

IRISH OPINION

# The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. Vol. I, No. 38.

AUGUST 17, 1918.

ONE PENNY.

War Weary  
Scots.

Labour Wins in  
Donegal, Derry and  
Down.

Freedom's  
Path.

## A Word to the New Executive.

To the newly-elected National Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party.

Comrades,

Your year of office as the National Executive of Irish Labour may be unmarked by abnormal incident, or it may be an unceasing whirl of happenings, vital to our well-being, rich with opportunity of advance, or menacing with threats of evil reaction. Whatever befall, the final judgment on your work will not be delivered by the next Congress at Drogheda, but in the issues of your labours as they appear in a more distant future, in the lives of our people. We ask you to magnify your office, and we adjure you ever to have in mind that you work for the future, preparing to-day the basis of Reality for the incarnation of Labour's Ideal.

Remembering that the power you possess and the influence you wield is derived immediately from the organisation of the workers of Ireland, we would urge you to assume responsibility for extending the ranks in areas yet unorganised, and to bring into the closest co-operation with you every association of workers by hand or by brains.

Delegate to your members the supervision of labour organisation in their residential areas, and urge them to take the initiative in the formation of unions and the binding of the unions into trades councils.

Organise intensively. Offer your counsel to the unions whose National Executive you are. It will not be your duty to smash the small union and foster the growth of the great, but being alive to

the dangers of sectionalism, you will not wait for the inevitable conflict between rival unions. You will bend your efforts directly to promoting the incorporation of competing organisations into a union, whose every member will be an expression of Labour's solidarity. In Belfast, in Dublin, in Cork, and especially in Limerick, there are numerous instances of money misspent and energy diffused that wisely directed would contribute not disunity and weakness, but unshakeable strength to our movement.

Our relations with kindred movements deserve your careful reflection and early action. You have it in you to save the great agricultural co-operative movement from becoming a close corporation for exploiting the national resources for the profit of individuals. The immediate need for correspondence with the co-operative movement springs out of the employees position, and here you can in concord with the I.A.O.S. and the Irish Sectional Board of the Co-operative Union avoid the scandal of strikes by constituting joint arbitration boards for the settlement of such differences as arise between organised labour and co-operation.

But on the constructive side we would remind you that the Co-operative Store should be the commissariat department of Labour's fighting forces, that co-operative production and distribution give the workers an increasing control over the necessities of life, and that the principle of social action underlying the co-operative movement only requires extension to bring the Workers' Republic into being.

Without anticipating the decisions of the special Congress on the re-constitution of the Labour movement on a broader basis, we look to you not only for guidance on political questions, but for the building of a Labour Party in the country. The Irish worker possesses the spirit of class-consciousness, but that spirit is unincorporate.

It will be your duty to give Irish Labour its own political organisation, not at the top in the person of labour leaders of local or national fame, nor in the elected representatives in Parliaments and municipal authorities, but in the banded forces of the rank-and-file. Every village and parish must have its electoral committee representative of the local unions, every borough and county its local labour party. You, too, will preach and practice the independent action of labour, separate from all parties however specious their claim to speak of all classes. Already the partizan press has opened fire, with lie, half-truth, and poisonous innuendo.

In the independence of Labour lies the victory of labour. We feel it is a hackneyed saying, that which enshrines the truth, "Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow." It seems hackneyed because we have said it but have not acted it. Yours is the opportunity to practice the self-reliance of Irish Labour in industry, in politics, and in the social and municipal life of the nation. Chosen to be first among equals, your leadership will be respected; your direction followed, as you remain true to Ireland and to Irish Labour.

COLKITTO.

IRISH OPINION.

# The VOICE OF LABOUR

Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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## PLUCK WINS.

Friends of liberty everywhere will rejoice that through her characteristic courage and daring Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington has succeeded in compelling the British Government to release her. There is no end to the resources of the great murdered pacifist's widow. That she should make her way to America in despite of the British Government, conduct a great campaign in the States, return to Europe only to be forbidden to land in Ireland, and escape home undetected from virtual captivity in England, delighted all her friends and astonished not a few Defenders of these Realms. But that she should compel the Government to release her and cancel her order of internment when she had been arrested and deported crowns all her bold deeds and big adventures. We have no doubt this strong, able, and determined woman will find her way back once more to Dublin, and she will be more than ever welcome. Ireland has not yet forgotten the great services of herself and her husband in the past. Ireland will never forget the great tragedy and suffering she has gone through. We shall be disappointed if Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington does not give Ireland and the enemies of liberty still greater cause to remember the widow of the man whom the released murderer, Bowen Colthurst, had done to death.

