

TO READERS

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IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. Vol. I, No. 43.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1918.

ONE PENNY

Labour and the Farmers

The North Explains Itself

Starkie's Sacrifice

THE NEW IRISH LABOUR PARTY.

The many resolutions on the agenda of the Waterford Congress proposing alterations to the constitution of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party showed that the movement was alive to the weakness of its organisation and actively interested in providing for the generous and living spirit of Irish Labour a means of expressing its will in the social and political government of the community. These resolutions have doubtless facilitated the work of the National Executive in drafting a new constitution, for their proposals have this week been circulated to the affiliated organisations for consideration and amendment, and, if adopted, these proposals will bring into existence a fully organised and adequately equipped political organisation of the working class of Ireland.

The emergence of Labour as an organised political party will not be regarded favourably by those in the North or in the South who have made a professed devotion to the interest and needs of Labour their principal claim to the support of the working-class. Their generous promises have never fructified in performance. Their sympathy has wrought no salvation from the evils of industrial servitude. Their service, such as it was, to "Ireland" on one hand, or to the "Empire" on the other, has left undisturbed the slumdom of Dublin, the poverty of Belfast, and the base degradation of the rural labourers' condition. Labour must act for itself.

Here we set out the objects which the Special Congress of November 1st—a worthy day for worthy deeds—will be asked to adopt as expressive of the purpose of the Irish Labour movement. Here are no novelties, no new departures, no principles unveiled by the ap-

proval of past Congresses. Before Congress assembles we shall traverse the proposals in detail, and set forth our opinions, and our columns will be open to full discussion. Meantime we ask our readers to note with care the reception this programme of Irish Labour receives from the press and the politicians. We ask them to remember that criticism is not the prerogative of any class or of any leader. It is no less than the duty of every member of a trade union, however humble he may be in his own estimation.

The decision of Labour's future organisation and policy must not be resigned to executive committees and officials. Every branch of the trade unions must have the new constitution brought under review at its meetings, the sense of the members taken and full instructions given to the Union's delegates to the Special Congress. Thus, if the constitution as submitted is accepted, amended, or rejected, we shall be certain that the decision of Congress is the free expression of the Irish working-class, in the planning of its and Ireland's future.

Objects and Methods Proposed for the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

(a) To recover for the nation complete possession of all the natural physical sources of wealth of this country.

(b) To win for the workers of Ireland, collectively, the ownership and control of the whole produce of their labour.

(c) To secure the democratic management and control of all industries and services by the whole body of workers, manual and mental, engaged therein, in the interest of the nation and subject to the supreme authority of the National Government.

(d) To obtain for all adults who give allegiance and service to the Commonwealth, irrespective of sex, race or religious belief, equality of political and social rights and opportunities.

(e) To abolish all powers and privileges, social and political, of institutions or persons, based upon property or ancestry, or not granted or confirmed by the freely-expressed will of the Irish people; and to insist that in the making and administering of the laws, in the pursuit of industry and commerce, and in the education of the young, property must always be subordinate to Humanity, and Private Gain must ever give place to the Welfare of the People.

(f) With the foregoing objects in view, to promote the organisation of the working-class industrially, socially and politically, e.g., in Trade Unions, in Co-operative Societies (both of producers and consumers), and in a Political Labour Party.

(g) To secure labour representation on all National and local legislative and administrative bodies.

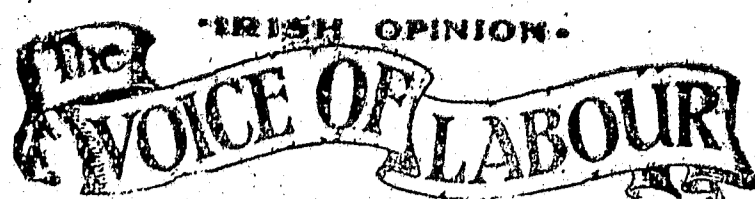
(h) To co-ordinate the work of the several sections of the working-class movement.

(i) To promote fraternal relations between the workers of Ireland and of other countries through affiliation with the International Labour Movement.

(j) To co-operate with that movement in promoting the establishment of democratic machinery for the settlement of disputes between Nations.

(k) Raising the standard of social legislation in all countries to the level of the highest; and

(l) Generally to assist in the efforts of the working-class of all Nations in their struggle for emancipation.



Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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LABOUR AND LAND.

We are asked by the Editor of the "Irish Homestead" to say what is our policy with regard to agricultural labour. It is a legitimate demand, and we will try to answer as definitely as we can.

To begin with, we will lay down principles.

We hold that the land and all the forces of nature are inalienably the possession of the whole people; that neither individual nor class, nor any section of the people has, or can have, any right of absolute property in the natural resources of the country by any process whatsoever; that no generation, past, present, or future, has a right to allocate, bestow, sell, or surrender to any individual or class, native or foreign, any heritable rights of possession in these natural resources. In the words of Fintan Lalor, "we hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of right to the entire people of that country, and is the rightful property, not of any one class, but of the nation at large," . . . "that the enjoyment by the people of this right of first ownership of the soil is essential to the vigour and vitality of all other rights; to their validity, efficacy and value; to their secure possession and safe exercise."

