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CONTENTS.

An Irishman for Ulster. By Andrew E. Malone ...	Page 25
Mr. Devlin and Labour. By D. B. ...	" 26
International Notes ...	" 27
Nota de Liam. P. O. Riain ...	" 28
Bolo Unmasked. By Thomas Johnson ...	" 29
Notes and Comments ...	" 28

Leader: The Bolsheviks	31
Labour in Ireland	30
James Connolly, His Critics. By D. R.	33
English Notes. By George Stanton	34
Correspondence	35
Notes (Continued)	32

An Irishman for Ulster.

By ANDREW E. MALONE.

AN ULSTERMAN FOR IRELAND, by John Mitchel. Dublin: Candle Press. Price 1/- net.

We have heard a great deal from time to time of John Mitchel, the patriot, but we have not heard so much of John Mitchel, the democratic revolutionist. For the reason that some rectification may be made in the general conception of Mitchel we welcome the publication of this little book. It consists of four letters, written in 1848, "to the farmers, labourers, and artisans of the North of Ireland," and published during April and May of that year in "The United Irishman." In its pages one finds the spirit of democracy and the spirit of revolution. There is here only Ireland; love of Ireland, love of Ireland's people, and a great fervour for their welfare. Venomous jibes at England are not quite absent, but here they are subordinate. Hatred is not the theme of the letters; the hate is all in a minor key, while the great love of the people is dominant. It is the note we should like to hear dominant in all Irish affairs, and it may well be so as time goes on.

Mitchel was not sparing in his criticism. "Then as for the mere 'Repealers,'" he says, "they have long been asking you to join in an effort to restore the Irish Parliament as it stood before the Union. That is to say, to place Ireland and Irishmen and all that is theirs under the feet of the Irish 'gentry,' instead of the English and Irish gentry combined; and then our 'Repealers' expect you to believe that straightway, on the assembling of Irish peers and Irish nominees of peers in College Green, by some magic or other, tenant right and the rights of industry will be at once guaranteed to the people. This kind of babble you have, very properly, neglected and despised. While a landlord parliament rules over Ireland, whether the same sit in College Green or in Westminster, no popular rights will ever be acknowledged by law." This is the contention of all the Irish democratic revolutionists from Tone to Connolly. No mere change in the habitat of a legislative chamber can make any real difference in the lives of the Irish people. "For government in this country," says Mitchel, "is simply a machinery for grinding out the earnings of the industrious to bestow upon the idle." "But now I address the Protestant labourers and artisans. You, it is said, have the utmost confidence in Lord

Clarendon, and are so happy and contented, sitting every one of you under his own vine and fig tree, that you are ready to rise in arms (so I have read in certain addresses), full of burning zeal to chastise those 'rebellious' persons who would change so happy a state of things. Is it so? We are told that the North is thriving, because Belfast exports much linen and Derry sends off innumerable boxes of eggs and cargoes of corn. How much of the linen do you, who weave it, get to wear? How much of the corn do you, who sow and reap it, get to eat? Just think of this, labourers and artisans of Ulster—Ireland last year produced twice as much as would feed all her inhabitants, not with Indian meal, but with good Irish wheat, oats, and beef. And think of this—there is flax enough grown, and linen cloth enough woven, and wool enough shorn in Ireland to muffle up every Irishman comfortably, close buttoned to the chin. Where does it go?" "It is this conspiracy of 'gentry' and 'capitalists' 'doing what they like with their own,' fearing not God, neither regarding man, that have established such free trade in human bodies and souls." "Our great capitalists never think of manufacturing articles for their own countrymen in the home market—they must compete with foreign nations in foreign markets . . . the only way in which capitalists may meet the foreign manufacturer is by reducing and pinching, continually pinching and reducing the wages of their own workmen. They take it all out of your bones." This is a commentary upon "foreign trade," upon the glorification of imports and exports statistics that has been widely adopted since 1848. It is now being generally recognised that a happy, contented population, well fed, well housed, well clad, well educated, is worth all the statistics ever published. Industry should be for the benefit of the human race, not merely for a small section of it, and the very idea of manufacture should not conjure up within us pictures of slag heaps, slums, disease, misery, destitution, and human degradation. The end of industry is man, just as he is also the beginning.

"Now, it is not the repeal of the Catholic Emancipation Act, nor yet the repeal of the Union Act by itself that will

cure all this. Nothing will cure it save the total overthrow of the autocratic system of government and the establishment of the people's inalienable sovereignty." "The time is long past when Jehovah anointed kings. The thing has long since grown a monstrous imposture, and has already in some civilised countries been detected as such and drummed out accordingly. A modern king, my friends, is no more like an ancient anointed shepherd of the people than an archbishop's apron is like the Urim and Thummim. There is no divine right now but in **THE SOVEREIGN PEOPLE.**"

In these days of resurgent democracy, when the greatest organised tyranny in the world has recently been overthrown, it makes one thrill with joy to read such words as these of John Mitchel. The people sovereign: sovereign in politics, sovereign in economics, sovereign in social life—that is the objective of all those who call themselves democrats to-day. There was a time when the end of democracy seemed to be the franchise and a parliament, but the experience of nearly 100 years has not been lost upon us. We know now, that all the people cannot be fooled all the time, even though a majority may be fooled part of the time. The war has taught us much also, and our experience will indeed have been costly if we learn nothing from it. "There is no divine right now but in the sovereign people." "The people's sovereignty—the land and sea and air of Ireland for the people of Ireland—this is the gospel that the heavens and the earth are preaching and that all hearts are secretly burning to embrace." Seventy years have made but small difference to the Irish democracy after all. We have had the land nominally won for the people, but to-day we are almost as anxious as were our people in '48 about the food of the people. The sovereign people reigns only, it does not govern. It gets lip loyalty only, not unswerving devotion; people are

still addicted somewhat to kings. And what is it that the democratic Mitchel wills for his country, "I scorn and spit upon 'Repeal of the Union.' The 'Queen, Lords and Commons of Ireland' will never be seen in bodily form upon this earth." The Golden Link of the Crown is as great a humbug as the great peace principle of the 'Mighty leader of the Irish people.' Again, he says "not a local legislature, not a return to 'our ancient Constitution'—not a golden link, or a patchwork Parliament or a College Green Chapel of Ease to St. Stephen's—but an Irish Republic one and indivisible."

We should like to see this little book in the hands of those to whom its words were originally addressed. "Ulster" has still its illusions and its delusions, some of which are pointed out by Eoin MacNeill in his preface. Ulster has lost nearly a million people since 1841. "Extermination," as Mitchel pointed out, "is creeping northward." And even though the people have gone, wages are still low. The "Golden Link of the Crown" is of small use to the Lurgan gasworker with his 18s. per week; nor does the Pope compel Robinson and Cleaver to pay their workers a sweating wage. These are jobs for the Sovereign People, of which our Ulster is a part. An Irishman for Ulster might have been the title of this booklet.

We regret that Eoin MacNeill has seen fit to misrepresent Montégut's criticism of Mitchel. Montégut does not serve the Entente Cordiale. His work was published about 1860, and he died in 1895, ten years before the Entente became a fact. Montégut is certainly not a "recent French critic," and in any event he merely discloses the effect of Mitchel's "Jail Journal" upon himself only. Buy this book and read it. The Candle Press is to be thanked for its publication and congratulated upon its format.

Mr. Devlin and Labour.

By D. B.

At a meeting of the A.O.H., held recently at St. Mary's Hall, Belfast, Mr. Devlin, according to the "Irish News," launched a "New Democratic Forward Movement." He made an eloquent speech dealing with the wrongs of the poor, and in vague general terms suggested certain ameliorative measures for dealing with the problems of poverty.