## The Path to the Workers' Republic.

Your contributor in the excellent article named above in a recent issue concludes: "Thought and education, drill and discipline, these be our immediate duties—the control and management of industry our objective and our policy." The article is thought provoking, and suggests the repetition of the following, already quoted in your columns from Jas. Connolly:—

"Capable of almost infinite expansion, and not the least amongst its attractions is the hope that the minds of Irish men and women once set thus definitely in the direction of common work, common ownership, and democra-

tically controlled industry, their thought would not cease from travelling that path until they had once more grasped the concept of an Ireland of whose powers, potentialities, and gifts each should be an equal heir, in whose joys and cultures all should be sharers."

Connolly here writes of what looks like a by-way running parallel with "The Path" your esteemed contributor indicates, and of which you in another column, headed "Co-operative Notes," in the same issue, give sufficient details to provoke not thought alone, but action and achievement.

In the latter column you mentioned a "one-horse" village in Scotland with an almost unpronounceable name which has more than half its population of Irish extraction. These do their bit towards retaining £53,000 annually from the clutching hand of the profiteer. You also show that in Edinburgh, by "thought and education, drill and discipline," five out of every eight families democratically control the management of their feeding and clothing industry at a cost of 16/6 per £.

Your contemporary, the "Herald," the other week, pointed out that those same Edinburgh people made a profit last year of £8,648 on their farm, and the Dora regulations, in its efforts to assist profiteering, forced them to accept £407 Government bonus for selling their own potatoes to themselves in their own shops! Lest you think the Edinburgh people are "all Scotch" read the casualty lists of the Royal Scots and other regiments recruited in that locality. You also show the general distribution of the population of the British Isles as purchasers at the various classes of shops. Notoriously Ireland, and particularly Dublin, supports the multiples, the grocers, and the dignified huxters to an extent much greater than the figures you give would indicate, yet the idea contained in the paragraph quoted has for years been dinned into the ears of Dublin workers by Connolly, Larkin, and a few who still lead in the Trades Council. Self-determination is the foremost resolution of the Dublin Trades Council at the forthcoming Congress. But the Poles and Yugo-Slavs, Belgians and Indians know more and do more self-determination of this kind than do the Dublin workers, if co-operative statistics prove anything.

Nor can there be much difference between the multiple and the democratic shop in these days of regulated prices and supplies except the fundamental difference that in the latter the capitalist does not finger your money, and cannot, therefore, use it against you in the future. Your contributor truly says Labour is not equipped for the task of running offices, works and factories if the capitalist should step out. He won't until he must, but one is almost driven to say that Labour is afraid to try its hand in its own technical school.

Labour in England and Scotland is already running the largest commercial machine in the world. The Co-operative Wholesale Society and the Scottish Society of the same name, have several men of Irish extraction or birth at their

heads. At least one director of our Irish Wholesale began in a humble place in life. Business capacity is not taught in Universities. It is God's gift to the individual, who only discovers it when he tries. Connolly, in the paragraph quoted, does not teach Socialism or Sinn Fein, Nationalism or Internationalism. He simply indicates a part of "The Path to the Workers' Republic," too long neglected, which all may use in turn without impeding the progress of any, and the use of which recuperates and renews our energies in our other activities. Is Dublin Labour only able to walk on one beaten track?

CO-OP.

## THE VOICE OF LABOUR.

(To the Editor of the "Freeman's Journal.")

Dear Sir,—With reference to the report of the discussion at the recent Trades Congress at Waterford of the motion standing in the name of the Dublin Trades Council asking for the support of the trade unionists of Ireland for "The Voice of Labour," permit me to point out that the motion was not negatived, as your report states, but, on the contrary, was unanimously adopted, after hearing a full statement of the position of the paper by Messrs. Thomas Johnson and Cathal O'Shannon. In view of the wide publicity which your report has received, I trust you will give this correction equal prominence.—Faithfully yours,

WM. O'BRIEN, Secretary,  
Irish Trades Union Congress and  
Labour Party. Dublin, August  
11, 1918.

## INSURANCE.

The profession of Insurance agent has hitherto been the opportunity of the hopeful and the last refuge of the despairing individualist. But in common with others, the agents have wakened to the value of joint action, and their union is entering upon a period of vigorous activity, with results beneficial to the members. The annual meeting of the Dublin members recorded the addition of 22 new members, and a record growth in finance. In addition to ordinary subscriptions, Dublin had given to the headquarters a gift of £5 to the strike fund, as a thank-offering for the prompt aid rendered by the executive and Mr. R. Brooke, the general secretary, in the recent successful strike of the Dublin agents of the Refuge Society. The following officers were re-elected for six months:—Mr. J. Dunphy, President; Mr. W. Coffey, Vice-Chairman; Messrs. O'Connor and Doolan, auditors; and Mr. Jas. Byrne, secretary and delegate to Trades Council. The retiring treasurer, Mr. Hegarty, was unable to take office, and Mr. Douglas was appointed. The committee consists of Messrs. P. T. Brady, P. Madden, T. Doyle, P. Nolan, P. O'Carroll, M. J. Egan, P. W. Byrne, J. Lynch, T. Slattery, T. Kelly, M. O'Connor, and P. Ward.

