

IRISH OPINION

The
VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

TRADE UNION

CONGRESS

NUMBER ::

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Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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CONGRESS.

Twenty-one years ago the fourth Irish Trades Union Congress met in Waterford; on Monday next the twenty-fourth Congress opens in the same Urbs Intacta. In the intervening years much water has flowed under Waterford bridge and many changes have taken place in Ireland and the Labour movement in Ireland. On the whole they are changes for the better; they could not have been for the worse. The fourth Congress met in 1897. It was a year that might have meant much for Irish workers. James Connolly had been just a year in Ireland, but he was following the lonely road and ploughing his lonely furrow in Dublin. He was beginning that great career of work and battle and sacrifice that was to lift Labour out of the mud and raise it up to the dignity of a great movement and a great cause. But he had no influence in the Congress. When he chose the hard path of hard thinking, hard hitting and hard fighting he chose well, and he knew that if weary years of conflict and wearier years of defeat were before him, better and brighter days would dawn when his voice would be heard and the workers of Ireland would rally round the banner he held aloft and was destined to dye a deeper and richer red with his life's blood.

We have been re-reading the report of the Congress of 1897, and have not found it a very inspiring document. But at least it shows that to some extent the workers were becoming conscious of their class and beginning to understand that they must fight their own battles. For a young movement without leadership and without guidance this meant not a little. Later the tide was to turn and strength and manliness and power were to come to the Labour movement.

That strength and power we have witnessed within recent years, and notably within recent months. When next week Congress meets again in Waterford it will have to record the greatest and most fruitful work of all the years that have

passed since its foundation. It is a great and noble record of much attempted and much achieved. It tells how Labour in Ireland has at length found its feet and is planted solidly on earth. But if its feet are on the earth its ambitions reach towards the heavens, and it soars high where its banner, as Lawlor said, flies nearest the sun.

To the delegates much might be said, but to say it is unnecessary. They are men used to hammering out many difficult problems, saying the things that ought to be said, and doing the things that ought to be done. These and no more are the things expected from them in Waterford. If they give their minds to the problems that come before them at Congress, if they say just what wants saying and say it well and strongly, if they do the things that need doing and do them with courage, firmness and straightness, they will serve well and truly and give us a Congress, an Executive, a

Party and a programme worthy of the high mission of Labour. If they fail in these they may return to the unions with glowing accounts of their meetings, but they will return to be shorn of their power.

To Waterford Labour and Ireland look for the voice that will speak in thunder for Labour and for Ireland in these days of the testing of men's souls. Waterford shall put Labour to such a trial as Labour has never been put before. To the trial then, comrades, haste to the fight: and this of the good Irish singer's be your song:

"It is not enough to win rights from a king and write them down in a book. New men, new lights: and the fathers' code the sons may never brook. What is liberty now were license then: their freedom our yoke would be: And each new decade must have new men to determine its liberty.

THE ORGANISATION OF LABOUR

By WILLIAM O'BRIEN.

The great progress we have made since the last meeting of Congress, the awakening of the agricultural labourers, the new accession of strength to the long affiliated unions and the new adherence of newly affiliated bodies like the National Teachers are in keeping with the grand new spirit of the movement. But we have a long row to harrow yet. The recruitment of the workers in the Army of Labour has indeed gone forward by leaps and bounds within the past year, and is still going on vigorously and successfully. Is this enough? I do not think it is. We must go further, we must rise to the occasion and take the tide at its flow. Here in Ireland we are luckily well situated to make a great advance in the further organisation of Labour, and I believe we should make it enough.

Comparatively speaking Ireland is a small country, and is largely unorganised. This gives us an unique opportunity of planning and building our movement on new and sound lines. The country is just large enough to contain a considerable industrial population and small enough to make that population manageable by a compact and well organised body. Our proletariat is just big enough to be organised into a strong and effective fighting machine, and just small enough to be handled and generalised, with close personal touch and contact, by such a body as the National Executive of the Irish Trades Union Congress. A few hours will bring the leaders into direct touch with any body of workers or any section of the movement in any part of the country. This is an immense advantage, and we must make the most of it.

To make the most of it we must, as a good friend of Labour has said, see Ireland steadily and see it whole. That is to say, we must have always within our vision the whole working class of Ireland and every section of it. To marshal

that working class into the great army of Irish Labour is the task we have before us, and we must set about it not only with earnestness and with thought, but with courage, breadth of vision, and above all a definite conception of the machinery of the movement and of the kind and size of that machinery. In other words, we must make of the Labour movement a great machine of which the operations will extend all over the country, and which will be a skilfully built and effective engine of our emancipation.

I have long been convinced, and every day that passes strengthens my conviction, that in the Labour movement as a whole and in the Unions as its sections we must be as fully and as well equipped as any great business.

We are in the making as a movement, and we must see to it that that making shall be the best that Irish Labour is capable of. We have the material, we have the men, and I am perfectly satisfied that we have the brains. Here now is our opportunity when we are a growing and expanding movement. Let us get our fully equipped offices, let us man them with the best men and women either money or love can buy, let our officials be highly skilled, well trained and where necessary, experts and specialists in their particular lines, and let us adopt all the best and most up-to-date methods of conducting business. For the conduct of our movement is, to a certain degree, a great business, and we must have it on big business lines. If we equip the Unions in this way, if we man them with the best we can give, if we concentrate our energies and make our efforts upon business lines we shall have a great army of Labour led by its General Staff, captained by able officers, with a militant rank and file second to none in Europe. Give us organisation of a highly technical nature of that kind, give us good staff work and with this Irish working class we shall conquer and come into our own.

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

Towards the Workers' Republic.

That the Labour movement in Ireland has been sadly lacking in its supplies of literary munitions is the continuous complaint of both propagandists and the rank and file of the workers. Leaflets, pamphlets and fly-sheets of all descriptions are indispensable for propaganda, and not only for the propaganda of organisation, but as well for the education and training of those who have already joined the fighting forces of Labour. We would therefore hail with a flourish of trumpets the decision the Transport Union has taken to remove this reproach and provide its membership with well-written and well-thought out pamphlets. Appropriately enough the first of the series to be issued under the common title of the "Liberty Hall Library" aims, as the preface states, at applying to the wants of the Union the theory and practice "of the One Big Union, the dream of James Connolly's life." This first pamphlet, "Lines of Progress," is written out of the very necessities of the case. The growth of the Union has been so great that the Executive recognises that now the time has come when the constructive ideas of Connolly and Larkin should be applied on a grand scale. What has been achieved in this direction and what still remains to do are the theme of the pamphlet. "We must see to it that the present and future development of this Union shall be based on a system which will need no alteration when at length the One Big Union has been accepted by Irish Labour as the effective instrument it needs to achieve its final emancipation from the bondage of wage-slavery," says the able but modest author of the pamphlet. We congratulate the Executive on thus laying broad and deep and solid the foundations of the Workers' Republic that is to be.

The Machinery of Emancipation.

We have no room now to analyse the pamphlet, but we shall return to it later in detail, for it is a veritable Red Republican Manifesto, and will make history. Written primarily for the guidance of the officials and members of the Union, we hope it will be available for the officials and members of other Unions, for it is a successful attempt to apply that thought and intelligence to Labour problems which we have pleaded for in "The Voice." It takes the big and broad view of the Union as the germ of the new social order which will take the place of the present inhuman system. From the beginning it strikes the right note: "To secure effective action in industrial questions there must be unified control—the one Executive Committee—the one General Fund. To secure that Irish Labour shall be free to do its duty in all questions of national importance, the Union must have its headquarters in Ireland, and as the problems of the Irish working class are merely the manifestations in Ireland of the world-wide difficulties confronting the working class in all countries, the Irish Union should be federated with the International working class movement."

On this basis the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has been built-up by the noble heroism and self-sacrifice of its founders, leaders, and its fighting rank and file. On this basis the Union has become numerically the strongest in Ireland and the most powerful force in Irish Labour. This pamphlet is the explanation and exposition of that basis. Its various divisions deal with the sectional, town, rural and branch organisation, benefits and advantages, general executive, and in particular with the Union's departmentalisation into industrial sections and its generous local autonomy under a single Executive. We wish other Unions would follow this excellent lead, and we trust the Transport Union will give us much more of such good thinking and good planning in the Liberty Hall Library.

Exiles Far Away.

Since we last wrote of Jack Carney, the still dashing rebel of pre-war days, and now Editor of the Dunluth Socialist organ, "Truth," we have had several kindly messages from the old comrade of 1913-14 and his wife. From their latest we learn that the "Voice of Labour" has reached them, and they have been good enough to secure several American subscriptions for our journal and to advertise "The Voice" in their own rattling organ. For all this we are grateful, the more so as we are glad to see that "Truth" is true to all the principles of Socialism, Internationalism and Liberty for which faithful comrades the world over are still battling and suffering. Both Jack and his wife send greetings to their comrades in Ireland with a special word or two for certain militants in Belfast and Dublin and the S.P.I. and I.T. and G.W. Union, and on this side these fraternal greetings will be heartily reciprocated. "We'll keep the Red Flag flying here."

England, Arise.

