

DURHAM JAIL NUMBER.

Articles in this Issue by Darrell
Figgis and Eamonn O Duibhir,
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IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. No. 57

DECEMBER 28, 1913.

ONE PENNY

Eamonn O Duibhir on Ireland and Socialism.

HOW TO REVIVE THE GLORIES OF CASHEL.

Durham Jail.

A Chara,—I note in recent issues of the Tipperary papers that Dean Ryan, of Cashel, has been on the rampage against Sinn Fein. He denounces Sinn Fein and presumably all Sinn Feiners as being unholy, irreligious, etc. He stated most explicitly that he was speaking as a priest, and not as a politician.

Many of us who are Sinn Feiners are indeed by no means perfect, and our principal virtue is that we love Ireland sincerely, and that we desire, without injury to any other peoples or to any class or creed in our own country, to make our homeland a land worth living in, but everyone in Tipperary, and far outside of it, knows that the Sinn Fein candidate for East Tipperary, Piaras Mac Cana, is a zealous and splendid type of Irish Catholic.

All who know Piaras, I am sure, smiled when they read the Dean of Cashel's onslaught on him as the standard-bearer for the "Ungodly" in East Tipperary.

The Socialist Objective.

I turn to his onslaught on Socialism. In the first place, no question of Socialism arises in this election. Neither are all Sinn Feiners, or a majority of Sinn Feiners, Socialists. On the other hand, if all Sinn Feiners were Socialists they would not necessarily be "ungodly" or "irreligious."

There are various types of Socialism, and the principal aim of each type, nay, the only aim, is to create a better world and give to all the people, and not a favoured few, as at present, an opportunity of enjoying the good and beautiful things of the world. For my part, I see nothing ungodly or irreligious in striving to give the children of the workers an equal opportunity with the children of the wealthy, in securing entrance to the

University, an equal right to live in beautiful homes, to have pleasant holidays, to wear decent clothes, to eat tolerably decent food, to have access to books and pictures, to be able to enjoy the beautiful things that our Great Creator has lavished on the world, and to expand their spiritual natures—in a word, to live nobly and not merely to exist vilely.

We may take it that these are the aims of the real Irish Socialists, but none of us pretend that those aims can be achieved in a day, or otherwise than through steady upbuilding work carried on by the Co-operative Societies and Labour organisations.

There is no possibility of creating a social system in which everybody will be idle and rich, but there is a possibility of establishing a social system in which there will be no idle rich, no poverty, and opportunities for all to uplift themselves gradually, mentally, morally, and spiritually. The workers of Russia, Bohemia, Austria, the German States, etc., have established or are establishing such States, and a majority of these people are Catholics. **Queenland, led by its Premier, Ryan, a Tipperary man and Catholic,** is hard at work upbuilding such a State. We in Ireland who ambition great things for our country and its people, hope to build up such a State, and in doing so we will be only rebuilding the ancient Irish civilisation. The Irish State of the past was composed of a few hundred Tuatha, each Tuath being a Commune or a Co-operative Organisation. It was this glorious civilisation of ours that held aloft the Torch of Knowledge in Europe from the 5th to the 8th century, and sent abroad that wonderful host of missionaries that Christianised and Educated Europe. When the Irish Co-operative Commonwealth of the near

future has settled down to work the Irish people will once again lead the world in spiritual beauty.

The Workers' Lot.

In using the term Workers, I include farmers, labourers, artisans, traders, teachers, clergy, professional and business men. Some of the people may be comfortable enough at present. If they are doing useful work and doing it well no one should interfere with them. But there is a majority of the workers, especially the labourers and small farmers, who have to work hard and have little chance of partaking of many of the comforts of modern civilisation. **As regards a standard of social comforts, this class is the worst off in Europe.** If God has conceded to the workers immortal souls, would it not be a little presumptuous on the part of anyone to shut them out from a decent share of the comforts of this world and an opportunity to develop the best traits of their spiritual nature? We, the workers, may not be as well educated as Dean Ryan, but we have brains and courage and determination, and we are not going to be deluded by those bogeys about Socialism raised by Dean Ryan or by claptrap on our side.

We were told that the European Socialists were anti-Catholics and anti-Christians, but we know to-day that the anti-Catholics and anti-Christians of Europe are also anti-Socialists. We know, and Dean Ryan knows it also, that the idle rich are the most immoral element in the world, and we and he know that it is the present materialistic system of civilisation that has produced all this bloodshed and ruin and wretchedness of the world.

Let Dean Ryan have a look at the

(Continued on Page 544.)

The VOICE OF LABOUR

Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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THE PRESENT WAR.

We were prevented some weeks ago from commenting on the wide extension and the objects of the Allied war against the Soviet Government of Russia. Now that Lord Milner, Mr. Winston Churchill, and other spokesmen of the British Government have condescended to give the British public some explanation of the action of the Allies in Russia, we presume it is not out of place for an Irish journal to say something on the same subject to the Irish people.

Lord Milner offers two main reasons why the Allies and their American co-belligerent sent their armies to Russia to fight the Bolsheviks. The first of his reasons is that the Bolsheviks were assisting the Central Empires and contributed to the fall of Rumania. The second is that the Allies were morally bound to save the friendly Czecho-Slovak armies in Russian territory.