Every trade unionist should make it his business to ascertain if the agent calling upon him is a member of the National Union of Life Assurance Agents.



# The Workers' Republic. The great only appear great because we are on our knees: LET US RISE.

## Labour's General Staff.

We are more than ever sorry this week that space is so limited in "The Voice" that we can neither report the proceedings of last week's Congress nor convey adequately to our readers the impressions of both others and ourselves upon what has been indubitably the most important deliberative assembly ever called together in the name of the workers of Ireland. We can but touch briefly and lightly upon certain of the events and decisions which marked last week's Congress in red letters in the annals of Irish Labour. And first of all we have a word to say of those on whom has fallen, at the desire of Congress, the mantle of leadership for the critical twelve months lying immediately ahead of us. The new National Executive elected at Waterford is: Chairman, Thomas Cassidy (Typographical Association); Vice-Chairman, Thomas Farren (Stonecutters); Secretary, William O'Brien (Dublin Trades Council); Treasurer, Thomas Johnson (Shop Assistants); Miss Timmons (National Teachers); Thomas McPartlin (Carpenters), Cathal O'Shannon (Transport and General Workers), T. C. Daly (Railwaymen), J. T. O'Farrell (Railway Clerks), M. J. O'Lehane (Drapers' Assistants), Joseph Mitchell (Belfast Trades Council), M. J. Egan (Coachbuilders). Sparing neither their blushes nor our own we believe that these members of the National Executive are not only representative of the movement and of the opinions and desires of the Congress, but that they are as well able and experienced Trade Unionists, with plenty of initiative, constructive ability, strength and independence of character, well defined and progressive principles and, we think, that disciplined dash and reasoned courage that mean leadership. They will need all these qualities before their term of office is out. They do not include all whom we should like to see on the Executive, but if they are not the picked peaches of Irish Labour they are most certainly the chosen of the movement and Congress, and in them Labour as a whole and the Unions as its fighting battalions have full and implicit confidence. That confidence must not be abused, for on the National Executive rests the responsibility, the terrible responsibility, of piloting Irish Labour safely and honourably through the resistance to conscription, through the difficulties of a most critical year of industrial and political struggles, and through the re-making of Ireland, of Irish Labour and of the International. It is, we repeat, the most terrible responsibility that has ever rested upon the shoulders of Labour's National Executive. We know the Executive has the ability to discharge it worthily, we believe it will not flinch or fail, we trust it will have both courage and wisdom, remembering the times in which we live, the spirit upon which we work, and the issues we have at stake. Bail o Dhia ar an obair.

## Storms.

Congress opened under what might have been a dark cloud, but was only a passing shadow, the abandonment of Sunday's procession and meeting through the permits blunder. Yet the atmosphere was electric, even before the opening. The crowded train of delegates on Saturday was a bustling throng of earnest, if merry, travellers, who alternately discussed Congress, and whiled away the time with song and jest and story. We needn't tell all about that journey. On Sunday the discussion was brisker than ever, for opposing opinions and principles were eagerly canvassed, and by that time rival groups were already measuring their forces and strength. We watched them all with interest, and not a little amusement at times. Soon after the formal opening on the Monday morning the general lines of the proceedings were made clear, and only a few issues, but those of all importance and feverish interest, remained in doubt. Mr. McCarron raised the storm by protesting against the election of William O'Brien as President of Congress, but, although the discussion was lively to over-heat, through a bad case and worse generalship, he was badly routed. Congress, we think, was heartily glad to get all this over early and its support of O'Brien has been amply confirmed; we are glad to say, by the Dublin tailors, whose general meeting after the Congress again vindicated O'Brien. With this we may close the episode, but not before we advise Messrs. McCarron and Lynch never to repeat the wild and autocratic threats and nonsense they made in the course of the debate. Other storms followed later in the week, chief among them the debates on Mr. Lynch's attack on "The Voice of Labour" and Mr. Bennett's explanation of his refusal to sign the outgoing Executive's anti-conscription manifesto, and his opposition to the International resolution. Both protesters fell easy prey, Mr. Lynch to Tom Johnson's careful, deliberate, and full statement on the position of the paper, and Mr. Bennett to Tom Foran's greatest speech, perhaps the great effort of the Congress, and as crushing an indictment as Congress has ever listened to.

