

THE OLD SLAVE MASTER WOULD NOT ALLOW THE SLAVES TO BE TAUGHT TO READ.
THE MASTERS TO DAY CARE NOT HOW MUCH THE WORKERS READ SO LONG AS
THEY FURNISH THE READING MATTER. Pass the "Voice" along to a Fellow worker,

IRISH OPINION

The VOICE OF LABOUR

EDITED BY CATHAL O'SHANNON.

NEW SERIES. No. 67.

MARCH 1, 1919.

ONE PENNY

Property: by Darrel Figgis.

AN ESSAY ON THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

"The rights of property may be pleaded. . . I acknowledge no right of property in a small class which goes to abrogate the rights of a numerous people. I acknowledge no right of property in eight thousand be they noble or ignoble, which takes away all rights

of property, security, independence, and existence itself, from a population of eight millions, and stands in bar to all the political rights of the island and to all the social rights of its inhabitants."

—James Fintan Lalor.

In a recent controversy an antique phrase nodded perilously at the threshold, if indeed it did not enter between the disputants. That phrase was "The Rights of Property." It is strange that a mind so alert as Professor O'Rahilly's should have admitted that hoary dictum to any parley, if only on nodding acquaintance. For to think clearly we must challenge all-comers at the threshold of our minds, and give pity neither to grey hairs nor to youth.

"Rights of Property"! What rights has property? A room crammed with golden sovereigns: has it any rights? Has a glebe field, or have a thousand glebe fields, any rights? Or a warehouse stored with costly merchandise: has it any rights? None of these things have rights. No, not rolled together and multiplied to the highest power, have they any rights. The purest materialist that ever lived never bestowed rights on matter in these inanimate forms. So, having no rights they can bestow no rights on those who come into their possession.

No; but men have rights. Not some men. All men. Not 2 in every 100 of them; nor even 98 in every 100 of them; but each 100 or every 100 of them. As human beings they were born into the possession of those rights. The ancient Scripture says that man was "made in the likeness of God." I do not read that some men were made in that likeness, and other men in some other sort of likeness. Nor do I discover in any philosophy that men came but the one way into the world, or will go out but the one way. Their gifts may not be equal; their talents may not be the same; their requirements and powers may be as wide asunder as the poles. But their rights are the

same. And the accumulation of dead, inanimate matter by any of them to the disadvantage of others of them cannot cancel or adjust those rights.

We see, then, that property has no rights; whereas men have. Now we can advance another step, and see a further thing. For to say that "property has rights" is, in fact, to say that dead matter has, or gives the right to dispose and order the living souls of men. Which, rightly speaking, is akin to blasphemy. Yet, while property has no right to men, men have a right to property. Not some men; all men.

Here, then, is the central confusion that that hoary phrase masks. It exactly inverts the moral order of things. In fact, the very word property (like other excellent words, such as noble-man and gentle-man) has become so tainted in its misuse that many have grown shy of it. Yet the desire for property is deep-rooted in the nature of men and women. The "good life," which it is the business of the State to achieve for all its citizens, cannot perfect itself while that desire remains unappeased. Like other desires, it may take monstrous forms, but the good life cannot complete itself while the healthful exercise of that desire is baffled.

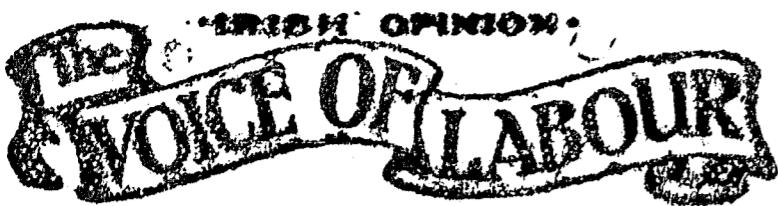
When we look abroad at the modern capitalist order of society to-day the thing chiefly remarkable is not the sense of vast property, but the sense of a vast denial of property. Let me illustrate this. Here is a man who, at the end of his financial year, sits at his desk and surveys the papers on which the growth of his enterprise is recorded for him. A rich satisfaction glows in his mind. It is not that he is thinking what he will do

with his added prosperity, what investments he will make, what conveniences and luxuries he will purchase, or the better display he will make, or his wife will make, before the eyes of envious neighbours. With the baser sort this may be so; but even with them the first thought will be that thus and thus he ordered things, planned his campaign, took swift advantage of occasion, turned even adversity to account—with the result spread before him.

Literally, the glow of satisfaction is his sense of property. He re-reads his figures as the author re-reads his book fresh to hand from the binder. I knew a business man (one of a large tribe) who timed his working-day from six hours to sixteen, with the smallest gain in nett profit, all for the satisfaction of increasing the range of his operations four-fold. Yes, but what of his fellow-workers in the enterprise, without whom he might whistle the moon? What even of the clerk who prepared the figures he so complacently surveys? What property have they in the joint enterprise? Have they any glow of satisfaction in the wider range of operations? Does it matter a whittle to them?

I do not ask if they are well or ill-paid, or what hours they work under what conditions. They may be lavishly paid for the smallest working day. At the moment this is a matter of indifference to me. But are they called to counsel as of right? Have they, as of right, a voice in the working hours of all and the payment of each, and the appointment of fit men for their apt places? In a word, is the property a fellowship, as the labour is? Or is it not, rather, that the property is vested in but one of that fellow-

(Continued on Page 622.)



Edited by CATHAL O'SHANNON.

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THE GATHERING FORCES AND THE COMING CONFLICT

The forces of the enemy are being gathered on a new front with unity of command and pooling of resources. Dublin Capitalists, following with their usual lack of initiative the example set by their big brothers in England, have combined in an Employers' Federation which is being extended to make it a Central Employers' Association which will embrace employers and their associations in manufacturing, trading and agricultural enterprises. The press has blessed the project and has enlarged on the beneficent scheme by which the new association will avoid strikes and lock-outs by substituting reasonable arbitration for the settlement of all claims made by the workers. Like the League of Nations, the new association will be effectively controlled by the Big Five or the analogous clique who already control the industries of Dublin and the Midlands. On the committee we notice the ominous name of Shackleton and the no more friendly name of Pim. The presence of a Pim assures us the preying will be done prayerfully by the new assembly of vultures.

