

Rebels Help
Mooney.

Tadhg Barry writes
from Usk Prison.

Wages Board
Failure,

IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. Vol. I, No. 52.

NOVEMBER 23, 1918.

ONE PENNY

"Æ." ON THE NEW ORDER IN RUSSIA.

Below we print a letter written by "Æ" to Wm. O'Brien, Secretary of the Irish Labour Party, and intended to be read at the Mansion House meeting. It is a noble tribute from the ablest of living Irish writers and economists of the conservative order to the most brilliant of successful revolutionists of all time, and is as the voice of the most western hailing the most eastern people of Europe.

17 Rathgar Avenue, Dublin,
14th November, 1918.

Dear O'Brien—I hear that a meeting has been arranged in Dublin at which some form of recognition or salutation to the Russian Revolution will be made. I hope the mists which have obscured that mighty upheaval will soon be cleared away and the real character of the revolution made known. I have no doubt that much to be regretted or deplored has taken place, but I have come to the conclusion, partly from personal statements made to me by people who were in Russia during the revolution, and from confirmation of their statements, which have been made public, that the stories of violence and bloodshed have been greatly exaggerated. A Canadian acquaintance who was in Russia for four years, returning this summer, told me that he had seen since his return minute, precise, and detailed accounts of massacres and the destruction of buildings in Moscow. "I was there at the time," he said, "and there was not a single shot fired and the buildings were intact." Colonel MacCormack, President of the American Society of Engineers, who witnessed the Revolution, wrote this spring in a New York paper that nine-tenths of the stories of outrages and murders were pure inventions of the old regime, and that they were circulated by the German Government, accepted by the Allied Press, and this helped to increase the

gulf between Russia and the Allies, which it was the aim of the German Government to widen. I was aware some years ago of an Irish journalist in the West of Ireland who fed his young ravens by inventing stories of outrages in Ireland and sending them to the English press, the demand for such stories in certain quarters stimulating the supply. That Irish journalist has cosmopolitan kinsmen, and they have indulged in war profiteering, I fancy, in their line of business. Even if these stories were true, this could be said in extenuation, that the autocracy kept the people of Russia ignorant and they could not be blamed much if they did not act with wisdom. The Russian peasants and workmen were regarded by the ruling classes as little above the brute, and were treated accordingly, and if men are treated as brutes it is too much to expect when aroused they will act with gentleness. The leaders of the Revolution had the heritage of a country desolated by war and wrecked economically by a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy. Swift action was necessary if worse was not to happen, and I doubt whether any Government—English, French or German—in a similar position, would have dealt more mercifully with minorities which obstructed them. It is said the Revolution is not democratic, that general elections were not held to give moral sanction to the new regime. This is a strange criticism arising in countries like our own where a practical dictatorship has been established since the war began, where the most revolutionary changes were made without any reference to the electorate. When victory is sure our rulers begin to think of elections, and in Russia no revolutionary leader has made any pretence that the existing system of Workers' and Soldiers' Committees could be permanent. When the revolution is safe they will act as our own rulers, who have waited until victory

was secured before they spoke of seeking the approval of the country.

We do not know enough yet to praise or blame the leaders of the revolution in respect of their dealing with those who opposed them. But we do know enough from dispassionate observers to see that heroic efforts are being made to reorganise Russia, to build up a new social order on democratic and co-operative lines. The leaders of the Revolution were, I believe, Marxians, and they would, only the genius and tradition of the Russian people opposed it, have built up the new social order as a highly organised piece of state socialism. But the vast mass of the Russian people, with ideals of life begotten in the Mirs and their great co-operative movement, desired a social order combining more freedom with democratic solidarity; and, as the promoters of co-operative societies almost alone had the practical economic experience required for the work of reconstruction, the Revolution, through their guidance, is tending to make of new Russia a vast network of co-operative, industrial, and agricultural societies to which the central government is more and more delegating the work of production and distribution. About sixty million people are already connected with these great and growing organisations. They own and manage co-operatively flour mills, soap factories, oil-mills, printing works, factories for manufacturing agricultural machinery, leather works, boot factories, brickworks, tobacco factories, saw mills, iron foundries, sugar refineries, rope works, dye mills, tile works, dress workshops, co-operative stores, creameries, bakeries and banks, and, in fact, they are attempting to make co-operative production and distribution equal to the whole range of necessities in the Russian Republic. Their efforts are appreciated by foreigners living in Rus-

(Continued on Page 502.)

IRISH OPINION
The VOICE OF LABOUR

Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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"L'INTERNATIONALE."

Arise! ye toilers of all nations;

Shake off your doubting and your fears,

Let's make an end of dire privations,

Women's sorrows and children's tears.

No longer cravenly surrender

To grim Despair and Apathy.

The sun, new risen in its splendour,

Has blazed a path to victory!

Chorus.

Then Comrades, come, rally,

The last fight let us face;

L'Internationale

Unites the human race.

We've borne the burdens of the ages,

We till the soil; we scour the seas;

We dredge the mines. Behold our wages:

Grief, starvation, and foul disease.

Let us break all the bonds that bind us;

The days of ignorance are done.

The hateful past we'll leave behind us

And set our faces to the sun!

Chorus.

Our sons we've sold as food for powder;

Our own and others' blood we've shed,

That those who rule us might grow prouder:

It is time they fought instead.

Ours the wounds, theirs the bloodstained

laurels.

Soon the workers of every land,

Will cease from fighting others' quarrels

And stand as brothers hand in hand.

Chorus.

—Version by Langdon Everard.

THE LIARS.

