









Irish Trades Union Congress, Clonmel, 1912.

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**SCENE IN THE HOUSE.****SUSPENSION OF MR. LANSBURY,****ATTACK ON MR. ASQUITH.****CALLED "TORTURER OF WOMEN,"****PREMIER'S COOLNESS.****MEMBERS MOVE TO HIS PROTECTION.**

Westminster, Tuesday.

The calmness of a humdrum day was rudely shattered this afternoon by the suspension of Mr. Lansbury. The scene was sprung upon the House after a question by Mr. Keir Hardie, who inquired about Miss Emily Wilding Davison, the suffragist prisoner under punishment for endeavouring to get letters in a pillar-box. Mr. McKenna is attending the King, and in his absence Mr. Ellis Griffith stated that Miss Davison, on passing to her cell, had thrown herself over a banister on to a netting eight feet below; that she had thence jumped a further five feet on to the lower flight of stairs; that her injuries had been pronounced slight by an outside expert summoned from St. George's Hospital, and that she was now under close observation.

Mr. Hardie framed a further question so as to include the allegation that the lady had attempted suicide as the only protest against the cruelties of forcible feeding. Mr. Ellis Griffith answered that it was the real intention the method adopted was quite inadequate. Mr. Healy rose. In low appealing tones he addressed the Prime Minister, urging that these sentences, which end in any case on Saturday, should be terminated at once. Mr. Asquith answered Mr. Healy with evident sympathy, declining indeed to interfere with his colleague's discretion, but adding that the ladies can be free here and now if they will undertake not to commit the offence in the future.

**THE STORM BREAKS.**

Before the Prime Minister had quite completed his sentence Mr. George Lansbury sprang to his feet and shouted angrily, "You know they cannot do it. It is ridiculous to ask them for an undertaking."

From all parts of the House cries of "Order, order" were at once raised, but Mr. Lansbury, now more excited, could be heard pitching his voice above the tumult and asking repeatedly, "Why didn't you ask Mr. O'Brien to give an undertaking? Why didn't the Liberal Party ask him to give an undertaking when he was in prison?"

Mr. Asquith at the beginning of the disorder remained standing, but as Mr. Lansbury showed no intention of giving way before the steady roar for "Order" he resumed his seat between the Master of the Bench and Mr. Ellis Griffith.

Mr. Lansbury up to this point had stood

in front of his usual seat at the lower end of the front bench below the Gangway, but suddenly he came forward to within a yard of the Treasury Bench and shaking a trembling finger towards Mr. Asquith screamed out: "Why, you are beneath contempt. You call yourself a gentleman and you forcibly feed and murder women in this fashion. You ought to be driven out of public life."

**SHOUTING IN THE PREMIER'S FACE.**

So soon as Mr. Lansbury advanced up the floor of the House the Speaker rose, and as he was noticed members who had been continually calling order one by one ceased to speak, until there could be heard the cold, clear tones of Mr. Lowther himself, repeating at intervals "Order, order."

But Mr. Lansbury either did not hear the Speaker or would not hear him. Almost choking with emotion and passion the member for Bow and Bromley continued to shout in the face of the Premier: "It is the most disgraceful thing that has happened in England. You are going down to history as the man who tortured innocent women. The Government have tortured women. It is disgraceful, disgusting, contemptible. You are murdering these poor women. You cannot tell them that they have the opportunity of walking out of prison. You know they can't do it."

At this point a few Ministerialists, when Mr. Lansbury just seemed likely to attack Mr. Asquith, pressed forward in their places, but seeing the calm on the Treasury Bench they, too, remained passive. There was only the continued repetition of the word "order" to be heard, with Mr. Lansbury's high-pitched angry voice rising above the monotonous drone of a hundred other voices.

**PREMIER PERFECTLY STILL.**

Mr. Asquith sat perfectly still, his arms crossed and his eyes fixed upon some point above the rows of Unionists on the benches before him. Only by his tightly closed lips could one see that he knew himself the object of Mr. Lansbury's sentences. No other Minister on the bench moved in his seat.

All this time the Speaker stood motionless. Several times he quietly said "Order, order." Mr. Lansbury continued to speak, but at length went slowly back to his seat, burying his face in his hands.