We have nothing but words of welcome for Mr. Devlin or any other politician when he enters the arena of social discussions. If Mr. Devlin talks Labour to-day, Mr. de Valera will probably follow the day after, and, not to be outdone, Sir John Lonsdale will enter the competition next week. But Mr. Devlin will find it necessary, if he intends to strike out a line of his own in Irish public life, to devote more thought to his proposals than he appears to have done hitherto. Sympathetic generalities won't do. Empty phrases about the "ending of old-time class distinctions" or pathetic pictures of the sufferings of the poor, will not suffice, in these days, to satisfy the workers. They will not believe that a leader has arisen who will guide them to "the pastures of freedom, peace, and prosperity" merely because he is fluent of speech and can mouth sweet nothings about an emancipated democracy.

For ourselves we have always believed in Mr. Devlin's "sympathy" for the workers. But his sympathy has never been strong enough to make him try to understand the workers' case—he has never taken the trouble to get an intellectual grip of the real meaning of the Labour movement; and wherever his political interests cut across the interests of labour, his political interests prevail and Labour may go hang.

Mr. Devlin says: "Poverty cannot be effectually eradicated until the root causes are grappled with and destroyed," but he makes no attempt to tell us what are the root causes. He asserts that "in the coming crusade against poverty

and its concomitant evils, we must "enshrine in our scheme of reform a living wage for all workers. This can be brought about by the development and extension of arbitration and conciliation boards established by the State and embodying drastic and compulsory powers."

A guaranteed living wage has been on the Labour programme for twenty years, and is now gradually being brought into operation through the Wages Boards. But we have no faith in arbitration boards established by the State with drastic compulsory powers. The chances are that those powers will be used against the workers five times for every once they are used against the employers. And "compulsory conciliation" is a contradiction.

Mr. Devlin's laudation of profit-sharing, coupled with his praise of Lord Leverhulme, indicate whence he has derived his inspiration. When defining his use of the word "equality," he said: "I imply that men and women shall be entitled to receive a full participation in the fruits of their labour." What does he mean by this? If it is that the workers shall be entitled to receive a full share of the value of their production, the employers will say they have that already. And what answer can he make? How does he arrive at what constitutes "a full share?" If, on the other hand, he means that the workers are entitled to receive, as their share of the product, the full amount of the value added by their labour, then there is no sense talking of profit-sharing. There will be no profit in the strict sense of that word.

Profit-sharing schemes almost invariably are based upon the idea that if the workers, by extra effort, add one hundred to the normal profit, the employer will keep seventy-five and will divide the remaining twenty-five amongst those who produced the whole.

The problems of poverty will never be solved in that way.

International Notes.

President Wilson having delivered one more of those pious addresses to Congress which have the unique effect of pleasing jingoes, moderates and pacifists alike, it is interesting to notice that Ireland is the only country which cannot derive consolation from the learned Doctor's platitudes. Woodrow Wilson has a perfect outfit of American electioneering implements, in the form of impressive and unimpeachable sentiments, hall-marked with the brand of eighteenth century libertarianism. Without any extra effort of ingenuity "The Irish Times" was able to prove the antagonism between the views of Lord Lansdowne and Dr. Wilson, while the Liberal Press of England demonstrated that it was a case of two minds with but a single thought. That eminent jurist, Lord Loreburn, specifically stated that he was "unable to see the smallest difference" between the President's attitude towards Germany and that of Lord Lansdowne. Presumably Lord Loreburn is as capable of forming an opinion upon evidence submitted as the master minds of "The Irish Times," which left "The Freeman's Journal" with the honours of the most intelligent comment upon the letter.

Having felicitated President Wilson on his ability to reconcile the irreconcilables in a hymn of praise to his nobility of mind, we may, if the gods are kind, be allowed to mention a fact which has escaped the commentators. There is no hint nor reference as to the position of Ireland in that world which is to be made safe for democracy. Dr. Wilson has shown great skill in repeated avoidance of any allusion to Ireland in his visions of the future. He has once or twice alluded to the case of Poland, as one which demands his attention as an advocate of independence for small nations, but our claims have not yet obtruded themselves upon his lofty mind. Moreover, his latest utterance suggests a certain cooling off of that ardour for re-arranging the map of Europe, which was at one time so evident. He does not wish "in any way to impair or to re-arrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire." If the imperialism of Austria-Hungary is to receive this democratic sanction, what may we expect for the great Anglo-Saxon Empire, of which President Wilson has so frequently expressed his high opinion?

Ireland is probably the only small nation which has kept its illusions during the past three years. Every week some fresh "revelation" comes out to show how cynically identical are the motives and ambitions of all great Powers. All the noise about "freedom," "democracy," "small nationalities," etc., has had a disturbing influence upon those countries and peoples who imagined they were at last about to witness a crusade on their behalf. As time went on, however, it became impossible to take these cries seriously, and soon disillusion was the only thing left for those who did not wish themselves to be written down as naive dupes. Nothing in worse "taste" could be imagined than any small nation coming forward to remind a Conference of the Powers of the war-time professions of sympathy for such cases. One can picture the delegates agreeing, with winks and nods, to pass over these unpleasant subjects, and discuss matters of real importance, and worthy of the attention of men of the world; spheres of influence, mining concessions, trading rights, and the like. To refer, after the conclusion of hostilities, to the rash statements and promises of belligerency, would be the same as to remind a man "the morning after" of his follies of "the night before." The decorum of the Peace Conference will not be disturbed by the untutored talk of the small nations who are misled into thinking themselves the boon companions of the Great Powers, because of the familiarity of the latter during a period of dissipation. At this moment it suffices to look at the way in which the diplomatic pruderies of the Allies are shocked by the naive faith of Russian democracy in truth and honesty as the essentials of peace and good will. Even the smug Mr. Massingham is outraged by the "bad form" of the Lenin revelations of the secret treaties, whereby the world was to be made safe for democracy, by the simple process of leaving nothing for the horrid Hun to contaminate with his reactionary principles.

We in Ireland seem incapable of that cynicism which protects the small nations of neutral Europe from the illusions which both belligerents try to cultivate in them. Holland and Switzerland are forced, by geographical necessity, into contact with both sides, and find it difficult to credit either with any intentions

which will benefit humanity at large. They know, for example, that, even where mutual conflict of interests seems to guarantee independence to a weaker State, the security enjoyed is precarious. We must beware of the fallacy of independence based upon guarantees given by one group of Powers to another, each side making mental, if not verbal, reservations which, under the guise of military necessity, or in the name of "humanity," prepare for an eventual disavowal of the agreement. The present war has shown us the infinite resources of those who require a high-sounding pretext for violating whatever rules, regulations, or conventions they subscribed to at a time when to do so did not appear to conflict with self-interest. If the conclusion of peace finds a single point of international law intact, the interesting relic should be placed, with an explanatory card, in the national museums of the small States, as a warning to all who put their faith in the contracts wrested from predatory Powers by their mutual hostility and suspicion.

That such agreements have only a momentary value will be evident to anyone who cares to sum up the various scraps of paper which have been torn up since August, 1914, to go no further back. So long as it was to the particular advantage of any Power, appeals were made to existing law, but these appeals went unheeded, because everyone concerned knew exactly what they meant. When America was neutral, for example, President Wilson wrote a vast quantity of his mellifluous prose in support of the rights of neutrals to trade with one another, and to supply non-contraband goods to the belligerents. He protested loudly about the freedom of the seas, and described the Allied blockade of neutrals as indefensible. But, as soon as America entered the war, he increased the restrictions on neutral trade, and Holland and Scandinavia have suffered more from the stringency of the American regulations than from the previous regulations which so horrified President Wilson. So much for these principles which are defined as sacred so long as they are opportune. It is the same with all such protests; they are just attempts to secure an immediate advantage under pretence of safeguarding permanent rights. When the devil was neutral the devil a saint would be!

NOTAÍ.

