

IRISH OPINION

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ONE PENNY

Making the "Half-World"
Safe for Democracy.

Underpaid Chemists
Menace Public Health.

FATHER GAYNOR ON "GUFF."

SINN FEIN AND SOCIALISM.

Leaving aside the camouflage, Mr. Guff's article—"The Revolutionists"—is based on five propositions. I propose to consider them in order.

The first proposition is that "Emmet, Tone, and the other dead heroes of a glorious past, fought for the re-establishment of the Gaelic Communal system."

James Connolly failed to prove that the Gaelic system was communal. Mr. Guff might perhaps succeed—if he tried. It will not suffice to show that the chief "did not own the tribe lands." Mr. Guff will have to prove that the chief did not own any part of them. He will have to prove that the individual clansman did not own the house he lived in and the land he tilled. He will have to show how it was that the clansman could own the produce of the land without owning the land. He will have to show why the clansman regarded the Feudal system as a grievance—because if the Gaelic system were communal the clansman would—so far as the land he tilled was concerned—be the "tenant" of the ruling authority in the tribe, namely, the chief. In that case he would have lost nothing by the introduction of the Feudal system. But he did lose something. He lost his ownership of the house he lived in and of the land he tilled. The Feudal system reduced him to the position of tenant or serf in the exact little spot of earth where previously he had been lord. It conferred ownership of all the tribe lands on the local ruling authority—the chief or the planter who displaced him. Feudalism is therefore the parent of the Socialist system of State ownership. The Gaelic system—"peasant" proprietorship—is utterly inconsistent with So-

cialism. The old Gaelic ideal still grips the imagination of the people, and while the grip holds Mr. Guff has as much chance of spreading Socialism, outside the cities, as he has of becoming a patriarch in a re-established tribal system.

Therefore I delete the word "communal" from the first proposition, and I assert that Sinn Fein will fight for the re-establishment and extension of the old Gaelic system of "peasant" proprietorship.

Mr. Guff's second proposition is that "the ideals of Sinn Fein are not those of the Proclamation of the Republic of 1916." Does Mr. Guff assume that those ideals were Socialistic? Apart from this, it is difficult to discuss the question. The words "Sinn Fein" are as elastic as the word "Socialism." A person can expound "Sinn Fein" to satisfy a Catholic Archbishop—he can also (if his mind be as elastic as the policy) expound it to satisfy a Marxian Socialist. Sinn Fein holds the general principles that Emmet and Tone held, but on the question of ways and means to attain our ideal—the well-being of the entire nation—our views are, like theirs, vague and unformed. By taking lessons from all (while copying no one slavishly), and especially by a close study of Irish life and circumstances, we shall evolve a scheme of State organisation suitable to the country. In my judgment that scheme will conform to the ideals of Easter Week, but not to the tenets of Socialism.

Mr. Guff's third proposition is that, "a man who takes Tone's choice—refusing allegiance to a Sinn Fein Government as well as to Britain—may be a more patriotic Irishman than any mere Sinn Feiner."

De Wet has given us a modern instance of Tone's

choice. De Wet, like Tone, revolted against the local Parliament as well as against Britain because the local Parliament was the instrument by which Britain governed his country. Does Mr. Guff imagine that a Sinn Fein Government, set up in defiance of British law, will be an instrument of British Government? His argument will hold in reference to a Home Rule Parliament set up by Britain in Dublin. The Sinn Fein Government will be opposed by Britain, therefore it must needs return that opposition. If Mr. Guff persists in revolting against the Sinn Fein Government as well as against Britain he will infringe on Wm. Martin Murphy's prerogative—he will have to fight for each against the other! As a further argument in favour of refusing allegiance to the Sinn Fein Government, Mr. Guff points out that "Government is merely an euphemism for 'the armed force of the ruling class.'" Precisely—whether the "ruling class" be junker, jingo or Bolshevik! What then? Would Mr. Guff abolish all government? But at the back of Mr. Guff's mind there lurks a suspicion that somehow the Sinn Fein Government will be an instrument in the hands of the "capitalist ruling class"—but capital, like the British Government, will oppose Sinn Fein. Mr. Guff credits Sinn Feiners with an alarming tendency to embrace our foes. I fear the credit is unmerited.

II.

Mr. Guff's fourth proposition is that "Catholic Socialism" is a mere device to prevent the accomplishment of any real good. There is a short paragraph in "The Faith and Morals of Sinn Fein" which treats of the social aspect of the Republican movement. The last sentence of that paragraph (page 9) sums up my view: "The only way to meet the menace of extreme Socialism is to put before the workers a theory of Catholic Socialism suitable to the circumstances of Ireland, and to evolve a practical scheme of social reform which priest, Socialist and Sinn Feiner can support."

The Menace.

I regard extreme Socialism as a menace, not to the Church—the Church will survive—but to the workers. Extreme Socialism will split the workers' organisation in twain, and it will unite all the forces of reaction against them. It will

silence many men—priests and others—who would stand by Labour against any party in Ireland so long as we can do so without violence to our principles as Catholics and Republicans. To remove the menace of extreme Socialism I advocated the adoption of a theory of Socialism in harmony with Catholic principles, and adapted to the special circumstances of Ireland. I used the words "Catholic Socialism" because it is a concise, definite, and well-understood expression. Mr. Guff chose to misunderstand it, so I shall express myself differently. I hope my meaning is plain when I say I advocate "an economic theory of State-organisation in harmony with the moral law, and suitable to Ireland."

I also advocated a practical scheme of social reform. The "economic theory of State organisation" was intended for the intellectual delectation of people like Mr. Guff, but the scheme of social reform should take account of the hard facts of life. I used the expression "social reform" rather than "Socialism," because any practical scheme must recognise "peasant" proprietorship in land, and therefore cannot be termed "Socialistic." Mr. Guff fancies some of us are trying to hoodwink the workers. On the contrary we are trying—perhaps in vain—to prevent people like Mr. Guff from bumping the workers' heads against avoidable stone walls.

The Land Question.

Mr. Guff's fifth proposition is that "Sinn Fein is powerless to cope with the problems which Socialism alone—extreme Socialism; not any of your drawing-room stuff—is capable of solving." Mr. Guff might have mentioned some of the problems which extreme Socialism alone can solve. He might have shown how it will solve them. Perhaps the simplest answer to Mr. Guff's fifth proposition is to indicate how Sinn Fein may cope with our problems. The land question can be solved on the non-Socialistic systems of "peasant" proprietorship, by fostering the co-operative movement. In reference to manufacture there are two sets of problems—the extension of our industries, and the promotion of the workers' welfare and happiness. How can we extend our industries without fostering the system of capitalism and wage-slavery? The workers can learn a lesson from the tillers of the soil. A short time ago the tillers

of the soil were practically wage-slaves. They worked, and they were permitted to live, but the capitalist drained them of their surplus earnings by compelling them to pay rent. The capitalist or landlord owned the means of production, and the tenant workers delivered the fruits of their labour to him. But the tenants forced the land-capitalist to sell the means of production, namely the land. To-day the tillers of the soil own the soil.

The Guilds.

