FOR
TOOLS, RAZORS, PENKNIVES, Etc.

Top qualities. Lowest Prices.
Nos. 60 & 53 Talbot Street.

PHILIP SHANAHAN,
Family Grocer,
134 Foley Street
(Off Talbot Street).

Telegrams: "WATT, DUBLIN." Telephone 4268 Dublin.

GEORGE WATT, Ltd.,
Engineers and Millwrights,
SOHO WORKS,
BRIDGEFOOT ST., DUBLIN.

ESTIMATES GIVEN FOR REPAIR AND SUPPLY
FOR ALL CLASSES OF MACHINERY.

Made Expressly for the Volunteers.
GREEN IRISH LINEN SHIRTS
(With or without Collars) 6/6.
GREEN SOFT COLLARS - 8d. each.
GREEN SOFT FRONTS - 8d. each.
The Republican Outfitters
GLANCY, BRENNAN, AND WALSH,
94 Talbot Street Dublin.

Specialism in Linen Washing

Send your Linen to the

Court Laundry,
HARCOURT ST., DUBLIN.

We have specialised in fine quality Launder-
ing Work and hold Silver Medal and
Diploma. Pioneers of Profit Sharing in
Ireland. We are users of Irish Materials.

Wexford Agency—Miss Lewis, Selskar St.

McQUILLAN for Tools
McQUILLAN for Razors
Most up-to-date Stocks in Ireland.
35/36 CAPEL ST., DUBLIN.

NO WORKER
can afford to be without
GIBSOL

It Cures Cuts, Scalds, Burns, and Hands
Cracked and Sore from Exposure

It Cures all kinds of Skin Trouble, Eczema,
Ringworm, Piles, Wounds and Bruises.

It is made by Irish labour.

No other Ointment is as good.

Of all Chemists, 1/-; or direct from the
manufacturers,

J. GIBSON & CO.,

1 Clara Lane, DUBLIN.

High-Class Tailoring—Lay and Clerical.

H. BOLAND,
64 MIDDLE ABBEY STREET
(Late Todd, Burns, Ltd.)
Trade Union Labour.

CASH FOR YOU.
Send Your Property to
MEREDITH'S
PAWNBROKERS & JEWELLERS,
48 CUFFE STREET, DUBLIN.

Highest Advances on best terms and no
delays. Strict Privacy. Established 1838.

BOWLER'S
FOR HIGH-CLASS TAILORING.
Perfection in fit and style guaranteed.
Specialisation in Ladies' Costumes.
IRISH MATERIAL ONLY STOCKED.
P. BOWLER & SON, 2 Lt. Ormond Quay,
DUBLIN.

Printed for the "Irish Labour Press," 27
Dawson St., by Messrs. Cahill and Co., Ltd.,
Ormond Quay, Dublin. Registered as a
Newspaper.