

# IRISH OPINION

THE VOICE OF LABOUR

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY.

NEW SERIES. Vol. 1, No. 17.

MARCH 23, 1918.

ONE PENNY

## They Never Called Him "Honest John." Filthy Mac Ferson. Guff Again.

### DUBLIN'S DIRTY BUTCHERS. Work for Public Health Department

In no other town throughout the length and breadth of Ireland is it possible to witness the revolting and disgusting practices exhibited by the Butchers of the Capital. In dirty milk, infant slaughter, foul slums, and dirty butchers, we are supreme and unenvied.

#### The Open Sewer.

Where else will you find the open—windowless—stall, exposed to all the muck and filth of the street; and where else will you find trestles blocking the footpath and obstructing the passage of the people? Where, indeed? Yet the latter could be remedied within one week by the operation of the bye-laws; for the bye-laws provide against outside displays. But greater than the offence of obstruction is the deadly danger to public health; for the meat so exposed absorbs every contamination of the street.

#### Dust and Dung.

Dr. Gogarty, in his preface to Mr. Houston's report on the milk supply of Dublin, called attention to the dust and dessicated dung stirred up in our streets, which became mixed with our milk; but how much more filth will be deposited on our meat, exposed all the time to the open street. Ponderous policemen with loaded rifles guard our waterworks, lest the German Hun should poison the supply, while the Hun at home is permitted to poison the people with meat loaded with microbes.

#### Cave Canem!

I have seen—and it can be witnessed any day of the week in Moore Street—ox heads lying among the sawdust of the footpath, lying where dogs can nose at them and make water on them, and the same thing happens with beef hung low to the ground. At any time, meat thus exposed, has a deposit of street dust and sawdust showing on it, and I challenge contradic-

tion when I say that if beef and mutton were transparent, the dirty appearance of the meat would be so revolting that the public would not purchase it.

#### Two Million Microbes.

Just two days ago I witnessed the following incident. A woman in one of the open stalls in Moore Street observed more sawdust than usual on the meat, and proceeded to remove it by brushing it over with a bannister brush, used for cleaning out awkward and dirty corners of the shop, and that meat was destined for human consumption. In his Bacteriological Report on Dublin's Milk, Mr. Houston found 2,300 disease spreading microbes on a single hair, so how many millions of disease germs would be let loose from the hundreds of hairs on the brush? Another incident I witnessed last week was the effort of a male assistant to wash some boards. He dipped a scrubbing brush in water, rubbed on some soap, and his activities resulted in brown dirt-laden suds being freely sparked on the uncovered meat.

#### Profits First.

The truth is that the master butchers do not care for ordinary cleanliness and human decency. So long as they get their wares sold, they care not whom they poison, and indifference has become so habitual that even the Office of Public Health has become accustomed to it and looks upon it as quite all right. Yet this same Office exhibits posters directing public attention to the danger of dirt and house flies in spreading disease. This is what Sir Charles Cameron says: "The microbes of Typhoid, Diphtheria, Diarrhoea, and many other dangerous diseases, are constantly carried by house flies and deposited upon food." And within a few days from now, the open butchers' stalls will be swarming with these disease-laden insects.

**Watch the Carters.**

To be logical, the open stall butchers ought to convey their meat from the slaughter house in open and uncovered carts and permit it to gather all possible filth in its transit; but do they? Ah no! There the Public Health Office asserts its authority for once and in its bye-law number 22 lays down that "no carcase, or part of a carcase, shall be removed from the Abattoir without being properly covered and concealed from view, by a clean and suitable covering; and no person shall sit on any portion of such carcase or part of a carcase, or on any covering for same either within the Abattoir or during the removal of the carcase, etc., therefrom." Again, let anyone go down to the North Wall and look how the butchers treat the dead meat being shipped to England. Do they expose it to all the dirt of the street? Oh no, that would never do for England! It is scrupulously sewn up in clean wrapping cloths so that contamination will not reach it. What is good for England in that respect is also good for us.

**Non-handling Meat.**

Dirty practices by the butchers and the open stall method are directly responsible for the practice of handling the meat by some of their customers, and the following incident may serve to disclose the extreme danger of such habits. A table of meat was exposed on the footpath and a woman wearing a shawl and having a bandaged hand approached. The bandage was undeniably dirty, yet with that hand she turned over, lifted and replaced, several cuts of meat, while the fringes of her shawl trailed over other cuts like a sweeping brush. She passed on, and other women had to purchase and consume the meat thus dirtily handled.

**The Remedy.**

I could multiply instances like this and I could fill every column of "Irish Opinion" with records of dangerous practices on the part of the butchers, but I have said enough to direct public attention to the evil, and I want now to show my readers the obvious remedy for the

disgrace. Here it is. Every meat vendor's shop should be glazed and fitted like the establishments of the pork butchers in Dublin. Outside displays should be entirely abolished and a persistent and careful examination of shops should be conducted by the sanitary inspectors. The public themselves should see to it that the assistants who attend them have clean hands, clean coats and aprons and that their shops are also clean.

**Why Not Co-operate?**

If they were wise in their own interests they would not only see that this is carried out, but they would develop their co-operative societies to include butcher meat and set up a standard of cleanliness and care for public health that would immediately force the private butchers to fall into line or go out of business altogether. Such an undertaking would raise the health standard of our city and it would add also to the civic dignity and prestige of Ireland's capital.

Next week I will deal with the loathsome and murderous practices to be seen in our private slaughter houses.

# THE COMMUNE OF THE GAEL. By E. GUFF.

In his reply to my criticism of his pamphlet, Fr. Gaynor counters on five propositions. I shall confine myself wholly to these, as they cover the chief points raised by previous correspondents.

1. Let me state, at the outset, that the term "communal" as used by me—and also, I fancy, by James Connolly—was used in a very broad sense—that is, as opposed to the "private property" system. The more correct term would be "collective," that is, where the land, in whole or in part, was parcelled out amongst the families—this being a higher stage of development than "primitive communism"—but, the ownership of the land being still vested in the whole Clan collectively.

As no State is absolutely static, but is, rather, constantly developing new forces, changes and relationships within itself, to show exactly for the past where one system ended and another began is always difficult, and, in a short article, impossible. But, may I remind Fr. Gaynor that, if I have not proved a "communal"—may I say "collective?"—system, he is equally as far from having proved his "peasant proprietorship"?

Fr. Gaynor says that to prove the existence of a communal land system I would have to show, among other things, that "the chief did not own any part of the Clan lands," and a few lines further down, he says—"If the Gaelic system were communal, the clansman would—so far as the land he tilled was concerned—be the "tenant" of the ruling authority in the tribe, namely, the chief." In a communal land system, the clansman would be joint owner, with the other clansmen, of the whole Clan lands—how then could he at the same time be a "tenant" of a public officer whom he himself had helped to elect? And if, as Fr. Gaynor says, the chief must not own any of the land, how could he have a "tenant" for something he does not own?—unless, indeed, the whole system were as complicated as the landlordism of the Dublin slums.