Knowing the past history of the Dublin Federation and like bodies and the invincible prejudices of those who compose them, we place no reliance on their professed desire for fairness and equity. Doubtless the starvation of women and children and the batoning of men that we witnessed in 1911-1913 and the duplicity, cunning and force employed to drive the insurgent workers of Belfast back to the shops and yards are fair samples of the equity they would mete out to our class.

Until we know the new Central Association better we shall consider it as a fighting organisation and as such we shall urge the organised workers to treat it. Already the outposts are engaged. The dispute between the Vintners and Grocers' Assistants' Union and Messrs. Andrews' of Dublin brings the trade union movement into conflict not merely with one retail grocery firm but also with the federated wholesale firms and the Chamber of Commerce.

The issue is simple but vital, and its importance is recognised by the large advertising of Messrs. Andrews. With skill the mind of the public is being daily

furnished with perverted platitudes and nothing has been done so far by the Union concerned or Dublin Trades Council to counter the anti-Labour campaign thus inaugurated. No weeding-out of trade unionists can be permitted in any industry, but the employers, who have not yet recovered from their "victory" over the Transport Union in 1913, have carefully selected the recent recruits to the labour movement—in the various branches of the distributive trade—to test the effectiveness of their new artillery.

The drapers' assistants are being challenged in the same way, the dismissal of active trade unionists and their replacement by non-unionists. This action has been taken by several houses at the same time, and the promptitude of the Employers' Association to enter the field proves the existence of a widespread conspiracy among the commercial captains to smash the growing power of Labour.

In such circumstances Labour must prepare to resist. It need not in the new Ireland fear the blackleg, so long the bane of the movement. It need no longer fear the bigot and the partisan, who, too long, sundered the masses of the workers into sections. What divisions exist arise from faulty organisation. There is no force that can be swung to fill the gap of danger. Sectional unions hold their petty forces isolated from the grand army. Their membership is too small to provide fighting funds, sufficient to combat the millions that the Central Association of Employers control and the hundreds of thousands they are prepared to spend to keep the people enslaved. David still uses his sling and stone, but Goliath has brought into action the long-range guns of international finance and the poison shells of the press.

Unity of forces, unity of funds, unity of command, are essential in the coming struggle with Capital. Without them a conflict with the newly-organised forces of Capital must end as the Belfast strike ended. The men were not beaten by any failure of courage or even by any excess of caution. The military invasion they derided. Not for the first time has the cry gone up in its streets, "The soldiers are out," and veterans of the eighties will tell you that Tel-el-Kebir in '82 was easier service than the brief excitement in Belfast streets in 1886. The old and outworn separation of men in one industry into craft unions governed by the rules drawn up in 1832 or 1857, the structure of labour organisations themselves, these defeated Belfast-men.

"Who is it speaks of defeat?" There is no defeat if the lesson is learned and steps taken to obtain the rise of a new trade-unionism, which will recognise no longer the distinctions hitherto imposed by the master class and accepted by the workers. One big union is too much, perhaps, for many to grasp at once, but the employers' example should be more telling than the theories of Cole, Orage, or Daniel de Leon. If we then do not put our forces in order to meet the new attack we shall deserve the servitude the state and the trusts and the employers' federations plan for us and for our children,

INDUSTRIAL ACTION.

A few weeks ago the "Voice of Labour" published a strong appeal from Mr. O'Lehane for "unity of action and unification of control" in the Trade Union Movement. The proposed Federation of Irish Employers and Employers' Associations calls for immediate and definite consideration of Mr. O'Lehane's suggestions. Labour needs some kind of unification **now**; we can't afford to wait for a few years till the One Big Union is a reality. It is obvious that big forces are stirring to-day in the world of industry. Is Irish Trade Unionism ready to turn those forces to its own advantage?

It would be possible to carry out the preliminary part of Mr. O'Lehane's programme without delay by the creation of a national industrial executive to control the labour movement of the country. (The question of the pooling of funds is not one to be settled easily or rapidly. But some solution of that problem would eventually follow the creation of the controlling executive.) I would suggest that such an executive should be responsible to a Council of Trade Union representatives meeting at stated periods. For we have to bear in mind that we live in a period when the principle of "self-determination" is very powerful: it is a healthy principle, making for growth and integrity; and labour leaders would be well advised to encourage rather than suppress it. I do not believe there could be any permanent unification if individual initiative were obstructed or ignored. Moreover, so little original thinking and real study has yet been done in the Irish Labour Movement that a constant interchange of ideas and of knowledge would prove a great source of strength. We have swallowed our Trade Union and industrial theories whole, as they came to us from England or Germany or elsewhere, without thought of our particular digestive capacity. But the last word has yet to be said on the treatment of Labour problems by Labour, and the Irish people may well find a way of their own to the Promised Land, if they once begin to think independently.

Cannot Mr. O'Lehane invite a Conference of Trade Union representatives to consider a scheme of unification which will help to direct the new tide of unrest along hopeful channels? We of the rank and file are struggling in that tide without any clear vision of our goal. We realise that modern Trade Unionism must evolve a constructive as well as a fighting policy but who is to evolve and direct it? We are conscious of the vicious circle of wages and prices: but how to get out of it? We appreciate the claim for the control of industries by the workers but how to acquire that control—or even the knowledge necessary to exert it efficiently?

We may find the answers if Mr. O'Lehane's plea for "closer co-operation by way of a co-ordinated or federated scheme, embracing unity of action and unification of control" is taken up actively and practically.

LOUIE BENNETT.

Haircutting by skilful hands. All trade union labour at Mallon's, 30 Eden Quay.

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

Propaganda by Deed.

The conscience of the world, we learn, has been outraged by the perforation of the Tiger. Clemenceau. The conscience of the world has not been active lately, and we are gratified that an incident has occurred to rouse it. It was not stirred by the brutal assassination of Mons. Jean Jaures by a bourgeois tool on the eve of war when a word from the great French Socialist might have prevented, as it did in 1911, the fearful murder of millions that ensued upon his death. Nor was the world-conscience outraged when Lenin's life was attempted by a friend of the Anglo-French Alliance, and we shall be pleasurably surprised if its new-found sensitiveness is agitated by the murder of Kurt Eisner in Munich.

