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CONTENTS.

Room for the Teachers. By Sean O' Cathasaigh ...	Page 73	Notes and Comments	Page 78
Teachers and Trade Unionism. By Labor Vicit ...	" 74	Leader: Food Control Farce	" 79
As I Wait in the Boreen for Maggie. By S. O'C...	" 74	Labour in Ireland	" 80
International Notes	" 75	Belfast Trades Council	" 81
"Rebel" Opponents of Housing Reform. By J. Vincent Brady	" 76	English Labour Getting Ready. By Paul Saradine	" 82
Inncinn an Sall Saedil	" 77	Correspondence	81 and 82

ROOM FOR THE TEACHERS.

By SEAN O'CATHASAIGH.

"What authority surfeits on would relieve us; if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear; the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularise their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them."—Shakespeare.

It is gratifying to think that the sap of discontent is stirring in the dry bones of the teaching profession. It is a distinct step forward to realise our misery. A few more progressive steps and the teachers will be marching in alignment with the rest of the workers. But they must cast from their shoulders the ghostly and threadbare mantle of respectability. This fetters their movements and blinds their eyes; but it will not keep them warm, nor will it, like a magician's cloak, produce in mystery the wherewithal to feed them; nor will it hide from their comrades in the Labour movement the poverty and silliness of antiquated pretensions to a status in the good opinion of society which ignores them—though it sometimes mouths an expression of pretended sympathy—but let the teachers be assured that the society to which some of them think they belong, will never lift a hand to help them. Their one and only hope is an intense and active union with the organised workers.

The number of teachers that voted for affiliation with the Labour movement is a hopeful sign, though it is irritating to remember how many voted against it, but considering all the evils they have endured, and how patiently and how long they have endured them, it is a wonder that they have not degenerated into slaves of the fourth dimension.

The teachers need have no fear that by identifying themselves with the Labour movement they will lose that curious and much prized "status," about which so many of them are fond of talking. They will always command the respect and admiration of the working classes by demanding that position in the Nation's life which is their due, and which they can never hold without an intensified improvement in

their economic position, and the reverence and admiration of the workers are more to be desired than a reluctant permission from society to enter into a middle-class or a first-rate drawing-room.

The desire for a higher life is brooding now in the breast of the humblest worker, and he is fighting that it may be satisfied. Their progress means a corresponding depression in the social position of the teachers, should they remain quiescent, and, if they refuse to walk in the upward way, they will soon discover that there is not one so poor as to do them reverence.

It would be well for the teachers to learn that they are made of the one stuff as the workers; that there is no degree of clay that moulds humanity; let them remember that as Khrisna taught, "that man observes distinctions when he is stupefied with ignorance," and they will find in the Labour movement their one true refuge and their one true strength.

As W. O'Brien and P. T. Daly point out in the Press, the workers, for their own sakes, must stand by the teachers. They are vigilant now and they will not continue to suffer the minds of their children to be cast in the moulds made by the hands of the National Board, or of Starkie, or of Welpy and his coterie of educational inquisitors. The very system that Labour is out to destroy is being perpetuated and strengthened in the National schools. Our children are not educated; they are taught to be useful so that they may bring profits to their future masters. They are trained as an exhibitor would train his dogs: not indeed to develop the animals' mentality, but simply to make money out of them. And the teachers are employed at the lowest possible wage to give them an education that will fit them for "their station in life," which is, of course, to make them energetic hewers of wood and drawers of water.

But now—quoting from P. T. Daly's letter—"when the oligarchic National Board speaks to the teachers, it speaks

to the workers," and these gentlemen will soon realise that some of us are able to analyse phrases in the English language, in a way so original that it may surprise them. The wage question is, at present, the one that calls for immediate solution, and the fixing of the teachers' salaries should not be left to Mr. Duke nor to Starkie, but should be settled by the teachers themselves, who are most nearly concerned, and by the Labour delegates, as representing those whose children are taught by them.

Teachers, like all human beings, must eat and drink and clothe themselves, and at present these must be difficulties that their present miserable wage can scarcely overcome. One would think that the reward of the teacher would be such as to entice to the profession the best minds in the country. And the workers demand that their children must be served by the best minds in the country, and this can only be done by creating conditions that will assuredly bring about such a consummation.

What opportunities present themselves to the teachers for self-improvement? Surely, the homes of the Irish teachers ought to be centres of literature, art, science and music; and are they? It is hardly conceivable. How in the name of goodness can they indulge their higher tastes when their salary barely allows them to live. Why some of them would not be able to pay for a course in the cheapest school of art or science. Day by day the workers become intellectually keener, and as they become more and more economically free, their education will increase, and they must, consequently, demand a higher and purer education for their children. So that the teachers' profession will become a more responsible one, and the future, therefore, demands the definite improvement of the present.

Let the teachers shed their hesitation to use the weapons of Labour. They will have organised Labour behind them, and surely the National movement will not withhold its help. Should all else fail, let them strike for better conditions.

There are many things that the teachers will have to claim. They will have to fight for a fuller freedom; for the improvement in the lives of the children they teach—for this would mean better and quicker results for themselves—school improvement; abolition of harassing and degrading methods that delay advancement and the clipping of inspectorial claws and wings. The teacher must be something above a slave that instructs the children of the workers.

But all these will probably follow the happy union with Labour. It was a great feat to demolish the half-god of respectability that frightened you from the temple of Labour.

Happily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

TEACHERS and TRADES' UNIONISM

By LABOR VICIT.

The affiliation of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation to the Irish Trades Congress marks an epoch in the history of both movements, and yet the marvel is that such an alliance, which is the natural outcome of the very natural relations that should exist between the teachers and the workers, has not taken place long ago. Why? The organised workers of the country are the parents of the children attending the schools; and the teacher, being in the position of "in loco parentis," what could be more natural than the bond of union which has been cemented between the workers and the teachers?

One of the most important planks in the labour movement must always be educational efficiency; for it is only through the spread of education, and of the very best kind, that the workers can ever hope to realise those ideals for which organised labour is striving. The National schools of this country are the universities of the masses, and on the efficiency, intelligence, and skill of the work done in the school must largely depend the future careers of children of

the masses. Will the work of teachers who are pauperised, and trodden under heel by the bureaucratic machine which controls Primary Education in this country be calculated to do the rising generation for the strenuous battle for existence which is before them? By no means; and here is work to hand in the educational field for organised labour, and on behalf of their fellow-workers.

On the other hand, the teachers no less owe a duty to organised labour, by making themselves thoroughly acquainted with labour problems in every detail, and by acting as intellectual torch-bearers to the movement being made by democracy to secure their proper position in the body politic.

Trades Unionism offers to teachers an organised support which they never had before, and one of the most potent reasons for the apparent failure of teachers to secure redress of their grievances in the past, has been due to the fact that they received far too much sympathy, and far too little active support. In fact, too much sympathy is often more dangerous than vigorous opposition; as the one enervates, while the other only braces us for the fight.

The war, with all the cruel suffering which it has brought in its trail, has taught us, nevertheless, many useful lessons, and who can think, considering how very essential labour is and has been to the very safety of the realm, that the organised workers will calmly submit in the future to be treated as mere beasts of burden? No. And all efforts for uplifting of the social conditions of the masses must be based on the liberal education of the rising generation. Here is work in which the closest co-operation may be looked for between teachers and workers.