The Irish chief did not own any of the Clan land—even of the Mensal Land he had only a possessory use while chief. "The chief held the demesne allotted to him for his life only, in trust for the kin and used its revenues for the

public service and defence."—"Making of Ireland and Its Undoing." To point out the difference between "owning" and "being in possession of" is quite unnecessary.

The clansman, if, as Fr. Gaynor claims, he were a peasant proprietor of the land he tilled, should have had the absolute right of free disposal of it, otherwise his "ownership" is no "ownership." Yet "they (contracts in land) could in general be made only with the concurrence of the clan."—"Brehon Laws." And again (it having just been explained that property in Ireland was divided into "separable" and "inseparable" property) "the inseparable included all lands and a great deal of chattels"; and again, "the person called owner was but part owner, part agent and part trustee for life with right of enjoyment." These few extracts would, in my opinion, prove "collective" property rather than "peasant proprietorship."

The final destruction of the Clans by Cromwell has, therefore, a significance quite different from that attached to it by Fr. Gaynor. The loss and the grievance consisted in that the clansman—hitherto joint owner with the other clansmen—was reduced to the position of a mere tenant-at-will where he was at all allowed to cling to the soil.

That "communal" ownership, and later "collective" ownership of land are quite compatible with the private ownership of the produce has been proved pretty fully by both Lewis Morgan and F. Engels. An example of how it worked in a particular case is that of the old Saxon Mark. Portion of the Mark land was parcelled out for tillage amongst the families; each family sowed its own plot and gathered in the harvest, which was its own private property; then the land reverted again to the common use of the whole Mark.

Marxian Socialism—the "extreme Socialism", to which I refer, is not a "Socialistic system of State ownership." The so-called "State Socialism" is no more Socialism than is, say, the State control of Boland's bakery.

2. I do certainly claim that the ideals of Easter Week were more nearly akin to Socialism than to Sinn Fein. In support of my contention, I point to two portions of the

(Continued on page 204.)

# INTERNATIONAL NOTES

## From the East Cometh their Help.

There is no doubt that the Yellow "Peril" has been abolished, like many other more serious things, for the duration of this great war of liberation. Japan has, since the 12th of January, been looking after the interests of capitalism in Siberia, but with touching modesty the subject has only now become public property in much-censored press references. While Japan helps to destroy social democracy in Russia, the Americans are discussing the necessity of importing "5,000,000 Chinese coolies into the United States to replace the men gone to war," as a Chicago paper reports. Elbert H. Gary, the head of the Steel Trust, is the leading sponsor of this proposal, which has been endorsed by clergymen and profiteers of all shades of opinion. With this movement to abolish race prejudice in full swing, it is not likely that the Japanese intervention will be hampered by any American obstacle more substantial than a few platitudes from the ever-ready Wilson. What American capitalism is preparing to-day Dr. Wilson will think to-morrow. Incredible as it may seem to Mr. Massingham and the English Liberals, the Trust magnates weigh more in the counsels of America than does the Sermon on the Mount, though to listen to the President and his devotees in England one might imagine the contrary.

## Unemployment in the U.S.A.

Lest it be thought that a real shortage of men, and not a pretext for cheap labour, has led to this reconsideration of the hitherto stringent laws against the immigration of coloured races, we refer to the investigations recently made by the American Federation of Labour. Except in a few special lines, there is widespread unemployment. Western farmers are crying for help, but they cannot get workers, because the wages offered are too low and the housing conditions for farm hands are abominable. The Federation reports that in Texas women are being employed at 30 dollars a month to replace men who were doing the same work at 60 dollars. Carpenters and painters in Ohio have been doing unskilled jobs because they cannot get work at their own trades. Women garment makers are working ten hours per day in Virginia for one dollar, and in New York 75 per cent. of them have been thrown out of work by the closing down of factories. At the same time, the Women's Trade Union League of New York reports that "there is no actual shortage of man labour in the United States, if the available supply were properly applied to existing needs. The placing of women in positions formerly held by men is prompted in most cases by the desire for cheap labour." So while the pious Woodrow captures the haloes

of Lloyd George and Co., the profiteers proceed along the lines so well established in the "mother" country. Against the patriotic plea of the "boys in the trenches" stand such facts as the official estimate that in January there were 50,000 unemployed in Chicago, of which no less than 10,000 skilled men were on the waiting lists of the Federal Employment Bureau. All shareholding friends of freedom will recognise at once the vast importance of getting those coolies, at a halfpenny an hour, if the business of getting on with the war is to be really satisfactory.

## The Hun at Work.

Emulating the Hun has for some years past been the favourite pastime of certain leaders of the great English democracy. Prior to the war this ambition centred upon educational matters, and such schemes of social reform as seemed like steps towards the Servile State. Once war was declared it became treasonable to recognise, or wish to imitate, any of the good features of German government, but in return there came a great and continued enthusiasm for measures described as "Prussianism," until adopted and re-baptised. As an instance of the sort of thing the "free peoples of the world" cannot contemplate with equanimity, we may quote the plans of the Education Department of Frankfurt-on-Main. City school children are to be sent into the country for the good of themselves and the community, and with that diabolical thoroughness which has earned for the Huns the democratic reprobation of the Allies, the children are classified as follows:—(1) worker-children, over ten years of age, who go in groups under a teacher, to help in agriculture and stay for several months; (2) country children, over ten, who stay a month in private households, chiefly for health and recreation, though they may help their hosts in light work; (3) children of any age, recommended by the school doctors to open-air schools, holiday camps, convalescent homes, sun-baths, and other health centres.

## "Forward's" Tame Socialist.

We suggest that the above paragraph be added to the cuttings of "Rob Roy," the Blatchford of the Glasgow "Forward," who is so fond of quotations to the discredit of the Hun, and whose ignorant comments on Ireland continue unabashed by the damaging replies of his colleague on that excellent journal. "Rob Roy" is as fond of jeering at the "tame Socialists" of Germany as he is of airing his preposterous views of the Irish question. If he knows nothing about us over here, he certainly knows all about tame Socialism, of the kind that "helps to win the war" for small nations, excepting, of course, those enjoying the

blessings of Allied "democracy." As "Rob Roy" holds the opinions protected by D.O.R.A., he has the advantage over us in discussing, as he did last week, the foreign policy of Sinn Fein, which, with characteristic foolishness, he attributes to Roger Casement. He obviously thinks so imperially that he has never heard of the commonplace, "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity"; he never heard of the French landing in Ireland; he is patriotically incapable of forming any conclusion as to the foreign policy of Irish Nationalism on the recorded facts of Irish history. He jeers at the "cowed neutrals," who refuse to get excited over the democracy he champions, while it bullies the paper in which he writes, as it bullies wherever the capitalistic interests of England demand suppression. "Rob Roy" is entitled to join in the Lord Cecil-Balfour-Milner chorus, but he must not expect that discordant braying to charm the ears of "cowed neutrals" as the psalm of pure democracy. Above all, he had better not take advantage of his being on the "right side" to raise points against Ireland which cannot be argued freely, owing to the existence of precisely those conditions denounced by him as peculiar to the heathen. By the way, can he tell us who "cowed" those neutrals?