Mr. Bonar Law, speaking recently in the House of Commons, stated that the Press Bureau exercised no censorship of opinion. Viscount Cave, who is still acting Home Secretary, speaking last Monday in the House of Lords, said:—"There were no regulations that interfered with the free expression of political opinion, and no money had been expended or could be expended in advocating political views agreeable to the Government."

That sentence contains two lies. There is in Ireland a censorship that does prevent, by petty evasions and by practical pro-

hibition, the free expression of the political opinion that is on the side of the extension of Republican institutions, now so dominant in Europe, to Ireland. The same censorship predominantly Unionist and Imperialist, some of it officially Unionist, has already adopted the attitude that with the coming of peace no sentiment of friendship with the revolutionary peoples in Europe must appear in this journal.

It sits in judgment on history. It forbids even a satirical reference to the "Glorious Revolution of 1782." It regards as dangerous to the realm a statement of the fact that Karl Marx—the Rheinisch Westphalian who fought Prussianism from 1847 in the streets as in the Press of Cologne until he was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hampstead—was a friend of Ireland, and protested with John Bright against the judicial murder of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien on November 23rd, 1867. So much for censorship of opinion.

We have in our possession, and anyone can obtain copies at any post office, a leaflet printed by Falkner's, of Dublin, as part of a Government contract in which the opinions of certain ecclesiastics in opposition to the Irish Republic are set forth. This leaflet is directed particularly against Irish Labour and Sinn Fein, and it is only one of a series of leaflets advocating Unionism, the political creed of the present English Government. It is part of the party propaganda of the Coalition, and is paid for out of public funds and distributed through the agency of a Government Department.

We would not have this circular withdrawn, however. Not only is it a splendidly typical example of Coalition Corruption as expressive of the personal character of the Ministry as Marconi, Mond, Nickel, or Cellulose, but its peroration, in which it calls Bolshevism the Fire and the present government of Ireland the Frying Pan, says in a phrase what the Censor would prevent us saying in a leading article. Who in the Frying Pan of Imperialism is not willing to risk the flame, if a leap in its light will carry us safely to the Hob of the Workers' Republic?

(This issue will probably be late in reaching our readers. For the delay and inconvenience we apologise, but plead not guilty.)

The WORK BEFORE US

The imminence of the Peace Conference of the States makes it necessary that nothing which will help the application of self-determination to Ireland shall be left undone by those forces, parties, and men of affairs in whose hands will be the destinies of Ireland in the coming three months.

It is already practically certain that the preliminary sectional conferences of the Allied Powers will take place next month, and that what may be called the Peace Conference proper will begin its full sessions early in January. In all probability the preliminary consultations will be held in Paris, and the plenary sittings in Versailles. But the important thing is that for all practical purposes the Peace Conference will open in December. In other words, whatever is to

be done must be done in the course of the next two months.

There is much, very much, to be done both at home and abroad, and it must be done at once.

It is therefore to be regretted that so far as public knowledge goes, the Mansion House Conference has not taken any steps to secure the unity of the people of Ireland upon the principle of self-determination, should be demonstrated in a similar manner to that in which the national unity against conscription was demonstrated. The tide came to the Mansion House, but apparently it has not been taken. This failure is fatal.

There remains the alternative of a new conference, representing all the elements in the nation, which will agree to take up this work. We do not suggest that the work of this conference would mean that all our difficulties would be overcome, but we are certain that it would be a most important factor in the achievement of a real national unity in essentials, and a strong lever to assist in the achievement of the national aims. As such it will be not only folly, but crime, if use is not made of its instrumentality, and that speedily.

In times like these, and with the example of the Russians, the Germans, the Hungarians, the Tchecho-Slovaks, and the Jugo-Slavs before them, it is the duty of the people of Ireland to constitute such local and national organs as will secure the free, full, and effective expression of the national will.

SURE TO BE IGNORED.

The Irishwomen's International League has adopted the following resolution and sent it to Wilson, George, and Clemenceau:—"The Committee of the Irishwomen's International League appeal to the United States of America and the Allied Governments immediately to raise the blockade of the defeated Central Powers. A food blockade means war on civilians, war on women and children. Whatever defence there may be for its use whilst hostilities are actually in progress, we claim that it is indefensible during an armistice, especially in a case where the people are faced with starvation and the anarchy consequent upon a social revolution. The provision of supplies at the discretion of the United States of America and the Allies cannot meet the necessity, and must inevitably create a sense of humiliation and resentment which may have evil results for the world in the future. The German people are struggling against fearful odds to lay the foundations of a new national life: generosity on the part of their conquerors would help to reanimate the spirit of human brotherhood which alone can ensure a happier civilisation for all peoples."

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(As passed by Censor.)

The Mansion House Meeting.

On Saturday the Lord Mayor of Dublin wrote to the evening papers stating that no meetings whatever would be held in the Mansion House on Monday of this week. This effectively closed the Mansion House to the great demonstration arranged to celebrate the first anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet Republic in Russia and to hail the great Social Revolution in Germany, Austria, and other parts of Europe. In the circumstances the promoters of the meeting called the demonstration off to the great disappointment of many thousands of workers and citizens. We do not know what influence or influences have compelled the Lord Mayor to take this step.

Both to those who rejoiced in and those who regretted the closing of the Mansion House to the Bolshevik meeting we commend a careful reading of the letter written by A. E. to Wm. O'Brien and published elsewhere in our columns.

Our First Year.