The very trite motto, "Mind moves matter," must be pushed to its logical conclusion.

As I Wait in the Boreen for Maggie.

Air: "Cnochainin Aerach Chill Mhuire."
To be procured in "Fuinn na Smol," by Father P. Walsh.

A bright autumn evening now darkens its hue,
And the wild flowers are wearily sleeping;
With her rich fragrant moisture the life-giving dew
The green garments of Nature is steeping:
So enters love into souls—silent and still,
Giving Hope to each heart and new force to each will,
And here in the twilight I feel its dear thrill,
As I wait in the Boreen for Maggie!

The noble and rich may be happy and proud,
With their parks and fair places of splendour,
But this poor little spot with fond memories crowd
Of dear meetings and incidents tender.
The leaves whisper a name as they bend to and fro,
The birds lilt of Love as home-flying they go,
And I hear a soft voice in the brook's gentle flow,
As I wait in the Boreen for Maggie!

In the arms of the strong hedge the winsome wild rose
Is quite calmly and safely reposing,
While her fair fragile face with love tenderly glows,
In a manner both coy and imposing;
When wild winds of trouble strive hard to molest,
So I'll gather my girl to my sheltering breast,
And I'll tell all that love on my heart has impressed,
When I meet in the Boreen with Maggie!

And I told her if me she would venture to wed,
That I'd honour and cherish her highly;
Tho' keen, ah! but few were my moments of dread,
For she answered, yes, softly and shyly.
Should Fortune abandon and leave me alone,
And Woe destroy seeds of hope joyfully sown,
I'll dare bravely the future—tho' dark and unknown,
As I go thro' Life's Boreen with Maggie.

SEAN O CATHASAIGH.

International Notes.

Naughty Count Czernin.

The Bolsheviks, like ourselves, have obviously no faith in the enthusiasm of the diplomats of Capitalism, when the latter proceed to "liberate" small nations in the interests of Imperialism. Count Czernin's guilty silence on the subject of nations whose loss of independence has not arisen from the present war could surprise only the most ingenuous. The great Powers, each with one or more oppressed nation in its grasp, could not afford to raise awkward questions of the pot calling the kettle black description. Czernin endeavoured to restrict the deliberations of the Peace Conference to such nations as had lost their independence since 1914, drawing a tactful veil over history, both ancient and modern. The "Freeman's Journal" congratulates him for having administered a rebuff to Mr. Arthur Griffith, while "Nationality" refuses to believe the Count would be so naughty. The Bolsheviks, however, seemed to be under no delusion as to intentions of the Central Powers, and, unimpressed by possible distinctions between "nations" and "national groups," roundly denounced the hypocrisy of Count Czernin. Trotsky and Lenin understood that a "group of nationals" is one thing, but a "national group" is another. The Irish, the Germans and the Russians in America form groups of nationals, but Ireland is a national group within the British Empire, just as the Poles are a national group within the dominion of Germany, Austria and Russia. Hence the failure of the Bolsheviks to accept the limitations imposed by Czernin upon the discussion of the independence of small nations.

The Bolsheviks and Ireland.

The determination of Lenin and Trotsky not to be caught by such quibbles is a valuable demonstration of the wisdom of our contention, that Ireland has little to expect from the diplomatic tribunals of international Capitalism. The Bolsheviks are the first Socialists who have entered into diplomatic negotiations on behalf of their country with a foreign Power. They are sincere democrats and ardent Internationalists. Consequently, we expected them to express the views of International Labour, and they have not disappointed us. Unlike the war aims of the British Labour Party, the aims of revolutionary Russia includes the nations struggling for freedom within the limits of the Allied combination. They are not restricted to rescuing the victims of the Hun, but contemplate an extension of the same benevolence to others, whose claims have somehow escaped the attention of those super-democrats, Milner, Northcliffe, Carson, Lloyd George

and President Wilson. It will be a serious thing if German and Allied and Neutral Labour does not support and cooperate with the Bolsheviks, in the first genuine attempt to arrive at a democratic settlement. English Liberals are now beating their breasts because of the short-sighted policy which lost Kerensky the support of the Allies. Labour in the neutral countries has expressed its adherence to the Bolshevik programme. Will the working classes of the belligerent countries do the same? Or shall we see International Labour bemoaning its lost opportunity as Liberalism is now doing?

Making the World Safe for Famine.

Now that far too much food has been exported from Ireland the soothsayers are busy consoling us with exhortatory communications to the Press, and we are apparently expected to feed ourselves with statistics on food production. This diet is all the less substantial since the figures do not even indicate what is actually in the country and at the disposal, not of foreign buyers, but of the Irish people. The workers who are desirous of martyrdom are heartily invited to get shot down in the streets by refusing to handle food consignments for export. Ireland has been exceedingly generous in the matter of life sacrifice, but we confess that the food problem does not appear to be one whose solution can be obtained by a holocaust of the transport workers. Experts state that the farmers simply must, as a patriotic duty, sell their products to the highest bidder, even when the rules of Lord Rhondda are broken. Economic Sinn Fein seems to be beyond the horizon of agricultural Ireland. This is a clear case in which the economic man is more powerful than the political. Unless the community can purchase or commandeer food for national use, exportation will continue. Meanwhile our conquerors have generously deigned to prohibit the export of butter—except through licensed persons! It is pleasant to speculate upon the potential statesmanship of an Irish Government in such a crisis, but the plight of the other small nations, both independent and otherwise, is not reassuring.

The Liberty of Small Nations to Starve.

In Belgium hunger has so weakened the people that tuberculosis is rampant, while hunger-typhoid is decimating the children in Luxembourg, which was not rescued by the Allies, as our readers will remember. The New York "Nation" describes the food situation in Finland as hopeless, and the Finnish Senate has had to appeal to England and America for assistance: "After an exceptional

failure of crops we are now destitute of all provisions, left to ourselves in despairing hopelessness. . . . If provisions do not reach us from America and from other sources, we fear famine. May God grant that your help does not come too late." Greece and Roumania are reported to be in a desperate state for want of food, from which their very different political history in the past two years has not saved them. A Swiss newspaper describes the Serbians "dying of hunger and misery, to say nothing of the ravages of war. . . . According to the most optimistic estimate, one quarter of the population has probably already perished owing to war, epidemic, lack of nourishment and privations of every kind." As for Poland, a Danish paper states that: "Famine is ravaging everywhere, and the people have therefore lost all power of resistance against epidemics . . . typhus and dysentery are raging everywhere. The Polish people is now a people of human shadows—irretrievably lost everywhere where diseases attack. . . . But even amidst the unlimited poverty and want there is one thing that stands out. I am thinking of the dying off of the children. . . . The children who do not get any food run about the streets searching for something edible, or gather in great flocks outside the barracks, in the hope that something may be left over for them from the canteens. In the streets of Warsaw and Lodz one sees children lying asleep in the middle of the footpaths, one sees them search the dustbins like starved dogs. . . . The want has been so great that mothers have kept their children's dead bodies at home a whole week, concealing their death to the authorities in order to let the living during that short time have the benefit of the bread cards of the dead. And mothers have deserted their homes because they could no longer endure to see the sufferings of their dying children."

The Moral.

