

THE INTERNATIONAL

IRISH LABOUR AT
BERNE AND PARIS.

Presenting Ireland's Case.

BY CATHAL O'SHANNON

IRISH LABOUR'S DELEGATES TO SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL RECEIVE A HEARTY WELCOME FROM WORLD-RENOWNED LEADERS.—CORRECT UNSATISFACTORY STATEMENTS OF BRITISH LABOUR PARTY.—FRATERNISE WITH INDIAN AND EGYPTIAN REBELS.—THE RESULTS OF SEAN T. O'KELLY'S LABOURS.—THE "PAPER WALL" IS BREACHED AT LAST.

(As passed by Censor.)

At last the paper wall which shut Ireland out of the world has breached in it, and Labour has proudly broken through one of the first of them. The European connection has been made again, and we are in contact once more with the world. The whole Continent knows now something at least of the truth about Ireland since we were cut off from the main stream of European life and thought and politics in August, 1914.

The beginning was made when Tom Johnson and I left Dublin as the advance guard of the Irish delegation to the International Labour and Socialist Conference at Berne. We hurried to London to find ourselves held up almost a week until the British, French, and Swiss had granted us visas for our passports after satisfying the Swiss police (and more than the Swiss, from all I could guess in London) that we were respectable enough and inoffensive enough to enter Switzerland. The delay made us lose the opening days of the Conference, which met on March 3. We did not get away until the 4th, and then it was helter-skelter until we reached Berne on the night of the 6th. On the 7th we attended the Conference, but, although there was no objection taken to them and we were welcomed warmly, our credentials were not passed until that night. The following morning, Friday, the 8th, Ireland had entered the International as a distinct national entity, and we were full and accepted members.

Just in Time.

We were just in time. Had we been even a day later we would have lost one of the two great opportunities we were able to grasp for putting the Irish case in the clearest and most uncompromising manner before the delegates in full session and the Press of every important country in the world. As it was, our unavoidable delay in London had deprived us of representation on the Commission on Territorial Questions, but we were luckily able to make up for that in full. The territorial questions had been debated vigorously for two days, and as nationality and national frontiers are burning questions on the Continent, and played a large part in the war, and are primary sources of the wars still raging in Eastern Europe, the discussion was both lively and comprehensive, and the interest of most of the delegates was intense. I need not say that as speaker after speaker put his case on the Friday, and especially when the apparently never to end stream of speakers from the smaller and until recently subject nationalities furnished us with quite a round dozen of stories similar in the main to Ireland's, we followed the debate with the keenest attention. On Saturday morning, the concluding day of this debate, we sailed into the ken of the Conference under the most favourable circumstances, in time to correct, from the Irish point of view, the British delegation's declaration on its position on self-determination and the nationality question under British rule.

Ramsay at Sea.

It was obvious—and the British delegation did not deny it—that the British felt that it was up to them to make their position clear, and this, I have no doubt at all, both because they saw that the various delegations had taken up a distinctly advanced position on the question and because they felt the very presence of the Irish delegation. Ramsay MacDonald spoke for them, and expressed the unsatisfactory official view of the British Labour Party, a view for which we were quite prepared, but which, as my colleague, Tom Johnson, notes else-

where, falls far below the highly important and reasonable general declaration of principle made by Arthur Henderson at the opening of the debate. The British Labour Party, MacDonald said, stands now, and has always stood, for the fullest possible measure of Home Rule for Ireland, its candidates have put Home Rule in their election addresses, and its members in Parliament have always voted for Home Rule. That was as far as the mandate of his delegation went, and it was in accordance with the demand in the past of the elected representatives of the majority of the Irish people. In other words, if I may paraphrase MacDonald's statement, the British delegation's mandate was anterior to the General Election of last December, and it ignored the Republican Insurrection of Easter Week, the canalising of majority opinion into separation during the war, and the universal national rejection of the Home Rule Bill upon the Statute Book. As for India, MacDonald said British Labour stood for Home Rule, holding that India was as much entitled to self-government (within the British Empire, it goes without saying) as South Africa, Canada, or Australia. Egypt, he said, was entitled to the same right to self-government as India, but indeed the British Labour Party of late years had not had much occasion to concern itself about the Egyptian question. Cyprus, on the other hand, which had been acquired by Great Britain for strategic reasons had every right to self-determination. What would not an Indian, an Egyptian, or an Irishman give to be a Cypriote? And yet, as we know, the Cypriotisation of a man from any of these three countries to which British Labour would graciously determine Home Rule within the Empire would not eliminate the necessity of armed insurrection, if my memory still serves me right.

Stating Ireland's Case.

We had already arranged that the Irish case would be put by an Irish delegate, and MacDonald's declaration made an excellent setting for us when our turn came later. It fell to my lot to do the talking for Ireland, but I am not going to inflict my speech upon the readers of "The Voice," which indeed, has already printed the British spy's rough and ready but not altogether accurate lightning summary of what I had to say. Suffice it for "The Voice" that the latter part of my speech was a summary in Irish, that I put the arguments as we know them at home, rapidly sketched the military, political, and economic subjugation of Ireland, gave a sketch of our contribution to the common stock of European civilisation, told the story of Easter Week and its aftermath, stressed the continuity of the struggle for independence, pointed the moral of the insurrections of 1798, 1803, 1848, 1867, and 1916; showed that we still possess all the constituent elements of a distinctive nationality, detailed the successful campaign against conscription, described the growing national consciousness of the people, culminating in the vote for independence at the General Election and the Constituent Assembly; drew attention to the importance of Irish influence in America and the British Dominions, argued the importance of Ireland's international political and geographical position, repeating the story of Ireland's many blood offerings for freedom on the Continent; summarised the situation in Ireland when we had left, including the treatment of the prisoners; demonstrated conclusively that neither Home Rule nor any measure of self-government short of independence would satisfy majority Irish opinion; exposed the hypocrisy of the British Government in its various schemes, including the Lloyd

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George Convention; demanded the full, absolute, and free choice by the people of their sovereignty; declared the people's unshakeable determination to have their freedom, pleaded for the exercise amongst the Governments, and at the Peace Conference in Paris, of the International's influence in Ireland's behalf, alike in the interest of the workers in Ireland, the people in general, and the International; recalled the parallel of the nationalities represented by previous speakers, and finally cited both Ireland's readiness and Ireland's ability to disturb the peace of the world until such times as her expressed and duly confirmed will to independence is recognised by the Powers.

Disinterested England

Our case was listened to with great interest and close attention, partly perhaps owing to what "L'Humanite" generously described as my "vigorous intervention on behalf of Ireland," but still more owing to the fact that our case in detail was fresh to many of the delegates—that it was the only case made for a nationality subject to any of the Entente Powers, that it threw a new light upon England's disinterested regard for small nations and self-determination, and that it was in flat contradiction to the attitude of the British delegation but right in agreement with practically all other declarations on similar concrete cases in which self-determination is demanded in Europe.

Some Trusty Friends.

Indeed, the interest in our position was manifest from the moment our arrival was made known. Many of the delegates, including some of the biggest men in the movements in France, Germany, Great Britain, Austria, and neutral countries, came to us to inquire about Ireland and the Irish demands. Many of the biggest men there, like Kautsky, Bernstein, Troelstra, Adler, and of course Huysmans and Longuet, showed a very gratifying knowledge of our question, and not only that, but a very ready sympathy with our claims. It was particularly noticeable that such important and such different men as these spoke to us with admiration and approval of the continuous struggle of the Irish people. "You have fought long and well in Ireland," said Kautsky; and Bernstein spoke in a similar strain. "You are a splendid fighting people," said Adler, "and you will keep it up until you succeed; good luck to you." "I have followed your position, particularly during the war," said Troelstra immediately after our declaration, "and I'm glad to see you here. I have written much about Ireland in my paper," he added, "and I want to get as much information from you as I can get." It was the same with many other delegates, including the Jews and Greeks, who were particularly cordial. Longuet, I need not say, expressed his pleasure at our attendance, and I must say that whatever our differences, justice and truth compel me to say that from Henderson, MacDonald, Middleton, Mrs. Snowden, and Miss Bondfield we had nothing less than good comradeship. Huysmans, as always, was one of our best friends, helping us in many ways

which mere fellowship would not dictate. From first to last we had the ear and the good-will of the delegates, and we were not the least favoured by the staff of the Bureau, an important consideration, as delegates to any conference or congress well know. We were especially indebted to Grumbach's brother-in-law, Greudel, who took us in hand as soon as we entered the Volkshaus on Friday morning, and went out of his way to get our statements in the hands of the delegates even before we formally took our place in the Conference, and to Mlle. Richer, who proved herself an invaluable friend to our cause both during and after the Conference.