With the present number of "The Voice" we complete the first year's working of the Irish Labour Press and the first organ of the working class in Ireland since James Connolly's "Workers' Republic" ushered in the resurrection of Easter Week. We cannot now tell the story of the fate and fortunes of our little paper since its foundation, under the brilliant editorship of Andrew E. Malone, when the Russian Revolution shook the world with its success last year until it hailed the German Revolution this year. The paper has had to face many difficulties, not all of them difficulties raised by the severity of the censorship and the exigencies of the war, some of them indeed raised by the calumnies of enemies and the uncharitable suspicions of those who, at the worst, ought not to be enemies. "The Voice" has survived them all and shall survive. It has passed the year with credit and with honour in class, national and international struggles, and its moments of menace have been greater than its moments of apparent tragedy. We have no wish now to blow its trumpet, for it needs no more boosting; it is firmly established, successful within the limits war (and armistice) conditions impose upon it, and of some importance in the Labour movement and within the nation. In the struggles of the past year, and in all its crises, it has spoken as freely and as fearlessly as the censorship would permit; it will not speak less freely or less fearlessly in the future. Indeed if all goes well it is hoped that in the coming twelvemonth "The Voice" will be in a position to do all its promoters have desired it should do. This will be possible when conditions approach the normal again, and if at all possible it is proposed that the necessary changes in the paper shall be made in the new year.

Some apology is necessary for the rather jagged appearance and incompleteness of the issue of last week. Readers may be assured that the fault

did not lie with the management or editorial departments. We were unable to do justice to the events of the previous week because even when the war for freedom has been won abroad, it is considered well that the blessings of that freedom should not be known, proclaimed or welcomed at home. Well, so be it—for the duration of peace.

When Peace Broke Out.

Decency compels us to draw a veil over many of the scenes which disgraced manhood and womanhood on Monday and Tuesday of last week when the signing of the armistice had been announced. It is plain that these scenes were but the counterpart of what was happening at the same time in London, Manchester and other English cities. It was equally plain that for the most part the men and women who took part in the more disgraceful incidents were not the people of Dublin (unless some of the suburban seoinini be counted amongst the people). In extenuation it can be said that much of the jubilation was due to the feeling of relief which broke upon war weary people when peace at last dawned. For the worst forms of the jubilation nothing can be said.

We do not suppose that we shall be allowed to describe or comment upon the attack by a body of soldiers upon Liberty Hall, the Mansion House, the Sinn Fein headquarters, and a Catholic church. This much we will not refrain from saying: in each of these cases the attack was unprovoked but deliberate and premeditated. Well, Liberty Hall, the Mansion House, and 6 Harcourt Street stand as strong and as firm as ever. The same cannot be said of the attacking party of Wednesday night. In the melee it did not distinguish itself.

Rebel Irishwomen Help Mooney.

From Holloway Jail Countess de Markievicz, I.R.A., writes:—"Enclosed you will find £2 for friend Mooney, £1 from Mrs. Tom Clarke and £1 from me. "The Voice" is a great cheer to us here and we watch out for it eagerly. I am keeping file but want copies of Nos. 41 and 44, as both of these failed to reach us. . . . Was very much interested in the Congress. There is a great deal to be said for your point of view and I should like to hear it all threshed out. Shut up in here it seems to me that the Executive took the wisest line. It was very dramatic and will startle many of our friends and enemies into thinking a bit. Can you let Mrs. Mallin know that I got the photo and letter? Thank her; I will write her later; and thank William O'Brien for paper and letter, both much appreciated. Mrs. Clarke suffers a great deal with great pluck and determination. . . . I am fit and fat, and in grand form for running round, longing to be back home again. . . . Good-bye and good-luck to you all as you sit in 'No. 7.'"

Nothing has been finer in the whole Mooney case than the spirit in which these Irish victims in Usk and Holloway, of the British frame-up, have come to

the aid of their fellow-prisoner in California, the victim of the American frame-up. This is the spirit which conquers all. Her friends will be glad to hear that the Countess is in such excellent spirits, and in her turn all who know Mrs. Clarke know that a Daly always does the right thing. There is more than a reasonable hope that very shortly all the interned prisoners will be released. Madame will then make things lively in St. Patrick's.

The Men at Usk.

Joe M'Grath's letter enclosing a handsome sum for the Mooney Fund reached us when the paper was printing. In the hurry of going to press and the confusion occasioned by censorship, the following subscriptions were inadvertently omitted from our previous list:—P. Hughes, 5/-; J. K. O'Reilly, 5/-; C. O'Donovan, 5/-; F. Lawless, 10/-; J. Minahan, 5/-; Geo. Lyons, 5/-; F. Drohan, 2/6, and R. Coleman, 5/-. Jack Mooney, we are sure, will have many pleasant things to tell the boys in 'Frisco when he transmits these sums from the Irish rebels interned in Usk. Nor will 'Frisco forget them.

As we go to press it is rumoured that the Irish prisoners are to be released. If the rumour is true the home-coming to Dublin will eclipse even the great turn-out of 1917. Failte is fionta rompg.

The Toll of Death.

Every week brings news of the death of some sturdy fighter for freedom. This week the toll is particularly heavy, and Labour suffers with the rest of the nation.

It was with a deep sense of shock that Dublin learned of the death of W. H. West last week-end. Few men did more for Labour and Socialism in Dublin than the brave and generous printer who stood fast for the workers in the darkest as in the brightest days, and none befriended Trade Unionism more unselfishly. He was the printer of the "Irsih Worker," but that was only part of his service to the movement. In election work, in Trade Union work, in propaganda, business, and pleasure, his press and his experience were given ungrudgingly and often gratis to the movement. In a sense he was one of the old guard, friend of Connolly and Larkin, and champion of the militant group throughout. Labour owes W. H. West much which can never be repaid, and not the least of its debts is that for the great, generous spirit and heart with which he sent the printed word of revolt throughout the land.

With him we couple the name of Joe Gaule, Secretary of the Arklow branch of the Transport Union. Despite his bad health, Joe worked unceasingly for the Arklow men, and largely to his efforts is due the continued strength of the Organisation in Wicklow. May the sod rest lightly upon both of them.