To speak thus is not to deny that it may be to the social advantage for the nation to let, hire, or give temporary tenure of the land to an individual or a class, or a group or a community, but the nation must retain the right to resume possession at any time without question.

We further hold that all wealth is produced by labour, of mind and muscle, applied to the earth and its products; that all increase arising from the spontaneous action of nature is of right the collective property of the whole people; that dead things do not increase and multiply except by virtue of the active principle of labour, therefore no claim upon a share of the increment as a reward for any passive virtue—"waiting or abstinence," as the economists say—or because of legal possession is justifiable. Any so-called "right" to rent and interest is conceded under duress, because of the power that legal possession gives the owner to withhold from use the land and the produce of labour until tribute is paid.

We hold that the ownership of the means of life by any individual section or class places in their hands the power to demand tribute from the remainder of the community for permission to live; that the existence of such a privileged class is a danger to the common weal and involves the virtual slavery of the propertyless working masses to the will and whim of those who control the means of life.

"You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live."

So much for principles; now as to policy.

We declare unhesitatingly for the ownership of the land of Ireland by the Irish nation. We realise that the position of the occupiers of agricultural land has undergone a revolution during the last generation, and we applaud their victory over the entrenched forces of landlordism, but we demur to the establishment of a large class of proprietors as merely a diffusion of an evil system. We do not charge against the present generation that the system of occupying ownership has produced any widespread evils; so long as the tenant remains an occupier and a working farmer the social danger is not apparent. But there is inherent in the system the possibility of the richer proprietor, by process of purchase, adding field to field, becoming a mere capitalist landlord, and using the land for useless or anti-social purposes. The evolution of farming methods due to new conditions arising out of the war already points to the danger.

In hope of high prices for produce farms are being sold at unheard-of sums. The purchase money is being borrowed at high rates of interest, the banks thus becoming the real owners, though the farmer bears all the responsibility. Exorbitant interest charges will necessitate a continuance of inflated prices for farm produce if the farmer is to be saved from bankruptcy. A fall in prices from any cause will bring ruin upon the highly-encumbered farmer, with the result that the agricultural lands will fall into the hands of the moneylender. To prevent this calamity every effort will be made to raise food prices by artificial means against the working-class consumers, they will eventually be made to bear the burden which the greed for land is now imposing upon the country.

At the present time prices are fixed, a limit has been placed upon the upward trend, and inasmuch as the interest-burdened farmer who employs wage-labour cannot take it out of the consumer he needs must look to the labourer to share his woes.

Now, the labourer is not going to be used in this way one day longer than he can help. He must be enabled to take out of the produce of his labour enough to live in comfort. That is the bedrock demand. If prices won't afford a living wage plus interest, plus annuities, plus the modest luxuries the wealthier farmer enjoys, all the "pluses" must be cancelled, the living wage must remain. We willingly concede that the farmer and his family must be paid a living wage for their labour. We suspect, however, that

the loudest cries against the prices fixed by the Controller and the strongest protests against the demands of the labourers come from the wealthier and lazier farmers, who want a return, not for their labour, but for their capital. We know these "farmers"!

We agree that the interests of the working farmers who employ no outside labour are harmonious with the interests of the labourers. The labourer who labours on his own small farm rejoices to see a bountiful harvest as the fruit of his toil and care; the labourer who labours on some other man's farm has no reason to rejoice.

We propose to change that. We propose that the labourers—all of them—should share the harvest, not on a basis of ownership, but on a basis of labour and service.

While the system of wage labour continues the wage must be adequate, must be a living wage for a family the whole year round. The industry must be made to bear it in one way or another. The organisers of the industry, those who are privileged to occupy the land, and have thereby accepted responsibility for conducting the business of food production on behalf of the people, must organise the industry in such manner as to provide this living wage. If they fail to do so, then the wage system must cease, and they will be relieved of their trust.

It is useless to retort that the market price of produce is the all-important factor in the situation. Neither market reports nor treasury notes will satisfy a hungry stomach. If the farmer employers cannot realise enough by the marketing of their produce to pay a living wage it may become necessary for the labourers to take the produce itself, to feed themselves therefrom, to divide it amongst other workers—tailors, millers, bakers, house-builders, etc.—who will agree to labour together for their mutual needs. In other words, to co-operate, to carry on the process of production for use, not for the market, not for the profit of the property-holder, but primarily to feed, clothe, house and educate the producers.

That is our policy, and we support any and every effort and experiment tending in that direction.

Agricultural labour must perfect its organisation, must unite upon the demand for a living wage. If in pressing that demand the employers find their present system of running the business will not bear the strain, then their system must be scrapped, and a new one take its place.