As we write the strike of the munition workers in England is at its height and at its crisis. The Government has withdrawn its exemptions from the strikers and is calling them to the colours. This is ever the weapon capitalist governments use against industrial rebels, and it is but what was expected from this liberty-loving government which is battling for freedom and democracy everywhere but at home. We do not know whether the strikers will surrender to the tremendous pressure that is being brought to bear on them both by the Government, the Press and their own Unions. But of one thing we are certain, that this big strike is remarkable evidence of the influence and power and sincerity of the Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committees' movements.

Three Tailors of Tooley St.

A dramatic coup has been brought about by Messrs. Patrick Lynch, James McCarron and Gurney Rowlerston, three members of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses. These three eminent democrats have expelled from membership of the Amalgamated Union four members of the Dublin Com-

mittee whom, it is alleged, have been unsettling the Irish membership of the Union, the alleged unsettling, it would appear, being the formation of an Irish Union of Tailors. One of the men expelled is, we understand, William O'Brien, secretary of the Dublin Trades Council and Chairman of the Executive of the Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party. It is a sight for gods and men to see these three Tailors of Tooley street solemnly "expelling" Bill O'Brien! Lord, but we should like to hear the laugh and the language of James Connolly and Jim Larkin could they but hear of this noble and notable achievement. O'Brien, if we mistake not, is well able to take care of himself, and will no doubt fight his corner in his own able manner. At that we may leave him and his opponents. But there is something further that wants saying. Why have Messrs. Lynch, McCarron and Rowlerston issued this ukase of expulsion against these four alleged wreckers without giving the accused a trial? Is not the approved method of dealing with opponents in Ireland to deport and intern them? And which of the three Executive members, we wonder, is the Lord French of the Amalgamated Tailors? Is it Alderman McCarron? And are Messrs. Lynch and Rowlerston the Long and the Shortt of the trio? Whoop it up for this new democracy!

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AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND THE LAND. By A.E.

During the next few years, it seems to me, there will be opportunities for agricultural labourers, which, if seized upon, may make many of them economically independent. The war has necessitated a vast increase of tillage, and the regulations enforcing cultivation of a fixed percentage of the land are not likely to be relaxed, but rather to be made more stringent. These regulations have been, with difficulty, carried out by the owners or renters of large grass farms, who were not equipped with the experience, capital, horses or implements necessary. In many districts the owners would gladly let their land to any person who would have cultivated the necessary area. While this was so it is regrettable that agricultural labour was not sufficiently organised or educated to enable it to use the opportunity of farming on its own account, as the highly-organised agricultural labourers in Italy, Roumania, and other European countries have done. What these Italian labourers did was to form co-operative societies and rent land in common. This land was either distributed among their members for individual cultivation, or else the whole farm was tilled as a single co-operative enterprise, the members being paid current labour rates for their work and sharing in the profits according to the number of shares held by each or the amount of wages earned. If the societies were not well off before harvest they only paid part wages in cash, and their members gave them credit for the balance until the produce was marketed. In Roumania the system had become so recognised that the Government, in 1909, passed a special law providing that national, departmental, and communal estates, if not directly farmed by the government, ought to be rented on moderate terms to such societies. In that year there were 275 societies, with 16,000 members. The land was mostly rented to them by the State, but about thirty per cent of it was let to them by private proprietors, who had begun to have confidence in the system. Such enterprises are possible as the result of good organisation of labour and of a general acceptance of co-operative principles applied in many directions. Where there were co-operative stores they helped the members with credit before the crops were marketed. Where there were co-operative banks they advanced capital. All these co-operative enterprises played into each others hands. In Italy the highly-organised societies of agricultural labour undertook the reclamation of waste lands and settled members of their unions upon the land reclaimed. In some districts the unions owned, and indeed were the pioneers of the introduction of agricultural machinery. No doubt the conditions in one country make possible enterprises which would be impractical in others. In Ireland, it seems to me that

the conditions favour such a development. It is doubtful whether the State will burden itself with more public debt for the benefit of Irish farmers, and land purchase, in all probability, will be at a standstill. Yet the State will require the land to be cultivated much more intensively, and if groups of skilled agricultural labourers were organised into co-operative societies it is probable that labour could bring political influence to bear to facilitate the renting of land to groups of such men. Few labourers would have capital other than their skill. In this respect their knowledge is at least as great and much more practical than that of many of their present employers. Their unions should, at the start, use some of their funds to finance an experiment, and the co-operative stores in the towns could guarantee purchase of vegetables, potatoes, milk, pork, or other produce. I have no doubt the Department would readily give technical advice, and the services of a competent instructor would at all times be procurable. If labour in Ireland is really in earnest about bettering its conditions it would be possible, I have no doubt, to try at least a single experiment, and if that was successful, if the agricultural labourers so united improved their lot, and the results were published, it would encourage other landowners to rent land to co-operative societies and the State to give aid. Landowners do not like dealing with a multitude of small farmers, and this was one of the reasons why the single grazier was favoured, and the small men got rid of. The same thing was true in Italy, where the large landowners, not liking a number of troublesome tenants, did not object to a society, as they dealt then with a single body and had not to keep agents to deal with a number of tenants. The same thing, I imagine, would take place here if a pioneer society was successfully promoted. The men chosen must be good men. A failure would discourage labour from attempting a similar scheme again. But with the first society a success, it should lead rapidly to the formation of others, as in Italy, Roumania and Hungary, and the agricultural labourers might make themselves the inheritors of the graziers, many of whom occupy land which is really not good for grazing, and would be much more profitable if tilled. The greatest difficulty is the lack of kindred co-operative organisations here, run in the interests of labour, and all ready to back other co-operative labour enterprises. If labour had created people's banks on the Luzatti model in Ireland, if it had flung itself energetically into the promotion of co-operative stores the problems of finance and of subsistence until the labourers could market their produce would be solved. Failing this, I can only suggest that some of the funds of labour unions should be ad-

A plea for Trade Union experiment in direct action, by the Editor of "The Irish Homestead."

vanced by way of experiment to finance an enterprise in co-operative farming by a group of fifteen or twenty labourers. If the experiment was not ambitious the loss in case of failure would be little, and if the experiment was a success the loan could be replaced year by year out of the profits. In Roumania the co-operative colonies paid for the land they farmed an annual rent of five and a half million francs. The societies had a capital of thirteen hundred thousand francs, and deposited guarantees of about two million francs. If brains are put into an initial enterprise here it is quite possible that co-operative colonies of labour may become numerous in Ireland, and raise the standard of living of rural labour. In Italy men refuse to accept a lower standard of living than they can provide for themselves as members of a co-operative farm colony. When labour is in constant argument with agriculturalists who employ them, it is something to be in the business oneself, and to know what there is in it. It is a modest proposal I make, but I believe, from what has happened elsewhere in Europe, it is well worth while considering.

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THE holding of the Annual Trade Union Congress is a suitable occasion for calling attention to the relations between Co-operation and Trade Unionism. To understand the connection between these movements we must remember that they are the outcome of the same industrial changes and social conditions.

In the chaotic conditions created by the Industrial Revolution the workers in the early nineteenth century struggled for opportunities of expression and for a more equitable share of the products of their labour. Some saw salvation in political action, and thought that greater influence in Parliament secured by manhood suffrage, secret ballots and payment of members would carry them to their goal. Others believed that their salvation would come through the formation of trade unions, which would increase their bargaining power and enable the workers to wrest from their employers higher wages and better conditions generally. Still others pinned their faith on co-operation, which would not only enable them to buy their food and other necessaries more cheaply, but would enable the workers to become the owners and directors of capital and business organisation.

The Rochdale Project.

Through co-operation the workers were thus to secure a control of industry and secure the whole of the products of their industry. The Rochdale Pioneers, whose programme was, and is, the most complete statement of co-operative objects, opened their shop as a means to an end, and not as an end in itself. It is true that they were suffering from high prices and from the adulteration of the food and other commodities which they purchased; and they hoped by becoming their own shopkeepers to prevent exploitation by shopkeepers intent upon selling inferior goods at high prices. But they were suffering from low wages as well as high prices; and they intended, as their shop trade increased, to produce for themselves many of the goods they sold, in order "to find work for such of their members as might be unemployed or employed at only low rates of wages."

Their vision was even wider than this. They stated their intention of acquiring, or joining with other societies in acquiring, estates of land in order to form communities of united interests in which co-operative principles rather than competition should rule. In other words, they conceived the idea of establishing a co-operative or collectivistic state. The necessary capital for their purpose they hoped to secure by the allocation of any trading surplus as dividend on purchases. Earlier societies had usually distributed their surplus according to capital, and had usually failed. The Rochdale Pioneers hoped that the members would leave their interest and dividends in the society; and from these accumulations they hoped to obtain sufficient capital for developing production and acquiring land.

The Class Struggle and After.

Experience has proved the soundness

CO-OPERATION AND TRADE UNIONISM.

By PROFESSOR HALL, M.A., B. Com.,
Adviser of Studies to the Co-operative Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

of the plan of the Rochdale Pioneers; but it has also proved that, in the present condition of affairs, political action and trade unionism are also essential to the full economic emancipation of the worker. The danger to-day lies in assuming that any one of these movements is itself sufficient. Many trade unionists are prone to overlook the possibilities of co-operation, and they fail to use it and make the most of its possibilities. Trade unionism—as hitherto conceived—is merely a fighting machine: it protects the worker and helps him to get a better wage; but it gets him little nearer a control of industry. The Co-operative movement is essentially a movement of reconstruction. It seeks to replace the present industrial system in which the motive of business organisers is profit making, by a system in which general welfare is the object, and association, rather than individualism and competition, is the basis of organisation. Every worker, therefore, has an interest in securing an extension of co-operative activity, not merely because it is going to improve his own position or that of his trade, but because it is going to raise the position of the workers as a whole.