I gcóir na n-íosaíle bíonn "il Cénrope" an-fairdeac mór na laete reo, agus dian-ghuaire có maic céadna: ar fad nuactán cumannaic go háirithe. Bíonn pian a láime, agus pian a pinn luai, le n-airiú ar "Avanti" (Milano) fad lá ra treactam. Fiacann an páipéar go han-ghobalac go minic. Ac nil "il Cénrope" san cinéal spinn. An lá fá deire cuiread airtí fada i gclo do'n nuactán úd; ceann de rriait airtí a bead i, do réir corúlacta, óir cuir an t-eagaróir an focal "continua" léite. Sgiorrad amad an airté go léir, an t-ideal réim agus ann an ughair; ac a mhórdaic "il Cénrope" níor bac ré leir an bfochal "continua." Sin a maib le reicrimt 'na donair, o'ér na foimadta móra!

Na nuactán cumannaic ra b'fianne, ran loadil, gl., bíonn moian le fadó aca, ó am go ham, fá imeadta i nÉirinn. Ac do-geitcear a lán dá gcuro "nuadta" Éireannai ó lonnoan, agus bíonn a pian uirté. Ní bameann rí leir an b'pior-Éirinn. Do réir deallpian ní tuigtear an fadact, ná luic raotair Éireann ar fad, ac ar fli meaparda ar an mhóir-tír go fóill. Agus maroir linn réim, nac b'fuitimro ar beagan eoluir, có maic céadna, um "nairiúni beaga" na heoirpa: a raogal, a rmaoince, a fceapra, a licpóct, agus mar rin doib? Do léigear le déanaí leabhrán maic ar "Lituanie," leabhrán do cuiread amad ran Eilbéir. Da huna lionn a b'fuit déanta ag na daoine i gcúrrai licpócta, i n-airiúni páire agus daor-ghoroe! Bac móir an fad é ceangal intleacta a beic roir rin réim agus ar mbriaitéie i n-gac tpeo.

Tug Muirir Ó Conaill deag-leact uair óf cómair fadéal lonnoan kamailin ó foim; léact a bain le "Daogal Cairiteadacta i nÉirinn nua." Tráct Muirir go bhíomar dána ar luic briabai agus fáltair. Cairpíó fadéil an fuais do cuir oirta-ran, adubairt ré, agus fad don fuo a bíor an pobal ag b'raic oir cun maireadctana do cuir i reilb na ndoime go coriteannca. O'adontuig a maib láit- nead le Muirir. Do-nicear an-tráct ar beo-beirteanna tpeo an n-fadéiliz ra fConnrad i lonnoan. Tráctarad airt ó bhian ar "Na páipéirí Nuadta." Dia Saclair reo cugainn, agus ir corúil go mbéid ré go dian p'ra.

Liam p. O Riain.

Notes and Comments.

Milk.

The most serious question before the world to-day is the food supply. It was the immediate cause of the Russian Revolution, and may be the cause of a great counter-Revolution. It is the cause of great discontent in Austria, in Germany, in Italy, in France, and in England. At the week-end an emeute is reported from Portugal, and the cause is given by the Press correspondents as food shortage. The outlook on the whole is gloomy; crops are short in every country in the world. The outlook for Ireland is very bad indeed. We are supposed to inhabit a country that is mainly agricultural; we have a very small population, yet our wheat supply could hardly provide us with bread for two months. There is meat in abundance, yet we are forced to pay double and treble pre-war prices for it. In Dublin, the South Union Workhouse is supplied with mutton at 9d. per lb., but if we desire to eat mutton we must pay double that price for it. Meat and potatoes both are abundant, and the price could be appreciably reduced without injury to anyone and with great advantage to the community in general. At the moment the supply of milk is the most precarious. That is so in Dublin, at any rate, and we understand it is so in all our towns and in many rural districts. The Irish Food Control Committee fixed the prices of milk at 5d. per quart over the shop counter and 6d. per quart delivered to the consumer's residence. This Order was made some weeks ago, to become operative on Monday, December 10th. In the interval the Dublin milk suppliers raised their price to 8d. per quart, delivered. It was a frank and open defiance of the Food Control Committee, which has not, however, been bluffed into cancellation of its order. We trust the Committee will stand firm, and are pleased to note Mr. Thomas Farren's statement at the Dublin Trades Council meeting, that "no nonsense would be taken from the dairymen." This is as it should be, and if, as they threaten, the dairymen should cease to supply us with our milk, we hope the Food Control Committee will com-mandeer and do the work itself.

Demand, Price, and Supply.

There is one aspect of this milk question which we earnestly commend to the attention of the Food Control Committee, and more particularly to the Labour representatives upon that Committee. There are everywhere numbers of people who are able, and doubtless quite willing, to pay the price demanded rather than go without a supply of the commodity desired. "The Herald" recently showed us what was possible in this way in London, where "business as usual," regardless of price, seems to be the motto of the capitalist and wealthy classes. The same thing, on perhaps a smaller scale, could be paralleled in Dublin. We heard recently of a rather significant case. The milk supplier of a very pro-

minent Irish official decided that it would be better for him to sell his cows rather than comply with the Orders of the Irish Food Control Committee. He informed the wife of this official of his intention, whereupon another milk supplier was requisitioned, and the following dialogue is said to have taken place:—The lady asked: "Can you supply me with milk?" "Yes," replied the milkman, "at 8d. per quart." "That will do," said the lady, "I must have a supply at any price, and I shall be obliged if you will supply me regularly." Rumour also says that some contracts were held out as additional bait to secure regularity of supply. This is the kind of thing that makes all control impossible. It will help the milk ring to fight the Food Control Committee, and incidentally to deprive the worker and his family of a prime necessity of life, or alternatively to make him pay a fine which is beyond his capacity if he desires a supply. These wealthy persons must be carefully watched; they will play the blackleg upon the community if we permit them to do so. We rely upon the workers' representatives upon the Food Control Committee to ensure that this method of aiding the profiteers is made impossible or at least ineffective. If it is permitted to continue the workers' food supply will be still further imperilled, and surely it is quite bad enough now?

The Co-operative Method.

The workers of this country have never given to the co-operative movement that attention which it seems to us its potentialities deserve. By co-operation the worker can be his own Food Controller, as the worker in many places has, in fact, become. When bread was being sold in England for 1s. per 4-lb loaf, it was customary for co-operative societies there to sell the same sized loaf at from 9d. to 10d. In Belfast the same state of affairs was noticeable, and in Dublin during the early weeks of the war the Dublin Industrial Society refused to follow the lead of the Dublin bakers. More recently, to our knowledge, the Sligo Co-operative Society was selling milk at 3d. per quart when we in Dublin were paying 6d. per quart. The Belfast society has also materially assisted its members in the same way. In a letter to the Press this week, Mr. Lionel Smith-Gordon, of the Co-operative Reference Library, points a moral for the people of Dublin. He tells us what the Plymouth Co-operative Society is able to do for its 50,000 members. The Society is obliged to pay 1s. 10d. per gallon for its milk; it nevertheless retails it to its members at 2s. 2d. per gallon delivered. The Dublin dairymen want 2s. 8d. per gallon. When it is remembered that Plymouth draws its milk supplies from long distances, sometimes even from Tipperary, we can better appreciate the work it does. Milk is procurable in Ireland at the fixed wholesale price of 1s. 4d. per gallon, and if our

(Continued on page 32.)

Bolo Unmasked!

By THOMAS JOHNSON.

An all prevalent suspicion is a deadly blight upon Ireland. It is found in every walk of life, North and South. In Belfast, Dublin, and Cork it permeates all classes, in business, politics, journalism, literature, and Trade Unionism. It destroys men's faith in humanity. So little trust have we in the honesty of our fellowmen that we refuse to believe in the possibility of a generous act without presuming a sinister motive. A public man proclaims his adherence to a particular cause, and we at once suspect a plot to undermine a rival's influence, or a subtle scheme to gather a few selfish shekels. A citizen seeking the suffrages of the electors for a seat on a public board is assumed to be aiming at pecuniary advantage; the idea of public service for the sake of the common weal seems almost to have gone out of our life.