Reading these pitiful accounts of the misery which has come upon the small nations, it is enough to recall the horrors of our own terrible Famine. We are too prone to accept a parallel from Irish history as dispensing us from any further reflection in the face of the horrors which this war has revealed. When we hear that Luxembourg is starving, a country which offered no excuse to the military savagery of any belligerent, a country whose "independence" has preserved it only from actual spoliation, we must surely realise that the liberty of such nationalities as our own must depend upon something more tangible than a mere political definition of independence.

"Rebel" Opponents of Housing Reform.

By J. VINCENT BRADY, Author of "Practical Slum Reform."

Housing reformers who are in favour of the movement for cottages and allotments on "virgin" sites should see that Sections 53, 57 and 59 and 6 and 7 (Part III.) of the Housing Acts, 1890-1908, are enforced by the Dublin Corporation. No new Acts of Parliament are necessary. Land can be acquired in suburban areas, and planned out in accord with garden suburb methods of economic estate development with homes at a density of from 8 to 15 per gross acre, with allotments for those who want them, and will cultivate them. Sites for new schools, bath and wash-houses, social institutes, and such like amenities can be provided, and ample playgrounds and playing-fields for the children.

So far, the Dublin Corporation, though it has had power for 27 years, has made very inadequate efforts to avail of these powers, and has preferred to acquire slum areas and re-build thereon at prohibitive costs under Part I. of the Acts, thus putting "a premium on bad sanitation and improper housing by purchasing up at a ruinous rate insanitary areas," and rewarding slum landlordism for neglect, and finally rebuilding what will in time, owing to overcrowding on area, due to high land values, shortly degenerate once again into slums.

How much better would be conditions in Dublin to-day if the money spent during the past twenty-seven years by the Dublin Corporation on slum areas had been spent in providing cottages and allotments for the workers on suburban areas in relief of overcrowding, and how many urban workers would be in secure possession, with fixity of tenure, of allotments and cottages had such methods been adopted?

Vested interests, apathy and ignorance of powers possessed by the people have so far successfully prevented such a reform, however. Report No. 176 (1903) of the Dublin Corporation strongly recommends this reform, and this report was unanimously adopted at a special meeting of the Municipal Council on the 8th January, 1904, as embodying the future line of policy. In 1900, and again in 1913, the Local Government Board in reports urges such a policy on the Dublin Corporation, but apparently to no avail. "We must continue to buy up slum areas" is the cry of Dublin's democratic representatives of all parties. In March, 1908, writing in the Dublin daily press, and quoting Report No. 176 (1903), Mr. Arthur Griffith states:—"It is five years ago since that report was adopted. The Sinn Fein members of the Corporation have endeavoured to get it carried out, but in vain." He also points out that the "tenement dwellers of Dublin" can, by their votes, force "the Corporation to carry out the recommendations of its own report on the housing question, and end the slum system on which some of our corporators thrive." To-day we have a Sinn Fein Chairman of the Hous-

ing Committee of the Dublin Corporation with several colleagues to support him. The Housing Committee persists in buying up slum areas at enormous cost in utter defiance of Report No. 176 (1903), and the Housing Committee's strongest defenders when criticised are its Sinn Fein members. I instance the stand they take with regard to Spitalfields, Crabbe Lane and Boyne St. areas, whilst if any outsider dares to criticise in a similar vein to Mr. Arthur Griffith he is to be commiserated with for the emptiness of his mind, and the gentlemen who, in 1908, were endeavouring to get Report No. 176 (1903) "carried out, but in vain," because they were not in position to do so, say to-day that they will not do so, now that they are in power, because (1) there are no indications amongst the people of a partiality for suburban dwellings. (2) The difference in value to tenants of city dwellings exceeds the difference in costs. (3) (a) There is necessity of dealing with slum areas because the houses therein have lived their lives, and are a source of danger to their occupants; (b) they are unhygienic, and consequently dangerous to their occupants and the community, which, strange to relate, is the case the "vested interests" that drew forth the criticism of Mr. Arthur Griffith were making in 1908. Truly does it seem to be the game of all the parties to fool all the people all the time, and only too well has it been said that "a glance at the condition of Dublin, for instance, reveals a state of matters sadly eloquent of the woeful lack of public spirit in those who are responsible as municipal rulers and those who, as electors, tolerate them."

With regard to the reasons now urged by slum area builders and vested interests against building on suburban areas they are easily answered. Let us first deal with the facts, which are that at the present time the working class population of Dublin in the central areas is intensively packed in rotten tenements and cottages overcrowded on acreage, and that there is a famine of sanitary and decent homes for the people; therefore the first point to be distinctly understood is that sufficient new accommodation should first be provided for the people to relieve overcrowding of people in houses and houses on area, and thus reduce the demand which creates the prohibitive values of slum areas.

Now modern improved traffic facilities have made easily available large tracts of land in suburban areas for building purposes, and while a number of those who at present live in congested districts may certainly be bound by necessities of livelihood to live there, this number does not represent more than half the population. The other half only want the opportunity to move out to better and healthier surroundings with cottages and allotments, and this would give those left behind the opportunity of getting decent facilities in

central housing schemes, such as ample breathing space, allotments, gardens and playgrounds for the children at reduced values. The allotments movement has finally demonstrated the willingness of the worker to travel to suburban areas, and surely if the worker is willing to travel backward and forward to till a plot, it cannot be said that he does not desire to live in a cottage built on his plot amid congenial surroundings.

With regard to the second objection, that the difference in value to tenants of city dwellings exceeds the difference in costs, surely it is not contended seriously that the value of increased health and well-being for the worker's wife and children, healthy surroundings and a year's produce from an allotment, with the countless other benefits to be derived from suburban life, are not to be carefully weighed against the doubtful benefit of living in an overcrowded neo-slum area, from which workers have oftentimes to travel miles to work.

As to the third contention, that it is necessary to deal with the slum areas, agreed, but not until sufficient new homes have first been provided by the people on "virgin" sites. We can then deal with the slum areas in a cheap, economic and efficient manner, and at the expense of the landlords principally, and not of the people, as at present; meantime, we can "relentlessly utilise" the sanitary laws against insanitary property, and punish neglect, not reward it.

The workers of Dublin should insist that any Government aid given to Dublin in the near future be spent principally on "virgin" site-housing, and that the recommendations of the Local Government Board be given effect to, as also Report 176 (1903) of the Dublin Corporation—it is the only way in which a comprehensive attempt can be made to cure slumdom in Dublin. Insist that we get at least £3,500,000 to build for the people 14 self-contained villages of 1,000 homes each around Dublin, with all the amenities of communal life for the inhabitants. Have no more slum area buying until this is done. We can then punish, not reward, slum landlordism for neglect.

Let it not be forgotten that the Dublin Corporation has ample powers at present to prepare such a scheme, and that efficient administration of existing statutes is our chief need, not new legislation, by which we are almost overwhelmed nowadays. Do not allow apathy any longer prevail among the workers on this question to the smug satisfaction of the "vested interests" masquerading under the guise of housing reformers, and taking advantage of all political parties.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that all urban authorities in Ireland have at present the powers I set out above to house the workers in cottages on "virgin" sites, and to provide, if necessary, half-acre allotments therewith.

INNTEINN AN SALL-SAEÓIL.