## Liberty, Equality, and—Neutrality.

A neutral's life is not a happy one, even when dealing with the gentle Allies. The Dutch, as the newspapers inform an admiring world, have discovered an answer to that vexed question, since Germany waged war on the seas, namely, when is piracy not piracy? Answer, when committed by the Allies for the benefit of humanity. Thus the Netherlands Government is squirming under an ultimatum from England demanding the mercantile fleet of Holland. As has been explained by the authorities, this is not piracy, because the owners of the vessels will be paid for the forced loan of their property, but they have no right to decide otherwise than as the Allies desire. The latter want the ships in order to make the world safe for democracy, and the Dutch are to be rewarded with American grain, when they acquiesce in this noble undertaking. Similarly, the United States authorities seized all the Spanish vessels in American ports, and refused to release them until the Spanish Government agreed to remove the prohibition on the export of certain supplies and foodstuffs from Spain to France, for the use of the American troops. As the delightful "Rob Roy" says, these damned neutrals are truly "cowed," since they cannot control their own products, and must let their ships be "voluntarily conscripted"—how happy the Allies have been in coining phrases—for the service of mankind.

# LABOUR IN IRELAND.

## Industrial Unionism.

Mr. J. J. Redmond, of the A.S.E., took the chair at Trades Hall when P. Coates, of the Irish Auto-Drivers' and Mechanics' Union, lectured on "Industrial Unionism." Messrs. W. O'Brien, D. Cullen, O'Donnell, and other trade union officers, took part in discussion.

## The Test.

Miss Cavanagh's new play was enthusiastically received at Liberty Hall on Sunday. It is factful and realistic, excellent propaganda, and is to be commended to the attention of dramatic clubs everywhere.

## Mrs. Eamonn Ceannt's Election.

"S. C." congratulates the South Dublin Guardians on the co-option of Mrs. Ceannt and suggests that further vacancies in the South Union should be filled by the co-option of Mesdames Marc-kievicz and Gonne MacBride, and in the North, Mrs. Tom Clark and Miss O'Hanrahan.

## "Aliens."

Mrs. Rose MacKenna's play, "Aliens," had a warm, even generous reception from an Abbey audience kindly disposed to a first play, which showed all the faults that might be looked for in a first effort and more than a little promise for the future. Poor Jacques saw nothing but the faults, perhaps because "Aliens" gave him no excuse for dabbling in filth. Only a puritan like Jacques can enjoy smutty plays.

## Waitresses' Strike.

On Monday, 11th inst., the waitresses in a well known hotel and cafe went on strike. The manager proved reasonable and entered into negotiations with a well-known trade union organiser then resident in the hotel, who arranged that the girls obtain an increase of 2/- per week in wages and 3d. in the £ commission, with improved dietary. The strike ended with the girls' acceptance of these conditions.

The correspondence published in the "Herald" reveals the sordid slavery prevalent in many city cafes. The house that was struck was not one of the worst. The waitresses should join up in the Irish Women Workers' Union and compel the employers to pay such wages as will for ever prevent such a figure as Lily Foley being presented on the stage as a typical restaurant girl.

By the way, what has Councillor Bewley to say about cafe wages?

Christie's, Arran Quay, wish us to intimate that all the pamphlets announced last week are not yet to hand, but orders will be booked for early delivery.

## SHOP WORKERS AND PRICES.

We find the Dublin branch of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, etc., has adopted a resolution calling upon the Food Controller to increase the margin of profit allowed to retail food distributors. The secretary explains that the assistants aim at curtailing the excessive profits of the wholesaler. They see no necessity for increasing retail prices or further taxing consumers.

Before control of food supplies, the wholesale traders carried on business with a small margin of profit, the quick turnover of large quantities of goods making this possible. The retailer, on the other hand, with his small turnover, expected and generally secured a larger margin of profit. The profit on tea, for example, was sufficient to enable him to sell sugar at a loss.

Control has changed all that. The wholesale traders (of whom Devonport was one of the largest), have increased their rate of profit. The retailers complain that their profits have shrunk so that they cannot afford to pay the wages they recognise their assistants ought to have.

The sad plaint of the retailer cannot be pleaded by a firm like Lipton's, Ltd., who as producers, wholesalers, and retailers, net all the possible profits on the goods they sell. There seems to be something peculiar in the administration of Lipton's Irish business.

For years back the salesmen of this firm's shops in Great Britain have been organised in the Shop Assistants' Union and all complaints by the staff have been amicably dealt with by the head offices of the firm and the Shop Assistants' Union.

Recently the Irish employees of Lipton's joined the Union, en masse in the North, but with a few spineless exceptions in Dublin. Since the local managers learned of this, they have dismissed 14 men in Dublin on the plea that as supplies were short fewer men were required—as things go, a fairly good excuse.

But all the men sacked were members of the Union, while non-unionists with shorter service and less experience are retained. This requires an explanation, which we hope will be furnished by Messrs. Lipton, Ltd. Have they one policy for Great Britain and another for Ireland or are recent happenings in their Irish branches unknown at City Road?

## W. E. A. Fiasco.

The clashing of events made the atten-

dance at the W.E.A. meeting on Saturday very small. Mr. McTavish spoke generally on educational questions and was followed by Professor Oldham, Dr Burke of Cork, and others. Unless the interest of Mr. Dunne secures Trades Council activity there is not likely to be any attempt made to form classes.

## Do Your Own Work.

But why should trade union education wait on visits from English organisers? Is there less initiative in Dublin than in the Rhondda Valley or the Clyde—where the workers provide and pay for their own education without corporation grants or the "you see—very well" patronage of university professors.

## Vive Le Commune.

The Commune Social of the S.P.I. was a lively and enjoyable event. The proceedings began at 8 p.m. on Saturday and closed about 2.30 a.m. on Sunday. Speeches, songs, toasts, and stories followed feasting, and the Red Flag sung to the tune chosen by the author, "The White Cockade," closed the meeting.

## The Ex-Poacher.

Jim Connell, the author of the "Red Flag," appreciates "Irish Opinion." In a letter to Wm. O'Brien he says that buying the "Freeman" is perpetrating a crime. He was starved out of Dublin 43 years ago. "I am now likely to be starved back again. All the butcher's meat I have been able to buy in the last five weeks is two sheep's kidneys."

## Bung's Profits.

Bung complained last summer in Phoenix Park that a wicked British Government only allowed him to sell one barrel of porter for every three sold before the war. Bung did not mention that the same Government arranged to let Bung have more than double the profit off that one barrel than he had from the three pre-war barrels.