Neither of these fairy tales will deceive a child in politics in any European country, even under the glamour of Christmas plum-pudding. The lie in the first is detected in the real influence Bolshevik example and propaganda had in the overthrow of the monarchies in mid-Europe, and Western Europe was given to understand that Rumania had fallen long before the Tsardom fell, and the latter event preceded the rise to power of the Bolsheviks by fully nine months. The lie in the second story is exposed by no less an authority than Professor Masaryk, the pro-Ally President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, who says it is the Allies, and not the Bolsheviks, who prevented the return of the Czecho-Slovaks from Russia to their own country, and the "Manchester Guardian" substantiates the Bolshevik contention to the same effect.

In any case, these reasons have no longer any validity since the signing of the armistice with the late Central Empires. It is therefore necessary for Lord Milner and Mr. Churchill and all the apologists of Allied lust for war to show some cause for the continuance of the war against the Soviet. Lo and behold, the Allies have induced some bodies of Russians—mostly reactionaries of the very worst type—to take up arms against the Soviet, and it is obligatory on the

paymaster to defend their proteges against the Bolsheviks at the same time as they endeavour to crush Bolshevism. This is interference with the sovereign rights of peoples with a naked vengeance, and Lord Milner is frank enough to say boldly that it is to prevent ultimate consequences which "would assuredly involve a far greater strain on the resources of the British Empire" than even the present commitments of the Allies. In plainer words, it is European and American Capitalism against the Workers' Republic and the Sovereign People.

These are the real reasons why for the past week the English and Irish daily Press have been giving column after column to reports of the alleged intention of the Bolsheviks to carry blood and war all through Europe. This is the camouflage which precedes all capitalist war. Or rather, perhaps, is it the poison-gas which is used to lead peoples blindly into wars of aggression and conquest, the high-sounding motive, not the imperial objective. In the case of Russia it is the prelude to a war of Western Europe and America on a grand scale against the first people's government and the first human social system.

Anyway, we are putting our money on Lenin and Trotsky and the Soviet against a capitalist world. For the People will be masters yet.

War or Peace?

(As passed by Censor.)

People have become so deadened to the stark realities of life that they go on, as if for ever, associating the festival of Christmas with the idea of peace and goodwill. Yet it may be doubted if, outside the family circle, there is anything in history to justify what is apparently one of the incurable illusions of mankind. Certain it is, at all events, that between powers and peoples, and between class and class, each recurring Christmas sees not peace, goodwill and charity, but some new or different manifestation of the old evils, war and hatred, oppression and exploitation.

This is as true of the Christmas of 1918 as it was of any previous year. The war of the Allies against the Central Empires is, indeed, over, and the armistice, if not the peace, prevails. But that blessed consummation notwithstanding, war even on the military field, and plunder and aggression are as rampant and as bloody and tyrannical as at any season of elusive goodwill these last four years. The war against Kaiserism has been succeeded by the war against Bolshevism. It is still war, hideous, horrifying and unjust, and the fact that it does not bathe all Europe in blood, but only a part of Europe, does not make it any the less terrible and wrong.

Nor is the war of the exploiter against the exploited, the dispossessor against the dispossessed, the capitalist against the worker, any the less relentless this Christmastide than any other. Rather is it more open, unashamed and sanguinary, for it is not only conducted now under the due form of supply and demand of

human flesh and blood in the labour market, but it is conducted by the massed forces of Capitalism against the gathering armies of the night.

It is in no less degree these things that prevail in Ireland than on the Continent, for we have a working-class struggling in the iron grasp of a capitalist system and a whole people struggling for its freedom against a dominant imperialism. Look around Ireland—North, South, East, and West—and behold the tattered rags on thousands of men and women and children, the filth and dirt of the houses in which they are doomed to birth and life and death, and the damnable traffic in factory, shop, mill and street; or look again with other eyes and behold a whole people in chains, and hear the cry for liberation that goes out from almost four millions of people, and say whether this Christmas means peace and goodwill in Ireland. The sight and the sound of all these things make nonsense of all the false calls of peace and happiness, and make even the sweetest of sweetness bitter. It would almost make the hopeful despair of humanity, and it leaves the worst of bad tastes in a man's mouth.

But what shall the coming year bring to Ireland? Shall it bring peace, or shall it bring war?

On the industrial field it shall, as a matter of course, bring war, for there can be no peace until the humble are exalted and the mighty humbled, and for the workers of Ireland that day is not come yet, although the first faint streaks of its dawn have appeared. On other fields it is not so easy to prophesy. All these things are not altogether in the lap of the gods, some of them, indeed, are within the determination of the people themselves. Thus far, at all events, not even Empires can prevent national self-determination.

During the year that is dying the people have done well. They have suffered and struggled, worked and fought, held the ground they had won, and gained more. They close the old year with as good a deed as ever they have done, a deed done in the memory and under the inspiration of those who died for them, the complete and utter rout of those who stood between them and the world.

The trial remains. The testing time has come. The people have brought themselves, as we have said, face to face with empire in the full light of day, in sight of all the world. The people have not failed, and if their faith is justified they will not fail now. The trial and test is not now of the people, not now even of a party. It is the trial and test of a nation. And it means one and only one of two things. It means either that Ireland takes her place among the free nations or that she falls back among the enslaved. There is no standing still, there must be a moving forward or a moving backward. The former will be heralded by the erection of a real Parliament, exercising all the functions of Government and assuming all its responsibilities; the latter will be signalled by the emergence of a dominant political party. Greatness will give us the one, littleness the other. Choose, O Ireland, for the day is here.