Cápla dam be'c as cainte le Sall-Saeóeal an lá fá deirnead, nro ip annam, agus an nro ip annam ip iongancaige. Ni Sall-Saeóeal do réir outcar é. Bi plonne bpeas Saeóealac aige, ac bi innceinn agus meanma Sall-Saeóil aige. Sé rin le nro ni pad innceinn fapanamail Salloda aige: bi fíor aige in a eoride ipcis nac de pór na nSall é, agus ni pad innceinn uapal Sa óil aige óir ni eus ré ac ói-meap an Saeóealaid com pad ip bi mé as trác leir. Capa do Seagan Réadmonn do bi ann (aice nigeann ciapós ciapós eile); tá tuairim lárdip asam sup feirne é féin agus tuigear nior feair ná suam an fáe ná eipis leir na feirne obair eiraeacac ar bit do deanam do héinn. As reo ponnac do na nroaid dubairt ré liom réir map ip cuinneac liom ac sup dubairt ré móran nro eile de'n trádac ceudna nac geurim pior anro.

Tá Éire nro beas le pappam an a donmair féin (nro puidé an a pcol féin), ni'l ann ac geallacac bit as bpat an paopre iomlan d'Éirinn. Ip cuipreige na daoine do ceap a leicéro. Dá n-eipregead Sacpanais ar réilb na tife ip an éigin baidip glanca cap Spuc na Maoile Coip go mbead oream eacpanac eile an an mutlac pa' tije agus iad pacc n-uairé ni ba meapa ná na Sapanaid féin. Ip cuma Sarmánis, nro Amepocánaig nro Seapánaig iad ni'l i noán d'Éirinn leo ac daop-bpoid agus léipreipior. Ac maroip leir na Sapanaid, adeip mo duine macanta a bfuil an innceinn Salloda a se, ni'l nro nro oic an cor an bit agus ip feair an diabal a bfuil Sean aicne agaim an nro an diabal an-aicne. Tá na olisge ip feair an román agaim agus ip paopre rinn fá lácaip na don aicne eile an román fíu na Sapanaid féin, óir ip éigin doib nro tpoio in agaid a namad agus ni éigin duinne é. Agus an paopre cainte acá agaim tá ré cap bair! Dá nro pan Seapmán do bead a leac agaim agus an cainte acá agaim an in agaid balla cuipre rinn agus trábaille piléar do pgailead linn!

Dá mbead ré an an geumar ppaad le Sapanaid (nro nac bfuil agus nac mbeid go bnonn na bpaac, óir ip fáid

an feirne) ni bead ann ac oicéillide agus deap-geallacac ppaad leite. Cé ioppad an bpeoil agus an n-im duinn? (Ni as magad do bi mo duine ac lom darpuid). Cé ceannocac an bpeir eapraide bionn agaim le diol? Cá bpaipmip longa le nroaid an opraacala san na Sapanaid do tabairt duinn, nro cé ceannocac na longa duinn? Rud eile, adubairt mo duine, ceap Dia go mbeadmaoir an an púl as Sapanaid agus sup planndail Sé Éire pan paipre in aice leir an bpeacain! Mura mbead go pad ceapca aige Éire bit paoi cumacac Sapaná tuige nro fáit ré pan paipre i taob bad cap de Amepocac!

Rud eile pór ce ppaad an t-oilean reo mura ppaad Sapanaid i. Sinn féin? Na! na! Nac bfuil pior as an trágac nac bpeupad rinn don nro ppaad. Ni canagamar le eile suam feic agus ni pad i héinn suam ac eapontar agus tréar. Nac pad Diarmuid Mac Mupcaoda agaim, agus an Tigearna Carleán Riabac agus go leor dá mac-a-pamail? Nac nro rinn as tréiprin Seagan Réadmonn inoip oipeac map tréigeap Saeóil Domnall Ó Conail, agus map tréigeap Pánnell. Dá mbead paopre iomlan agaim i mbairt ni bead agaim ac ceac móp geal.

Ac goide an maic duinn beid a trác an a leicéro. Ni leipre Sapanaid coide d'Éirinn paopre magaltar do bit aice. Bead Sé DADGALAC DO SASANAID. Agus an cumacac acá as Sapanaid. Cuis milliún paopre aice fá lácaip paoi aipm. Agus beid nro rinn paopre cap éir an coaid le pmaac do cup an Saeóealaid. Agus an lomgeap! agus na sunnai acá an na longaib. O bpeupad Sapanaid long coaid do puidéad i gCuan Baile Áca Cliaac agus pléapgan do caitead anonn trapa na tife go Sallim! (Goio mo duine an nro reo ó Caos Ó héalaisge. Dá mbud nro pior é nro pad fapanamail ni cogpad ré ó Caos é map ip beas an baid acá caillce eacopca).

Tuigim nior feair anoir ná map do tuigear go nuige reo map tá an pgeal leir na feirne, ac ni tuigim ce'n fáe an glac muntear na héineann leo map feirne Tá

innceinn Salloda meacca as na feirne. Ni'l a dac de munnigin aca an a oip féin no an a munnigin féin. Ip tije beas paopre Éire agus ip meacca miolacoda, cancaic, bpeagac, amardeac an oream muntear na héineann. Ni'l san a bit leo. Ni'l don maic ionna. Na Deise an a bpaite beas calman ip fíu cogad na geinbeacca iad, ac muntear na héineann, sup! - An cúpla milliún daoine i oip reoide na bionn ip fíu iad paopre magaltar ac na Saeóil! agus Sapanaid! a láoipeac ip a mbpeadac agus a geumacac agus a n-uairleac! Sin i innceinn na nSall Saeóeal! innceinn an pglabairé! innceinn an daopceinél! agus nuair aipreipre gnoia dá réir ip iontuigte duinn nac map geal an ceitpe ceac panta pa bliadain amain do gno feirne na héineann toil Seagan Réadmonn agus toil Seagan Duide. Ac ré an nro nac iontuigte duinn tuige an cup muntear na héineann amain munnigin pan oream meacca nro. Óir ip do iapraid paopre na tife cuipread iad map ceacairt d'feir Sapaná. Nuair ceapad an comliac feirne an oip paoi ceannar Pánnell cuis sac uile duine sup o'iapraid paopre na tife ceapad iad. Ip minic dubairt Pánnell féin é agus ip minic dubairt a luic leanta é. Ip minic minic dubairt dá mbead an eoir aca paopre na tife baint amac le som sae agus paobair claidéam go noéanpadoip é le ponn agus le diogpait. Agus tá an tuairim ceudna as muntear na héineann amain d ponn. Ip deacair a tuigim map rin ce'n fáe an cup muntear na héineann an paopre an na feirne meacca dá luacair coipregeadac an trác miolacoda agus mionairpanta an nro mo duine-pa. agus coipregeadac an an cainte amardeac reo deic mbhiona ó ponn. Bi ré ppaipre go leor ó ponn nac pad funneam no meirneac in na feirne. Dá geurce an paopre an na cladaip an uair rin agus daoine calma meirneamla do cup in a n-aic go mbead innceinn Saeóealac outcarac aca ip oisge go mbead ppa móp de'n paopre agaim i bpat ó ponn. Ac buideacac le Dia ni'l ré p-mall pór. C. U

Notes and Comments

Sinn Fein for Herreros!

Mr. Lloyd George has spoken, and at the time of writing everybody, from M. Clemenceau to Philip Snowden, appears to be satisfied! We are more cautious, having had some experience of L. G. We remember how, after he has "reconciled" conflicting claims and how after a few days consideration, the parties have found that the difficulties have only been varnished over to appear again after a little wear.

