

# IRISH OPINION

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## PEARSE'S SONGS OF THE LOVE OF IRELAND

By DESMOND RYAN

Messrs. Maunsel have recently issued the "Songs of the Irish Rebels and Specimens from an Irish Anthology" (5/-), being Vol. II. of the collected works of P. H. Pearse. Slender as the book is, it demands a definite place. One of the few of the author's dreams which remained unfulfilled was an anthology which would "include all that has been nobly said in verse by Irish-speaking men and women from the beginning to our own time," i.e., an anthology, at the least, that would occupy in Irish literature the position Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" occupies in English, at the best, a monument to Irish poetry of labour and critical discernment, similar to the "Oxford Book of English Verse." Here we are given only the rough plan of the projected work, half consisting of "Songs of the Irish Rebels" and the remainder, translations "of such of the songs of the unknown singers of the hamlets and hillsides as seem to me worthy to be placed by the side of those that have been most finely fashioned by the master craftsman among the bards. The wind of poetry bloweth where it listeth, and in Ireland in these latter years it has often blown into the cottage of the peasant"—an instinctive flash of Pearse's democratic sympathies, this last sentence!

The publication of the Irish originals and English translations upon parallel pages is a welcome innovation upon the publishers' part in their, until now, rather unequal collected edition of Pearse's works. Messrs. Maunsel's success as pioneer publishers of the works of Irish writers in the English language, perhaps, prejudices them in favour of English translations. However that may be, this Irish anthology is a praiseworthy and enterprising effort, produced with the care and taste which endears the firm's publications to all book-lovers.

This book, I have said, has a definite place. It raises, not in itself, but incidentally several burning questions. P. H. Pearse himself would undoubtedly never have wished his original work to appear in a foreign dress, especially after circumstances had removed the only conceivable translator. Few translations, not even Mr. Joseph Campbell's

otherwise excellent versions, have preserved the beauty, dignity and terseness of Pearse's Irish prose, while even the author's renderings are open to a similar criticism.

The exploitation of Pearse by several well-meaning but badly-informed critics in America and Great Britain, as an Anglo-Irish celebrity, is a grave misrepresentation of the ideals he strove for so vehemently in his lifetime. Essentially, P. H. Pearse worked for an Ireland, not only free, but Gaelic as well; his life-work will be misunderstood so long as it is ignored that the sources of his inspiration lay in the chivalry and heroism of the old Irish sagas, the hatred, despair and militancy of the dispossessed Gael as voiced in his poetry, the simple and religious outlook of those self-contained Irish speaking communities remote from the "civilisation" of the Pale upon the Connacht seaboard. Rightly or wrongly—one gets another view in MacDonagh's "Literature in Ireland"—his whole mental attitude was antagonistic to Anglo-Irish literature. The very words, "Anglo-Irish," he detested and denied their validity, although, unlike certain perfervid propagandists, his knowledge of the work of Irish men and women in English was as appreciative and accurate as his knowledge of English literature itself. Next to the Tain Bo Cualnge, which he read with the ease and attention most of us read newspapers, his favourite author was Shakespeare, innumerable editions of which had an honoured place on his book shelves. His admiration for Yeats was profound and cordial. In J. M. Synge he saluted a genius who had made Ireland's name considerable in the eyes of Europe; nor was Pearse lacking in courage to defend Synge in circles where the latter's works were disparaged for miserable propagandist reasons. But, speaking generally, Pearse preached bilingualism to the detriment of the English language in Ireland, hoping and striving for the great battle between the two languages. Nor would his side in such a conflict have ever been in doubt for a moment. Your Anglo-Irish writers, he contended, brought only fame to English literature and could never be representative of Irish literature. A special niche

might be set apart for them in English literature, it is true, but at the best they only retarded the rise of an Irish literature, at the worst, they forwarded the most subtle of English Imperialism's conquests: the mental conquest. Pearse no more questioned that the language of the Irish nation should be Irish than he would have questioned the existence of God.

As a Gaelic League propagandist, Pearse is a great and effective exemplar. Like his fellow-worker, Thomas Mac-Donagh, Pearse envisaged all the difficulties in any enterprise he undertook. He strove for nothing in which he did not whole-heartedly believe. Neither of them ever adopted that ineffably foolish combination of enthusiasm, abuse and flabdoodle which expresses itself in flamboyant prophecies that "in five years we shall all speak Irish." Pearse said with pride that the regeneration of Ireland began when the Gaelic League began, but he realised superhuman efforts were needed to save the Irish language from decay. To quote his own phrase, he was singularly moderate in his aspirations and methods. He merely wished the Irish people and not the human race to learn and speak Irish; he himself learned Irish and spoke it. In this book we have a fine example of the manner in which he interpreted Irish literature to the non-Irish speaker. Compare the following with Mangan's well-known lines, both translations from a common original:—

Thou hast slain me, O my bride, and may it serve thee no  
whit,  
For the soul within me loveth thee, not since yesterday nor  
to-day.  
Thou hast left me weak and broken in mien and in shape,  
Betray me not, who love thee, my Little Dark Rose!

The Erne shall rise in rude torrents, hills shall be rent,  
The sea shall roll in red waves and blood be poured out.  
Every mountain glen in Ireland, and the bogs shall quake  
Some day, ere shall perish my Little Dark Rose.

Or Geoffrey Keating's:—

My pity, how Ireland standeth,  
Her battle-triumph transformed;  
She hath exchanged happiness for ruin,  
Despised by these savages.

Fallen, her own winsome beauty,  
From her lovely, shapely face;  
Full-breasted nurse of fair hosts,  
No heir is left to her!

Pearse's references to his abilities as a translator are too reticent and modest, his insistence upon the "roughness" of his prose renderings and his "failure" to fully interpret

the march and beauty of the Gaelic medium being overstrained. Space forbids quotation of the bitter plaints and cries of vengeance of militant and despoiled Gaeldom in these poets of the 17th and 18th centuries. We do well to read them in the spirit Pearse expresses elsewhere in quoting the quatrain composed by a dispossessed Gael, who sees an Englishman hanging from a bough. "I neither apologize for this nor defend it," adds Pearse. In the same spirit is the comment upon the "Roman Vision." "The savage hatred expressed for the English and Protestant secretaries will be understood when it is remembered that the poem was written within a year after Drogheda and Wexford, and that it was intended as a stimulus to the Irish in their stubborn stand against the Cromwellian generals."

"Why is not Clan Luther flayed,  
While Christ's clan is persecuted unto death?  
Why no pity for the lambs that are torn  
While the wolves harry the flock?"

Assuredly Pearse is in the rightful line of our translators. Placed beside Ferguson or Mangan, Sigerson or Hyde, he does not falter, but is, in some respects, superior to them, in the strong, stark, austere beauty of his interpretation.

Yes, that was part of his effort to save the language he loved from extinction. He had tramped, too, every district of the Gaeltacht until he could have found his way blindfolded, later to leave vivid and lasting pictures of the Connaught of the bogs and lakes of his heart. He studied bilingual systems of language teaching in Belgium and applied those systems to Irish conditions in an invaluable educational philosophy, not to mention his great practical experiment of St. Enda's, which he started with a pair of globes and burning enthusiasm to uphold in the face of tremendous financial difficulties, widespread apathy and cynicism. He preached his political ideals—to many at the time unutterably moderate—in a weekly paper written wholly in Irish and printed in Roman type. Before he ever electrified an audience with his English oratory, he had preached his Irish-Ireland faith from every platform in Irish throughout the length and breadth of the land. It seemed likely to few only in those years he would emerge eventually as a militant. Indeed, he was sneered at as a moderate by critics, who grew milder with age. Often it seems to me his shade would grow caustic—could he see aspects of the strange Post-Easter Ireland we see to-day, looking upon her affectionately, but with a strangely divided mind. "Terrible revolutionaries," he would murmur, "you might be more dangerous did you begin and work as I did in my time. At least, you might do more good to Ireland!"

But we, Heaven help us, can only read his book!