This never-ending suspicion is unworthy of Irish men and women. It may be that it is bred from past generations of slavery and sycophancy, but unless we cast it under our feet and learn to have faith in men until they are proved false, we cannot hope to educe faithful service.

The foregoing remarks are occasioned by certain rumblings of suspicion regarding the power behind "Irish Opinion." It is suspected that some hidden hand is pulling the strings; that in resuming the issue of this journal some "Bolo" with malignant purpose is working out a dark and evil design!

The rumours are from two quarters. On the one hand it is feared by some of our Trade Unionist and Socialist friends that "Irish Opinion" is being used to capture the Irish Labour Movement for Sinn Fein. On the other hand, we are accused of being out to undermine Sinn Fein, to split the Republican Movement in the interests of the British Government, or, what is worse still (!) of the Parliamentary Party. (We have not yet heard what the A.O.H. or the Orangemen have to say, but we expect something much more horrible.)

These mutually destructive suspicions are derived from the knowledge that the capital necessary to finance this paper was not provided by the Trade Union Movement; that the writer has no means of his own sufficient to provide the necessary funds, and that **therefore**, as an inevitable consequence, whoever provided the capital must be guilty of unworthy motives.

Our friends of the Labour Movement—and they only—are justly entitled to question us regarding the source of our finances; it is to them we look for support; it is to promote their interests alone that the journal exists. Our sole claim for a hearing is that we have given time and energy to the workers' cause.

To any accredited enquirer connected with the Labour Movement we are ready to show copies of all correspondence leading up to the revival of "Irish Opinion," to divulge the name of the donor of the necessary funds—by no means a close secret—and to show now and in the future all accounts, whence every penny has come and how it has been spent.

Those who have followed the fortunes of the Irish Labour Movement during the past two years know how imperative has been the call for the publication of a weekly journal in the Labour interest. They also know the difficulties which stood in the way of an official journal being founded. The

writer's voluntary activities on behalf of the movement for many years past having received a certain publicity, and his views on Irish Labour and its future having been made known, his oft-expressed conviction that no real progress could be made towards building up of a Labour Party without a weekly journal led to an unexpected response. A sum of money, sufficient to enable this journal to resume publication and continue on a modest scale with voluntary contributors for a few months; long enough to overcome the initial difficulties, was handed over to me **absolutely without any reservations or conditions.** That sum I hold and use entirely at my discretion to promote the interests of the Irish Labour Movement through the circulation of "Irish Opinion," advocating the policy outlined in the issue of December 1st. No one outside the active workers in the Irish Labour Movement is consulted in regard to whom or what we shall support, whom or what we shall oppose.

I, personally, am satisfied that the donor has no other motive in making the gift than a desire to see a Labour Party in Ireland fit to take its due share in the work that lies before the democracies of the world after the war. But whatever the motive, whether I have judged truly or am deceived, our friends may be assured that no influence outside our own movement will have any power to interfere with the policy or conduct of "Irish Opinion" (always excepting the Censor, who must be obeyed if we are to live!). When the paper has justified itself I will be ready to invite my friends of the Labour Movement to share the responsibility for its continuance. I may be permitted to say, as the question has been asked, and to prevent misunderstanding, that my ideal for Ireland is that we may establish a free, co-operative commonwealth, equal to and in free communion with the other democratic nations of the earth, neither dominating over nor dominated by any other people whatsoever. I believe in both social and political democracy, and am, therefore, a Republican. But "Irish Opinion" is not intended to advocate my particular views except in so far as they are in general harmony with the policy of Irish Labour. Its purpose will be to promote the growth and development of the Labour Movement in Ireland—i.e., Trade Unionism, Co-operation and independent working-class political action—in the sure and certain hope that as the workers become conscious of their true position in the economic structure of society they will direct their steps unerringly along the path that leads to social and economic freedom, without which political independence is but a shadow.

If in the pursuance of this policy we conflict with any other movement we will try to remember that it is in the nature of things and will bear no malice. We are not out to attack individuals except in so far as their public work calls for attack. We will criticise policies and practices, but with constructive aims. We have no enemies but the enemies of the working class, and whichever party or policy seems to us to run counter to the workers' cause will receive our condemnation.

All we ask of the workers and their friends is that they will judge us by our work, by the character we develop with our growth. If we prove false to the workers of Ireland then—"to the Death"!

THOMAS JOHNSON.

Labour in Ireland.

DUBLIN NOTES.

The activity in Dublin Labour circles indicated in our opening survey shows signs of slackening owing to satisfactory settlements having been effected in the bulk of the cases concerned. The Bakery workers, Gasmen and Carters are now disposed of, and at the time of writing the Dockers' question is moving slowly towards a solution. The abolition of Sunday work and an eight-hour day are notable improvements for the Bakers' operatives, who also get 9s. weekly increase. The Drivers' minimum wage is fixed at 45s., with commission. The Bakers' Clerks are the only section who do not come under the award. The Clerk will evidently be the last to let the world know that he works for a living and means to get it. The Gas award grants increases of 2s. to 5s. "to members of said Union" (Irish Transport Union), and fixes the minimum for the labourers in the works at 34s. 6d. Certain men will still remain slaves to their machines, having to eat their meals in the dust-laden atmosphere of the works, and be ready at any moment to leap forward to adjust them. Meal hours were not conceded. The Carters have for the first time got recognition of their Union (Transport), with 3 o'clock stoppage on Saturday. An increase of 5s. weekly was granted, with a 38s. minimum, for the city. The main points in the Dockers' claim has been conceded, but so far some few smaller ones are outstanding; negotiations are proceeding.

Important concessions, including recognition, have been obtained by the Fishmongers and Poulterers from their newly-formed employers' Union. Increases in pay from 5s. to 10s., with regulation of hours and overtime, are among the results of their return to Trade Unionism. Some points of a minor character are, up to date, unsettled. The firms in the Drapery Trade are still responding, though slowly and variously, to the steady pressure of the Drapers' Porters, for whom a flat rate does not exist.

The industrial groups formed as a result of a recent conference of the Trades Council have continued to meet and narrow down their divergencies. The main result so far has been to stimulate thought immensely in the direction of Industrial Unionism, on which subject a very useful discussion took place on Tuesday, 14th inst., at the Trades Hall. It is probable that thought will first pass to action in the case of the building trades, and already in the minds of many concerned a Building Workers' Union is taking definite shape. All those who think that Trade Unionism has other and better work before it than even getting a few shillings a week for its members will watch this development with deep interest.

The spirit of progress that at present inspires our movement is clearly

evidenced by the fact that the Dublin Trades Council has asked the affiliated trades to vote on the question whether Labour Day should be celebrated on May 1st or some other selected Sunday in May. The latter has been the custom here for some years, but it is felt that the time has come when assertion of the dignity and power of Labour should be made in the same virile manner as on the continent.

LABOUR IN THE SOUTH.

In few parts of Ireland is Labour so active and pushful to-day as it is in the South. The causes of this are not far to seek. For the first time for many years Trade Unionism is finding a firm foothold in the towns and villages and rural districts of Munster. The continuous increase in the cost of living and the abnormal effects of the war have created in the workers of the South just that spirit of unrest and discontent that can be remedied only by the organisation of the workers who suffer most from them. War itself, of course, produces a mental ferment that lends itself to exploitation for both good and evil ends. So, too, has the Insurrection of Easter Week opened a floodgate of thought, a spiritual and mental revolution, that bids fair to create such a change in the outlook of the people that many of the old shibboleths will be discarded and many of the old institutions, economic as well as political, will be swept away. James Connolly has not died in vain, for his principles and teachings are welcomed to-day where Connolly himself would have—and in fact was—anathema two years ago.