In the meantime, Labour in the towns will support a demand that maximum prices should be high enough to provide a living wage for all engaged in an efficiently conducted agriculture, but Labour is not willing to pay exorbitant prices for food to enable middlemen, interest-mongers, landlords and incompetent farmers, all to thrive on the difference between the price paid to the producer (the labourer) and the price paid by the consumer.

The Workers' Republic. The great only appear great because we are on our knees: LET US RISE.

ECHOES OF OUR CALL TO THE NORTH.

Our recent articles on Labour in the North have called forth rejoinders from two of our readers, who, though they here express their own views rather than those of the organisations to which they belong, may be taken as spokesmen of ponderable masses of opinion seldom vocal in the pages of a "national" organ. Mr. James Baird is a prominent member of the Boilermakers' Society. Mr. Alexander Adams is a well-known farmer in Co. Down, who has actively exerted himself on behalf of the agricultural workers of Ulster. As will be seen, neither is an extreme partizan, and therefore it behoves our Southern readers to suggest the means of overcoming the scruples that hinder the men and women of the North from accepting their Irish Heritage.

Mr. Baird raises a serious question when he refers to the control of education. We remember that for merely permitting a discussion of this subject in its pages, the "Irish Peasant" was suppressed by an eminent cleric who is on the Military Governor's visiting list.

AN ULSTER WORKER'S VIEWS.

To the Editor.

Sir,—As you have dealt at some length in recent issues with the position of Trades Unionism in Ulster, I should like to put before your readers the position of the Ulster Trade Unionist in so far as I understand it.

I admit that the Ulsterman lives too much in the past, and attaches too great importance to "The Battle of the Boyne" and other "stirring memories," to the exclusion of the things that directly affect his everyday life; but in this he is little different from his brother in the South, who is sometimes fond of shouting "Remember Limerick."

It is true he is also opposed to Home Rule in any form whatever, but so far as the Trade Unionist is concerned, that opposition is honest, unlike his political leaders, many of whom simply play the game of Party politics without honesty or principle.

I make bold to assert that if the Home Rule question was out of the way Ulster would quickly become the most democratic province in Ireland.

Always remember the Ulster workman's position is very plain; it is simply this: "Home Rule would be Rome Rule."

I would suggest that the first thing "Labour" in Ireland requires to obtain if the Ulster man is to be won over, is an entirely new system of education under popular control from the infant school to the university, and if this were obtained, or even fought for, it would go a long way to convince the Ulsterman that his honest fear of "Rome Rule" might at least be questioned.

Another thing which tends to make the Ulsterman stand a little apart is the op-

position shown to what are sometimes called "English Unions," but which are not in reality any more English than Irish, but are capable of catering for the workers in both countries.

Might I suggest it is just a little premature to boast of the superiority of the Trade Unionism which, as it were, has "sprung up in the night" over that sturdy Unionism which took root three-quarters of a century ago in Belfast, and in spite of persecution, victimization, and all manner of difficulties, developed and extended until at the present time we claim to be one of the best organized cities in the British Isles.

The fight which the workers must engage in and win if they wish to live like freemen will be terrible, and few of them realize the powerful opposition they shall encounter, because if the masses are not class-conscious their enemies are, and at the first sign of danger all their little differences shall be brushed aside, and a united front shown to Labour so soon as Labour awakes.

I am of opinion that some sort of "settlement" of the Home Rule question will, in the not distant future, be arranged, and then in an Irish Parliament vested interests shall come together for their mutual benefit and profit:

The liquor interest still anxious to ruin the country if by doing so they can make a profit; the farmers, orange and green, anxious to hold for ever **their** land; the clergy of the various churches anxious to keep the children under their control, and prevent them from learning those things they (the clergy) do not wish them to know, and also anxious to keep the teachers under their sway, so that they shall perform various services for the churches without fee or reward.

In addition we shall have to fight all those who neither "Toil nor spin," and all who think themselves superior to their fellows, but the greatest enemy of all will be that spirit of servility which seems to permeate the workers of all countries; also that spirit which in some is known as fatalism, but which, when rightly understood, is just our old enemy, apathy.

Apologising for taking up so much of your valuable and all too limited space, I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BAIRD.

372 Beersbridge Rd., Belfast.

LABOUR LOOKS AT ULSTER.