The bourgeoisie has never scrupled to assassinate for its own purposes. Charlotte Corday has been canonised by the middle class. Bowen-Colthurst is rewarded with a pension. Count Arco-Walley, should he escape the vengeance of the Bavarian proletariat, would find many friends among those who are already devoting the young Frenchman who shot the Tiger to the guillotine. There is a dramatic justice in the weapon of its own choice being turned against unrighteous authority, but that does not justify the employment of secret murder as a method of righting social wrongs. We are not concerned with the moral question, although we think it ill befits those who have provoked and maintained a massacre of millions to talk about the immorality of murder.

Jaures' Murderer?

The attack on Clemenceau has been seized upon by the capitalist nations as an excuse for suppression of all radical opinion. Bolshevism, that awful spectre, is invoked to camouflage an incident that finds its simple explanation in the ruthless sacrifice of millions of French lives for the re-conquest of the iron and potash and silk industries of Alsace Lorraine. It is a violent expression of natural and proper resentment against the dragooning of French workers, the suppression of freedom in thought, and speech, and the press. Had these natural outlets of dissatisfaction been open Clemenceau would have been spared the torture of the last few days. He has no need of our sympathy. His class can transfer to him some of that gentle rain with which, in sentimental moments, it bedews the workers' misery. Justice we suppose will have its way with the youth arrested—but when will Clemenceau's protegee, the murderer of Jaures, be brought to trial? Four and a half years is a long time to hold, untried and unpunished, an assassin who was caught red-handed.

The Vicious Circle.

That phrase occurs in Miss Bennett's contribution on "Industrial Action," but we should not like to think that Miss Bennett has accepted the loose and vicious theories industriously propagated by our rulers that increased wages bring higher prices and that higher prices cause demands for higher wages that in turn force up prices. This is not true in fact and experience. An examination

of miners' claims for wage increases and coal prices over a long period shows that the price to the consumer of coal has always been raised before the miners claimed or obtained higher wages. Wages have risen even when prices were falling. From 1880 to 1895 food prices fell heavily and rapidly. During the same period wages rose slowly but steadily, mainly as a result of the "New Unionism" that knit up the old trade unions and extended the benefits of organisation to the unskilled workers. The "vicious circle" did not exist.

In the middle of the nineties the opening of the Westralian mines and the adoption of the cyanide process of gold extraction cheapened the cost of gold production. As a result of the fall in the price of gold the price of all commodities measured in gold began to rise. Food prices were included in the movement, but although they rose steadily in the next ten years, wages fell both in money value and purchasing power. The strikes of 1911-1914 bettered the workers' position slightly, but the increased wages obtained then did not overtake the ever-growing cost of living. War supervened, and as a result of war conditions directly controlled by the English Government the workers are in a far worse position than in 1896. The "vicious circle" is an imposture. The theory is invented and promulgated to betray the workers through their ignorance, and we regret that Miss Bennett should use the phrase without repudiating the fallacy it contains.

Tailors' Re-union.

We gladly call to the attention of all tailors the confidence that has been summoned for the 16th March in Dublin to form an all-embracing union of garment-workers for Ireland. Every union and every union branch catering for tailors and tailoresses, whether in workshop or factory, shirt-makers, dressmakers and milliners, should make a point of having delegates present empowered to establish One Big Union in the trade. The Amalgamated Society in the past refused to keep pace with the technical development of the industry, and for long excluded from its ranks division of labour and factory workers, even when these groups had come to be numerically preponderant in the industry. As a natural result, these workers formed separate unions, but a few years ago combined them into the United Garment Workers' Union. To-day that union controls the tailoring and clothing industry of Great Britain and the Amalgamated Society is in a backwater.

In Ireland we have a great opportunity of creating an effective industrial union for all garment workers—and one, too, which will be managed in Ireland by Irish workers. If unity is not attained at the St. Patrick's Eve conference, the old bickering of sectional unions must continue and garment workers continue to be sweated and underpaid. The Board of Trade returns of 1906-7 showed that the average wage paid to men tailors, highly skilled workmen, worked out at 29s. 7d. per week in these islands,

and therefore must have been considerably less in Ireland. Women's wages in all branches of the garment-making industry averaged 13s. To correct these figures and make them applicable to Ireland, remember that the Royal Commission's inquiry in Dublin found that the average earnings of the 1,250 cases investigated was 16s. a week.

During the war these workers have obtained an advance of 40 per cent. on pre-war wages. The cost of living has increased 139 per cent. Surely such conditions will make unity possible now. It has been long overdue.

The Belfast Strike.

Now that work is resumed, we let Belfast men speak for themselves as to the issue of the conflict. Comrade Lorimer's letter this week will be followed by an open letter to the Strike Committee from the vigorous pen of Jimmie Baird. It may not be out of place to emphasise two things that should be noted by the rank and file of Belfast workers. First, at the beginning of the strike the local branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union offered, with the full support of headquarters and executive committee, to join in the strike. That offer was turned down by the General Strike Committee, but it held good all through, and its acceptance at the eleventh hour, with a general call to the trade unionists of Belfast would have prevented the collapse. The second point to be noted is that the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress was equally ready to help with money or action. It is for Belfast men, without prejudice or passion, to find out why that help was not wanted.

CATHAL O'SHANNON'S DESPATCHES HAVE GONE ASTRAY.

The first communication to reach this Office from the delegates to the International Socialist Congress, Thomas Johnson and Cathal O'Shannon, is a harmless picture-postcard from the latter. It is dated Berne, 14th February, and states that Cathal and T. Johnson were leaving that day for Geneva, en route for home. It concludes: "I hope you have got my despatches."

Well, we haven't!

We are not putting the British Post Office to the trouble of tracing the missing packets, and we hope the officials of the Grahamising department have enjoyed the perusal of the contents. They must have, when they cannot spare them for our readers' pleasure.