Another most important factor is the abnormal proportion of young people in the present population. Never since the 'forties has Ireland been blessed with such a proportion of young men and women, and Labour is making the most of the younger generation. This is the day of the young, and hopeful and ardent, and the Labour movement is not blind to its possibilities.

Activity is general in most of the Unions, but it is most fruitful in organisation amongst the general labourers. This is as it should be, for, as James Connolly pointed out, the march of both Labour and the Nation is to be measured by the progress of the lowest-paid class in the community, and the general labourers in the town and the country stand sorely in need of organisation. Organisation is more rapid in the towns because it is more easy to organise the urban population, but in the country areas considerable headway is being made. When town and country are linked together in the army of Labour we shall have begun our march towards the dawn.

Women's labour in the South is receiving its due share of attention. Women and girl workers are mercilessly exploited, but the callini are rushing into the Unions at such a pace and in such numbers that the Unions find great difficulty in dealing with them. Clerks, shop-workers, and other divisions of the "collar-and-cuff" brigade are realising their identity with the men and women who earn their bread by the labour of their hands. This is all to the good, and with the big and important reinforcements coming to us from the primary teachers we have good hopes of building up a strong, self-reliant, and intelligent movement second to none in Ireland.

Reports of activity reach us from practically all the Southern counties. Progress is most marked in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Kerry. In these four counties Labour is making such headway as has never been known in the history of the movement. Cork, of course, claims that "God's own town" is marching away from the rest of the country, and with some reason, because it would seem that the vast majority of Cork workers are now organised. But Limerick is making a bold effort to come up to the high standard of Cork, and "The Bottom Dog" in Limerick is doing a mastiff's work. Kerry is maintaining its good reputation. Waterford is now coming into line. There the Unions and the movement are stronger than for very many years. Much still remains to be done, and when the intensive method is adopted in Waterford, as in Cork, Limerick, etc., the same good results will be shown. Waterford and its Trade Council are working hard in preparation for the Trades Union Congress of 1918, and hope to attain a greater success than when Congress last met in Waterford.

The strength of Labour was shown to good advantage, particularly in Cork, when the Unions took part in the Manchester Martyrs' commemorations a fortnight ago. Upwards of 3,000 members of the Irish Transport Union, headed by the Connolly Memorial Labour Band, and with excellently-trained boy scout and girl guide divisions of the Irish Citizen Army, gave a fine impression of the strength and discipline of the workers.

In Cork, on Sunday night last the members, friends, and supporters of the Irish Transport Workers' Union packed the City Hall at the Connolly Band's first concert. Mr. D. Houston, organiser, presided, and Cathal O'Shannon, organiser, lectured on "James Connolly, Socialist and Revolutionist." An excellent programme of dances, songs, recitations in Irish and English, and musical selections was contributed to by Misses N. Wallace, C. Conlon, Walsh, Messrs. Galvin, Leahy, Barry, Desmond, Houston, O'Keeffe & Co., Forbes, the Connolly Band, and the boys of the I.C.A. Scouts.

A Cork wit says the Voice of Labour is "Irish Opinion"!

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The Bolsheviks.

The respectable ones of Europe and America have turned their thumbs down and have shrieked "Away with them." This might have been expected, it might have been provided for in advance. Bourgeoisie Europe and America is outraged, wounded in its tenderest parts, perhaps permanently injured. And so it howls because the Bolsheviks have exposed their secrets. How is life to be lived, they say, if everything one does is to be known to and by the ignorant illiterate mob? We cannot doubt that the secrets so exposed to the vulgar gaze were valuable secrets to the capitalists, commercialists and industrialists of Europe and America. They had been held as family secrets by the "noble families" because, according to Lord Robert Cecil, a workingman is incapable of understanding the intricacies of foreign politics. But now workingmen have arisen who are not only capable of such understanding but are honest as well. Of course it was not so much the capacity of the workman that Lord Robert Cecil doubted, it was his transparent honesty, his sincerity, his earnestness he distrusted. It is true that the Labour Parties of Europe have no tradition in the art of diplomacy, no skill in the tactful lying and mazy intrigue which gives itself the name of Foreign Affairs. He does not think in terms of military strategy and consequently does not worry very much about "safe" frontiers and carefully rounded-off Empires. These are not by any means the lines of the workers' thoughts. He may be a mere materialist, to these high-brow diplomats, but it is a fact that he thinks more of his own land and his own home than he does about the necessity of fortifying the Suez Canal or coaling stations in the China Seas. These things do not interest him generally, and even when he understands their significance he opposes them strenuously. In every country of Europe to-day, belligerent or neutral; Labour opposes imperialist aggression. Labour opposes imperialism because it is the antithesis of freedom. It has been said that nothing is nearly so important to a subject race as the fact of its subjection. Labour in every country is a subject race and in some countries like our own it is a subject race within a subject nation. Being so, Labour can and does understand that subjection is a hateful burden; a burden that cannot and should not be borne cheerfully or willingly. In consequence Labour is in favour of freedom everywhere, in favour of the freest development of human genius in all its aspects and under its many national guises. Labour, therefore, cannot contemplate with equanimity any encroachment upon that very meagre stock of liberty which the world possessed

at the outbreak of the war, rather that stock must be increased.

Labour in Russia was and is honest. In consequence it has given to the world a formula which was worth a Czar's throne to have given. "No annexations, no indemnities, and the right of every nation to determine its own destiny." Beside that formula the greatest military victories are as nothing. That formula must be ultimately triumphant; not now, perhaps, but in the days to come that formula will, in our opinion, be the outstanding feature of Europe's years of agony. The Entente Powers were aware, according to Dr. E. J. Dillon, of the imminence of a revolution in Russia. The revolution was to have been a post-war coup d'état by the Cadet Party led by Milioukoff. But bread proved stronger than promises and the revolution came earlier than was anticipated. There was yet another accident. Revolutionary Russia having triumphed, having given its formula to the world, decided to be honest and as might have been expected stand by its own formula rather than by the Czar's treaties. Kerensky tried the diplomatic method of moving his nominal allies. He asked definitely for a revision of war aims and was, not very politely, turned down. We were interested in these "war-aims" negotiations because we thought of the small nations that were to be liberated from the menace of the Hun. The saviours of small nations preferred diplomatic procrastination to the honesty displayed by the Russian Soviet and so the Maximalists displaced Kerensky. Kerensky tried to serve two masters; he served neither. Now we know why Kerensky failed, the skeleton cupboard has been opened, and no matter what is said to the contrary, we are of the opinion that the skeletons displayed are useful. It has been said that we guessed all that the Secret Treaties contained, but even if we did it is much better to know. Thanks to the Bolsheviks we know now. We know that, with the exception of America, all the allied countries were bent upon annexation. France seems to have been the greediest, demanding even some definitely German territory and "liberating" some German territory from the sway of Prussian militarism. England also would get some of the spoil, even to the last inch of Persia. All the other "liberators" were to compensate themselves liberally also. It was nothing but imperialist aggression, naked and unashamed. We trust it has been killed, though we know that European democracy must still remain very much on the alert.