## BELFAST TEACHERS.

The outstanding event of last week was the teachers' meeting in the Co-operative Hall on Saturday, which was a united rally indicative of the esteem in which all classes of the community hold the men and women to whom the training of the children has been committed. Mr. Devlin's able statement of the case has been so well reported that we need not even summarise it.

Mr. T. Johnson attended on behalf of the Belfast Trades Council, and said a proposition such as the White Paper which offered 6 per cent. increase to the lower paid workers and 30 per cent. increase to the more highly paid, would be scouted by any trade union (ap-

plause). In the opinion of organised labour in Ireland educational interests should be the first charge upon the national finances, and they held that the wages paid to teachers should be such as would attract into the profession the very best talent (applause). He was sorry to find that the "foremen teachers"—(laughter)—had broken away from the Union, because it was desirable that there should be a compact body working for the interests of the "under dog." (Applause.)

Mr. D. R. Campbell, Secretary of Belfast Trades Council, offered the opinion that the recent correspondence was too complicated and technical to influence the public mind. Teachers should concentrate on the plain blunt claim—that they wanted more of this world's goods.

Mr. W. McCracken, B.A., B.L. (Technical Institute) urged the teachers in technical schools, whose claims had been en-

tirely ignored, to combine with the National school teachers.

Rev. T. H. Ellison, as a comparative stranger to Ireland, contrasted the Irish system unfavourably with that of England. He wished to see the teachers free from clerical managers and education under the control of local democratic authorities.

Rev. W. T. M'Guffin, President of Belfast Co-operative Society, speaking as the representative of the largest democratic organisation of its kind in Ireland, assured the teachers that the co-operative movement was behind them in their efforts for betterment. "If there was one thing dearer to his heart than another, it was that they should have a united Ireland, which would also be a cultured and educated Ireland, and then they might not fear any adversary."

# INTERNATIONAL NOTES

## UP, BOLSHEVIKS, AND AT 'EM! (Passed by Censor.)

Felicitations are due to all those who, having first supported programmes directly and indirectly opposed to that of the Bolsheviki, are now congratulating Lenin and Trotsky. "Nationality," having written Count Czernin's apologia, we are relieved to find that Sinn Fein is not committed to that line of tactics, but has frankly endorsed the efforts—and the results—of the opposing party, who interpreted Czernin's words as all democrats have done. Similarly, the "Herald," which seemed quite content with the war aims declaration of the British Labour Party, has come round to the view of the Bolsheviki, namely, that independence applies to the subject races of the Allies as well as the Germans. "We did not and we do not make any distinction in principle between the Imperialism of the Central Empires and those of the Allied countries." Such was Trotsky's reply to the French Socialists who protested against his making a separate peace. The French Socialists are sadly in need of Jaures at this time, for their attitude is singularly narrow, petulant and short-sighted. Thomas talks of Alsace as if he were one of those French capitalists whose profits are so delicately concealed by the camouflage of chauvinistic patriotism. Will Thomas and those French Socialists who object to a plebiscite for Alsace-Lorraine, because of the immigration of Germans into those provinces and the emigration of the French population, support Ireland in a claim to the Home Rule vote of our emigrant population overseas? Not the least absurd of the many absurdities arising out of the Alsace-Lorraine question is the unreasoning and unreasonable claims of the majority of Socialists in France. Even worse is their disgraceful hostility to Russia.

## WEXFORD WORKERS GAINS.

### PIERCE AND PATRIOTISM.

By P. WHITE, Secretary, Wexford Trades and Labour Council.

The year 1917 has witnessed a notable development of labour activity in the town of Wexford, which will soon take its place amongst the best organised towns in Ireland. At the beginning of 1917 there were but six branches of Trades Unions established in the town and the prospects of getting the workers organised was anything but encouraging, as the great majority of the employers were bitterly antagonistic to anything like combination amongst their employees, whilst amongst many of the men the spirit of mutual confidence and unity which is essential to Trades Unionism seemed lacking. Early in the year the building trades made a move

towards getting organised; while in March the Trades and Labour Council was established, and from that time the progress made was extremely rapid. The painters, masons, plasterers, and carpenters formed strong branches of their societies. The insurance agents were the next to join up their forces, and the latest recruits are the sawyers and moulders. The sailors and dockers and bakers' wages have been twice increased inside twelve months; the printers and engineers also secured advances of wages.

### The Most Notable Advance

was the victory gained by the building trades last week. In the middle of December the carpenters, masons, and plasterers sent in a demand for an increase of 10s. per week. The employers first offered 3s. and when the men showed that they were not to be trifled with offered a further 3s. In the meantime one of the employers had consented to give the men the full amount asked for. The men were determined that they would not accept less than the full amount asked for, and as the employers refused to give way all the men ceased work. At the end of a week the employers, seeing that the men had not the slightest intention of resuming work except they got the amount asked for, quietly re-opened negotiations and consented to give the men the full amount. The men owe their victory to the excellent spirit which animated them and to the united front which they presented to the employers. They are to be congratulated on the success which has attended their first movement and the fact that the employers, combined together and used all the old tricks to get some of the men to break away, and that the men are only recently organised makes their victory a great moral success for the whole Labour movement in Wexford. The only employer who did not settle with their men was the firm of P. Pierce and Co., agricultural implement and shell makers, who will be remembered in

connection with the great lock-out in 1911. It shows

### The Spirit of Hostility

which the management of this firm regards Trades Unionism, and proves that when they were fighting the Irish Transport Union in 1911 they were fighting against any combination amongst their employees. As 90 per cent. of their employees are now members of a trade union it is time that Messrs. Pierce realised that the spirit of combination amongst workers is impossible to kill and that, however they try to put off the evil day, the time must come when they will have to treat with their employees as a body, not as individual units.

The efforts of the local employers to prevent the new Government works from interfering with the local rates of wages, would make very edifying reading for the people of the town, but will have to remain unwritten until matters develop further. The most satisfactory feature of all the employers' energies is that they have failed.

N.B.—The Pierce business in agricultural implements has been built upon appeals to the patriotism of the users. Public opinion has made the house of Pierce. Public opinion can bring Pierce's to reason. There are other firms, giving full recognition to Trade Unionism, manufacturing the same goods as Pierce's. They should be supported by all who wish Irish industrial development to be based on a fair deal to the workers and not on the subjection of a servile, spineless, and soul-less proletariat.

The Wexford bakers have secured an increase of 5s. per week. The local press says they thanked the employers for it. They are quite right to be gracious, but if they had no Union—?

The local branch of the I.T.W.U. has gained an increase of one-halfpenny per ton on all cargo handled.

### THE VOICE OF INDIA.

We have received a copy of that interesting monthly, "A Voice from India," which contains among other interesting articles one entitled "The Brotherhood of Ireland and India," by Elsie Chapin, which sets out several interesting parallels between the two nations linked together in these days by another tie. Laurence Housman, Ernest Rhys, and Tagore are among the contributors to a number of the highest excellence.

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# Transport Workers and Food Exports.

## THE IRISH TRANSPORT UNION GENERAL MEETING.

No friend of the Irish Transport Union could have come away from the annual meeting of the parent Branch of the Union without a feeling of deep satisfaction. Not that all the divergent elements that go to form an organised body of 8,000 men found each the satisfaction of all its heart's desires, for that way lies chaos and ruin, but the meeting was of record size, the Round Room being crowded, and in dignity of conduct and business efficiency was worthy of the place the Union holds in Irish life. Every loyal heart "beat high with hope" to hear the facts and figures of the Secretary's report, showing that all previous progress had been well eclipsed, and that the Union bids fair to take its full place in the sun before the New Year becomes the Old.

The meeting was held in the Mansion House on Sunday, 13th January, by the kindness of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Laurence O'Neill. Standing boldly out above the platform was the Lord Mayor's coat-of-arms, on which the Red Hand of Ulster stands out in bold relief, an omen hailed with delight by all observers. During the progress of the proceedings his Lordship came forward to the platform and, in a few cordial words, bid the Transport Union welcome to the Mansion House. Mr. Wm. O'Brien availed of the occasion to propose the thanks of the meeting to the Lord Mayor, not merely for giving the use of the premises, but for the invaluable work done by him during the last three months in particular, when the bulk of the workers of Dublin got big improvements in pay and conditions at conferences arranged or presided over by him. Mr. Foran, in seconding, reminded the members that Mr. O'Neill was no fair-weather friend, but had faced odium and lost business in the dark days of 1913 by his support of the Labour interest. The members by their acclamations showed how conscious they were of the sincerity of Mr. O'Neill's words of welcome, and his Lordship, in reply, expressed his sense of the importance of the labouring classes to the community and said he and the city rose or fell as the working classes were downtrodden or prosperous.