Excess Profits.

Speaking at the meeting of Bovril, Ltd. Mr. George Lawson Johnston, Chairman of the Company, said: "To earn an additional one per cent. of dividend (free of tax) on their Deferred Shares—£7,500—they would have had to increase their selling price by £53,571, of which £46,071 would have gone in excess profits and income-tax." ("Freeman's Journal," 21/2/19). And they tell us the Government is not profiteering

BELFAST HATH SPOKEN.

Sir,—I must compliment the "Voice" on its outspokenness during the past few weeks on national and international questions. Even Belfast is not neglected. Perhaps I might be allowed to express my opinion on recent happenings in Belfast.

A thorough believer in Industrial Unionism, I need hardly say that Connolly's "One Big Union" appeals very forcibly to me. I do not see how industrial salvation can be secured except by an organised effort of all the workers. While I despise the discredited doctrine of Syndicalism, I am not blind to the fact that little or nothing can be expected from that conglomeration of reactionists which we are pleased to call Parliament. There is the possibility of the Welsh Wizard over-reaching himself—but would the electorate reject Pilate?

"Direct Action" is promising at present. Belfast has tried it. Belfast is not defeated; it merely lost a battle. Greater struggles with better organisation will, I believe, not only regain the lost ground but will considerably advance us into the enemy's country (or profits). A clear definition of the words "drastic action" is necessary; but the blame for the temporary defeat cannot fall on any individual. Lack of organisation, leadership, and class-consciousness added its part. Belfast is creeping, not walking; industrially it is yawning, politically it is fast asleep. The materialistic conception that was taken of the strike proved conclusively that the real meaning of the unrest was recognised by few.

I haven't the least compunction or dread of contradiction in asserting that the Federation did not utilise the full forces at its disposal to squeeze the sponge of capitalism; and I learned with disgust and loathing of the indifference shown by the Federation towards the various offers of those whom I am proud to call my fellow-countrymen. Until Irishmen realise that Labour's colour is red—not green or orange—industrial and political action is a burlesque. During the strike Belfast workers appeared to be a leaderless democracy, and events have proved that many of the "fire-brands" are typical of the month of March.

If the strike achieved nothing except to show the strikers that in future more attention must be paid to Trade Unionism than to Ulster Unionism, it has accomplished much; but who would grudge our admiration for our eight Labour M.P.'s, whose mental anxiety and sleepless nights on our behalf confounded the empire and materially assisted in moving Lord Pirrie's bowels of compassion which resulted in the offering of such ideal terms? "You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," but who dares to say that you cannot make a democrat or a Socialist out of a Unionist M.P.?

Unofficial Vigilance Wanted.

I have always been sceptical of the pugnacity of full-time officials when they face the employers, therefore I would favour the formation of unofficial local committees elected by and from the rank and file, controlled by a national

executive and federated internationally. Herein lies the best possible method of having unified action and capturing the industrial machine; but the movement must be purified of jealousy, prejudice and ignorance with the flail of education. With a confederation of all workers of all lands I do not see how any demand, however revolutionary it may be, could be denied, **because with industrial unity an accomplished fact, political unity must follow.**

Belfast failed, and in a sense I'm glad it failed. Belfast resumed its work, and I voted for resumption. Why exploit the suffering, the loyalty and enthusiasm of workers whose semi-class-consciousness might be obliterated and whose leaders' hearts and prejudices were where their heads ought to be? It is ludicrous to expect a hungry army armed with blunt bayonets and blank cartridges to fight; but it is criminal for leaders to be in possession of both food and munitions and quibble over "principle" and "prestige" while the army loses. Better accept temporary defeat than extermination. Upon Belfast's failure of today the success of to-morrow will be built.—Yours, etc.,

WM. LORIMER.

REPUBLICAN DEMONSTRATION IN GLASGOW.

The greatest Irish demonstration that has taken place in Glasgow was that held on Sunday, 16th Feb., in the St. Andrew's Halls, under the auspices of the Scottish Executive of Sinn Fein. The Hall, which accommodates nearly 5,000, was crowded to excess. The platform party, numbering 300, consisted of all the leading figures of the Irish life in Glasgow and the West of Scotland. The meeting, which was one in support of the principle of Self-Determination, was addressed by Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington and Mr. J. J. Walsh, M.P. for Cork City. The reception accorded to the speakers was remarkable for its enthusiasm, and the resolution in favour of the object of the meeting was carried with acclamation. In the evening Mr. Walsh addressed meetings in Coatbridge and Partick, where he was also well received. The distinguished visitor was entertained in the afternoon by a well-known Cork man, Mr. P. J. O'Callaghan, at Hillside House, Partickhill.

The "Forward," of 22nd ult., reports fully Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington's account of the murder of her husband.

We are informed that this meeting has made a remarkable impression on the Labour movement in Glasgow. The publication of the Democratic Programme in the "Forward" has removed many misconceptions about the social aims of the Irish people. Further intercourse between Ireland and Scotland, between the forces of Labour in particular, and concerted action for common ends, would help the workers of both countries—and the Belfast worker is the natural link.

Boyle.

Employees at the Stewart's mills have claimed rates obtaining in the flour milling industry and expect inclusion in the first Milling Arbitration, over which the M. of L. still delays.

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We are pleased to acknowledge on this week's list a handsome donation from Mrs. Tom Clarke, who owing to ill-health was recently released from Holloway Jail, and we trust to hear of her complete recovery in the near future.

The amount subscribed to date is encouraging, and is an indication of the interest throughout the country in the Workers' International. Many branches of the I.T.G.W.U. have done very well, but the activities of other branches in this direction are not yet apparent. Money is still needed, and further subscriptions should be sent without delay to the Treasurer, Cumannacht na h-Eireann, Liberty Hall, Dublin. Cheques and postal orders may be crossed "I.A.W.S. Bank." G.S.

CUMANNACHT NA h-EIREANN.

The branch committee has succeeded in obtaining new and inviting premises at 42 North Great George's-street, Dublin, where the next branch meeting will be held on Friday, 28th inst., at 8 p.m.