At the same time we congratulate the British Labour Party, and especially Mr. Henderson, upon having forced the Government to toe the line drawn by them. It was Lloyd George brought to heel by Arthur Henderson, a sweet revenge!

But the hypocrisy of the Government is appalling. When Ireland is demanding in vain the right to decide its own form of government, independent of British interference, the Prime Minister of Imperial Britain makes it a condition of peace that "genuine self-government on true democratic principles is to be granted to those Austro-Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it," that "the German colonies are to be held at the disposal of a Conference, whose decision must have regard to the wishes and interests of the native inhabitants of such colonies."

Thus is the Sinn Fein thunder stolen! The Peace Conference is to decide the future of—not Ireland—but the German Colonies.

Ireland and Russia.

Herewith we have pleasure in giving the text of a resolution passed at the meeting of the Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress, held in Dublin on Saturday, 5th inst.:

"That this National Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, representing the workers of Ireland, re-affirms its welcome to the Russian Revolution, hopes that it will be consolidated, and congratulates the Russian workers on the tenacity with which the Revolution has clung to its original democratic principles; that we appreciate the determination of the Government of the Russian Republic, and the soviets of the workers, soldiers and peasants to insist upon the application of the principle of the self-determination of all peoples without exception to the subject nationalities under no matter what imperial domination; that we call upon the workers and Labour and Socialist parties in all the belligerent countries to follow the example of the revolutionary democracy of Russia and bring pressure upon their governments, whether of the Entente or Central Powers, to observe, as has been done in Russia, the right of all peoples to dispose freely of themselves; and that we appreciate the action of the Russian Government and people in claiming this right for Ireland, and appeal to the democracies of Germany, Austria, Great Britain, France, Italy and

the United States of America, to carry out their professed principles in the same respect."

We can all add our congratulations to those who have brought the Russian Republic into being. The most hated of European autocracies is now as dead as mutton, and for that all democrats will rejoice. The Russian Revolutionaries have done much for democracy. They have made prominent the idea of national self-determination to which all now pay, at least, lip service; but the Russians alone are prepared to serve in the spirit and in the letter. They have made public diplomacy a fact. They have not only killed the annexationist plots of the "secret treaties;" they have so far conducted their peace negotiations with a degree of publicity hitherto unknown. They have expressed their sympathy for Ireland, and they will aid us when and how they can. We can give them only moral support at present, and at a time when the capitalist Irish Press is doing its best to discredit the Bolsheviks and their aims, we are pleased to do what little we can to help in a proper understanding of Russian Revolutionary intentions. We congratulate the National Executive of the Trade Union Congress upon its resolution, and trust it may reach our Russian friends and comrades in the cause of national freedom.

Food.

At last the export of butter from this country has been prohibited. It is necessary now to go a step further. During the months of December-March of each year this country never produced sufficient butter to satisfy its own demands. In normal time we depended upon Danish and other foreign butters to make up our supply. This year we are not to have any foreign butter imported and the probability is that we shall have no butter whatever. Margarine, too, is scarce, so that dry bread is not a very remote possibility for our people. The muddling of the food supply has been unpardonable, but even had there been no muddling there would still have been a very serious difficulty. The supply of food available throughout the world has been short during the past year. Wheat alone shows a decrease of 25 per cent. upon previous crop averages. The supply of fat cattle in Ireland is daily becoming smaller and the possibility of a meat shortage must therefore be kept in mind, and so far as practicable our resources should be conserved. The recent agitation has shown its efficacy, and we must therefore be prepared to continue it so far as may be thought necessary to our well-being. We are pleased to hear that a great public meeting is being arranged by the Executive Committee of the Irish Trade Union Congress. The meeting will be held in Dublin at the earliest possible date, and if it can be arranged the Labour representatives who recently resigned from the Irish Food Control Committee will speak. There is no possibility of doubting the seriousness

of the food situation. It is becoming daily more and more difficult to obtain adequate supplies, and even where supplies are available prices are prohibitive. We expect a great rally of organised labour in Dublin at the meeting to be arranged. The date and place of meeting will be announced in due course. It is due to Labour to make its influence and its power felt upon this vitally important subject.

Situation Vacant.

The "National News" political writer, on the look out for a successor to Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador at Petrograd, says: "We see no objection to the despatch of a locum tenens of the Labour type from London, provided a man can be found who, while sympathising with the Revolution, will hold firm to the principles which inspire our policy and will not allow himself to become unhinged by his novel surroundings or misled by the futile chatter of dreamers. Such a man may be hard to find."

We don't think so. Would not Mr. Havelock Wilson, O.B.E., fill the bill?

Is Henderson a Democrat?

We can have no faith in the words of the British Government until they show their sincerity by their deeds. The Revolutionary Democracy of Russia claiming the self-determination of nationalities does not hesitate to grant independence to Finland and the Ukraine. Thus is an example shown to the British democracy. Mr. Henderson, speaking on Labour's war aims; no doubt means well in his references to Ireland, but he has some distance to travel before he can be regarded as a democrat. When he says "the Labour Party will welcome and accept without qualification any solution arrived at by the different parties and groups represented on the Convention," he surely forgets that the Convention is an undemocratic assembly without any claim to represent the democratic thought of Ireland. In its desire for unity it is conceivable that an anti-democratic, anti-labour constitution may be evolved to conciliate the most reactionary elements in Irish life. Yet the British Labour Party binds itself, through its most powerful spokesman, to accept without qualification any solution this Convention arrives at!

British Labour must understand that Irish Labour demands that any constitution drawn up by the Convention shall be submitted to a referendum of the Irish people before it can be accepted.

Private Enterprise.

We note that a report has been made to the "Reconstruction Committee" in London recommending the establishment of sixteen large electrical power stations. From these stations is to be distributed all the electrical power required in Great Britain. Existing generating stations

(Continued on page 82.)

IRISH OPINION.

The organ of Industrial and Political Democracy.
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Matter intended for publication in the following issue must reach the Office not later than Monday afternoon.

Food Control Farce.

Labour has thrown over the Irish Food Control Committee. The Irish Co-operative Movement has also thrown it over. The Committee now consists of officials and their friends. The ordinary outside public, the common human being is no longer represented on it. The Committee as it now remains would have been an ornament to the old Russian system. It consists of bureaucrats, dependent upon the goodwill of the British Government for their salaries. They will in consequence be very careful not to cause any trouble nor to give any cause for uneasiness. It is a committee of Tchinovniks, the Irish Tchinovniks of the Land Commission and the Department of Agriculture. Our own view is that the Irish Food Control Committee was a fraud from the first. It was intended as an opiate for the Irish people. Rhondda and company seem to be of the opinion that we are a simple, childlike race, more attracted by the appearance of things than by realities. He has added one more to the long list of miscalculations with which he is credited. Ireland was to be lulled into a state of inertia upon the Food question by the appointment of this Committee. Had we fallen into the scheme as it was intended we should we might still be treating with the Food Committee and that Committee might in turn be keeping its eyes shut and its mouth open for the good things Rhondda's officials thought fit for it. We have not been taken in by the scheme. We are not quite the naive simpletons our governors evidently think we are, and on such a very vital question as this our faculties must be always on the alert. We must do our own work and not repose any confidence in the Tchinovniks now calling themselves the Irish Food Control Committee. We congratulate Messrs. Farren, Waugh and Lynch on their stand and trust that with the aid of the workers generally we shall soon have a Food Control Committee which invites confidence and which has real power. We have done with farces and frauds. We want a representative Food Control Committee, with complete executive authority in Ireland. We must have a Committee entirely free from Rhondda and his minions of the Civil Service in Ireland.