Capitalism in land is dying and the Gaelic system of "peasant" proprietorship is being restored. Can capitalism in industry be killed as well without killing industry? Can means be devised whereby the capitalists will be forced to sell the means of production to the workers? I believe that the methods by which the tenants forced the capitalists to hand over the land will equally avail—with certain alterations—to force the capitalists to hand over the means of production to the workers. The workers must be organised to the last man and to the last woman. In addition to the general organisation the workers in each factory or trade should be organised as a co-operative society or guild. The first experiment should be made with infinite care. The entire power and resources of labour should be used to make the venture a success. Select a suitable trade—one in which the workers are skilled, in which the commodity is easily marketable, and in which the capital is small. Organise the workers in that trade as a guild and when all arrangements have been made, let them strike—but when they strike they will cease working for the capitalist and commence working for the guild, even if only on a small scale. In return for the strike pay the guild will have a marketable commodity, and the strike cannot be broken. It can be carried on until the capitalist agrees to sell the means of production to the guild at a fair price. If the experiment be made, let success be assured. Success in a small venture is the stepping-stone to success in a big venture.

There are methods besides those of extreme Socialism by which organised Labour can set its heel on the neck of capitalism. In Ireland extreme Socialism is likely to enable the capitalist to set his heel on the neck of Labour—act nar leigi Dial!

GATHERING OF THE CLANS IN WATERFORD.

By DANNY BOY.

An interesting and unusual blend of accents was heard at the Town Hall, Waterford, on Sunday, when a very large and enthusiastic meeting was held to stir up the embers of trade unionism in the city and also to pave the way, as it were, for the great Trade Union Congress to be held in the "Urbs Intacta" next August. It was a happy gathering—effervescent, sincere, democratic, portending great things for the future of what our reactionary imperialistic and capi-

talistic "friends" in Waterford choose to call "Bolshevism." The Mayor (Mr. D. McDonald, T.C.) presided, and said as an employer, he would be heartily with the labour movement so long as that movement was not unfair to them (the employers).

Messrs. Campbell, Belfast; Lynch, Cork; Wigzell, Dublin N.U.R.; Bennett, Limerick, were the visitors, to whom a hearty welcome was extended, and who spoke to resolutions that were passed: (1) Welcoming the Irish Trades Union Congress in August; (2) calling upon the unorganised workers to join their respective organisations and help to strengthen

the labour movement in the city; (3) protesting against the exportation of food; (4) calling on the Corporation to institute a large scheme of housing for the workers of the city; and (5) protesting, in the name of the workers, against the treatment of the Irish National teachers, and assuring them of the fullest support.

Other speakers included Messrs. R. Keane, T.C.; P. Cahill, T.C.; L. J. Larkin, President Waterford Branch N.U.R.; E. Dalton, President Trades Council; M. Cleary, N.T. A prominent gentleman on the platform was Rev. J. Kelleher, S.T.L., the great friend of democracy in Waterford.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Ireland and the International.

It is some four weeks now since Cathal O'Shannon reported to us the mission of the Irish delegates, who went to the Nottingham Conference to meet the leaders of Continental Socialism, and enlist their support for Ireland's claim to international recognition. The wisdom of that mission is all the more evident in the light of subsequent events. The Hendersons, Hyndmans and other tame exponents of Lloyd Georgian-Northcliffe-Bottomley "democracy" are evidence only too painful of the impossibility of ever expecting more than a handful of Britishers to understand even the elements of the Irish case. So long as the Hun is the offender, these ardent minds glow with righteous, Wilsonian indignation, but the victims of English Junkerism must never look to England for anything more substantial than the flapdoodle of Anglo-Saxon Liberalism, the hollowest substitute for freedom the world has ever seen. Ireland must rely upon those European nations, who, whatever their faults, have cultivated intellectual honesty, the first condition of freedom, and the last to penetrate the thick unctious of Anglo-Saxon sanctimoniousness. It is, therefore, satisfactory to note the good results of the Irish mission to Nottingham. To a "Herald" interviewer last week, for example, Longuet is reported as saying: "I heartily endorse Ireland's national aims, and want to see her put her claims before the International."

Wilsonian Democracy.

The devotees of the great Woodrow are sadly perturbed by the revelations of America's methods of financing this great war for Liberty. The purchase of Liberty Bonds has been the test of loyalty imposed upon the citizens of that glorious Republic, and incredible inquisitions have been instituted with a view to convicting of pro-Germanism those whose bankers could not produce proofs of investment in American War Loan. Now it appears that the friends of freedom in America are displaying even less concern for "equality of sacrifice" than their dear British cousins. The expenses of the crusade for democracy up to June 30th, 1918, are reckoned to be about 11,527 million dollars, exclusive of loans to the confraternity, and of this amount only some 1,900 million dollars are to be furnished out of taxes on income and war profits. As the "Nation" points out, this is "a sum considerably less than Great Britain, with less than half the American population, and a good deal less than half their wealth, is furnishing this year." This information, which cannot surprise anybody who knows the plutocratic Republic, drives the English Liberal com-

mentator to the sorrowful conclusion that all is not so well in America as the transcendental holiness of the President's orations would imply. The Council of National Defence, for example, consists of 280 rescuers of small nationalities, of whom "more than 170 are said to be connected with corporations doing war-profiting business, as officials, directors or large shareholders." This is really very sad, and must inspire the patriots nearer home with gratitude for the thought that their masters are not so contaminated!

"We Have No Selfish Ends to Serve."

Remember this strophe from Wilson's War Message to Congress, where he declared, amidst the sobs of the Allies: "We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make." Then pity the compromised virtue of the Council of National Defence, so unfortunately soiled by the presence of 170 war profiteers, forty-eight of whose companies are ascertained to have trebled their earnings in the year 1916. "Their net earnings," the "Nation" reports, "amounted in the aggregate to 900 million dollars, as compared with 260 million dollars during the pre-war period, 1911-13." The figures for last year are not yet available, but "it is known that in some important companies the earnings for 1917 are still higher." The net earnings of the United States Steel Corporation were 520 million dollars in 1917, an increase of 56 per cent. over the previous year, all done by the colossal brain-work involved in raising the price of steel billets from twenty-six and a half dollars in 1913 to 42 in 1916, this sum being raised to 100 dollars when Wilson made the speech quoted, on the occasion of America's entry into the war. During the same period steel plates rose from a little over thirty-three and a half dollars to 200 dollars. All this needs no telling, were it not for the curious fact that even those whom similar phenomena have rendered suspicious of Allied patriots in Europe, continue to cherish the illusion that Wilson's uplifting platitudes are to be taken at their face value. Is it not evident that while his eloquence brings tears to the eyes of the Allied Liberals, it does not cause the hands to tremble which rake in the profits. These far-seeing gentlemen do not allow their vision to be dimmed by the altruistic emotion of the Presidential rhetoric. And, as the unknown bard has sung: The Hand that rakes the Profits rules the World.

Bolshevism and the Yellow Peril.

Our old friend, the Yellow Peril, is the latest recruit in the grand army of the anti-Bolsheviks. The French papers, which early in the war expressed the desire to see Japanese troops in Europe,

have never played up this bogey, so that they are not under the necessity of hiding behind the oracular pronouncements characteristic of the British and American references to Japanese intervention in Siberia. Balfour's ambiguous reference to there being no fresh "reciprocal" military convention with Japan, in no way diminishes the probability that arrangements are being made to deliver the Knock-out Blow to Bolshevism, especially since we know how the Ukrainian counter-revolutionary movement was assisted by the Allies. The Americans are naturally feeling a little uncomfortable at the prospect of Japan being "privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured," to quote Woodrow Wilson's definition of the Allied war aims. Admittedly these are absolutely consonant with the destruction of revolutionary Russia, and it only remains to find a Wilsonian phrase to meet the situation.