We know now, too, for certain why the Allies of the Entente ignored the Pope's Peace Note. It will be remembered that Allied statesmen were very evasive upon the point; some said that President Wilson stated their aims, while others said it was the intention to reply when the members of the Alliance had discussed the question. Now we know they were deliberately lying. They knew they could not reply without converting another treaty into a mere "scrap of paper." If such mendacity be the price of what is called diplomacy, we had better have none of it. Secret diplomacy has been the curse of the nineteenth century. It has drenched Europe in blood in the twentieth century. It is well that the workers do not

understand it, they had much better stick to truth and justice as their guides rather than trust themselves to something of which the very essence is deceit and falsehood. Yet it is true that some persons whose hatred of the thing called diplomacy we were wont to think at least as strong as our own, seem to disapprove of the action of the Russian Maximalists. The only way, as it seems to us, to end secret diplomacy is simply to end it by making it public. It is like ending the slaughter, someone must begin, and that one will very probably be the most abused of Europe for a time. It is said that the publication of these treaties can do no good, but it has done good already. We are quite willing to believe that the Bolshevik leaders have not behaved like "gentlemen," and for that we certainly rejoice. Kerensky tried to behave like a "gentleman" of the diplomatic school, but he found the voracious appetite of the prospective recipients of the annexed lands too much for him, so he is now in hiding or perhaps he is dead. Who knows? It is

easy, perhaps, to be a "gentleman" if one is dealing with "gentlemen," it is certainly not easy to act as such when one's colleagues are after spoil rather than etiquette. The Russians decided upon public diplomacy. It may have been thought they did not mean all they said. But in some quarters at all events their words were taken literally, hence the newspaper eulogy of the revolting Korniloff. Korniloff was to save Russia for the imperialists, but Korniloff, too, failed. Russian literature is almost as incomprehensibly chaotic as the Russian revolution, yet through it shines the great fact that the Russian is honest. Readers of, say, Tchekov, might have wagered that the treaties would be published and they would have wagered upon a certainty. Let us hope that even though the Bolsheviks be not "gentlemen," they have rid the world of the incubus of secret diplomacy. For the future it must be public, it must be controlled by the democracies of the world, and it must be based upon international justice.

NOTES AND COMMENTS—Continued.

workers were co-operatively organised their own societies could undertake what the Dublin milk ring says is impossible. Co-operative milk supply for Dublin would cost, says Mr. Smith-Gordon, £10,000, but the present state of co-operation in Dublin makes the capitalisation of such a scheme impossible. It is for the workers themselves to make the co-operative distributive movement the living thing it ought to be. At present there is apathy and indifference, which the extortions of the profiteers ought to dispel. If our workers will combine co-operatively they can be their own shopkeepers, their own food controllers, and their own food providers. Co-operative societies, we know, will welcome a change.

Ireland's Food Supply.

Ireland is being thoroughly roused at present to the perilous position of its food supplies. There is a feeling of unrest which may well foreshadow definite action in the very near future. The Department of Agriculture is collecting statistics of the available supply; so also is Sinn Féin. It is a large and complicated undertaking, which will need the greatest skill on the part of its organisers, and the greatest good-will on the part of the community generally to make it successful. It is a matter of the greatest importance, and for that reason if for no other we trust that everybody will assist in every possible way. Knowledge is the necessary preliminary to action, if that action is to be effective. We must know our available supplies before we can know what surplus we have, and it is only surplus we should export. To procure many of the commodities which we have come to regard as necessities we must export some part of our stocks, but our own

people's needs must be the first call upon our own supplies. The present state of the people of Achill, as stated by Mr. Darrell Figgis, may very easily in a short time be that of the entire Irish people. The unfortunate people of Achill are forced to go without flour, while we hear of pigs being fed upon the essential foodstuff in other parts of our country. Can our Food Control Committee do nothing in the matter? We commend it to the attention of Mr. Thomas Farren in the hope that some steps may be taken towards the immediate alleviation of the Achill people's sorry plight. We trust that something will be done at once, as a diet of potatoes only is not calculated to keep the people in health for any prolonged period. "If the workers do nothing the food cannot leave the country," said Mr. Foran at the Dublin Trades Council last week. That is a last resort, but it may have to be adopted, and we hope that if the necessity should arise Labour will find itself in a position to act with the other forces in the country. The necessity may arise for such action, though we hope it will not, as it might easily have effects the very contrary of those that would be expected.

HOW CAPITALISM WORKS.

We have before us a leaflet, reprinted from "The Socialist" (Glasgow), entitled "Capitalism on the Tyne," by J. Walton Newbold, which gives some startling facts relating to the ramifications of modern capitalism. The writer shows vividly how the big armament firms stand to make profit by the war, whichever side wins or loses, always provided that the workers of all countries fail to step in and stop the little game.

We read that amongst the connections of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, are A. & J. Main, Ltd., of Glasgow and Dublin. The following illuminating paragraph needs no comment:—

In April, 1915, the French armoured cruiser "Leon Gambetta" was torpedoed in the Adriatic Sea by the Austro-Hungarian submarine "U 5." That submarine "U 5" was constructed in 1909 at the Reszventaarsaag Yard at Fiume, in Hungary. That yard was owned as late as 4th August, 1914, by a firm called Whitehead & Co.

This Hungarian company had upon its directorate, from 1906 to 1914, two directors of Vickers, Ltd., and two directors of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd.

In August, 1914,

Saxton William Armstrong Noble, whose address was given as the Elswick Works, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, and Henry Whitehead, also of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd., were directors of this "Hun" company.

When Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd., started, in 1906, to build submarines for the Central Powers, to manufacture torpedoes for the Austrians, and to instal plant and machinery which is now turning out commerce destroyers for the blockade of Britain and the sinking of Allied transports and warships in the Mediterranean, their chief partner was Alexander, Count Hoyos. His address, as given in the first share list of the new company, was

The Austro-Hungarian Embassy, Berlin. The Austro-Hungarian Embassy, Berlin, and the Elswick Works, Newcastle-on-Tyne! There is Solidarity for you! There is Hun Cuddling! There is the International of Death and Dividend!

James Connolly and his Critics. By D. R.

A contributor to the "Irishman" and "Banba" of the "Evening Telegraph," have been conducting a long artillery duel upon Catholic social reform and Socialism. The controversy proper belongs to the columns of the "Irishman," but certain statements of "Banba" cannot be allowed to pass without comment. Not so much indeed the assertions that delightful controversialist attempts to confuse his trusting readers with, as the mental attitude which makes possible his peculiar appeals to ignorance and prejudice by the aid of black type.

"Banba" succeeds admirably in garbling quotations from "Labour, Nationality and Religion," asserts that Socialism was the mainspring of the Easter Week Rising. Socialism being apparently criticism of ecclesiastics for their views upon labour matters, and the Dublin lock-out being apparently fought for the workers by enthusiastic Sinn Feiners and Republicans, who subsequently were used by Connolly and Madame Marcievicz for sinister ends. The conclusion is drawn that James Connolly never was an Irish Nationalist, while Madame Marcievicz is unrepentant and never will repudiate his teaching. The obvious insinuation is, of course, that the indiscriminate enthusiasm of certain persons is leading them into something they don't anticipate. Tanks and trench bombs and the anger of President Wilson are bad enough, but Socialism and Liberty Hall Socialism!

Perhaps "Banba" has his tongue in his cheek. Writers in newspaper offices sometimes have, especially in trying to score off political opponents. Perhaps "Banba" writes in good faith, in which case he should spend his time in cheering Mr. Dillon, advising the youth, and gently reproving candid bishops.

We should be thankful for the crude expression of a widespread misconception. "James Connolly never was an Irish Nationalist," is not only heard in the offices of the "Evening Telegraph." In country districts one hears sometimes the wish that Connolly had not been in the rising, followed by the inevitable question: "Was he an Irishman first or a Socialist first?" One of our gravest national defects is thus illustrated in our fear of words. Cardinal Newman once complained that in Ireland one was expected to say what was pleasant rather than what was true. Connolly himself insisted with great force that many Irish men and women will face death sooner than the opinions of their neighbours. Yes, we are afraid of words; we think in phrases; we isolate ourselves in cliques, often in glorified family parties. It will be a crowning irony if the man whose life was one long crusade against this national defect should be its victim.

"The Socialists will never understand why I am here," said Connolly, before his execution, to his daughter Nora, "they all forget I am an Irishman." These words are enlightening to any careful and informed student of his writings. They imply that many European Socialists had forgotten they were Socialists. They do not imply that the speaker renounced the

ideals for which he had striven to impress upon the Ireland disillusioned by the Parnell split, the Ireland awakened by the Irish Ireland movement, the Ireland hostile to the propaganda and methods of Jim Larkin, the Ireland swept off her feet by the outbreak of the European war. They were neither a platitude nor recantation, but words worthy of a successor of Mitchel or Fintan Lalor.

