

IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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JUNE 22, 1918.

ONE PENNY

Union Jack Catholics. A Scheme that Isn't Dead. Guying Cork Workers.

Mr. E. Guff Returns to the Charge.

SOCIALISM AND SINN FEIN: CAN THERE BE UNITY?

I have been charged with claiming that communism was peculiar to ancient Ireland. The Irish Socialist who would claim such would be indeed as superficial a humbug as the man who would label our Irish rights and faiths princes. But I have never claimed any such thing. I know, just as well as Mr. Thompson does, that communism was, at some time in the past, common to all the races on the earth—however much their present stage of development may differ. Neither do I claim that, if a foreign foe had never set foot upon Irish soil, communism would have lived on. Communism had to give way before new property and social relations in other countries—so would it also have had to die out in Ireland. But, taking into account the fact that it was by Norman Invaders the private-property system was introduced—as it was by Cromwellian force it was universally established—it is quite fair to label the communal system "Gaelic," in opposition to the foreign private property system.

Mr. Thompson gives three main forms of land ownership which obtained in all countries at some time in the past. In this he is right—to a certain extent. It was a pity, though, that he forgot to begin where he should have begun—namely, at the beginning. Real primitive communism in land is where the land and all its products are the common property of the whole sept, or clan; the necessary labour (either of hunting, fishing, or tending herds and crops) being performed in common. What Mr. Thompson gives as the first stage of communism (namely, where a portion of the clan, land is divided periodically—first every year, then at longer and longer intervals—amongst the families) is really the collective system of communal property, and is separated by a very long period, both of time and development, from primitive communism. I shall confine myself here to maintaining that this was the land system prevailing in Pre-Norman Ireland. Perhaps, in a future issue, if the Editor will kindly allow me space, I shall substantiate my claim, by proofs, against the "peasant proprietary" of Father Gaynor and Mr. Thompson.

In the meantime, I await, either from Father Gaynor or Mr. Thompson, proof of an ownership other than that vested in the whole clan.

But really, we Irish people are too much given to living in the past. Shutting ourselves up in our insular shell, we are wont to pride ourselves—without any justification—as being a race apart. Though we are of the present, our eyes are turned towards the past, watching for inspiration, or seeking a cause of self-conceit. But the past is past, and can never be re-called into the present; nor will inspiration come from it. We must live in the present, with eyes and mind and energy intent upon the future. Socialism, like any other movement, cannot justify itself by the past—it must stand the test of all truth—"will it work?"

Why then have I touched at all upon the past? With one sole purpose—to point out to all, who have eyes to see, that Sinn Fein, while using the glamour of the past to restore what it calls the old Gaelic spirit, is using the past as a respectable cloak in which to conceal, from vulgar eyes, a system of society that had no place in Ancient Ireland, and that cannot justify itself in Modern Ireland. And Socialism—in Ireland, as well as in every other capitalist country, branded as "foreign shoddy"—is the natural outcome of the social and property relations existing under capitalism in any, and all, lands.

Much has been written and spoken of late about the "unity of Irish democracy," "the common aim of Sinn Fein and Labour," "the need for reciprocal constructive criticism between Sinn Fein and Socialism," etc. In the first place, there can be no true "democracy" that is not based upon economic equality. In the second place, there can be no real "unity" where the aims are directly opposed. And, any so-called "unity" that may be engineered between Sinn Fein and Labour is only a sham—because their outlook on life and their principal aim are entirely different.

What is the aim of Sinn Fein?—to set up a free, independent Irish Government. But this government—whether of the type of France, America, Switzerland, or a system of Bureaus, as favoured by Mr. Figgis in the "Gaelic State"—will be, essentially, a government of people, a government elected on a territorial basis, a government relying in the last resort, upon the naked force of its army and police. In

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The
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AT THE DOOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL.

In the organised Labour Movement in Europe there is nothing, except its shameful acquiescence in the war, to compare in the extent and degree of its discredit with Labour's weakness in allowing the re-assembling of the International to be prevented by the Governments of Europe. Neither Russia nor Ireland shares in that shame and that discredit. Labour in England, in France, in Italy, share both with Labour in Germany and Austria. Had Labour in all five countries not been servile and slavish the International might have been sitting any time these last twelve months. But the Herves and the Havelock Wilsons made of Labour the willing tool of governments which prohibited the meeting of the workers' spokesmen from the belligerent countries at the very time, as everybody knows now and some knew all along, the official and authorised agents of these same governments, on both sides of the Rhine, were secretly carrying on conversations on peace proposals.