As the business on the agenda for the branch meeting on the 28th instant is very important, a large and representative gathering of members is expected, and those wishing to join the Party should attend this meeting at 42 North Great George's-street, when their application for membership will be dealt with.

On Sunday next, March 2nd, Conrad Peterson will lecture in the Trades Hall, Capel-street, at 8 p.m., on "Phases of Revolution." That there is no lack of public interest in these weekly lectures was proved by the large audience and intelligent discussion at the lecture on "Sinn Fein and Labour" by Comrade Tom Nagle on Sunday last, and it is hoped that those who attended will return on Sunday next and bring their friends, when an interesting programme is promised.

A concert and play will be given in Liberty Hall on Monday, March 3rd, at 8 p.m., under the auspices of Cumannacht na h-Eireann, and we trust the hall will be packed on this occasion, and that it will be a huge financial success.

From Com. G. Burns, of 8 Camden-quay, Cork, we receive a very encouraging report as to the progress being made by the S.P.I. branch recently formed there. On the 16th instant they had a lecture on "Elements of Socialism," and on the 23rd inst. "Socialism and the Co-operative Commonwealth." Comrade Treacy is booked for next Sunday to speak on "Solidarity."

Walter Carpenter, of Dublin, S.P.I., lectured at Belfast last Sunday on the Future of Labour in Ireland, in the I.L.P. Hall, Victoria Street. There was a packed meeting, many questions, and general satisfaction. It is hoped to further the exchange of speakers between Belfast and Dublin, particularly during the coming summer.

Ginger Shortage in Kilmallock.

Belfast strikers have been emulated by the strikers at Kilmallock, who have issued a Labour daily under the title of "Kilmallock Strike Bulletin." Hot as ginger, it will enliven old Kilmallock, and by pointing the moral of the present struggle help the workers to realise that the fight is the thing. It parodies The Great MacDermot thus:—

We do want to work,
And, by Jingo, when we do,
We'll name the work,
We'll name the hours,
And also name the screw!

NEXT WEEK.

An Open Letter to the "Federation" Strike Committee, Belfast.
By JAMES BAIRD.

EVERY BELFAST WORKER MUST READ THIS INDICTMENT.

Shop Stewards and others can obtain supplies direct from this Office. Price, 1s. 8d. for two dozen. Orders must be received on Tuesday, March 4, to ensure supply.

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IRISH TAILORS AND TAILORESSES' UNION.

Open to All Workers in the Clothing Industry in Ireland

The Irish Tailors and Tailoresses' Union has issued a Circular calling a Conference of the Tailoring and Clothing Trade Unions and Branches in Ireland, to be held in Ardee Hall, Dublin, on Sunday, the 16th March, with the object of uniting and consolidating all into one concrete and virile Trade and Labour Union for the Tailoring and Clothing industry in Ireland.

Those interested who have not received Circulars, can obtain them — on application to the Secretary, —

Dermot J. Stewart,
Ardee Hall, Talbot Street,
Dublin.

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A Pamphlet of extreme interest to every business man, farmer, worker, and thinker in Ireland. Deals with Irish Reconstruction—General Principles, Relations between Capital and Labour, Housing Public Health, Poor Law, Unemployment, Education, Raw Materials for Industries, Financial Facilities, Shipbuilding, Power, Transport.

Issued by the Irish Reconstruction Association, 84 Merrion Sq., Dublin.
Sent Stamps.

DUBLIN WORKING CLASS Education Conference

MONDAY LECTURES

Trades Hall, Capel Street, at 8 p.m. prompt.

Next Monday, March 3rd, R. T. J. Mortished. Subject: "Road, River, and Rail."

March 24th, H. C. Neill-Watson. Subject: "The Employers' Sphere in Industry."

April 14th—Arthur Williamson, M.A. Subject: "The Machinery of Government."

April 28th—Professor Charles H. Oldham. Subject: "The External Trade of Ireland."

On Thursday, 20th March, in the Municipal Art Gallery, 17 Harcourt St., Mrs. Duncan. Subject: "Pictures."

Monday Lectures, Admission 3d. Tickets for Course, 6d.

May be obtained at Trades Hall Classes on Sundays, 4 to 5.30 p.m., or from members.

CUMANNACHT NA hEIREANN. 42 North Great George's Street, Dublin. SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES, TRADES HALL, CAPEL STREET, CONRAD PETERSON

Will Lecture on "PHASES OF REVOLUTION," On Sunday Next, the 2nd March, At 8 p.m., sharp. Questions and Discussion Invited. Admission Free. Music. Collection. **Concert and Play, "A Man of Ideas,"** in Liberty Hall, on Monday, March 3rd, at 8 p.m. Admission sixpence.

BELFAST INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY.

(North Branch, Langley St., off Tennent Street). SUNDAY, 2nd MARCH, at 7.30, **MR. JAS. MAXTON, M.A.** (Glasgow) Will speak in the Above Hall.

Irish National Assurance Society Offers sound and attractive money proposition to energetic Irishmen who can influence insurance with this purely Irish and First-Class Society. Prospectus and Agency terms sent post free on request.

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PROPERTY: By Darrel Figgis.

(From Front Page.)

ship of labour, and the rest his wage-slaves, without security of tenure, tenants-at-will, without any claim in his improvements.

In his last, and best, book, "Labour in the Commonwealth,"* Mr. G. D. H. Cole says, justly, that "Industry, in a very real and fundamental sense, has to do with the affairs of men and women, and this gives it a spiritual content not at all inferior to that of politics." Indeed, industry is nearer to the continuous lives of men, and in that degree more vital than politics. In politics men and women have entered to their right. Come what may, the affairs of States will be, and must be, more and more democratically ordered by whole peoples. With that Citizenship becomes possible. For Citizenship, at its best, is a sense of property in the national honour, uprightness and dignity. Where a few possess rights in a State to the exclusion of the many, the few have the property of citizenship, while the many are helots. Where States are democratically ordered and controlled, and exactly in the degree in which that control is continuously insisted upon, the property passes to all, and the spiritual heritage by so much increased.

