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IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. Vol. i, No. 44.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1918.

ONE PENNY

**Our Capitalist
Colleges.**

**Father
MacNabb, O.P.,
on Earthly Hells.**

**Food Prices
Rose this Year**

IRISH LABOUR IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

INDEPENDENT OF ALL PARTIES.

**LABOUR THROWS DOWN THE
GAGE.**

NEXT ELECTION LABOUR'S FIRST.

As explained in the circular sent to the Trades Councils in Dublin and other centres, the National Executive of the Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party has recommended that Labour shall put forward its own candidates at the General Election. This is the boldest and most courageous lead in politics the National Executive has ever given, and it goes far to justify the high hopes and promise of the great Waterford Congress.

The National Executive is following up this decision by requesting the Councils to call local conferences at which the position and prospects of Labour as an independent political force in their respective constituencies will be considered, and the final act of fighting or not fighting be determined. At those conferences a delegation from the National Executive will attend, as on Tuesday night in Dublin, and explain the views and arguments of the Executive. By the time these lines are read the Executive's position will have been explained in detail. In the meanwhile we think it is due to the rank and file of the movement that "The Voice," which is their own organ and mouthpiece, should indicate for the general body the line of reasoning upon which the Executive has based its decision.

At the outset it is important to note that the Executive's decision was come to after long and earnest argument and

debate; that finally it was arrived at unanimously; and that it is a recommendation to the movement that Labour shall fight for its place in the elections, and that its prospective candidates shall pledge themselves before election to remain and work at home in Ireland unless or until, at a future date, the whole movement, through Congress, shall decide otherwise.

Labour recognises, and has some reason to regret, that the parliamentary elections will be fought upon what is not intrinsically a Labour but a national issue, the right of self-determination, in the concrete case of Ireland, of the people to choose the form of sovereignty under which they shall live and the place in which they shall make their claim for the exercise of that right. It is quite true that Labour would prefer that the issues at the elections were the issues of elections in normal conditions, for Labour would then be free to attempt the application in politics of its whole body of political and economic principles. But normal conditions do not and cannot prevail in Ireland until the people's claim to self-determination is admitted, as it is not now. To the principle of self-determination itself Irish Labour is, by its own free choice, by reason, by sentiment and by convictions, enthusiastically committed, and Labour will never commit itself to an abstract principle without honestly endeavouring to assert it in concrete practice. Labour, therefore, welcomes the General Election as an opportunity of testing the Irish people's will to self-determination, and at the same time of putting to the trial, in the case of Ireland, the professions of the governments and parties, including the Labour parties of Great Britain and her

allies, that they stand for the free and democratic self-determination of peoples and their inalienable right to determine their own destiny and shape and fashion their own national life.

Independent of the Home Rule Party, independent of the Unionist Party, independent of the Sinn Fein Party, and independent of the British Labour Party, its nearest neighbour in the International, the Irish Labour Party will, therefore, enter the General Election with its own candidates, on its own platform, with its own principles, policy and programme.

Before this grave decision was arrived at the whole question in all its aspects and with all its consequences was reviewed in the fullest and frankest manner. While opinions differed at certain stages, and arguments clashed at others, the discussion throughout was most friendly and cordial. Sharp difference there was, but it was all the time the honest difference of conscientious men, whose only aim and desire were how best and most effectively to serve Labour. In the long run the decision was complete and thorough and unanimous. Labour should fight, and its candidates should pledge themselves to remain in Ireland and not enter the British Parliament until such time as the movement releases them from their pledge or adopts another course.

Labour will fight at the General Election because the time has come for Labour to assert in action its claim to political power and its will to govern in this island. Labour will fight because the Irish Labour Party is a party not of professions only, but of practice as well.

(Continued on next page).

IRISH LABOUR IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

(From front page).

in self-determination as in all else. To Irish Labour the political weapon is indeed secondary to the economic weapon, but still it is a weapon, and Labour will fight to show, by staking its claims, that it intends to use that weapon with others in its armoury. By putting official candidates in the field Labour will secure that bogus Labour candidates of no matter what colour or character (and we anticipate a varied assortment) will stand revealed in all their nakedness. Above all, by fighting, and if possible winning, on a policy differing and distinct from those of other parties in Ireland, and from the British Labour Party, Irish Labour will prove its independence of all Irish parties, its separateness from Labour parties abroad, and its reality as a political party, and thus add another to its claims to separate and distinct recognition as a national entity within the International. This is not all, but it is much.