Connolly's writings are accessible to contradict the lying legend that he was a Trades Union leader and politician playing upon sentiments in which he did not believe. Mr. Arnold Bennet recently insinuated something of the sort. He proceeded to say "Labour in Irish history" was quite an unanswerable book. Even taking the words in the very literal sense Mr. Bennet meant them, to Ireland alone, with possibly the Central Powers thrown in, this is a very true and sapient remark. The book is indeed remarkable for the passionate logic with which Irish Nationalism, as understood by pure politicians and even more estimable persons, is indicted for the subordinate part Labour has been made play in the past, for its worship of a mechanical and outward unity, for its emphasis upon mere systems of government to the ignoring of social issues. To-day all shades of Nationalist opinion from Joseph Devlin to Eamonn De Valera eagerly seek Labour support, a strong and enthusiastic Labour movement has grown too strong a factor in the national life to be safely ignored, sane and intelligent social effort and study are spreading, Irish history is no longer regarded as an interminable series of battles as to whether the Old Flag should float over College Green. These changes, due in large part to Connolly's determined propaganda must surely give pause to those Irish writers and Socialist critics outside Ireland who dismiss Labour in Ireland "as the work of a doctrinaire."

Even the parts of his book which the author, as a pioneer stating a case which then required great moral courage to state and was bound to meet fierce and unreasoning opposition, felt impelled to over-state, have not been so hugely shaken by the course of events since 1913. "Labour in Irish History," might well be called Connolly's Testament as "The Re-Conquest" should be called his apologia. "The Re-Conquest" is a critical application of a self-reliant Labour spirit to the sores of Irish towns and cities, to neglected opportunities within Ireland for reforming conditions of work, wages and housing, the record of Connolly's work as a man of great and high ideals who fought every inch of his way. The Irish Nationalist, who is not grateful to the Labour movement in Ireland for calling attention to facts, however unpalatable and dissipating in rhetoric with realities, should confine his attention to writing poetry. And may his poetry be as bad as his nationalism!

For downright cant and dishonesty it would be hard to excel some of the appeals which have been made to religious prejudices to disparage Connolly's

Only malice or ignorance can explain these appeals. Upon the question of religion and Labour, Connolly held Labour questions would be settled along industrial and political lines. He held clergymen were open to the same criticism as laymen in secular affairs. Some of his criticisms of clergymen in secular affairs were undoubtedly incisive and severe. In America and Ireland his criticisms of Socialists who introduced religious questions into Socialist organisations were no less severe. To quote his own phrase, you could always depend upon him to borrow a pair of hob-nail boots to dance upon these blatant anti-Christians. "Blatant and crude Atheism," "scribblers who disgrace the Socialist ranks with their dogmatism," "superficial thinkers," are the phrases he uses in discussing the subject in the "Harp." A grave responsibility rests upon those, who, to forward political propaganda, raise this despicable controversy which to decent minded men and women the manner of James Connolly's death should definitely have closed.

If James Connolly was never an Irish Nationalist, that would be little to the credit of Irish Nationalism. One might just as well claim a Gaelic Leaguer, a co-operator, or an industrial revivalist who devoted most of his life to his particular cause was not a Nationalist. Connolly's life represents a consistent development. A careful investigation of his last adventure will not leave it an inscrutable and mysterious episode. It will prove him, on the contrary, the real revolutionary of 1916. "I stand," he said, when challenged to define his policy towards the end "for constitutional agitation in times of peace and revolution in times of war."

This investigation is to be commended to Mr. Arnold Bennet, to those Socialists in Great Britain who fondly believe Connolly's study of Irish history perverted his internationalist ideals, to those who criticise Irish Nationalists with Connolly's weapons, but never apply the moral nearer home.

James Connolly and his critics will have a tremendous debate at the bar of history, for Connolly will stand there as the spirit of revolution incarnate, not the showy and melodramatic brand of revolution popular historians and comfortable persons love at a distance, but that slow mental and economic revolution which changes the destinies of nations. The critics may score off James Connolly, but his shade will ask awkward questions. Historians have no censors or Defence of the Realm Acts except truth. Is it too much to expect the critics to-day to drop the detestable hypocrisy which affixes a label to men and movements and judges them thereby? Is it too much to demand the ending of that mental cowardice that bludgeons the most intelligent questions and all sincere efforts to rouse a social conscience with "no extreme Socialist views here!" If so, the Act upon the Statute Book is a munificent gift to an undeserving people.

English Notes.

By GEORGE STANTON.

Lord Morley's two volumes of "Recollections" are being hailed as the most important contribution to the personal side of political literature for a decade. They run to some eight hundred pages in all. It is significant that the name of Mr. Lloyd George is not mentioned once!

Sir Arthur Yapp, as an administrative food economist, is not a striking success. His appeals to rich and poor alike are practically ineffective. His eloquence may be delightful, but it is positively unsatisfying to a healthy appetite. "The Herald's" recent exposure of the way things are done at the Ritz has caused some little stir in active working-class circles. The futility of the general methods adopted by the local Food Control Committees, working under the aegis of Lord Rhondda, is not helping matters. Meanwhile, the menace of a food shortage grows every passing week. It is a common sight to see five or six hundred people marshalled in queues, and kept in order by policemen, awaiting their turn in the hope of purchasing quarters and half-pounds of butter and margarine. Tea, sugar, and bacon are almost as difficult to obtain. There is a growing discontent due to these difficulties of the food supply, but the Government gives no indication that it is taking cognisance of the political influence of a half-pound of butter that is unobtainable.

If any evidence is needed of the discontent in England, we have but to look up the circulation of Mr. Bottomley's paper, "John Bull," in the light of its average contents. True, Mr. Bottomley is a superficial writer of the super-jingo type, but his literary appeal is of a destructive nature. He is continuously aggressive: an iconoclast whose sole desire is to smash something. His appeal to a discontented but ill-educated populace with short memories is thus easy to explain. In fanning the flames of the war spirit, he is assisting to foster something which in the long run of post-war events will have a very different result to what he imagines.

It is impossible to gauge English opinion by means of our newspapers. The Press appears to be completely in the hands of the governing caucus, and anything unfavourable or distasteful to its personnel and policy is not reported, or is distorted into misleading terms. The result is an antithesis between private

and public opinion such as England has never before experienced. Working-class opinion finds practically no open expression, and the only items of working-class activities which receive notice in the Press, are those that can be made to appeal to sensationalism. When the history of the censorship during the war comes to be written, we shall learn the answer to many of the riddles that puzzle us to-day. And only then shall we realise the present studied and deliberate ignorance which is being practised upon us by our modern journalism.

There is a terrific slump in Bolshevism on this side of the Irish Sea. The English public have refused to be gulled by this comic opera bogey. The hunt for food is of far more immediate concern than the hunt for imaginary enemy agents; and stories of German gold have never received much credence by our stolid populace. Further anti-Government speakers in the public places of our large towns have been widely disseminating the knowledge that the real Bolshevists' relations were with the militarist and stunt Press of France, and have hinted that our own stunt Press might be unduly anxious about its own character.

GEORGE STANTON.

STRIKES IN JAPAN.

Cost of food in Japan has risen since 1914 by 66 per cent. Much unrest amongst the workers is evident, strikes are of frequent occurrence but mostly of short duration, as employers have in most cases granted increases in wages of from 15 to 20 per cent. The agitation for an advance in wages has spread to the subordinate staffs of Government departments and local authorities.—"Labour Gazette."

FINLAND.

AN EIGHT-HOUR WORKING DAY BY AGREEMENT.