At the outset the Branch President, Mr. Foran, introduced to the meeting Mr. Thomas Johnston, ex-President Trades Congress, whom he invited to speak on behalf of the Irish Labour Party. Mr. Johnston, tracing the growth of the Labour Party from its foundation by Jim Larkin, pointed out that the decision to enlarge the scope of the Trades Congress so that its activities would include political representation on all public Boards in Ireland was taken at the meeting held in Dublin in 1913, when Jim Larkin, Jas. Connolly and Wm. O'Brien were present. The European war hindered the work, but last year it was re-

solved to enlist the support of the rank and file by issuing a card of membership, with a subscription of 3d. monthly, and asking Trade Union officials to act as collectors in the Branches. By such support alone could the Party be compact and strong enough to make and enforce good laws which would more than repay the trouble and expense of its members.

The meeting throbbed with deep feeling when all present rose to their feet to mark their respect for the memory of their heroic comrade, Wm. Partridge, who had passed away under such tragic circumstances since the last meeting. The reading of the annual balance sheet gave immense satisfaction to members, consisting as it did of record figures, and showing that No. 1 Branch had handed over to the General Fund of the Union a sum of £2,212 for the year's working. The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the report, referred to it as a barometer of progress. Mr. Wm. O'Brien, in seconding its adoption, reminded the meeting of the alteration in their circumstances which had taken place since June, 1916, when the Union seemed dead and John Dillon Nugent was negotiating with the Castle to bury it. He reminded the members of the loyal help given at this time of trial by other Trade Unionists, in particular Tom Johnston, and said that the soil sown by the labours of Larkin and Connolly and fertilised by the rich blood of their General Secretary in 1916 was now bearing a harvest beyond all their expectations. In Cork the members now numbered over 5,000, and the financial support given to the Union was considerable. Every section in the Branch had got increases in pay and the Union was spreading rapidly through Ireland. It was already the biggest Union in Ireland, and had still bigger prospects before it. He urged the members to extend their activities beyond mere wage-raising into the work of changing their social status by co-operation and political action. The report was carried unanimously.

Mr. Thos. Foran then referred to the Executive financial statement, which showed that the Union had assets of over £12,000 in 51 Branches with a total membership of nearly 25,000. He pleaded for such help and machinery as would enable a live Executive to use to the full their present advantages. The future in Ireland was uncertain, but whatever other parties did the political interests of Labour could only be served by the Irish Labour Party. Urging the vital importance of an immediate settlement of the Food Problem, he said the popular solution was a simple down-tools policy to be carried out by the dockers, but Labour is not satisfied that to merely keep food in the country would ensure an equitable distribution of the food thus saved. A successful stoppage policy might mean the starvation of friend as well as foe by cutting off urban supplies. Any party that

can produce a plan which would secure the feeding of the bulk of the people as well as of a minority of the population would find a ready ally in the Transport Union. They had never shirked their duty but could not see what the advocates of simple stoppage proposed to do after they had disorganised the present system of distribution.

The election of officers for the Branch was then proceeded with. John O'Neill was unanimously re-elected Secretary, and Joseph Metcalfe, Assistant Secretary. A ballot vote will be taken to appoint the three delegates, for which L. Redmond, P. Nolan, T. Brien, D. Courtney, and M. Connolly were nominated. Tom Foran was then unanimously re-elected Branch President. By a show of hands it was decided that the Committee be elected at sectional meetings, one member for each section.

The Branch nominated for General President, Thos. Foran; General Secretary, J. Larkin; General Trustees, Wm. Fairlough, Jos. Metcalfe, and Ml. Cunningham. A ballot will be necessary to decide the E.C. members, as Messrs. Wm. O'Brien, P. Stafford, B. Conway, and J. Brohoon were nominated.

Keen regret was felt that Jn. O'Neill was prevented by illness from attending the meeting. All who know the debt the Union owes to John for his years of unflinching devotion and sterling honesty were sorry that he could not be present to read a balance sheet so full of the fruits of his labour.

HOMO.

## THE PRINTING TRADE VICTORY AT CORK.

A correspondent has kindly supplemented Cathal O'Shannon's account of the Christmas strike at Cork—especially in some particulars which Cathal's modesty forbade him mentioning. We forbear quotation, to spare his blushes. Our correspondent wrote, on 4th inst., and said, inter alia:—"I wish to bring under the notice of your readers the advantages which we gained through the organisation of the Transport Union. Nine weeks from this day's date, we, the printing trade employes, were disorganised. As the name of the above union seemed to be in the minds of everybody, we decided to organise as one body and enrol ourselves in its ranks. Clerical and labour workers combined and went as one man, fighting for the one cause. Had it not been for the organisation to which we belong, and the organisation which helped us in every way possible, we would never have gained anything. Therefore, my advice to workers of every description, whether engaged with pick or pen, no matter in what capacity, organise under the banner of the Transport Workers and General Workers Union and forget the bygone days of fighting the employer individually."

# Labour Liveliness at Cork

By  
CATHAL O'SHANNON

## "The Children's Father!"

Another notable victory has been won by the Transport Union. The "children," as they are called, in the firm of Messrs. Ryan and Co., soap, candle and glycerine manufacturers, have got a second substantial increase, dating back to October, the back money being paid in a lump sum. From October 15 to December 1 they got 3s. per week advance, from December 1 to January 15, 4s., and from January 15 forward 5s. This applies to all men over 21 years of age, boys under 21 to receive one-half this award. Boys entering the firm are to have a starting wage of 9s. per week, with 1s. weekly increment every six months. The "children" had refused to accept a smaller increase, and in fact handed back the increases for a number of weeks in succession. They have now their well-deserved reward.

## Grainmen.

The weighmen and storemen employed by Messrs. Green and Co., grain merchants, have got a retrospective advance of 2s. 6d. per week and 3s. 6d. forward. There was a stiff battle of words in the negotiations between the firm and the Transport Union, but in the end the Union's argument held good. This advance is not all it might be, but morally as well as materially it is a victory for the men.

## The Building Trades.

It looks as if there is to be some trouble before the new demands of the building unions are granted by the Cork master builders. In answer to the demands put in by the masons, plasterers and builders' labourers, the Builders' Federation proposes to reduce the number of hours worked per week, to decline to allow work on holidays unless when it suits the employers, and then only at ordinary rates, and to make the provision of artificial light optional instead of compulsory as at present. For all this they offer the magnificent increase of a farthing per hour, which, with the reduction in hours, etc., would mean a net advance of a penny or twopence per week! This will never do, as the employers might have learned after the strike of builders' labourers last year. The builders' labourers are a branch of the Transport Union, and as they are working in very close co-operation with the other unions there should be "a certain liveliness" in the building trade after a while.

## Harness Makers.

The Harness Makers' Branch of the Transport Union is furnishing the next contingent for the first line trenches. Instead of advancing wages, Messrs. R. Day & Son propose a new piece-rate scale, which would actually reduce the present rate of wages. Negotiations have been in progress during the past fortnight, but to no avail. The men have unanimously rejected the piece-rate scale, and are determined to resist any effort made to impose it upon them against their will. In the circumstances there is but one method of settlement left, and at the time of writing it is very probable that that method will be adopted. Thus there are still a few employers in Cork who have not learned wisdom with the passing of time, and it is not so many years ago since this firm, now in palatial premises, occupied a very humble building indeed. On Saturday night the men removed their tools on re-

ceipt of a communication from the firm stating "WE MUST HAVE PIECE RATES." So be it.