Nor was Ireland forgotten in the Commission by its most important member, its Chairman and reporter, Mistral (France). In his report to the Conference, Mistral included the declaration of Irish independence amongst other evidences, such as the second Balkan war, that the pre-war situation was unsatisfactory in many respects, which would have to be changed.

On the Commission.

Ireland scored again on Sunday when Tom Johnson, with the speech printed in another column, intervened effectively and successfully for the representation of the subject and small nations on the Permanent Commission charged to carry on the work of the Conference until the International is called together again, and to draw up the new statutes. Johnson began in his usual quiet and judicial manner, but he soon warmed up until he glowed as I have never seen him fired on any platform in Ireland. As will be seen from his speech, he got in some very telling points, and he certainly turned the tide in favour of equal representation for all the delegations on the Permanent Commissions. So, in the absence of our colleagues on the Irish delegation, we duly nominated ourselves as the two Irish representatives on the Commission! We attended its first meeting, and await the call to the second, when we shall have another and even better opportunity of doing good.

In Like Bondage.

Our speeches brought to our notice and to our help representatives of two countries which were not represented on the Conference, but for which we have naturally a more than platonic feeling, India and Egypt. Thus we were able to make, so to speak, a triple alliance of subject peoples under British rule, and when India and Egypt commissioned us to speak authoritatively for them, we felt our hands strengthened, and realised the importance of this united front. Here let me pay my tribute to the two Egyptian leaders, Aly Shamsy, a member of the Opposition in the Egyptian Legislative Assembly, and Mohammed Fahmy, the President of the Young Egyptian Committee in Europe. Their help was priceless, and highly appreciated. To-day I cannot but think with a certain sorrow of these two devoted missionaries of Egyptian freedom far away from their suffering people, among whom, in this day of trial, they would fain be instead of even the international clearing house of Switzerland. Who among us would not prefer to be in Ireland in such circumstances?

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THE RED HUNGARIAN REPUBLIC.

Hungary has joined the group of European countries which have raised the Red Flag of the Workers' Republic and established the direct government of the labouring masses. The proletarian revolution has won another victory, and the spectre of Bolshevism has taken tangible shape again in a new Soviet Republic. These are great times to live in.

Ten years ago the Socialist Party in Hungary was weak and badly organised. The narrow franchise of the Magyar oligarchy prevented the common people from practically exercising any function except that of the exploited producer of wealth, in the national life. When the Hungarian Socialists wrote to the Socialist Party of Ireland in 1907, for instance, they had no more say in the direction of Hungarian affairs than the Irish Socialists had in Ireland. But they were wiser than the Irish workers, for they built up a strong Socialist Party, which to-day is in a position to seize power and rule the Magyar lands. We have still a long road to travel in Ireland yet.

When the war came the Hungarians were amongst the most faithful to the principles of international Socialism. They were the implacable enemies of the Hungarian Government and the monarchy, and their declarations at Stockholm were clear and definite.

During the course of the war, and, above all, under the influence of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Party fell into its natural lines of division, its moderate but uncompromisingly Socialist Right and its Communist Left. When the armistice was signed the Left had become a definitely Communist or Bolshevik Party admitting of no compromise with the bourgeoisie, and refusing its co-operation to the coalition government of the Hungarian Republic under the oligarchic Karolyi. Karolyi, however, succeeded in forming a government, sinking his oligarchic principles under pressure from the working class insurrections, and accepting the co-operation of the Socialist Party of the Right. Since then there has been little news of the course of events in Hungary, indeed we commented at the time on the significant silence of the Western press about the first risings after the armistice. But some news trickled through at Berne, when the Hungarian delegates, including the Minister of Education, told the story of the blockade, of the ravaging of Hungarian lands by the Entente troops, of the prisoners, of the prohibition by the capitalist Entente of all elections, and of the wreaking of the militarist blood lust by the occupying Czech-Slovak troops. The country, we were told, was a seething mass of revolt, which would burst into revolution if any further strain were imposed upon it.

That strain has been imposed, and by the Entente. The breaking point was reached when the Entente handed to the Karolyi Government a Note making a new line of demarcation on the Hungarian-Romanian frontier, and extending the Roumanian occupation to the whole of Eastern Hungary, thus depriving Hungary of her richest lands. French and Czech troops were to occupy practically all the rest of Hungary. Against this the government could not stand, and Karolyi resigned immediately, making way for the passing to direct power of the Hungarian proletariat.

Some passages in Karolyi's farewell proclamation to the people are most significant. "The Government," he says, "which has hitherto governed on the basis of the people's will and the support of the Hungarian proletariat realises that the constraining force of events"—the old logic of events of which we, in common with all revolutionary Socialists, have stressed the importance—"demands a new course. The regulation of production can only be safeguarded if the proletariat takes over power." And declaring that the Entente aims at making Hungary a base for military operations against the Russian Soviet army, he concludes: "I, as Provisional President of

the Hungarian People's Republic, turn as against the Paris Conference to the proletariat of the world for justice and support." As in Russia, as in Bavaria, as in Austria, so in Hungary, the mere democratic republic has proven but a half-way house, and the base and bulwark of the people's liberty is being found in the Socialist Republic. The ghosts of 1848 have come again to haunt Europe, but France still holds back. Yet we shall not be surprised if the French do not dance to the strain of this Hungarian music which is mingling with the grand Russian march of freedom.

What course is the Revolution taking in Hungary? Allowing for the experience of the Russian Soviet, the Hungarians are following the Russian model. Wiser than the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries, the Hungarian Socialist Party has joined forces with the Communist Party. In this union the ruthless logic of the Bolsheviks is the driving force, and it has a Soviet of Hungarian Peasants', Workers' and Soldiers' Council, which is hastening to conclude a military and intellectual alliance with the Russian Soviet in order to safeguard the rule of the workers and oppose the Imperialism of the Entente. And, irony of ironies, Hungary looks now for protection to the land whose armies Austria employed to crush the Hungarian Republic in 1848-9.

Pay heed, Irish workers, to this proclamation of the United Socialist Parties and the Revolutionary Government Council of Hungary:

"To all—the proletariat of Hungary has from to-day taken up the power into its own hands. By decision of the Paris Conference to occupy almost the entire territory of Hungary the provisioning of revolutionary Hungary becomes utterly impossible.

"In these circumstances the sole means open to the Hungarian Government was a dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The legislative, executive, and judicial authority will be exercised by a dictatorship of the Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Council.

"Revolutionary Government Council will begin forthwith its work for the realisation of Socialism and Communism.

"The Revolutionary Government Council decrees the socialisation of large estates, mines, big industries, banks, and transport.

"It declares its complete solidarity with the Russian Soviet Government, and offers to conclude an armed alliance with the Proletariat of Russia."

"The Council of State will organise a proletarian army, which will enforce the proletarian dictatorship against the Hungarian landowners and capitalists and against the Rumanian boyards and Czech bourgeois."

The declaration goes on to invite the workers and peasants of Bohemia, Rumania, Serbia, and Croatia to conclude an armed alliance against the boyards, big landowners, and dynasties, and calls upon the labouring classes of German-Austria and Germany to follow the example of Hungary, breaking with Paris, allying themselves with Moscow, constituting a republic governed by Workers' Councils, and resisting by armed force all Imperialist conquerors.