Seamus O'Kelly.

The tragically sudden death of Seamus O'Kelly is a national loss greater than

LABOUR IN IRELAND

many of his readers who did not know him personally can realise. No more gentle soul has come our way since the guns spoke death behind the walls of Kilmainham Jail. To know him was to love him, with his quiet humour, his unobtrusive manner, his simplicity of heart, and nobility of character (of literary men he was the most charitable and the least envious) no less than for his great gifts of the creative imagination. When Seamus O'Kelly breathed his last a good man died. He will be mourned by many thousands of readers, by many thousands of admirers, by many thousands of people who heard of him only when Dublin gave him a great and worthy public funeral. But the mourning of these will be as joy beside the mourning of that little circle of friends of whom he was a beloved intimate.

In literature he will be remembered best for "The Bribe," "The Parnellite," and "Wayfarers," until some day some of his friends, Seamus O'Sullivan or some other singer among his friends, will give us those true poems he sang from the heart but was too modest to publish. Nationally it will be remembered unto him that when Arthur Griffith was deported he stepped into the gap and edited "Nationality" until his tragic death in harness.

With Seamus O'Kelly we may not inappropriately link the name of the grand old Fenian veteran, Joseph O'Flaherty, of Loughrea, one of those who tended the flame until it became a conflagration throughout Ireland. I bhFlaitheas De go rubhadar anocht.

"The New Way."

Inchicore branch N.U.R. sends us a resolution condemning a poem which appears in the November "New Way." We venture to suggest that some of the sentiments contained in it are excellent, although the Censor would object to quotation without the context, the sugar coating in which they are wrapped.

Inchicore men may think the poem degrading but it expresses a state of mind not uncommon among Irishmen of the second generation born in England. We ask for tolerance, especially of minor poetry.

Held Over.

News and comments on the Socialist Republics in Central Europe.

Castlecomer.

An unofficial strike of railway workers tired of waiting on the Ministry of Labour was closed down by the intervention of a Hunting Priest, who has figured on the recruiting platforms. We are asked by a local correspondent if there is any other country in the world where clergy interfere in labour disputes. Certainly the clergy interfere in other countries besides Ireland, and we have no sympathy with those who would exclude the clergy from full participation in the life of the community. We would insist, however, on excluding from labour disputes the clergyman who uses his his cloth to secure an advantage for the master class.

Queenstown Trades Council.

At the meeting of the Council on 14th inst. the following resolutions were carried unanimously:—

"That this Council demands the immediate release of all political prisoners, and specifically mentions the names of John McLean, Eammon de Valera, A. Griffith and colleagues, and considers their incarceration a gross tyranny which is totally out of harmony with the new world which is being born, where tyrannous autocracies are rolling by the dozen in the dust before the advance of democracy."

"This meeting of the Queenstown Trade and Labour Council protests against the imprisonment of the thirteen men connected with the Charleville strike, and we demand that a public inquiry be held in the case of Maurice Barry, who we believe to be innocent of the charges preferred against him."

Proposed by Mr. P. O'Neill, Irish T. Workers' Union, and seconded by Mr. D. Ronayne, Joiners.

Up, Bakers!

Hearty congratulations to Frank Moran on his success in the election for organisership of the Irish bakers. The headquarters of the Union are now transferred from Derry to Dublin. With head office in Dublin and with friends Cullen and Moran as secretary and organiser, we can see a great future for the Irish bakers and a hell of a time of it for the bosses.

IRISH WOMEN WORKERS' UNION.

We have now come to an arrangement with the Irish Tobacco Company by which their employees will receive wages ranging from 15/- to 25/- a week. This means that since these workers joined the Union, less than a year ago, their wages have been increased 50 per cent. and in some cases 75 per cent. We hope to conclude a similar arrangement with Messrs. Taylor's firm next week.

The Laundries Employers' Association have proposed a meeting of employers and employees in the laundry industry to discuss the establishment of an Industrial Council on the lines of the Whitley Report. The I.W.W.U. have agreed to this conference, but we bear in mind the fact that a Trade Board is to be established in England for the Laundry Trade, and we must make sure that an Industrial Council will be equally advantageous to the workers as the Trade Board before committing ourselves to it.

The Executive Committee of the I.W.W.U. have asked the Dublin Trades Council to appoint a committee to study the subject of Industrial Councils, and so be in a position to advise the Trade Unions which may have to deal with such Councils. Athy.

The Transport Branch, formerly the South Kildare Labour Union, has secured payment of £175 arrears of wages, without having to bring a single case into Court. This is due to the high state of organisation. The membership now exceeds 900, and it is quite ready to meet the threatened lock-out.

Cumannacht na hEireann.

The refusal of the Mansion House to Labour by Labour's reputed friend did not interfere with the success of the social gathering held by the S.P.I. in Denmark House, where a happy and hopeful international assembly of Russians, French, Lettish, English, Scottish, and Irish workers celebrated with song, speech, and dance the birthday of the Russian Socialist Republic and the uprising of German Social Democracy. Cathal O'Shannon briefly outlined the events of the past year and emphasised their significance. Deeds, not words, were needed now, he said. The Red Flags decorating the Hall were auctioned in the course of the evening and fetched from 5s. to 32s. each, a total of £6 18s. being realised, which goes to the Connolly Memorial Treat.

The Mansion House.

There is due from the Lord Mayor an explanation of his change of mind about lending the Round Room to the Trades Council. Some assurance is wanted that he is not out of mere vanity giving way weakly to General Fry in order to preserve the boast that the Mansion House is the freest spot on earth. There is another sinister suggestion current that the prohibition was dictated from Drumcondra. We have no reason to believe, however, that Cullenism is being revived in Dublin Archdiocese.