## The Motor Industry.

Since Mr. P. Coates, organiser for the Irish Automobile Union, came to Cork two or three weeks ago, the membership of the Cork Branch has been trebled. This is not the only record of the organiser's progress, for new branches have been opened in the country, and substantial advances have been gained for drivers and mechanics in the city. A few employers are still standing out against the Union's demands, but this young branch has made an excellent start, and all concerned are to be congratulated on results already achieved. The branch is now affiliated to the Trades Council, and the delegates had a hearty welcome at last week's meeting.

## Trades Council.

Council at last meeting approved of the resignations from the Food Control Committee in Dublin, and congratulated the Labour and Co-operative members on their action. The Chemists' Assistants reported that Messrs. Kiloh and Co refuse, on a technicality, to reinstate two of their comrades, and in a letter the firm confirmed this. Council decided to make another attempt to settle the dispute. If this fails, the Chemists' Assistants should ask the public to come to their assistance, for these are matters calling for publicity. Council is sending a proposal on the food question to the National Executive and the All-Ireland meeting under its auspices in Dublin. In the Grocers and Vintners Assistants' Union another new recruit was welcomed. Of the Council and delegates more anon.

## Bandon.

Bandon has a strong and progressive branch of the Irish Transport Union, and the ancient town is now all but blackleg-proof. The branch's new hall—the Allen Memorial Hall, after Allen of the Manchester Martyrs—is one of the finest union halls in the South, and is a credit to the workers and the town. It has reading, recreation, bagatelle, meeting rooms, etc., and business in it is nearly as brisk as in Liberty Hall, Dublin, or Connolly Hall, Cork. It looks as if the branch is now to win its spurs in the labour war, for a number of firms who pay miserable wages refuse to make advances of any kind. These include firms employing a considerable number of workers like Allman's Distillery and grain and flour mills owned by Healy's, Onkle's and Brennan's. As these firms are doing a considerable export trade, a strike would perhaps do more good than a continuance of words, and this consideration has had its due weight with the workers. Bandon may soon be a storm centre, but "somewhere, some day, somehow, by somebody a beginning must be made."

## Connolly and the Republic.

In Cork City Hall on Sunday night, 20th inst., Countess de Markievicz will deliver her postponed lecture. Her subject is "James Connolly and the Irish Republic," and few lecturers can speak on Connolly with more knowledge and more understanding than the Countess. The question of Labour and the Republic is a burning one now, and readers of "Irish Opinion" should not fail

to hear Madame Markievicz's interpretation of Connolly's view. The lecture will be followed by a short but excellent programme of Labour and Republican songs, Irish music and dances, etc., to which will contribute the Misses O'Connell, De Bhalis, Barry, Byrne, Philpott, etc., Messrs. E. McCarthy, Seosamh O'Connor, J. Murray, O'Neill, Desmond, etc., and the Connolly Memorial Band. Roll up now, Cork Bolsheviks!

## COUNTER-JUMPERS IN COUNCIL.

The Irish National Council of the Shop Assistants' Union met on 13th inst. at the College Cafe, Dublin, under the presidency of Mr. R. W. Todd (Dublin). Delegates were present from all the Irish branches, except Sligo and Derry. Mr. Owens, the organiser, reported on his work since the last meeting of the Council in August, and stated that the membership had more than doubled, and new movements in Dublin and Cork were engaging his attention. Several new branches were started, but two were misfires, for the fear of their employers' wrath and the danger of the loss of status still oppressed the minds of some shop workers. In one case, assistants who had withdrawn from the Union at their employer's wish, were using a technical association to request higher wages. The example of the teachers he hoped would not be lost upon these men.

The following minimum wage scale for drapers, grocers and allied workers, on the motion of Mr. W. W. Knox, was considered and adopted:—

### Minimum Wage Rates for the Area of Dublin and District. Minimum at Age Twenty-one.

	Men.	Women.
Assistant Managers .....	38/-	32/-
Assistants .....	28/-	22/-

Warehousemen, Despatch and Van Salesmen to rank as Salesmen.

The minimum for ages twenty-two to twenty-eight is 1/- per week each year in addition to above rates.

Advances beyond these figures to depend on special responsibility and experience.

Juniors.					
Age	16	17	18	19	20
Boys .....	12/-	15/-	18/-	20/-	22/-
Girls .....	11/-	14/-	16/-	17/-	18/-

Mr. J. W. Kelly (Dublin) was nominated as delegate to the annual General meeting of the Union, Mr. W. Richards (Dublin) for a seat on the Executive Committee, and Messrs. Thos. Johnston (Belfast) and Humphreys (Cork) as delegates to the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party.

Mr. Owens was fraternal delegate to the Union's Scottish Federation annual meeting in Glasgow on 1st January, at which it was stated that during last year Scottish shopworkers had obtained £100,000 in extra wages through Union action, and 16,000 new members had joined the Union since the outbreak of war. In all the cities dress-makers were now enrolled in the Union, and were working under Union conditions at Union wages.

# Notes and Comments

## More Shuffling.

Last week it was generally understood that the exportation of Irish butter had been prohibited except under licence. The so-called Irish Government had intimated that this was so. But the Food Controller is still up to his tricks, he still thinks that baubles, rather than realities, are what we want. During the week ended 12th inst. a good quantity of butter left the port of Dublin for Cross-Channel consumption. We thought, and we were not alone in so thinking, that this traffic was in defiance of the prohibition order. We were wrong, evidently, for people still have the right to export, notwithstanding the assurances and telegraphic messages recently published. **No order prohibiting the export of butter has yet reached the Customs Authorities.** The customs people are, of course, good officials, reared in the best red-tape tradition; and no mere newspaper announcement will satisfy them. To act they must have an official order, and so far they have had no such order. This is double-dealing of the most flagrant kind. We are to be kept quiet by "official assurances," while at the same time a necessary food leaves our shores because no "official order" of prohibition has been issued to the customs authorities. But we are not being hoodwinked by stuff of this kind, and Rhondda and his Irish Food Control Farce had better know that once for all. **The export of Irish butter must be immediately prohibited till the middle of March,** when perhaps we may have a surplus for export. At present we are not producing enough to meet our own needs, and our own needs constitute our primary responsibility. We must make it clear that this food shuffling must cease immediately. Labour, Sinn Fein and Co-operation in Ireland have all expressed their views vigorously upon this subject, and if Rhondda and his technicians will not act, our people will have no alternative to direct action themselves. Self-preservation demands such action, and we shall deserve our fate if we neglect our plain duty.

## Shielding a Criminal.

There has always been a good deal of suspicion in the minds of ordinary, plain citizens in this country that many people who ought to be prosecuted for adulterating foodstuffs have been shielded from publicity and punishment by friends and relatives upon public boards. We think the suspicion is well founded. We once knew a member of a local governing body who was presented with a very valuable gift by a traders' association for work of this kind, and we wondered if the system had been generally applied. Last week a case at Kingstown aroused our suspicions anew. A milk vendor was summoned for selling milk adulterated with 13 per cent. of added water. The vendor

was summoned by an official of the Urban Council, but a committee of the council, having heard the trader admit his guilt, decided to withdraw the prosecution. Fortunately, the police magistrate would not permit this, and when the case came before him on adjournment he fined the milk vendor £3. The magistrate said it was "the most deliberate sale of milk with water added to it that he had experienced in the few months he had been a magistrate. It was the defendant's duty to throw out the milk; instead of that he had made £1 6s. out of it." The Kingstown Urban Council tried to shield the man who sold this milk to people within its jurisdiction, without reference to the public health of its people. We are pleased that the police magistrate took such a decided stand in this case, and we trust that it will be a lesson to the Kingstown Urban Council not to interfere in such a way again. We congratulate Mr. Lupton, and trust that when the workers of Kingstown have an opportunity they will sweep away the men who tried to shield this adulterator. They are the same men who refused the very just and moderate demands of the council's workers a few weeks ago. We are certain that Kingstown is not the only district where such shielding is practised, but unfortunately the cases never get the same publicity.