The proclamation further declares the Socialist Party and Council of State acknowledge the difficulties and sacrifices which they will have to endure, but asserts they must wage war for the liberation of foodstuffs and mines as the sole means of bringing about the victory of Socialism.

The proclamation concludes by calling upon every workman and peasant to work and to assist in the production of food, or else to enter the army and sacrifice himself for the triumph of the Socialist ideal.

The Social Revolution is spreading now over all Central Europe, and it brings the promise of freedom even to the benighted democracies of the West. Had it not been for the call from Ireland some of us might have preferred to stay where the Revolution is carrying all before it. But—there is work to do here in Ireland.

BRITISH JUSTICE.

Look on this Picture.

At Belfast Assizes recently, James Vinters, a discharged soldier, was tried for the manslaughter of his wife. Evidence showed that accused struck the woman with his fist over the right eye. The jury found Vinters guilty, and recommended him to the utmost leniency of the Court. His Lordship said he would sentence the accused to three months' imprisonment in the second division, to date from 2nd January, the date of committal. Mr. Hill Smith, K.C., Crown Prosecutor—According to prison rules 14 days automatically come off, which means that the prisoner will now be discharged.

And on That!

Court-martial Sentence.
Timothy Dwyer, of Cappamurra, Co. Tipperary, civilian, tried by District Court-martial at Cork on 13th March, 1919, for having in his possession a number of documents, the publication of which would be likely to cause disaffection, in contravention of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, was found guilty and sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment with hard labour.

A Solid Tribute.

In remitting their account for the "Voice of Labour," the Pearse-Connolly Club of Butte, Montana, add five dollars extra.

The Workers' Republic.

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

The Man in the Gap.

On taking up the editorial pen again we should like to pay our hearty tribute to the work of the editor who took our place while we were helping to spread the light in Europe. Our Joseph MacDonnell excelled himself in "The Voice" of the past six weeks, and he will have the congratulations of our readers as well as of ourselves for the lively little paper which, with little but welcome help, he produced in our absence. It was no small task to write and edit the paper in addition to his managerial, sub-editorial, and educational duties, but MacDonnell did it with right good will and success. "The Voice" was one of the few Irish papers, and the only Labour journal, to reach us on the Continent, and to us abroad it was a weekly joy which it has never been to us at home. For this, Mac, many thanks.

The Kidnapped Children.

(As passed by Censor.)

There has been no more damnable incident in the recent terror in Ireland than the deliberate spiriting away from their homes of two children who, it is expected or intended, shall furnish some clue to the identity of the person or persons who shot the policemen in Tipperary some weeks ago. There is nothing as bad as this either in any mediæval inquisition or in the history of Tsarist Russia. We have a fairly extensive knowledge of the records of torture for the purpose of manufacturing evidence, but we have never read of anything to surpass this. One of the children is but 11 years old, and both of them lived not less than four miles away from the scene of the tragedy. Without the knowledge, much less the consent of their parents, these children were kidnapped by the Royal Irish Constabulary. They were seen crying bitterly in the custody of the police on a Dublin-bound train at Limerick Junction. Since then they are hidden away in the R.I.C. Depot in the Phoenix Park in Dublin, and we have reliable information that in their prison both of them cry piteously all day long. The police say they have everything children may want—except, of course, their liberty and their mothers. As the R.I.C. and the Castle officials were not born of women they cannot be expected to understand the cry of a child. But we want to know: What law empowers the police to kidnap children by force? What law will permit children of this tender age to give evidence in a law court? What rights over their children have parents under the laws of Capitalist England, and where now is the boasted sanctity of the home?

No Passports for Russia.

The governments of France and Great Britain have definitely refused passports to the French and British members of the International's mission to Russia. It would, of course, have served these democratic Governments well if the Soviet Government had declined to allow the mission to enter Russia, but as on the Prinkipo proposal, so on this, the Soviet has proven more than a match for Lloyd George and Clemenceau. France and Britain are afraid of the truth. They dare not let their peoples know either what is happening in Russia or what benefits the Soviet has brought to the long oppressed Russian masses. Hence, no real news comes from Russia, and no impartial and honest inquirer is to be allowed to go to Russia. It is not that the International Commission is pro-Bolshevik. Some of its members are indeed friendly to the Bolsheviks, but others—the British members, for example—were amongst the keenest critics of the Bolsheviks at Berne. Now once again the alleged democratic Governments of France and Britain have slapped Labour in the face. What is Labour in France and Britain going to do about it? The French Socialist Party, we are sure, will not lie down under the blow. Will the Labour Party in Great Britain stand up to its own Government and compel it to grant the passports for Russia?

Work for the Exiles.

Several of our readers in Great Britain, including some who have no Irish blood in their veins, have asked us what assistance can they give the Irish Labour Party and the International programme of the Party. We are glad to have these inquiries, and we hope and believe they are symptomatic of a growing movement in Great Britain. To begin with, we suggest that these friends and comrades assist us in increasing the sale and circulation of "The Voice" in Great Britain. We are quite conscious of all the defects of "The Voice," but if our readers in Scotland, England, and Wales will increase our circulation in Great Britain they will help not only the movement at home, but as well the movement abroad. In the next place, our friends should take an active part in the Labour and Socialist movement in their own districts, and in the general work of Labour in Great Britain. We should like to see them figure more prominently, especially in the Trade Unions. But the political Labour movement must not be neglected. Again, and here is definite constructive work which our friends, and all friends of Ireland and Irish Labour in

Great Britain, can do, we want to see in every district in which there is an Irish working class population, Irish workers' committees spring up within the British Labour movement itself. In Scotland some of these committees are already at work, but we want to see them spread all over Scotland, England, and Wales. They must be definitely Labour committees and they must be definitely Irish. They can be both without any injury, either to Labour or to Ireland, and in fact they will be very strong weapons in the hands of the best friends of both. Some day, when the present high pressure has eased off, we hope to be able to write at greater length on the role of the Irish worker in Great Britain. In the meantime, we commend to our friends there the extracts from Karl Marx which we print in "The Voice." As a beginning in a big campaign of propaganda the Irish workers in Great Britain might well circulate the Marx document broadcast.

The Men in Jail.

The country is naturally jubilant over the release of the Republicans recently interned in England but, we may well ask, would its jubilation not turn to the deepest indignation if it knew the whole truth about the political prisoners still in jail in Ireland? The situation of these men is so bad that the power which keeps them in prison will not allow the truth to be told. Every other power in Europe has released its political prisoners, but England still holds scores of Irishmen imprisoned here. The interned men are indeed at home again, but they were not released until the terrible tragedy of Piaras McCann's death left no other course open. Must the release, and even the human treatment, of the men in Belfast and Mountjoy await some similar or worse tragedy in an Irish jail? That such tragedy may add one more foul stain to England's prison records in Ireland, and that soon, no one can doubt who knows the sufferings the political are undergoing. Sunday's meetings have done good in exposing the situation behind the jail doors. But this is not enough, and it cannot be effective. Something more is wanted, and in the doing of that we look for the active support of every element in the country making any pretension to some regard for humanity, justice and decency. The workers in various quarters might well consider how they can help effectively to bring those responsible for this state of affairs to some sense, we do not say of decency, but of responsibility.

Labour Day.

We understand that at the recent Special Conference of Trade Unions many delegates expressed themselves warmly in favour of having International Labour Day observed as a workers' general holiday this year. Last year Labour Day was eclipsed by the greater glory of the Anti-Conscription General Strike. The eagerness of the delegates to the Conference is welcome evidence that this year the holiday movement will be widespread, and we hope it will be an All-Ireland movement, and include Belfast and the North-East. Dublin and Limerick are already getting a move on, Waterford, Wexford, Cork, Kilkenny, Derry, Drogheda, Dundalk, and other smaller centres should follow suit. The coming Labour Day will be invested with a new importance this year, since the International Conference at Berne decided that Labour Day should be devoted to a world-wide support of the International's Society of Nations as opposed to the Paris Covenant. Nothing will get more whole-hearted support amongst Irish workers than this, and if the Trades Councils and the Unions make their preparations for meetings, processions and demonstrations, Ireland will have an honoured place on May Day. But there is no time to lose—so get busy.