## The Bright Spots.

The big and important resolutions on the agenda on the International, the Control of Industry, Self-Determination, the War and Peace, Education; etc., were carried with great enthusiasm and, where a division was challenged, by overwhelming majorities. There was no mistaking the temper of the delegates on the questions that are agitating Labour. We rather regret that neither the motion on the Control of Industry nor that on Self-Determination was opposed, for we looked forward to keen and well-sustained debates on both, and the discussions would have done much good. But both principles are now affirmed and become the official policy of Irish Labour, and Labour can face the world with a worthy programme and policy. It is satisfactory, too, that all the motions on the re-

drafting of the constitution should have been referred to a Special Congress for, only a special congress can deal adequately with such a big problem. We trust the National Executive will give Congress a constitution fitting the times, spirit and circumstances of the newly re-born movement. It is to be regretted that more time and more discussion were not given to educational and housing questions, but in spite of the fact that Congress sat longer than usual it concluded, as usual, in a hurry. In future a fourth day's session will be a necessity.

## "The Voice of Labour."

Mr. Lynch's attack on this journal gave "The Voice's" backers an opening which they had not hoped for, so crowded was the agenda. Contrary to certain newspaper reports, Congress was overwhelmingly in favour of support of the paper, and expressed itself in this sense in no uncertain fashion. For that vindication of the conduct and policy of the paper all who are connected with the Irish Labour Press are grateful. We hope that now that the delegates are back again in the Unions they will give a practical demonstration of their support. We want more readers, and we must have a bigger paper. Our special Congress number has won general praise, and in many quarters we are asked if we can keep up that standard. We can if Trade Unionists will give us the necessary help. We have no room at present to deal with Labour questions as they ought to be dealt with, but if the Unions will give us their help we promise them they will have nothing to find fault with in the quality or quantity of the matter "The Voice" will turn out.

## The Lighter Side.

After our criticism of the Waterford Committee last week we can afford to be generous in our references to the Waterford men this week. They made more than amends for whatever fault was committed over Sunday's meeting. They were faced with the biggest task ever undertaken by a Congress reception committee, and they rose to the occasion magnificently. Everything went with a swing and a dash that put everybody in good humour. The local people seemed to vie with one another in their endeavours to make the delegates not only comfortable but happy, and they were both. In the trip to Tramore, the entertainment provided there, the concert and the cinema show, and in a score of other ways, the Trades Council made itself the hospitable host of the delegates, and on all sides its successful efforts were warmly appreciated. There was another and less official social side to Congress—the impromptu concerts held by various groups of delegates throughout the week. Fun and frolic ran furious from Tramore to the Granville and Metropole, and not a few of the staid and steady delegates appeared in a new light as excellent entertainers. Last, but by no means least, the good comradeship of the Scottish fraternal delegates, O'Hagan and Simpson, crowned the week. To them we owe the raising of "The Red Flag."

# LABOUR IN IRELAND.

## FARM LABOURERS' STRIKE IN ULSTER.

(By R. McClung.)

"It is impossible for us," says "The Herald" (London), "to publish all the complaints made by agricultural labourers against the meanness of the Wages Board." That is in England. In Scotland, where rural workers had been strongly organised, and had established district minimum wages before the Corn Production Act was passed, the "Scottish Farm-Servant" for August calls that measure a "Wage Reduction Act."

We chronicle week by week the grievances of the Irish workers under the same Act, and now a crisis has come upon us. A partial strike of farm workers began on Saturday, 3rd August in Donegal, Derry and Down.

In Donegal the claim was made for 10/6 increase per week. Similar claims were made for Derry. In Down the claim was for 5/- increase and one o'clock stop on Saturdays. The strike is spreading at time of writing. On Saturday, 3rd August, 800 members of the Workers' Union attended meeting in Downpatrick to arrange for picketing, etc. 800 pickets turned out on Monday morning at 10 a.m. and succeeded in peacefully persuading every non-union farm worker in East Down to join the Union and cease work. On Tuesday, August 6th, R. McClung, Organiser, spoke for over an hour to a crowd of over 2,000 people, being cheered to the echo again and again. On Wednesday a meeting of women workers was held in the Assembly Hall, Downpatrick, and sixty female farm workers joined the Downpatrick Branch of the Workers' Union. Enthusiastic meetings were also held in Raholp, Dunsford, Killyclief, Killough, Killyleagh, Clough, and in many parts of Co. Down.

The farmers are complaining to the police that they are being threatened and intimidated by the pickets, and the pickets complain that the farmers meet their arguments with guns, hatchets and pitchforks. Up to time of writing the farmers' union have refused to meet the men's union. The Ministry of Munitions has intervened in order to save the flax crop, but the men's representatives are asking for compulsory arbitration. An early settlement is expected. The police have not interfered with open-air meetings held since strike was declared, although no permit was applied for.

### Derry and Donegal Settlements.

By the settlement of the farm labourers' dispute in Derry district, men over 21 years of age receive an advance of 5/- a week; workers over 18 and under 21, 3/-, and boys under 18, 2/-. Letterkenny agricultural labourers' strike has been settled, the terms being 31/- a week of 60 hours, no objection being made by the Labourers' Union to the employment of non-union men provided all union men be reinstated.