Yet only a part of men's lives function in their nation's polity. The greater part of those lives function in their industry. And in industry, for the most part, property is held by a few to the exclusion of the many, with the result that the few gather such power into their hands that they trample out the rights of the many in the political domain in spite of a declared democracy. The result is, to quote Mr. Cole again "a class-society, a division of the community into grades and classes, with not merely different social functions, but different degrees of rights." "Different degrees of rights!" It is there we touch the essence of the case.

Let me take an instance from two different departments of our industry. Fifty years ago the land of Ireland was the property of a few men. Those whose labour was necessary before it could yield fruit were but tenants-at-will. At any moment they could be dismissed, with or without cause, and their places filled by competition. They bought their tenure by a rent that meant the whole profit of production, less the least that could keep body and soul together. If turned from it, all the improvements they created—the richer tilth, the increased range of operation through reclamation of waste, even the very habitations they built—were retained without compensation by the capitalist owner of their means of production. Therefore, accompanied by the praise of a whole nation, they banded themselves, and arose, knit and organised together. They broke the right of the despot to dismiss them. They won the property of their improvements. And finally they won as their property as workers what had hitherto been the property of a capitalist: that is, the means of production, the land. Then, finding themselves weak as single units, they joined together in co-operative cor-

porations, elected their own officers, technicians, managers, salesmen and directors. Capably and efficiently they have done so, and are doing so; and it is clear that the hour must come when these fellowships of joint labour will inevitably receive greatly increased power over the common means of production. For it is not likely that a man who uses his land ill will be suffered to do so and clog the joint effort of the fellowship. Then communities will own and direct for the general good what once had been owned by a single man.

Much of this has now been done. But property has not been diminished. It has rather been increased (to say nothing of the great spiritual properties that have been created) by the claim of the many, in assertion of a common right, where once only the few had been admitted. And history applauds the result.

Let us turn from the farm to the workshop and the factory. Here the same war is in progress: the same inevitable war, the same in all its features. History has a strange sphinx-like smile on her large features. Men who praise the result of the land-war to-day raised hands of horror and voices of anger while it was being waged; men who mingle horror and anger at the industrial war to-day will live to praise its results yet. For men in workshops, factory and office are but tenants-at-will, with no property in their improvements, neither owning nor controlling the means of production. They are where the worker on the land was when he banded himself with his fellows; and another banding-together is declared. They may still be dismissed, with or without cause, and their places filled by competition. But the spectacle may be seen when, for one man so treated, a thousand will lay down their tools, forego, maybe, a month's wages, endure the pangs of hunger, and boycott the factory, all for the sake of a comrade whom, perhaps, most of them never beheld. The cynic, who judged that the age of heroics and high comradeship was dead, may well revise his estimate at such a sight. In such a way the heroes of the Red Branch would have aided one another. But in the meantime security of tenure is being won.

The rest will follow. One war will take the course of the other. The tides of man may no more be turned back than the tides of the ocean, though those who seek to turn them back will cause havoc enough. Fellowships of labour will become fellowships of property: nay, trustees for the larger fellowship of all. Labour will not be bought and sold by bargain, with the whip of starvation held before it, instead of an old-fashioned knout. When I think of the Scripture, that man was "made in the image of God," I think, too, of that saying of Rousseau's: "S'il y avait un peuple de dieu, il se gouvernait démocratiquement." To be sure. Not only in politics, but in industry also. In one as in the other, power will come not from above, but from below, for it is there the rights are.

Yet property will not be banished. Nor will it be diminished. Rather it will be increased by the entry into their rights of all those who have hitherto been withheld from them. Also, it will be increased by pride in the joint service, well-rendered, in which each plays his

part, great or small, but which all control. A new part of citizenship will be made, with its own responsibility; and a new spiritual heritage created.

DARREL FIGGIS.

CLERICAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE.**Adopts National Programme, Censures Turf Club, and Threatens to Stop Donations.**

A specially convened meeting of delegates was held at No. 1 College Street, on Saturday, 22nd inst. Com. T. Murphy, President, occupied the chair. The following delegates attended:—

Dublin Branches—Coms. Cluskey and Higgins, No. 1; French and Slater, No. 2; McGuinness and McDonnell, No. 3; Blackburn and Judd, No. 4; Grace and McCarthy, No. 5; O'Byrne, No. 7. Provincial Branches—Coms. Mullin (Galway); O'Connell (Kilkenny); Johnston and Roche (Limerick); Ruxton and Tocher (Tullamore); Long and Clifford (Cork); Power (Waterford).

The national demand for shorter working hours and a minimum wage was under consideration. A resolution was adopted claiming for clerical workers a 38-hours' week (inclusive of meal hours) and a minimum wage for adults of £3 per week, and not less than a fortnight's holidays each year, with full wages paid in advance.

Com O'Donnell, General Organiser, submitted a report of his recent visit to Belfast, and it was decided to strike a levy of 1s. per head on members to supplement the amount already voted by the National Ex-Council to the Belfast Strike Committee.

The matter of the victimisation of four members by Mr. Brindley, Secretary of the Turf Club, and Keeper of the Match Book, Merrion Street, Dublin, was considered. It was pointed out that these four clerks had been dismissed solely because of their refusal to renounce their right to be members of a trades union. It was unanimously decided to submit the matter to all the Trades Councils throughout Ireland.

The refusal of the Ministry of Labour to recognise the right of a trade union to negotiate on behalf of the clerks employed in Labour Exchanges was considered. It was unanimously decided to wire the Ministry of Labour that this Union would insist upon its right to negotiate for members employed in Labour Exchanges, and in the event of a non-receipt of a satisfactory reply on or before the 28th inst., labour would be withdrawn.

G. GRIFFIN.

Bray, Kingstown and District Council.

The council is preparing to fight the local government elections and is promoting a draw to defray expenses. In addition to Jos. Metcalfe, I.T. & G.W.U., recently elected to the Bray U.D.C., the council now has a member on the Kingstown U.D.C., J. Kelly, the secretary, I.C.W.U., having taken the Labour Pledge.

Nominations for the forthcoming poor law and county council elections are requested from branches. All candidates must be endorsed by the trades council and take the Labour Party pledge.