"The Daily Herald."

On Monday next "The Daily Herald" will make its welcome re-appearance, and nowhere will it get a more sincere greeting than in Ireland. In the great days of 1913 the Irish workers' best friend abroad was the "Daily Herald," and we know that the new series will be still more friendly and more powerful than the old. We bespeak it the support not only of the Irish workers but of every friend and champion of good causes in Ireland. Its news service, and particularly its foreign news service, will be second to none in these countries, and its views will be honest and direct from every country in Europe. "The Daily Herald" is the only foreign journal with a special permanent correspondent in Ireland, and when we say that that correspondent is both able and well-informed upon every aspect of Irish affairs, that he is, in fact, the present brilliant Irish correspondent of the weekly "Herald," and a most valuable contributor to "The Voice," we need give our readers no further assurance that in at least one daily in England the truth and the whole truth about Ireland will be told. We are as eager for the new "Daily Herald" as we were when James Connolly first introduced us to the fighting little daily of the old "Limit" days.

Cork Socialists.

Interesting lectures fill the evenings. "Waves of questions" prove the keen local interest. Tribute has been paid to the memory of Con O'Leighane.

THE FREE AND THE SUBJECT IN CONTRAST

THOMAS JOHNSON on Ireland and Switzerland.

A Genevese Yearhs for Guinness's.

The first words we heard after crossing the frontier from France into Switzerland were refreshing as the morning dew. We had just gone through the second night travelling, just emerged from ten hours' sublocation in an over-crowded, overheated French railway train and found ourselves in the office of the Swiss Customs at Geneva for another scrutiny of passports. A question arose over a slight informality in one of the documents, in which we, Arthur James Balfour, a Member of His Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a Member of the Order of Merit, a Member of Parliament, etc., etc., His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Request and Require in the name of His Majesty all those whom it may concern to allow (Thomas Johnson) to pass freely without let or hindrance, and to afford him every assistance and protection of which he may stand in need." Some of those who appeared to be much concerned seemed to care precious little for the requirements and requests of His Britannic Majesty or His Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but the young man called upon to assist in clearing up the little difficulty, seeing we were from Ireland, asked: Did we know Dublin and Phoenix Park? and the Shelbourne Hotel? He had been for two years training as a waiter in the Shelbourne, had learned to speak English, and was now back in Geneva as assistant passport officer! We were delighted with his welcome, and his wishes for the success of our mission. He had pleasant memories of Ireland, but, alas, being but a youth when he left the city, he thought of Dublin as the home of Guinness's stout, and the place where the Phoenix Park Race Meetings were held.

Bloody Balfour's Delays.

After an involuntary delay of five or six hours in the beautiful City of Lausanne, we arrived in Berne about midnight on Thursday, February 6th. The Conference had begun its sessions on the previous Monday, but owing to the doubts and hesitancy of the said Arthur James Balfour and his agents, and the formalities required by the Swiss Government, we had been kept back until almost too late.

It had been thought that the Conference would continue for three weeks, but the Austrian Elections and the German political situation compelled the delegations from those countries to return home, and the programme which had been mapped out prior to the Conference had to be revised.

I propose to leave my colleague, Cathal O'Shaannon, to deal with the work of the Conference, while I touch upon some aspects of the social and political life of Switzerland which I hope will be of interest.

My Estimate of Berne International.

I shall content myself therefore with saying that, despite the criticism that has come from both left and right, despite the fact that the more vigorous sections of the Socialist and Labour movement in some countries had been manoeuvred out or chose to remain outside, and, more serious still, that the industrialist elements in the movement of to-day were overshadowed by the politicals, the upholders of the parliamentary method and the revisionists, I believe that the Conference was a valuable piece of work, and will make possible a larger Congress, even more fully representative of all sections of the Labour and Socialist movement in all countries, and to rebuild a greater and better organised Inter-National than that which failed in August, 1914. This is quite apart from the special value which we in Ireland have a right to place upon the Berne Conference. We have secured a position for the Irish movement which cannot well be challenged in the future.

Ireland has been recognised by the organised Socialist and Labour movements of the world as a distinct national unit, and be it remembered, several of the delegations represented Parties actually in power to-day, and several others will be in power to-morrow or the day after.

These men and women have read and heard Ireland's case stated, and a deal of other much-needed educational propaganda regarding the relations between Ireland and England has been carried through.

Henderson's Progress.

Arthur Henderson has often been adversely criticised in these pages. We can the more readily give him credit for having, with Camille Huysmans, been mainly instrumental in bringing together this International Conference, overcoming enormous difficulties and obstacles. His speech on the League of Nations resolution is of special interest to Ireland, and the following extract is specially noteworthy as coming from the man whom Lloyd George left "on the mat":—

"The Paris Peace Treaty must secure the complete recognition of the rights of small nations, and even of those people within the British Empire itself—a recognition of the principle that no people must be forced under a sove-

reignty under which it does no wish to live."

Ireland and Switzerland: a Parallel.

Switzerland has a population of four millions, living within an area half that of Ireland. Of this area not less than 22 per cent. is unproductive, barren mountain. She has no coal and no iron, imports four-fifths of her grain requirements, has no very rich men and, so far as our close observation extending over four weeks in three of the largest towns, could detect, no squalid poverty, no destitution. Physically and economically Switzerland has many parallels with Ireland, politically and socially the two countries are as the poles apart. Both countries rely upon imported grain, fuel, iron, both are countries mainly rural, and the rural populations depend upon pasture and dairying for their main support. Both are countries of small peasant holdings. The average holding in Switzerland is 20 acres. In Switzerland one-fourth is a town population, in Ireland rather less than a third. Switzerland has 300,000 peasant proprietors supporting 53 per cent. of the population, Ireland has 536,000 agricultural holdings supporting 60 per cent. of the population.

How the Republic Works.

On the other hand, while Ireland is subject politically to the King of England, Switzerland is a federal republic, a confederation of twenty-two States or cantons, each with a separate constitution. In some of these cantons the purest form of democracy prevails, where the people themselves meet en masse at least once a year to carry on their own government, to appoint the Executive Government, and to pass or reject legislative proposals. But strangely enough, amongst so democratic a people the women have not yet citizen rights. The referendum and initiative are in operation for both cantonal and federal legislation. Proportional representation, after having been tried in several cantons for some years, has now been adopted for the federal legislature, and will take effect at the next elections.

Swiss Cabinet Ministers are not over-paid. The President of the Republic receives £800 a year, the other members of the Federal Council (roughly equivalent to the British Cabinet), £720 a year, plus free railway travelling.

Bilingual Education.

The standard of popular education is high. There are seven universities, and another is proposed. Primary schools in the towns are large and spacious, and the educational system is generally under the control of the cantons subject to certain general federal requirements. This local autonomy appears to work satisfactorily permitting of adaptation to suit local conditions. But it must be noted there is, to begin with, a high level of educational achievement amongst the general population, and a popular belief in the value of Education.

Every child learns two languages in the primary schools, generally German and French, or in the Italian-speaking cantons, German and Italian—German is the home language of 69 per cent., French of 21 per cent., and Italian of 8 per cent. of the people. And while everyone can speak or understand at least two languages, a very considerable number can read or speak a third. We found, especially at Berne, in railway stations, post offices, shops, and even on tramway cars that English was understood by someone.

One would look far in Ireland or England for a newspaper seller at a street corner stand with three languages, but we found one in Berne who could talk to us in German, French, or English.

While the federal law fixes twelve as the limit of primary school age for compulsory attendance in all cantons, including the small rural communities, in some of the cantons it has been raised to fourteen, fifteen, and even sixteen years.

A Nation of Readers.

One result of this high standard is the prevalence of first class book shops. It seemed to us there were almost as many as there are public-houses here! As one book-seller informed us (a German settled years ago in Berne) it is by no means unusual for an ordinary workman to pay ten francs (say 8/6) for a book.