J. W.

Making the "Half-World" Safe for Democracy.

The effect of the war on public morals is engaging the attention of aristocratic busybodies in England at present. They have formed an Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, and are clamouring for the suppression of the *Maisons tolerées* in the war area in France. Mr. Iain MacPherson, the Gaelic-speaking Under-Secretary for War, has expressed the opinion that "he was not at all sure that it was such a bad thing to have a certain house where women were registered and kept clean." The scientific impossibility of "keeping clean" will be realised when it is known that fifteen women receive at one of these houses three hundred and sixty men in one day.

The Dean of Lincoln (Anglican) has denounced Mr. MacPherson's "not such a bad thing" in the "Times" as a "phase of the White Slave Traffic." If Iain shocks an English Dean we wonder what will be the effect of his defence of State-regulated prostitution, *ca.* the minds of his Free Kirk electors in Inverness-shire? They may indeed fail to understand MacPherson, for such means of making the half-world safe for democracy could not enter their unsullied minds.

P. L.

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LABOUR IN IRELAND.

DUBLIN NOTES.

May Day.

The special conference of the trade unions of Dublin has decided to celebrate the First of May in unity with the workers of the world, as International Labour Day. Hitherto the celebration has, following the English example, been held on the first Sunday of May, but Irish Labour has entered the International and is squaring its practice with that of the rest of the world.

It is now the duty of all trade union branch officers to prepare for a total cessation of work in the city on that day, and for a monster demonstration.

The Future Government.

It is odd that it should be left to the Trades Council to call for an Irish Assembly, which was decided upon by the Mansion House Convention last year. The proposed conference of labour to promote electoral organisation is a move in the right direction.

Trades Hall Meeting.

Mrs. R. MacKenna addressed the S.P.I. last Sunday evening on "Woman in New Ireland." As usual, a lively discussion followed.

Socialist Party.

The business meeting of the party at Room 3, Liberty Hall, on Friday, 1st inst., saw further additions to the roll of membership from the city and several from the country. A group of enthusiasts in Paisley are forming a branch there to spread Socialism amongst the large Irish population of Renfrewshire.

Commune Commemoration.

The 18th of March is memorable in the history of the working class as the beginning of the Paris Commune—the first attempt of the working class to seize the powers of the State. The annual celebration will take place at Liberty Hall on Saturday, 16th inst. (St. Patrick's Eve), at 8 p.m., when William O'Brien will deliver the oration. Tickets, price 2s. 6d., may be obtained from members of the committee or from this office.

Cathal O'Shannon

Has agreed to lecture on Sunday, 10th inst., in the Trades Hall on "Ireland and the International." A large audience is expected and the well-known publications of the Catholic Socialist Society, "Economic Discontent," by Fr. Hagerty, and "Catholic Socialism," by the late Hubert Bland, will be on sale.

The Plebiscite

Being taken in Dublin was discussed, and it was agreed to recommend all citizens to declare for or against the Peace Conference proposal so as to ensure a full and accurate test of public opinion.

Mansion House Lecture.

As the members of the party desire to attend Cathal O'Shannon's lecture to the Cumann na mBan in the Mansion House, on Friday, 8th inst., the S.P.I. weekly business meeting will be postponed until Saturday, 9th inst., at 8-0 p.m.

Marx Centenary

Falls on 5th May, 1918, and the party will celebrate it by a large demonstration. A committee has arrangements on hand.

BOYCOTT OF CORK TRADESMEN IN CORK.

The importation of second-hand traps and other such vehicles into Cork from across channel is an evil which speaks poorly for those who encourage such traffic. The buying of these by farmers, merchants, traders, and even clergy amongst us is, to say the least, unpatriotic, and now that it is considered good business to be patriotic and to support Irish manufacture, the mean spirit of those who deprive the tradesmen of Cork of the work entailed in the manufacture of such vehicles need not be elaborated. Unfortunately it is being done to an extent that has made the coachmakers draw public attention to the matter. What should be done in such a case is to publish a list of purchasers of such importations, and the fact that some surprises would be found on the list would show that some people in Cork do not do to others as they would be done by. Cork craftsmen are as good as any across Channel, and why some of our politicians refuse to support them is indeed a puzzle. The coach-builders mean to take strong action in the matter, and all who know the amount of imported articles being brought in will say it is about time.

HOUSING IN BELFAST.

Greasing the Fat Sow.

Nowhere perhaps in Ireland is the housing problem so urgent as in Belfast. The shipbuilding and kindred industries have been booming since 1914, and, thanks to the U-boats, will boom after the war. Masses of new workers have come to the city, but empty houses there are none, and overcrowding is general.

During the war the building of houses is practically stopped, and after the war on the removal of recent restrictions all rents will increase.

Elsewhere alert municipalities are making plans for extensive schemes of house-building, but nothing is being done in Belfast. Councillor Coates stated the policy of the present corporators when he said that under no circumstances should the Council become owners of house property.

The Works Department is jealously regarded by the profiteers of the City

Council. The Lord Mayor wishes to sack all superfluous workers, as if there could be any such when the very roads call out for repair. Nevertheless, the working staff of the department has been reduced by two-thirds, while the administrative staff has increased by one-third. The administration, of course, provides jobs for Councillors' relatives and the political hangers-on of the Unionist Party.

The Works Department ought to be entrusted with a scheme of house-building, the Corporation employing direct labour for the purpose. The rural districts of despised Galway show Belfast a splendid example in that respect.

Yet the Council proposes to secure loans to enable private contractors to build houses. That's the game. Profits to the contractors, interest to the loan-mongers, to be paid for by the rack-renting of the hapless tenants.

Belfastmen! Get rid of the hoodlers, money-lenders and contractors' cousins from the City Council, and support the Labour Housing scheme. Within the next few weeks a public meeting will be called to expose the rottenness of the City Council, and to propound a scheme of Housing reform that will command the support of the workers.

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DOWN WITH THE GAEDHILGE!

By SEAN O CATHASAIGH.

"Down, down to hell; and say I sent thee thither."—King Henry the Sixth.

Should the Irish language die, we may blame, not the British Government, but the Irish people. For years the Gaelic League endeavoured to fling aside the mould that held it in its grave, and a few handfuls were removed, but the Irish people are again shovelling the clay of indifference upon gasping life. We may prate as we like about our language, listen reverently to some gifted speaker, who boldly reminds of its existence, piously mark down one Irish song at least upon our concert programmes, religiously say "slan leat" to our parting friends; but if we say that we love the language, and that we believe that the Gaedhilge is the basic power of Irish expression, we are liars, and the truth is not in us. The plain, unvarnished truth is that the Irish people, United Irish Leaguers, Sinn Féiners, and Trades Unionists say, day after day, moment by moment, in their indifference and neglect: "To hell with the Gaedhilge!"

Consider the Gaelic Athletic Association. Some years ago a resolution was passed at the Annual All-Ireland Convention declaring that the Convention of

1917 should be an Irish-speaking Convention—how easy it is to resolve for the future—and the speaking of Irish was made obligatory upon all the delegates. But 1917 has come and gone, and the day of an Irish speaking G.A.A. Convention is as far distant as ever!