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New Menace to Irish Agriculture.

FAULTY SCHEME OF WAGES BOARD

Sir T. W. Russell expounded last week a policy of increased tillage and production of foodstuffs in Ireland during 1919, but there is reason to fear that Sir Thomas and his Department have learned nothing from their experience during the past summer and autumn.

In agriculture as in every industry the essential fructifier is Labour, and in so far as the Department's Labour policy is expressed in the proposals for new wage rates announced by the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland last week, their policy is foredoomed to failure. It does not satisfy the reasonable demands of the Irish worker and provides new incentives to emigration, which will result in a scarcity of labour more disastrous to an extension of tillage than the most exorbitant wage demands could be.

The highest minimum for men allowed by the new proposals is 28s. 6d. per week. Expressed in the value of pre-war money that is 12s. 4½d. The lowest minimum at 18 years of age—when the Scots ploughboy is entitled to a man's wage—is 22s., or in pre-war money 9s. 4½d. How far such wages are from the living wage as expounded by Leo XIII. is obvious. How far it is from providing the barest necessities of life is plain to anyone who knows the conditions obtaining over the country.

Recently the Tullamore branch of the Transport Union investigated closely the family budgets of its members and collected figures showing the costs of essential articles of food, clothing and fuel in that town in July, 1914, and in October, 1918. The conclusions of the inquiry showed that to enjoy the same degree of comfort (or its opposite) as before the war, wages must be raised to £2 a week for general labourers. And before the war the entire class of labourers in that district were living in conditions whose misery cannot be pictured in words. Such inquiries as to actual conditions in given localities have more practical value in preparing wages claims than Board of Trade figures, and we should like to see the Wages Board in its coming itinerary confronted with facts culled directly from the hard experience of the workers in the area they visit.

Agriculture—despite the protection afforded the landed interest by the Corn Production Act and the high prices paid to the farmers at the cost of virtual starvation of Irish urban workers—remains a sweated industry, and the paltry increase of 3s. 6d. offered to rural workers by the Wages Board proposals is a sufficient warrant for the workers to cease all reliance on that body, and to organise to win by direct action in negotiation or conflict with the farmers such wages as will make the farmer more of a business man and less of a highway robber.

Organisation on a national basis began in Scotland before the war, and when the Corn Production Act was passing the rural workers of Scotland were

able to have it modified to their advantage. Despite this the very construction of the Wages Boards, with representatives of farmers and workers and supposedly neutral and impartial elements representing the State, has prevented the Scottish workers obtaining their desires. When we contrast the wages paid in Scottish districts with those offered in Ireland, it will be seen that the Wages Board is so worked here as to give Irish farmers a special subsidy in their competition with Scottish farmers at the expense of the Irish field worker. Here are the proofs:—

In Group I. in Ireland, that is, in the districts contiguous to industrial centres, the wage specified at 18 years of age is 25s. 6d., and to men over 20 years the wage is 28s. 6d. In Scotland, in the rich belt across the country between the Forth and Clyde, an area comparable with Antrim, Down and Co. Dublin, men of 18 years obtain 36s. and over 21 years 38s. Female workers over 18 years, in the Irish Group I., are given 16s. 6d. In the Forth and Clyde area in Scotland, women over 17 years receive 20s. a week.

In the south-west Highlands of Scotland, which is mainly the County of Argyll, a district comparable with our Group III. (Donegal, Kerry, etc.), the wages paid to ploughmen is 36s. a week as compared with 23s. 6d. in Group III., Ireland. Different as conditions are in many respects, there is nothing in the state of Scotland compared with that of Ireland to justify the difference in wages.

The direct result of paying 53.4 per cent. more for the same work in Scotland will be the emigration of Irish agricultural workers to Scotland, and having regard solely to the present needs of Irish agriculture, we have no surplus population to spare. With 15 per cent. increased tillage in 1919 and rigid enforcement of tillage regulations hitherto ignored, there will be an actual shortage of labour, involving certain loss to those who attempt to carry out the Department's regulations.

When to the shortage of labour, serious in itself, is added the prospect of conflicts on the wages question over the country, the outlook for Irish agriculture is not rosy. One line of development offers chances of improvement if workers and farmers are wise enough to choose it. Let the organised workers of each county in agreement with organised farmers make their own bargains, fix local wages on the ascertained cost of living in the district, and thus ensure that next year's crop will be secured without the disturbance and loss of strikes, lockouts and boycotts. The Wages Board has failed the workers and again it must be asked are Messrs. Foran and Orangle performing any useful function while they remain on a Board in which their votes are powerless, while their presence provides a camouflage behind which the farmers and landlords make rules and regulations to strip the workers naked of the essentials of decency and comfort.

WORKERS' UNION ORGANISER ON RURAL WAGES.

To the Editor "Voice of Labour."

Sir,—It is with feelings of dismay that one peruses the proposed award of the Agricultural Wages Board for Ireland.

The wages proposed for male workers in prosperous Ulster vary from 22/- per week in Donegal to 28/6 in Down.

The new proposal is less than 3/6 per week of an increase, while empowering the farmer to deduct a larger amount for value of allowances. The 1917 award fixed the value of a labourer's dinner at 11d., the new award proposes to fix at 1/-, which is far too high when you consider that thousands of skilled artisans employed at our shipyards can secure a dinner of their own choosing for 10½d. The dining rooms at our Belfast shipyards are privately owned and controlled, employ many workpeople and pay a profit to their owners, also allowing a profit to the dealers and farmers who grow the produce. A 10½d. dinner at the shipyard consists of meat, vegetable and potatoes, with tea and pastry. Again there are many diningrooms frequented by business people where you can secure a plate of nourishing soup, four potatoes, tea and a bun for 6½d., and yet the farmers and landlord are allowed to charge 1/- for a dinner and the labourer has got to take what is set down to him. I have known farmers to set down boiled bacon and cabbage day after day for eight days and the labourer daren't ask for pudding or tea after.