The book shop windows divide their wares into two departments, scientific and technical books and books on politics, sociology, history, etc. Novels and light literature appeared to be kept in a subordinate place.

How Swiss Labour Organises.

The Labour and Socialist movement is active and strong in some cities, but the industrial organisation generally has not reached a high percentage numerically. In the industries where Trade Union organisation has been successful, particularly the metal workers, while the percentage of eligibles organised is not very high, the manner and effectiveness of the organisation commands our admiration.

Of the population of four millions about 900,000 are recorded in the reports of the Federation of Unions as dependent workers in specific industry, 400,000 to 450,000 are occupied in agricultural. The Federation of Trades Unions (equivalent

KURT EISNER.



Bavarian Delegate to Berne Congress, murdered at Munich by Count Arco-Valley.

to our Trade Union Congress, but with a much closer organisation, more responsibility and control over the industrial affairs of the affiliated Unions) reports that in twenty industrial groups out of 583,770 workers eligible for membership 148,30 are organised and 435,440 are not organised.

Railwaymen Lead.

The best organised trades are the railway and postal workers, the printing trades and the metal and machine industry (including watch makers). Amongst the worst organised are the textile trades, employing a large number of women, and the building trades, in which a large proportion of Italians are engaged.

The Railway and Postal workers comprise a total of 48,700, of which 27,000, or about 55 per cent., are organised. Of the 5,654 printers 5,054 or nearly 90 per cent. are organised, and in the metal and machine industries out of 106,000 nearly 63,000 or 60 per cent. are in the Unions.

The textile trades, building trades, food and clothing and distributive trades are all badly organised, and despite the fact that the fairly well organised railway workers and metal workers comprise 28 per cent. of the total number of eligible workers, not quite one quarter of the total are organised. (These figures are for the year 1917, a considerable improvement has taken place during 1918, following a general strike).

Taking the total of workers eligible for trade union membership in the two countries the advantage is greatly in Ireland's favour. Ireland may claim 300,000 organised out of 650,000 eligible, Switzerland has 148,000 organised out of 584,000 eligible, or 46 per cent. in Ireland against 25 per cent. in Switzerland.

They Have a Good Press.

But while the numerical percentage is low the efficiency of the organisation is high. If we may take the report of the metal workers as an example we find recorded in great detail every activity for the year in every branch, particulars of every trade dispute and its result, branch activities, financial position, etc., etc., all in a well printed volume in German of 253 pages. This organisation of 63,000 members publishes a weekly journal, "The Metallurgist," one edition in French and one in German. No less than 50,000 copies of the German and 25,000 copies of the French edition are printed and sold every week! There are no less than THIRTY trade union and socialist newspapers and journals in Switzerland. Mark that, thirty well printed, well edited journals controlled by the labour movement in a country the size of Ireland with only half the number of organised workers.

I must leave to another time further particulars regarding labour and Socialist representation, the cost of living, wages, etc., and will close this contribution by saying that we in Ireland may find in Switzerland many examples in the political and social conditions there well worth copying.

We did not see a bare-footed child nor an ill-clad man or woman, not a beggar, nor a child street hawker during our four weeks' sojourn.

May the day soon dawn when as much can be said of Ireland. T. J.

"FEED MY LAMBS."
Divine Command is made illegal by English Home Secretary.

On December 16th, 1918, Eamonn Fleming and Frank Thornton, then interned without charge or trial, sent on behalf of the Irish Republican prisoners in Reading Jail, a sum of £2 to Walter Carpenter for the Connolly Memorial Children's Treat.

As they failed to receive any acknowledgment, either direct or through the "Voice," they wrote on January 13th to Walter, asking if he had received the £2. Carpenter's reply to this inquiry did not reach the jail.

On January 26th the prisoners were informed that the money had been returned to the jail by order of the Home Office. No reason was given. Perseveringly they sent the money on the road once more on January 29th, with the request that, as the treat was past, the sum should be devoted to some "charitable" purpose.

On February 21st the money and the letter of advice were returned, with a covering note from the Home Office, which stated:—

"It has been decided that the transmission of this sum for an object so vaguely stated cannot in the circumstances be authorised."

Ultimately the letter of January 29th, with a footnote dated February 21st, did reach Liberty Hall. It is impossible to understand the refusal of the authorities to allow this donation to reach its destination, for money for the Connolly Memorial Treat was received from every place of internment, even from Reading Jail.

The working of the Treat last Christmas left a balance of over £28, which is being carried forward. But for the restricted accommodation of Liberty Hall, the entire sum would have been expended on the kiddies.

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PLAIN WORDS AT BERNE. MARX and LONGUET ON IRELAND

There Can be no Peace Until Ireland is Free.

On the proposal to appoint a Permanent Commission of the International, composed of representatives of the bigger nations only, Tom Johnson spoke with effect, and secured the election of a comprehensive Commission in which the delegates of the small nations have their rightful place.

We give the speech below.
Mr. President and Comrades,
I wish to support Mr. Stuart Bunning in his emphasis on the need for bringing direct pressure to bear upon the Paris Conference, and his claim that this necessity should be constantly present in the minds of the delegates.

The workers of Ireland felt that this Conference at Berne, if it rose to the height of its rightful position, would come to decisions upon the various questions brought to its consideration, and, having decided, would lay these decisions before the Paris Conference, saying these are the decisions of the Berne Conference representing the workers of the world, and it is your business to put them into practice.

We feel that this Conference is not acting up to its responsibilities: instead of commanding, it is pleading with the Paris Conference of Governments. While supporting Mr. Stuart Bunning in respect of his views on this matter, I protest against the suggestion that the permanent Commission should be restricted to the representatives of the big nations—France, Germany, Great Britain, Austro-Bohemia, with Branting, Huysmans, and Henderson.

Let us remember that this is a Labour and Socialist Conference, and any Commission of this kind must include representatives of the small and subject nations, and nations lately subject. Even Paris is reported as having agreed to give larger representation to the small nations on some of its Commissions. If Paris sees this to be necessary, surely Berne won't be less just?

Races Still Enslaved.

I want to impress on the Conference that the subject nations are entitled to claim special consideration from the Labour and Socialist Parties, and to point out that all the peoples lately under the subjection of Russia, Germany, and Austria have now some form of free state organisation, some form of national autonomy. But the nations subject to the British Empire still remain in subjection. No freedom has come to them, no freedom is even promised, now the war is over. India, Egypt, and Ireland are still held to that Empire by military power.

I want to warn the Conference that there can be no peace in the world while these subject peoples are held to England by force. The right of free self-determination must be secured to them as well as to Belgium, Alsace-Lorraine, Serbia, Poland, the Czechoslovaks, and the other peoples lately held to the empires of Russia, Austria, Germany and Turkey.

Carthage Must be Destroyed.

We speak with knowledge when we say that the war between England and Ireland will go on, no matter what pretence of peace is planned at Paris, until the freedom of Ireland is won. By recurring insurrections, and in every other way that presents itself, the Irish people will continue the struggle, and they will be backed by their kinsmen in America, Australia, South Africa, and in Britain itself.

Despite the presence of a hundred thousand British soldiers, and all the paraphernalia of modern warfare, the young men and women of Ireland will continue the struggle in arms. It lies with this Conference to do its part towards bringing a peace of justice to Ireland.

ADLER AND LONGUET.

Not Afraid of People's Dictatorship.

The leading idea of the policy which we have energetically and indefatigably pursued throughout the whole course of the war, was the reconstitution of the international front of the conscious revolutionary proletariat. This same fundamental principle also determined our attitude towards the Berne Conference.

We maintain that this Conference runs the risk of provoking grave criticism, not because of what is contained in its resolutions, but because certain commonplace truths have been expressed too late, not during the war, but after the war is over.

On the other hand, the resolution on Democracy and Dictatorship gives rise to most serious objections. The same men who have passively or actively hindered international action for four and a half years, who have thought it their duty to abstain from any international meeting, now eagerly utilise the Conference for a course of action which will inevitably increase the difficulties of the International.