At the moment when Bung is assisting the recruiting officers by turning his men on the streets, he is trying to work up a national protest against Government interference with the brewing trade.

The Irish Book Shop's new premises in Dawson Street will enjoy the advantage of a central position and will prove a useful rallying ground for Gaelic students.

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.

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60 South William Street, DUBLIN.

# The Gaelic Movement To-day

By SEAN O. CATHASAIGH.

The programme of the Gaelic League is miserably insufficient. The outcome of limited outlook of the present committee it ignores entirely the working class movement.

This is a question that vitally concerns the workers, as "C. U." wisely says in his article on "The Language in the Primary Schools." As he points out, "those in affluent circumstances can choose the schools to which they can send their children, and they have strength and means to add at home to the education that their children receive." This the workers cannot do, for after their work they are too tired to interest themselves in their children's improvement, or, perhaps, lack of early opportunity has left them knowing less than a pupil that is in the fourth or fifth standard. It is important that

## The Workers' Children

should receive the best possible training during school hours. And if the workers wish our children to be Irish, then the instruction they get should be Irish, not for half an hour in the day, but from the calling of the roll till the last chime of the clock. This would be possible if we had leaders in the Gaelic League with sufficient faith to remove, not maintain, but little obstacles not larger than mole-hills. The vision of these leaders is small and narrow, and eminently respectable, and they cannot conceive that a thousand workers speaking Irish would savour more fully of an Irish life than one eminently respectable person lisping a few words of Irish in a Gaelic League class. Take

## "An Fainne"

for example, an organisation for Irish speakers who undertake to speak nothing but Irish to those who are also acquainted with the language.

Before admission is allowed to "An Fainne" a candidate must be recommended by two members and an annual subscription must be paid before you will be allowed to speak Irish habitually to other Irish speakers!

One would think that the Gaelic League would honour Ireland's sons and daughters that had the perseverance and courage and love to learn Ireland's language by a badge that would proclaim to all that those who wore it were true to the first essential of Irish nationality without a fee or a call to vouch for your untarnished respectability!

## Shoneenism

is creeping back to Ireland's bosom again. "The Tango" and "The Turkey Trot" embellish the joys of social events organised by the "National Aid," and foreign dances elbow out our Irish dances in many scornidheachta held by societies

whose ostensible aim it is to develop and perpetuate our Gaelic characteristics. We hear everywhere around us the phrases, "Up Valera!" "Are we downhearted," "he's a slacker," "he did his bit," and many other indications reveal to us that the Cock of Anglicisation is again crowing lustily.

Some weeks ago Mr. Griffith suggested that the best monument to raise to Tomas Aghas would be 800,000 additional Irish speakers. So it would; but how is it to be built? Is the Gaelic League equal to the task? Davis, in his own day, recommended that efforts should be made to save it "by inducing the upper classes to teach it to their children, as the introduction of the language through the National schools was a dream only to be thought of a hundred years hence." We workers know now more than Davis did then. The language can only be saved by the help of the "lower classes," and the Gaelic League must recognise this, must help the workers to secure conditions that will allow them to practice their duty to their country.

They must not act so insensately as they acted some years ago when they "made all hell stir" because Jim Larkin spoke at one of their meetings, who showed by his burning and earnest words that the language question could only be solved by the working class. Re are to have an All-Ireland Conference with reference to the Food Problem. Why not an All-Ireland Conference to deal with the

## Education of Ireland's Children?

Why not elect an All-Ireland Executive, representative of the Gaelic League, Labour, the Teachers, with men of science, art and literature to resolve upon all educational problems, and frankly to make the continuance of the "National Board" impossible? If we are earnest over the Irish language let us show it; if not, then let us abandon the idealistic attempt that we may economise our energy "for the greatest of all waste," says Ruskin, "is the waste of energy." We abhor partition, and shout sarcastically about two-thirds of a nation; but there is worse than partition, and that is the loss of the language; for, as Davis says, "a country without a language of its own is only half a nation!"

We may anticipate comment by saying the obvious reply to Sean's strictures on the Gaelic League is that the Labour movement has shown little enthusiasm in relation to Gaelic. How many trade union branches have organised Irish classes—or indeed any other kind of class? The Gaelic League is the creature of its members. Its faults are those of the men and women

who compose it. We do not want Labour to stand outside and jeer, but to get into the League and take a hand in the work. Then it will have its chance to remould the Gaelic organisation.—Ed.

## They Never Called Him "Honest John."

"I say it is the most infamous and bloody tyranny in the world, as recently seen, when every man who does not agree with these adventurers is shot down. Murder, wholesale murder, goes on every day in the streets of Petrograd and robbery of the most atrocious character is practised there every day."—So said John Dillon at Enniskillen.

## Old Man Dillon is a LIAR.

Michael Farbman, Arthur Ransome, Phillips Price testified daily in the English Liberal press to the orderly nature of the Revolution.

"The Cambridge Magazine" this week quotes from the "New Republic" the testimony of newspaper correspondents just returned from Russia to U.S., proving the liberality of the insurgent people of Russia towards those who made them suffer under the old regime.

Old man Dillon is a liar—but that is no news.

## BRIEF NOTES.

"The Two Workers."—Don't be silly. Run away home. You touch the limit of conceit.

Æ. MacCormao is promoting a trade union to be organised like the Land League on the basis of Parliamentary constituencies. We have refused an advertisement of his scheme and he is annoyed.

E. S. (Limerick).—We have an eye on MacPherson and will publish all that the Censor and decency permit.

Scissoned.—Mr. Edwd. Owens, Irish Organiser for the National Union of Shop Assistants, has been appointed to represent the Union on the newly-formed Belfast Advisory Wages Board for disabled sailors and soldiers (the first of its kind in Ireland). Mr. Owens has the distinction of being the first hairdresser to be appointed an organiser for the Union, prior to which he was for a number of years charge hand in Mr. James Doloughan's saloon, William Street South, Belfast.—"Hairdressers' Weekly Journal." He has sheared the fleece of some bosses since he became organiser.

Sunday Closing.—A movement is on foot among Dublin hairdressers to secure a day of rest. It originated with the Employers' Association but has the hearty support of the journeymen. The public can make it effective.

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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. 3d.; 26 weeks, 3s. 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.