If it takes 1/- to provide a dinner for a labourer, how much money is left to provide meals for the labourer's dependants. In many cases the labourer's wife has got to provide meals for herself and her children at less than a penny a meal.

I'm just afraid the members of the Agricultural Wages Board are asking for trouble.—Yours truly,

ROBERT McCLUNG.

Belfast, 15th Nov., 1918.

WAGES BOARD ON TOUR.

The Agricultural Wages Board is sending its members on tour to hear objections to the proposals announced. The farmers' associations will use their opportunities to the full to press for lower wages and higher deductions for rent, perquisites and food. The unions concerned must see that their case is presented as strongly as possible on the lines we have indicated.

A section of the Board will sit at Derry on 26th November and at Belfast on 28th. Another section will sit at Claremorris, 26th inst.; Athenry, 28th inst.; Limerick, December 2; Cork, December 4; and Waterford, December 6.

IRELAND AND THE INTERNATIONAL.

By Tadhg Barry, Usk Prison.

"Over and above the Labour arguments and the national arguments we esteemed the international arguments the greatest." "There now, Cathal O'Shannon says he believes internationalism greater than nationalism." The latter was the comment (all too familiar to our ears) of a comrade on reading the former in the "Voice" of the 9th November. And though having long ago grown tired of arguing the distinction between cosmopolitanism and internationalism, I again essayed in vain to convince my friend that what he meant by one, Cathal meant by the other. Incidentally the cynical smile of poor Jim Connolly or the passionate denial of Jim Larkin came to my recollection as I recalled the days when they met such daily, and I sympathised all the more with Cathal in his unenviable task of explaining away in the double meaning words of the English language the real distinction between internationalism and anti-nationalism and the real kinsmanship of internationalism with nationalism. I wonder could I do it now.

Unfortunately Ireland's workers think internationalism to be that which we know as English Labour, with which Irish labour is connected, not as an equal but as a dependency. If British labour was honest enough to call itself Imperialism we would have an easy task before us, but under the guise of labour it has been brought by its bosses to talk of self-determination while meaning a Lloyd George-cum-Carson Home Rule. Russian Labour on the other hand believes in self-determination as we believe in it in Ireland, and is not, unlike the selfish English variety, satisfied with its own appeasement, but wants to help the nations of the world to secure an equal liberty with itself, knowing that such is the surest way to international peace. The Internationale is the means by which a nation which wants liberty can make its claim to liberty known, and in this Ireland is not a dependency of the British Labour Party, but on the contrary the Irish Labour Party is as equal to and as distinct from British labour as the Belgian or French, whose labour unions are all as distinctly national as the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. Owing to the connection of the majority of the Irish workers (and consequent dependence) with British labour, the stronger we make our representation at the Internationale the better for Ireland and those who, like Cathal O'Shannon, believed in securing that Ireland's spokesmen would be some of the elected Parliamentary representatives, sought this, and not, as some people think, to upset the unity of the nation before the world. It was to strengthen and not to weaken in the eyes of the world that labour sought the suffrages. The appearance of weakening, false as it was, found them patriotic enough to weaken their position, just as the cry of "Unity" induced the country to swallow the Home Rule humbug. Such, Cathal and those who think with him believe a mistake. It is open to the Sinn

Fein Executive to reciprocate the self-effacement of the workers. Let us hope so, for Ireland's sake.

The strength of the international is that of a wall of nations, each helping with its individuality to uphold the whole and incidentally each other. The weakness of one affects the whole wall, as the weakness of English labour affects the European wall of Soviets at the present time. English labour has denied sympathy with Bolshevism which all the European labour parties are accepting as their ideal. If we show the workers of Europe that we are one with Jim Connolly in the belief in the equality of men and nations we will continue to have the sympathy which the Citizen Army won for us. The international argument is our strongest card. The national argument will seem to the other nations selfish, though even the most professing anti-internationalist I have met in Ireland was in reality as internationalist as Cathal O'Shannon. If "language was given to man to disguise his thoughts," the English language was invented to confuse man's thoughts. No true Sinn Feiner but is an internationalist in the true sense. All Sinn Feiners want to see equality of nations and emancipation of peoples. The representation of Ireland at the Internationale means the destruction of what Arthur Griffith described so aptly as the wall of paper, because Ireland recognised equality. The refusal of the Irish workers to send Parliamentary representatives to the Internationale is a curious antithesis to those who would send them to Westminster. But we in Ireland are too prone to let others think for us, and worse still become almost bigoted in our acceptance of others ideas. In the Internationale lies security for our future. Let us see that it is effectually secured and so make our national status all the better for our international standing.

Poor Willie Partridge got me to read Jack London's "Iron Heel" because he believed Jim Larkin was the original of the heroic labour leader in it. I found that, better still, the book explained what could be done by the "Internationale." War is declared between America and Germany in the middle of the present century. Labour in both countries does what it did in Ireland on the 23rd April. Result: No war for want of the means to get within murder distance of each other. In Ireland we have been prevented by lack of self-reliance from getting our voice heard in peace. It is up to us in the future to make our voice strong before the nations. We must secure an international status. Securing such we must assume international responsibility. Those who argue against internationalism whilst keen on securing Ireland's rights amongst the nations make the mistake of trusting to the capitalist international intrigue with its warring interests. Why not instead look ahead and secure it in the international parliament of labour whose interests are those of peace and fraternity. Are we to become an independent nation only to be as isolated from the world by our own actions as we have by our enemies?