The leading article in the "Voice of Labour," August 24, says:—"We look to Ulster. We want to know what our Northern friends desire; we know that Labour is awake in the North; hills and vales are responding to the call of organisation, but politically, if not altogether damned, it is dead." I think the latter part of this statement is a great mistake. Because the political views of the North are not identical with those of the South, is that any reason for saying the North is dead? Personally I think the North is very much alive. So much

so that time after time the powers of Britain have been rather timorous about subjecting her to a political course for which she has no taste. This may be right, or it may be wrong, but the fact remains it is a true conception of the situation in Ulster. Abuse is no remedy. If my Southern fellow-workers have certain political beliefs, if they think it is unjust and wrong to be governed by a power foreign and alien to them from every national point of view, how can they think it foolish for a section of the North to hold similar opinions regarding Home Rule for Ireland? It is argued that Ireland has been and is a separate nation. That may have been in days gone by, but what is known in history as the "Plantation of Ulster" has altered all claims for a distinct and separate nationality. What we have now to recognise is, that whether or not the Plantation was right, the result is, we have

two races in Ireland

differing not only in race but in religion and sentiment, and in many other temperamental characteristics, which show them to be dissimilar, and hinders all attempts to weld them into one.

If in accordance with a variety of opinion in the "Voice of Labour" it is right that small Continental States should have a legalised status of self-determination, and if the Southerners of Ireland ask for the concession of the same fundamental principles, how then can they argue against Ulster's contention that as a separate race they also should have the right to select their own method of government?

Labour is beginning in the North to realise the necessity of combined action to meet a common danger, and also how it requires unification of forces to reach a common goal. Once concede these Northern national demands which I have tried to set forth, and I think we will see the North ready to respond to the invitation of the South, ready to join forces, and fight and work not only for the recognition of nationalities, but for the establishment of Internationalism and the development and fulfilment of that greater aim—the brotherhood of man.

ALEXANDER ADAMS.

Co. Down.

Housing.

The Dublin Tenants' Association, 10 Lower Abbey Street, wishes to correct our statement, that it has no constructive policy. Their policy is to demand the immediate erection of cottages with plots on virgin soil, with interest, free grants, and the use of powers already vested in the Corporation.

The delayed publication of the Cowan Report is blamed on the Printers' Lock-out. That is a mere subterfuge. The newspaper houses could do the work, and if Dublin employers are unreasonable, we are sure the Dublin Typographical Society could place the job.

LABOUR IN IRELAND.

Dublin Tailors.

The International Tailors' Union registers another victory for its members in the settlement. Shorter hours without reduction of pay, war bonus and arrears of war bonus from July, are the features.

Kaiser Bill.

After all, is not original. Following the Lloyd George precedent in the Henderson case, he has refused Karl Kautsky passports to go to Switzerland.

National Service.

Neville Chamberlain (paid £38 a week) spent £231,851 in finding jobs they couldn't do for 43,000 persons.

The newspapers netted £54,041 for advertising, and the political agents of Great Britain grabbed £4,424. The show burst up in eight months.

Dublin Chemists.

T. Johnson, Treasurer of the T. U. Congress, addressed the largest meeting of Chemists' Assistants ever held in Dublin, last week, on the necessity and possibilities of Trade Union organisation. Practically every house in the trade was represented. A salaries' scale was discussed, and with a few alterations adopted unanimously. Meetings will be held monthly in the Chemists' Rooms, 39 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin, on the second Monday each month, at 9.15 p.m. Assistants in the country should communicate with the secretary at that address.

As the Irish Chemists' Assistants' Association is now an integral part of the National Union of Shop Assistants, chemist members will be welcomed in the local branches, and in the Belfast Chemists' branch.

Ballymena.

The new branch of the Shop Assistants' Union has opened a dressmakers' section, which is preparing a scale of wages. A large employer, on hearing of this development, called his staff together, and said he wished to settle the wages question with the Union organiser at the earliest moment.

Enniskillen.

The N.A.U.L. applied lately for a minimum wage of 30s. for Urban Council workers, and the great Trimble organ is not ashamed to record that their present wage is 22s. 6d. and had, in **Prosperous Ulster**, been only 15s. before the war. After an indecent discussion of personalities, the time-expired Urban Councillors yielded a measly grant of 3s. 6d. per week, which the clairvoyant "Impartial Reporter" says will mean an increase of 2d. per £1 in the rates.

At present prices, the 26s. will only buy what 11s. 8d. purchased in 1914. "Glorious News" from France forsooth. That's the game, Trimble. You know your Bible. "Verily the eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth." Keep them there, and don't tell the Enniskillen labourers that the great war has robbed them of 3s. 4d. per week.

FROM DROGHEDA CENTRE.

T. Dowling and E. Rooney have established Transport Union branches in **Dunleer, Grangebellew, and Julianstown**. E. Rooney is now touring Meath branches and expects to form new ones at **Athboy and Nobber**. On 10th inst. a meeting of quay labourers at **Drogheda** was addressed by E. Rooney and Larry Redmond (Dublin delegate), who made effective the contrast of wages and conditions in Dublin and Drogheda. Bread-van drivers are joining up, and their section had a meeting last Sunday. Usher's and Boyne Mills are centres of unrest, the men requiring at least 15s. a week more to keep the pot boiling. The new Hall is undergoing repairs. A great opening ceremony is being arranged for the near future to start Drogheda's "Liberty Hall" on a career of enlightenment and social activity as healthy as that of the historic Dublin centre.