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

Christmas Week.

Owing to the Christmas holidays, "The Voice" has gone to press this week some days earlier than usual, and cannot deal with any event that has taken place since the end of the week.

Whether the men and women still in prison in Ireland and in Great Britain will enjoy their Christmas at home or in gaol we do not know at the time of writing, and it would be perhaps too much to expect the British Government to do the decent thing for once and release them, and that in time to join their families before the feast itself, as many Irishmen were unable to do two years ago. If still in gaol the prisoners, we know, will enjoy themselves, and they need no assurance that the thoughts and blessings not only of their friends and relatives, but of hundreds of thousands of good men and women and children in many lands will go out to them in their imprisonment for justice' sake. To all the prisoners, men and women, in all the gaols in Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales, whether they are of our nationality or of others, whether they hold all the same political and social faith as we do or not, to all good fighters, to all brave hearts and men and women, in all lands, struggling against tyranny and oppression, and striving and battling for right and justice and truth, we send a hearty greeting this Christmas time from the workers and the Labour movement in Ireland. May all be nearer their goal when Christmas comes again. And whether they fall or rise, may all good political and social revolutionaries keep firmly to their faith, and acquit themselves as nobly as their comrades who have gone before them in other years, and not least in this great year of the greatest deeds in history.

Working Class Education.

Dublin Labour will usher in the New Year with its wonted vision and courage in its inauguration of working class educational classes on lines somewhat similar to those adopted in South Wales and on the Clyde. The conference of Trade Unions, called by the Dublin Trades Council, and already noticed in "The Voice," was eminently successful, and promises well for the classes. Discussion was keen and pointed, and if the same interest and spirit of inquiry are shown in actual class work the beginnings of revolution will have been made. Taken all in all, the scheme is such as should commend itself to the ambitious and militant elements in the movement. It springs from the rank and file, and is essentially a rank and file scheme. At the same time, it provides that association with the Trade Unions and the Trades Council necessary to give it a genuine Trade Union basis. Its management committee is elected by and from the delegates specially appointed by the Unions sharing in the work, and no doubt the students attending the classes will have their share in the conduct of affairs. Financial provision has been made to enable any and every worker

who wishes to take one of the courses to do so without any inconvenience. The courses suggested seem to us to be just those most wanted at this preliminary stage. For it must be remembered that in their first session the Dublin classes will only be an instruction to the regular courses of study and introductory courses in Economics and Industrial History, and Trade Unionism in Ireland will prepare the way for that more specialised and more complete study which it is hoped will follow. As it is, the first session is but an experiment, based indeed upon experience in other centres, but still an experiment, and an experiment which we doubt not will be crowned with the desired success. Of course, the classes will not close with the same fine flourish of metaphorical trumpets which will blow in their first weeks, but that will not materially affect the ultimate success of the experiment.

Now that Dublin has again given a lead cannot Derry, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, Portadown, Dundalk, Drogheda, etc., follow suit with their own courses of working-class education by the workers for the workers?

A. E. M.

Our readers will join with us, and with the readers of "New Ireland," in regret that a severe illness has deprived Ireland of Andrew E. Malone's brilliant articles for the past few weeks. Mr. Malone's is work that can ill be spared in these critical weeks. We are glad to say he is now making a good recovery.

The Invitation to President Wilson.

Writing before any of the meetings called by the Lord Mayor of Dublin to invite President Wilson to visit Ireland have been held, we can only write upon the invitation, and not upon the demonstrations or the speeches. It is well when such an invitation is being given that all forces in the country should unite in support of it, whatever be their impressions of President Wilson himself, and therefore it is good that the Lord Mayor should invite Labour to send speakers to the meetings, and that Labour should accept the invitation. Whether the President will come to Ireland in response to the national invitation we do not know, but we agree heartily that no obstacle should be placed in his way. So far as the people are concerned, and this, we should think, applies equally to parties in Ireland, no such obstacle will be raised in Ireland. But there are other elements and forces than the people and parties inside and outside Ireland, and we are not so sure that they will desire the presence of Woodrow Wilson in Ireland. If, in spite of these, he comes to the Irish people, he will be assured of a sincere and hearty welcome from the Irish people, and as a distinguished President of the United States, and an important figure in international politics, he will deserve it. At the same time we would make it clear, and we hope the Labour speakers at the meetings have made it equally clear, that Labour puts its faith no more in presi-

dents than in kings or princes. We cannot forget that the American and French Republics are equally guilty with the English and Japanese monarchies of the present unprovoked war against the working-class government of Russia, and that there are other acid tests which even President Wilson has not yet answered. For all that Labour will not begrudge its help to those who desire to welcome in Ireland the head of a State which so many men and women of the Irish working-class have helped to build up nor its aid in their effort to secure some payment of that not inconsiderable debt.

In Converse with a Contemporary.