The second number of the current volume of "Arbetsstatistisk Tidskrift" (the journal of the Finnish Labour Department) contains information with regard to the recent introduction of an eight-hours' working day in various occupations in Finland. Immediately after the revolution the Senate passed a resolution introducing an eight hours' working day in the workshops of the State railways and in the State printing works. Agreements for a like object have been arrived at between employers' associations and trade unions in the metal,

printing, sawmilling, paper and pulp-making, and glass industries. Various private employers have also granted a similar working day to their workpeople; and several municipalities, including Helsingfors, have made the same concession. As the result of this movement it is believed that, in the near future, the reduced working day will be operative in most of the industries and in the more important handicrafts of Finland.

One of the most important agreements was that arrived at in the metal trade, under which the working hours per week may not exceed 47, the daily hours being eight on ordinary days, and seven on Saturdays and the eves of public holidays, including the 1st of May, which is also to be a holiday. The workpeople undertake to perform overtime work, for which extra payment is to be made at the rate of 50 per cent. above ordinary pay for the first two hours, and 10 per cent. for subsequent time and for hours worked on Sundays. The pay for work by the job or day is not to be reduced in consequence of the shortened working day. Where work is done in one shift, this must fall between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., one hour interval for meals being permitted.

Two Bills relating to the introduction of an eight hours' working day in industry and in agriculture respectively have been put forward by the social democratic party, and are now being considered by the Legislature.

AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS.

The Irish membership of the A.S.E. has grown since the outbreak of war by over 2,000, mainly in the smaller towns. As a consequence wages have risen steadily, in some cases almost equalling the increase in the cost of living. This is nothing to crow about, but it is better than most trades have done. Unorganised workers should ponder over the following figures:—

	Pre-war Wages.	Present Rates.	Increase per week.
Portadown ...	30/-	57/-	27/-
Newry ...	30/-	55/-	25/-
Deiry ...	36/-	51/-	15/-
Dublin ...	38/-	53/-	15/-
Cork ...	34/-	51/-	17/-
Limerick ...	34/-	51/-	17/-
Dundalk ...	35/-	57/-	22/-
Belfast ...	41/-	57/-	16/-
Arklow ...	7½d.	1½	6½d.
Larne ...	About 26/-	57/-	per week. 31/-

On December 17th another 5/- per week is to be added in all these towns, and in a large number of cases the recently secured 12½ per cent. will also apply.

NOTES AND COMMENTS—Continued.

We see that the "Labour Leader" points out that "the Russian Maximalist programme for the Ukraine, Finland, and other nations is independence, which the bourgeois elements in Kerensky's Government resisted; hence it is very probable that the Ukraine and Finland are wholehearted supporters of the new Government." We would like to know what the "Labour Leader's" and the I.L.P.'s programme for Ireland is? Do they boggle at the Maximalists' programme and follow the bourgeois elements, or will they frankly concede to Ireland her right to independence?

AN ECHO OF 1913.

In these days of universal recognition of the workman's freedom to organise, it strikes the mind with a feeling of surprise to hear of a genuine lock-out of a firm's employees for refusing to desert a Union disliked by their employer. Yet such a lock-out is actually, when writing, in progress at Portarlinton, at the saw-mills of Messrs. Russell Bros. Scarcely had the men working for Russell's begun to join the newly-formed branch of the Irish Transport Union when the firm called a meeting of their employees and warned them they would have to choose between the Union and the job. Fr. O'Leary, P.P., added some words of solemn admoni-

tion, but was afterwards successful in getting the men a fortnight to come to a decision; Russell wanted to give them a week only. The following notice was then hung up in the works:—

NOTICE.

22nd November, 1917.

All employees, who are NOT members of the "Transport Workers' Union" and also those who, in future, intend to withdraw from the Union, are requested to hand in their names at the Office **at once**, in order that they may obtain the full advance in wages and overtime, which comes into force on Saturday next, the 24th inst.

For RUSSELL BROS., Ltd.,

J. MITCHETTE, Secretary.

This notice expired on Thursday, 6th inst., and so little did threats or bribes move the Union men that 60 of them were paid off on that evening, and nearly 30 non-union men have either come out since or have given the firm a week's notice. This leaves the works at a standstill practically, as they have only 10 or 12 hands left of the least efficient class. The term "Ltd." seems appropriate enough when added to Russell Bros.

Correspondence

To the Editor, "Irish Opinion."
21 Hollybrook Road,
Clontarf,
Dublin, 6th Dec., 1917.

HOUSING DUBLIN POOR.

Sir,—In your first issue, in the course of your leading article, you state: "The housing of our town workers, the provision of all those amenities of life which makes the difference in death-rates between the working and other classes—allotments and gardens, proper train and tramway facilities—will have our hearty sympathy and support." For such a pronouncement you are to be congratulated, for it is not by any means the least important of the many democratic tasks you set yourself, in your article "Our Outlook." Personally, I consider it the most important of Dublin's many social problems. And if we can but insist on a fundamental change in the methods so far pursued in weakly attempts to grapple with this problem, we will have accomplished a work of lasting benefit to future generations. Such a fundamental change can only be brought about

by building around Dublin at least 14,000 cottages on "virgin sites" and providing therewith all the amenities of "Garden Suburb" life for the workers.

At the present time in England there is talk of £28,000,000 being granted for housing reform. Of that grant we in Dublin should get at least £3,500,000. It is our right and we must get it.

On Sunday last a mass meeting was held in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, to insist on this fact. It was a record meeting so far as the attendance of workers and their wives was concerned, and showed that the people are becoming alive to their real interests and anxious to know their powers. A resolution was passed demanding the grant of £3,500,000 for the purpose of housing on "virgin sites." Strange to say, this meeting received scant notice. One wonders why?—

Yours truly,

J. VINCENT BRADY.

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Top qualities. Lowest Prices.

Nos. 60 & 53, Talbot Street,

THE JAMES CONNOLLY MEMORIAL
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS TREAT
FUND.

A Concert and Dramatic Entertainment, in aid of the above deserving object, will be given in Liberty Hall, on Monday next, the 17th inst., at 8 p.m. The above Fund was founded by "Cuçey," who, on his recent visit to the city, gave a cheque for £20, to give the kick-off. A representative committee has the matter in hand, and they intend that the Concert will be of an exceptionally high standard. Mr. A. Patrick Wilson's Labour Play, "Victims," will be produced by the Irish Workers' Dramatic Class. Mrs. Jim Larkin is in the cast, and she will also recite Connolly's great poem, "The Legacy." Many other well-known artistes have promised to appear. The price of admission is 6d. Tickets can be obtained from the Hon. Sec., Walter Carpenter, Room 3, Liberty Hall. We would advise our readers to make a point of being present.

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 If not, you will be well advised to do so.
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It Cures all kinds of Skin Trouble, Eczema,
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 Most up-to-date Stocks in Ireland
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 Irish Ireland and Labour Literature.
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FRENCH ARMY BOOTS,
 Hand-Sewn. Sizes, 7 to 12.
 16/11 per pair; worth 30/-

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The Irish Transport & General Workers' Union

[Founded January, 1909.]

Head Office:—Liberty Hall, Dublin.

Affiliated to the Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, and with all local
 Trades Councils. Reg. No. 275. Approved Society No. 52.

This organisation was established in order to provide for the workers of this country
 a Trade Union with headquarters in Ireland, having its affairs managed and
 controlled by Irish Workers, and its policy and programme based on Irish conditions,
 so as to secure for all workers in Ireland higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions
 of employment, improved housing, a higher standard of living, and a fuller and freer
 life for all who labour.

A Live Union for Live Workers.
Thirty Branches. Over 20,000 Members.
Join Now! He who hesitates is lost!!

If there is no Branch in your district, write to:—

THOMAS FORAN, General President, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

ΔΟΝΑC NA ΝΟΟΛΑ3 1917.

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