That is the sorry story of International Labour these twelve months. What is to be the tale told of it these next twelve weeks? Once again the time has come when Labour in all countries can assert its will and force the resurrection of the International. Under force of the gravest crisis in the military and diplomatic history of the war sections of the capitalist press which have hitherto frowned on all talk of peace, notably certain important journals in France, are now declaring that it is inadvisable to turn down peace proposals without discussion. Contemporaneously with this comes the news that it is proposed that there should be held in Switzerland in July a meeting of the representatives of Labour from the Entente and neutral countries to discuss the British Labour Party's War Aims Memorandum. To that proposition the support of Labour is being given in the most important of the Entente countries. The

French working class, a proletariat crucified to make a capitalist holiday if ever there was such, picking up again the broken threads of its glorious traditions of '93, '48 and '71, is demanding passports for its representatives. France was ever gallant, if sometimes fooled, and the revolutionary, self-sacrificing militants of France may again help to lead Europe and the world, if only in the train of great, heroic Russia. Paris has not forgotten the glorious Four Days. England has none such either to forget or remember. But France, again with the enemy at her gates, may rise to the great heights, and never rose she higher than when she found herself in the agony of Gethsemane. She finds herself once more to-day. Europe may forget 1914 if France can become herself again in 1918, as Labour forgot the Empire when France made the Commune of Paris.

Of the War Aims Memorandum, we have already given the opinion of Irish Labour: it is weak, vacillating and inadequate both from the world's and Ireland's points of view. For all that, Irish Labour is not only willing but anxious for the restoration of the International, even with the Memorandum as the basis of discussion. To the proposal to confine the conference in Switzerland to Labour in certain countries we cannot agree so readily, because our position is that there can be no International Congress unless both sets of belligerents are invited. We may not say that we are not of the Entente, we may not say that we are neutral, we may not say that we are belligerents. But we may indeed say that if there is to be a Conference of Labour from the neutral and some belligerent countries Irish Labour claims the right to send representatives to that Conference and will assert that right at the doors of the Conference itself.

That right Irish Labour was prepared to assert at various times since July, 1917, and to-day it is more passionate in its will to that end than ever before. No false modesty will prevent us saying that Irish Labour last year and early this year took the right course when it declared its intention and its will in International affairs to its sister movements in other countries. When Branting and Longuet and other Continental comrades come again, as they will before the end of the month, within reach and hearing of Irish Labour, the claims of Irish Labour will, we hope, again be urged upon them. The next step will be to claim representation at the proposed Conference in Switzerland. To Stockholm, to Switzerland, it is all the same to Irish Labour, Ireland claims a hearing, and Labour is the voice to make that claim.

And when Congress meets in Waterford in August, Congress, we trust, will hear the story of Labour's effort in the International, and Congress, we hope, will set up its Irish section of the International Socialist Bureau. This week then, before the 23rd, let the Unions and their branches see to it that in the busi-

ness sent forward for Congress there will be no neglect and no omission of the International and its Irish section.

THE ISLE OF SERAPHS!

What is all this talk of Ireland being left in or out of the world? If one were inclined to emulate the volcanic mouthings of the nearly-forgotten Thomas Carlyle, one would plunge into a diatribe full of rumblings and numblings about the new, strange, and surprising transcendentalism of solids!

But let us ask these advocates of suspension to explain exactly what they mean. We know that they are out to uplift humanity, but they must forgive us if we doubt their ability to uplift a whole geographical area such as Ireland, and set it somewhere amidst the winged heads of the cherubim!

Ireland is part of the physical universe, and as long as she remains such she will have her place in the world. She is peopled, in this year of government grace, by a race tenaciously bent upon self-determination. Self-determination and pre-determination are not mutually exclusive. To say that you can only have absolutely one or absolutely the other reminds us of the obsolete metaphysics of free-will with which we adorned our adolescence. The plain, logical fact being that the will is sometimes free and sometimes not free, as Spinoza put it: "The will is free inasmuch as it is not compelled, and not free inasmuch as it is not uncaused."

Self-determination means, fundamentally, the right of a given people, or community, to decide upon its own share and contribution to the progress and evolution of the affairs of the universe; pre-determination is the universal reaction wherein the affairs of a nation are legitimately controlled by international needs and conditions. Historic necessity is the reversion of the world's social consciousness upon a nation's responsibility.

England denies the right of Ireland to self-responsibility. She must not, therefore, expect this people, with their present terrible tenaciousness, to support her responsibilities in return for that denial.

It comes down to this, that Ireland, according to English reasoning, is to be put out of the world, because she will not forswear her racial principles and take a place assigned to her by England.

How would the Editor of "The New Age" like some authority to swoop down upon him and command that he was to eat green cabbage every day, or even every second Tuesday? Of course there is the alternative (always is there an alternative) of pickled cabbage, which is not green—but worse!

Another thing: and here is the crux for Socialists. "The world order changeth!" May not England's place be with the culminating climax of a system entering upon its age? May not Ireland's spirit and body politic be more pregnant of that birth which has already begun to labour through Russia.

SELMA SIGERSON.

A SCHEME THAT ISN'T DEAD.

By R. J. Cassidy.

(From the Queensland "Worker.")