Trade unionism is the fighting instrument of the worker.

Co-operation is his instrument of reconstruction.

I have already said that political action, Trade Unionism and Co-operation are all essential to the emancipation of the worker. During the period of the war the value of each has been demonstrated. Labour representatives in Parliament have undoubtedly had an influence in protecting the interests of the workers both as producers and as consumers. Trade union action has been instrumental in raising wages in the wake of prices.

Co-operation Has Kept Down Prices.

My space will not permit of my stating fully what various societies have done in this direction. "The Board of Trade Labour Gazette" showed, prior to the fixing of the price of the loaf at 9d., that bread in co-operative shops was being sold in almost all districts at prices below those charged by private traders, and, in addition, a dividend was returned to co-operative purchasers. Many societies, including the Dublin Industrial Co-operative Society, retained pre-war prices for bread for months after the outbreak of war, although frequently urged by private bakers to raise their prices. They did not raise the prices until compelled by the exhaustion of their stocks of flour and the

necessity for replacing these stocks by buying flour or grain from private firms who controlled the supply.

Other societies kept down the price of coal for months following the outbreak of war, only raising it when the completion of their contracts compelled them to purchase fresh supplies at higher prices from colliery owners and agents. In a town in the English Midlands a year or so ago, the milk dealers combined and raised the price of milk. The co-operative society, believing that the increase was not justified by circumstances, opened a milk department and by successfully selling milk at a lower price, forced the local combine to lower its price again.

These instances might be multiplied many times. They go to show what the co-operative movement has done, not only to keep down its own prices but, by offering an alternative supply, to keep down the prices of other traders as well. To what level prices would have risen if there had been no co-operative movement we can only conjecture. That they would have risen much more than they have done, we can be sure. It is no wonder that over a million new members have joined co-operative societies during the period of the war.

It may be asked, why have co-operative societies not done more to keep down prices and maintain supplies? The answers are simple. The million new members have made demands on its productive capacities, which war-time restrictions prevent being satisfied immediately. The movement has, as yet, only an inadequate control of raw materials and sources of supply, and therefore when its stocks are exhausted, it has to pay toll to the profiteers.

To increase its command over raw materials and to increase the number of workers enjoying the superior conditions of labour the movement provides; in a word, to hasten the coming of the Co-operative Commonwealth, more trade in the retail shops is essential. Every trade unionist ought to be a member, subscribing his capital and giving all his custom to his local society.

The two movements must work together, and by local and national joint committees, take common action against common enemies, and give each other mutual aid in rebuilding civilisation on a basis of equity, freedom and happiness.

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FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

DORA'S GRAND-MA.

In 1878 Prince Von Bismarck introduced Dora's grandma to the Reichstag. It was directed against the Social Democratic Party, then a growing force in Germany. It is so obviously the progenitor of our own Dora that if we read "Sinn Fein" for Social Democrat we might be reading current history—say a speech by the redoubtable Field-Marshal.

Bismarck introduced the Bill with the following considerations:—

"It has become a necessity, for the preservation of the State and society, to adopt an attitude of determined opposition to the Social Democratic movement. It is true that thought cannot be repressed by external compulsion, and an intellectual movement can only be effectually combatted by intellectual means. But such a movement, when it enters on false courses and threatens to become pernicious, may be deprived of its means of extension by legitimate methods.

"Yet the State alone will never succeed, even with the means proposed in this Bill, in destroying the Social-Democratic agitation. These are only the preliminary requisites of the cure, not the cure itself. Rather will it need the active co-operation of all the conservative forces of civilized society, in order by the revival of religious sentiment, by enlightenment and instruction, by strengthening the sense of right and morality among the people, and by future economic reforms, to effect a radical cure.

"The ordinary penal code is inadequate to stem the agitation in question, because of its predominately repressive character, in virtue of which it can indeed take cognizance of particular violations of law, but not of a continuous agitation directed against the State and society. A revision in this department is, therefore, not advisable, especially as, in order to be operative, it would have to exceed the requirements of the present, and would necessitate a permanent curtailment of rights. **What is wanted is rather a special enactment which shall subject the right of association and of public meeting, the freedom of the press, and the following of particular trades, as well as the liberty of removal from one place to another, to such limitations as shall exclusively operate against the dangerous aims of Social-Democracy, inasmuch as, confessedly, all morbid and extraordinary conditions in the life of the State call for remedy by means of special legislation, directed exclusively to the removal of the immediate danger, and ceasing to operate as soon as its object is attained.**"

By the law itself all Social Democratic Societies and all combinations having a similar character were forbidden. All mutual benefit societies were subject to the control of the police, who could be present at their sittings, call and conduct their general meetings, forbid resolutions likely to further Socialistic aims or propaganda, supervise the officers and even take charge of the funds. If a Society were prohibited its funds

were confiscated. Literature of a Socialistic tendency was forbidden. A newspaper could be seized and prohibited by the police, and be suppressed for ever when one of its numbers had been thus prohibited. Its property could also be destroyed or confiscated. Suspected persons could be expelled from the town or district in which they resided. Socialistic meetings were declared unlawful, and anyone offering accommodation to a prohibited society was liable to imprisonment. There could also be punished by imprisonment or fine anyone who distributed forbidden publications or collected subscriptions for Social-Democratic purposes. In bitter mockery of the forms of justice, a special commission of five members was instituted to hear appeals of societies prohibited, and editors of newspapers suspended by the police; but no such appeal could stay police execution, which was immediate. Lastly, in districts where all these measures of repression might not suffice to extinguish Socialism the Government was empowered to proclaim "a minor state of siege."

Now who will enlist in the war against Prussianism? T. J.

SUPPORT THE IRISH LABOUR PRESS.

By Thomas Foran,
General President, I.T. and G.W.U.

The pages of this paper tell from week to week the story of the Transport Union's growth in membership and increasing solidarity, and there is no need for me to dwell on the satisfactory progress we are making as a Union.

One thing we have done, however, to which I would call attention here. Our Union, from the first, has recognised the necessity of aiding its propaganda on the platform and at the street corner, by a labour press. We founded the "Irish Worker" and the "Workers' Republic," the files of which enshrine the best of Larkin and Connolly's work. During the days of storm and stress these journals rendered enormous service, not only to the Transport Union, but to Irish Labour in general. Since our press was confiscated we have felt the want of a free and unfettered labour press.

We have now joined with other labour forces in the Irish Labour Press Co-operative Society, which publishes the "Voice of Labour." We have not abandoned the desire to have a paper of our own, but in the present circumstances we believe it is best for Irish Labour to concentrate in giving whole-hearted support in capital to one good general weekly, and to see that it is brought within reach of every trade unionist.

The Transport and General Workers' Union has subscribed its share of the capital of the Irish Labour Press, but as

President of the Union I want to make it clear that the "Voice of Labour" is not intended to be a Transport organ only. Its purpose and scope are wider and fuller, that is to speak of every union and every branch of Irish labour. Therefore, as a member of the provisional committee of the Irish Labour Press, I appeal to the executives of all Unions to join the Co-operative Society, subscribe share capital, and use the machinery of their Unions to promote the circulation of the paper. Given proper support, we can issue a sixteen-page paper every week. Given the circulation that is possible in the Irish Labour movement, we can make the paper self-supporting.

It's up to you, comrades! Come along and help us in this good work. It would be scandalous if we did not rally now and own and control our own weekly, the "Voice of Labour." It or some other paper we must have, for the Irish Labour movement, without a proper press to guide it, would be like a ship without a helm.

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HA MAONAI ASUR A n-OROLUCAN.

Le cu ulad.

"ASUR ASUBHADAR Clann Imael nu, oo b'feairi linn so b'raasaoir bar ne lam an uaisneam a' seiric na heispte an uair oo fuiseamair lam ne putosaib' feola ASUR an uair o' icimir amh an rait! oir tus r'bre amad inr an b'raasac ro r'inn oo maibad na coimheionola-ra le hochar."