### Co. Down Strike Settled.

The Workers' Union has agreed to enter into arbitration. The Farmers' Union and the Ministry of Labour wanted a friendly arbitration, which would have left the payment of the award to the good will of individual farmers. The Union insisted on compulsory arbitration, the award to apply to all farmers in the area. The Ministry of Labour has agreed, and has ordered farmers to re-employ all men offering themselves—no victimisation.

The Department of National Service, Dublin, offered to supply blackleg labour during the dispute. In June last, during the Portaferry dispute, this department supplied thirty scabs. Perhaps Mr. Charles Win-the-War Duncan, M.P., will make inquiry about this.

### Flax Pullers.

The recent award by Mr. T. Andrews, K.C. has aroused the anger of the Northern farmers, who are only allowed to deduct 4d. from the wages of the flax pullers for supplying them with breakfast. The farmers want to charge the breakfast at hotel rates. If they cannot supply a decent meal for 4d. how do they expect the farm labourer's wife to supply a meal at 1d. a time?

### Kildare Moves.

Farmers in Co. Kildare have been asked to concede the following programme to the agricultural workers:—35s. per week, £4 harvest money, and the nine-hour day. No doubt this will grieve Sir Thomas Russell, the farmer's friend.

He complains that wages trouble in rural districts being fomented by town workers. Sheer nonsense, Tom! If there were no grievance, no sweating, no starvation wages there would be no strikes.

### Constabulary and Wages Board.

During the hearing of Wages Board prosecutions at Newtownbarry, D.-I. Winder complained that the Board gave the police no legal assistance, and did not even send their inspectors; that such cases were outside the province of police duty, and that they were calculated to make the police champions of one class against another.

### Tam Pow says—

I've heard ploomen advocatin' the conscription o' Ireland frae the tap o' a haystack.

There's ower muckle o' this "take a'body, bit leave me."

—"Scottish Farm Servant."

### New Basis for Family Wage.

The Very Rev. H. Montgomery, of Belfast, appeals for 7s. 6d. to give a poor child a week's keep in a holiday home. Good luck to him, but why not give every child 7s. 6d. a week? How many working women can spend so much on their children?

### The Programme of Labour.

This leaflet, by James Connolly, should be ordered at once. Note the revised prices: 1s. per 100, 9s. per 1,000.

## HOTEL EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES' BLOOD-SUCKING METHODS.

The system of securing employment in Hotels and Restaurants has been so much neglected in the past that the present method adopted by many employers and agents is not only a great scandal but a disgrace to any employer, who would pose as a just or honourable man. Are employers aware of the methods of the agents with whom they deal? Why should anyone be allowed to stand between a worker and his work, and before allowing a worker to secure employment demand a heavy fee, usually running into pounds?

Much has been written and published about the abominable methods of the money-lender, of the grip he secures on his helpless victim and how he sucks him dry. Detestable and cruel though his methods are, much more could be made public of the Employment Agent who, by

### Holding the References

of a Hotel Worker, keeps his unfortunate victim out of employment until that victim is compelled to beg for a job at whatever price the agent wishes to name.

If you who read this are a hotel worker, you are, God knows, unfortunately well aware of these truths. It is for the general public that I publish such matters, and leave them to contemplate on the misery and hardships such methods create.

If the future holds any prospects for us our demand must be not a mere reform of this present system of seeking employment, but its absolute obliteration. Any partial reform would be no use to the worker. Every worker is asked to assist us in our efforts to kill this system completely, by keeping away from such agents as far as possible, and by notifying me at the earliest moment they know a vacancy is about to be made in any firm. For the present this is all we can do, but, please God, in the very near future we shall be enabled to bring stronger pressure to bear on these people, to compel them to give up their blood-sucking systems.

T. GORDON.

Hotel Workers' Club,  
29 Eden Quay.

### MEMBERS DECIDE.

A general meeting of the hotel and restaurant employes in the city was held in the Trades Hall on Sunday last, when demands for increased wages—£1 per week for males and 15s. for females over and above pre-war rates—and improved working conditions, including the abolition of the private registries, were formulated. Propaganda addresses were delivered by Messrs. T. Foran, Wm. O'Brien, Cathal O'Shannon, and Thomas Curtin, Secretary of the Association, which embraces a large number of women. It was decided to call for the abolition of certain grievances under which these employes in all grades suffer, and in respect of the demands pro rata advances were asked for casual workers.



**LIVERPOOL I.L.P. AND TRANSPORT UNION.**

The executive committee of the Liverpool Federation of the Independent Labour Party branches has tabled the following resolution for next meeting of the members:—"That this meeting of the Liverpool Independent Labour Party strongly protests against the action of the authorities in prohibiting the Irish Transport Workers' Union from holding meetings. We consider that this is an unwarranted attack upon Trade Union rights, and call upon the Government to immediately withdraw the ban." This will be moved by a good friend of "The Voice," Sean Kearns, of Edgehill branch, and seconded by Arthur Carey of Bootle.