Much criticism, and that from different and opposing quarters, will be directed against the Labour pledge of abstention from the British Parliament. Mr. J. D. Nugent, whom we may take as speaking for the Home Rule Party, and the editor of "New Ireland," whom we may fairly take as voicing the opinion of the Sinn Fein Party, have already opened the fire of criticism. Let us state here once and for all that "The Voice" is not going to waste many words in defending Labour against any criticism on this particular score. In truth, neither criticism, so far as Labour is concerned, has much real ground, and the one pretty fairly cancels the other. Labour is bound to neither party, Labour can be bound to neither party, and Labour, we hope, will resist every effort, from no matter what quarter, to bind it to either party. Labour is and will continue to be independent of both; it will follow its own course in its own way, and it will rise or fall on its own principles and policy, and fear no man. The proper place for Labour to answer that criticism is on the hustings, and we can assure both our critics that on the hustings Labour will answer them.

Of necessity this policy is the only democratic policy for Labour, and equally of necessity it can only be Labour's policy unless the movement changes it. No Congress and no Executive can bind our movement to a particular policy for all time, but only for a period for our movement is no more immutable than the world it lives in. Labour's attitude on war in general and this war in particular, Labour's position in regard to liberty in political as in economic and social life, the situation created by the great battle of blood in Europe and its re-action in Ireland, the broken faith, broken pledges, and fair words and false faith of the Power that holds the Irish people in subjection against their will, these make no other course possible for Labour. If the movement wants any other course, then the movement knows how to get it. The National Executive is responsible to

Congress; Congress can always make short work of a National Executive whose judgment it dislikes or condemns; and we hope it always will. If, on the other hand, the constituencies in which Labour fights want other courses or other candidates they can have them in plenty, and we know they will. Let them judge. Labour has declared its policy. If it is a sound policy and the right policy, and we believe it is both, then it will stand the elections. If it is neither it will fall, and it will deserve to fall. Until it is tested at the elections we are as ready to champion it as we are to champion any course we have followed anywhere. On this Labour will fight, and we promise that it will fight sturdily.

Labour has thrown down the gage of battle in the political field for the first time in Irish history; let who will pick it up. The national leaders and the National Executive have taken a bold and daring and difficult course. They have taken it with due deliberation, and they are unanimous. The rest remains with the local and union leaders and the rank and file. Up till this they have not failed. We do not think they will fail now.

THE TRUE PATH.

To resume our conversations with our agricultural contemporary we would remind the "Irish Homestead" that so far as organised Labour in Ireland is concerned the small farmers, that is the small proprietors who till their holdings by the labour of their own families with no hired help, are regarded as one and the same with the wage-earning and non-proprietary labourers. The unions indeed are organising both in one body and cementing their alliance with the organised town workers. It is in fact along these lines we believe the solution of the social problems of agriculture in Ireland is to be found. If anything our quarrel, and the quarrel of our agricultural membership, is with the wage-paying and labour-employing farmers. It was not so very different in Russia, and the distinction—in Russia poor peasant and rich peasants corresponding roughly to the wage-paying and small farmers in Ireland—may not have very different results in this country. This, we think, is Labour's way out of the difficulty the "Homestead" raises, the undoubted numerical preponderance of the land-owning workers over the landless workers engaged in agriculture. We know that these are the lines upon which Labour thought in Ireland is moving, and we believe that the rapid organisation within one movement of these two sections of agricultural labour will prepare the way for that really democratic co-operation in production which we desire to see evolving in Ireland side by side with the economic union of the workers in town and country. This, we verily believe, is one of the true paths to that Commonwealth or Workers' Republic to which the Irish Labour Party is definitely and consciously guiding the working-class in Ireland. If it is pursued with

as much persistence, as much intelligence, and as much skill as it has been begun in the past summer, it will justify the interest and the hope it has already evoked both in Ireland and abroad. The eyes of Irish and English thinkers are upon us, and we doubt not but that the Irish rural workers will make as big a name for themselves as the Irish urban workers have done.

Labour States Its Conditions.

To our contemporary's proposal that the agricultural labourers should join with the farmers in a joint demand upon the State, the one for a fair price for labour and for a fair living, and the other for a fair price for produce and a fair living, we see no objection as a temporary expedient. We do not think the labourers would object to take part in this if the conditions they can rightfully lay down are fulfilled. Those conditions demand that the joint claim be recognised as a temporary device, not a final solution; that the farmers as a body agree to the proposal; that the prices to be fixed for produce shall be fixed upon a real economic basis and not, as too often happens, when the price of commodities is raised in consequence of an increase in the price of labour, upon a profiteering basis, which gives the employer a big surplus over and above his increased cost of production; and that finally the farmers shall sink their silly prejudices and recognise that at this stage in the world's progression (it's a downward progression for the time being, but not, let us hope, for ever) they must in justice deal with the labourers as corporate bodies; in other words, through their unions. If the "Homestead" can persuade the Irish farmers to do this, Labour, we are sure, will be prepared with proposals for a fair, square deal with its basis not in profits, but in human value.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- City Songs and Others** Richard Rowley (Author of "The City of Refuge"). 4s. 6d. net.
- The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century.** By George O'Brien. Demy 8vo. 10s 6d. net.
- The Irish Convention and Sinn Fein.** By Warre B. Wells and N. Marlowe. Demy 8vo. 5s. net.
- Broken Glory.** By Eva Gore-Booth. 1s. net., paper.
- The Indestructible Nation.** By P. S. O'Hegarty. 4s. net.
- Ireland's Case Against Conscription.** By Eamonn De Valera. 1s. net.
- The Sacred Egoism of Sinn Fein.** By Gnathai gan Iarraidh. Wrappers. 1s. net.
- First Songs.** By Anthony Allen. Cr. 8vo. 3/6 net.
- The Rosses and Other Poems.** By Seumas O'Sullivan. 2/6 net.
- The above books are just published by Mautsnel and Co., Ltd.
- The W.E.A. Year Book.** 5s. net. By post, 5s. 6d. Workers' Educational Association, 16 Harpur St., London, W.C.1.
- 001 and the International Magna Charta.** Kenny Press, 65 Mid. Abbey Street.