An t-olason ceona oo bioo as Clanna Imael in allon ran b'raasac bioo as feiriri na heimeann o' b'raasaoir lunnun na n'gall. Ir in deio feola na heispte a bi uaisnear na hiuadighe ac ir in deio aihis'o asur omor na sapanac ac b'ion an na feiriri. Ta' uait'bir eile eadair iao fein asur na hiuadighe am i. so rab maoir as r'c'irad Clanna Imael raoi coimheice De fein asur nac b'ruil as na feiriri ac seagan'oiolun asur r'p'io'rao' uo'ra' eigin o'a n'g'io'rao' ar bealac a amleapa. ASUR macairo r'iao' amair no' nac iongnad' raoi cuimheaca' p'amao' a'ir. U'rao' leobca uair asur iao as tabairt' sac ne feucant' tar a n'guailne! Cuiseadair so maic nac rab mear as an' b'raasac' eall o'ra ac e as i'air'io' a' s'ar' fein' oo b'aint' arca. Cuiseadair so maic nar maic le muinteair na heimeann so u'ceid'oir amair le hu'adair' a' tabairt' oo seagan' buioe in a' cuio oibheaca' ra' t'ir' reo. Cuiseann r'iao' so maic so scuip'io' ne ac'ar ar sac namair ac' as muinteir na heimeann, feiriri na heimeann' oo' o'ul' amair i' o'ois' a' namad' asur so scuip'io' ne b'ion ar ca'ir'oe na n'g'ae'oeal i' n'g'ac' t'ir. Cuiseann r'iao' so maic o'a mbead' to'g'ad' i' n'he'ir'inn i' mb'raac' sur beas' u'ime' ac' oo mac'ad' amair in' ainm feirire o' e'ir'inn. ac' o'a m'buo' ar leabair' a' mb'air' a' be'oir' mac'air'oir' amair so lunnoun. ASUR seob'ad'oir' lei'c'geal' cuise. le cur in' as'air' r'ois'igin na t'ir! le cur n' as'air' na' g'canac' nuair'oe! le curiu' le' dean' t'air'ib' na heimeann in' e'ir' an' co'g'air'. O' am'ir' p'air'mell' no'ir' cuimheadair in' as'air' r'ois'igin na t'ir asur no'ir' cuimheadair in' as'air' ar'ou' canac, ni' head' ac' cuimheadair lei' an' ar'ou'; asur ni' punneadair puinn' ma'ir' ar' pon na no'ean'cu'ir. Ma'ir' seall' ar' a' be'it' as' me'ois' i' lunnoun ac' r'iao' as' o'ul' amair; asur an' SACO' oo' co'ra'nt' asur a' cumilt' guailne le Uoy'o' se'oise' asur Curron' asur ce'airron. Ta' na' ma'oir' o'ul' amair as' a' n-OROLUCAN! na' ma'oir' lac'aisge! na' ma'oir' ru'araca, an' rean'g-cu' o' bealac' a' u'ois'inn; an' p'ros' o' u'eil'feir'roe, an' cap'raen' o' saillin' an' u'air'uin' o' i'ar'-'ir'oe' asur an' cuio' eile' ac'a. Im'ceact' san' pillead' u'ois' ac' tab'ra'ama'oir' a'ir'e, com' luac' ir' cu'oc'ar' an' r'ail, nac' mac'air' r'iao' am'ir' ma'ir' feiriri' o' e'ir'inn. Ta' r'ao'ir'ead' na' n'g'ae'oeal' i' b'p'io'ra'um' eall' ait' oo' ba' o'ual' oo' se'oe'oeal'ib' ma'ice' oo' be'it' com' r'ada' ir' ta' s'neim' as' seagan' ar' an' t'ir' reo.

Irish Labour Press Co-operative Society.

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THE FATE OF THE PEASANT.

By W. N. EWER, Author of "Five Souls."

You in Ireland, I suppose, meet even more frequently than we in England the argument or assertion that Socialism, whatever its merits, is entirely inapplicable to agriculture.

"You cannot," so the argument usually goes, "run counter to the natural evolution of things: and the natural evolution of agriculture is in the direction of a system of individual peasant holdings. There is a desire for property and especially for property in land, which will defeat every attempt to communise agriculture. The whole history of the nineteenth century all over Europe shows it. And so on. "You have all Europe against you": so Mr. Belloc summed it up in a discussion at a National Guilds League meeting.

Now, if this were all true, it would be a pretty serious—though not a decisive—thing. But certainly it is serious enough to compel us to examine the argument pretty closely.

The Nineteenth Century.

And for that, first of all, a little history is necessary. Because the case of our critics rests very largely on the assertion that the establishment over most of Europe during the nineteenth century of peasant-proprietorship as the normal land system is the result of a strong and steady desire of the peasantry to hold and work their own land individually rather than in any co-operative manner.

What are the facts?

The great changes of the nineteenth century commence, of course, with the French Revolution. And it is certainly true that, on the whole, the result of the Revolution was not only the abolition of feudalism, but the destruction of the communes and the sharing out of the communal lands. But this, as Kropotkin has shown, was not the work or the desire of the mass of the peasantry. It was the work, firstly, of the wealthier peasants and the "village bourgeoisie," and, secondly, of the Girondins and other theorists of the cities, who were disciples of Turgot and Adam Smith, and firm believers in individualism and laissez-faire as the cure for all ills. It was the natural and characteristic work of men whose social and economic theories were precisely those which in England were producing capitalist individualism.

Economic Liberalism.

And as in France and the countries affected by the Revolution, so in Germany and Austria. There the men who carried out the change were not revolutionaries; they were the ministers of autocrats. But in economic matters they were Liberals and individualists translating their creed into practice. Stein and Hardenberg carried out precisely the reforms which the disciples of Adam Smith would have carried out in England had they and not a landowning oligarchy been in power. And it is noteworthy that precisely as they set up

peasant proprietorship, so they established individualism in commerce and industry by the destruction of the guilds. So too, at a later period it is Russian Liberalism in the shape of Stolypin that commences the deliberate destruction of the mir and the establishment of peasant proprietorship—in the teeth of the opposition of the peasants themselves.

Your own case in Ireland is somewhat different. There your own land system had already been destroyed, and the purely individualist English system forced on the country. The need was for relief from a peculiarly predatory landlordism. But even so it is significant that the final transition to proprietorship was largely the spontaneous act of the ruling class.

History then seems to me, on the whole, against our opponents. The peasant proprietor system is the result far less of a spontaneous and natural land-hunger on the part of the masses than of individualist theories on the part of rulers and reformers. They have held out proprietorship as the panacea for agricultural ills: it has been offered as the only alternative to oppressive feudalism and to predatory landlordism: and so it has been usually accepted.

But more important than its historical origin is its fitness to survive. Is it a workable, practical system: or does it, like that small-scale individual capitalism which it so closely resembles, bear in it the seeds of its own rapid decay?

First of all, let us clear up a possible confusion. There are two systems, each based on the ownership of the soil by its occupant, but entirely different in their social and economic results. You can have the medium or large-scale capitalist farmer, owning his farm, and working it by wage labour. Or you can have the true peasant, the small owner, working his holding by the labour of himself and his family.

Now, the first of these we can rule out at once. It is intolerable and unstable for precisely the same reason that renders industrial capitalism intolerable and unstable—because it is based upon the class war, and an industry divided against itself is doomed. The only issue between us and Mr. Belloc and his friends is how to deal with it. They say break up the holdings, distribute the land, until every worker is lord of his own soil and his own livelihood.

The Doom of the Peasant.

It is then with the peasant small holder that we have to deal. And, if I read the signs rightly, the peasant is doomed to disappear: not by force of Socialist propaganda, but by sheer force of circumstance. He is doomed to disappear because his very existence is based upon a fallacy—upon the belief that a man can be economically independent of his fellows. Man, by the very nature of things, is bound to co-operate if he will survive.

In the economic as in the political "state of nature," life must of necessity be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

And so, everywhere that the peasant exists, we find him struggling for existence. A bad harvest, illness, bad luck of one kind or another, brings him into the hands of the money lender. He is at the mercy of the men who sell to him and buy from him: just as in the old cottage industries the little manufacturers were exploited by the merchants; just as in the homework industries of to-day the workers—lords of their own workshops—are the most sweated of all industrial classes. He is fighting single-handed against the world; and it's long odds on the world.

Surrounded by Foes.

Everywhere it is the same story. The Polish peasant is in the hands of the Jews. The Austrian peasant is a slave of the sugar-kartels. In India, where the village community has been destroyed, and the rayatwari system prevails, law after law has been passed to protect the rayet against the money-lender, until he has ceased to be, except in name, a free tenant of his holding. The gombeen-man—but you know more about that than I!

Moreover, the small holder has to compete against the large scale farming of America—will soon have to compete against a reformed large-scale farming in England; and he cannot do it. There are economics of large scale production in agriculture as in industry. It is cheaper to run a herd of 100 cows than twenty "herds" of five. It is cheaper to grow twenty acres of wheat than to grow twenty one-acre patches. The peasant may keep his end up awhile by incessant toil and by contenting himself with a pittance. But that is a vain and a foolish self-sacrifice.

Already the writing is on the wall. Everyone is realising that by himself the peasant is doomed. And the cry is for salvation by—co-operation!

Precisely. That cry is the surrender of the whole position: it is the acknowledgment of the Socialist case. It is the abandoning of individualism and of the whole basis of the argument for private property in land. Co-operation is the opening of the gate through which agriculture will and must move steadily and swiftly towards a guild system.

The Way Out.

You may start only with co-operative buying or selling; you will go on to co-operative banking. Certainly and inevitably you will move to co-operative production—because it will be more efficient and more remunerative. And once you get co-operative production under the co-operative control of all the workers, you will, to all intents and purposes, have communal ownership. The fact may disguise itself under other names for a while. But the facts will prevail at last even over names. The evolution of agriculture is certain: it is through co-operative societies to local guilds: and through the

(Continued on Page 362).

CO-OPERATE.

TO TRADE UNIONISTS the ideal of Co-operation makes a special appeal. The Co-operative movement offers an alternative to the present selfish organisation of industry. By the Co-operative method the community may control industry and commerce for the benefit of all.