A more surprising resolution as coming from the executive of so important a body within the I.L.P., the virtual creators of the National and Parliamentary Labour Party of England is one asserting that the time is now opportune for the I.L.P. to withdraw its affiliation from national and local labour parties.

"State" socialism and Parliamentarianism are now being abandoned everywhere, and the workers are realising that their power lies in organising where they create the wealth.

**Drumkerrin.**

Mr. Shortt, that prolific parent of prevarications, declared that the interrupted meeting of the Transport Union was held in the local Sinn Fein Hall. Mr. Shortt's informant is a liar. The hall is privately owned by respectable people, who let it to all and sundry. Religious and friendly societies, trade unions, Sinn Feiners, and even the local M.P. (Hackett) use the hall. The Transport branch has been established, and is now going ahead. Sean Burns is opening up at Borrisokane.

**Monasterevan.**

Umeras Peat Works management ought to write their plant as Humorous. They complain of being asked to pay 12s. 6d. a week extra, when the union has only asked 10s. They also volunteer the information that they can hire the same class of labour for 4½d. per hour.

**Newbridge.**

The Curragh district has several strikes at present. Since 30th ult. the Turf Club employees (18 men) have been out, while the contractor Dowling's men have been out since 2nd inst. Requests have been served on the other contractors, and we learn there is a prospect of the 9d. per hour demand being conceded.

**Drogheda.**

J. Dowling reports that the Drogheda branch (T. Behan, secretary) has taken over the old Trades Hall as permanent headquarters. Meath is being worked from this centre, and a branch has been set up at Ardeath. Balbriggan and Skerries are asked to deal with the "Sixpenny" question at once.

**Charleville.**

Despite the prejudiced maladministration of the law and every mean dodge employers can compass, the strikers continue solid, and have actually launched their own co-operative bakery, which is so successful that the demand already exceeds the output.

**"The Southern Democrat."**

The Charleville workers are fortunate in having the constant support of the ably-conducted "Southern Democrat," which has already raised £80 in aid of the men. Says the Editor: "Consider for yourself, dear reader, the position of some of those 80 men who are to-day picketing in the streets of Charleville, fighting for a living wage. Many of them have young and helpless families to provide for, and the sacrifice which at present they are making is essential to the vindication of their rights. They have a grievance—that is an undoubted fact—and, knowing as we do that their cause is a just one, we have opened this Fund in their aid."

Every Transport branch should take steps at once to support their comrades, and their tribute will be none the less effective if sent to the Editor, "Southern Democrat," Charleville, Co. Cork.

**Belmullet.**

The labourers engaged handling cargo on the local Leviathan have secured a wage of 7d. per hour and 9d. per hour overtime. The shopmen of the town have secured an all-round rise of 4/- per week, with 2/- and 2/6 to certain juniors.

**Shipyard Wages in Belfast and Derry.**

Wood-workers, painters, sheet metal workers and furnishing trades employed in the Northern shipyards have been awarded advances by the committee on production as follows: Men, 18 and over, 3s. 6d. per full ordinary week; youths, 1s. 9d. Piece workers to receive the advance in addition to earnings. This advance came into operation on 10th inst. Ship plumbers get 6d. an hour advance. Smiths', drillers' and forgers' piece-work rates are advanced by 10 per cent. as from first full pay day in April in the Belfast yards, and from first full pay day in June.

N.A.U.L. men will be disappointed at the failure of their claim for the establishment of minima in the textile machinery trade. The concession of extra overtime rates does not meet the case. Men engaged in exhausting labour should not be coerced into excessive overtime in order to make a living wage.

**Belfast I.L.P.**

Socialist propaganda has been resumed at Custom House Steps. On Sunday, 4th inst., R. McWilliams gave a fine address, and was followed by Comrade Brooks of Bradford. Alex. Lynn, B.A., spoke last Sunday. The police have intimated that no anti-conscription speeches will be allowed. Belfast men will please note that the law officers of England have repeatedly stated that it is quite legal to oppose conscription.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT—  
Mical J. Staines.  
Dr. James Ryan.  
Liam Tobin.  
Mical W. O'Reilly.  
Frank Thornton.  
Richard Coleman.

**Cumann Uiníodair na héireann.**

Where is the father who does not spend Sixpence per week on his child?  
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# Maeve Cavanagh Looks On.