We are in entire agreement with Mr. Thomas Farren when he insists that the Committee was never intended to do any serious work. The Committee tried its best but found itself thwarted at every turn. "The man higher up," to use the phrase of another ex-member of the Committee, Mr. Harold Barbour, always found it convenient and easy to ignore the Irish Com-

mittee. The Irish officials were all appointed by the "man higher up." The Irish Committee never had even the semblance of control over these gentlemen. These officials did simply what they thought fit. They gave the Committee only the amount of information that could be forced from them, and that was very small indeed. They were obedient to their service, to their traditions, to their "Chief," never by any chance to the Committee of which they were nominally the subordinates. Who is the "man higher up"? Is it Rhondda? Is it Wrench? Is it Bathurst? We are at a loss to know, but we opine that it is Rhondda, whose willing tools the others are. The Irish Committee tried to work but could not. Take an instance. When the Dublin milk ring defied the Committee by raising the price of milk to 8d. per quart the Committee appointed a sub-committee to investigate the matter. The sub-committee presented its report, which was sent to Rhondda and ignored. A suggestion contained in the report for the prohibition of export of milch cows was deleted by Rhondda and no action was taken at the time. The Department of Agriculture supplied figures at which milk could be sold. Despite this the Committee surrendered to the dairymen, with only the Labour representatives present, Messrs. Farren and Waugh, dissenting. It had been decided to have the original price of 6d. per quart verified by experts, and if the figure was unreasonable it would be revised. The Committee surrendered before it got this information. Later the expert reported that the dairyman who grew his own foodstuffs could easily sell at 6d. per quart, but the damage had been done. The dairymen had won.

For a short time during the dispute it appeared likely that Dublin would be left without milk, the deliveries to one large supplier fell from 2,000 gallons daily to between 70 and 80. The Food Control Committee sought and obtained the power to commandeer the necessary milk supply. The Committee never used the power it sought and obtained. Instead it surrendered. It did the same thing in connection with a dispute about the price of bread in the Derry district. In Donegal police officials had power to vary and fix the prices of certain articles of food, of which bread was one. In one district the price was fixed at 8d. per 2 lb. loaf when the baker's price was 9d. As a consequence that district was deprived of its supply of bread from the Derry bakeries. An inspector from the Food Control Committee was dispatched to fix matters up. The way in which he did it reflects great credit upon all officialdom. He fixed the price at 9½d. per 2 lb. loaf or ½d. per loaf more than the bakers asked at the time. This man should be included in the next list of recipients of the Order of the British Empire. He deserves all the opprobrium cast upon those whose names have figured in previous lists and somewhat more especially for himself. So far as we can gather, the gentleman is one Bathurst, and we have pleasure in bringing him to the notice both of Rhondda and the people of Ireland at the same time. We should willingly confer upon the whole outfit the "most eminent order of the boot."

LABOUR IN IRELAND.

TRANSPORT WORKERS' RALLY.

On Sunday, 13th inst., at 12 noon, the ninth annual general meeting of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, No. 1 Branch, will be held in the Mansion House (Round Room). Members should make it their business to attend for matters of the utmost importance to the future of the Union will come up for decision.

The constitution of the Union will require strengthening, for after the stormy years the Union has become the largest in Ireland, alike in numbers and in financial strength. It has outgrown its old machinery and the further developments must be carefully planned.

The branches now number forty-five and effectively cover Ireland from Antrim to Kerry and from Wexford to Sligo. Various grades of workers are organised within the ranks and I.T.W.U. bids fair to become the One Big Union towards which, with its far-reaching objects, our martyred comrade, James Connolly, was steadily working.

All-Round Progress.

The record of successes during the past year is one of which the General President, the Executive Committee and organisers have reason to be proud. The minimum increase in dockers' pay is £1 per week. Carters, drapers' porters, theatrical workers and others have shared in the victories. The recent strike at Cork has introduced the shop steward system to every department of the printing trade.

Among rural labourers the Union has been equally successful and its representatives now sit upon the National Wages Board and upon many local boards. Farmers are showing reluctance to comply with the decisions of the boards, and a tendency to make the minimum wage the maximum for the district. House rents are being increased, a higher valuation placed upon goods supplied, and perquisites are being stopped. The Union is carefully watching these manoeuvres and will not fail to act to secure its members from imposition.

Liberty Hall, which, after Easter Week, was a ruin, has been restored, to become once more the headquarters of the Union and the lively centre of democratic life. The I.T.W.U., which Mr. J. Dillon Nugent, M.E.P., attempted to take over from Major Price as a concern, broken and bankrupt from the shock of the Rebellion, is to-day more firmly bound together, more extensive in its operations, and has greater resources behind it than at any time in its history.

ONE BIG UNION.

The republication of James Connolly's article has produced some correspondence, which is held over. Meanwhile, we shall welcome further contributions on the subject.

IRISH TRADES CONGRESS AND LABOUR PARTY.

Important Decisions.

At the meeting of the National Executive, held on Saturday last, several subjects of the first importance were dealt with, including the action of the Labour members on the Irish Food Control Committee, the affiliation of the National Teachers' Organisation, the Teachers Salaries Agitation, Representation of the People Bill, the International Labour position, the Russian Revolution, the political prospects of Labour in Ireland, etc., etc.

The affiliation of the teachers was agreed to, and the statement published by the Chairman and Secretary on behalf of the Executive was adopted.

A sub-committee was appointed to prepare a report for submission to the next meeting on the position and prospects of Labour in the various constituencies, with a view to fighting for a number of seats at the next elections.

The action of the Labour members in resigning from the Irish Food Committee was commended, and it was agreed that a public meeting regarding the Food Crisis should be held at an early date in the Mansion House, Dublin (under the auspices of the National Executive), to be addressed by Messrs. Waugh, Lynch and Farren, the Labour representatives from Belfast, Cork and Dublin, respectively, who resigned from the Food Committee.

A resolution was adopted, which appears in full in another column, in support of the Workers' Republic in Russia.

The Secretary reported that about 2,800 cards of membership to subscribers, under the organising scheme, had been issued to date. Further steps were decided upon to promote this scheme. Every Trade Unionist who desires to forward the interests of the Irish Labour Party should immediately enrol his name as a subscribing member, and call upon his Branch to appoint a collector under the Scheme. We aim at enrolling 10,000 subscribing members before the end of June.

ACTIVITY AT LIMERICK—THE BROKEN TREATY.

The dockers' strike has excited much comment and much has been made of the dockers' "breach of promise" by the local capitalist press. In August, 1917, by the good offices of the Federated Trades Council, an agreement was made by the shipping companies and the dockers fixing wages at 7s. per day and 9s. per night, any change to be the subject of one month's notice.

When the SS. "Kalambangra" came alongside on 27th ult., the men demanded an advance of 2s. per day and 3s. per night. This was treated as a breach of promise by the bosses, and the request refused. The Trades Council again tried to adjust the matter and

secured from the manager a promise that if the men resumed the matter would be arranged, any increase being made retrospective. The stevedore, however, did not appear next morning and the men withdrew their offer.