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## Educate, That You May—

"If mankind continue to improve," John Stuart Mill thought nearly a century ago, he might reach the highest ideals of his aspiration. Mankind, however has not continued to improve, or in the alternative his rate of progressive improvement has been very slow indeed. It was possible for mankind to improve if the bulk of mankind, which is usually termed Labour, had been aware of the opportunities presented and if aware the opportunities had been grasped. The trade union movement has been compelled to neglect opportunity after opportunity because of the insistence of its individual membership upon increases in wages and improved conditions of labour in factories and workshops. To get workers to continue, it was necessary to hold out to them the carrot of increased wages. Combination was essential, but it was essential to a more important step for labour than mere increases in wages or slight amelioration of working conditions. The brain power that ought, in the natural course of things, to have been given to the great problem of industrial control on behalf of and for the workers had to be frittered away in the direction of strikes, in the details of organisation, in the wearying efforts of propaganda. We have termed increases in wages a carrot because we have in mind the old story of the carrot and the donkey. The donkey is impelled to effort by the apparent possibility of reaching the carrot held at his nose, but with every increase in effort the carrot remains the same distance off. It is the same with wages. Real wages—that is, the amount of comfort or subsistence that can be commanded by money wages—have really never increased, or, at least, have not increased to any appreciable extent. The Iron Law of wages or the orthodox economist remains the Iron Law so long as the control of industry is not vested in labour. With every increase in wages the cost of living goes up, and the last state for the worker is nearly as bad as the first. Yet what could the thinkers of the labour movement do? The leaders had to produce results, and the only results appreciated were increases in wages or reductions in working hours. And that was really marking time, as labour is now beginning to realise.

We in Ireland must really try to discover a labour policy which will not be merely a policy of marking time. It is probable that the efforts of our labour leaders will be frittered away in futile endeavour in much the same way that British labour effort has been. However, we would appeal to our leaders of labour to make it quite plain to the workers of our country that mere efforts to increase wages are doomed to futility from the start. Our labour movement should not be a mere movement for the ploughing of the sands, nor must we endeavour to emulate the ostrich by burying our heads in the same sand and pretending that things are not as they are. Let anyone look at the Blue Book, issued by order of the Right Hon. J. Burns some years ago in London. It is called "Tables Relating to Public Health and Social Conditions." Therein will be found a graphic chart showing the tendency of wages and cost of living in two curves. It will be seen that the two curves moves simultaneously, and generally in the same direction. Apparently wages had risen during the nineteenth century, but in reality no great improvement had been brought about in the living conditions of the worker. The aim of working-class organisation is naturally to increase wages. The aim is to get as much of the produce of labour for the labourer as can be got. To our minds this can only be achieved by a policy definitely aiming at industrial control by organised labour. This is the policy of the National Guilds, advocated very brilliantly by the London "New Age." The policy is very largely the product of Irish brains, as is now admitted by the insertion of the name of Mr. S. G. Hobson on the title page of the book entitled "National Guilds." Control of industry through a series of guilds is not an impossible dream. It may be Utopian but, as Cunninghame Grahame saw somewhere, "the most enduring castles are castles in the air if we put strong props under them." The prop for the guilds, the weapon to bring the guilds into being, is the blackleg-proof trade union organisation.

Organise and educate are our last words to the readers of this paper. Organisation is progressing rapidly throughout the land, every branch of labour is feeling a new impulse towards combination, and we trust that the work will go on without interruption until every worker in Ireland is a member of a trade union. Not a member only until such time as he or she has had what they thought fit, but really and sincerely a trade unionist. Our unions must go in definitely for education. Our workers must be given thoroughly to understand that it is their aim to control industry through their trade unions, and they must be taught therefore what sort of machine they are setting out to control. Only the trade unions can undertake this work; only the trade unions can carry out the work thoroughly, and the trade unions must undertake it as soon as possible. In Great Britain, the Workers' Educational Association, the Plebs' League, and other organisations are doing the work with the active assistance of the unions. In Ireland, Cork is the only place where work of a definitely Irish character has been undertaken. There the University-Trades Council Committee undertakes the direction of the classes. The Belfast Branch of the W.E.A. is not very vigorous, and, so far as we know, it does no tutorial class

work at all. Limerick has a class in being for the study of Irish economic problems. These sporadic efforts are not enough, not even a decent beginning, for the work to be done. Every branch of every trade union in Ireland must have its class for the study of industrial problems, economics, industrial structure processes, and industrial organisation. When we have this network of study circles we shall be in a fair way

towards the adoption of Father Gaynor's policy of control, with which we are in complete agreement. Until then we must continue in the "carrot" system of the increase of wages. Our policy must be definitely a policy of control through guilds, not a policy of amelioration and patchwork leading nowhere. Organise, organise, and educate, educate should be our method of approach. We shall win in time.

## Notes and Comments.

### Editorial Change.

This is the last issue of "Irish Opinion" for which Mr. Andrew E. Malone will be editorially responsible. This change is consequent upon several other changes which have been decided upon by the directing authority and proprietors of the paper. The increasing price of paper is the great fact that all connected with newspapers have to bear in mind. Readers, particularly casual readers, have not given this matter much attention evidently, but with prices rising steadily and supplies being gradually cut down, the lives of those engaged in newspaper production are anything but enviable. The supplies of paper available are now only 50 per cent. of those of last year, so that it becomes necessary to decrease the size of the paper. We have tried to give our readers the greatest possible quantity of reading matter at the lowest possible price. We have tried furthermore to give to our readers and to the Irish Labour movement an organ which in quality and turn out would be equal to the best in Irish journalism. Evidently we have aimed too high. Upton Sinclair said when he wrote his famous book, "The Jungle," that "he aimed at men's heads and hit their stomachs." We have aimed at the same target but we have not been so successful as friend Sinclair. In future, from the next issue, the paper will consist of eight pages and this reduction will necessitate the sacrifice of some of our most prominent features. We gather that in future the paper must be "more popular" in tone and in language, and as we have given our readers the best paper we can give them, we can now only step out and give place to some other person. Who will take charge of the paper in the future we know not at the moment. The supreme control of the paper will in future repose in the hands of a committee of Trade Union leaders, the personnel of which will be published in due course. To those who have helped us in producing this paper for the past three months we tender our thanks and also to those who have sent us their criticism, their appreciation and their advice. We can only hope that "Irish Opinion" will have a bright and useful future. To our friends and readers, adieu.

### The Grocer's Assistant.

The licensed traders are trying a dangerous game of bluff. They have decided to "lock out" their assistants who are members of the Grocers' and Vintners' Assistants' Association. The demands of the assistants are not very revolutionary. A living wage, reasonable working conditions and recognition of their trade union. We have always thought that the "living-in" system was most iniquitous and we rejoice that the assistants are making an effort to put an end to it in their particular business. By this system the employer not only controls the working hours of his employees, he controls his "leisure" time also. The effect of this system is to rob the employee of all freedom of action. The shop assistant under the living-in system might just as well be a conscript in barracks. His entire life is ordered and regulated, in effect he is robbed of free will and the right to dispose of his own time as he thinks fit. It is surely time to end such a system. We are prone to think that this is a democratic age, yet the customers of people who have treated their employees as these licensed grocers have done and are doing are as much to blame as the employers themselves. No complaints were made by customers in the old days when publichouses opened at 7 o'clock in the morning and closed at 11 o'clock at night. Few gave any consideration to the fact that unfortunate human beings had to serve in a bar during all these hours. Not a word was spoken by the customers. Nothing was thought of the inhumanity of working a man for 16 hours a day by those to whom the bar was the "poor man's club." Protests were actually made when the "pubs." were compelled to close earlier, and even when the half holiday weekly was being arranged special arrangements were made to facilitate the "pub." owners. There was no protest made by democracy and the unfortunate "curates," as we have heard them termed, had to suffer in silence. Now their time has come. They are very well organised, and if organised labour generally stands behind them the assistants must win. The arguments of the employers are of the usual kind, but we have heard one prominent employer state most emphatically that "he would be damned if he

recognised any union." This gentleman spoke very contemptuously of the work performed by his assistants. He would not do so, however, if he were advertising for an apprentice. He would then seek to extract a premium, a term of free service and a further term of service upon the lowest possible wages. The assistants need not worry about the bluffing lock out policy, the employers are making too much profit just now to keep their establishments closed very long. Organisation and determination must win.