## SOME FLYING IMPRESSIONS OF THE LABOUR CONGRESS.

The rush for the 4.20 train at Kingsbridge on the Saturday previous to the Congress was almost as great as the present rush of stalwart, eligible young Irishmen to the colours (?). However, it was worth all the bustle and crushing when on the opening day of the Congress one looked round and saw the splendid gathering of earnest and intelligent men and women who had come together from all parts of Ireland to discuss Labour and its future. By the courtesy of the members of Congress, I was included in an invitation to the platform, which gave me an opportunity to study the various speakers. It seemed to me that there was much less speaking for speaking sake than at some other similar gatherings I have been at; and that those who spoke generally had something to say. There was a certain amount of business doing in axe-grinding; it is an interesting occupation, I have no doubt, but I think on this occasion that the results were somewhat disappointing. It may or may not be true that it takes 9 tailors to make a man, but I do know that two or three can add to the gaiety of Congresses. The youthful Clerical Workers' Union was very much in evidence. Through some slight overlooking of rules on their part—forgivable in a young union—they were nearly being deprived of certain advantages, but Congress acted in the spirit instead of the letter, and accepted their explanation. They seem made of the right stuff, and will soon make up for lost time at the rate they are going.

There appeared to be a great spiritual affinity between a delegate who was "out to win the war" and the delegate who seemed very anxious to discredit "The Voice of Labour." His objection to the paper was based on the allegation that it was started by English money—or an Englishman's money. He must really be a Sinn Féiner in disguise, and Mr. Shortt should be told about him; such selfless zeal is always dangerous. I hope his mind is at rest on the subject of the paper after the detailed explanation of Tom Johnson. The latter, instead of being heartily ashamed of himself, for having been found out in such a nefarious plot, even though it wasn't a German one—seemed instead to be gloating over the splendid advertisement the high-souled one had given the paper. So perish all plots.

The delegate who wished to win the war entertained us with all the old chestnuts about German atrocities—not a single fresh yarn among them (those Huns are very unoriginal after all). The only story he omitted was about the cutting off of the little children's hands; I was expecting to hear it trotted out, but he spared our feelings. Perhaps his sense of humour got the better of his desire to win the war. All the same I felt as if I were being cheated out of something.

The speeches of the Scottish visitors were a decidedly interesting and welcome item. They seemed very observant and

interested, and well in touch with both Labour and National movements here. I hope they will not find any microbes hiding in the pages of the "Spirit of the Nation" with which they were presented. However, any microbe or insect they find they can stamp out, as French says he will do; but personally I have "doots" of those Scotsmen. I really believe they like insects; at least I saw them on very friendly terms with some extra-poisonous insects—and some who will take some stamping. To one to whom Ireland's independence—political and economic—comes first it was a great source of satisfaction to me to see the fate of Labour in Ireland in the hands of men who, though enthusiastic believers in the brotherhood of man, do not think that cause can best be served by becoming backboneless Irishmen. I can never forget that on a certain occasion in Dublin Union Jacks were waved by the Irish workers on strike in a wave of mistaken enthusiasm.

Ireland is bringing her own sane and idealistic mind to bear on her Labour question. The reverent disciples of James Connolly are among those who hold aloft the flag of labour in Ireland—they march among the ranks. With those men and women, to whom his gospel is as a religion, the cause of Labour and Nationality is safe. May they ever be as closely linked as he left them—one splendid and lasting monument of his great life-work.

MAEVE CAVANAGH.

### Trade Union Officials Please Note!

From Hansard, Vol. 109, No. 89, column 116. Extract from speech of Mr. Shortt, Chief Secretary for Ireland.—“I have been at pains to have a proper circular sent out explaining to the police all over Ireland that the only meetings which are intended to require permits are those which have a political character.” Cut this out and show it to the police if they attempt to stop your labour meetings.

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### HEARD IN WATERFORD.

At a woollen mills in the neighbourhood of Waterford, one woman earned 6/9 on the making of 10 pairs of blankets whose sale value was £2 per pair. This is typical of conditions existing in the mill.

The working week in two bottling stores in the city is a 60-hour week. No half-holiday is given. The women earn from 11/- to 13/- per week. The I.W.W.U. has just secured small increases on these wages. But materials are short just now, and full time is not worked, so these paltry wages suffer considerably "cutting" every week.

Two I.W.W.U. organisers called in reference to a claim for increases in a large printing firm in the city. They were ushered up a long, circular staircase to the proprietor's office. A benign, venerable and gentle-eyed man stood silently regarding them. They stated their mission. "I wasn't born yesterday," softly replied the patriarch, "I can manage my own business." Nor could he be induced to enlarge upon that statement. We doubt if he will prove an apt pupil in the new gospel of the control of industry by the workers.

### OUR I.W.W.U. LIBRARY.

We have quite a good collection of books accumulated for the Lending Library which we propose to open in September. This library will be available for all Trade Unionists, men or women, and we should be glad to have suggestions as to books desired by possible readers, so that as opportunity offers they can be added to the library.

#### Louie Bennett's View.

"The aims of education should be to enrich life by enlarging the mental vision and arousing appreciation of the true, the good and the beautiful; and to train the minds of boys and girls with a view to citizenship rather than personal success."