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The I.A.W.S. is the Trade Federation of the Co-operative movement in Ireland. Both Rural and Urban Societies trade through it. It is the link between the town and the country.

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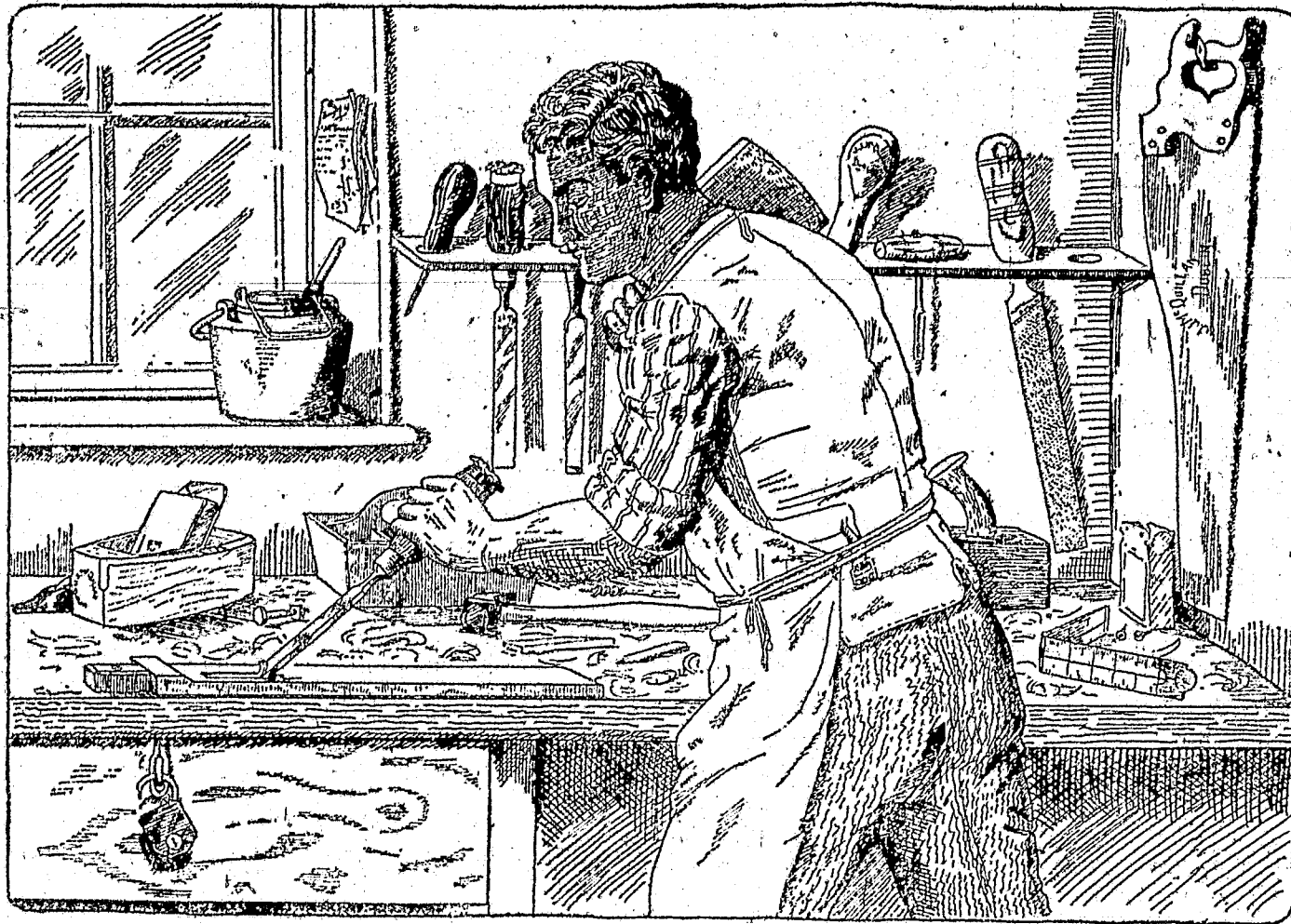
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(Mention this paper when writing.)

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YOUNG LIFE-SAVING BILL.

Dear Fellow-Members,

In order to relieve the terrible poverty and suffering that is devastating Europe, let us hasten to secure 5/- a week for every child in poor circumstances—for boys up to the age of 14 years and to girls and women for life. Whilst they are exposed to cold, hunger, and unchivalrous treatment, we can think of nothing else, and are, therefore, handicapped in pressing for other reforms which might decrease their helplessness. 5/- a week to each child would enable whole families to move at once into better houses, and to obtain better milk and food. This would stimulate local trade and reduce expenses of Workhouses, Hospitals, Prisons and Lunatic Asylums, and do away with poor rates to such an extent as to be a great saving to the tax payers, and would enable sensible girls to marry where they would otherwise not dare to do so, and to bring up healthy, happy children, to become stalwart citizens and parents in their turn, besides relieving untold pain and suffering, and being an inestimable benefit to the State.

The fact of a married man becoming automatically **POORER** at the birth of each child constitutes a cruel wrong to all children, and until each child has 5/- a week in its own individual right as an infant citizen, suffering, war, disease, and poverty can never be abolished. Let us all demand this from our different Governments now, at once, before it may be too late!

In Voting, let us concentrate on Chivalry and Courage to first help the smallest Nations, and the weakest Members of the Human Community. Complete Self-determination for Scotland and Ireland, and 5/- a week to every child and every girl and woman who has otherwise no private income of her own. This is the **ONLY** way to avoid present and future suffering falling upon those least able to bear it.

S. MACKENZIE KENNEDY.

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IRISHMEN—

KEOGH BROS. LTD.75 Lr. Dorset Street,
124 Stephen's Green,**DUBLIN.****HIT BELOW THE BELT.****UNJUST AWARD GIVEN IN SHOP ASSISTANTS' DISPUTE.**

After a strike of seven weeks, with as strong and clear a case as any body of organised workers ever had, the shop assistants, clerks, and studio workers in dispute (with their employers, Messrs. Guy and Co., Ltd., Patrick St., Cork, allowed Mr. Chas. H. O'Connor, Chairman Agricultural Wages Board, to arbitrate upon the points at issue.

They had no hesitation in submitting their case to this gentleman, for while justice remains anything more than a mere word they knew that at least a great part of their demand must be conceded.

The arbitration award which has come to hand is so grotesque, so fantastic, so utterly without any semblance of justice, that one is left wondering how such decisions could have been arrived at in the face of the case the workers were able to present.

The terms of Reference were, briefly:—

- (1) Whether the proposed dismissal of seven employees was due to a reduction in business consequent on a shortage of goods;
- (2) Whether an increase of wages be given or the firm continue to pay for time lost through sickness.

The award gives the firm full power to dismiss all or any of the seven persons named, decides that sickness shall not be paid for in future, increases the wages of 8 employees who received nothing at the February settlement by amounts ranging from 6d. to 5s., and gives the whole staff a "compensation" for the loss of the claim for "sick money" an increase on present wages of 2½ per cent.

Think that over, organised workers! Two and a half per cent.—sixpence in the pound for a staff of qualified shop assistants and clerks whose average wage is less than a pound per week. Think it over, and your thoughts should be an eye-opener for Mr. O'Connor of Dublin Castle.

Now as to the right to dismiss—or let us be plain, "to victimize"—the seven workers named by the firm.

The firm's plea was "shortage of goods." Let us take that for the moment as a fact, and analyse the firm's subsequent action.

Shortage of goods is a thing which can be foreseen for weeks—sometimes months—it is a gradual process, and dismissals consequent upon it can be so arranged as to cause a minimum of hardship to the employee, but Messrs. Guy and Co. were so eager for "blood" that the ink was scarcely dry on the award before four of the seven were "on the carpet" and summarily dismissed with a week's money in lieu of notice.

And that they say is not "victimisation"—ye gods!

But the National Union of Shop Assistants, under whose banner the staff are organised, do not intend to let the mat-

ter drop. The staff are at work it is true, but they are only keeping their powder dry.

[From the copy of the award that has reached us we find that Mr. O'Connor does not accept Messrs. Guy's plea of shortage of goods. He speaks of "reduction of business."—Ed.]

CORK TRADES COUNCIL AND THE STRIKE AT GUY'S.

At a well-attended meeting of the Cork Trades Council, held on July 25th, the award given by Mr. O'Connor, Chairman Agricultural Wages Board, came up for discussion, and very strong views were expressed by the delegates present upon the nature of the decisions arrived at by this Dublin Castle arbitrator.

The Secretary (Mr. Twomey) said he wished to express his keen disappointment at the award given. The workers' representatives had thought that by handing their case over to a gentleman of Mr. O'Connor's standing they were doing the right thing, but he regretted the award had not justified their action. Mr. O'Connor had failed to arrive at anything like a fair or just conclusion. That was the opinion of all who had been made acquainted with the award.

Mr. Humphrey (National Union of Shop Assistants) said he was sorry to have to trouble the Council once more with the question of Guy's dispute, but the nature of the award was such that he had no other course open to him but to raise the matter again. It was monstrous, and he felt sure Trades Unionism would not tolerate it.

He was anxious the Council should understand that his Union had not finished with the matter, and Mr. O'Connor, Messrs. Guy, and the public would do well to note the fact.