Only now are many people beginning to realise what they and their country escaped through the defeat of conscription.

And a lot more are realising what incessantly lurks in the dark mind of the Prussianist.

In fact, conscription itself can well be judged by the company it keeps.

Just what sort of men some of the New South Wales advocates of compulsory throat-slitting are can be gauged by a number of documents which have recently come to light.

Everybody—in New South Wales, at any rate—vividly remembers Premier Holman's secret memo, on recruiting. In that notorious document were suggestions to the effect (1) that amusements should be practically abolished; (2) that the press should be censored as it was never censored before, and be instructed as to not only what it should leave out but also as to what it should put in; (3) that unmarried men should be sacked wholesale, and that youths, boys, and women should be requisitioned for all necessary national work.

Mind you, these suggestions were made, not during the referendum campaign, but at a time when voluntarism was the accepted and existent military policy of the land. In fact, they constituted Holman's conception of the voluntary method of raising recruits! "You can please yourselves about going to the front," he said in effect, "but you're not going to stay here in this gloriously free country if we can starve you out."

And Holman wasn't alone in adopting this iron-heel attitude. Like all political twisters, Holman is a coward. If he is bowled out in something particularly atrocious, he at once seeks to pass the blame on to somebody else.

Thus it came about that, in the Assembly the other night, he tried to convince the House that the suggestions contained in the notorious secret memo. were really inspired by or were elaborations of other suggestions by certain "enthusiasts."

And to "prove" his contention he produced a list of suggestions from Captain Coates, Professor Macintyre, and General Wallack, all of whom, particularly the first-mentioned two, were grand panjandrum in the campaign for the gathering in of recruits.

Let us remember that Coates and Macintyre were, so to speak, the national trustees or administrators of voluntarism. They unconditionally accepted the positions offered to them on the unwritten but nevertheless obvious understanding that anything pertaining to or savouring of compulsion in any

shape or form was shoved right out of court.

Yet, according to the documents Holman rather meanly produced in Parliament, what did these servants of the voluntary system do?

Listen. Captain Coates wanted a regulation **compelling** theatre, concert hall, and moving picture proprietors to shape their programmes to the Jingo-Junker plan of things; also he wanted sport restricted to well-nigh the point of total obliteration.

Professor Macintyre proposed that single men should be the first to be discharged, and that "this policy should be laid down not in a vague way, but as a **fixed policy and openly announced.**"

In view of these disclosures, we have much to thank Premier Holman for, since he plainly shows what sort of Prussianist maggots wriggled in the brains of the men whom an unsuspecting public believed were impartially administering the military policy of the country.

For what we have to consider is this: If these men wanted, as they undoubtedly did, to make voluntarism a process for starving or otherwise **compelling** men into enlistment, **what would they have done if conscription were made the law of the land?**

And that this New South Wales stunt was part of a general scheme is proven by reference to the columns of the Tory Press. For instance, in October last the Brisbane "Daily Mail," in a leading article, declared: "Though there is no attempt to enforce compulsory service by direct methods, **there is to be a form of moral compulsion**" (meaning, of course, IM-moral compulsion of the kind advocated by Holman, Coates, and Macintyre).

But probably this diabolic scheme hasn't been dropped. Indeed, the defeat of conscription has in all likelihood made the schemers keener than ever. And, although they may not find it advisable to bump the sporting bodies and amusement proprietors too hard, they can easily enough put their starvation idea into practice—unless unionists and the workers generally say in decisive tones: "It shall not be done."

We are up against a scheming, determined, and unscrupulous gang. Cheated of the chance of imposing conscription one way, they won't hesitate to achieve their purpose in any other way that presents itself or that can be developed out of our capitalistic social system, wherein thousands of single men can exist only so long as they can find a boss.

Trade Unionism was very largely responsible for the rout of the Prussianists. It now devolves on Trade Unionism to see that its victory is not stolen from it by the infamous gang it defeated.

A Resolution.

The Irish National Council of the Shop Assistants' Union has placed the following resolution on the agenda of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party:—

"In view of the extension of the Franchise and Reform of Electoral Law and the necessity for enlarging the scope and authority of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, it is resolved to appoint a special committee of seven members to formulate a revised constitution and standing order, and to report not later than September 30, 1918, the report to be circulated amongst affiliated societies and a special congress be held to consider, and if so decided, to adopt or amend same not later than October 31st, 1918. The Revision Committee be instructed to give special consideration to:—(1) Proposals for the affiliation of individual members, women, working class political organisations (Socialist societies, local labour parties), and co-operative societies; (2) combining the industrial and political functions within one organisation; (3) ensuring that the working class character of the organisation shall be confirmed."

Longford.