#### The Jungle Patriots.

The "Daily Mail" (10-8-18) tells us that five American meat-packing companies control half the meat supplies on which the Allies are dependent. A Government Commission has convicted these companies, which work together, of defrauding both producer and consumer, securing special privileges from railroads, dockyards, and shipowners.

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Highest Advances on best terms and no  
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### HOW THEY "HOLD FAST" IN SCOTLAND.

"Forward" last week related several incidents significant of the true attitude of the Scottish people towards the war. Some postwomen overheard the remark that Lord Lansdowne's "peace" statement was coming over the wires. Like wildfire the story spread that peace had been declared, and that the news was in the Post Office. Crowds of men, women and children ran from every part of the city, from the West-end as well as from the South Side and the East-end. By ten o'clock it was estimated that 20,000 people were outside the Post Office. Cries of "Hooray! our men are coming home now!" were heard. Only when the Postmaster came out and announced that the war was still going on did the people disperse.

The discharged soldiers and sailors of Glasgow had a procession through the streets led by a soldier on horseback on 4th inst. Wagons bearing the one word, "Justice," on the sides were occupied by their wives and children.

At Glasgow Green they joined with 25,000 citizens in demanding the immediate release of John MacLean.

At Dundee angry wives of soldiers besieged the Town Hall, assaulted the council officer, and compelled the Council to adjourn. 5,000 soldiers' wives participated in a procession and demonstration in favour of "Peace and Bread."

Alex. Smillie (Larkhall), son of "Bob" Smillie, has been court-martialled as a C.O. He declared he was an International Socialist, and that war was a crime against humanity.

### "THE WORKERS' REPUBLIC."

Twenty years ago, on 15th August, 1898, the day of the '98 centenary celebrations, the Irish Socialist Republican Party offered the first Irish Socialist journal to the Dublin public. "The Workers' Republic," edited by James Connolly, ran for eleven weeks, but the public was irresponsive and the party without funds. The paper lapsed until by dint of sacrifice the members raised sufficient money to purchase a hand-press.

Dublin printers, being notoriously retrograde, were not found in the ranks of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, but the members themselves, without previous experience, undertook the entire work of producing their weekly, which re-appeared in 1899. Its career was chequered, and in turn it appeared as a weekly, a monthly and a quarterly. From the same hand-press, the voluntary labours of the Dublin socialists brought forth the first issues of the Glasgow monthly, "The Socialist."

### King's Regulations.

Even now, but much more when October comes, we need a working knowledge of the English military system. The King's Regulations for the Army gives full information about Discipline, Courts-Martial, Detention, Imprisonment, etc. Whether you "refuse to recognise the court" or otherwise passively resist the knowledge will be useful. All who occupy responsible positions in the Defence movement should have a copy of this book for reference.

### CO-OPERATIVE NOTES.

#### Enniscorthy.

Through the militaristic spirit prevalent in the management, the Enniscorthy society is involved in a very bitter dispute with the local labour union. All classes of workers have withdrawn their services, and labourers on the farms will not work co-operative machinery. We understand the society's directors have refused arbitration—which at once puts them out of court as co-operators. It is wonderful that the form of co-operative can be built up without its spirit.

#### U.C.B.S.

The United Co-operative Baking Society has begun to manufacture its "Scotch" oat-cakes at its great bakery in Ravenhill Road, Belfast. Irish epicures are now assured of a constant fresh supply.

#### Dublin.

The children's fete on 27th inst. was a huge success. 1,000 children were present. A conference is being arranged in Liberty Hall between the co-op. directors and the I.T.W.U., to promote the ideals which Connolly and Larkin had so much to heart.

#### English and Scottish Records.

"The Producer" review of balance sheets shows that the village of Resolven has a co-operative society with a membership of 1,020, who have accumulated a capital of £16,890. Last quarter their trade was £17,999. Out of this 1s. 6d. per £1 was returned to the members after interest had been paid on their capital.

Kirkintilloch Society has 2,090 members, with £46,401 capital (average 22s. per member), and its trade for the quarter amounted to £41,049. The dividend paid was 1s. 10d. per £1 purchased. Thus they saved £3,700 from the profiteers. The average purchases per member reached the high level of 30s. 3d. per week.

#### "I.A.W.S. Bulletin."

The August issue has been delayed, but will be issued shortly. A number of Trade Unions have opened accounts with the I.A.W.S. banking department. We would suggest that the directors take advantage of the special congress to have a conference with Trade Union officials on the question.

#### Not The S.C.W.S. This Time.

A sum of £3,900 in £1 shares has been subscribed by farmers and others to establish co-operative corn and flour mills at Enniskillen, the total capital required being £5,000.

### KING'S REGULATIONS FOR THE ARMY.

Every Solicitor and every Parish Priest should have a copy of this official publication.

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