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

The Eleventh Hour.

As October approaches it becomes more and more evident that Conscription is to be attempted in Ireland. This is the plain reading of the official announcement of Saturday last, and Captain Alston's semi-official statement of the same evening. It is confirmed not only by the economic and military preparations which are being made everywhere, but as well by the private and public declarations of members of the Recruiting Council backed up by the conscriptionist press, which is in the confidence of the Castle, particularly of the military element. From an authoritative quarter "The Voice" has evidence to prove that without any shadow of doubt the attempt will be made, and that it will be made after the opening of Parliament. In addition we are able to state definitely that the provision of man-power is not in any sense one of the purposes the conscription of Ireland is intended to serve. We are informed on excellent authority that high military personages have freely declared that for the governing classes conscription in England after the war is a vital necessity, and that there can be no after-war conscription in England unless Ireland is conscripted beforehand. We can add to that that the Trade Union leaders in Great Britain are being informed officially that further drafts on British man-power are now unnecessary. In future America will supply the men, Great Britain the material. This will ease the critical situation between British Labour and the British Government, and make way for the continuance of conscription in England after the war through the conscription of Ireland. This clinches Irish Labour's argument that in fighting conscription in Ireland we are also fighting it in Great Britain. Whether the rank and file of British Labour will fight after the war is British Labour's own concern. Ireland and Irish Labour will oppose it now, and if we in Ireland go down, British Labour must fight alone or go down without fighting. Our path is chosen. Is yours?

The "Freeman's" Plot.

We would wish that some of our leader writers in the daily papers would take lessons in manners and methods from some such a master of decency as the "Irish Homestead." Last week, for instance, the "Freeman's Journal," in a leading article formally opened its offensive against the Bolsheviks in Russia and the leaders of the Labour Party in Ireland. We have seldom read, even in the daily press in Ireland, a more ill-informed and unscrupulous article. In manner and matter it equalled the worst production of "Banba" of the Dublin "Evening Telegraph," and provided us with more amusement than any we have enjoyed since the fever of Bolshevism attacked "Banba" in the spring of the year. From its tone as much as from its utter nonsense, it is evident that in attacking and calumniating the Russian Soviet the

motive inspiring the "Freeman" is to find a dirty stick with which to beat Irish Labour on its prospective entry into the political field. Now in attacking the Soviet the "Freeman" is opening a battery of lies against the only democratic government in Europe and the only government that is attempting to apply its principles in practice; it is allying itself with the "Morning Post," "The Times," the "Daily Mail" and the "Irish Times"; it is backing the blood-stained backers of the late Tsar, the Cadet allies of Germany, the capitalists of Europe, Asia and America, and, in its ignorance, the so-called Social Revolutionaries of Russia, the only party in Europe whose historic role and policy are terrorism and assassination. This of course is quite the thing with Mr. James Sexton, democrat, Christian, and labour leader who, last week, proposed that the Kaiser the Crown Prince and others should be "hanged from a lamp-post without even a trial." Even the "Independent," when it cried for the blood of James Connolly, did not go so far as this, and we are surprised that, to use the phrase Connolly applied to Mr. Devlin's organ, Mr. Dillon does not "call off his dogs." To attack Irish Labour the "Freeman" looks back to the great pro-Bolshevik meeting in the Mansion House. The "Freeman" ignores the fact that the speakers at that meeting have since been confirmed in their leadership by such overwhelming majorities as the workers of Ireland have never in their history given any leaders. We trust Mr. Dillon does not ignore that fact, and as a public man and the leader of a party we most certainly must make the claim that he use his authority to get his principal organ to produce proof that his colleagues on the Mansion House Conference are, as the "Freeman" accuses them, propagating terrorism and assassination under cover of wages movements and trade union organization.

Labour's Standard Bearers.