We warn the working classes against any kind of stigma which may be applied to the Russian Soviet Republic. We have not sufficient material for a judgment. One thing only do we know with certainty, that the shameful campaign of lying in which the Press and

(Our readers will remember that in the Marx Centenary number of "The Voice" we printed certain statements of Marx on Ireland. These we are now able to supplement from Longuet's brilliant study, "La Politique Internationale du Marxisme," which, however, we were unable to get until we reached Geneva. At the beginning of March we sent from Geneva a translation of these passages to the "Voice" and to another office in Dublin, but the Post Office has not yet delivered either of them. We quote the whole passage below, leaving both Longuet and Marx to speak for themselves. The capitals are Marx's, not ours.—C. O. S.)

The cause of Ireland interested Marx not one whit less than the cause of Poland or of Hungary, or Lincoln's struggle against American slavery. Here again this pure theorist of the class struggle shows himself to us as the faithful defender of an oppressed nationality and as taking the greatest interest in its liberation. Until his last breath he was to follow with passionate interest Ireland's struggles under Parnell and the Land League as he had followed the previous revolutionary movement of the Fenians. Besides he considered that the liberation of Ireland was called for if the most considerable influence was to be exercised on the revolutionary development of England and the whole of Europe. Hence he wrote on April 6, 1868, to Dr. Kugelmann:—

"The Established Church in Ireland is the religious bulwark of English landlordism in Ireland as well as the advanced outwork of the Church of England (I speak here of the Church of England only as a land proprietor). If the Church falls in Ireland it will fall also in England and landlordism in Ireland first of all, and then in England, will follow it. Now for a long time past I am convinced that the Social Revolution must begin at the base, that is to say, at landed property. In addition, this would have the very important result that when the Irish Church is dead the Irish Protestant farmers of the province of Ulster would unite with the Catholic tenants in the other three provinces of Ireland and attach themselves to their movement, whereas up to the present landlordism has been able to exploit this religious antagonism." (1).

A very precise and attractive statement of Marx's conception of the Irish question is found in a circular on the chief problems which the General Council of the International was called upon to solve, addressed in 1870 to the Brunswick Committee, the central organ of the Eisenach Party, then represented by Liebknecht and Bebel in the Parliament of North Germany.

In it at the same time are to be found Marx's opinions on England and the great part he attributed to England in the international revolution. We shall return to that. On the Irish question itself he wrote:—

"If England is the bulwark of landlordism and European capitalism the only place where the great blow against official England can be struck is Ireland. In the first place, Ireland is the bulwark of English landlordism. If it falls in Ireland it will fall in England. In Ireland the operation is a hundred times more easy, because the economic struggle in Ireland is concentrated exclusively on landed property, because in Ireland this struggle is at the same time national, and because there the people are more revolutionary and more readily aroused than in England. Landlordism in Ireland is maintained exclusively by the English army."

In the second place "the English bourgeoisie has not only exploited Irish poverty in order to hold down, through the compulsory emigration of the poorer Irish, the working class in England, but it has besides divided the proletariat into two hostile camps. The revolutionary fire of the Celtic worker does not combine with the steady but slow nature of the Anglo-Saxon worker. On the contrary, in the great industrial centres in

England there is a deep antagonism between the Irish wage-earner and the English wage-earner. . . . This antagonism among the wage-earners in England itself is artificially fed and sustained by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie knows that this division is the true secret of the maintenance of its power."

"Further, this antagonism is reproduced beyond the Atlantic. The Irish, driven from their native soil by cattle and sheep, find themselves together again in the United States, where they form a formidable and ever-growing part of the population. Their only thought, their only passion, is hatred of England. The English Government and the American Government—that is to say, the classes which they represent—feed these passions in order to perpetuate the international struggle which hinders all earnest and effective alliance between the working classes of both sides and consequently all common liberation. Ireland is the English Government's only excuse for maintaining a large standing army which, in case of need, is thrown, as is seen, against the English workers after it has completed its military training and rehearsal in Ireland."

And Marx backed up this strong affirmation of his faith in the freedom of all peoples:—

"What ancient Rome showed us upon an enormous scale is repeated in our day in England: THE PEOPLE WHICH SUBJUGATES ANOTHER PEOPLE FORGES FOR ITSELF ITS OWN CHAINS."

And he concludes: "Thus the position of the International Association on the Irish question is quite definite and clear. The first need is to push forward the social revolution in England. To this end a great blow must be struck in Ireland."

The resolutions of the General Council on Irish amnesty would serve to introduce other resolutions which would affirm that, apart from all question of international justice, "it is a condition precedent of the emancipation of the English working class that the present forced Union—that is to say, the enslavement of Ireland—should be transformed into A FREE AND EQUAL CONFEDERATION, if it can, into SEPARATION, if it must," (2).

Some months previously Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

"I am more and more convinced—and it is only a question of impressing it upon the English, working class—that that class can never attempt anything decisive so long as it does not separate, in the most definite fashion, its Irish policy from the policy of the ruling classes. It must not be content with merely making common cause with the Irish; it must go further and take the initiative for the dissolution of the Union of 1801 and replace it by a FREE FEDERAL COVENANT." (3)

And he added that on the other hand this would have to be done still more in the very interest of the English proletariat than in sympathy for Ireland:

"The present relations between the two peoples not only paralyse the social evolution of England, but as well the position of England as regards Russia and the United States of America."

"As it is incontestably THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASS WHICH WILL INCLINE THE BALANCE IN FAVOUR OF SOCIAL EMANCIPATION WE MUST PRESS THIS POINT WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH. Indeed it was Ireland which brought about the fall of the Republic under Cromwell. NON BIS IN IDEM." (3)

(1) Letters from Marx to Kugelmann in "Le Mouvement Socialiste" of July 15, 1903, page 418.

(2) Circular of the General Council of the International communicated by Marx to Kugelmann. Letters from Marx to Kugelmann printed in "Le Mouvement Socialiste," September, 1903, page 55.

(3) Idem., page 89.

agencies of the Central Empires and the Entente have vied with one another during the war, continues unchanged to-day.

We do not wish, by passing premature judgment on political methods, to be the victims of the manoeuvres and interested calumnies of bourgeois governments. To our great regret we are unable to rely solely on the information received from those Russian delegates present at the Conference, who represent only a minority of the Russian working class. We do not cast the slightest doubt on their good faith, but we must demand that the International remain true to its old principle of hearing both sides before coming to a decision. The Berne Conference is but a first feeble attempt at an international assembly. Whole Parties, such as the Italian, Serbian, Roumanian, and Swiss are standing aside! Others are taking part reluctantly.

We have warned you against any decision which would make the meeting of the work-

ing classes of all countries more difficult in the future. We desire to reserve free entry into the International for all Socialist and Revolutionary Parties of all countries conscious of their class interests.

The majority of the sub-committee have not listened to our warnings. We do not wish to be parties to any action against the International, and we cannot be bound by the resolution as a whole, since certain paragraphs can be exploited by the bourgeoisie.

This document was adopted by the National delegates from Holland, Norway, Ireland, and Spain, the delegates representing the majority of the French Socialist Party, half the German-Austrian delegation, and on his own behalf by one Greek delegate. The signatories are:—

Austria, Friedrich Adler; France, Jean Longuet, Mistral, Paul Faure, Marcel Cachin, Frossard, Veruill, Presse-manne; Germany, Herzfeld; Norway, Scheffo, Traumal; Greece, Petridis; Ireland, O'Shannon, Johnson.



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PRESENTING IRELAND'S CASE.
By Cathal O'Shannon.
(From Front Page.)