Some time ago (in the "Claidheamh Soluis" the decreascent enthusiasm for the Irish language was commented upon. It was pointed out that fifteen years ago at Aeridheachta and Cuirme Ceoil an English song was a rarity; now at any of these events an Irish song is seldom heard. At the same time in the streets Irish was spoken even aggressively, but now is it ever heard? The people have grown tired of it, and, for good or evil, political zeal has dissipated the attachment once so vigorously bestowed upon the Irish language.

In last week's issue of "Fainne an Lái," we find an Educational Committee of the Gaelic League recommending that an effort should be made to have Irish taught in the schools to lower standards as an ordinary subject for one hour per day, and to higher standards as an ordinary subject for one half-hour per day, and an additional half-hour as an outside subject, after or before school hours, the teachers to receive added remuneration for this work. It is also suggested that each class should not consist of more

than twenty-five pupils, and that the teacher's might be able to teach five classes in the one day. Does the Committee think the teachers can do this? They are shamefully overworked and shamelessly underpaid at present, and it would be silly to impose upon them an additional worry and labour till time and struggle place them in the position of security against any difficulty in living a life free from economic cares, so that they may be able to teach the workers' children from the heart as well as the head. If we are to restore the Irish language to Ireland, then the teaching of it must be a happiness to the teachers, and the learning of it must be a joy to our children. At present, wherever it may be taught, the children hate it, for it is not taught, but administered as a noxious medicine. If we hope to restore the Irish language through the schools, then the whole system of Irish Popular Education will have to be revolutionised. The teachers must be lifted to a plane of elevated citizenship, free from economical worry of every description, so that they may teach, and our children must be comfortably clad and fully fed, that they may be able to learn. These are the first things. Then it is for Labour and Learning and Nationality to decide what shall be taught in the schools, and the methods and means to be adopted.

CONNRAÓ NA GAEDHILGE

GAELIC LEAGUERS!

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Notes and Comments

Co-operation for the Workers.

From time to time we have tried to interest our readers in the co-operative movement, which across the Irish Sea has reached huge proportions; but which in Ireland has met with very little encouragement from those who ought to welcome it with joy. The Irish farmer has become a co-operator for his own benefit and protection, but neither the Irish urban or rural worker has yet realised the possibilities and potentialities of the movement. In Belfast only is there the great society every Irish town should possess, certainly every Irish city. Many of the towns in the North have progressive societies doing very useful work, but in the south we still lag behind. We have some societies, but they are puny and weak when compared with what they ought to be if the workers of our towns looked a little more to their own interests. Hundreds and thousands of our city workers transact the bulk of their trading with multiple shops, whose headquarters are in England. They tolerate long working hours and low wages for shop men and women and yet if one questions them they merely shrug their shoulders and perhaps add: "What can I do?" The workers themselves control the co-operative societies, they are the shareholders, they elect the directors, the profits upon the trading carried on belong to them, they can see to the working hours, conditions and wages of the shop workers in their shops. Everything within a co-operative society is controlled by the members of the society. In Southern Ireland there are at present societies in Dublin, Rosslare Harbour, Waterford, Clonmel, Cork and Queens-town. None of these societies have all the workers in their town members of the society, and every worker should be a co-operator just as he should be a trade unionist. Limerick, Roscrea and Tullamore may soon have societies. We want co-operation to be the dominant force in Irish trade, commerce and industry, and we can only achieve that as a result of organisation, concentration and enthusiasm. As a beginning we would advise every worker to join his local co-operative society. Workers go to the workers shops, where the shopmen have the best conditions of employment and where the profits belong to the members, and where the profits are distributed to the members in proportion to the purchases they have made. Workers, become co-operators. Get into your local societies and start new ones.

The Clerks and the Grocers.

At the moment the strike at Bolands seems to have come to an end. It appears that the directors of Bolands actually desired the transfer of their bakery to the control of the Government. If Bolands can strike a bargain similar to that struck by the railways they will have done a good day's work for themselves. This appears to be their aim and they

seem to be getting close to it. Government control will probably mean nothing more than Government responsibility for the maintenance of profits. Bolands made no effort to counter the case of their clerks for increased wages. Instead they resorted to a trick that is comparatively easy and far too common in those days of the reign of D.O.R.A. They were at the mercy of the Food Controller! Of course, they were when it suited them, as in the present case. There is a good chance for a victory yet, however, nothing has been lost though nothing has yet been gained. When the arbitration comes the triangular combination of clerks, bakers and transport workers will probably prove as strong as it did before. A good win for the clerks will do a great deal towards strengthening their organisation, recruits flock to the winning side. Up clerks! The Grocers' Assistants position is not by any means clear just now. One thing, however, is very clear, it is that the employers are very definitely opposed to recognition of the Assistants' Union. These great employers require their own union recognised, but they will not recognise that of their assistants. Such an attitude at this time is simply absurd. The British Government is organising employers associations in England for the purpose of regulating industry in conjunction with the trade unions in their particular industry. Yet here in Ireland we have still employers and employers' associations who refuse to recognise trade unions of their employees. They might as well refuse to recognise the moon or the coming of night. Recognition simply must be conceded whether formally or informally, it matters not, and we are pleased to hear that the Grocers' Assistants Union is strong enough to enforce its demands. The temper of the employers, we know, is high, but the temper of the men is higher, and their organisation is good.

Dublin Tramwaymen.

The tramway employes of Dublin are once again on the move. The organisation of the men has been proceeding quietly for several months now and negotiations have been in progress since November last between the Dublin United Tramway Company and the National Amalgamated Tramway and Vehicle Workers' Association. It will be remembered that the Chairman of the Dublin United Tramway Company, Mr. W. M. Murphy, once stated that he had no objection to trade unionism as such, his entire objection was to the revolutionary policy put forward by James Larkin. That was Murphy's war ground in 1913-14. His employes are not now connected with the Irish Transport Workers' Union. They belong now to what Mr. Murphy might well term a "respectable" trade union. But the policy of Mr. Murphy has not changed in any respect. Trade unionism in any form is anathema, not the Transport Union only, but all

unions, not James Larkin only, but any man who attempts to organise Mr. Murphy's employes. Since November the Dublin branch of the Tramway and Vehicle Workers' Union have been endeavouring to bring the Dublin United Tramway Company into line, but with no result. In consequence seven days' notice to strike has been tendered. The notices will expire next Saturday morning, 9th inst. The demands of the tramway workers are an increase of £1 per week in wages above pre-war rates; proportionate increases in overtime rates and payment of increased rates as from the first pay day in January of this year. Thus the demand is not for a further increase of £1 per week, it is simply that inclusive of bonuses given from the beginning of the war period up to the present the wage rate of 1918 shall be £1 per week per employe above that of 1914. It is a modest demand, and yet modest though it is, and despite the fact that the I.T.W.U. has had nothing whatever to do with it, the Dublin United Tramway Company will not concede it with any degree of willingness. This time the fight will not be a Dublin fight only as the demand has been served on practically all the tramway systems directors of Great Britain and Ireland. If a stoppage should ensue it will probably be of short duration, more especially as the Board of Trade in London is at present so intimately associated with the control and direction of many tramway systems. We hope the tramway men will win all along the line this time.