## Co-operate.

The workers of Waterford have formed a co-operative society which is now open for business, and have been agitating for a seat upon the local Food Committee. It is but just to them that they should have representation upon the committee, but these private traders do not love the co-operative movement. We wish the workers of Waterford every success, not only in their co-operative undertaking, but in their endeavours to obtain representation upon the Food Committee. In Waterford the railway men were the originators of the co-operative scheme which is now in operation. At Strabane the railway men also became interested in the co-operative movement and a store will shortly be opened in that town to cater for their needs. Various other towns are presently considering the co-operative methods of trading and co-operative control. We would wish that the workers in every Irish town would give the question at least some of the attention we think its importance requires. By the co-operative method the workers may obtain control of their own distributive trade in a very short time and then the many grievances of shop assistants, to name but one body of workers, could have immediate remedy. The workers of England and Scotland have their own societies, their own great wholesale federation and their own productive factories. The only eight hour day biscuit factory in Great Britain or

Ireland is owned and controlled by the co-operators of England, and they have shown that such a trade as shirt-making need not necessarily be a sweated trade. Hitherto our workers have not given the movement very much attention. Only in Belfast has the movement grown to any great size. In Dublin and Cork the movement languishes for support, and in many other towns it has never even been heard of. To Waterford and Strabane we wish every success, and trust that other towns will take up the movement sincerely. Would not our Trades Councils give the movement some of their attention? If so we might have a strong co-operative distributive movement in a few years.

## Trade Union Progress.

Last week Cathal O Shannon described the victory of the women in the printing trade in Cork. It is one of the victories of the new attempts to organise women workers in this country. During the past year several thousands of women have been brought into the trade union movement with very considerable benefit to themselves. Several unions are doing the work which so much needed to be done. In Cork, in Limerick, in Dublin, in Derry and in Belfast the organisation of women workers has progressed very favourably. In other directions also the organisation of the workers has made progress. The Irish Transport Workers' Union has added some thousands to its membership in a few months and the organisation of clerical workers is making great strides. These movements are described in detail from time to time on another page. What we desire to impress here is the necessity for more and more organisation. It must be our endeavour to make every worker a trade unionist, and so bring about the greatest possible cohesion within the entire movement. In a small country like ours, where industry is not very highly developed, with comparatively small groups of various types of workers scattered throughout the country, it seems to us that the ideal we should aim at is one union for all kinds of workers. Within that union the various grades and types of worker would be sectionalised. It must be borne in mind that the capitalist is not confined to one industry only. He spreads himself throughout all industry of whatever kind, and now we are faced with new combinations of capital and capitalists every day. Capital is organising, if it has not always been organised, into one big union. Dublin workers were faced with the fact in 1913, and have learned the lesson. The Dublin Chamber of Commerce is no sectional organisation nor is the Employers' Federation. The ideal of James Connolly was "one big union" for all labour in Ireland, and we shall strive to bring that ideal to fruition. It is worth striving for, as within such a union the power of the worker can be truly focussed.

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Matter intended for publication in the following issue must reach the Office not later than Monday afternoon.

## National Self-Determination.

The Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party at its meeting on 5th inst., passed unanimously a resolution part of which reads as follows:—"That we call upon the workers and Labour and Socialist Parties in all the belligerent countries to follow the example of the revolutionary democracy of Russia and bring pressure upon their Governments, whether of the Entente or Central Powers, to observe, as has been done in Russia, the right of all peoples to dispose freely of themselves; and that we appreciate the action of the Russian Government and people in claiming this right for Ireland, and appeal to the democracies of Germany, Austria, Great Britain, France, Italy and the United States to carry out their professed principles in the same respect." The Russian revolutionary Government has put its professed principles into practice. It has recognised the independence of Finland and the Ukraine. It has permitted the Ukrainian deputies to take part in the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. Russia was the first country to recognise the independence of the Finnish Republic, thus bringing joy to a small nation whose struggle for freedom has won the admiration and sympathy of liberty lovers in all nations. Other countries have since recognised Finnish independence, but to Russia belongs the credit of an act of justice and honour. It was thought by some self-styled "Liberals" that Russia, even revolutionary Russia, would quail before such an application of their formula. The Russian revolutionaries demand for all countries the right to determine its own future government, and they have themselves been the first to put that formula into practice. Finland is now a free Republic, and though we may be somewhat envious of such good fortune, we nevertheless rejoice that a new free nation has been born in Europe. To Finland we offer our congratulations and to Russia we offer them no less. Russia has again shown the way, the only way, to the formation of a League of Nations. All other ways are futile.

Other countries, or sections of the population in other countries, have adopted the Russian formula, but up to the present none of them have followed the Russian

example. Is it any wonder then that Trotsky thinks some of them the greatest hypocrites of history? Faith without good works is a dead thing. The Russians had faith and they had the courage to live up to it. The other countries would like to have the same faith, they profess to have it, but when an action based upon that faith is demanded they fail, their faith is not strong enough. The democracies of all the Empires in the world profess sentiments which so far they have not attempted to put into action. The memorandum on war aims passed by a special conference of the British Labour movement held in London on 28th December last demands "the frank abandonment of every form of Imperialism." We all abhor Imperialism. Democracy and empire are incompatibilities. The two cannot continue to exist in the same world, and if those who desire a democratic world try to graft upon their democracy a piece of imperialism, the fruit will be the fruit of imperialism and not the fruit of democracy. Democracy is based upon a recognition of rights; imperialism exists upon a denial of rights. Democracy has justice as its aim, while the subversion of justice is the aim of imperialism. It is impossible to be a democrat and an imperialist at the same time, just as it is impossible to be a slave-owner and a democrat at the same time. Democracy demands freedom and upon freedom only is a true democracy possible.

The British Labour movement seems to approve the actions of the Russian Government, and its recent conference approved the "general principle of allowing all peoples to settle their own destinies." Yet their programme ignores all the problems of nationality within the jurisdiction of their own government. Not a word have they to say about such problems. India is ignored, Egypt is ignored, Ireland is ignored, and though the German press makes facile use of these countries in their propaganda, the British Labour movement does not grasp the situation. British labour does not seem to realise that general principles are for general application. It is true, though we had almost forgotten, that the Labour Party Conference to be held in Nottingham on 23rd inst. will be asked to approve the grant of Home Rule to India. British democracy, despite its resolutions and protests, is more closely akin to the German peace programme than to that of the Russians. Of course we are primarily concerned about the future of our own country, and we desire the application of the Russian formula, the general principle of the British Labour Party, applied to us. Instead, we get a declaration from the leader of British Labour that the decision of the Convention will be immediately accepted by it. This is a clear attempt to have one's loaf and also to eat it. Henderson will back the Russian formula for foreign application, while for home application he keeps the programme of Count Czernin. We should like to have a definite statement from British Labour of its intentions as to the future of Ireland. It is probable that Labour will govern in England in a very short time, and for that reason a definite statement is clearly necessary. Let the Conference at Nottingham tell us once for all whether they will follow Trotsky and Lenin, or Czernin and Henderson. We shall await the answer with impatience.

# LABOUR IN IRELAND.

## WAR ECONOMY IN DERRY.

Since the Derry Shop Assistants organised in the National Amalgamated Union, several months ago, there has been much unrest in the ranks of the shop-keeping bosses. In the Loyal City, British laws anent State Insurance have been pretty generally ignored. The advantages of these laws may be doubtful, but some Derry shop workers have not been able to test them. Wages in some cases are lower than they were thirty years ago, and mostly they are below the level of those in rebel Cork for the same class of work.

Two of the smarter firms determined they would impress the public with their consideration and generosity—much to the advantage of the "Journal," "Standard," and "Sentinel." Robert Neill led off with a twelve inch advertisement, booming his tender care for his staff, as shown by closing his establishment for the mid-day dinner hour. In these days of submarines, one lot of shop assistants had time to eat, perhaps without sugar or butter.

Messrs. Austin & Co., "The Great Costumiers," took another twelve inches next day in the three papers, under the caption, "Humanity and the Dinner Hour—Open All Day," to tell the public that they fed their staff every day with "soup, roast beef (fresh joint every day, and best procurable from Mr. Joseph Patterson, fisher, Strand) and pudding." They also intimated that their sales for December, 1917 (the fourth year of the great war), were £741 3s. 7d. more than in December, 1916; and further that they were not philanthropists. They treated their assistants "handsomely" for their own purposes.