We Got a Good Press.
It was not only the delegates and the visitors we were able to put our case, but in many interviews during the Conference to the representatives of many important newspapers in many countries. One of the first of them was an American, a personal friend of Padraic Colum's. Again and again they came to us eager for news—for hints on what is going to happen in Ireland most of all. And we weren't tongue-tied. Whatever the Press of England may be, the Press of the world was eminently friendly. In all, there were 250 representatives of the Press of all countries, from Japan to North and South America, and from Greece to Norway and Sweden, with all Europe in between. The European Press, and even the agencies proved rather better to us than might have been expected, and we found ourselves figuring as prominently as most of the delegates, the big guns of course excepted, in important newspapers in a dozen languages, including even "Le Temps." The Swiss Press was very friendly to what one of the best of them playfully called, "les enfants terribles, les Irlandais," and away from the depths of European darkness a report of our speeches in a local paper brought us a letter of congratulation from an Irishman who hasn't set foot on Ireland for a quarter of a century. The world is a small place when you have a European audience.

Mémoire sur l'Irlande.
Nor did we confine our work to speeches and interviews with pressmen and politicians. Everywhere we went we pleaded and argued and made the most of our opportunities. We wound up with the publication of the first pamphlet from Ireland printed on the Continent since Padraig Pearso's published in Geneva some six or seven years ago. This was a Memoir on Ireland which we prepared for the delegation from the Berne Conference to Paris, and consists of that section of our report dealing with the Irish Working Class and National Aspirations, giving a summary of the Irish claims and Labour's connection therewith, a brief historical summary, a sketch of the present situation in Ireland with statistical appendix, and the extracts from Karl Marx published in "The Voice." A French and a German edition, the one for Western and Southern Europe, and the other for the North and Centre, have been distributed to the Press, and the leading figures and forces in political and industrial Europe, and are on sale in every kiosk and almost every bookshop in Switzerland. And to our delight, on the day we left Geneva for Paris we found on sale in that Swiss Belfast the three declarations adopted by Dail Eireann in January.

When we took our farewell of Switzerland we left behind many new friends of Ireland in the European Press, in several governments and cabinets, and throughout the whole Labour and Socialist movement. Pressmen's promises to us have been kept since we came home, and as I write I have a letter asking for news of Ireland for the Swiss papers since our arrival here. Without boosting the personal work of the delegates, it can be said with truth that Irish Labour has left its mark behind it on the Continent, and it will endure.

Sean T.'s Good Work.
On our way home we stayed four days in Paris, and were glad to find that Sean T. O'Kelly had been making good. When we had passed through Paris on our way to Berne there wasn't a line on Ireland in the Paris Press. When we came back each new day brought its bundle of cuttings on Ireland from the whole French and European Press. The Irish delegation in Paris has done excellent work, and created an atmosphere, and an interest where it was much more difficult than in Switzerland. For a week or so he had a rough enough time of it, I think, but when he had found his bearings and made a scoop or two, he found himself handling a continuous procession of callers at the same time as he began to find his way into some of the most influential circles in Paris and around the Peace Conference. When we were there he was hard at work, with little but most important help, early and late, following several lines along which notable progress has been made. But all that is Sean T.'s own story, and when he tells it he will tell much more than I can now. He is certainly very near the centre of things, he has established himself very firmly, and Ireland is a burning question in and around the Conference and in the Council itself, even if the Irish claims have not been formally welcomed or the Irish delegation officially received.

Peace Conference Hopeless.
At the same time, I should be lacking in frankness if I omitted to record my impression that on the grounds of justice or principle, Ireland has nothing to hope for from the Peace Conference. Justice and principle are unknown quantities in that august body, and the most absolute cynicism and the spirit of territorial grab are the prevailing forces, except when President Wilson starts the Conference with some new repetition of an abstract principle of right. The League of Nations Covenant as it stands is but the perpetration of the alliance of the conquering military Powers, a twentieth century unholy alliance, with but one little loophole through which Ireland might squeeze and outside the Entente it has been received with but little enthusiasm

LABOUR IN IRELAND

IS UNIONISM SCUBBERY?
A BOSS CLASS UNION OF HEARTS.
Lord Farnham, D.S.O., is Chairman of the Irish Unionist Alliance. On his estates in Co. Cavan the workers are organised in the I.T. and G.W.U., and have had the temerity to suggest a nine-hour working day. All who would not immediately accept the boss's conditions—work from morn to night—were sacked, thus precipitating a strike.

His Lordship refuses to recognise the Union, or to meet the organiser. In this he, the Unionist Landlord and sworn foe of Irish Independence, is fully supported by Mr. P. A. Galligan, Chairman of the Cavan Urban Council and Cavan Sinn Féin Club.

Once more it is proven beyond a peradventure that the employing class has no politics, but its pocket? The Orange and Green sham fights of politics are got up to amuse the workers in times of industrial peace, and to divide them in moments of struggle.

Lord Farnham, however, has been forced by the solidarity of the workers irrespective of their individual political opinions to consent to be bound by the result of the negotiations between Cavan Farmers' Union and the I.T. and G.W.U.

Co-operation.
We are informed by the "Irish Messenger" Office that Father Canavan's pamphlet on "Co-operation" is still in stock. Single copies are 2d., or by post, 2½d. Transport Union branches will be supplied with thirteen copies to the dozen at the special rate of 1s. 3d. per dozen, postage 4d. extra. Orders should be sent direct to the "Irish Messenger" Office, 5 Great Denmark Street, Dublin.

WHITE SLAVERY IN DUBLIN.
According to B. Secbohm Rowntree, the necessary minimum bare living wage for a woman should be not less than twenty-five shillings a week.

The following advertisements from the Dublin "Evening Mail" show the current value of female flesh in this Christian city:—
Smart woman go from 10 to 4 daily; good scrubber; plain cooking; for 3s. 6d. per week.
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When can we return to the revolutionary religion which sings, "He hath exalted the humble and meek; He hath filled the hungry with good things, but the rich He hath sent empty away"?

Ballaghadereen.
This healthy branch reports an increase of wages to the direct labour. Gangers now have £2, and general labourers 30s. a week. Other town workers have also had the ten bob rise.

and much distrust by those people and Powers which the war has not damned spiritually for a generation. If indeed through America, Australia, and the homeland, with such interested or disinterested help as can be enlisted on the Continent, Ireland can bring pressure to bear on the Peace Conference the path will be easier; if not it will be harder again before it is easier, for it will be the path which one half of Europe is treading in hunger and worse than hunger. For all that, the mission in Paris is absolutely necessary, and indeed for that very reason it has found its ample justification.

For our own part, the Irish Labour delegation did excellent work in Paris, in spite of the terribly high prices, for Paris is making its visitors pay before it takes its indemnity from the Germans, whom it feels it has not yet beaten thoroughly. Longuet was again our best friend, and his position in the French movement makes his practical Irish sympathy of the first importance. His own paper, "Le Populaire," now the favourite of the demobilised poilus, and "L'Humanité," which has more than recovered its influence and authority under Cachin and especially its Foreign Editor, Amadee Dunois, welcomed us gladly, nay, asked for us, and has done as much for Ireland as the most exacting of us could demand. "La Bataille," too, after an unfortunate but quite understandable mistake, was eager to put our views exactly as we gave them, and wants nothing better than to take Irish Labour's position on the Irish question as its own. And this is significant, since "La Bataille" is the daily organ of the C.G.T., in which the embers of the old revolutionary fire are again stirring. A new French edition of our Memoir is now being published in Paris.

We did not tarry in Paris, but hurried home through London, where we pressed the Irish claims again in quarters friendly of old and others friendly now, and home to Dublin, dear to both of us even after the greater glories and fewer infamies of some of the Continental cities, but still dear, old, lovable and not unloving or unlovely Dublin.

C. O'S.

[Next week we shall report on the general proceedings at Berne, and record our impressions of the International Conference.]

IRISH versus BRITISH UNIONS.

To the Editor, "Voice of Labour."
Dear Sir,—The articles on above subject in last week's "Voice" raise a question of particular interest to all Irish workers which does not receive the attention it should. It was shown how Irish members of a British Union were let down by the latter.