We can only add a word or two on Labour candidates for the General Election. Whoever they be they must be the best and ablest the movement can supply. They must be men or women who have stood the test of Labour and they must be chosen, not for their personalities and associations, but for their principles, policy, character and ability. The workers must not make the blind blunders they made in the first Local Government elections twenty years ago. Their candidates must be worthy of the great cause and the great movement they are called upon to represent and they must be able, willing, straight and clean, men of action and men of thought, for they shall be the pioneers to hew the pathway for the Irish Labour Party in the political re-building of this Irish nation, the men whose banner flies nearest the sun and whose example will set a high and noble headline to the greater political party of Labour still to come. They will not be many but they

must be the best. In a few days the movement in several constituencies will be asked to take stock of its political position and declare whether it is fit and willing to fight. In those constituencies which answer in the affirmative we hope that local Labour will choose soon and choose both wisely and well.

The New Machinery.

We regret that through lack of space we are compelled to defer until next week the publication of our Notes on the proposed new Constitution and Standing Orders of the Irish Labour Party now in the hands of the affiliated organizations. For the great days ahead we must have that bigger paper.

FOOD PRICES ROSE THIS YEAR.

When the Ministry of Labour intervened to secure arbitration on the claims of the Dublin Tramwaymen, we understand the D.U.T.C. suggested there was no ground for demanding higher wages, as prices had not risen this year. The workers' reply was to send cuttings about higher prices from the "Evening Herald."

The "Fabian Research Circular" quotes official figures, which show that in February, 1918, food prices had risen by 106 per cent., in May by 107, in June 108, and in July by 110 per cent. over pre-war prices. All other articles reviewed by the Board of Trade had risen in price by 105 per cent.

These figures suggest that the prevalent demand of Irish Labour of increases of £1 on pre-war wages now being put forward by Asylum workers, the various grades organised by the I.T.W.U. and I.C.W.U., and others is already out of date.

A rise of £1 a week would not restore the pre-war purchasing value of wages that in 1914 were above 18s. 3d. per week. Men who had 25s. a week in August, 1914, required 52s. 6d. to have an equal purchasing power in July this year. Farm labourers who, with Christian resignation, starved their wives and stunted their children on 12s. before the war, are actually worse off now with the Wages Board rate of 22s. 6d.

Further, a comparison of increases in food prices in Britain with those of other countries suggests that under the Union Jack, with its Labour Party Food Controller, profiteering is more rampant in Britain than elsewhere. Holland, hemmed between the belligerents, with all food supplies controlled on one side by Germany, and on the other by the ship-stealing Allies, has kept down the increase to 81.8 per cent. Denmark, despite the competition of Germany and Britain for her products, has limited the operations of the law of supply and demand, and food is only 72.8 per cent. higher than in 1914.

Irish Citizen Army.—Drawing for memorial, winning number 4479.

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GOODS ARE
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Industrial Co-operative SOCIETY (Dublin) Ltd.

LABOUR IN IRELAND

Longford.—The Transport branch is still growing, 220 members are enrolled. The town will soon be scab-proof, and will be kept so.

Dunboyne branch I.T. and G.W.U. musters 100 members in the first fortnight of its life. Threshing is being carried on at the fixed rate of 12s. per day. A meeting was held here on Sunday last

Dungarvan.

Congratulations to L. A. Veale and his men at the Gas Works. The little dispute has been settled, and stokers' pay has gone up from 28s. to 40s., and yardmen's from 28s. to 36s.

Cork.

Professors Alfred Rahilly and T. Smiddy are undertaking courses of lectures to Cork workers during the coming winter.

In Cork and Kerry the I.T. & G.W.U. has secured increased wages amounting to over £400,000 since January, 1917. With higher wages, shorter hours have also been won.

Migratory Labourers.

The cunning Scottish Potato Merchants, with the assistance of an Achill family of Achill flesh exploiters, are trying to prevent the arbitration, on the promise of which the workers went to Scotland this season. The Glasgow Trades Council is fighting the workers' case and pressing the Ministry of Labour to act at once.

Coal Shortage and Labour.

In the present crisis every interest but Labour is busy safeguarding itself against the shortage of coal and the effects of this shortage on industry. That there will be a serious deficiency of supplies is established. The manufacturers are making every endeavour to prevent short time or closing down as a consequence, but in many industries a reduction of coal consumption will involve shorter hours of work. Where labour is unorganised shorter hours will mean less pay. An attempt to shorten the pay with the hours was made recently by a tailoring firm, but the workers struck, and, as we noted last week, obtained full wages for reduced hours.

That must be Labour's policy. Wages which are barely sufficient to maintain life, and which will have to meet increased food and fuel costs during the winter months cannot be further reduced without causing widespread suffering. As workers are only employed to make profits they must insist on being maintained at the full standard of living, even if that involves either a reduction of swollen war-profits or a State subsidy.

The Tobacconists' Assistants alone of the shop-keeping workers menaced by the proposal to close shops between 3.30 and 5.30, and to keep the shops open later in the evening, have protested against this extension of the working day. We suggest the time is opportune for a joint meeting between the too-many unions catering for the distributive workers, so that they can offer a united front to these reactionary schemes.