Donore section of Drogheda branch is starting on its own, and has secured permanent headquarters. The farmers are asking for trouble in this area by persistent over-valuation of perquisites and rations. The remedy is, all wages in hard cash. Tommy Lundon, M.P., is invited to come along and clear away the debris of his vote-catching machine of yclept "Land and Labour Association." Good for nothing, it only obstructs. The distribution of £300 strike pay has influenced recruiting—without disturbing the hands of the clock at Dublin G.P.O.

E. Rooney spoke on co-operation between the teachers and other labour forces at a meeting of Douth I.N.T.O. last Saturday. A large gathering unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed the strike policy of the C.E.C.

REMARKABLE TRIBUTE TO TRANSPORT UNION.

Congratulations are due to Secretary Donnellan and fellow-workers in Ballinasloe on having established the town minimum wage of 30s. a week and a 51-hour week. The Urban Council, at its last meeting, conceded these terms to their own workers. Mr. R. Moore, vice-chairman, in a speech of sound, commonsense economics, extremely rare in Urban Councils, paid the following tribute to the I.T. and G.W.U.

"The Transport Workers' Union reflected the greatest credit both on itself and on its organisers and its Executive, in its grand effort to better the conditions of the working man and mankind generally" (hear, hear).

It is hoped that Conroy and Son and E. Rothwell will read and digest Mr. More's speech, as reported in the "Galway Express."

"Work or Eviction."

A ploughman on strike at Anbally resisted an attempt at eviction by the local police sergeant on 9th inst. The eviction squad retired.

BIASSED COURTS IN KILKENNY.

The iniquitous perversion of justice possible under the English system of J.P. ship—the great unpaid, for the "Removable" is alien to the English system, in England—was exemplified at Stoneyford Petty Sessions on 12th inst., when D. J. Gorey, the protagonist of the Farmer-Capitalist oligarchy, presumed to adjudicate on prosecutions initiated by the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

The Union had brought summonses against several farmers for arrears of wages under the Corn Production Act, but before the court opened a conference of the parties resolved to submit the matter. Messrs. Kearney and Healy, differences to a local arbitration solicitors for the Union and farmers, respectively, when the court sat, made joint application for an adjournment pending this attempt at settlement outside the law-courts.

Mr. Gorey, in pursuit of his vendetta against the Transport Union, objected to any adjournment being granted, "not while the present ration allowance existed. He did not understand the present ration allowance." The Chairman demurred to this exhibition of prejudice, but Gorey refused to leave the bench. He whose friends were placed at the bar, intended to usurp impartiality. The practices of such persons brings all law into contempt.

The proceedings revealed the interesting fact that magistrates and the defending solicitor were alike indebted to the Transport Union's representative for the loan of the Corn Production Act.

TRANSPORT UNION IN THE SOUTH.

The readiness of Mr. P. Coates to accept arbitration in lieu of legal process in wage-cases will result, we believe, in good understanding between the labourers and farmers in Kilkenny area. At **Dunmore** the farmers and the local branch have agreed to a £3 harvest bonus being paid on 1st November to all labourers employed regularly from 1st July. **Thomastown** is, under its new committee, pursuing claims for arrears. **Callan** farmers have resolved to ignore letters from the Transport Union. When their crops rot in the fields they may change their minds. **Banagher** branch has prevented the employment of non-union labour by Co. Councillor Coghlan, and called on him to resign. The branch is determined to prevent the transfer of turf from the district until local needs are fully met. Eamonn Hayes and Wm. Gleeson have made peace at Clerihan's, **Nenagh**, and reinstated comrade Burke. The push for the town minimum of 30s. a week, a ten-hour day and Saturday half-holiday, is proceeding. Several victories already registered. **Cloughjordan** has now a vigorous section.

Pro Bono.

Objects to our affixing "Jail-Bird" to Eamonn O'Duibhir's name. We can't help it. We are unable to quote "A . . . cap's, the noblest crown an . . . head can wear."

TOM MOONEY APPEAL.

The English Trade Union Congress at Derby unanimously adopted this resolution:—

"That this Conference, representing four-and-a-half million workers in Great Britain, desires to associate itself with the 37th Convention of the American Federation of Labour in its urgent request that new trials be given to Thomas J. Mooney and others accused in connection with the San Francisco bomb outrages, in order to avoid a grave miscarriage of justice; and, further, respectfully request the active and immediate intervention of the President of the United States and Governor Stephens in giving effect to this resolution; and that a cablegram be sent to the President of the United States of America."

Hughes's "Alec Gordon."

The Australian Government, like the American, has been prosecuting the I.W.W. The chief Crown witness, Scully, has now ratted, admits that he was a Government agent provocateur, and that he was paid £370 10s. for his false evidence. Sensational developments are promised, and documentary evidence in support of Scully's admissions have been produced on the floor of the N.S.W. Parliament.