We agree with "The Irish World" that whether Unionist Ulster "will or will not be held to be a people" entitled to self-determination "may depend upon our being able to point to a permeating streak of nationalist voters right through" Sir Edward Carson's stronghold. While it is true that Labour bases the nation's claims upon the historic nationality of the Irish people and their present conscious will to choose their own sovereignty and upon nothing else, not even the most eloquently expressed declaration of principles by statesmen, governments, or even Peace Conferences, we recognise that in this world out of which all public morality and international sense of justice have gone, the rights of peoples will only be acknowledged, if at all, when they are backed by the concrete expression of the nation's will, by something still stronger, and by international necessity and expediency. For that reason we should have thought that when the Unionists in the Six Counties were opposed no efforts would have been spared to poll the full anti-Unionist vote. It is regrettable that in at least some of these constituencies this was not done, and we fear that in Belfast, for instance, despite the opposition of both local Labour and Sinn Fein, the result of the elections will show a Unionist preponderance out of proportion to the real numerical strength of Unionism. Father McCotter's miserable exhibition of fractiousness was, of course, only what was to be expected from that imperial militarist, and the A.O.H. performance in East Down was characteristic; but we should have expected that Sinn Fein and Labour in Belfast would have made some arrangement to poll every available vote, and did not. Yet we know that there are large anti-Unionist blocks of voters in the constituencies concerned. As the matter stands now, it is probable that much of the nationalist opposition to the Unionist candidate has defeated its object.

L'Audace.

We agree again with our contemporary that an embassy in Paris is an urgent necessity, and we would suggest that others in other capitals, including London, which are important international centres, are no less necessary and desirable. But on other affairs which more nearly concern "The Voice" we are not so sanguine, even on the eve of Christmas, as "Sarsfield" appears to be.

LABOUR IN IRELAND

GALWAY SPEAKS OUT.

The Trades Council of Galway—the westernmost outpost of European working class organisations—has adopted and circularised to the workers of England and Scotland a resolution that deserves the support of these bodies, and if they are to justify their position in the International they must make the case of the Irish internees an urgent issue between them and their masters.

To the English Councils we would say that Ireland has earned their friendship by the labours of the Irish pioneers, who, from the eighteen-twenties, spent themselves in building up the English working-class movement. The one-ness of Scots and Irish, only obscured since the seventeenth century, when both nations were prostrated under the brutal Hunnishness of the House of Hanover, is well emphasised, and we look to the Wheatleys, Regans, MacManuses, and MacLeans to act in the spirit of the old slogan: Clanna nan Gaedheal ri guallibh a cheile.

Resolved:—

(1) "That this meeting of the Trades Council of Galway unanimously and emphatically protests against the further detention, without trial or forms of law, of Irishmen and women in British and Irish prisons, and demands their immediate restoration to liberty.

(2) "We are not impressed, and never have been, by the pretext of the existence of a 'Plot,' and their complicity therein, which was the reason assigned for their arrest in the first instance, and we do not, and never did, accept that as the true explanation. In this connection we feel that we are supported by the public testimony of the Right Honourable Lord Wimborne, late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who, after the arrests, stated that he was unaware of the existence of any 'plot.'

(3) "We feel certain that if any evidence was procurable, upon which the prisoners, or any of them, could be brought to trial, with the remotest prospect of securing their conviction on any charge, their cases would have been disposed of before now. And we are, therefore, driven to the conclusion, to which the occurrences of each day that passes lend fresh support, that their detention is alone due to the exigencies of party politics in England and Ireland, is a scandalous abuse of power, and shows an utter disregard for all lawful individual rights, or even the pretence to decent government.

(4) "We direct that copies of these resolutions be sent to the several Trades Councils in Ireland; also to those of Scotland and England."

In addressing the English Unions we ask them to remember their country's history and the struggle of their forefathers for liberty in the days gone by—from Runnymede, where the Magna Charta was wrested from the unwilling Norman tyrant, down to Peterloo and Hyde Park; and we say that if the struggle of your sires in Liberty's sacred cause is still an inspiration to their descendants, it is up to you to use your best exertions to prove before the new democracies of the world that no responsibility attaches

to you for the state of things existing in Ireland, where those who govern in your name are not careful to sustain even the pretence of decent government. We are your neighbours, and it is our desire, as equals, to be your friends.

In our appeal to Scottish Unions we invoke the ties of common blood. We are both of the ancient Gaelic stock—a fact which received recognition recently in this Galway Trades Council, when we united our voice with yours in demanding the release of your comrade and ours—John McLean, M.A.

Copies also to be sent to the Right Hon. D. Lloyd George and to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, also to the Labour Press of Great Britain and Ireland."

EDENDERRY ADVANCES.

Yet another Trades Council to build up the forces of labour industrially and politically! On Thursday, 12th inst., the workers around Edenderry convened a delegate meeting, and established the Edenderry and District Trades Council. Over 1,000 members were represented by the delegates. Mr. Freyne was appointed President; Mr. O'Neill, Vice-President; and Mr. H. Healy, Secretary-Treasurer of the new Council.

Mr. W. O'Brien (Dublin) has promised to supply speakers for a public demonstration to be held early in the new year. It was resolved to charge an affiliation fee of 1s. per member per annum, and all union branches in the district are urged to affiliate at once to ensure labour's solidarity.

The new Council, at its first meeting, was called to support the shop-assistants, and appointed a deputation to interview the employers. Happily there was no need for the Council's intervention, as the Union wage was conceded the following day.

A SIX MONTHS' RECORD.

Ballinasloe Transport Union branch started its vivacious career on the 7th July of this year, and already it has put up the following records.