Think! workers of Ireland, think! You are too fond of abusing your opponents

"Æ" ON THE NEW ORDER IN RUSSIA.

(From front page.)

sia, for the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce recently passed a resolution to the effect that they believed in the permanent responsibility of the Russian Co-operative Societies, and they, as representing American business firms in Russia, advised the Government at Washington to support financially and in other ways these powerful democratic organisations. These developments are not noticed in the press here, which selects all that is sensational, whether accurate or rumour, and ignores the work of reconstruction. I have read papers, which in the same article denounced Lenin and Trotsky as paid agents of Germany and also commented on the disastrous effect of their propaganda on the morals of the German soldiers and workmen. These men could hardly be paid by the German autocracy to undermine its influence over its own people. On the Eastern front Trotsky and Lenin, the men of ideas, won against Hindenburg and Ludendorff, the men with guns. We begin to suspect that the "Daily Mail" for once allowed truth to be printed in its columns when its correspondent in Russia wrote that, strange as it might appear to people in England, Lenin and Trotsky were men of real intellect and probably knew more about international politics than Mr. Arthur Balfour. We can see over the smoke of conflict the scaffolding of the new Russia arising. The conflict over its foundations will pass, but the building will be continued, and the democracies in other countries should see that their Governments allow the Russian people to work out their own destiny. Even those who are enemies of the Revolution have to admit that ninety per cent. of the Russian people are supporters of the present Government. And no League of Nations, however armed with self-righteousness, could have a moral right to overturn the social order in a country which is supported by the people themselves. We do not hear of Russians rising in masses against the rule of the Soviets, but Czecho-Slovaks and Japanese and other foreigners deputed to punish the Russian people, for their crimes against humanity. Their crimes I believe to be twofold. They desired to be at peace when the rest of the world was at war, a very serious offence, as we in Ireland know. They also desired to have economic democracy when the Great Powers had got no further than a desire to make the world safe for political democracy, and were, I believe, even a little dubious about that state of society, though experiment has proved that pure cultures of capitalism can be cultivated in a political democracy and develop there with the rapidity of bacteria in a jug of Dublin milk.—Yours sincerely,

GEO. W. RUSSELL.

as you abused Connolly and still abuse Larkin. Try and understand for yourself, and to that end seek explanation. Do not refute too readily that which if expressed in different words you would readily believe in. Ireland's strongest claim is not to be independent of all. It is to be the equal of all.

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CONNOLLY MEMORIAL TREAT.
The fund to treat the Dublin kiddies without taint of patronising charity keeps on growing. "Casey," in memory of his own childhood in our city and as a tribute to the ever-present personality of his comrade James Connolly, is playing the cash from his audiences in Britain. Send to Walter Carpenter, Room 3, Liberty Hall, for a collecting card and share in the good work.
Already acknowledged ... £3 10 0
Patricia Lynch, "The Christian Commonwealth" ... 0 5 0
Auction at S.P.I. Social ... 6 18 0

ANTI-BOLSHEVIK "FREE LOVE" STUNT.

What a nice little coup it was that our anti-Bolsheviks, whose moral standard is well measured by Regulation 40D, imagined they had effected by the publication of a decree establishing "free love," which it was alleged had been issued in the Moscow "Izvestia," official organ of the Soviet. It was indeed a pretty story, which had only one drawback, namely, that it had no foundation whatever in fact. On the contrary, it was a piece of impudent trickery which we are able easily to expose. The facts, briefly, are these. In the early part of the year the organ (also named "Izvestia") of a local Soviet of an out-of-the-way district in the Urals printed an article, written by a woman, in which the writer argued for greater sexual freedom for women and advocated a sort of sexual communism. Maxim Gorki, who at that time was opposing the Bolsheviks, reprinted this article in his "Novaya Zhizhn" as a horrible example of Bolshevism in practice, but achieved nothing more serious than a great laugh at his own expense. Nothing more was heard of the matter until the end of the week before last, when a summary of the self-same article blossomed forth in our capitalist Press as an alleged Soviet decree and purporting to have been printed in the Moscow "Izvestia," the official organ of the Soviet Government. There's to that. Our anti-Bolsheviks are persistent and anything but honest. But their every attempt to discredit Bolshevism only succeeds in casting ridicule on themselves.

—The Call.

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SHALL MOONEY HANG?

December 13th is the date fixed for the legal murder of Tom Mooney by the State Government of California. Wilson's intervention under world-wide pressure is the only thing to save him. Send your resolutions to the President at Washington, D.C.; the American Ambassador, 6 Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W., and the local Consuls.

Think of Tom Mooney—calmly counting the days, sustained in the presence of death by the consciousness that if he dies his martyrdom will be the seed of the Social Revolution. He is Irish—the idea of sacrifice for the common good is in his blood. He is American—and recalls the example of Spies and Parsons. Show yourselves worthy of his oblation.

Think of Billings—that boy of the smiling countenance—walled up for life in prison walls.

Get them out!

THE MOONEY FUND.

Remitted to Jack B. Mooney.

Acknowledged last week	... £3 3 9
Belfast and Dublin Loco. Engine Drivers' and Firemen's T. U., per Frank Hanratty, 13 Moyelta Road, Dublin...	1 0 0
Countess Markiewicz, Holloway Jail	1 0 0
Mrs. T. Clarke, Holloway Jail	1 0 0
Prisoners at Usk Prison, 2nd remittance	2 2 6
Irish Transport and General Workers' Union	5 0 0

British Soldier on Mooney.

The following is an extract from a letter by a soldier with the British force in Italy:—"The recent 'Voice' is first class and I have had the pleasure of creating an opinion about the Mooney case. Everyone should read the story of the terrible gigantic lie framed up to hang an enemy of capital. I feel our friend Mooney will ultimately be released and will gain a remarkable influence in the fight against the present legal oppression in 'Free America.'"