They would fight again and win.

Mr. John Good said if that was the kind of arbitration they were to get from such people the sooner they had Arbitration Boards established on which Labour could secure fair representation the better.

Alderman Kelleher also spoke. He expressed surprise and disgust at a firm of Guy's standing accepting the award, even though it was in their favour. It was a disgraceful award, and when the shop assistants entered the field once more he was confident they would have behind them the full support of that Council.

On the motion of Mr. Good, a resolution was unanimously adopted declaring that the award, in the judgment of the Council, was unfair and without any semblance of justice, and calling upon Mr. O'Connor to resign any posts he might hold which may have for their object the regulation of the wages of the working classes, he having proved himself totally unfitted to arbitrate upon questions affecting the price of labour.

LANSBURY'S GLAD HAND.

To my Comrades and Friends in Ireland.

First of all, best of good wishes and greetings from all comrades and friends connected with the "Herald."

We are all watching the struggle of nationalist Ireland for self-determination, and trusting that very soon freedom and liberty will come into their own in your country. We are not amongst those who believe in separation. We have no faith, however, in Unions of Governments, or Leagues of Governments. We want a Union of Nations, and when we support the proposal for a League of Nations, what we mean is a league of the peoples. In fact, the "International."

The "International" to us means that the people of each country shall each manage their own affairs, and will enter into relationships with the people of other countries, and together make the world safe for democracy, because democracy will refuse to fight at the bidding either of plutocracy or of autocracy. It is the common people of all countries who slay each other. For us there is no virtue in any sort of Government as Government, it is the people who should administer their own affairs. Therefore we take no interest in republicanism as republicanism or in the monarchy as monarchy. We believe that the free peoples of the world must arrange their affairs in such a way that the people themselves would be in control. And the first step towards this is to bring about Industrial solidarity.

I hope the Trade Union Congress in Ireland will stand fast for this. It may be that we on this side of St. George's Channel have not always been true to our principles in regard to Irish relationships. All the same the war has taught all of us a great deal; in every country in the wide world there is a great longing for solidarity, and to be successful solidarity must commence at home. We want the Irish democracy and the British democracy to join hands, and we want them to do so in order to overthrow vested interests and autocracy in our own countries.

We believe that if the working classes in the world are united, no other power in the world can do them any harm. It is the workers who destroy the workers either in a strike, a political crisis, or in a war. This can only be overcome when we remember that as individuals our individual freedom is bounded by the freedom of our fellow-men and women, and as nationalists remember that our nationalism is bounded by the right to freedom of every other nation.

The "Herald" stands for internationalism, internationalism which is to include not merely white men, but all the races of the world. We believe that there should be no barriers, no frontiers, either of sea, of land, or religion; no barriers of class, colour or sex; but that humanity should be just one the world over. Our view of the present struggle is that it is not a struggle between two systems of governments, for up till now all governments have been controlled by autocrats

or plutocrats, the representatives of privilege and monied interests. The fundamental truth to be born out of the present horrors is just this: That all down the ages mankind has made a great mistake in allowing itself to be dragooned and drilled to fight on behalf of Kings and Capitalists, Governments and Kaisers. Labour must end all this. The end will come when the workers of every country understand they have one interest only, and that is to join their forces together for a great peaceful revolution; a revolution of mind and conduct which will enable us all to stand four square against all the forces that at present keep us down. John Mitchell, in his cell in a Dublin prison, said that in his thoughts and dreams he heard "the tramp of millions of Irishmen marching to secure the emancipation of Ireland; to-day those who have eyes to see and ears to hear can see the gathering of the forces of labour in every land coming together for a final struggle of the oppressed of every land against the oppressors, and our true bond of union is not a class or a racial union, but a union based on our common brotherhood—our belief in the oneness of human life and our complete faith that the common people of the whole wide world will win salvation "each for all and all for each."

Again, best of good wishes and good luck to the Congress, and may Ireland soon be a nation in the true sense of the word, working side by side with the peoples of the world to bring about that international which millions of Irishmen as well as millions of men of other nationalities have lived and died to make possible.—Your fraternally,

GEORGE LANSBURY,
Editor, "Herald."

THE FATE OF THE PEASANT. (From Page 358)

co-operation of local guilds, to a National Agricultural Guild, comprising in its ranks every agricultural worker in the country.

And that takes me back: for the brushed aside momentarily, the employing farmer, and have written as though the Bellocian ideal had been fulfilled, and there were no agricultural labourers. But it is, of course, precisely here that our work lies. Circumstances will force the farmers through co-operation into guilds. It is the task of Trade Unionism at the same time to organise the wage-workers, and then to obtain for them, not merely better conditions, but a change of status, so that they as well as the present farmer-class shall be free and equal members of their guilds. In a word—agricultural guilds are inevitable in one or other form. It is for us to see to it that they shall be democratic in form and spirit: that they shall be true guilds and not predatory trusts.

GET READY NOW.

Avoid disappointment for future Demonstrations. We are making and supplying Banners in Irish Poplin with Portraits, symbolical subjects and border of Celtic interlaced designs painted in oils at less than pre-war prices.

Some Banners recently supplied:

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Others in work at the "Frongoch Studio."

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STOP **Fleming's Hotel,**
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Two minutes' walk from Gardiner St. Chapel
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SELECT—MODERATE—CONVENIENT.

MISS HUGHES'S Private Hotel

(Late Miss Gainey's), 39 LOWER GARDINER
ST., DUBLIN. Telephone 2568. Three min-
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COMFORTABLE, SELECT, OLD-ESTAB-
LISHED, MODERATE.

Every facility for Trade Union Delegations.

INSURANCE AGENTS!

Are you doing your duty by your fellows in the Trade Union Movement?

Are you a member of the National Union of Life Assurance Agents?

THE ONE UNION THAT CATERS FOR ALL OFFICES

WANT OF ORGANISATION IN THE PAST IS TELLING ON ALL NOW.

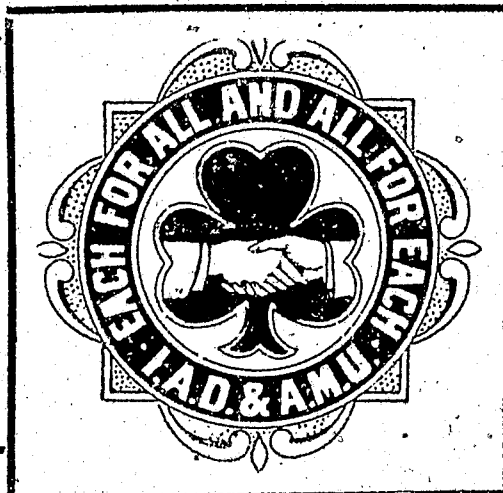
REMEDY this now by joining up in a live Trade Union. Information may be had from the Secretary, National Union of Life Assurance Agents, 61 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin.

TRADES COUNCILS should see that they have a branch of this Union affiliated in their districts.

An Insurance Agent is the agent of the public, not of the offices. See that your agent is a Trade Unionist and a member of the

National Union of Life Assurance Agents.

MOTOR DRIVERS



MOTOR MECHANICS

?

HAVE your wages increased in proportion to the increased cost of living?

Why Not?

Because you are not organised!

IT is only by Unity (i. e., Strength), that you can be brought up to the level of every other worker in Ireland.

Representatives can be interviewed at the Irish Trade Union Congress, Waterford, 5th, 6th, and 7th August, 1918.

Organise!

ENERGETIC men wanted to form branches in every town in Ireland. Write

Now

for all particulars to the Head Office of the IRISH AUTOMOBILE DRIVERS' AND AUTOMOBILE MECHANICS' UNION,

22 Dawson St., Dublin

THE WORKER'S MONEY.

BY ANDREW E. MALONE

As things are now, it is very doubtful if the average Trade Unionist gives much attention to the financial side of his membership at all. Beyond paying his subscription, and perhaps grumbling a little at the size or the frequency of the levies, he takes very little interest. Workers generally do not understand balance sheets and columns of figures bore the majority of them. But balance sheets, even balance sheets, are vital sometimes and columns of figures instead of boring might very easily galvanise the workers if even a very little attention were paid to them. Where are the Trade Union funds now? Generally speaking they are in the custody of the numerous joint stock banks up and down the country. The joint stock banks do not hoard money in cellars, that is not what they exist for. They hoard the workers' money no more than they hoard any other money entrusted to them. The banks exist for the purchase and sale of money, or credit, and if they pay for the workers' money, say $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, they sell it to someone who requires it at 5 or 6 per cent. per annum. The difference between the purchase and sale prices keeps

the bank going and provides the profit to the shareholders. When employer and employed are banking in the same bank or even under the same system it is quite possible for the employer to be strong, because the employee's funds are at his disposal through the bank. An employer need not know that such funds are behind him, but it is a fact, we should say, that the bank will give facilities to employers or traders that it will never give to workers or Trade Unions. The workers' money, through joint stock banks, is helping to perpetuate the existing industrial system. It must continue to do so until the workers make up their minds to do their banking with a democratically controlled bank which does not transact business with the employers and the traders as we know them to-day. If the workers want to help the employers, sweaters and good firms alike, of course it is their own affair and any interference would be mere intrusion.