May I be pardoned for introducing a subject which has already been discussed ad nauseam? But the Oath of Allegiance furnishes a striking example of the folly of Irishmen depending on English associations to give them even value for their subscription money. It was shown by the small body of Dublin Civil Servants who were endeavouring to fight the oath, that their weakness in the opposition was mainly due to the fact that Irish C. S. Associations were either branches or merely tail-ends of English bodies! Also the A.I.P.O.C.—which is Irish only in name—issued an official circular in which they stated that it was not advisable for them to oppose the Oath, as it was not being fought by English associations! Irish postmen were left in the same position by the English Postmen's Federation.

Experience is a dear school, but Irish dockers and Civil Servants have had a wholesome lesson. Will they profit thereby, and take the management of their own trade union affairs into their own hands?

For the dockers I cannot answer, but do not expect much from the C.S., the majority of whom are merely milk and water trade unionists. Note the result of the recent plebiscite of the A.I.P.O.C.—the majority favour affiliation with Irish labour, but are not prepared to stand in with their fellow-workers and take part in the fight!—Is wise.

RAHANAC.
(It is, perhaps, unfair to say that the result of the ballot in the A.I.P.O.C. is a refusal to take part in the fight. The members gave a commonsense answer to a stupid question, the framing of which is no credit to the governing body of the Association.—ED.)

NEWCASTLE IRISH AND LABOUR IN IRELAND.
Despite the "Newcastle Chronicle's" lament for the absence of Nationalist M.P.'s, the annual celebration of St. Patrick's Day in the Capital City of the "Geordies" was large and enthusiastic. The U.I.L., G.B., was opposed to any demonstration being held, but the younger and revolutionary forces went ahead on their own and secured the largest Irish gathering held in Newcastle-on-Tyne since 1914. Mr. Chas. Diamond, metamorphosed into a Labour man, and Wm. O'Brien, Secretary of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, were the principal speakers.

Mr. O'Brien's record of the growth of Irish Labour, and of Connolly's part in it, as the prophet martyr of Industrial Unity, were warmly applauded. (Mr. M. Connolly (Boilermakers' Society) moved the vote of thanks to the speakers. The speeches were followed by an enjoyable concert.

The organising committee, of which Mr. W. O'Neill, secretary of Felling-on-Tyne Trades Council, proved a highly efficient secretary, entertained Mr. O'Brien to dinner at the County Hotel, at which speeches were delivered by Messrs. P. Hayes, B.A. (Chairman); Councilor Smyth (Newcastle Labour Party), and Wm. O'Brien.

The local labour and Irish movements (practically identical in personnel) are keenly watching the advance of Irish Labour, and are eager for direct information of its progress. The local branch of the National Union of General Labourers invited Mr. O'Brien to speak on Irish Labour at a demonstration, which was also addressed by Rt. Hon. J. R. Clynes.

The Widow's Curse.
The Scottish "Forward" quotes this advertisement from the "Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald" (14/3/19):—
WALKER—In loving memory of my dear husband, Gunner Robt. Walker, R.G.A., died Hydepark Military Hospital, Plymouth, 17th March, 1917.
Sacrificed for a callous and unjust country.
May God avenge my children.
Inserted by his widow.
26 Portland Street, Troon.

W. Lorimer.—More about confederation by all means.
Chinese Labour.
The Massey-Harris Co., makers of reapers and binders, have been employing hundreds of Chinamen during the war. 70,000 Chinamen have been brought into Canada, the Government kindly remitting the Poll-tax of 500 dollars imposed by law on all Asiatic settlers. The skilled Chinese workman earns only about 20 cents a day, as against the Canadian's 3.50 or 4.00 dollars.

Cumannacht na hEireann.
SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES:
TRADES HALL, CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN.
On Sunday Next, 30th inst., at 8 p.m. prompt.
MR. L. P. BYRNÉ.
Subject: "Ralahine—The Irish Utopia." Questions and Discussion Invited.
Admission Free; Music; Collection.
Branch Rooms at 42 North Great George's Street open each evening.
Members' monthly meeting on Friday, 28th inst., at 8 p.m. prompt.

IRISH COAL MINERS AND THE COAL COMMISSION.
Last week Mr. Wm. O'Brien, representing the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, had an interview with Mr. Robert Smillie, President Miners' Federation of Gt. Britain, in London, with reference to the Coal Commission and how the miners in Ireland (who are all organised in the I.T. and G.W.U.) would be affected by it. The whole matter was fully discussed and a line of action agreed to. Mr. Smillie was most friendly, and promised to give all the support in his power. He expressed the greatest satisfaction of hearing from Mr. O'Brien of the wonderful progress which the I.T. and G.W.U. and the Labour movement in Ireland generally is making, and promised to accept an invitation from the I.T. and G.W.U. to visit Ireland as soon as his engagements would permit him to do so.

MARXIAN SCHOLAR IN IRELAND.
J. T. Waton-Newbould, M.A., the foremost authority on the control of industry by organised capital, is visiting Ireland to investigate the peaceful penetration of Ireland by English capital. His information will probably be more candidly expressed than that of Mr. R. J. Kelly, K.C., whose recent deliverance on the subject can only be characterised as arrogant hypocrisy, for Mr. Kelly is Cardinal Logue's nominee on the Board of the Goschen-controlled National Bank. The National Bank has long ceased to be Irish, and its operations directed from London make Irish industry and the Irish Church tributaries of English capital.

Mr. Waton-Newbould is no stranger in Ireland, as he lived for some years in Waterford. It has been arranged that he will address several meetings under the auspices of the I.T. and G.W.U.

CLERKS, PLEASE NOTE!
Mr. E. H. Andrews, D.L., says clerks are perhaps the worst paid body of workers in Ireland. Had Dermot Logue said that he would be charged with trying to set class against class. We place implicit reliance on Mr. Andrews' word in this instance. As a private employer and a director of public companies, he is a large employer of clerical labour. He knows how badly clerks are paid, and his public admission is no doubt merely a precedent to the concession in full of the demands of the N.A.U. Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks, presented lately to the wholesale drug houses.

MEATLESS MISERY.
At Cavan, the other Friday, Peadar O'Donnell was holding forth on the misery of the worker's life and the poverty of his table. "How many of you," he asked, "had rashers and eggs for breakfast this morning?"
"None of us," cried a voice. "This is a fast day."
As Peadar observed, too many workers have seven fast days every week.

It was on another Friday a worker's wife sent little Johnny out hastily to buy his father's dinner. "Bring a pound of sausages," she said.

Recollecting the day when the boy returned, she sent him back with the sausages and told him to get his money back. "Bring the sausages back to your mammy," said the butcher, when he heard the boy's request. "They're all right. There's no meat in them."

IRISH TAILORS FOR UNITY.
The Conference of Tailoring Trade Unions and Branches in Ireland, which met in Ardee Hall, Dublin, on St. Patrick's Day, had delegates from the Tipperary, Drogheda, and Limerick branches A.S.T. & T., the International Tailors, Pressers, and Machinists, Dublin, Galway, Clonmel, Derry, Tralee, Ballinasloe, and Dublin Women's Branches of the Irish Tailors and Tailoresses Union. Many branches unable to send delegates expressed their support of the project of one big union for all garment workers.

It was unanimously agreed that the Irish T. & T. Union is the one union for all workers engaged in the tailoring and clothing industry, and all local unions and branches of unions are urged to link up with the national body.

A discussion of ways and means of embracing all the scattered units was adjourned for four weeks to enable delegates to obtain instructions from their branches.

The Conference proceeded to elect the Executive Council of the Irish Tailors and Tailoresses Union. Mr. John McGarvey (Londonderry) was chosen President, and Messrs. Joseph Power (Clonmel), James Sherlock (Dublin), J. Doyle (Tralee), Fred. Reardon (Ballinasloe), Wm. O'Brien, and Ed. Murphy (Dublin) as Council members. John Clinton and Dermot J. Stewart were elected treasurer and secretary respectively.

IRISH FUND FOR THE FAMINE-STRIKEN.
Europe is Starving, and Supplies CAN be Sent.
Will You Not Help to Send Them?
Contributions received and acknowledged by Treasurer Irishwomen's International League, 29 South Anne Street, Dublin. Cheques crossed "Hibernian Bank."