* Headley Bros. 5/6 nett.

IRISH WOMEN WORKERS' UNION.
The Nurses' Union.

The public meeting for the initiation of the Irish Nurses' Union as a branch of the I.W.W.U. will be held in the Oak Room of the Mansion House on February 28th, at 5 p.m. The Lord Mayor will himself preside, and the meeting will be addressed by several well-known doctors, as well as Trade Union leaders. Great interest has been shown in the formation of this new branch, and we hope it will rapidly become strong enough to revolutionise the nursing profession.

A meeting for domestic workers will be held in the Hardwicke Theatre on Sunday, March 2nd, at 8 p.m. Good speakers and a lively discussion are promised.

I.T.C.W.U.—Theatrical Branch.

At a special meeting of the above branch, held at Liberty Hall on Sunday, February 16th, 1919, Mr. Patk. Kearns, Chairman, presiding, the Picture House section elected the following Committee:—Operators—Messrs. Tate, Ellis, and Case; Ground Staff—Coakley, Foley, Merritt, and M'Carthy; Film Renters—Fitzsimons and Foley; the female staff represented by Mrs. Kane and Miss Ashmore.

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THE FARMERS' PERIL.
Can't Increase Wages out of 283 per cent. Excess Profits!

The programme of farm work reforms adopted by the conference of Co. Dublin branches of the I.T. and G.W.U., which was published in the "Voice" of Feb. 8th, appeared in last week's dailies. The Press generally is agreed that the profits of farming cannot yield the higher wages asked and that the nature of the work will not permit any limitation of the day's work to a fixed number of hours. So far, no proofs of these statements have been furnished, nor are any likely to be forthcoming.

Few farmers keep their accounts by any intelligible method. Twenty-five years of co-operative and Department propaganda are beginning to introduce science in the fields, but in the farmers' financial operations rule-of-thumb and guesswork hold the field. The bank pass-book is the only book many farmers have, and that is entered up by the banker. From such muddled methods no defence of the farmers can be built up to prove that 50s. for a forty-nine hour week will ruin Irish agriculture.

Some few farmers do keep books, and the "Producer" for February gives us a comparison of costs, profits and prices of potato crops in 1914 and 1918.

Potato Profits.

	1914 Crop.			1918 Crop.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Rent to Land-owner	2	0	0	2	0	0
Proportion Farm Manure	3	0	0	7	10	0
Horse Work—Ploughing and Carting	2	10	0	6	0	0
Seed	2	10	0	8	0	0
Artificial Manure	4	10	0	7	0	0
	14 10 0			30 10 0		
	7 tons at 50s.			7 tons at 120s.		
Average Crop per Acre	17	10	0	42	0	0
Profit per Acre	3	0	0	11	10	0

A net war increase of 283 per cent.

Doubtless, there are many considerations that will lessen the force of these figures. Crops vary in quality according to soil and weather conditions. Marketing charges of various kinds have to be borne by some farmers. Making every allowance for these factors, it is evident that a profit of 283 per cent. which escapes excess profits tax, affords an ample margin for paying a living wage without reducing the farmer to bankruptcy.

One instance of this kind in which the actual conditions are expressed in cold figures will weigh more with the labourers than the bluster of Farmers' Union meetings or the special pleading of the Press.

Notice.—New orders and alterations for the "Voice" should arrive at the office not later than Tuesday evening.

500 SECOND-HAND BICYCLES, Ladies' and Gent's; Price £4 10s. 0d., £5 10s. 0d., £6 10s. 0d., £7 10s. 0d. to £8 10s. 0d.; carriage paid. Also 500 stove-enamelled frames, all sizes, ladies' and gent's; Trade supplied. New Covers from 5/-, 6/6, 9/-, 12/-, 15/-. Tubes from 2/6, 3/6, 4/6, 5/-, carriage paid. New Machines from 11 to 15 gns.; Dunlop Tyres and Brooks' Saddles. No shortage of anything.

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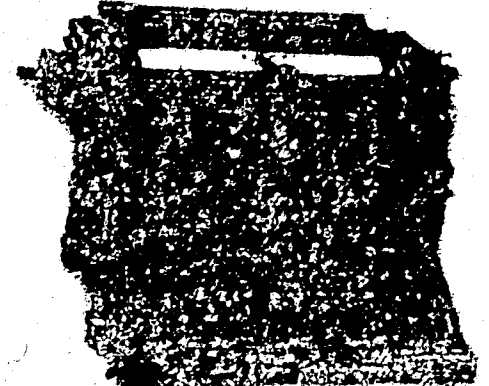
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Transport Union Notes.

Result of Annual Branch Nominations for Executive and General Treasurer.

Liberty Hall, Dublin,

18th February, 1919.

Group No. 1.—Dublin No. 1 (William O'Brien, G.T.; Joseph Kelly, Patrick Stafford, Exe.).

Group No. 2.—Dublin No. 3 (William O'Brien, G.T.; Michael M'Carthy, Exe.), Lucan and Leixlip (William O'Brien, G.T.; Thomas Kennedy, Exe.).

Group No. 3.—Belfast (William O'Brien, G.T.; Patrick Kelly, Exe.); Kingstown, Baldoyle, Lusk, Rathfarnham, Crumlin, Blanchardstown, Swords, Inchicore, Bray (William O'Brien, G.T.).

Group No. 4.—Arklow, Wexford; Waterford (William O'Brien, G.T.); Roscrea, Banagher, Belmont (William O'Brien, G.T.), Clara, Edenderry (James Connor, Tullamore, Exe.), Portarlinton, Tullamore, Turraun (James Connor, Exe.).

Group No. 5.—Cork City (William O'Brien, G.T.; William Kineally, Exe.).

Group No. 6.—Sligo (John Lynch, Exe.), Magherow (Michl. Feeney, G.T.), Ballisodare, Collooney (Micael Gallagher, G.T.; James Harte, Exe.), Limerick (Michael Ryan, Exe.), Tralee (William O'Brien, G.T.); Patrick Nagle, Cork, Exe.), Killarney, Killorglin, Bandon (William O'Brien, G.T.; Patrick Nagle, Cork, Exe.), Blarney (William O'Brien, G.T.; Patrick Nagle, Cork, Exe.).