This cross-talk might have continued to the great glory of Messrs. Neill and Austin and the enrichment of the local newspapers, but unfortunately the "Standard" admitted the following advertisement to its pages:—

## HUMANITARIANISM AND WAGES. A CHALLENGE.

The Shop Assistants' Union, Market Buildings, Strand Road, Derry, hereby calls on the rival Humanitarian Firms to supply the Public with a statement of the present wage paid to each Employee, the whole Staff, not the few admittedly well-paid ones in each Establishment; also bonus given to each Employee since August, 1915.

With this information before them the Public will be in a better position to judge regarding respective claims of the rival Humanitarians.

EDWARD OWENS, Organiser.

We trust the rivals will agree to Mr. Owens' request.

### Disputes Pending.

Several firms in the Maiden City have been approached by the Union with a request for an advance of 50 per cent. on present wages and the establishment of

minimum rate. One firm has offered 33½ and agreed to the minimum. Another offered 25 per cent. at first and afterwards reduced its offer to an advance of £10 per annum. Another polite boss consigned the organiser and the Union to Hell, while one of the best-known houses in the city returned the Murphyite answer, "we arrange these things with our staff individually."

We have in our possession figures showing the wages paid in these four houses, and they reveal a disgusting system of sweating. Adult women, with the responsibilities of a department, are getting from 13s. 6d. to 15s. per week. An experienced bookkeeper, 18 years of age, gets 8s. a week, another 16s. Men are cheap at 24s. a week, and they pay their laundry bills out of that besides feeding, clothing and housing themselves. Such is the legendary prosperity of the North—among the workers.

Perhaps before these notes are printed there may be several strikes in Derry. The men and women are solidly organised. The shop workers of Londonderry have the game in their hands. Loyalty to one another, and to their own Union, will win them victory—and cash.

## DERRY NOTES.

The delay in paying the 12½ per cent. bonus has been the cause of considerable commotion in local engineering circles. The failure on the part of the North of Ireland Shipbuilding Company to pay the award on Christmas week resulted in all the societies concerned deciding against overtime during the holidays (from Saturday, 22nd ult., to Wednesday, 2nd inst.) and also against resumption of work after the holidays until the bonus should be paid, as from 13th October last.

On Saturday, 22nd December, the management issued a statement regretting that they had not so far received the necessary instructions to enable them to pay either the 5s. award or the 12½ per cent. (although the former had been paid to the majority of the workers in the yard the previous week, and the latter to a certain section of workmen who had shown fight some three weeks before.) They also desired it to be understood that the firm was not responsible for the delay, and hoped to be in a position to pay on Saturday, 5th January.

Negotiations proceeded during the holidays, resulting in the firm's giving a positive guarantee to pay the award not later than Saturday, 5th January. The strike then came to an end, any workmen required being free to return before the expiration of the holiday period.

A. Brown & Sons, Ltd., engineers and foundrymen, paid the 12½ per cent. bonus on Saturday, 5th inst., to all workmen except labourers, as a consequence of which the labourers came out on strike on Tuesday, 1st inst. The strike lasted three days, during which time the whole works were closed down. On Thursday evening a settlement was reached, when

the firm agreed to pay on Saturday, 5th inst., and the men to return on Friday, 4th inst. This, however, did not finish the trouble. The engineers and moulders now demanded payment for the three days of enforced idleness. Negotiations on Friday and Saturday resulted in a compromise, the firm offering one and a half days' pay, which offer the men accepted; work to be resumed on Monday, 7th inst.

The firm attitude adopted by the workers on this question has taught the employers concerned a useful if expensive lesson.

A one-day's strike of the workers in the meal and flour mills of George MacFarlane & Co., Ltd., Carrigans, has resulted in an increase of 3s. per week to all employees in the mills. This now makes the wages 26s. and 27s. weekly.

In the negotiations consequent on the strike, Mr. Cooke, D.L., represented the firm, and the men were ably represented by Mr. J. Devenney, National Amalgamated Union of Labour, Newtowncunningham.

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## Irish Opinion

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# Dublin Tramways—Trades Unionism Comes Back.

The annual general meeting of the Amalgamated Union of Tramway and Vehicle Workers, Dublin Branch, was held in the Trades Hall, Capel Street, last Sunday morning at 12.30 a.m. Despite the hour, there was a large and enthusiastic attendance, which augurs well for the future of Dublin's tramway workers. Mr. Michael Colleary presided, and called upon Mr. T. Johnson, of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, to extend a welcome to the men on behalf of the workers of Dublin and Ireland. He had recently met the Belfast Tramway Committee on behalf of their Union Branch in that city, and he knew that the wages of Dublin tramway men were below the Belfast level, and very far beneath the cross-Channel rates. While their wages remained stationary in token value, the increased cost of living reduced their purchasing power. He knew the old story of Ireland's poverty was played out. The bank returns proved there was money in the country. The Munster and Leinster Bank had £11,714,000 lying on deposit, an increase over the corresponding half-year of over two and a half million pounds. This money was not all invested and tied up; £8,000,000 could be immediately realised. With wealth being piled up in increasing abundance there should be no poverty among those who laboured night and day for the service of the public.

Mr. J. J. Brogan, the secretary, moved a resolution of respect and remembrance of comrades who had passed away since the inception of the Union, and of sympathy with their relatives, which was adopted in silence, all standing.

Mr. Brogan then presented a report of the branch's progress, which showed that the organisation began with 250 members, and although several had been victimised on account of their activities, the membership had more than doubled since then, the

weekly increases varying from 20 to 70. He recalled the declaration made by Mr. Wm. Martin Murphy in the Ancient Concert Rooms in 1913:

"The traffic men from time to time have made efforts to form a Union without success. I take it to be that they found no necessity for it and that it was not worth the cost, as they got on as well without it. . . . Any man or any section of men who desired at any time to make representations in their own behalf or on behalf of their fellow-workmen, may have the confident assurance that their employers will not find any fault with them for so doing."

He was one who had taken advantage of Mr. Murphy's invitation, and they knew the result. Since the formation of the Union, certain efforts had been made to force a strike. They had wisely avoided any stoppage, and they hoped to obtain improved conditions without resort to drastic effort.

A curious form of the anti-Union efforts of some of the inspectors was a semi-official propaganda of a perverted doctrine of Sinn Féin. The solidarity of Irish workers with their English fellow-workers in the transit service was represented as unpatriotic. Dublin workers could discriminate between the English Government and the English people. They knew their friends, and in the event of any dispute they had the solid backing of the finance of the entire Union.

The Union's claim for £1 per week advance on pre-war wages had been brought before the Committee of Production on behalf of the tramway men and women of Ireland, Scotland and England, and no settlement would be made which did not satisfy the Dublin men.

Officers for the ensuing year were elected, and the meeting closed about 3.15 a.m. on Sunday morning.

manner in which the food supply problem has been muddled.

It may interest Irish workers to know that the paper which Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Belfast, wrote on "The Situation in Ireland, with respect to Food Production and the Relation of the Consumer Thereto," for the Irish Co-operative Conference Association, has been fully reprinted in the "Co-operators' Year Book for 1918," issued by the Co-operative Productive Federation.

The recent reconstruction of the basis of the British Labour Party's constitution is already bringing good results. A general election should see between two and three hundred Labour candidates fighting for working-class representation at Westminster. These will be run not only under Labour Party auspices, but the I.L.P. and the co-operators will also have their nominees appealing to the electorate on the democratic programme. There are some intelligent observers who do not hold Labour views, who believe that a wave of democratic feeling is preparing to pass over the country, which may put a Labour majority in power at the House of Commons. Not being a prophet, or the son of a prophet, I will not hazard the chances of this belief coming true, but without doubt Labour is going to greatly increase its political strength when the next election comes.