Big Bill Heywood

and several others have been sentenced at Chicago to various terms of imprisonment for retarding war preparations. The retarding consisted, of course, of trying to get wages to meet the high cost of living. Meanwhile the American Senate, on which, at one time, "Nationality" rested its bright hopes, is proceeding with a measure of Industrial Conscription.

"The Socialist."

The September number contains the "Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Socialist Republic"—the most epoch-making document since the American Declaration of Independence. If somebody will present the "Voice" with £20, we will reprint it here. Mean-time send 2½d. to 50 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, for the September "Socialist"—banned by the Dublin Vigilance Society.

The Scutchers' Award.

The Flax Scutchers of Ulster are intensely dissatisfied with the recent award. The South Armagh scutchers demand 2s. 6d. per stone and bonus. Coleraine and Ballymena want 2s. per stone, piece-work; and £3 12s. per week, time work, with £3 bounty for the season, strikers to receive 5d. per stone, piecework, and 25s. a week in time mills, and piecework not to be taught to an apprentice until the £10 bonus to the mill-owner be handed to the teacher-scutcher, the latter to be paid, in addition, the average wage earned in the mill where he is employed. Monaghan scutchers organised in the Workers' Union ask 2s. per stone and a £6 bonus, and improved conditions.

Sutchers No. 1 branch (Coalisland) of the Workers' Union strongly protest against the recent award of the arbitration court, and demands a re-hearing of their claim.

NOTES FROM CLERKDOM

[Exigencies of space compel the omission of some pleasant remarks about the "Voice."]

The recent delegate meeting of the I.C.W.U. confirmed the unity of the profession. Rules were amended and strengthened. The financial basis was wisely recast. From 1st October the entrance fee will be 2s. 6d. and the trade contribution 6d. per week.

The I.C.W.U. is the first Trade Union to register its proceedings on the cinematograph. The film projections of the officials and delegates were shown last week at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, and will be displayed at all towns where the Union has branches.

D. Logue scored a hit at Limerick, where the Commercial Club came over en masse. The gallant Ennis Land and Law Clerks have joined us with their bays of victory fresh on their brows. Galway and Mullingar are awake. Dundalk and Drogheda will open branches on the 19th inst, and Belfast is waiting for us. Waterford, Clonmel, and Kilkenny are brisk centres, but Wexford needs attention. Dublin's five branches grow daily. The National Health Insurance Secretaries are entering the fold.

Hard Cash Victories.

Limerick Gas Company's clerical staff have obtained from 8s. to 13s. 6d. per week increases.

Cleeve's staff at Clonmel has put on 12s. 6d. to the average weekly wage.

The munition factory clerks have attained a basic wage of 50s. a week for all over 21 years, and proportionate increases for those under 21.

Eason and Son have conceded our requests with retrospective payment as from April 1st.

Claims Outstanding.

Cleeve's Limerick staff want 25s. increase. Kilkenny branch is dealing with the brewers. Brooke Thomas, G.E.C., Crane and Sons, the Junior A. and N. Stores, and Sutton's are being dealt with by Dublin branches, which are also handling some points in discussion with the Ministry of Munitions.

The Printers' lock-out still continues, and 14 of our members have been locked out for the past seven weeks. The employers have taught us the real meaning of Syndicalism in this dispute, and the lesson will not be lost.

Economic Conscription.

The powers that be have already begun the war against us in "Beggars Bush," where the colonel in charge tells us that he has orders to get rid of 100 male clerks. Several are already under notice, and a mass meeting to deal with the matter was held in the Trades Hall on the 12th inst. A strongly-worded resolution was carried unanimously, and the Executive Council was requested to take drastic action in order to meet this naive attempt to enforce hunger-conscription.

The colonel in charge seems a perfectly candid and straightforward individual, but the Major Newman influence and the pin-money for the daughters of Merrion

Square folks, etc., govern the situation—so think they—but they may become sadder but wiser folks as time proceeds. We shall expose this petty and shabby attempt to deprive our members of the fruits of their labour.

Now that they have, through four years of hard toil, and sometimes under cruel conditions, made their jobs worth while, they must forsooth make room for the daughters of the tony folks, who will now find things easy, as the wheels are running smoothly. The folks who planned this offensive know full well that not by one iota will their action benefit the British Empire; on the contrary, it will lead to much hardship and delays in payment of the scanty pittances doled out to the unfortunate wives and children of poor brave Irish fellows, who had at least the courage of their convictions.

These people will know whom to blame if by any chance this order of dismissals is carried out.

D. H. O'D.

UNSELFISH STARKIE!