Sunday, 16th, saw Longford's labour rally. The Foresters granted the use of their Hall and the I.N.F. band paraded the town before the meeting. Messrs. O'Brien and Farren were the speakers, and met with a warm reception. Mr. Peter O'Connor (N.U.R.) was chairman. A branch of the Irish Transport Workers' Union was formed, of which Mr. Mahony (N.U.R.) is acting as secretary. This is another of the numerous instances in which the N.U.R. members have exerted themselves to serve the cause of labour outside their own ranks. The admirable spirit shown by the N.U.R. men everywhere in Ireland is warmly appreciated. The Longford Committee includes, among others, a tailor, a baker, a teacher, and a comp.

Bagmen Scabs.

We hear complaints of travellers scabbing in trade disputes in Belfast, Cork, and Dublin. What have the local branches of the Commercial Travellers' Association to say?

Tiemakers.

The International Tailors' Union is making application to the scarf manufacturers of Dublin for increases to piece and time workers engaged in that prosperous branch of the Rag Trade.

(S) Windling.

University College, Cork refuses to acknowledge a trade union or reply to letters. Local authorities which support this college should get busy. This attitude is a curious commentary on the Social Reform work which, through the activities of Messrs. Smiddy, McSweeney, Burke, and Rahilly has given U.C.C. an unusual regard in the esteem of the workers.

Mr. E. Guff on Labour's Goal: People's Control of Field & Factory

(From Front Page.)

other, so-called, "free" Nations, the whole force of the State is used to protect the "sacred rights of property," and to subdue the workers if they dare strike for better conditions—and why?—because **capitalism, in order to preserve itself, must keep control of the State.** Does anyone claim that what has happened in other lands will never happen in Ireland? Are we to believe that there is a nebulous something in the mists that cling to our hills, in the winds that sweep in from the Atlantic, or, perhaps, in the "genius of the Gael," that will keep us above the faults of other "free" capitalist States? And if that vague something exists only in our imaginations—will the baton that cracks upon the worker's head have any the less force, for that the police-man who uses it is clothed in "green" instead of in "blue"?

But what is the aim of Labour? Whatever may be the immediate reform sought, the final goal is Socialism. What is Socialism? Briefly put, it is a system in which, what a man produces, he has the right to consume. Under a capitalist system, the worker produces all wealth; but the capitalist walks off with all of it except what is barely necessary to keep the worker in working form. Whither then does Labour go? Is it not towards a free Ireland? Yes—but towards a free Ireland based upon the **government of Irish industry by Irish men and women**—not towards a free Ireland based upon the government of Irish men and women by other Irishmen and women. Under capitalism, in every country, industry governs man—the capitalist as well as the worker. And all the wrongs, all the inhumanities, all the exploitation, so characteristic of the capitalist system, arise from that one cause—that industry governs man, that production is chaotic and uncontrollable, and that the fundamental conception of our common humanity can have no place in it.

This government, then, which Sinn Fein appeals to Labour to help it to establish, is just such a one as Labour **must fight** before it can reach its own goal. Labour can undoubtedly help Sinn Fein; but Sinn Fein can no more help Labour than can the Irish Party or Carsonism. And any section of Labour that blindly supports Sinn Fein is just playing at the childish game of putting up a cock-shot for the mere fun of knocking it down again. The only consideration that **might** justify a class-conscious worker in supporting Sinn Fein, is a purely negative one—to prove that the evils of Ireland are born of Irish capitalist conditions—and not of foreign domination.

For the present peasant-proprietorship in land, Mr. Thompson proposes that "the State should insist more and more upon the right and full use of

land," that "the farmer should apply the right methods of use through co-operative organisations," and (lower down) that the State should tax "the co-operative societies or other communes." The mention of "State insistence," "taxation" and "communes," all in the one breath, brands Mr. Thompson at once as of the mildest of drawing-room Socialists—in fact, as nothing more than a Reformer, and a pretty tame one at that. A commune can work only on a firm basis of economic equality and perfect freedom: State insistence is not only foreign to the very spirit of a commune; it is plain tyranny—because it is fundamentally "government from the top, down." Many lower middle-class parents, now at their wits' end to find soft jobs for their children, would hail with wild delight the rich harvest of snug berths foreshadowed in Mr. Thompson's scheme. But, unfortunately for them and for his Socialism, it simply would not work.

Socialism in land is the only system that can benefit all—the landowner as well as the landless. What is Socialism in land?—that the land within the commune—big or small—be the common property of all; that those who have the inclination to work on the land have the opportunity to do so; that production be for the free use of all, instead of for the private profit of an individual; that the land be worked in common; that machinery (to shorten the hours of necessary labour) seeds, manure, etc., be provided by the commune. That such a system would benefit the landless workers and the struggling farmers of the West is evident. But it would also benefit the "big" farmer—however "big" he may be. At present, the farmer produces principally for sale; he **must** sell at the market price, be his profit big or small or non-existent; free competition forces him to keep step with the times; if machinery—horse or motor-drawn—be generally introduced, he must adopt it or go under; to-day he may be well-off, that is no guarantee that to-morrow may not see him ruined; his labourers press upon him for higher wages and shorter hours; his life is one long round of toil and worry; the hired worker may cease at six o'clock, but the farmer—the owner, mark you!—must keep on working; even on holidays his brain is racked with vexatious doubts and plans, wondering will this crop be up to the average, will those cattle realise a decent profit, where will he get the money to replace that bit of worn-out machinery, or to buy that other new bit, what will he do with his younger sons, where will he get fortunes for his daughters. But under Socialism all that will be changed. Those who work on the land will control the land—instead of, as at present, being controlled by it. Production for use, instead of for profit, will leave leisure time for cul-

tivating the mind, and for gaining an insight into the higher realities of life.