The issuing by the Labour Party of a report on reconstruction after the war, is also making the political quidnuncs to sit up and take notice. It goes straight to the root of the matter, and insists that reconstruction **must** not mean the dabbling about of this Government department, or messy and patchwork legislation sponsored by that Ministry, but a definite overhauling and rebuilding of the whole fabric of the national life. It points the way to a co-operative basis of the Nation's affairs in a calm and practical manner. The Press is inclined to pass supercilious sniffs, and hint at the Utopian character of the proposals outlined; political headquarters, however, are taking the matter in quite a serious fashion, and just now we shall doubtless see the organisations of the old political groups attempting to steal some of Labour's "thunder," while it warily stalks its political projects and aims.

The New Year list of "honours" was a very tame list indeed. It may be taken as an expression, however, of the real forces which are governing the nation. They are fairly wealthy and doing well out of the war; they have comfortable homes and no risks. The refusal of Mr. John Galsworthy, the brilliant novelist, to be numbered amongst such a crowd, provides a happily ironical commentary on the whole farcical business. Politics at best are an unfortunate necessity. When they are deliberately made dirty and corrupt by the dominant economic interests of the nation they need to be cleansed by the purifying idealism and indignation of democracy. In England they are going to get it!

## English Notes

Is 1918 to be a year of famine? That query is being put in varying forms of expression by many lips. The general food situation teems with disquieting factors. The last few days have seen butchers' meat almost unobtainable in many of our big industrial centres. There is a speeding-up of the card-system of rationing by Lord Rhondda and the local Food Control Committees alike. Sugar, tea, butter and margarine are now being distributed under these methods of registration. It is expected that bacon, cheese, lard, milk and bread and flour will shortly be distributed on the same basis. Food queues are not yet at an end, however. At a few minutes past 7 a.m. last Saturday morning, I saw several hundreds of people waiting for a pork butcher's shop to be opened. And this is a midland town, where a rationing scheme has been set up!

By  
GEORGE STANTON

The truth of the position is that the inviolability of Great Britain is challenged, and a sufficiency of food for our people can no longer be guaranteed. Mr. Lloyd George may tell us we need no longer fear the U-boats, but Sir Eric Geddes admits that the construction of new ships is not keeping pace with the U-boat sinkings. And Mr. Prothero, of the Board of Agriculture, has told us there is "no question that in 1918, and for some considerable time afterwards, a shortage of food would exist." There is a big effort to break up new land for tillage proceeding, but obviously this cannot easily catch up the shortage of imported foodstuffs. There are grave days ahead; already the food problem ranks in the public mind with the war situation. Indeed, it is not improbable that we may see Mr. George's knock-out blow administration go **à** eclipse because of the

# Allotments and Garden Plots.

**Cropping the Plot.**—In my last notes an outline scheme of cropping was given. Below I give in detail an approximate estimate of the amount of vegetables which can be grown in one season on an allotment of about 600 sq. yds. in extent, or about 40 ft. wide by 135 ft. long. Also general idea as to amount of seed or plants necessary, and when they would be fit for use, etc. In this scheme one-half is set aside for potatoes and the other half for the various other vegetables. Next year the potatoes will be grown where these other vegetables are to be grown this year. The rows, which are 40 ft. long, should run north and south.

**In addition** to the plan, 3. rows of cabbages might be planted in March—between the rows of early cabbages. An

additional row of sprouts between the early cauliflowers, and 2 rows of quick-growing savoy cabbages between the rows of mid-season cauliflowers. Three or four rows of leeks might be planted in June on ground occupied by shallots and potato onions, or early turnips, while late sowings of turnips, might be made between rows of Tripoli onions in July. Late curly greens, savoy cabbages, and broccoli could be planted on remainder of ground occupied by mid-season and early potatoes.

**Salad and other quick-growing crops**, such as radish, cress, spinach, etc., could be sown between the rows of sprouts and other greens, or adjoining the peas, beans, and celery, until such time as these crops require more space.

**Swede turnips.**—These can be bought by the hundredweight in autumn and winter so cheaply that it may be advisable to purchase them and store them rather than grow them. Personally, I usually plant a couple of rows. Cabbages should not be grown amongst potatoes, especially where spraying is done, otherwise some one is liable to get too much copper sulphate. Jerusalem artichokes are a crop well worth growing, especially for those who are fond of soups. Purple sprouting broccoli is another vegetable which is worth growing, as it matures in a season of scarcity. Seakale Beet and or Spinach beet is also a desirable vegetable for winter and early spring use, for those who do not object to its earthy flavour.

PLOTHOLDER.

Space allotted for each Crop	Kind of Crop, distance apart, etc.	Amount of Seeds or Plants	Time of Sowing or Planting	When in Use.	Amount of Produce
1 ft. 6 in.	Runner Beans (as an edging) single line of seeds 6 ins. apart	1 pint	1st May	July—Nov.	1 cwt.
4 ft.	Space for raising various seedlings and Herbs	—	—	—	—
8 ft.	4 rows of Early Potatoes, rows 2 ft. apart, sets 1 ft. apart	1½ stone	Feb.—March	June—July	2 cwt.
18 ft.	8 rows of Mid Season Potatoes, rows 2 ft. 3 ins. apart, sets 1 ft. apart	3 stone	March	July—Aug.	6 cwt.
42½ ft.	17 rows of Main Crop Potatoes, rows 2 ft. 6 ins. apart, sets 1 ft. 3 ins. apart	5 stone	April—May	Oct.—June	16 cwt.
8 ft.	4 rows of Early Cabbage, rows 2 ft. apart, plants 1 ft. 6 ins. apart	¼ oz. seed or 112 plants	October	March—May	100 heads.
6 ft.	3 rows of Brussels Sprouts, rows 2 ft. apart, plants 2 ft. apart	¼ oz. seed or 60 plants	March—May	Oct.—Feb.	1 cwt.
4 ft.	2 rows of Early Cauliflowers, rows 2 ft. apart, plants 1 ft. 6 ins. apart	½ oz. seed or 55 plants	March—May	June—July	50 heads
4 ft.	2 rows Mid Season Cauliflowers, rows 2 ft. apart, plants 2 ft. apart	¼ oz. seed or 40 plants	April—May	July—Sept.	40 heads.
5 ft.	2 rows Autumn Broccoli, rows 2 ft. 6 ins. apart, plants 2 ft. apart	¼ oz. seed or 40 plants	April—May	Nov.—Jan.	40 heads.
3 ft.	1 row French Beans (1 ft. row and 1 ft. each side picking space), seeds 9 ins. apart	½ pint seeds	May	August	80 lbs.
2 ft.	2 rows Carrots, rows 1 ft. apart, plants thinned to 8 ins. apart	½ oz. seeds	March—April	Aug.—March	40 lbs.
4 ft. 6 ins.	3 rows Parsnips, rows 1 ft. 6 ins. apart, plants thinned to 10 ins. apart	½ oz. seeds	Feb.—March	Oct.—March	80 lbs.
3 ft.	1 drill Early Dwarf Peas (space as for Beans) seeds in a triple row 3 ins. apart each way	½ pint seeds	Feb.—March	June—July	40 lbs.
3 ft.	2 rows Beet Root, rows 18 ins. apart, plants 9 ins. apart	1 oz. seeds	May	August	1 cwt.
3 ft.	2 rows Early Turnips, rows 18 ins. apart, plants 6 ins. apart	1 oz. seeds	March	June—July	¾ cwt.
3 ft.	1 row Broad Beans, seeds sown 6 ins. apart	½ pint	February	July—Aug.	80 lbs.
2 ft.	2 rows Onions (Spring sown), rows 1 ft. apart, plants 6 ins. apart	½ oz. seeds	April	Aug.—March	½ cwt.
2 ft.	2 rows Tripoli Onions, rows 1 ft. apart, plants 6 ins. apart	½ oz. seeds	Planted out in October	July—Feb.	¾ cwt.
1 ft.	1 row Shallots, rows 1 ft. apart, pts. 6 ins. apart	½ stone bulbs	February	July—Feb.	½ cwt.
2 ft.	2 rows Potato Onions, rows 1 ft. apart, plants 9 inches apart	1½ stone bulbs	February	July—Feb.	1½ cwt.
4 ft. 6 ins.	1 French Celery, double row, plants 1 ft. apart each way	80 plants	June	Oct.—Feb.	80 heads.
1 ft.	Edging of Parsley, plants 8 ins. apart	½ oz. seed	Feb.—March	June—May	Weekly supplies.