General Treasurer.

Michael Feeney and Michael Gallagher, Collooney, having withdrawn their names, William O'Brien, No. 1 Branch, is unanimously returned General Treasurer.

Executive Committee.

The following have been returned without opposition:—No. 1 Group: Joseph Kelly, Patrick Stafford, Michael M'Carthy. No. 2 Group: Thomas Kennedy. No. 3 Group: Patrick Kelly. No. 4 Group: James Connor. No. 5 Group: William Kineally. In No. 6 Group ballot papers will be issued to all Branches concerned in order to decide between James Hart, Collooney, and Michael Ryan, Limerick. Patrick Nagle withdrew his name. John Lynch ineligible under Rule 25. Nomination also received late.

THOMAS FORAN,

General President.

Balbriggan.

The two girls who resigned their jobs rather than join a Union and were cast off by the I.C.W.U., which refused to be a dumping ground for scabs, are the only menace to the newly-won peace. It's up to the King of Balbriggan to prevent another breach. Else the fog-horn, which struck terror into non-Unionist hearts, will have to be resurrected, and "the Head" will require more Tinori for his corns.

Tipperary and Offally.

E. Hayes has visited Birr, which is doing splendidly and, with Rathcubbin and Lorrha, will join up as sections. Borrisokane and Toomevara have also been organised by him as sub-branches of Cloughjordan and Nenagh.

TO BRANCH SECRETARIES. HEAD OFFICE ORGANISATION.

Commencing with next week the Finance Sub-committee of the Executive will meet on the Wednesday evenings only of each week, to consider applications for the payments usually made by Head Office.

Cheques for payments sanctioned by the Committee will be sent out on each Thursday.

It will therefore be necessary for all applications to be posted by the early evening collections on Tuesdays, in order that they may reach Head Office not later than Wednesday mornings, for payment to be made the same week.

Applications received after Wednesdays cannot be submitted to the Committee until the week following and consequently payment will be delayed a week. This applies to all applications, including Dispute Pay, Wages, Expenses, etc., but not to Mortality Benefits, which will be paid by return of post.

Your strict attention to this instruction will obviate disappointment to your members, and will facilitate the efficient working of the Union.

Yours fraternally,

WILLIAM O'BRIEN,

General Treasurer.

Straffan.

The strike at Kennedy's still proceeds. The stables are not benefiting by it, and The Tetrarch is reported to have kicked a scab. Just what we would have expected from a thoroughbred.

Leix for the O.B.U.

Tom Farren has been continuing his missionary work amongst L. and L. branches in this county, and in the course of a strenuous week opened new I.T.G.W.U. branches in Ballybrittas, Castletown, Borris-in-Ossory, Mount-rath and Mountmellick, as well as giving Abbeyleix branch a much-needed filip.

Caledon.

O'Donnell was on the spot to accept the challenge of the mill management, who had scrapped Union live wires and dared the organiser to make the other men follow him. O'Donnell won, the old political ticket being tried on the men without avail. Enthusiasm is at fever heat, N.U.R. men co-operating with the strikers, a citizen police force has been established, and the Orange Band parades and cheers for the Transport.

Ballyneale.

One of the happy hunting grounds of farmer offenders against the A.W.B. Regulations. Inspr. Woods in a few days' good work recovered over £50 in arrears.

Baltinglass.

The branch is cutting out the local profiteers by buying coal and selling it to its members, saving £6 15s. per waggon.

Co. Kildare.

F. McCabe has spent some days in the North County, fixed up the roadmen crux, work being resumed on Saturday, and expects early settlement of the Fleming dispute.

Strokestown.

Good progress is noted here. Shop assistants are linking up in large numbers,

Wages Movements.

The success or failure of Branches largely depends on the proper handling of movements for increased wages and improved conditions. All Branch Secretaries and Committees must implicitly carry out the instructions issued under this head during the present week.

Carrick-on-Shannon.

The recent general wages movement was successful in every instance, save that of employees at the Electric station, who are on strike for a 5s. increase on 27s.

Kilmallock.

Twenty-two men formerly employed by Walsh are out, demand having been turned down.

Kilmacthomas.

In the woollen mills here and at Kilmeaden a 49-hour week has been conceded, but the wages question still pends. Though Proprietor Stephenson has racing proclivities, he may need a touch of the spur.

Carlow.

Grain store men, carters and fillers on boats rejected an offer of a 50-hour week and a 3s. advance, and hold out for full demands, 7s. 6d. and 6s.

Dunleary.

Gardeners claim a 50s. minimum and a 44-hour week. Carters at Kill-of-the-Grange demand 10s. extra.

Thurles.

The demand for town bakers has met with an offer of 6s. per sack in larger firms, 7s. 6d. to foremen, and 4s. to foremen in smaller houses.

Lucan.

The grass grows lush on the Hermitage Golf Links, yet the Committee is cutting down the staff. The remaining men, who have to shoulder the extra work, protest. At Hill's mills matters are calmer since the non-Unionists in the flash jobs were humbled.

Bray.

Carters and yardmen in the four coal firms have demanded Dunleary rates, which recently were levelled up to city rates, and 12s. daily for casuals.

Killarney.

Organiser Dempsey is leading a strike of town workers, who ceased on their demand for a 48-hour week and 40s. flat being met by an offer of 50 hours and 30s.

Longford.

Saw mills dispute proceeds, the men standing firm. Urban Council men have secured 5s. advance to 32s., and Co. Council employees seek 10s. on 37s. 6d.

Arklow.

Recent successes have resulted in extension of membership, especially amongst plasterers, saw-mill employees and builders' labourers.

Westport.

Only a quartette of employers hold out against settlement, and picketing is being rigidly carried on by the strikers, who display fine spirit.

Collooney.

A difference of 1s. between demand and offer threatens trouble at Connolly's saw-mills. Wages run from 23s. to 40s., and the men claimed 5s. extra. Carbide Factory workers gained a 6s. advance, which brings rates to from 36s. to 45s. with reduction of hours and a promise of another 4s.