As soon as the fierce, free competition that is bound to come "after the war," coupled with the imperative demands of his labourers, shall have convinced the farmer that farming "does not pay," he will come to realise that the extremest of extreme Socialism—so far from robbing him—is the only force that can free him from the slavery of endless toil, and from the haunting fear of future want.

I do not, for a moment, mean to imply that, where a man had a special passion for gardening, he would not be allowed a piece of private land to divert himself—so long as he did not thereby encroach upon the rights of the rest of the commune. He would have as much claim to his little bit of ground as the artist to his canvas, the sculptor to his marble, or the scientist to his instruments. To deny that right would be tyranny—and Socialism aims, not at substituting a new tyranny for an old, but at destroying all tyranny and putting in its place perfect freedom—"the brotherhood of men and the sisterhood of women."

UNION JACK CATHOLICS.

THE LOVE YOUR BOSS PARTY.

A body calling itself the Standing Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Trade Unionists in England is actively promoting a split in the English Labour Party. These gentlemen, self-appointed to speak for the Catholic Trade Unionists of England, are more Catholic than the Pope in one respect and violently anti-papal in others.

They want to split the Labour Party because it aims at "the common ownership of the means of production." According to these self-appointed Doctors, Burns, Milligan, and Sexton, no Catholic can support a party whose principles are endorsed by S. Ambrose and many teachers since, principles which have never been condemned by spiritual authority.

On the other hand, these gentlemen of the National Union of Dock Labourers are thick and thin supporters of the English Government, which is pledged to Italy not to recognise the Holy See at the Peace Conference.

At a conference to be held at the Bishop's House, Salford, on 6th July, this precious clique will attempt to form a Christian Democratic Party to compete with the English Labour Party. Dublin, Cork and Belfast know the measure of Sexton's christianity and democracy, and will have none of it. We warn all Irish Trade Unionists to give this soi-disant Christian Democratic Party a wide berth, even if it has such a measure of Episcopal patronage as is indicated by its assembly at a Bishop's house.

Our Feebleness Arises from our Economic Individualism.—A. E.

CO-OPERATIVE NOTES.

The I.A.W.S. Bulletin for June gives a splendid record of progress from all parts of Ireland and the story of the Enniscorthy Society, with its rise in sales from £1,000 in 1895, to £57,000 in 1917. Tea rooms, picture houses, saw-mills, are the latest developments of its activities. It bids fair to realise the community desiderated in "The National Being." "The Bulletin's" reports of co-operative progress are, perhaps, the most heartening news we can read.

Waterford.

Despite the shortage of supplies, the Society has done an average trade of £114 per week. A net surplus of £31 is being set aside as the nucleus of a reserve fund. The members have wisely provided their society with adequate capital, but we look to them to increase their purchases from the society. Even in a low-wage town like Waterford a higher figure than 5s. 2d. per member per week could be reached.

Derry.

The registration of a new co-operative society marks the beginning of a new era in the Maiden City. Difficulties are being encountered in obtaining supplies, but meantime we hope the Trades Council and the Unions will see that members do their duty to the movement and themselves by joining the Derry Co-operative Society, Ltd.

Limerick.

The projected society here is also at the registration stage. The committee has wisely decided to trade for cash.

Queenstown.

The half-year's sales totalled £7,025, and a dividend of 10d. per £1 is declared. Members would do well to let the dividends lie.

Dublin Industrial.

The Phibsboro' branch, at 69 Phibsboro' Road, opened on Friday, 14th inst., with satisfactory sales and some enrollments of new members. The members and the children will have an outing on 27th July. Mr. McGill has been appointed organiser and canvasser for the society.

Week-End School.

The Larne Summer School is fully booked now for its fourteen days' session. Those unable to attend may come to the week-end school in Dublin on July 20th and 21st. Prof. Fred Hall, M.A., B.Com., will be the lecturer. Particulars may be had from I.A.W.S., 157 Thomas Street, Dublin; or Mr. W. M. Knox, 18 Frederick St., Belfast.

Open Air Propaganda.

"The Bulletin" directs attention to the successful appeals made at Moycullen and Killanin on 9th inst. for more members and loyal support, by the local co-operators, in open air meetings. The method should be employed everywhere. Co-operation has a tale of success to tell, and need not be ashamed to challenge public discussion on its principles and methods.