The Teachers.

The teachers are just now coming to a decision whether they ought to go on strike or not. The ballot is now being taken and a decision fraught with great possibilities for the future of the Irish teacher may be expected very shortly. It is surely time that the teachers of our country began to get some of the law, anyhow, into their own hands. For generations they have been the subjects of public apathy, official tyranny and disorganisation. To-day the teachers are well organised and their organisation, having decided upon a progressive policy, lost no time in putting that policy into action. The Irish teachers are now an integral part of the Irish trade union movement and are in consequence entitled to all the assistance organised labour can command. The teachers having organised themselves have proceeded first to the procuration of a living wage. In this country of ours in this twentieth century, our teachers, the moulders of our future generations and upon whom much of the future of our country depends, are actually worse remunerated for their services at a lower rate than our policemen. Perhaps the teachers are rebels, and for that authority frowns. But it seems that in the view of the British Government, the policeman is a much more important functionary.

IRISH OPINION

THE VOICE OF LABOUR

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY

EVERY THURSDAY, ONE PENNY.

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

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

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Murder in Milk.

"The general will to do good, and the many hard-working philanthropic bodies to which Mr. Houston's long, accurate and patient work is a testimony and remarkable contribution, must unite practically for the protection of child life and their own lives against the evil of infected milk." So says Dr. Oliver St. J. Gogarty in his preface to Professor Houston's pamphlet, "Report of a Bacteriological Investigation of the City of Dublin Milk Supply," issued by the Co-operative Reference Library. We agree heartily with Dr. Gogarty and hope that this pamphlet may so affect the people of Dublin that a revolution will be brought about in our Civic Sanitary and Health administration. The great pre-eminence which the City of Dublin enjoys in statistics relating to mortality is notorious. It cannot be explained away. Every day people die in Dublin whose lives might have been saved if our civic administration and our civic democracy but realised their respective duties and responsibilities. As Dublin stands at present there is no civic pride, no civic consciousness, and certainly no civic "will to do good." Before we can set out to do things our people must be stirred to the depths of their feelings. They must be so stirred that nothing short of what they want will be offered. The housing conditions of Dublin are one of the great scandals of modern civilisation and those housing conditions are responsible for much of the death and disease that daily visits itself upon the people of the city. The housing question is in process of solution, we are told—but, meanwhile, the process is so slow that thousands of Dublin citizens who otherwise and under better conditions might have lived to a ripe old age, are annually condemned to an early grave. We must get on more quickly with this work. Finance is the difficulty we hear most of, but we venture to express the opinion that if some of the thought, the skill and the ingenuity that is now so freely given over to less worthy things were diverted towards housing, greater progress would be made. And then the infantile death rate. This is the most terrible problem in the Dublin of to-day. During the past eight weeks no less than 318 infants have died in the capital of Ireland. Such a waste of the nation's future life! And there were no angry demonstrations

in the streets, no whirlwind campaign through the streets, no angry mobs about the City Hall. Not a word, yet these were the children of the workers, the children of the most powerful class in the city if they but understood their power and used it properly.

This pamphlet makes us realise very fully the cause of the abnormal infantile death rate of Dublin. Professor Houston quotes the following from the "Observer": "The greatest evil caused by impure milk is the mortality and great damage to health amongst infants from diseases of the intestinal tract," and proceeds: "A well known doctor emphasised this point when he remarked to a parent who attributed to Providence the death of her bottle-fed baby from diarrhoea—'Madame, God did not kill your baby—it was dirty milk.'" We should like to drive that remark home with all the force of which we are capable. Three hundred and eighteen babies dead in eight weeks—what was the cause of death? When we have read Professor Houston's conclusions we have very little doubt that the primary cause of death was impure milk. This Report proves that the milk supply of Dublin is very impure indeed. Most people in Dublin would hesitate before drinking water drawn from the Grand Canal, or from the Dodder, yet Professor Houston has proven that they contain less possible infection than the milk commonly supplied in Dublin. "Only the Liffey, with its great allies—the century old sewage beds of civilisation," says Dr. Gogarty, "promised more infection if imbibed by the public than the milk ordinarily supplied to the city. Nobody drinks of the Liffey at Butt Bridge except an occasional suicide; but milk, which is the blood and flesh of every generation for a year and a half is drawn without inspection, and drunk without foreknowledge of its quality. It is necessary for an epidemic of typhoid to break out in a public body, such as a constabulary barrack, before an investigation is held, and then the dairymen are changed—not the milk." That statement is literally true, it is borne out by the scientific examinations made by Professor Houston. We are provided with full particulars of 105 samples of milk all supplied by nurses engaged in infant welfare work in the city. Only four of these were free from bacillus coli, a potent cause of intestinal trouble in children. Pollution occurred in every sample examined, in some of the samples the quantity of impurities contained, the Professor says, was "amazing."

Is it any wonder then that three hundred and eighteen infants died in Dublin in the past eight weeks of the present year? "As I write this day," says Dr. Gogarty, "five or six children are dying, but the worst disease is the Department of Public Health, to whose ineptitude thousands of little children are yearly sacrificed and slowly, painfully, and unobtrusively put to death. The sheer waste of human life, the lives of children, in this town is appalling. It is worse than any war." These are strong words, but the case presented in the result of Mr. Houston's investigations makes the use of strong language inevitable. We are faced with two important facts: the first is the terrible death rate amongst infants, the second is that no public effort has been made to obtain a pure milk supply for the citizens or their children. A few years ago the efforts

of an individual to provide pure milk were met with derisive laughter, she was made the butt of so-called comic songs. The effort failed and the purveyor of impurity and disease under the name of milk is still in a position to make profits out of the deaths of Dublin children. We agree that so long as all or any milk may be sold at the same price no improvement is likely to take place. We are definitely in favour of the grading system advocated in this pamphlet, but we would insist that even first grade milk should be sold at a price not exceeding the present. The price for low grade milk should be fixed very low or its sale should

be prohibited. Meanwhile let the Dublin Public Health Department get busy in putting into force at once the suggestions outlined in Mr. Houston's last three pages. If that is done we shall, at least be on the way to clean milk, and may ultimately reach the standard of the American Medical Milk Commission. This is a problem that immediately concerns the workers. Let the Labour members of the Dublin Corporation read this pamphlet and then get the suggestions contained therein carried into effect. Infantile mortality may be very considerably reduced thereby, and then our representatives will have done something really worth while.

Transport Union Notes.

Limerick.

Renewed activity is reported from Limerick City, where four branches are going strong. Not a week passes but some sections benefit in the shape of increased wages and better hours and working conditions. The organiser and branch officials are kept busy, it being recognised by now that the Union has come to stay in the City of the Violated Treaty. On the whole Limerick employers with whom negotiations have been opened up have readily recognised the One Big Union. The one or two who would have "no interference from outsiders" and would treat with their employees direct have since seen the foolishness of their attitude. They paid for their experience in increased wages. The total yearly amount gained by the I.T.W.U. for its Limerick members since they joined up is well over £8,000 and will soon run into five figures. The series of Sunday afternoon meetings in the Town Hall are attended by crowded audiences, and the proceedings followed with the greatest interest. Co-operation was dealt with at the last meeting. All the branches have backed up the scheme financially and otherwise, and it is hoped to open a Co-Op. store in the near future. Negotiations are pending for the acquisition of a central hall to house the branches, and a concert and lecture to get funds to furnish it, etc., is to be held. A district committee has been formed. A public meeting, at which a branch was started, was held at Dromhanna on Sunday. Messrs. M. J. O'Connor, organiser; J. Byrne, sec., No. 3; J. Sheehan, pres., No. 2; and J. Flood, Pres. No. 1 Branch, spoke. A big number of new members was enrolled. Mr. O'Connor also opened branches in Ennis and Clarecastle.