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MUST READ
THESE
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WM. O'BRIEN IN CLARE.

The first public meeting held in Clare since it was declared a special military area was addressed by Wm. O'Brien on 22nd inst. in Ennis Town Hall, when he expounded the policy of the Labour movement. A conference of local trade unions followed, and arrangements were made to establish a Trades Council to undertake the industrial and political organisation of the county. Mr. O'Brien met a deputation of the local branch I.C.W.U., who brought to his notice the position of several of their members whose employers have not yet surrendered. On Monday a Transport Union branch for men in the Building Trades was set on foot, and a visit was made to Kilrush, where the Transport Union is involved in a dispute with Messrs. Glynn (flour millers). He accompanied a deputation of the Asylum Workers to the meeting of the Asylum Board sub-committee and supported their demand for £1 weekly advance on pre-war wages. On Tuesday evening he addressed a meeting of the Ennis United Labour Association on the advantages of solidarity and the evils of industrial sectionalism. Now that Labour in Clare has begun public activity, it is hoped to enliven the movement by a similar series of meetings.

STRIKERS START STORE.

At Castledermott, Co. Kildare, a strike of farm labourers and other workers has been proceeding for over a week. Although this recently-formed branch has over 200 members, only 30 are affected by the dispute. One of the two employers affected is Cope, who keeps a large store in Castledermott, from which the surrounding district draws its supplies of food. The store was picketed successfully, so much so that some means had to be found of feeding the district.

The local Transport branch rose to the occasion and organised a co-operative store. The Agricultural Co-operative Society (please note, Æ) dismissed their manager on account of assistance given by him to the strikers. He was at once installed to manage the Workers' Co-operative, which has taken over Cope's customers and is supplying the entire neighbourhood with foodstuffs.

Castledermott has taken a sound step in starting a store. The enterprise should be at once consolidated. Every member should subscribe his share of the capital, the committee should be elected and relations established with the Irish Wholesale Society and the Co-operative Union. But other branches of the trade union movement should learn from Castledermott and Charleville.

Co-operation can be studied conveniently through a little booklet by Rev. Fr. Canavan, S.J., entitled "The Co-operative Movement," which, if not obtainable in the local church book-racks, can be had post free for 2d. from the "Messenger" Office, 5 Gt. Denmark St., Dublin. The Co-operative Union (Secretary, W. M. Knox, 18 Frederick Street, Belfast) will give every help to those who wish to start co-operative societies.

In Christ's Name, PEACE!

The Austrian Note offers the opportunity of an unofficial discussion by belligerents and the possibility of a righteous peace. Suspicion, distrust, memory of inhumanities, suggest refusal. Our Lord counsels conference, reason, reconciliation. The Military way has been on trial for four years. Ought we not to try Our Lord's way now? Fellow-countrymen, do not let the opportunity slip.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, 17, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

FATHER MacNABB, O.P., ON EARTHLY HELLS.

We cannot congratulate Father O'Halloran of Urlingford on his controversial methods. He rushed into print with an attack on the Transport Union, James Connolly, and Socialism. He relied on a forged document which he quoted extensively. It was charitably presumed that he was ignorant of the forgery. He has replied to the strictures passed on him, but he has forgotten to apologise for using the methods of Pigott to slander those who are in no sense his opponents—unless he happens to be a shareholder living on usury or an employer of labour.

That he is personally, although not by his Sacred Office, identified with the maintenance of the existing social anarchy is shown by his choice of (presumably) scandalous passages from "Labour in Irish History." Here is what offends the soul of the curate of Urlingford:

"One of these slave birth-marks is a belief in the Capitalist system of society: the Irishman frees himself from such a mark of slavery when he realises the truth that the capitalist system is the most foreign thing in Ireland." Page 12.

"It is a system which in its least repulsive aspects compels thousands and tens of thousands to fret and toil, to live and die in hunger and rags and wretchedness, in order that a few idle drones may revel in ease and luxury." Page 106.

Happily for the future of Humanity there are few who share the opinion that it is unCatholic to criticise or delineate the evils of the Capitalist system. In last week's "Catholic Times" Father McNabb, O.P., expresses himself thus:

"We who live under the blight of Mammon realise with Pope Leo XIII that 'a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the labouring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself,' because this small number of very rich men 'has in its grasp the whole of labour and trade, and manipulates for its own benefit and its own purposes all the sources of supply.'

"Capitalistic Industrialism is tending, as it has tended, to servile conditions. For the moment it offers certain privileges of wage or power to those intelligent and trained workmen who will help it to organise and police the body of workers. And it is because we Irishmen abroad have no wish to see the woes of our people succeeded by some of the greater woes of the poor down-trodden English, Scottish, and Welsh people that we ask Rebel Cork to beware of letting the Industrial enemy make an earthly hell on 'the pleasant waters of the River Lee.'"