Rural Wages in England.

The English Agricultural Wages Board has proposed the following minimum wages:—30s. for Gloucestershire, Dorset, Brecon, Radnor, and Somerset; 31s. for Hereford, Leicester and Rutland; 33s. for Kent; 36s. for team-men, cowmen and shepherds in Norfolk.

The Dean and Trade Unionism.

Rev. Dr. Moore Ede, the Anglican Dean of Worcester, writing about farmers' attempts to evade the conditions on which they secured advanced prices for corn, says:—"If one realises that 25s. now is only equivalent to 12s. 6d. before the war, it becomes the duty of all lovers of justice to assist the agricultural labourers to obtain justice—which means 25s. per week and all arrears from the date of the Act. The most obvious way of doing this is by supporting their efforts to obtain a strong Union. If there be a branch of the Agricultural Labourers' Union in this part of the country I will gladly send a contribution to it."

Bolands.

The Sexton gang has arbitrarily closed down the mill and locked out their mill-men in consequence of the carter's strike (called to determine whether the Food Controller or Sexton had power to negotiate wage raises).

Keep Your Eyes Skinned.

A strike was necessary to enforce a solemn agreement between the A.S.E. and the controllers of the National Shell Factory. The agreement provided that no skilled workers should be dismissed while dilutees were employed. Work has been resumed pending inquiry.

Carlow.

The new Transport branch is growing rapidly. The first fruit of organisation is an increase of 5s. per week given to the roadmen without application.

AN R.M.'S STRANGE VIEW.

Petty Sessions of a case which arose out of a labour dispute in the C.D. Board Sawmill, Claremorris, the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Hinkson, took the view that a striker who wishes peacefully to persuade a blackleg from doing scab work may not stop him against his will to speak to him.

Mr. C. A. Maguire, M.A., LL.D., the brilliant young lawyer for the defence, who based his case on the "peaceful picketing" Act of 1907, pointed out that the R.M.'s contention practically nullified that Act, that it was useless for a striker to have a legal right peacefully to persuade a blackleg to stop from work if at the same time the striker could not legally stop the blackleg on the road or on the street, to speak to him.

Fortunately, the two other magistrates on the bench took a saner view of the matter, and the case was dismissed on the merits, the R.M. dissenting.

At the same case the C.D. Board official, in the course of his evidence, said that the men who were on strike for higher wages had already got a rise—two shillings a week. Mr. Maguire simply scouted the idea of calling such a sum a rise at the present day. Evidently there is room for labour organisation in Claremorris.

Benefits of British Rule.

The West African niggers are beginning to realise the benefits of British Rule. Their principal produce, palm kernels, are selling at lower than pre-war prices, owing to the monopoly secured to the English soap and margarine traders by the export tax. And margarine, soap, oil-cake and other manufactures of palm kernels and palm oil are doubled in price to consumers.

<p style="text-align: center;">IRISH TRANSPORT and GENERAL WORKERS' UNION.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Free Membership Offered to All.</p> <p>THE advanced wages gained by the Union for its Members exceeds, by several hundred times, the amount of subscriptions paid by them.</p> <p>DON'T worry about your dues—the boss will pay them for you. All information may be had from the nearest branch secretary, or write to the General President,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thomas Foran, Liberty Hall, Dublin.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">THE MARY STREET PICTURE HOUSE (The "Mary-O.") Star Pictures Always.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE ELECTRIC THEATRE, TALBOT STREET. First in Dublin and Still the Best.</p>
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THE COMMUNAL NUCLEI.

TRADES COUNCILS.

Ballymena.

A Trades and Labour Council has been established in this Antrim town. The N.U.R. took the initiative. We hope the Council will rope in the surrounding towns and villages, and make itself a power in the country. Now that Ballymena and Larne have moved, when will Ballymoney, Coleraine, Lisburn and Newtownards organise?

Cork.

At the meeting of the Council on June 6th, Mr. Denis Houston (I.T. & G.W.U.) intimated several increases secured by members in various occupations. Messrs. Blair and Co.'s girls had obtained advances from 9s. to 11s. per week.

Referring to the dispute which had been existing for some considerable time between the I.T.G.W.U. and the Dock Wharf and Riverside Workers' Union at Rushbrook and Passage, Mr. Houston said that matters had now come to a head between the two Unions concerned.

Briefly, the tension between them had been brought about by the action of the D.W. and R.W.U. in refusing to work with members of the I.T.G.W.U. unless they attached themselves to the other society. They even had the audacity to demand a 10/- entrance fee, often obtained by a promise of work which never materialised, and showed preference to non-unionists if they would consent to join the D.W. and R.W.U. rather than give employment to men who had a lifetime of Trade Union membership behind them.