Wexford.

As mentioned last week, there is abounding energy being displayed by the I.T.W.U. here. A big move is expected among the hard-driven foundry workers, who are sweated both literally and metaphorically. Mr. T. Farren will address them next Sunday, and it is expected he will start a fresh movement among them for better conditions. The men at the

Admiralty works are under the same banner and have, since the beginning of the year, secured satisfactory terms from the Admiralty despite the intrigues of local employers to prevent any increase in wages to which, by stress of competition for labour, they would be forced to conform. Subscriptions to the Transport Workers' Union pay dividends every week.

Howth.

A new branch of the I.T.W.U. will be formed here shortly.

Military as Boss.

A conference is to take place between the Union officials and the Military Authorities at North Wall with regard to conditions there. The men have returned after a three-days' stoppage pending the conference.

Kildare.

Despite efforts, well-intentioned but unwise, to form a local county union for agricultural labourers, it is satisfactory to note that the One Big Union makes progress. The local labourers' association at Maynooth have decided to enlist the big battalions of Irish Labour behind them in their struggle and have unitedly entered the I.T.W.U. Mr. T. Farren addressed a big meeting at Dunlavin on 3rd inst., and gave the new branch an impetus.

Coals.

The Transport Workers' Union has succeeded in giving the coaldrivers and hagsmen a Saturday half-holiday. Last Saturday they stopped at 1 p.m. and that will be the stopping hour in future. Since the outbreak of war the Union has reduced the Saturday hours by six or seven hours.

Dockers.

The casual workers have been on strike for a few days, but a conference between the Union officials and the representatives of the Clyde, Cardiff, Bristol and Silloth lines resulted in a settlement, giving a shilling a day increase and 3d. per hour overtime.

TORNACHAS.

Le LIAM P. O RIAIN.

NAC PONAPAC AN DUINE TADG O Donncaida (Tómas)! Tá buairt aige cun na piliócta. Fear leigeannca ir ead é. Tá pé so pocair riam, na ollam Saolac i scolairce na nloirgoite i scoilcais. Cuirtear rium na curó éisre ar fuo na fúola. Tá meap ag na mílte air, oir ir lágac náóurca é, aigne deapac oit-carcannac aise. Ir seail leir sac fuo uapal, sac fuo alunn, sac fuo rimpli eprordial dá bpruit i nEirinn. Dionn pé lán de sean agur de dócap. Tadg an trém san ampur.

Taisce na Muimhneach.

Ir mói le pao é i scárrai liciócta Saedilge. Do-nicear rcaidcap ar a curó faoair. Cuirtear rpeir na cuairmi. Do péir mar rmaomiseann pé, do péir mar piomann pé ranna, ir amlaró rin a rmaomiseann doime eite, ir amlaró rin a ceapann ríad so mbu healada do pili óga deic a leanúnc dá piomad péim. Tá "Tómacap" i péim le paoa, meap na Muimneac so náirice. Ir spádao leo Tómas, ar nói Oirín leir an bpeim.

Da Thorna.

Tá úr-chnaspac dán curca amac aise. "Carceam Ampipe" ir cerdeal oi (Ac-Cliac: Mac Soil. 2r.). Airisim ar na dánta ceona so bpruit dá Tómas ann, ra trli intlesca. Tá Tómas an Snáclae ann, Tómas na Snác-cuairme, an Tómas a dior plámrapac i ocaoid na mban, an Tómas a canann Snác-laoice ar féanad an ólacám, ar eaprai Saolac, agur mar rin dóid. Ramtacc de'n trasap ro:

A tina na mairme, Sabaid páip so mairal uon

Sa cáir ro an t-aoisail;
 Den déantúir d'úscar bíod ábhar an
 suna,
 'S an t-náic dá réir;
 Na cáiré úmra dá ndéanna allmúraic,
 Dá áilleacht é;
 Ac bíod ar b'ántna as rínné cárra
 Do Spáinne Maéil.

Cearc go leor san amhras, mar
 ceasars. (Ou coir go scripsead na
 naoi mína' Deara, na' Moupaí, an-
 trum ina sunaí). Ac an bfuil morán
 díriochtá roir pannaicé dá leicéro
 rin asur p'p'ora? Ni dóig liom go
 bfuil. Ac ir corúil go mbéid na fili
 asur na meafadóirí ar a malairt
 aigeanta. Ir úna liom a mbionn de
 p'p'ora i b'filióct Saebúige uairéanta.

TORNA NA N-EAN.

Ureair liom go mór an Torna eile,
 Torna na n-ean, an Torna go bfuil
 spá aige do'n t-amparó fáin, do écol
 na p'p'ocann, do doibneap tuaithe go
 léir. Inr an t-sonuaraic go tá glé-
 airí a baineap le d'neac na t'ime
 asur a iol-áilleacht. Tá d'án de
 "lonrou" (leac. a 44) asur ir p'p'
 a cup i t-écol-meap le beo-airí d'ar
 ceap donatáin naomta i móca na
 meadóin-doiréann. Asur b'neacnuis
 ar "An t-amparóe neamhá":

Ragam ar p'p'air de báin na t-écol
 ar capall coit'om coir,
 Mar a mbí na páirce ir áille oir,
 'S na héin san tor ar ceol.
 Seoc, a capall, seoc, seoc,
 Seoc a capall ó;
 Ragam go taug de báin na t-écol—
 Ir seoc a capall ó.

Ragam ar p'p'air san fáin ná a coir
 pé d'eim éann uball na t-écolmeac,
 Mar a b'p'p'airé n-a luige ar an
 noiréct.

Na cáirne d'áillairé oir.
 Seoc a capall, gl.
 Ragam cap' p'p'air, ragam cap' ap'p';
 Ir cloirpam sanca plós,
 Asur áirne as p'p'ic go p'p'ulmair fáin
 i ngairp'p'airé neamhá an oir.
 Seoc a capall, gl.

Tá léir-macnam inr an d'án fáin.
 Tá cméat d'p'p'airéacéca ann. Saotim
 ar uairé naé mbionn Torna i muiméin
 na t-écol t-écolp'p'airé!

SAOZHAI NA LICHTOCHA.