### Higgins and White.

The striker, Patrick Higgins, is still in jail serving the savage sentence of ten years' penal servitude imposed upon him four years ago. This man was sentenced nominally for "playfully tossing a policeman into the Liffey," as counsel expressed it, but what Labour must bear in mind is that the sentence would not have been ten years' penal servitude had there been no strike. Somebody had to be the butt of bourgeoisie vengeance for 1913, and on Patrick Higgins some of the vengeance at least was wreaked. The policeman is nothing the worse for his playful tossing, but a respectable workman has already lived the life of a convict for four years and if we do not bestir ourselves he must continue so to do for another four or five years certainly. We may be certain that the friends, relatives and acquaintances of Bowen Colthurst did not content themselves with merely passing resolutions. They realised the effect of resolutions and they knew the value of direct action. We may be certain that before the temporarily insane murderer of Sheehy Skeffington and so many others was released a long series of letters, interviews and buttonholings had to be worked through. The Colthurst clique belongs to the governing class. It is probably connected in some way with the "authorities," and the power possessed was used to the full. Colthurst is now at liberty and we allow the man who did his bit in Dublin's great fight in 1913 to remain in a convict cell and a convict garb. Are not the soldiers of labour as well thought of as the soldiers of any other cause? The soldiers of the Irish Republic of 1916 were not released by the British Government without reason, and the reason is obvious. Ireland had to be pacified, so the prisoners of war of Frongoch, etc., were released. Labour assisted in that release and it is Labour's turn now to

Appeal to the Irish people to have Patrick Higgins released at once. Less than that cannot be demanded, less than that cannot be conceded. Let us bestir ourselves so that the man who fought for his class and his rights as a labourer four years ago be not permanently injured by his incarceration. Let us have some action now, we have already delayed too long, and while we are at it let us insist that J. R. White be permitted, as he desires, to return to his native land. White also has incurred the hatred of the governing class by his democratic actions, tendencies and connections. The friends of Irish labour only must not be open to punishment with impunity. We must get a move on so that Higgins shall be released and White allowed to return to Ireland at once. Nothing less will suffice.

### Trade Union Organisation.

The "New Statesman" Lancashire correspondent recently reported an interesting item of trade union information which may be of use to some of our readers. "The shop steward problem in the engineering trades gives a special interest to proposals which have been officially put forward for the reorganisation of the Oldham Provincial Operative Cotton Spinners' Association. During the past year a shop stewards movement has grown up in the spinning trade and, as in the case of engineers, it has resulted in the formation of an organisation of shop officials within the recognised trade union. The consequence has been increasing friction between the 'rank and file' and the 'official element' of the Operative Spinners' Amalgamation—the central organisation to which the local unions are affiliated. The Executive Council of the Oldham Association has had the wisdom to see that this sort of thing is a symptom of defects in the trade union organisation and it has tabled for discussion by the members proposals for amending the constitution. For many years there have been 'shop clubs' in the cotton mills, but they have not been an integral part of the trade unions. What the Oldham Executive now proposes is to embody the clubs in the union organisation." "Hitherto," says the Executive, "there has been no link between the mills and 'districts' other than individual membership, and the only means whereby members could know of the activities of the association was by attendance at the 'district' monthly meetings or by circular from the central office or the 'districts.' Except on special occasions the attendance at the monthly meetings is 'very thin,' so what is now suggested is a linking up of the mills to the 'districts.' The method proposed is that the shop clubs shall become part of the constitution of the trade union of the organisation. If the Executive's scheme is adopted the spinners at every mill will have

to set up a club and all of them will have to be members of it. The club will elect its chairman, secretary and committee, and these officials will be representatives to the management in regard to grievances, acting strictly according to union instructions. Every club will also have to appoint two members to attend the monthly 'district' meetings, and these representatives will have to present a report to their fellow workers at the following shop meeting. By this means all members should be kept fully informed of what has been, and is being done in their name and less should be heard of not consulting the 'rank and file.'" Our One Big Union when it comes might work somewhat on those lines. Let us get on with the One Big Union meanwhile.

### THAT RECEIVING DEPOT.

#### The Suppressed Report.

We need not expect that the establishment of a receiving depot in Ireland for Government contract goods will be unduly rushed. Sir Matthew Levy's report is dated November 14th, 1916. The question of making it public was kept under consideration until a few days ago when it was given to the world. As action is a more weighty matter than publication, the depot may come into existence about 1960.

#### No Irish Need Apply.

Sir Matthew nails the Union Jack to the mast in the fourth recommendation. The responsible official should be British. Very self-denying, for we suppose that bars the door against the Clan Levy in company with the mere Irish.

#### Prospective Chief Secretary.

Mr. Ian MacPherson has been nominated as Mr. Duke's successor as Chief Secretary for Ireland. While in a sense it is indifferent to us who occupies the Lodge, it is well that the Irish public should know the opinions of MacPherson on the State Regulation of Vice in the Army. We repeat the quotation already given in these pages—"... human nature being as it is, I am not at all sure that it is such a bad thing to have a certain house where women are registered and kept clean."

The "Forward" (Glasgow) has this comment:—"Nominally Mr. Ian MacPherson, M.P., represents Ross and Cromarty in the House of Commons, but we venture to say that in his defence of the Brothels, he violently misrepresents and outrages the moral sense of 90 per cent. of his constituents. The Scottish press has contrived to boycott the scandal, and it is noteworthy that leading militant organs like the "Morning Post" deliberately cut out all reference to the subject in their report of the Parliamentary debate."

### The Highland View.

The Edinburgh Branch of the Highland Land League passed a resolution repudiating with indignation the suggestion made in the House of Commons by Mr. Ian MacPherson, the Under-Secretary for War, that it might be necessary to maintain "tolerated houses" for soldiers in France, and expressing shame and disgust that any Highland member should be found making excuses for such institutions.

In view of his attitude the League called for Mr. MacPherson's immediate resignation, so that a representative may be obtained who will not so grossly misrepresent and outrage Highland sentiment.