The Speaker then said, "I shall ask the hon. member for Bow and Bromley to leave the House."

Mr. Lansbury, again jumping to his feet, said, "I am not going out," and other Labour members murmured "Shame." Mr. Lansbury, his anger rising again, turned towards Mr. Asquith and shouted, "I am not going out while this contemptible thing is going on. You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" ("Order, order.") Turning towards the Opposition Benches Mr. Lansbury called out, "You men who talk about fighting in Ulster ought to be driven out of public life. You don't know what your principles are. These women are showing you what principles mean. I

say that the Prime Minister, in the way he is going on, is beneath contempt."

**SEVERE PENALTIES THREATENED.**

After this outburst Mr. Lansbury again buried his face in his hands.

The Speaker hinted at severer penalties. The Prime Minister must be protected, so must the House. If every member had so acted as had Mr. Lansbury all respect for Parliament would be lost. "It's lost already," cried Mr. Lansbury. Mr. Crooks walked along the carpet to his colleague, and gently sought to lead him beyond the Bar. The Speaker again gave his instructions. "I've no quarrel with you, Sir," said Mr. Lansbury, "and, any way, what does withdrawal mean?" The Speaker explained that the suspension would be for this sitting only. "Well, what do you say about it?" asked Mr. Lansbury of his leaders—Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Keir Hardie. These members seemed to indicate that withdrawal would be wisest. Mr. Lansbury pulled himself together, made a dash for the Bar, and disappeared amid the crowd of members there gathered. A quick cheer of approval endorsed his decision.

On the bench still sat the Prime Minister, quiet as ever but paler. In his expression there was not a trace of anger, but neither was there indifference. Whoever else has offered over this controversy one thing is certain—the Liberal leader has not escaped. Throughout these strenuous years he and his have seldom known from day to day when or in what form the persecution would manifest itself. There were personal assaults only ten days ago. This afternoon his offer of liberty to the hunger strikers, made with the most earnest courtesy, is received with taunts of "Murderer!" In apportioning sympathy may an eye-witness suggest that "the torture," as it is called, is not all on one side?

[What a pity this scene was not enacted over the action of the Government in connection with the London Strike.—Ed.]

Owner: How did you come to puncture the tyre?  
Chauffeur: Ran over a milk bottle.  
Owner: Didn't you see it in time?  
Chauffeur: No, the kid had it under his coat.

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"What's fun to you is hurt to us."

TO THE EDITOR IRISH WORKER.

SIR—Would you kindly allow me space in your valuable paper, as the friend of the workingman, to draw the attention of Lord Iveagh to the extra work heaped on the already overworked tramwaymen. In order to supply Guinness's some of the regular cars are cut off and the extra duty put on the cars left running to the extent of one and some of them two journeys, which means from one to two hours extra without any remuneration whatsoever. I have not the slightest doubt that Lord Iveagh is unaware his sports causes the sweating of any workingman, and hope in future, if necessity causes it, that the men will be paid for any extra work done, as they have not been on previous occasions. Thanking you in anticipation.—I am, Sir, yours,

A. VIOTIM.

Name enclosed, but not for publication.

TO THE EDITOR IRISH WORKER.

SIR—At a meeting at Beresford place on Sunday last a controversy took place (Larkin v. Richardson) in which Richardson made a remark that we (the workers) were all ignorant. Well, as the con says, "We may be crazy, but we ain't no-fools." The Creator that created him, and also the class he referred to, gave them brains to know right from wrong; and it's about time we showed Richardson and his clique that we can do more than think. We can not alone put them out of office, but out of the country. In conclusion I must congratulate you on your great victory over your opponent, in vindicating yourself and the class which you represent. Good luck to you and the cause you have at heart. Thanking you for the required space.—I remain, dear Sir, yours,

THINKING OBSERVER.

"I'll work no more for that man, Dolan."  
"An' why?"  
"Shure it is on account of av a remark he made."  
"An phwat was that?"  
"Says he, Casey, says he, ye're discharged."

The expression "Adam's apple," obtained its name from a superstitious tradition that a piece of the forbidden fruit which Adam ate stuck in his throat and produced the swelling.

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