Deir pé ra neamhá: "Deirp'p'air sup

A t'neacp'p'airé cine a fáin leicm-
 beacé c'ca." Ni p'p'p'icéim léir an
 méid rin. Cummí as t'ac file mór
 d'ar máin amam asur ir pollur náin
 bam a beag-p'p'airé léir an t'neac-
 p'p'airé. I p'p'airé p'p'p'ora ir t'is t'ead
 bíod pé i mb'p'p'airé r i mb'p'p'airé. Asur
 anoir, nuair acá cap'p'p'airéacé asur
 p'p'p'airéacé i n-uacéap, tá pé co' d'ois
 léir an cáiré as an d'ommac naé
 p'p'p'airé p'p'p'airéacé de cméat ar bit
 do b'p'p'airé ar an t-aoisail coit'annac.
 Nuair a beap an t'glé-p'p'p'airéacé asann,
 asur t'ac d'uirne p'p'p'airéacé na p'p'p'airé
 asur t'ac p'p'p'airé na eolac, b'p'p'airé
 go mbéimro i n-ann a p'p'p'airé sup'p'
 ionann an t'neac-p'p'airé asur p'p'p'airé
 d'úcar an file. Anrin beid p'p'p'airé
 as t'ac éimpe ar "an t-amparóe
 neamhá."

Draoidheacht le Teachr.

Tá p'p'airé asann le tuillead p'p'p'airéacé
 ó Torna an t-amparó, ó Torna na
 n-ean. Tá pé de d'ualsair air a t'glé-
 draoidheacé do cup i b'p'p'p'airé oirann.
 Támp'p'airé p'p'p'airé coit'om móir aige ceana
 péin, améac: ar ucc na noán acá
 luairéacé asann. Ad asur améap air,
 i t-écolp'p'airé t'is b'p'p'airé coit'p'p'airé!

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AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD FOR IRELAND.

ORDER DEFINING THE BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES NOT BEING BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES PROHIBITED BY LAW, WHICH MAY BE RECKONED AS PAYMENT OF WAGES IN LIEU OF PAYMENT IN CASH FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE MINIMUM RATES OF WAGES FIXED BY THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD UNDER THE CORN PRODUCTION ACT, 1917, AND THE VALUES AT WHICH THEY ARE TO BE SO RECKONED.

WHEREAS by Order under Seal dated the 5th day of December, 1917, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland did order the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland to define the benefits or advantages, not being benefits or advantages prohibited by law, which may be reckoned as payment of wages in lieu of payment in cash for the purpose of the minimum rates of wages fixed by the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland under the Corn Production Act, 1917, and the values at which they are to be so reckoned.

AND WHEREAS the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland did confer upon the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland the power to limit or prohibit by Order the reckoning of benefits or advantages as payment of wages in lieu of payment in cash for the purpose of any minimum rate of wages fixed under the Corn Production Act, 1917;

AND WHEREAS the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland, did, by Order bearing date the 10th day of November, 1917, fix certain rates of minimum wages for male workers over 21 years of age and for female workers over 18 years of age;

AND WHEREAS by Order dated the 14th day of January, 1918, the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland did fix certain rates of minimum wages for male workers under 21 years of age;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD FOR IRELAND, acting in pursuance of the powers conferred on us by the Corn Production Act, 1917, and by the Order above referred to, made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the 5th day of December, 1917, DO HEREBY DECIDE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

That for the purposes of the rates of Wages set out in the Board's Orders above referred to of the 10th November, 1917, and the 14th January, 1918, the following, and the following only, shall be benefits or advantages, and their maximum weekly values, which, if supplied or provided by the employer according to agreement, may be reckoned as payment of wages in lieu of payment in cash for the purposes of the minimum rates of wages set out in the above-mentioned Orders:—

WEEKLY VALUES.

House or house and small garden

The amount that may be deducted weekly from wages on account of the occupation of a house, or a house and small garden not exceeding one statute rood in area, of which the rates and taxes are paid by the employer, and where the house is kept in repair by the employer, may vary by agreement from 1/- to 1/6 in £ on the weekly wages payable to the workman. Provided, however, that where such deduction is considered inadequate by the employer, he may appeal to the Board, who may authorise a deduction at a higher rate. The value of the allowance may be increased if the land attached to the house is in excess of one rood at the rate of 10/- per annum per statute rood.

(No deduction from wages shall be made on account of the occupation of any house which has been condemned by the Sanitary Authority as unfit for human habitation.)

Group	Group I.	Group II.	Group III.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
(a) Land, cultivated and tilled, per statute acre	0 7	0 5 1/4	0 4 1/2
(b) Land, cultivated, tilled, and manured, per statute acre	5 0	4 0	3 0
(c) Land, cultivated, tilled, manured and sowed, per statute acre	6 0	5 0	4 0

(c) Land, cultivated, tilled, manured and sowed, per statute acre	6 0	5 0	4 0
Drills of Potatoes to be measured and paid for at same rates as (a), (b), or (c) above, according as the conditions of (a), (b), or (c) apply.			
Potatoes (weekly rate of deduction per ton per annum)	1 6 1/2	1 6 1/2	1 6 1/2
Fresh milk, per gallon	1 4	1 2	1 0
Grass of cow, grass only	2 8 1/2	2 3 1/2	1 11
Grass of calf, till one year old	0 7	0 7	0 7
Keep of cow with grass and hay	4 7 1/2	4 2 1/2	3 10
Use of cow (a freshly calved cow for one year)	5 9	5 4 1/2	5 0
Grass of donkey	0 6	0 6	0 6
Grass of goat	0 3	0 3	0 3
Grass of sheep	0 6	0 6	0 6
Coal at cost price, including actual cost of delivery	0 6	0 6	0 6
Turf bank	0 6	0 6	0 6
Turf, cut, saved, and carted, sufficient for workman for one year	1 9	1 9	1 9
Timber firing	1 0	1 0	1 0
Board and lodging (seven days)	13 0	11 8	10 4
Board (seven days)	11 1	9 11	8 9
Board, per day	1 7	1 5	1 3
Breakfast (seven days)	2 4	2 0 1/2	1 9
Dinner (seven days)	6 5	5 10	5 3
Supper (seven days)	2 4	2 0 1/2	1 9
Board and lodging: Males, 18 to 21 (seven days)	12 0	11 0	11 0
Board and lodging: Males, 16 to 18 (seven days)	9 0	8 0	7 0
Board and lodging: Females, (seven days)	8 6	7 6	6 6

Nothing shall prevent an employer and his employee from agreeing to a valuation of benefits or advantages at a rate less than that set out herein, but no benefits or advantages shall be valued at a higher rate unless it shall be shown to the satisfaction of the Board that special circumstances exist, when the Board shall decide whether a higher valuation is equitable, and, if they think fit, give their consent thereto in writing.

This Order shall be read in conjunction with the Board's Orders of the 10th November, 1917, and the 14th January, 1918, and its provisions shall take effect as from the 10th November, 1917, except in cases where, as a consequence of the Board's Order of that date fixing minimum rates of wages for certain classes of employees, special agreements were entered into between employers and their workmen in regard to the value of benefits or advantages given, and in such cases this Order shall take effect only as from the 27th day of February, 1918.

The provisions of this Order shall remain in force till the 9th day of November, 1918, or until cancelled or varied either wholly or in part by the Board.

CHARLES H. O'CONNOR, Chairman.
WALTER NUGENT.
E. M. CUNNINGHAM.
KILLANIN.
P. BRADLEY.
R. RALEIGH.
JAMES MURPHY.
JAMES CRANGLE.
T. B. PONSONBY.
JAMES CLARKE.
M. C. RUSSELL.
THOMAS FORAN.
J. C. NOLAN FERRALL, Secretary.

14 St. Stephen's Green.
27th February, 1918.

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SINN FEIN FOR THE TWO CLASSES.