SAOLACAS.

C. LIAM P. O RIAIN.

Tá Séamur Ó Cuirín 'na cónnuí ran India Toir le fáda, ac ní gá dúinn a fáo nár maoluis rin a bpi Éireannac. Cuir ré leabair amac le deannai, leabair 'na bfuil a lán trácta an Éirinn, si go bfuil terdeal Saluda air: "New Wayr in English Literature" (Máorap: Zanerh). Cuiréann ré ríor an Tagore, Arabindoo Shore, Yeatr, A. E. Stephen Phillip, E. Carpenter, Meredith, Synge, Emerson, 7l. Tréite rúnda rriora-dálta ip mó atá an a aipe, ac do-ní ré tagairt fá leit do luét raotair agus do'n bantpact. Tá neite rmaoin-tiála le fáo aise um Saedala agus um Saolacair, ac bíonn ré as dul amú uaireanta. "The Semur of Ireland and of Yeatr ip vágriant and typical" deir ré. Ac na daoine do cum rgealta Cúchulainn, litríocht na Féinne, agus a lán tráotair eile, bíodair i n-ann oibhriú an rli rairrings cumarai, agus tá an tpean-bpi ra scine go fóill. San amur tamuro an-abránac le cianta, ac tá pát leir an rgeal ran. Ac tá lá an dháma, lá an úir-rgeil, lá na hépopée as teact. Mar rin féin tá ugoair Saelaca ann agus táro las leirgíul, agus ró-eugta do gnát-tuairmí.

Fear mihniúil bhíomar ip ead P. S. Ó héireartaig agus tá neart eolair agus ríor-leairgur aise an il-éirteanna Éireannaca. Ip leir an méro rin ón leabair atá curta amac aise um Sean Mirtéal (Maunrel). Ip 10l dúinn go leir óo laocta léio-meac agus do bí an Mirtéalac, ac ní tuigeann an bhurmhór óo doimhín ar do bí ré riam an tréite agus an dílte luét raotair, agus an móo díneac éun a sceart do baint amac. Bí "social policy" dá-rírib aise, agus ip breas mar míngéann páorais Ó héireartaig an taob ro do'n rgeal. Déanraio an leabair an-maitear do éur na n-oibhrite i héirinn.

I mbéal feirroe a véar an tOipeactar i mbliana. Tionóirar é an Luágar 4, agus véio ré an ríudal go dtí Luágar 10. Véio 49 comórtarai an fáo ann: i litríocht, labairt na Saedilge, abcóroeaet, reancur na héireann, rgealuioet, reacaireact, múntcoireact, amhánuioet, clair-éadad, ceol upnéire, rínnee, 7l. Véio quair móo (£50) le fáil as an

té ip feair a ceapraio léir-meair an raogal agus an raotair na bpi n Saelac é amir Cécinn anuar. Connrao na Saedilge i Lunndain do bhonn an duair céadna. Quair eile ó C. na S. Lunno.—£20 do'n té ip feair a ceapraio úir-rgeal um gnát-raogal i héirinn ríom Cáire 1916, agus baint a véit as cur an rgeil leir an Éirge amac. Daineann comórtairi liteairda eile le cluici, le dinn-reancur, le ríliocet, le hairci (feall-rámannda, ealadanta, 7l.), agus le rgealta an gnát-raogal i sceatair éigin i héirinn. Bíonn ar-oibhneair le n-airiú le linn an Oipeactair, agus bu geal linn luét raotair 'na mílte do tual ann. Véioir as rmaoinead an raoirre intleacta dá báir.

Níl teora le rgealuioet agus ríliocet na Féinne. Fuairat ar eníair breascta aca, maille le ríetrácta 'na otaoib, 'nár laete féin. Cuir páorais Mac ríarair dá rgeal do na rgealta i n-eagar, o'foillirg Eoin Mac Néill rí-énuaract rílioceta, "Dúnaire Finn" (Cumann na Sgríbeann Saedilge), agus anoir tá "rían-Laorte" le fáil ó Síoran Laoroe (Cumann Oroeaair na héireann). Tá ráir-eolair as an laoroead an éurrai na litríoceta céadna—agus an il-litríocet eile. Do réir corúlacta ní curtear an oipead rin ríme i rgealta na Craoibe Rua, imear 7 na ndaoine. Tá leabair tairneamac, "Concubair Mac Neara, 7l." le fáil agann ó "Cú Ulad"; "Dúneir" agus "Táin Dó Cuailgne 'na dháma" ón áair ríeodair; an "Táin" mar tá rí i leabair Dúibe leacain (Strachan agus Ó Caoim); agus mar rin doib. Da bhíomar iad na daoine do ceap agus do cóimead an tpean-litríocet úo i n-allóo. Cao é an fáe nac mbíonn ugoair agus luét léigte na linne reo óo neartmar le raorté agus le raotruite na rean?

L. P. O R.

THE IRISH LABOUR PARTY.

(To the Editor of "Irish Opinion.")

Sir,—As an interested reader of "Irish Opinion," I should like to have your views on what seems to me a defect in the constitution of the Irish Labour Party. This was published in your columns recently, a short time after the

publication of the new constitution of the British Labour Party, and there is a very marked difference between the two. "Between the comparatively small group that exists on rent, interest and profits (exercising in consequence a disproportionate political power) and the great mass of wage-earners"—I quote Mr. S. G. Hobson, of the "New Age"—"are the salaried classes, an infinite, variegated, and unorganised aggregation of fortuitous atoms. . . . Some of them, by education, training, and 'milieu,' are closely related to the actual exploiters; others are equally close, in interest and sympathy, to the wage-earners." It is to this latter class of the "salaried," and to those members of the former class who, for any reason, rise in political thought where the limitations of "education, training and 'milieu,'" that the theories of national guilds make a special appeal; and, largely under the influence of the national guilds school of thought, the British Labour Party has now thrown its membership open to all "producers by hand or by brain," and is aiming deliberately at capturing as much as possible of the "salaried" as well as the "proletariat," and organising itself on a national instead of a class basis. Any individual who lives by his or her own exertions, physical or mental, is entitled to membership on the sole condition of endorsing the Party's profession of faith.

The Irish Labour Party, on the other hand, is rigidly restricted in its membership to bonafide trade unionists. Is this condition necessary? I anticipate the answer that members of the "salaried" not organised in trade unions ought to be so organised, and that the existence of such a condition may stimulate them towards organisation. I agree entirely that salary-earners, equally with wage-earners should, so far as possible, be organised. The people I have in mind, however, are people who from the nature of the case cannot be organised—young men in public or semi-public departments, in the professions, in journalism, on the fringes of literature, and so on. James Connolly, in "The Reconquest of Ireland," noted that in these classes we have in Ireland a proportion much larger than across the Channel, of men who are more and more attracted to the labour and co-operative movements, and welcomed the prospect of their support. But the Irish Labour Party, by its constitution, shuts them out. I fully appreciate the danger of a working-class movement being captured by bourgeois theorists; but the British Labour Party, while realising it, has been able to provide adequate safeguards against it. There are, I believe, a considerable number of younger men situated as I have outlined, who are equally dissatisfied with the Sinn Fein, Nationalist, and Unionist parties, who could give the Irish Labour Party useful service. Cannot the Irish Labour Party find room for them?—Yours faithfully,

W. B. W.

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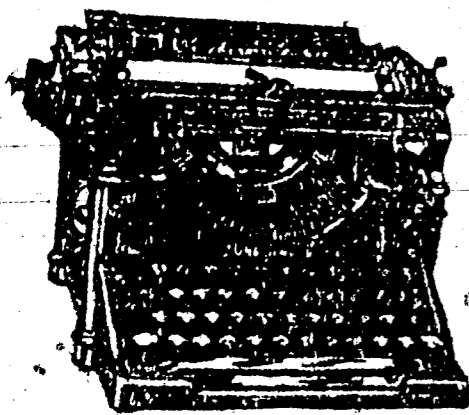
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