Col. Lynch and Capt. Gwynn addressed a meeting of the staff of the National Education Office on Recruiting. The usual musical honours were not rendered, even when Starkie, speaking on behalf of the following gentlemen, Rev. Henry Evans, D.D.; Lieut.-Colonel Lord Frederick FitzGerald, Lord Killanin, LL.D., H.M.L.; Most Rev. Patrick Foley, D.D., Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; Gerald Dease, D.L.; Mr. Richard Bagwell, M.A., D.L.; Right Hon. Laurence A. Waldron, Mr. John A. McClelland, M.A., D.Sc.; Right Rev. Maurice Day, D.D., Protestant Bishop of Clogher; Very Rev. Robert Miller, M.A., Protestant Dean of Waterford; Mr. Robert Donovan, B.A., the "Freeman's" leader writer; Mr. William E. Thrift, M.A., F.T.C.D.; Mr. Denis Holland, J.P.; Rev. James Bingham, M.A., D.D., declared that any official up to 41 years of age who wished to join the forces would be facilitated in every way. In view of the gravity of affairs the Commissioners were prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

Never has history afforded such a spectacle of unselfish devotion of other people to the God Mars as that presented by the Right Hon. Starkie, the Most Reverends and the Right Reverends, and the pen-chasing barristers of Townsend street, preparing "to make the necessary (vicarious) sacrifices."

Carlow.

The Transport Union branch now exceeds 800 in membership, but the energies of this new branch have not been expended solely in recruiting. The secretary, Padraig O'Tuathail, has succeeded in securing no less a sum than £200 arrears of wages for his rural members, and is actively pursuing claims for a similar amount at present. The urban workers have also secure substantial advances from several firms.

A POLITICAL FREE LANCE.

The Sacred Egoism of Sinn Fein. By Gnathai gan Iarraidh. Maunsel, 1/- net.

The author of this acid booklet seems to be one of those fortunate—or unfortunate—mortals whose disillusioned indignation places him outside all political parties. As an Irishman he must know that such an attitude, dangerous enough in all countries, is particularly dangerous in Ireland, and although his obvious Nietzscheanism has doubtless prepared him to “live dangerously,” he may resign himself to the prospect of considerable abuse and misunderstanding. His title, for example, is intended as a gentle piece of humour at the expense of Italy, the satisfaction of whose “sacred egoism” is one of the lofty war aims of the anti-German coalition. Yet, as with so many of his allusions, it has already been mistakenly understood as a sneer at Sinn Fein. Having carefully analysed, with fasting and prayer, the entire dissertation, I am satisfied that “Gnathai gan Iarraidh” is an Irish Nationalist, an International Socialist, and an Aristocratic Radical of the Nietzschean school. Clearly, this combination, while it may puzzle the unsophisticated patriot, promises well for a candid examination of current political morality.

Readers of “The Voice of Labour” will have little to quarrel with in this booklet, which largely coincides with the avowed policy of Irish Labour. The author points out, as this journal did at the time, the irrational weakness of that section of Sinn Fein which imagined it could support simultaneously the Russian Revolution and the Ukrainian capitalist reaction, which, as we know, proved fatal to the diplomatic offensive of Lenin and Trotsky. He is sarcastic and contemptuous in his references, with most apposite illustrations, to the reactionary, as distinct from the progressive wing of Sinn Fein. It is evident that “Gnathai gan Iarraidh” has no use for “monarchical” Sinn Fein, and that he extends to the anti-Labour Sinn Feiner a contempt only surpassed by his contempt of Anglo-Saxon Liberalism, which must be read to be believed! A more scathing, bitter, and damaging indictment of British Kultur it would be difficult to imagine. Irish Socialists will read it with pleasure, intelligent Sinn Feiners (who are not saved) will balk only at a few passages.

and the reactionary rabblement will return to its favourite idols. If I have read the author aright, that is precisely what he himself would desire.

E. A. B.

VICTIMISATION OF FARM WORKERS.

The I.T. and G.W.U. has, in addition to notifying individual claims for arrears of wages, addressed this general remonstrance to the Wages Board:—

14th Sept., 1918.

The Secretary, Agricultural Wages Board, Dublin.

Dear Sir,—We beg to draw your attention to the number of cases reported to us of farm labourers who have been dismissed from their employment immediately they claimed payment of arrears due to them under the regulations issued by your Board.

The number of these cases brought under our notice by our branches in the country is daily increasing, a fact which furnishes further proof, if such were necessary, that in many districts not only are the Regulations more honoured in the breach than in the observance, but that many farmers, when called upon to pay their lawful debts, have recourse to a policy of victimisation. Further, in several instances such farmers are getting the support of others in their neighbourhood, who boycott and refuse to employ men who are victimised in this manner.

It need scarcely be pointed out that if this practice can be carried out with impunity, it does not conduce to the observance of the regulations, nor does it help to strengthen the relations between farmers and their men.

(Sgd.) THOMAS FORAN,
General President.

Connolly Memorial Treat.

The success of last Christmas treat was largely due to “Casey,” the famous violinist of the I.L.P. Himself and fiddle are again busy raising funds to ensure that the joy and brightness of a Christmas treat will endear the name of James Connolly to the kiddies he lived and died to make happy. “Casey” hopes to give a concert in Dublin this winter. Meantime collecting cards for the treat may be obtained from Walter Carpenter, 44 York Street, Dublin, to whom subscriptions should be sent.