One hundred general labourers, formerly paid from 15s. to 23s. a week, now receive 30s. Smiths, coach-builders, and coach painters have increased their earnings by from 9s. to 12s. a week. For the various grades wages now run from 32s. to 40s. Saddlers have had their piece-work rates raised, and now net from 10s. to 14s. extra. Carpenters, formerly paid 25s., now receive from 30s. to 36s. weekly. The agricultural labourers moved slowly, but those organised early are now paid 25s. to 27s. a week, with rent, turf, milk, and other perquisites added. These rates are higher than this year's Wages Board scale, and the Board's new proposals still fall far short of what the Union has been able to win without Government help.

Better than mere wage advances is the reduction of hours from 65 to 51 per week. "Better still in 1919" is the motto.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

SEE THAT YOU GET IT.

Now that the election is over and the Unemployment Donation has served its purpose, the boss-class no longer dissembles its antipathy to the scheme. Dublin Sweaters are complaining that their girls working for 5s. a week are actually inviting the sack, so that they may luxuriate on the £1 with which the State for its own purpose rewards their idleness. That the workers should be paid for doing nothing offends the readers of the "Irish Times," most of whom would become lousy if they had not valets and maids to wash and comb and perfume their worthless carcasses.

For countless generations the Wellesleys, Beresfords, Hills, Boyles, Plunkets, Fitzgeralds, etc., have been kept in idleness by the labours of Irish workers. Now they grudge their slaves a paltry 29s. a week—worth about 12s. 4d. pre-war value.

Officials at the Labour Exchanges are turning down many applications for benefits presumably at the dictation of employers. Trade Union secretaries should not fail to notify all complaints to the Divisional Director, Unemployment Exchange, Lord Edward Street, Dublin.

DRAPERS' SWEEPING PROGRESS.

The Irish Drapers' Assistants' Association has in the last few months made splendid progress in the Dublin drapery houses. In one case 354 members have secured advances totalling £2,150 in a year. Messrs. Clery's staff take £2,200, and most of the leading firms' staffs share the results of their united action, in hard cash.

In Cork, Mr. Duffy has secured a war bonus of £25 for this year for the staffs of the four leading drapery houses, but better than money is the agreement that only Union labour will be employed. His suggestion of a joint council to regulate the conditions has been ignored, but he need not grieve that the Union retains its freedom of action.

"The Drapers' Assistant" refers to the urgent necessity of providing more money for Union funds. The rank and file should take this up seriously. There is no union in the distributive trade adequately financed. The members are receiving benefits out of all proportion to their subscriptions, with the natural result that organising work is hampered and the policy trimmed down to the limits of the exchequer. It is bad business, and shop assistants, of all people, should know that.

Canada.

Peace has broken out in Canada with severity. The glad news of the armistice was the signal for sacking munition workers wholesale. In Toronto alone, in the first week of peace, Capital threw six thousand wage-earners on the streets. Demobilisation is being retarded to have forces at command to suppress any revolt. The Government is not providing relief in any shape.

Our Advertisers are worthy of Labour's support. Mention the "Voice" when you call or write.

"It spoke for Peace on Earth by the Creation of Good-Will among Men," says DARRELL FIGGIS, of the Russian Revolution.

Had Michael Farbman in this book displayed only his clear honesty, his gift (so singular these times!) of truth-telling, the engagement of such qualities on a theme so significant could not but have made the result remarkable. When, in addition to this, we find the clear eye and the clean tongue ready ministers to an understanding unspoiled either by the teaching of schools or the suggestion of interests, the result becomes a little more than remarkable. Words have been cast to and fro about the Russian Revolution. The name of its present predominant party, the Bolsheviks, has become a term of common abuse by those who have had neither wit nor honesty to examine its meaning; praise has been bestowed with lying intent; and blame has been bought at comely rates in editorial offices; till, in the result, the fact itself, with its causes and meaning, have become buried under the refuse cast upon it by the studied care of a world's press. Yet it is true that the Russian Revolution is (together with a certain other event nearer at home, and prior to it in time by nearly a year) about the only event of the great War to arrest the minds of such men as are careful for other things than blood, putrefaction, poison-gas, and the clash of empires. And of this event the only accurate register we have met is Michael Farbman's book.

Czardom Provoked War.

It is true to say that Farbman takes no sides, although he affirms his faith in the revolution, and, as part of his clear honesty, never permits any doubt to exist as to where he himself stands. His book is an exposition of the event itself, and an examination of its causes and some of its results. He shows how in 1914 the tide of revolution were rising about an obsolete autocracy; and how, in order to turn those tides away to other purposes, that autocracy deliberately opened the dams of war. The result was, though Michael Farbman does not pass to this, the panic that led to the German mobilisation. The game succeeded; the tides ran strongly, and enthusiastically, past the royal palace, and the offices of the bureaucracy, to the frontier; but the autocracy found itself faced with other problems it was unable to solve, with the result that those tides turned back again to the royal palace and the offices of the bureaucracy. In no part of this little book does the writer more ably unravel the skein before him than in his examination of the problems that faced Russia with the coming of war; problems of the economic isolation that followed upon the rupture with Russia's economic counterpart, Germany; problems of the workshop, of spent humanity and spent machinery; problems of agricultural exhaustion, of inflated currency, of profiteering and consequent lack of movement in commodities; and problems of discipline in the army, and the casting aside of bonds that time and decay had worn through. Added to this

was the fiction of Russia created by her Allies in their own selfish interests—a fiction carefully wrought, of Holy Russia wonderfully become Steam-Roller—which led to increasing fiction. Michael Farbman has not much space in which to deal fully with these things; yet each is carefully examined, and for the first time the truth is told.

People Always Right.