Morality in Dublin.

The Dublin Watch Committee sends us details of crimes against children and a call for more severe penalties on offenders. We are doubtful if punishment in such cases is any deterrent. The real criminals are not the helpless animals gripped by foul passions but those who are responsible for our hideous, incestuous housing system and the competitive organisation of society. "As long as you have men paid wages insufficient to marry on and women paid wages that must be supplemented by their earnings on the streets," says Fr. Paul Bull, the Anglican monk, "you must accept the 'social evil' as a normal natural consequence."

Burglary in Dawson Street.

Last Monday morning four persons cleverly disguised as D.M.P. creatures entered the "Voice of Labour" office in the absence of the staff and stole a red poplin flag which was flying from the window.

Ballyshannon.

Under Peadar O'Donnell the Ballyshannon branch of the Transport Union has raised wages in the town by advances of from 8/- to 11/- a week.

I know not whether laws be right
Or whether laws be wrong.
All that we know who lie in jail
Is that the wall is strong,
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

The NEW RUSSIA

*A Souvenir of the First
Anniversary of the Russian
Soviet Republic, 1917-18.*

Contains the Constitution of the Soviet Republic and Decrees with Articles by Zelda Kahan Coates, H. Sheehy Skeffington, "Libertia" of the "Worker" (R. McKenna), Edén and Cedar Paul.

EDITED BY SEMYON ARONSON (SIDNEY ARNOLD).

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CAPITALISM AND LABOUR.

The "Daily News" appears a little perturbed regarding the position of the Liberal Party at the forthcoming General Election.

Discussing the conditions under which an election is to be held, the above journal remarks:—"The danger we see ahead is that the surrender of the Liberal Party will mark a definite revolution in the politics of this country (England)." "It will mean a new and an ominous alignment—the parties representing the classes, the vested interests, trade, finance, and so on, on one side, Labour on the other." "This is a political division we should deplore at any time."

Every workingman would do well to learn, mark and inwardly digest the above excerpts from the official organ of English Liberalism.

Socialists have always contended that the last thing in the world the possessing classes desired was a clean fight between Capitalism and Labour. We have always argued that the alleged antagonism between the two Capitalistic parties was a sham, a mere make belief to gull the proletariat. So long as the workers can be got to look at political and economic problems through the spectacles of Liberalism and Toryism, so long will the Capitalist "system" be safe. It is the object of Capitalism to keep the workers divided and constantly squabbling over such things as Home Rule, Tariff Reform and Free Trade. When the workers appear to be getting out of hand they are quietened by a sop from their masters in the shape of an increase of wages. Social Reforms are occasionally introduced to gull the workers into believing that the "superior" classes are concerned about their welfare. The fact is, the Capitalist will do everything for the worker except, as Tolstoi said, "get off his back."

This is the one thing that really matters. We must get these parasites off our backs.

Let us think and act as workers. Let us gain control of the political and industrial machines, and when we have done that it will be an easy matter clearing out the parasites.

In order to do this we must have a strong Labour Party, composed of all the hand and brain workers in every trade.

When that is accomplished, the downfall of Capitalism will be imminent.

FRED. ROBINSON.

NOTES AND NEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL.

What About Ireland?

In a scathing reply to the protest of the neutral Powers against the alleged Red Terror in Russia, Tchitcherine, as Soviet Commissary for Foreign Affairs, asks: "Did the representatives of the neutrals ever hear anything of the incidents in Dublin in Easter, 1916, of the shooting of Skeffington and other Irishmen?"

The International Conference.

In a telegram to Branting, Troelstra demands that the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee shall summon an urgency meeting of the I.S.B. for the purpose of organising an International Conference. Branting suggests that Brussels should be the place selected for the meeting of the International, as that will probably be the meeting place of the official Peace Conference. As it is now more probable that the Peace Conference will meet in Paris and Versailles. Switzerland is mentioned as the most likely meeting place for the International. It would be much better for the International if the Peace Conference met at Brussels, since then the International could meet side by side with it.

The British Coalition.

The decisive vote in favour of breaking with the Coalition, although it will not make the ex-Labour members like Barnes and Co. withdraw, was the best work done at the Conference. The measure of Labour's freedom of the Government can now be gauged by the efforts the Tories and Liberals in combination are making to down Labour at the polls. In these circumstances we shall be surprised if the Labour Party succeeds in returning 100 members.

Nothing Doing in South Dublin.

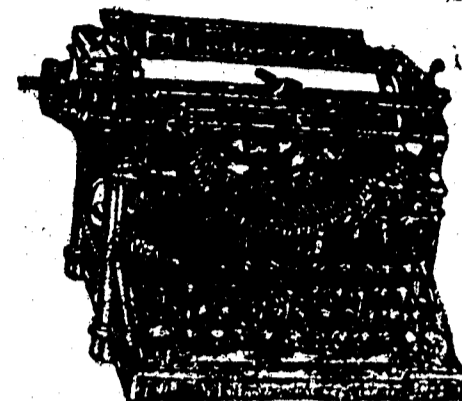
In consequence of the attempt of certain South Dublin Home Rulers to jockey the Labour bodies in the constituency the Bray Kingstown and District Trades Council has adopted the following resolution:—

"This Council, being an affiliated body to the Irish Labour Party, strongly condemns the attempt being made to have organised Labour dragged at the tail of any other political party; and in entering its emphatic protest calls upon all its affiliated bodies to abstain from taking any part whatever in the proceedings at the forthcoming conventions."

BELFAST INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY
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NOVEMBER, at 7.30 p.m.
J. DORMAN.
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