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Legacy and Songs (Connolly), Problems of New Russia (Arnold), Lessons of Russian Revolution (N. Lenin), Should the Workers of Ireland Support Sinn Fein (Russell), Loyalty and Disloyalty (Green), Handbook for Rebels (Johnson)—3d. each.

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DERRY AND DISTRICT NOTES.

Letterkenny.—On Wednesday, 4th September, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Derry Trades Council, accompanied by two representatives of the Literary Committee, addressed a meeting of Asylum attendants, who are claiming an increase of £1 on pre-war rates, and a working week of 56 hours.

At present the Asylum attendants are working 80 hours per week.

At a public meeting organised by the N.A.U.L., a resolution was passed pledging support of the Asylum attendants' demands.

A large amount of leaflets were sold by the literary committee, which is the Trades Council's latest innovation. Altogether a very successful night's work was done on behalf of Labour.

Councillor Wm. Logue has been appointed temporary organiser for the N.A.U.L. for the North-West district. **Trades Council.**

At the Derry Trades Council monthly meeting, Mr. Aitken presiding, some very interesting discussions took place on resolutions, which prove that this Council is steadily marking progress.

It decided to convene a public meeting to further the 44 hours' movement. The secretary was also instructed to call a meeting of the Shipbuilding and Engineering Trades, to consider the advisability of establishing a Federation. The secretary of the Literary Committee gave a splendid report of progress made, informing the Council that the library would be in full swing on October 5th.

The prize-drawing committee, who are aiming at realising £100, also reported progress, which makes success inevitable.

We regret our limited space prevents us giving adequate space to the rally of Donegal National Teachers, held at Letterkenny on 7th inst. We note with pleasure their splendid unanimity, and endorse the opinion of A. Aitken, the vice-president of Derry Trades Council, that the wages of Ireland's teachers constitute an insult to organised Irish Labour.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Olympus Speaks. By Fionnuola Mayo. 5s. net. By post 5s. 3d. Daniels, London.

Cleon. By Eupolis, Jr. 1s. net. By post, 1s. 1d. O. W. Daniels, Graham House, Tudor St., London, E.C.4.

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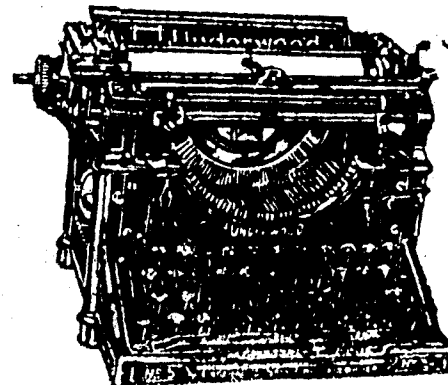
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CO-OPERATIVE NOTES.

In connection with Sitric Road branch of the Industrial Co-operative Society, a Women's Guild has been formed. The opening social was held in the premises of the St. Patrick Branch of the Guild in Thomas Street on 11th inst. Future meetings will be held at 62 Sitric Road on Mondays at 8 p.m. All ladies interested will be warmly welcomed. We hope to give full details next week, with some notes on the Guild movement.

Enniskillen.

At the end of the 30th quarter, the Co-operative Society reports sales for the half-year of £12,561 10s. 6d., an increase of £884 over the corresponding period of last year. This shows an average purchase by members of 14s. 1d. per week—but as half-dividend is allowed non-members, we suppose the average is really less.

Is the payment of dividend to non-members good business? Why not canvass them vigorously to join up? Make them co-operators. The thing can be done. A pleasing feature is the payment of bonus on wages at the rate of 8s. per £1.

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Join To-day—Don't Delay

On examining the balance-sheet one might enquire in what part of Scotland Enniskillen is located. The balance-sheet is printed at Shieldhall by the S.C.W.S. No purchases appear to be made from the I.A.W.S. The only co-operative money spent in Ireland is paid to the U.C.B.S. for bread.

The Society's investments follow its trade. The Irish Wholesale has been entrusted with £25, and no doubt the committee sends a deputation regularly to Thomas Street to make certain their investment has not been mis-spent in the promotion of Irish Industry.

S.C.W.S.

The Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society started its career on 8th September, 1868. Its trade in the fifty years totals 216½ million pounds, and it has saved to its federated societies £7,500,000. It possesses four mills, soap works, clothing factories, chemical works and engineering and building departments. The controllers of this enormous business are nearly all graduates of ordinary elementary schools.

IRISH WOMEN WORKERS' UNION.

We have not yet come to terms with Messrs. Goodbody. This is the fourth week of the strike. It is difficult to understand the mind of an employer who in these days of hardships would keep 100 girls out of employment whose wages were 11s. per week.

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

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