Connolly said belief in Capitalism was the birth-mark of a slave. Leo XIII. speaks of Capitalism as "a yoke little better than that of slavery itself." Father McNabb calls it "an earthly hell," and labels as "the industrial enemy" the class of monopolists that Fr. O'Halloran defends.

The reverend gentleman's latest letter bristles with so many texts wrested from context, unjustifiable assumptions and betrayals of incomplete knowledge, that charity as well as lack of space forbid us exposing them in detail. We are satisfied that he has quoted passages from Connolly's "Labour in Irish History." They are in themselves a recommendation of the book, which is published in a handy shilling edition. We hope Fr. O'Halloran will continue to study Socialism, and would recommend him to obtain "A Guide to Books for Social Students and Workers" compiled by Prof. Rahilly, and obtainable from the Talbot Press, Dublin, for 2½d. post free.

COLKETTO.

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EDUCATION IN RELATION TO LABOUR—III.

The universities ought to be the intellectual torchlights of the nation: their influence ought to be felt in every grade of national life: and, above all, they should work towards the intellectual uplifting of the masses. This is the conception of State-endowed and rate-aided universities in democratic countries. It obtains in the case of the American universities, and to a large extent in the case of the Scotch universities also.

But how do we stand in this respect in Ireland? Knowing the objects for which Trinity College was founded, and the class it was intended to cater for, it is little wonder that it has remained, though in Ireland, not of Ireland; and a bulwark of feudalism, class privilege, and ascendancy. There is no fear of any pestiferous democratic microbes flourishing in this hoary citadel of exclusiveness.

In regard to the new universities, but recently established, it is strange that it is only in the case of Belfast University any democratic leanings are observable. The proposal to set up a Training College for Primary teachers in Belfast, and in affiliation to Queen's University there, will be watched with some interest.

The very doubtfully named National University, agitated for and hailed with acclamation as "the poor man's university," is almost as rigid in its exclusiveness as Trinity College itself. Money is there the passport through its portals. It caters for those who can afford the luxury of residence in its constituent colleges, and for those alone. It is quite true that there is a system of Co. Council scholarships in connection with the university, and provided from the local rates, to which rich and poor alike contribute; but these scholarships are only available to those who can afford five or six years' residence in Intermediate schools to qualify for these scholarships, and where does "the poor man's son" come in here?

There are no evening lectures in connection with the university to supply the wants of those engaged in work during the day. It is completely cut off from the primary education system which is associated with the masses of the people. Severe in its respectability, and rigidly exclusive as to the classes it caters for, it can safely be regarded as a close pre-

serve of what may be described as the "upper middle classes."

I shall try to lay bare some of the immediate effects of this educational policy in so far as it affects the working classes, in a future article. L. V.

CO-OPERATIVE NOTES.

The annual conference of the Irish Co-operative movement takes place on 28th inst. at Portadown, when a proposal to disband the conference association and replace it by three district associations will be discussed. Mr. L. Smith-Gordon will move for the appointment of a survey-committee to report on the practicable developments of co-operation in Ireland.

We trust the delegates will take some steps to secure more direct relations with organised labour.

How Dublin Bread-Ring Works.

Housewife to D—— and Co.'s bread-server—Five loaves, please.

Server—Aren't you one of Boland's customers, ma'am?

Housewife—I was, but Boland's have shut down their bakery.

Server—Sorry I'm not allowed to supply Boland's customers.

The lady is now getting more attractive and cheaper bread from the Industrial Co-operative Society's Model Bakery.

Trade Union and the Store.

Last Sunday the International Tailors' Union was addressed by Mr. Magill. Walter Carpenter is taking the names of the Union members who wish to join the Industrial Society. Westland Row N.U.R. is calling a special meeting for Tuesday, 1st October, at 8 p.m., in N.U.R. rooms, Beresford Place, to organise the purchasing power of their members. Grand Canal Street Branch received the co-op. organiser last Tuesday.

These unions are working on right lines. They are not stopping short-sightedly at the organisation of their earning power, they are combining to spend—and thereby to save—effectively through the medium of the co-operative store.

50 new members joined the Dublin Industrial last week, and 41 the previous week.

Southern Wholesale Agents.—News-agents can obtain "The Voice" from Messrs. News Bros. Cork; Messrs. Sean O'Cuil and Co., Cork; Mr. J. J. A. Byrne, 49 Roxtown Tce., Limerick.

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The enrolment of students is now in progress, and intending students are strongly advised to obtain their class tickets as soon as possible, as the number of admissions to each class is strictly limited.

Abridged Prospectus, with Time-Table of Classes and Fees, can be obtained at the Kevin Street, Bolton Street, and Rutland Square Schools, or at the Municipal Public Libraries.

L. E. O'CARROLL, Secretary, Technical Education Committee for the City of Dublin. Offices, 18 Rutland Square.

FRAGMENTS OF TRUTH.