Such a state of affairs was bound to breed resentment, and quite recently about 100 men at Rushbrook decided to secede from the D.W. and R.W.U. and came over to the Irish Transport Union. Similar action was taken at Passage, but there the man who led the "agitation" was promptly pounced upon by three of his work-mates, and reported to the foreman, who dismissed the "agitator." This was followed by a strike, which lasted some 48 hours, at the end of which time the autocrats of the D.W. and R.W.U. capitulated and the Irish Transport card was now officially recognised on the Extension.

But there were the men who were employed in the Docks who still laboured under the Czarism of the D.W. and R.W.U., and he asked that the Council arrange to hold a meeting in Passage on Sunday, the 9th inst., so that the air might be cleared, and members of his Union be put on the same footing as those who belonged to the other association (applause). This was agreed to.

Derry.

The Council is growing steadily in influence, in numbers, and in firmness of purpose. The Derry branch of the Federation of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers has now affiliated. This is an important step, for whatever may be the opinions held about soldiering, the

ex-soldier must be mobilised in the working-class movement immediately on discharge. The patriot employers have shown themselves too ready to use the ex-service men as blacklegs.

As announced, the Council adopted a resolution against conscription by 33 to 1. All the Irish Trades Councils are now at one on this subject.

The Maiden City will be strongly represented at Waterford. The shipyard section of the N.A.U.L. will have four delegates, and other unions are arranging proportionate representation.

Without waiting on the executive sanction, the local tailors have secured by direct action an increase of 1d. per hour.

The strike at Abercorn Hosiery Factory for war wages has been settled by Sir George Askwith's offer of arbitration on the girl's demands.

Gweedore and Rosses teachers have now added their strength to the Council. The migratory labourers in the district are forming a union to secure decent conditions in Scotland this summer.

Killarney.

The Council is preparing for a big push. The teachers and N.U.R. delegates were welcomed at the last meeting. The Transport Union delegate called attention to the trouble on Lord Kenmare's estate, where the manager is, to put it mildly, unsympathetic to labour. The Council gave the assurance of solidarity with Kenmare's employees, and by its intervention it is hoped to establish 33s. as the minimum wage.

A town and district organising, wage raising and hour shortening campaign is contemplated, in which the aid of prominent speakers will be sought. The Council will be represented at Waterford Congress.

Mullingar.

Mullingar Trades Council has adopted this resolution:—"That this meeting of the Mullingar and District Trade and Labour Council, representative of the organised workers of the town and district, do hereby strongly condemn the action of Philip Sheridan, Griffinstown, Killucan, in holding the lands of Colehill, Kinnegad, in defiance of the people of the district, and also strongly condemn the action of those people who are assisting him to hold the said lands. We request him to comply with the wishes of the people of the district, and to hand over the lands for distribution to the workers of the district. That copies of this resolution be sent to Philip Sheridan and Edward Sheridan, Griffinstown, Killucan; Edward Conlon, J.P., Leager, Hill of Down; Rev. Fr. Bracken, P.P., Kinnegad; Rev. Fr. Nulty, P.P., Ballinabrackney; P. J. Weymes, Mullingar; Jas. Donnelly, Kinnegad; J. H. Langan, J.P., Hill of Down; Thomas Campbell, Edenderry; Mrs. O'Connor, Killiskillen, Kinnegad, and all the local Press, the 'Voice of Labour' and 'The New Way.'"

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KILKENNY TRADES COUNCIL.

At a meeting held in the Town Hall, Kilkenny, on Friday evening, the 24th May, attended by delegates from the various local Trade Societies and Organisations, a United Trades Council and Labour League was established. The following societies were represented:—Bakers, Teachers' Organisation, Irish Post-Office Clerks, Postmen's Federation, Tailors, Painters, Printers, Brewery Employees, Asylum Attendants, Drapers' Assistants, and National Union of Railwaymen.

The following officers were elected, the election in each case being unanimous:—

President, Mr. Pierce Wall, T.C.; Vice-President, Mr. D. Hegarty (Teachers'); Treasurer, Mr. T. Hennessy (Asylum Attendants); Secretary, Mr. M. J. Burke (Post Office Clerks).

It was proposed by Mr. Walshe (Teachers'), seconded by Mr. Corrigan, and passed unanimously:—"That this Trades Council call upon all unorganised workers to at once join their respective Trade Unions, and thus help to strengthen the forces of Labour in the fight before them: and to enable them to do so the more effectually we wish to impress upon them the necessity of availing of the new franchise."

Why War Continues.

Armstrong Whitworths, the great armaments firm, pays 12½ per cent. to its shareholders; Nobels Explosives Company paid 20 per cent.; Siemen's Bros., 10 per cent. (more to follow); British and American Tobacco Coy., 30 per cent.; Smithfield and Argentine Meat Coy., 15 per cent.; Vickers Maxim, 12½ per cent.; Lyons (caterers), 25 per cent. Why kill the goose that lays such golden eggs?