Our mealy-mouthed daily press has said little or nothing about the scandal, and the outrage of placing this Scotch equivalent of Jamie O'Connor at the head of the English Government in Ireland, with a possibility of his applying his moral principles in Ireland, might have come to pass.

### British Socialist Party.

The annual conference will be held on Easter Sunday and Monday at Leeds. Among the resolutions is one from Central and South Hackney Branch:—"That this Conference calls upon the Government to prove the sincerity of its professed desire to liberate oppressed peoples by making immediate preparations for granting self-government to Ireland, India and Egypt."

### A Fallen Star.

John Leslie occupied the front page of "Justice" last week with a minatory article on "Irish Opinion," which he called "Public Opinion." John's active acquaintance with Irish movements ended in the early 'eighties, when he hauled down the green flag with the crownless harp and hoisted the Red Flag. John still suffers from what Mazzini called the delusion of French initiative.

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céart nuair a bhí sé ag fáil le sae ríolós a  
sábalcar féin. Fan t-rean-aimhriú ríolós  
ólúgáil na féinne go díreach mar is áitid  
rú láidre ag a lán feirmeoirí in Éirinn nó  
an ag "Mr. Supp." atá an féinne nuair  
a bhí sé ag fáil le cumánacáir do bhí b'éiríom i  
rean-Éireann?

### San tSáan Aimséar.

San céad dul amach má éalluigeann an  
t-ádh mac fionnbairt le daoine sup  
leo a ngabaltáir, nó "Pearant ríolós  
ríolós" daoine sup leo an talaim mar  
is leo áimhriú, na earráid eile is cinnte  
nác mar seo do bhí feilb an talaim ag daoine  
fan t-rean aimhriú i nÉirinn. Ná tigeann  
talaim do bhí agáin leat de bliadainn  
ó roin i nÉirinn ba shádas leo riarthú  
"nác féiríom liom nó roga ríolós do dhéanam  
le mo dhúo féin?" agur cuir féinneoir  
an ceirt ceirte an lá rú deiréad nuair  
bhí sé ag fáil le ríolós talaim uair le  
háidre sháiridín ná "plotr" ní rú de  
céad ag na céilidhe nó ríolósá ríolós  
t-rean aimhriú aon ríolós do'n t-reirte do  
dhéanam le n-a ngabaltáir ríolós féinneoir  
is dóig liom sup leo de ugháir ar seo  
leabhar mac fionnbairt do rinne ríolósáir  
cruinn ar an ceirt. Deir ina leabhar (L. 67.)  
"If by absolute ownership is meant  
unlimited and perpetual power of use and  
disposal, then no such things as absolute  
ownership of land existed; and the person  
called owner was but part owner, part agent,  
and part trustee for life, with right of  
enjoyment. The *finé* occupied the position  
of principal and *cestui que trust*. With the  
concurrence of the *finé* the individual could  
confer an almost absolute title. Without  
this concurrence he could not. Though  
the *céites* owned in a sense, the land about  
their homesteads and no doubt called it  
their own, they certainly had not an  
absolute right either during life or at death  
to dispose of it to a person outside the clan.  
Tenure depended on, and was subject to,  
the tribal status not of the immediate holder  
alone, but of other members of the *finé*,  
who had in the property vested rights of a  
character and extent defined by the law.  
Neither the land nor the tenure of it  
belonged exclusively to the individual, but  
partly to the *finé*, contingently to the  
*tuath* or *cinél*—a wider circle; and though  
all had waived, or forfeited their rights, or  
had died, the holder did not thereby acquire  
a right of absolute disposal, for the  
paramount rights of the clan itself inter-  
vened."

### Duan-Seilb na Sgolós.

Tá trácht ann seo ar an talaim do bhí  
i mbuan-reilb na ríolós fíno na céilidhe  
ac bhí sé go leor talaim nác rú i feilb  
aonruine ac go réaladac. Nuair tigeat  
buacáil ós go háidre ríolósáir cáiridhe  
sábalcar talaim do ríolósáir do nó cóir do  
éabairt do i ngabaltáir agur b'éiríom do  
luet an talaim móian daoine do cteú ar  
an talaim, cuir i scáir an aor aorad, luet  
sáilre; gealta gl. agur do bhí oiréa t'hoiré  
ar ríolós a scineid agur ar ríolós an náiríom  
agur sae ríolós do éabairt ó ríolósáir rú

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cuimne do ioc. Is roileirín ó na riaráid seo na c m n s céile ar cor ar bit an "peasant proprietors" agus raon—céile na n-geodeal. Tá oipriodacta bunadapaca eatorra agus tá mearbail ar an dtáir mac fionnbairne agus a meap sumab ionnan ra' éap iad.

### An Bealaic a hFéarr.

Ac an "cumannacur" do bí ag na sean geodealairb? Ní fearacé daimra cao ip cumannacur ann. Ac abair go nglacrao an stát geodealac reilb ar talam na héireann cao ip tuairim le "Mr. Surr" ar an dóig ip fearm leir an talam do cup i dtairbe do poblarodact? Na héireann? Cao é an bealac a b'fearm le toraó an talam do méapú agus do poinnt? Cinnce níor máit an mod píora beas talam do tabairt do sac uinne, nó ionlán an talam do beit i geor no i geortcionn ag an geortcionntact. Agus níor máit an mod acru reilbe do déandm sac bliadain no sac real bliadain. Ba dóig liom péin náir bpearm bail o'feurapomair cup ar feilb an talam nó é págail, an cupo ip mó de, i reilb na psolós mbeas dípacé mar acá pé ac cuprimn ar a meabap suri leo péin an talam amac ip amac. Cuprimn in unail do éac sur leir an ptat no leir na doime i geortcionn sac pód talam i néimn, agus go scaitpeam an talam do mairacó agus do páoerú ar máite leir an ptat. Caitpead na psolósca cupidú leir an ptat ó toraó an talam in ciorcáin o'ioc agus caitepóip an talam do páoerú go tabactac agus go héireactac agus da oteaptoeacó ó'n ptat tuilleacó bíó o'págail nó tuilleacó olna no tuilleacó lin no tuilleacó admaró ualgar do beit ar an psolósairb iad pin do tógail ar an talam psolós do déandpáó paillice go deonac do éparann agus an sabailtar do tabairt do fearm ní b'fearm. An rocrú úo do bíó ag muintir íraeal in allóo i bliadain ar tubail níor bolc an gléap uinne agus an talam o'airpoinnt sac leat éacó bliadna. Noceuirgeap éama péin mar do coméapóipinn poinnt de'n talam in aice na mbairtí móir mar fearán búiro do na bailtib móra; agus comneócamn riar beagán de'n talam le haáaró curpóip náirín tacá eile, cupi i scár mar coeú do psoltaib agus colairtib

### An Talam Fá Coimne an t-Sinag.

Anoir an "cumannacur" na rocuirge seo do éairneocacó le "Mr. Surr" nó an é "peasant proprietors" do páoeracó an t-actair mac fionnbairne? Ní pior daim agus ní mó ná sur eama liom. Ní do réir ceoirpe rocuirgeap ceirp mar seo ac do réir cleactaró. Se an éacó iud le rocrú sur le doaimb i geortcionn an talam do cupituis Dia. Níl don aihur ar na Ruirini nó ar muintir na hÉiréine sur leir an tpsuas an talam. Nuair beap pé pin roileirín uáinn ip féoirp uáinn einneacó ar ar ruairineap ar an tpsias ip fear i leir an talam do mairacó go macaró pé i mbuntairpe do'n tpsuas. An coimgeall amám sur ptat geodealac beap agáinn agus nac macaró don cupo de toraó an talam i dtairbe do don uinne no i n aicme ac do muintir na héireann.