(From "Truth" Duluth.)

"Cheap" clothes means "cheap" workers. Aw shut up, what is a poor guy to do anyway? Wear the things you produce.

The girl who receives low wages generally finds herself in the RED LIGHT district. So does the fellow. One goes to make a living and the other because he cannot afford to give the girl a living.

Husbands who work more than eight hours per day, furnish sufficient evidence for their wives to divorce them.

We would rather hear a rebel swear, than a highbrow talk.

JACK CARNEY.

NATIONAL REPORT SOUND.

The position of Labour in The NEW IRELAND.

FINANCIAL REPORT EXCELLENT.

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Irish Materials	Prompt Despatch

IRISH WOMEN WORKERS' UNION.

The four weeks' strike of the women in Messrs. Goodbody's Tobacco Factory has ended in a brilliant victory for the workers, who have gained even more than they dared to ask for. The I.W.W.U. put the matter into the hands of the Ministry of Labour, who proposed to appoint an arbitrator. Whereupon Messrs. Goodbody produced a schedule of a minimum scale of wages for the workers, which grants to the spinners and turners-off 25s. a week; first-class general workers and strippers, 21s.; second-class general workers, 17s.; and learners, 10s.

Thus the great majority of the women gain increases amounting to 7s., 9s. or 10s. The firm have re-organised their system of work and wages for the women, and in concluding the settlement Mr. Goodbody expressed his satisfaction at having been given an opportunity of doing this. It was an expensive opportunity for the women concerned; nevertheless we wish more of the Dublin employers would give such practical acknowledgment of the error of their ways as Messrs. Goodbody have done. The root of the evil of women's sweated wages lies in careless and indifferent management. Where cheap labour is employed, no effort is made to organise the work on sound lines. It is left to the trade unions to enforce good management by pushing up wages.

The women concerned in this strike behaved magnificently—with unfailing loyalty and spirit. Even when the men were given notice, and a rumour went round that the factory was to be closed down, not one girl showed the white feather. The men were out for a week before the settlement was made, and they secured an all-round increase of 5s. Now Taylor's and the Irish Tobacco Company will need a little attention!

This victory set beside the awards made in the case of Messrs. Boland's employees constitutes a record for the I.W.W.U.

Connolly Memorial Treat.

Walter Carpenter is organising the committee to raise funds for this treat, and has obtained the support of William O'Brien, T. Foran, T. Johnson, among others. Subscriptions may be sent to this office, and will be duly acknowledged in these pages. Already "Casey" and his fiddle, with the help of "Dolly," have raised over £7.

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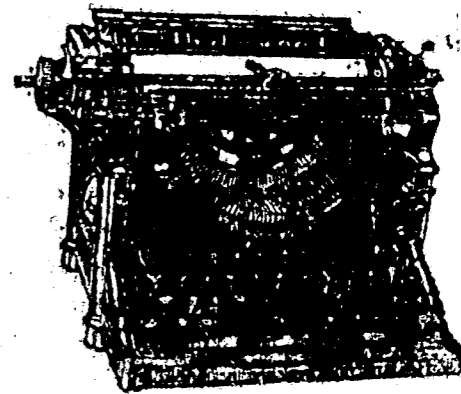
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Legacy and Songs (Connolly), Problems of New Russia (Arnold), Lessons of Russian Revolution (N. Lenin), Should the Workers of Ireland Support Sinn Fein (Russell), Loyalty and Disloyalty (Green), Handbook for Rebels (Johnson).—3d. each.

Bob Bundles Post Free. Separate Pamphlets, Postage 1d. extra. Secretary Cumannacht na hEireann, Room 3, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

Tip for Tippiereaders.

"The Voice" can be obtained from Proinsias O'Meachra, 91 O'Brien Street, Tipperary.

A PLAGUE ON BOTH!

35 Jocelyn Ave., Belfast,
Sept. 21st, 1918.

To the Editor of "The Voice of Labour."

Sir,—Having read Councillor Logue's letter and your comments on same I desire to avail myself of the opportunity and invitation extended by you to free lances of the rank and file.

Two correspondents have come to the rescue of the Northerners, both shiver on the beach—afraid to plunge into the deep. For my part I really cannot understand this vacuous exaltation over Northerners or Southerners, there is far too much of this petty and puerile sentimentality with Irishmen. Labour is not confined to North or South—not even to Ireland; and until Irishmen adopt an international instead of a parochial outlook their chance of establishing a permanent democracy is very remote.

You all disagree as to whom belongs the honour of being most progressive. How many Labour or Socialist members represent Ireland (North or South) in the Imperial Parliament? Northerners are so afraid of losing their "religious liberty" that they let their economic and political liberty go to Hades; Southerners are so devoutly bent on retaining their "religious liberty" that they do likewise. The fact of the matter is that both parties are so busy wrangling and fighting over that old Bogey (Home Rule) that they haven't time to work out their political and industrial salvation.