Thus the revolution came; and the tide engulfed both palace and bureaucracy. Yet, though the event was seen, it was not created by the people. The Tsar and his ministers sent out deliberately to create a premature revolution, and to mow it down with machine-guns. But the miracle happened. The soldiers who had long been trained to regard the people as their enemy, now turned and joined the revolutionaries, so providing an unexpected harvest for the machine-guns. The mock revolution became a real one; and the world of governments started forth, when it recovered its breath a little, to praise a thing it hated in its heart. It is just here we feel a little complaint against the limits Michael Farbman has set himself. Yet, within those limits, his hand is competent, and, as usual, just and discriminating. Mirabeau said a long time ago that the people must always be right, for they rise long after their conditions are intolerable, and they stay their hand long before they win their due. So it was in Russia. The people created the Revolution. The Duma not only feared it, but hated it. It only joined when the work was done; and then sought to undo all the meaning of that work. Yet the people forebore with them; for, in this great hour of their history, they hated the thought of disunion. They saw themselves snared and lured; and knew well they were being snared and lured; but still they forebore, and only advanced step by step as their patient sincerity compelled them to do. The Provisional Government gave place to the Coalition Government; but still the Soviets, the real power (and be it said the only honesty) of the revolutionary ardour, were thwarted, and were unable to bring their great ideals to bear upon the world.

The Song of Bethlehem.

How all this led to the calamity—Farbman's more accurate word is "crime"—of the July offensive, which led to the July revolution, this book shows. Dealing as it does with the immediate facts before it, we are hardly given time to realise the great thing that happened when a people, as distinguished from the government of a people, found its voice. For that voice pronounced a great ideal. It spoke for Peace on Earth by the creation of Goodwill among Men. Its immediate formula (for it knew of the great Treaties that were the hidden springs of the war) was for immediate peace on the basis of "No annexations and no indemnities." The power of the ideal spread among the nations; Germany found herself unable to undertake an initiative against Russia for fear of what might chance within her borders. The governments were afraid, and the first governments to act were England and France. It was to silence that ideal that the July offensive was devised by them. And when the July offensive ended in disaster, they turned to subtler methods. The Press of the world was suborned against Russia. When its people needed assistance and comradely aid, they received abuse and calculated falsehood, with considerable harm to themselves, but with greater harm to truth and to virtue. It is to dispel that falsehood Michael Farbman has written his book, and we hope it will be widely read. We hope, too, he will continue his theme through its next and most intricate period, from the November Revolution onwards, through the Bolshevik rise to power.

DARRELL FIGGIS.

Russia and the Struggle for Peace. By Michael Farbman. 5s. net. At the Office of "The Herald," 2 Gough Square, London, E.C.

Tut! Tut! Willie.

"Sinn Fein is really an effort to run Ireland on Tolstoyan lines," says the Catholic Socialist Note-maker in "Forward." He has never seen a hurley.

The NEW RUSSIA

A Souvenir of the First Anniversary of the Russian Soviet Republic, 1917-18

Contains the Constitution of the Soviet Republic and Decrees with Articles by Zelda Kahan Coates, H. Sheehy Skeffington, "Libertia" of the "Worker" (R. McKenna), Edén and Cedar Paul.

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A NOVEL OF SLUMDOM.

The major feast of Christmas Day is also the feast of that saint whose name is absent from all calendars, Tiny Tim. And the novelist whose offerings at the lesser shrine are sent for review within the octave is sure to disarm criticism. The artless story of "Dinny of the Doorsteps" warms cold hearts, as does "The Christmas Carol," and perhaps will open blind eyes to the dangers of social life in a community which, with all its outward parade of religion, has very little of that quality as defined by Saint James.

Miss Purdon's novel is not, despite the publisher's puff, a realistic picture of life in Dublin slums. For no publisher would dare offend the self-righteousness of Dublin by sending out from his premises a truthful presentment of the communal crime that is the life of Dublin's poor. And if any were so indifferent to public opinion, or so courageous as to risk its wrath, the insurance companies would decline to honour their policies.

Dinny is brought into the world at the cost of his mother's life, and with the fearfully casual aid of a medical student from an hospital. Gran Molally, from County Clare, takes the boy and his sister Bridgeen under her care, and shares with them the comforts of a cellar in an old Georgian mansion, descended from its grandeur to be a human rabbitry. "The cellar of the old mansion was very dark, it was also damp in the extreme, but it was cheap." Such are the homes of boys and girls in twentieth century Dublin.

There was no room in the inn two thousand years ago. There is no room now. Miss Purdon weaves romance into the lives of her flower-sellers, hawkers, and beggars, but does it without mawkishness. Her charitable young lady has misgivings about charity organisations, distrusts the maxims of the social economists, does good by impulse, and enjoys the gratitude that bread tickets and officialism never inspire.

The gloss of sentiment makes the reading of Dinny's adventures a genuine entertainment, but we would have the reader remember that the sentiment is fiction, the hard, ugly evils of child neglect are facts. We should hope, too, that the prelates, Catholic and Anglican, who at this season make speeches at charity society meetings, will base their orations on "Dinny of the Doorstep" rather than on the statistical returns furnished by the not uncomfortable official administrators of the heartless charities of the robber-class, to whose greed we owe the miseries of the Dinnies and Bridgeens of Dublin.

Dinny of the Doorstep, by K. F. Purdon.
Talbot Press, Dublin. Fisher Unwin,
London. 6/- net.