The Chamber of Commerce, in further conference with the Trades Council, demanded that the dockers should be put outside the pale of Trade Unionism and the loyal trade unionists of the city should unload the boat. Any concession to the treaty breakers was refused, although the boat had been loaded at Liverpool by dockers' drawing 15s. per day. Lying statements were circulated to the effect that the I.T.W.U. was urging the men to stand out because a strike at Limerick might mean the diversion of traffic to Dublin. The I.T.W.U. repudiated any connection with the strike, but only one of the local journals admitted the organiser's letter. It was the bosses' game to sow dissension in the ranks of Labour. The I.T.W.U. had not organised the men in dispute, but in face of the enemy it supported their claims.

The next strike is in the plumbing trade. Some weeks ago an advance had been granted the plumbers and a concession was asked for in the case of contracts. This being granted, work proceeded for a fortnight, when it was found that the parties who were granted the concession were canvassing the other firms to go back on the old terms. There are some employers in the trade who have the principles of men of honour, whilst of others, the least said of them the better. Another strike took place in O'Donnell's tannery, but, thanks to prompt action, it did not last six hours. It appears that the men in this employment joined the I.T.W.U., and the organiser, Mr. M. J. O'Connor, on behalf of the men, asked for an increase in their wages which after some parley was granted. The manager attempted to disturb the basis of the agreement by speeding up the work. Perfect organisation won.

The Commercial Workers are on the look-out for a lecturer on their craft and organisation. They are an energetic body here, as proved by the substantial concessions granted since their inception. It is to be hoped that they will see the light in the true sense and link up with their confreres in other cities in Ireland.

Progress is being made by the bakers, and their demands will be brought to arbitration next week.

The engineers held a large and enthusiastic meeting last week, addressed by Mr. J. Freeland, the Irish organiser. It is up to the Limerick A.S.E. to affiliate with the Trade Union Congress and Labour Party and thus bring themselves into unity with Irish Labour.

B. D.

PLOTHOLDERS.

Next week's "Irish Opinion" will contain a useful article on "Cropping the Plot," with a plan and instructions in full detail. Don't fail to order "Irish Opinion" from your newsagent.

**BELFAST TRADES COUNCIL
AND
LABOUR IN POLITICS.**

The monthly meeting was held at the Engineers' Hall, College Street, on Thursday, 3rd January, the vice-president (Mr. Woods, Railway Clerks) in the chair. Thirty-six delegates were present.

Trade Reports.

Amongst the trade reports presented were the following:—Railway clerks had secured an additional war bonus of 6s. per week, making 21s. since the outbreak of war.

Postmen's Federation reported an advance of 6s. per week for men and 4s. per week for women.

Corporation Carters, Public Health Dept. (Vehicle Workers' Union), reported an advance of 3s. per week, dating back to 1st December.

Belfast branch of the Typographical Association have secured an advance of 4s. per week from the first pay day in January (making 11s. increase since the outbreak of war). Overtime: Time and quarter for first three hours, time and half after three hours, double time for Sundays and holidays. The T.A. minimum rate is now 47s. 6d. per week.

Fair Wage Clause.

Mr. Donnelly (Vehicle Workers) reported that the cartage contractors to the Tramways Department of the Corporation (Edgar Bros.) were evading the fair wages clause in their contract, paying only 24s. per week to carters while the ruling rate is 34s. 6d. The Tramways Committee's excuse for allowing such a breach of the Fair Wages Clause is that there are no other carters doing similar work and therefore the clause does not apply. A deputation from the Council to act with the Vehicle Workers was appointed to appear before the Tramways Committee at an early date.

The Vehicle Workers also complained of the action of Messrs. "Barney" Hughes, bakers, in employing non-union carters at a wage of 27s. and 29s. per week. The Secretary of the Council was instructed to communicate with Messrs. Hughes on the matter, informing them that the attention of the Trade Unionists of Belfast had been directed to this grievance, and asking for a reply before taking further action.

The Musicians' Union alleged that the Shankill Road Picture House employed several non-union musicians at sweating wages. The delegates were asked to carry this information to their societies. Trade Unionists and their families being the main support of this picture house, the requisite pressure should be brought to bear upon the proprietor.

Profiteering.

Following the suggestion of the War Workers' Emergency Committee, a resolution was carried calling upon the Government to institute immediately an enquiry by Select Committee or Royal Commission into the scandal of profiteering, such committee to have power to examine into books, accounts and all

transactions of private firms. It having been thought necessary to enquire into the causes of industrial unrest, which meant an enquiry into the actions and motives of the workers, a similar enquiry was requisite into the actions and motives of the merchants, manufacturers, shipowners, speculators and capitalist class in general.

Irish Labour Party.

At the request of the National Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, Mr. Thomas Johnson addressed the Council on the Organising Scheme of the Irish Labour Party. After dealing with the need for immediate action towards organising the political forces of Labour in Ireland in view of the probable political changes, he detailed the scheme for enrolling as large a number as possible of subscribing members of the Irish Labour Party. The subscription, a voluntary one, had been fixed at threepence per month. A subscriber's card would be issued and a stamp affixed thereto for every threepence subscribed. Where a Trades Council existed which undertook the work of "organisation and Labour representation" in its own locality, the Council was asked to co-operate with the National Executive in the collection of subscriptions and enrolment of subscribing members from the various trade unions. In such a case the local Council would retain for the purposes of a local "Organisation and Labour Representation Fund," half the contributions, three halfpence being sent to the Central fund and three halfpence being retained for local purposes. The view of the National Executive, said Mr. Johnson, was that it was at least of equal importance to secure Labour representation on local governing bodies as in any legislative chamber. The work of building up a Labour Party in Ireland must be done in the towns and cities, and one of the most effective methods of doing this was to take an active interest in local affairs. But it is of great importance that the work of Labour representatives on town councils, boards of guardians, etc., should be co-ordinated, that the policy of the Labour members in, say, Cork or Waterford Corporations, should be consistent with the policy of their fellow Labour members in Derry and (when they arrive) Belfast. What we aim at is an Irish Labour Party taking its place in National and local affairs, pursuing a common policy and aiming at a definite object, i.e., the dethronement of capitalism and the substitution therefor of a co-operative commonwealth in Ireland.

After some discussion the Council adopted a resolution approving the scheme and instructing the delegates to bring the matter before their branches.

Nomination of Officers.

President: H. T. Whitley (Typographical Association).

Vice-President: Mr. Woods (Railway Clerks).

Treasurer: Jno. Windsor (Amalgamated Tailors).

Secretary: D. R. Campbell (Assurance Agents).

Assistant Secretary: Mr. Moore (Railway Clerks), Joseph Mitchell (Bookbinders).

Trustees: Thomas Moore (Patternmakers), Thomas Johnson (Shop Assistants), W. Boyd (Coach Builders).

Auditors: — Woods (Railway Clerks), W. Taylor (Furnishing Trades).

Committee: W. H. Murdoch (Joiners), R. Gould (Tailors), J. Donnelly (Vehicle Workers), T. Irvine (Postmen), A. C. Dodds (Theatrical Workers), S. Haslett (Boilermakers), Jno. Yaugh (Printers), J. Noble (Woodcutting Machinists), D. Gordon (Flaxroughers), Jno. Campbell (Sheet Metal Workers), R. G. Bell (Bakers), J. M'Cauley (Patternmakers), Jno. Clarke (Printers), J. Wright (Shipwrights), J. Connolly (P.O. Engineers), J. Alexander (Dockers).