I firmly believe in the principle of self-determination, but should I be so full of self-determination as to let my economic and political liberty be exterminated? If I'm to be exploited it matters little whether the Head-quarters of the exploiter be in Dublin, London or Berlin. It's most ludicrous to see the implicit faith that the Southerner has in "Home Rule" and the Northerner has in the "Union"—each regarding his Political Fetish as the Heaven-sent Panacea for the ills which Irishmen are heir to. Collectively, neither North or South is class or power-conscious.

One of your correspondents refers to British timorousness regarding the subjecting of Ulster "to a political course for which she had no taste." He attributes British timorousness to Ulster's aliveness, but if he reads the "Foreword" of "A Handbook for Rebels" he might modify his opinion.

No one would strive more earnestly than I for the unification of the Irish working-class; but this ignorant religious bigotry exhibited occasionally on both sides is detracting the energy which should be applied towards realising the essential—democratic control of the industrial and political machine. The Church, unfortunately, dominates on both sides, much to the satisfaction of the capitalists.

Neither Home Rule or the Union is an essential towards democratic emancipation. Ye foolish Irishmen! Hammer that into your skulls! The ascendancy party of either crew is bitterly anti-demo-

cratic, and so long as Irishmen remain in their state of imbecility and servility, bemused in a conglomeration of Sinn Fein, Unionist, and Nationalist verbosity, so long will the mental activity remain comatosed and the true Irish labour accents inarticulate. With best wishes for the "Voice," I am, yours faithfully,
W. LORIMER.

THE INSURANCE DISPUTE.

The strike of Refuge Insurance Agents has now extended to Drogheda, Dundalk, Navan, Kingstown, and Bray, while the efforts of the superintendents to collect money on Dublin agents' books has been a failure.

The Refuge Company is an enormously wealthy company, which assures over £15,000,000 each year, and receives a premium income of over two million pounds per annum. Like all the capitalist insurance concerns, it has been trying to reduce expenses at the cost of the agents by limiting their collections to certain areas. Thus they have planned to confiscate the customers and commission which agents have acquired outside the area to which the company might allot them. This scheme was defeated in Dublin some time ago, but it was persisted with in Belfast, where its effects would have been to reduce agents' earnings to 30s. a week.

Having ceased work to defeat this "block system" finally, the agents are determined not to resume work unless on terms which give them a living wage. In this effort they rely on the support of the policy-holders, who are asked not to pay any premiums to blacklegs. As the agents' entire livelihood is dependent on his connection with policy-holders, they are asked not to transfer to other societies without first consulting the Refuge strike committee.

IRISHWOMEN PRISONERS.

The following resolution, proposed by Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington, seconded by Miss Wyse Power, was passed unanimously at a reception held by the Irish Women's Franchise League on September 14th:—

"That we, the members of the I.W.F.L., as Irishwomen and voters, protest against the internment in Holloway Jail of three distinguished countrywomen (Countess Marcievicz, Mrs. T. Clarke and Mme. Gonne McBride), and that we demand from the Government their immediate release and return to their homes in Ireland. That we call upon Irish public bodies to support us in this demand."

Release the Prisoners.—Attend the public meeting under Cumann na mban auspices Round Room, Mansion House, Friday, 27th September, 8 p.m.

PLOTTING.

The prizes awarded to the plotters under the Land Cultivation Committee were distributed by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor at a public meeting in the Mansion House last Monday. The Lord Mayor, Mr. Cowan, Local Government Board Inspector, and other public men addressed the meeting.

Prisoners as Strike-Breakers.

Chas. Duncan, in the House of Commons on July 29th, stated that a farmer near Littlehampton has threatened the women workers, that if they asked for increased wages German prisoners would get their work!

"Daily News," Aug. 9th.—German prisoners are being employed in the stone quarries to take the place of the men on strike at Shepton Mallet.

On Aug. 10th the press announced that the Allied armies had captured 17,000 prisoners. Wonder whose job they'll get?—"Solidarity."

We Agree With the "Mail."

When the fighting is transferred to German soil we believe that the end will come quickly, the end of the war, and the end of Hohenzollernism.—"Evening Mail." But ask our readers to note the "when."

Jack Carney in Trouble.

For the offence of publishing in Minnesota the election programme of Victor L. Berger, Wisconsin, Jack Carney, editor of "Truth," who one time made Library Street, Belfast, ring with his oratory, is being prosecuted by the State Government.

Bolshevik Vladivostock likes the Allies so little that the Friends of Freedom have been obliged to declare Martial Law.

The Sacred Cause of Gallant Little Belgium had a severe set-back when the Turks chased Belgium's champions out of Baku.

N.B.—Look up Belgium and Baku on the map.

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MARTIN O'BYRNE,

Secretary.

17th September, 1918.

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