It may be said that Trade Unions now use the ordinary banks because there is no alternative. There is an alternative, there is the bank of the Irish Co-operative Wholesale Society in Dublin. Perhaps that is not generally known. What will, we think, be generally known is that English Trade Unions are now using the bank of the English Wholesale Society to a very great extent. The I.A.W.S. bank is open to Irish

Trade Unions just as the C.W.S. bank is open to the Trade Unions of Britain. The I.A.W.S. bank is under the control of hundreds of Irish co-operative societies, in turn owned and controlled by tens of thousands of the Irish people. The funds at the disposal of the co-operative bank are used only in co-operative work and for the development of co-operative undertakings in our own country. A glance at the balance sheet of any of our joint stock banks will show how much Irish money is in use outside Ireland, yet we want all our money at home. Do we not want to develop our own country? Do we not want its potential manufacturing power realised? We do, at least we say we do, and pass resolutions about it, but very little else.

We should desire our industrial developments to be under democratic control and not merely ministering to the appetite for profits of a small group of people. We can help in this work by banking with the co-operative bank, and that help can be given without any loss in interest, indeed it can be given with a gain in interest because the co-operative bank gives higher rates to its depositors than any other in Ireland. We think the matter is worth some attention from Irish workers, more particularly from Irish Trade Unions, and we trust they will consider it and take some action.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE GREAT LABOUR SONG?

THE WATCHWORD OF LABOUR.

O, hear ye the watchword of Labour,
The slogan of they who'd be free,
That no more to any enslaver
Shall Labour bend suppliant knee;
That we on whose shoulders are borne
The pomp and the pride of the great,
Whose toil they repay with their scorn,
Must challenge and master our fate.

Chorus:

Then send it aloft on the breeze, boys,
That watchword, the grandest we've
known,
That Labour must rise from its knees, boys,
And claim the broad earth as its own.

Aye, we who oft won by our valour
Empire for our rulers and lords,
Yet knelt in abasement and squalor
To the Thing we had made by our swords,
Now valour with worth will be blending
When, answering Labour's command,
We arise from our knees, and, ascending
To manhood, for freedom take stand.
Chorus.

Then out from the field and the city,
From workshop, from mill and from mine,
Despising their wrath and their pity,
We workers are moving in line,
To answer the watchword and token
That Labour gives forth as its own,
Nor pause till our chains we have broken
And conquer'd the spoiler and drone.
Chorus.

Words written
during the Strike
Wexford, 1911,

By

JAMES CONNOLLY.

Music composed
during the Lock-
out Dublin, 1913,

By

J. J. HUGHES.

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ON SALE IN WATERFORD DURING CONGRESS WEEK.

A Manifesto by The Irish Passive Resisters' Fellowship.

If there can be any event during the last four years of war upon which our children will look back with grateful pride, it will be the All-Ireland Labour Convention of April 20th, 1918, and the general stoppage of work that followed it. The national protest against conscription, so spontaneous and determined, must mark an epoch in the history of our country, and Irish workers may be justly proud of their special demonstration of that protest. Other great strikes there have been in Germany, Austria, France. Other great strikes there may yet be—but none up to the present nation-wide as this one-day strike in Ireland. By it the workers of Ireland proved that they are in the van of those who fight for liberty the world over.

It is because we of the Irish Passive Resisters' Fellowship recognise at its true worth the influence of the workers of Ireland upon the cause of liberty, not only in their own country, but in all the civilised world, that we ask them to ponder carefully the methods they adopt in maintaining their

Opposition to Conscription.

For conscription is not yet dead, even in Ireland. And conscription may be killed, only to leave its parent, militarism, exalted to power over us. It is because we wish to crush both conscription and militarism that we seek to enlist your support in provoking discussion and spreading a knowledge of the principles of Passive Resistance.

The workers of Ireland, with a sure instinct, have made it plain that they would oppose conscription, even if it were an Irish Parliament that sought to impose it. They know well that military conscription inevitably brings with it industrial conscription in some form or other.

Yet we submit that Labour opposition to conscription cannot be based merely on its interference with industrial organisation, and that above every consideration of expediency there is a vital principle involved. Labour stands for the recognition of the

Equality of all Men.

It protests against and strives to pre-

vent the domination of a few men over many, rendered possible by the concentration of economic power in the hands of the few. It recognises economic compulsion as wrong, as a denial of justice and brotherhood, as an attempt to extinguish the divine spark that burns in the soul of the least human being. On precisely the same grounds, Labour must object to physical compulsion. The use of force in furtherance of any policy also constitutes a denial of justice and brotherhood, but the crime is graver because physical resistance is followed by irreparable injury—the maiming and killing of those who resist.

For a government to seek to compel a man to wound and kill his fellows, contrary to his own conscience, is

To Commit Sacrilege.

It is no less sacrilege if a man seeks to thwart the government by military resistance to its servants—men who may be its unwilling victims, or who may be only doing what they conceive to be their duty.

To adopt physical force as a means of resistance to conscription is to adopt the Government's own methods, to admit the validity of the Government's own principles. It is to deny that Right alone is sufficient, and to declare that Might must be a deciding factor.

The Irish Passive Resisters' Fellowship therefore seeks to enlist the support of the Labour movement in opposing the use of physical force and in securing a national reliance on moral force. It may be that passive resistance will involve greater hardship and sacrifice than forcible resistance, but we know that organised workers do not hesitate at the severest sufferings in defence of their principles. We know that

Passive Resistance

may place a greater strain upon the individual will than forcible resistance in active co-operation with one's comrades, but we believe that the hope of democracy lies in the perfecting of each individual, and that such a testing of the individual fibre will help to strengthen all of us.

We wish to make it clear that in urging

passive resistance we are not proposing a merely negative policy. Passive resistance is only the negative expression of that resolute determination and striving for righteousness which inspires every movement making for the liberation of the world from the slavery of ignorance and selfishness. It is another expression of the principles of justice and liberty upon which the Labour movement takes its stand. It is a new application of the method of the strike, which is Labour's own special weapon. If the people of Ireland as a nation repudiate the use of force and profess their faith in reason and justice against every opposition, who can foretell how far-reaching the effects of their action may be? We shall save Ireland from conscription. We shall root up the seeds of militarism from Irish soil and save our children from an evil burden. And we shall give a new hope and inspiration to all the war-weary peoples of the world, heartening them with the promise of a speedy peace and reconciliation, showing them a vision of a new world in which belief in war will be a forgotten superstition. The workers of Ireland have made a splendid beginning. We ask them to consider whether they cannot go on to a still more splendid conclusion by ranging themselves definitely on the side of peace and justice between man and man, between people and people.

[This Manifesto is published at the request of the Irish Passive Resisters' Fellowship which, alone, is responsible for the policy advocated.—Ed.]

Irish Labour Press.

A resolution regarding the "Voice of Labour," placed on the Congress agenda by the Dublin Trades Council, will afford an opportunity of discussing the work and prospects of the Irish Labour Press Co-operative Society. In addition, the committee hope to have several meetings during the three days of Congress. The first of these will be held on Saturday, 3rd inst., at 9.30. The place of meeting will be intimated by the Reception Committee.

"UNITY AND SELF-RELIANCE."

Appeal to ALL Women Workers

To adhere to their recent PLEDGE AND COVENANT and

NOT TO ACCEPT POSITIONS VACATED BY MEN



The Co-operation of All Trades' Unionist
is requested in this important matter



IRISH DRAPERS ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

LABOUR'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

By THOMAS JOHNSON.

The future of Ireland is in the hands of Labour.

Not English Labour nor Scottish Labour, but Irish Labour, and not Labour in the abstract, but actually the labour men and women who will attend the annual Congress at Waterford next week.

The British Labour Party have a grave responsibility at this moment in regard to the government of Ireland. They are responsible, through their representatives in the government, for the intention to impose Conscription, they are responsible for the deportation to English gaols, and for the treatment in Irish gaols of political prisoners.

But Irish Labour at this hour is responsible for the course that history will take; whether Ireland is to be a free nation, whether the Irish people are to be a free people. A so-called "free" nation, whose freedom is merely an exchange from a prison cell to a barrack yard, or the freedom of "no man's land" between the trenches of still warring powers, is not the freedom which Labour will fight for. When we speak of a free Irish nation we speak of a people who have thrown off the shackles which bind them to conditions of poverty, ignorance and disease.

We know that alien rule, the exploitation of this nation by an oppressive imperialism, must be demolished before the people can be free, but we also know that the essence of the evil of alien rule will remain if the workers of Ireland are still to be held in subjection to the will of the propertied classes, if the new won freedom is to mean merely that greater facilities for the accumulation of riches by Irish capitalists, lawyers, and landowners shall be provided by an Irish Legislature.

We shall be wise if we, when looking across the seas for a sign of sympathy, look only to the parties of the working class. None but they are likely to give disinterested assistance; any help offered or received from capitalist governments or parties, monarchist or republican, will be dictated by the interests of the capitalist class in their own country, to be withdrawn or transferred as diplomatic twists and twirls determine.

We are responsible also for the conditions that will determine the internal politics of this country in the next decade. A general election will be upon us within six months, and, perhaps more important, the oft-postponed local elections will take place in January. We all know that the labouring masses are receptive of labour's message, they are coming by the thousand into our trade unions; tens of thousands of men and women newly enfranchised will have the right to cast their votes for representatives on town and county councils, poor law boards, and parliament, who will feel in duty bound to support the candidate of their Union and the Labour party.