Another Forecast.

Like poets, there is no end to the long line of political prophets these days. From among several preferred tips we select that of "A Red Republican" as the most likely for a winner. He says Sinn Fein will hold 70 seats, the Unionists 25, and the Home Rulers 10, adding that he counts Waterford among the latter. We should be sorry to think so badly of Waterford as all that implies.

WHY ENGLAND FIGHTS RUSSIA.

Sir George Younger—We are there to keep order, and don't you know that Russia owes us millions of money?

[None of mine. Try Dartry Hall.]

Bonar Law—The troops are not in Soviet Russia, and the work they are doing is to save the people from starvation.

[They use naval guns for the purpose.]

The "Financial News" says events in Russia promise an international suzerainty over Russia. This will make Russian securities the cream of the international market.

[Cheer up, Sir Scott, all is not yet lost to the Munster and Leinster.]

Incidentally, it is hoped that the Brito-French campaign in Russia will lead to the recovery of the money Murphy dropped there.

Who are the Loonies?

The Richmond Asylum attendants work 13½ hours per day. They should become patients.

A. E.'s Warning Justified.

The rumour that Tedcastle McCormick's ships are to be acquired by an English trust justifies us asking if the interests of national industry are safe in the hands of private owners.

THE CONNOLLY MEMORIAL TREAT.

We can before the event extend to Walter Carpenter and his Committee our hearty congratulations on the annual treat by which they honour the memory of James Connolly.

An article in last week's "Labour Leader" by "Casey" shows that he, like all exiles, yearns at Christmastide for the homeland. In half-a-page, he presents a summary of English rule that is at once indictment, proof, and verdict against its continuance. One quotation alone enshrines the case:—

"Under the hated Hun rule even the population of Mulhausen has doubled itself since 1871. The population of Ireland during the last 60 years has decreased by 4½ millions."

To "Casey's" affection for his own town the Treat owes much. His love for Connolly has not lessened because the nameless grave divides them. "Connolly's heart and soul were dedicated to the cause of the people," says "Casey." "He was a great historian, a true Socialist with heart aflame. He is the first Socialist martyr in Irish history, and he died to save Ireland from conscription. He dedicated his life to the children of all nations, and he died for his faith."

(Subscription List next week.)

Dublin Working-Class Education Conference.

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Irish Industrial History.

Lecturer: CATHAL O'SHANNON,
Editor, THE VOICE OF LABOUR.

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Secretary, Trades Hall.

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Denmark House, 21 Great Denmark Street.

This was James Connolly's estimate of the I. T. & G. W. U.

"It found the Workers of Ireland on their knees, and has striven to raise them to the erect position of manhood; it found them with all the vices of slavery in their souls, and it strove to eradicate these vices, and replace them with some of the virtues of free men; it found them with no other weapons of defence than the arts of the liar, the lickspittle and the toady, and it combined them and taught them to abhor these arts and rely proudly on the defensive power of combination."

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UNION NOTES.

Bungarvan.
The Transport Union and N.U.R. are projecting a Co-operative Store.

Waterford.
Corporation labourers go up to 40s. a week—an advance of 13s. since last May.

Listowel.
The four-week-old Transport branch has won a 5s. weekly increase from the U.D.C.

Donore.
Secretary Madden reports that his branch (I.T. G.W.U.) has secured £75 12s. 6d. in arrears of wages—without the aid of the Wages Board.

Belfast.
The coal porters' strike has been settled by a re-adjustment of rates, which gives an average advance of 5s. per day. Weigh-bills will now be produced by employers so that men can check the wages tendered to them.

Kilkenny.
A hold-up of flour on the outskirts of the town induced Molloy, the baker, to meet the Trade Union officials, whom for twenty years he has refused to recognise. Mr. Cullen has succeeded in bringing all the bakers employed by Molloy within the fold.

Castlecomer.
The report of the R.D.C. discussion on the Housing problem raises no lively hope of a satisfactory solution. The remedy is a new Council, and the local labour organisations should look to the register and select their candidates. Nobody can do labour's work but labour's self.

Longford.
The bakeries dispute here has been settled by Tom Farren, who has secured advances of 10s. a week for the bakery staffs, whose wages are now 47s. for foremen and 37s. for helpers. Yardmen obtained 4s. a week increase. During the strike the Union arranged for a supply of bread from the Dublin Industrial Co-operative Society. We could wish that trade unionists nearer Dublin had a livelier appreciation of the good work done by this Society, not only in disputes, but all the time.

Cork.
The Tramway Company has offered the advance wages as follows:—Motormen and conductors, 6s. weekly; labourers, 4s. 6d.; boys under 18 years a proportionate sum, and point-boys 1s. 6d., the advances to be retrospective as from 9th October.

A concentration of forces is taking place, the various craft sections in Cork being re-grouped in branches to promote efficient management and co-ordinated action.

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ADJOINING
ARNOTT'S

Notice.—New orders and alterations for the "Voice" should arrive at the office not later than Tuesday evening. Otherwise supplies cannot be guaranteed or changes made.

Eamonn O Duibhir on Ireland and Socialism. (From Front Page.)

state of the town he lives in. Cashel, once a proud and regal city, is to-day a poverty-stricken little town. How many of the happy children born within sight of those glorious ruins on the Rock, have had to go overseas ere they attained the bloom of manhood or womanhood to become in nine cases out of ten the drudges of half-heathen foreigners? How many to become mere cannon-fodder?