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One encouraging feature of our office work on "Irish Opinion," is the constant flow of evidence that if our circulation is not as big as we want it to be, it is at least widespread.

Orders, inquiries, requests for "Voice of Labour Records," and subscriptions arrive daily from all parts of Ireland, from townships remote from railroads and from islands in the far west.

Mr. Alfred Byrne, M.P., writing with reference to his booklet on the Military Service Act, adds: "I might mention that your journal appears to find its way to all parts of Great Britain, where Irish workers are employed, as I had applications for pamphlet on the Military Service Acts from Wales, Liverpool, Glasgow, Herts.,—Gretna, Aintree, Kidbrooke, Bristol and the Clyde, as well as many parts of Ireland, and all mention 'Irish Opinion.'"

We have the basis, therefore, of a big circulation. What is needed to secure it is a sustained effort on the part of our readers to induce others to buy the paper.

An example of the value of our journal is afforded by the request recently received from a trade union official for a supply of a back number in which a report of his union's annual meeting appeared. He was going to break new ground, and "Irish Opinion" would help him.

We have had a direct influence in form-trade union activities among agricultural workers have awakened a desire for organisation among the labourers in districts, where, but for "Irish Opinion," the advances gained elsewhere would never have been known.

We have had a direct influence in forming several co-operative societies. So while university professors worry us with peremptory demands for a definition of Socialism—which any penny dictionary can give them—we rest satisfied that in our short career we have done something to make the workers class-conscious and to inspire them to action for their own betterment.

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Let us have more letter like that I opened to-day from Glasgow:—"Since 'I. O.' began to arrive in good time for the Saturday trade, I have been sold out almost every week. You might increase my weekly supply by 13 copies till further notice.—William Gribbin." That is the second increase in three weeks, from the Irish-Ireland headquarters in Scotland. As another of to-day's correspondents remarks: "Your valuable paper is a great boon to the workers."

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# THE COMMUNE OF THE GAEL. — Continued from Page 194.

Republican Proclamation of 1916:—"We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland. . . . to be sovereign and indefeasible"; and again, "The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole Nation and of all its parts. . . ." The "ownership of Ireland by the people of Ireland," "equal rights and equal opportunities to all," "pursuit of the happiness and prosperity of the whole Nation"—all these are mere empty phrases so long as the present "private property" system of society—including "peasant proprietorship"—is continued. The only system in which they have any meaning is a Socialistic Industrial Republic.

3. I am afraid Fr. Gaynor is not quite happy in the example he has adduced. De Wet revolted against both the local parliament and Britain—certainly!—but not, as in Tone's case, to emancipate "that respectable class—the men of no property."

Would Fr. Gaynor re-read my statement? I do not claim that a "Sinn Fein government would be an instrument of British law." What I do claim is, that so long as Sinn Fein clings to the present private property system of society—and Fr. Gaynor has yet to prove that it does not—it is quite open to an Irishman, having the best interests of his country at heart, to revolt against it, equally as well as against Dublin Castle.

Granted! Even the Bolshevik government is at present, and necessarily so, "the armed force of the now ruling class"—the workers. But the Soviets, the germ of the new order, are the industrial organisations of the peasants, artisans and soldiers. And when the present Revolutionary Government has destroyed both the internal and the external menace of Capitalism, then the rule of force will disappear, because there will exist no longer a "ruling" class and a "ruled" class.

4. I must thank Fr. Gaynor here for not having interpreted my references to "the Church" as "needlessly offensive to Irish Catholics," as was done recently. In this, as in other things, he has displayed a very fine spirit of broad-mindedness highly to his credit.

He says that "extreme Socialism will split the workers'

organisation in 'twain." Extreme Socialism, so far from "splitting," will unite all the workers in one big union to fight Capitalism, no longer national, but international.

The suggestion is thrown out here again, that extreme Socialism is not in harmony with "Catholic principles" or the "moral law." As I happen to be a Catholic, I should be interested in learning from Fr. Gaynor in what points exactly it is not in harmony.

May I suggest that "peasant proprietorship" will have to justify its continued existence on grounds other than those of being Gaelic—as Fr. Gaynor claims? It will, for instance, have to prove that it is the best possible system to promote the greatest good of the whole nation. Michael Davitt was unable to satisfy himself that it was—Fr. Gaynor might perhaps show that it is.

5. As an example of a few of the problems Sinn Fein will have to tackle, I give—slums; the unemployed and the half-employed; the overcrowded labourers' and artisans' cottages; the demesne lands; the stony farms of Donegal, Mayo, Connemara and Kerry; extension of industries; foreign competition, the army, navy and police. How Socialism would solve them is clear—"the right of the community (all) to control, for the good of all, the industrial activities of each." How Sinn Fein proposes to solve them remains to be seen.

Fr. Gaynor's scheme of "non-socialistic guild organisation" is an advance upon the invitation to Irish-American millionaires to develop our resources industrially and (incidentally of course) to turn our mineral wealth into gold—an advance upon which I beg to offer my congratulations. All that now remains, to dispel the last trace of suspicion that "Sinn Fein" means "unfettered Irish Capitalism," is to have this scheme adopted by the Sinn Fein Executive in preference to that outlined in "The Sinn Fein Policy."

In conclusion, might I assure Fr. Gaynor that it was no spirit of carping criticism, prompted my attack on his little pamphlet? But I, also, as well as Fr. Gaynor, am very anxious to help Labour in so far as I can—because I happen to be a wage-slave myself and no intellectual; and also because the happiness and freedom of "Ireland" are very dear to me, as well as to Fr. Gaynor.

E. GUFF.

## DRUGGISTS' SALARIES.

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Cork Catholic Social League, at a meeting presided over by Most Rev. Dr. Cahalan, considered the strike at Messrs. Dobbin, Ogilvie and Co., Ltd. A resolution was adopted declaring it an invasion of the workers' right, to be dismissed solely on the ground of being a member of the Workers' Union, and calling for immediate arbitration or Government intervention.