The Belfast Teachers' Association have decided to affiliate with the Trades Council, thus falling into line with the teachers' organisations throughout the country.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DEPARTMENT AND THE PEOPLE.

Dear Sir—In your issue of Dec. 8th you state: "It is to be feared that our workers do not take that interest in technical education that might reasonably be expected of them." This is undoubtedly true; but it is also true that department officials do not take much interest in the working man. At a recent distribution of prizes, the secretary of a County Technical Committee stated that technical education was meant for those only who had reached the sixth standard. This makes technical education almost a monopoly for the middle classes, who have already a monopoly of university and intermediate education. Why should a knowledge of Shakespeare be necessary for a boy who intends to become a motor mechanic, and must the wives and daughters of our workmen have some acquaintance with conic sections before they learn cookery and needlework in the local technical school? The formula, "All creeds and classes," will not satisfy the workmen who have no representative on the Council of Agriculture, and whose wishes are not consulted when schemes of technical education are being drafted.

SAGART.

DUBLIN HOUSEHOLDERS' LEAGUE.

Sir,—The need for a Dublin Householders' League is very badly wanted to help the workers and to fight the profiteers. In the case of the publican charging sevenpence for a pint of porter—if a League was formed it would bring it down to fivepence: also all other kinds of foodstuffs. Hoping that "Irish Opinion" will give us a lead by starting the Dublin Householders' League.—Yours truly,

A DUBLIN WORKER.

5th January, 1918.

English Labour Getting Ready.

By PAUL SARADINE.

The British Labour Party to-day is preparing itself for the discharge of the duties of Government. In 1895 it had one member of Parliament. It now has over forty. At the outbreak of war its unity in the House of Commons was shattered, and it seemed to be a negligible factor. Behind its Parliamentary representatives, however, there was an organisation in the country, and it is due to the firmness of the party in the country that a Labour Cabinet has become a possibility now and a certainty in the near future. So certain is Labour's success that the editor of "Commonsense" has been at pains to introduce Mr. Snowden to his bourgeois readers as a possible Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to assure them that if the war continues, the Socialist's scheme of making a levy on capital may become a necessity of capitalism.

Without being unduly elated by the prospect of an all-labour Cabinet, the rank and file in the country sets about the business of providing that Cabinet with its indispensable basis, a majority in the Commons. That is not won by declamation on the hustings, but by bringing into existence local labour parties in each constituency, managed by representatives from the organisations eligible for affiliation, trade unions, Socialist societies and co-operative societies. These bodies appoint the local organiser and provide the funds to nurse the constituency. Henderson's suggestion of 300 Labour members in the next Parliament has appealed to the imagination of the rank and file. They mean to make sure. Local Labour parties are being formed in practically every urban constituency and in certain rural constituencies. Candidates are being selected and kept before the constituents. Bridgeton Division of Glasgow is a case in point.

Last year the local Labour Representation Committee decided to contest the constituency, and James Maxton, M.A., then in Calton Jail, was selected as candidate. £500 has been raised for expenses. The constituency has been thoroughly canvassed. Since his release Maxton has addressed several demonstrations in the Division, the latest being held on Glasgow Green on 23rd ult. The meeting, which was advertised as a "Peace Demonstration," was preceded by processions from six points, and was attended by 10,000 people. Bridgeton represents the high-water mark of enthusiasm and revolutionary fervour, but even in London, pro-war and anti-war factions are laying aside their differences to build up the local organisation which alone ensures electoral success.

The same zeal is being devoted to preparation for the next Town Council and Guardians' elections. Nothing is being left to chance. The London Labour Party is selecting its London County Council and Borough Council candidates. Glasgow Labour Party intends to contest thirty out of the thirty-seven wards of the city, and, as the election will be the first in the redistributed enlarged area, they will bring forward three candidates in many wards. The test question will be the local housing scheme, of which Bailie John Wheatley, a Catholic Irishman, President of the Catholic Socialist Society, is author.

The hearty enthusiasm which is being shown by British Labour should cause serious reflection here. We have no Parliamentary candidates, no municipal candidates, and no local organisation. A General Election is imminent. The "Daily Express" has been demanding one for the past two months. A Parliamentary General Election presupposes the re-election of all local Councils. The incubator at Trinity may give us an Irish election of some kind. Labour must be ready. No bourgeois party can do our work. Let us make sure, in any case, of the local Councils. If Labour masters them, then let who will attempt to rule Ireland, either from Westminster or College Green—Labour will command. Up, Bolsheviks!

NOTES AND COMMENTS—Continued.

are either to be abolished or closed down. There are many British municipalities with generating stations. Most of the towns are lighted by electricity, and electric tramways are the rule. Yet despite this the "Reconstruction Committee" report suggests that the new giant electricity generating stations should be "left to private enterprise." We know what that means to the public generally, and we hope that no such system will be permitted or tolerated. Either the central authority or combinations of local governing bodies should undertake this enterprise. Municipalities have shown that they can conduct these undertakings with greater public advantage than "private enterprise," and there is no reason whatever why they should not continue to do so. The profiteer is now firmly entrenched and everything we can do to dislodge him from the position he holds must be done. To hand over to private individuals the right to levy monopolistic profits from the entire community is a proposal so monstrous that we cannot understand why it was even permitted to be proposed. The "divine right" of the "upper classes" to make profits out of our requirements must not be interfered with evidently. Our only duty in the world is to make that world

as comfortable as possible for wealth and leisure. The proposal is as likely to be adopted as that of the British Trade Bank or British Dyes, Ltd., in both of which cases some of our money was handed over to British profiteers. The present report does not once refer to Ireland, though we were nominally represented on the Committee responsible for it. We can only hope that British Labour will kill the "private enterprise" suggestion.

Gas and Electricity.

At the moment when the Reconstruction report upon electrical undertakings recommends "private enterprise" in Great Britain some people in Dublin have seen fit to attack once more the city municipal undertaking. It is true, we think, that the city generating station has not been as successful as it might well have been, but when it is attacked for increasing its price for light and power at a time like the present we think there is something to be said in defence. The great cause of complaint, of course, is that the city lighting and electricity supply has not been left to "private enterprise" in the same way that our gas supply and our tramway service have been left. The "private enterprise" of

the Dublin Gas Company is certainly something to wonder at. Its prices have been raised several times since the outbreak of war, and this is how the Company does it: When the time for the presentation of accounts comes nigh a notice is issued through the press informing all and sundry that the next "meter reading" will be charged at an increased price. A notice of this kind was recently issued informing the public that "the January readings" would be charged at an increased price of 1s. per 1,000 feet, an increase of 75 per cent. from 4s. to 5s. per 1,000 feet. Thousands of gas consumers have consumed under the impression they were doing so at the price of 4s. per 1,000 feet, but in reality they are asked to pay 5s. When the gas has been consumed the price is increased. We question the legality of this proceeding and we trust that some consumer will contest it. That is "private enterprise." Yet the Citizens' Association howls when a suggestion is made by the Electricity Committee of the Dublin Corporation to raise the price of electricity. Let the Corporation emulate the Gas Company and the Citizens' Association will be pleased. The Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club will send congratulations.

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