And will not the tide of emigration set in again in the near future and drain away the life-blood of the little town unless some practical Socialistic thing is done to give work and comfort and joy to the workers of the town. For instance, the town is surrounded by a

wilderness of grass.

Why not the townspeople insist on a reasonable proportion of this being tilled, and may it not also be feasible for the townspeople to get possession of some of this land and form themselves into a Co-operative Society to till it to produce pigs and poultry, eggs and honey from it.

May there not be room for a Co-operative industry of some kind in the town, as remote Templecrone, in Donegal, has, through its Co-operative industry, captured the cotton glove business formerly held by the Austrians. Why not a Co-operative bacon factory for Cashel? This would be a kind of Socialism—at least something to start off with—but I don't think it would in the least make the people of Cashel "ungodly" or "irreligious."

The Gaelic Culture.

To turn from material things, I might hint that a little Gaelic culture would not be amiss either, and if Cashel once became really alive to the importance of reviving the national language and culture it would become very much alive and alert in other ways too.

Its citizens, refreshed in mind by the gleams from out our glorious past that would have thrilled their souls, and braced up by the healthful nation-building ideas that the study of the language and history of our people would have created, would set out to make Cashel as of yore beautiful and vigorous. Would not a good library in the Town Hall, Irish classes, weekly ceilidhs of Irish and Anglo-Irish songs, music, and dances, a dramatic club staging healthy national dramas and occasional lectures, stir up a new life in the town and make it a place worth living in? All such work will, of course, inevitably tend towards the creation of an Irish Co-operative Commonwealth or Social Commune—either name signifies what was known in ancient Ireland as the Tuath—for the instinct of our race is towards such and not towards a materialistic servile State. Dean Ryan should, when the heat of the election is over, dismiss his prejudices against those ideas he deems ungodly, read Father McNabb's articles in "The Catholic Times," and get the opinion of some priests in Queensland on Premier Ryan's experiment in Socialism. He

ought also read "The Voice of Labour," "The Irish Homestead," and "New Ireland." Having probed the question thoroughly he will, I feel sure, get to work on the above programme, or a better one, in Cashel.

If he does not do so, that does not absolve the Sinn Fein Club, the Transport Workers' Union, or the Gaelic League from getting to work along those lines. In fact, if those organisations do not do so, there is no excuse for their existence. Waving the tri-colour, orating, or even winning the election, will not produce the State we need in Ireland. No. Only sane, constructive work and persistent educative propaganda and the will to suffer and make sacrifices can lead us to the goal of our ideal.

EAMON O'DUIBHIR.

DYNAMITE IN AN IDEA.

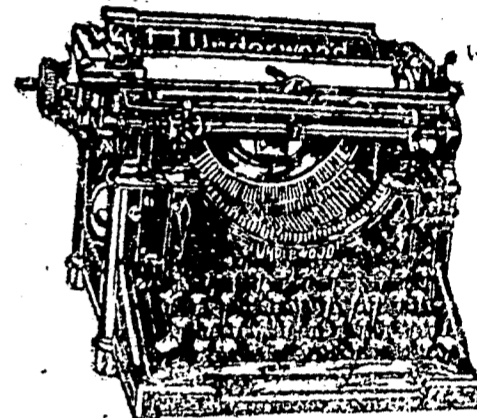
A week or two ago we said that with the example of the risen social democracies and the subject peoples of Europe before them, it is the urgent duty of the people of Ireland to constitute such local and national organs as will secure the free, full, and effective expression of the national will. If it is not too much to hope for in the heat of a general election, we would ask our readers to examine that idea and consider whether it does not bear within it the seeds from which a liberated democracy in Ireland might spring. We do not propose to discuss now the idea in detail, for we prefer that the people themselves should discuss it, and we are content for the moment with suggesting that it should receive the careful and deliberate consideration of those sections of the community which constitute the effective driving force of the nation. We refer specifically to those bodies which in Ireland correspond to the constituent elements of the Soviets in Russia, Germany, and Austria. Those bodies, as all the world knows to its delight or chagrin, are the soldiers, the workers, and the peasants, and they are not only the constituent elements of the Soviets, they are the backbone of the people in every country. In Ireland, as we say, we have elements which correspond to some extent to these bodies. There are differences, of course, due to the difference in the positions of Ireland and of Russia and Germany, but they are differences which we do not think rule the idea of an Irish Soviet out of the drift of our argument. Indeed, on other occasions Ireland came very near to presenting herself with Soviets. What, for instance, was the famous Cork Food Control Committee of January last but a local Soviet in embryo? And what was the greater Committee which drew up in Dublin the national scheme of food control, the ablest piece of constructive work anybody designed in Ireland within the twelvemonth, but a national Soviet in embryo? Indeed, but for the unfortunate circumstance that the Mansion House Conference was so constituted that under no conditions could it become a working body and the equally unfortunate want of instructive thought in the mass of the people, the local Defence Committees and the Conference itself

contained within them nuclei of both local and national Soviets. They would have been rough and ready Soviets, we freely admit, but they would have been Soviets in function and in structure, however imperfect, and they certainly would have been local and national organs for the expression of the national will.

We have written much more in development of this proposition but we are holding it over until the election fever falls and people have both time and inclination to think. In the meantime, when you have voted for your candidate, put that in your pipe and smoke it.

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