It is our imperative duty to rise to these responsibilities, to fashion an organisation that will respond to the

stimulus of the new demands. The present machine will not do; it is too slow, too crude; it was not designed for the new burdens. We must have a machine that is capable of doing the work that lies before us. But we want not only an efficient machine, but the enthusiasm to use the machine to obtain results; we must so order things that the Irish Labour party shall be recognised the world over as the authority which can speak for Labour in Ireland. We must so order things that any branch of any trade union, any local authority, any government department, or any responsible individual seeking knowledge of Labour conditions in any trade or any district in Ireland will know where the information may be obtained. We must evolve a distinct labour policy in local affairs, so that labour representation on local bodies throughout the country shall act in harmony. A definite line of labour policy consistently and intelligently pursued will work wonders in a few years. We can at all times count on a consistent policy of re-action amongst our opponents, let us defeat re-action in local affairs by an organised national policy of reform in local government.

Above all, let us remember that the labour movement is more important than representation in Parliament, or even on local Councils—the solid organisation of the workers in Unions and in the party, if it is vocal and insists on being heard, will be effective whether it elects men to a legislative assembly or a town council or not.

These give points of vantage for carrying on the fight, but it is worse than useless, it is dangerous to place men in these positions unless they are at all times conscious that behind them stand the mass of the organised workers, supporting them and keeping them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

THE CLERKS AND CONGRESS.

For the first time in its history the Congress will be graced with the presence of an Irish trade union for clerks, and let us hope that the delegates representing the "Irish Clerical Workers' Union" will be able to add their quota to the deliberations and dignity of Ireland's Labour Parliament. When I say dignity I do not mean that awful "cuff and collar dignity" of which I am a deadly enemy.

The I.C.W.U. was founded on the 21st October, 1917, having for its principal aim and object the emancipation of the clerks of Ireland, while at the same time fully alive to its duty towards our fellow-workers not only in our own country, but in every country the world over. The vision and outlook of the I.C.W.U. is not bounded by St. George's Channel and the Irish Sea, as Sullivan's geography was wont to say, in our school days, of parts of Ireland.

Our first and greatest fight was in the now famous Boland's strike, where after a two weeks' struggle we forced the Government and the firm to capitulate. It was a never-to-be-forgotten spectacle to see 700 bakery workers voting for a general strike if the demands of Boland's

clerks were not conceded. This fight removed the barrier which existed between the clerks and their fellow-workers in Dublin, and laid the foundation of what yet may revolutionise old-fashioned sectional unionism. The arbitrator in his award gave those clerks an increase of wages ranging from 30 per cent. to 40 per cent., together with an additional bonus of 10 per cent. to be paid in June.

From this onwards our record has been one of continual success. We have had several tough encounters since, all of which ended in our favour, with few casualties. Dublin has now five branches of the union, all of which have gained materially by our efforts. We have altogether 16 branches over Ireland, and we are now ready to meet all calls for the establishment of further branches.

In Dublin the Building and Engineering Branch has gained, to date, well over £5,000 per annum in increased wages. Individual clerks have gained increases varying from 25 per cent to 65½ per cent., with two weeks' holidays.

The Food and Drug Branch has gained over £7,500 to date, as a result of our campaign.

The Government Clerks' Branch has gained over £10,000 per annum increases. This branch had some very tough fights with Government departments, but we won every time.

The Printing Branch has also gained substantial increases, but as most of the demands are as yet sub judice, we cannot give an approximate estimates of the figures.

Race Tenacity.

A family which landed in England from Germany in 1714 has not had a legitimate marriage in the direct line of succession with other than a full-blooded German since then.

NEW ERA IN PRODUCTION.

By its constitution the

**United Co-operative
Baking Society**

unifies the interests of Producer and Consumer, employing usefully the capital of both.

Their products,

**BREAD, BISCUITS AND
OATCAKES, :: ::**

may be purchased at Co-operative Grocery and Dairy Shops in Town and Country.

PREAMBLE TO THE RULES OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

SEPT., 1864.

(Written by Karl Marx.)

"Considering:—That the emancipation of the working class must be achieved by the working class itself, and therefore involves a class struggle, which on the side of the workers is not for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule;

"That the economic subjection of the man of labour to the monopolizer of the sources of life and instruments of labour lies at the root of social misery, mental degradation, political dependence and servitude in every form;

"That the economic emancipation of the working class is therefore the great end to which every political movement must be subordinated as a means;

"That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

"That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, involving all countries in which the modern state of society exists, and depending for its solution on the practical and theoretical co-operation of the most advanced countries;

"That the present reawakening of the working classes in the most industrial countries of Europe, while it raises new hopes, gives solemn warning against a relapse into old errors and calls for a close connection of the now separate movements;

"For these reasons the International Workmen's Association has been founded. All its members shall recognise that Truth, Morality, Justice, must be the basis of their conduct towards each other, and towards all men, regardless of colour, creed, or nationality. They shall regard it the duty of a man to demand the rights of a man and a citizen, not only for himself, but for everyone who does his duty. No rights without duties, no duties without rights."

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Bootmaker and Repairer,

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DUBLIN,

Boot Repairer to the Irish Volunteers while at Stafford Jail.

Trade Union Labour.

No Delay with Orders.

Cumannact na hÉireann
(Socialist Party of Ireland).

Willing workers wanted to build branches all over Ireland!!

Tell me your needs and I will send you membership cards, literature, badges, and every information to help you. I will send a man too on payment of expenses. Write to the Secretary, Room 3, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

SCATTER THE SEED TO THE
"FOUR WINDS OF EIRINN"

AND

Build Your Branch Now!

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(One Door from Elchequer Street.)

GREETINGS FROM SCOTLAND.

"The common people of the world are going through Martyrdom to Freedom," says Robert Smillie, the Ulsterman, who is President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

Some years ago I had the honour of being one of the two delegates sent by the Scottish Trades Union Congress to convey fraternal greetings from organised labour in Scotland to the Congress of organised labour in Ireland, which was being held in Kilkenny. I enjoyed the Congress very much, being much struck by the earnest tone of the discussion, and the deep reverence and active interest shown by the majority of the delegates when great questions of principle were being dealt with. The Congress itself was all that could be desired in spirit, but to us, coming from the centre of the great hives of industry in Scotland, the number of organised workers seemed small.

I remember a mass meeting held in the open air on one of the evenings of the Congress, which struck me as one of the most amazing gatherings which I had ever attended. I was honoured by being invited to address the meeting as one of the fraternal delegates. The gathering consisted of practically all the delegates who were attending the Congress, with a considerable number of local folk and a number of small farmers and farm labourers from the districts round about. The gloaming was settling down when I was called upon to speak, and I felt rather timid, as I did not know how my ultra Social revolutionary views might be received.

I dealt with wage-slavery, the curse of the capitalist system and the evils of the land of a country being held, by a few people while the vast majority were landless and had to "beg a brother of the earth to give them leave to toil."

I found that the more extreme my statements were the better they were received, and I felt that a few short years would find the workers of Ireland organised industrially as well and as solidly as they then were politically. I am delighted with the progress that the trade union movement has made in Ireland during the last few years.

Let us hope that Labour is organising in Ireland not merely to secure a slight rise in wages from time to time or even for an instalment of justice in the shape of shorter hours of labour.

Those things, good in themselves, and absolutely necessary for immediate well-being, are only slight steps in the direction of Social, Political and Industrial freedom, and no movement is worthy of the attention of earnest men and women which has not for its object the total emancipation of the human race from the body and soul-destroying curse of landlordism and capitalism. Ireland, like the other countries of Europe, is being sorely tried at the present time, but be of good cheer. The dawn is breaking, the common people of the world are going through martyrdom to freedom.

"Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won."
I hope that the Irish Trades Union Congress at Waterford may be a huge success.

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EXTRAORDINARY DECLARATION BY CAPT. FRASER.

Recently the Newbridge secretary of the Transport Workers' Union sent in a request to the proper military authority at Curragh Camp for an increase in wages to the sweepers, who are members. It is alleged that Capt. Fraser declared that any man who did not resign from the Union would be dismissed, as he would not employ any man who had anything to do with Sinn Fein, Liberty Hall or James Larkin, who were responsible for the 1916 rising in Dublin, when innocent women and children were shot down.

The men held a meeting and resolved to adhere to the Union. It was then explained that the captain had no wish to make any man leave the Union, but no more demands were to be sent from it.

We make no comment on this, but we hope Capt. Fraser will take the earliest opportunity of correcting the impression that he is anti-labour or anti-Transport Union.

MIGRATORY WORKERS.

Mr. T. Foran has now returned from Glasgow, where the demands of the migratory workers from Ireland are now in a fair way to be settled. Sir George Askwith has obtained a joint reference from both parties (the Transport Union and the G. and W.S. Potato Merchants' Association) to the Ministry of Labour, so that the matter will be settled by arbitration under the Munitions Acts. Mr. Foran informed us that Councillor E. Shinwell, president, and Mr. Wm. Shaw (A.S.C.T.), secretary of Glasgow Trades Council, rendered every assistance to the officials of the Transport Union.

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