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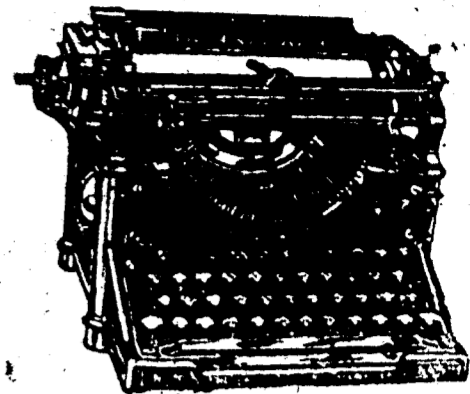
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Guying Cork Workers.

Messrs. Guy and Coy., of Cork, continue to keep their assistants on strike for a paltry increase of £7 16s. per week, divided among 35 workers. We have already reported in detail the negotiations preceding the strike, which began on 27th ult. Since then Rev. Father Thomas, O.S.F.C., Alderman Lynch and Mr. Twomey, Secretary Cork Trades Council, have been assiduous in trying to compose a settlement. Proving themselves no "guys," the firm have entered into discussion, and several times a settlement has been imminent, except on some one clause of the agreement.

Each item of the workers' claims has in turn been conceded and withdrawn by the firm. Their only object in negotiation has been to play for time and seek to exhaust the funds of the Union and destroy the moral of the strikers. Up to date they have failed. They have made it a point that the Union concerned (the Shop Assistants) is an English Union, and that the trouble has been caused by two "aliens," an Englishman and a Scotsman, on the staff. This development of pseudo-Sinn Fein comes very strangely from Unionist employers who have been notorious importers of English assistants.

That Cork Labour rightly estimates the guying is shown by Ald. Kelleher's speech at the Trades Council, when he said:—

As to the term "Alien" being used by the firm he thought it was too late in the day for Messrs. Guy to draw that red herring across the path. Irish Labour was not concerned with any worker's nationality so long as they were loyal to the Trade Union movement. If these same men had stopped at their work and had "been guilty of blacklegging on their fellow-workers they would not have been called "Aliens." It was highly discreditable to the firm that they had used such an epithet but he hoped the "Aliens" would remain true to the cause they had identified themselves with, and that before very long they would, with their fellows, be back at their work.

At the present stage, the workers are determined on war to the knock-out blow, but are still willing to arbitrate. One comical incident occurred in connection with the one man who has gone back. The strike committee published a leaflet: "Ba! Ba! Black Sheep! Guy and Company have succeeded in inducing one of the strikers to return to work. His wages were 21s. per week, on which he is trying to support a wife and two children."

Light Weight.

Jim Larkin will be interested to learn that his old sparring partner, Light-Weight Scully, has been re-elected Chairman of South Dublin Union.

The Prager Lock-Out.

Mr. Goldfarb, the manager of the Dublin branch of the Manchester and London firm of cap-makers, Prager and Coy., locked out the workers on 31st May, because they refused to work on a piece-rate scale fixed by him. The machinist on time work had been paid 5s. to 12s. a week, and could not afford to risk their earnings being reduced. There will be no return to work, unless under the wages programme prepared by the Amalgamated Tailors' and Tailor-esses' Society.

Some other conditions will require to be altered, for example, the practice of stopping a whole day's pay if a girl loses half a day through illness.

London and Dublin Wages.

Mr. Goldfarb has stated he wishes to introduce English rates of pay in Dublin. We are able to show the comparative rates in London and Dublin, and have no doubt the Dublin workers will gladly accept Mr. Goldfarb's offer, if this is what he means:—

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Lining Maker	—	40s.	20s.	Average
Needle Hands	—	35s.	—	17s.
				Time
				Workers
Blocker ...	90s.	32s.	55s.	5s. to 12s.
Seam Presser	50s.	25s.	18s.	
Packer ...	—	30s.	—	8s. to 12s.

It's up to Goldfarb to do it.

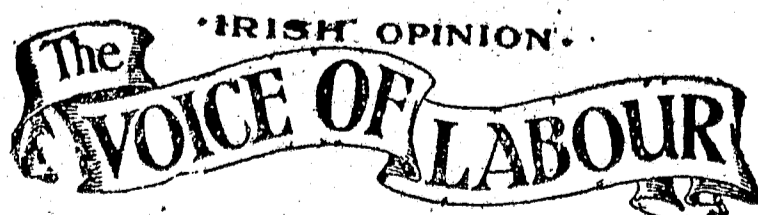
Illogical Teachers.

The Irish Protestant National Teachers adopted unanimously this resolution:—"That we condemn the action of the C.E.C. of the I.N.T.O. in passing a resolution which recommended the young men of Ireland to shirk their duty to the Empire in its time of danger."

They rejected, however, the logical consequence of their condemnation, as expressed by Mr. Morrison (Belfast), who moved:—"That we call upon the Government to put conscription into force in Ireland at an early date."

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