If this country possessed its own Government there are many of our present Sinn Feiners who would be such no longer, and the writer is one of them. Much has been written under the heading of Sinn Fein and Labour that is hardly in keeping with this much-discussed subject. Sinn Fein is a National movement, with its aim—the political freedom of the whole people of the country. It recognises that the capitalists as well as the workers of Ireland suffer from foreign interference, and it endeavours to press forward the united demands of both classes for political freedom.

As a truly National movement it must embrace all sections of the people. As it is the work of the Gaelic League to teach the Language to both rich and poor so it is the work of Sinn Fein to unite and free them. No one would say that, in his supreme sacrifice, Connolly considered the capitalists of his country. Connolly gave his life for the workers, while Pearse suffered death for his countrymen, both rich and poor.

In a movement such as Sinn Fein the co-operation of all the people of the country is necessary and a man cannot be kept out simply because he has been "inflicted" with riches or has become an employer.

Sinn Fein is out to free the country of foreign domination and not to teach employers or employees the error of their ways. The workers are left with confidence to fight their own battles in practically the same way as the Gaelic Leaguers and Industrial Revivalists are left to carry on theirs. And as the necessity for the Gaelic League is recognised so also is a strong and vigorous Irish Labour movement required and encouraged. To the revolutionary arm such would create another great muscle, and the past, and even the present, records of our people should prove an encouragement to the Labour organiser. To the Red Flag in Australia and New Zealand our exiles have rallied, and in the United States we find them in the front rank of all democratic progress, while even in England and Scotland they have given no small assistance to the furthering of Social Reform. Tone, Mitchell, Lator, Davitt, have espoused the cause of the workers, and even our discredited representatives were obliged to fight for the land for the people, were forced to give, at least, some support to the cause of Labour in England, and we to-day are welcoming co-operation and building up Trades Unionism. I believe that the Irish people are a democratic people. I believe that if we had a native parliament our island would soon win a reputation for Social Reform. I can strive to be a good Labour man and a good Sinn Feiner, and I hope that the capitalistic Sinn Feiner will also strive to give us of his best. But when we have accomplished our freedom from foreign rule, I with many others, will be glad to enter into the fight against the capitalist with additional enthusiasm.

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CHEMISTS AT 3¹/₂d. PER HOUR.

By T. BARRY.

Most people think of a druggist's or chemist's shop as a place of delightful odours, pleasing perfumes, and a cool, sweet quiet pervading all. And so it is!! It is a rest-room in the chaos of noise that racks the nerves and wearies the brain beyond enduring; and the assistants are so refined, so attentive. To look at them, one would think they were a well paid, contented body of men, but behind their refined manners and quiet speech lies one of the greatest scandals the country has ever heard of. No section of the workers, I think, are worse paid for their labour than the Chemists' Assistants, and I speak, not merely comparatively, but in the terms of actual money earned. Let us take

A Typical Case

and assume a boy leaving school and entering a druggist's employment as an apprentice. He will have to bind himself for a period of four years at a salary (sic) of £50 for the period; £5 for the first year; £10 for the second; £15 in the third year, and £20 in the fourth. When he has completed his period of apprenticeship he receives the magnificent salary of £50 per year, but, being unqualified, he is not allowed by law to sell any poisons, much less make up a prescription. To do so he must study very hard and give up every thought of recreation, because the examinations are exceptionally stiff. If he studies and finally sits for his B.D. (Registered Druggist), it will take him at least nine months persistent study to fit himself for it. His class fees will equal £1 1s. per quarter and his books will cost him another guinea. The privilege of sitting for examination will take another £4 4s. out of his, or rather his father's, pocket, and if he fail he can sit again within six months on a further payment of 10s. 6d. Under no circumstances, however, can he sit for examination until he has reached the age of twenty-one, and if he passes he will be lucky to get 25s. per week as a reward for his skill. But he is not yet qualified to dispense, i.e. to compound prescriptions, and if he aspires to that end he must apprentice himself for a further two years to a pharmaceutical chemist and pass his preliminary examination. Then comes a period of

Real Hard Work,

a period of the most unremitting study imaginable, for he has now to prepare himself for his final examination. Classes must be attended again for nine months or a year at a cost of £1 1s. per quarter, plus 2s. for books, and when he is

ultimately ready to sit he must pay £5 5s. of an entrance fee, and travel to Dublin and pay all his expenses there during the three days of examination. And if he fail he can, by a merciful providence, sit again on a further payment of £1 1s. The strain is awful and the anxiety terrible. For months and months, aye, even for a period of two years, the prospective candidate must grind every night until twelve o'clock and when he passes he will receive as his reward—how much do you think? Four pounds per week; three pounds per week. Nay, he will receive from £80 to £100 per year, or in other words, from 31s. to 39s. per week. And for that he must have a splendid general education, he must have a knowledge of Mathematics, be skilled to precision in the metric system, and have a knowledge of chemistry and physics. It is an

Abominable Scandal,

a crime against humanity. It means that the employers are being subsidised by the fathers of the assistants, since it is utterly impossible for the latter to live on the wages they receive. It means that the health of the assistants is undermined by the toil and strain of study, and it means, since they work 82 hours per week, that the ordinary pleasures of home life are denied to them.

Apart from that, there is another danger, a danger not only to the assistants but to the public; the danger of being poisoned!! Working such inhuman hours, living under such mental strain, who could blame them if they made an error in making up a prescription? And an error is the easiest matter in the world. Let the mind but think of something else for an instant and a deadly poison may be added instead of a harmless ingredient. And who would be responsible? I hold it would be the employers and the public. It is time something was done to remedy this state of affairs, either by the men themselves taking action or by a public law regulating their hours of labour and their remuneration, for mark you, these men are essentially public servants and public benefactors, and as such ought to be well rewarded by those whom they serve. In London, where the same scandal formerly existed, the assistants themselves took the matter in hand, and by organisation, secured a 48-hour working week and time and a quarter for overtime and for Sunday work. In Belfast, the chemists' assistants, on an average, work three nights per week overtime and go on Sunday duty every second Sunday—for nothing!!

Sweated Labour.

And now, just before I close, let me tell you of two cases of sweated labour which came to my notice some time ago, and for which I can furnish proof and produce evidence and witnesses. Two advertisements for qualified chemists' assistants appeared in the Belfast Press, and were applied for by a young man of 24 years of age. He was of good appearance and address, well educated and qualified; he would have had to work 82 hours per week and take Sunday duty and in the first place he applied to they offered him fifteen shillings per week. And the advertisement stated that the firm were offering "liberal terms"!!!

The other place, with the same conditions of labour, made the startling and generous offer of twenty shillings per week.

The indictment is complete. Never has labour been so scarce in the drug trade because of the number of chemists needed by the army, and profits and prices, I venture to assert, were never higher, yet despite all that, the assistants are, without doubt, the hardest worked and most poorly paid section of the community. Their average hours are 82 per week, or 14½ per day. Their average wage is 25s. per week, or 3s. 9d. per day; and their average wage per hour is roughly 3½d.

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BELFAST INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY.

Sunday, March 10th.—Central Labour Hall, 77a Victoria St., 7.0 p.m. Mr. Bernard Hare. Subject: "Socialism and the Irish Question.

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Everybody welcome at these three meetings. Questions and discussion invited.

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PAPER SHORTAGE.

NEWSAGENTS!

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