

"The principle I... and mean to... up a is—that... tire ownership... Ireland, moral and... I, up to the sun... down to the centre... right in... of Ireland."

James Fintan Lalor.



Who is it speaks of defeat?  
I tell you a cause like ours;  
Is greater than defeat can know—  
It is the power of powers.

As surely as the earth rolls round  
As surely as the glorious sun  
Brings the great world moon wave,  
Must our Cause be won!

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Edited by Jim Larkin.

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DUBLIN, SATURDAY, MAY 18th, 1912.

[ONE PENNY.]

## Labour and the Re-Conquest of Ireland.

III.

It has been said that the most deplorable feature of Irish life is the apparent lack of civic consciousness. It is, indeed, strange that the people of a nation which has such an indomitable determination in its struggle for possession of the mere machinery of government should exhibit so little capacity to breathe a civic spirit into the machinery as they have already brought under their control. That this phenomenon is explicable in a manner not at all to the credit of the citizens of the towns and cities of Ireland is quite true, but true also is it that a full and generous admission of the adverse influences that have hindered or retarded the development of a civic or municipal, as distinguished from an aggressive or even self-seeking national patriotism, does not absolve these citizens from the duty of labouring to overcome our national apathy in this respect. An Irish municipality elected by the male and female voters under the present suffrage ought to be in its public activities, breadth of work, and comprehensiveness of ambition for the social well-being and mental enrichment of its inhabitants a centre of pride to the Irish race, and a shining example of the possibilities of the work of Ireland under free and self-governing institutions. Its failure to do so, if it does fail, will not, indeed, vitiate its claims to the credit of its citizens' obedience, but it will unquestionably weaken the powers making in that direction, as well as sadden the hearts of those who amid the struggles of to-day require the mental aid to be derived from an feeling of the human elements with whom they are allied, and upon whom they hope to build the future. An almost complete change in the intellectual viewpoint of the mass of the Irish people would be required to establish in its proper place and relative importance the modern conception of the function of public bodies as a governing factor in Irish municipal politics. It would necessitate such a change as would impel the public to regard such public bodies not so much as offensive weapons to be won from a political enemy in order that they may be silenced, but rather as effective tools to be used in the upbuilding of a healthier social edifice in which to give vent to the needs of the citizens for sociative aids to their individual development and culture.

This is, indeed, the needed point of view. We require in Ireland to grasp the fact that the act of voting at the ballot-box is the one act in which we get the opportunity to give expression to the soul of the race; the act in which we give a tangible body to our public spirit. The ballot-box is the vehicle of expression of our social consciousness, by means of it we collect all the passions, all the ideals, all the desires, all the ambitions, all the longings, all the weaknesses, all the integrity, all the corruption, all the elevating spiritualities, and all the debasing interests of the population and make of them a composite whole which henceforth takes its place in the history as the embodied soul of the race at that period of its development. A people are not to be judged by the performances of their great men, but to be estimated spiritually by the intellectual conquests of their geniuses. The only true standard by which the physical and mental measurement of a people can be taken in modern times is by that picture drawn of itself by itself, then it, at the ballot-box surrenders the care of its collective destiny into the hands of its elected representatives.

The question of whether such elected persons have or have not the power to realise the desires of their constituents merely enters into the matter. It is not by its power to realise high ideals a people will and must be judged, but by the standard of the ideals themselves. A people with high ideals of collective responsibility and public virtues it is positively impotent to realise will necessarily sink higher in the scale of humanity than a people in full possession of political power, but destitute of public spirit and civic virtue.

Up till the passing of the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 there existed no means by which the democracy of the rich towns could be tested in order to ascertain the measure of their civic patriotism. The local government of Ireland

was exclusively in the hands of the proprietors of the municipal councils outside of Belfast were elected on a restricted property qualification, and whatever evils existed in the urban districts were no more under the control of the mass of the people than if they had been resident in Timbuctoo or Terra-del-Fuego. Indeed, by means of the Parliamentary franchise the masses in the Irish cities could conceivably exert a determining influence on the fate of countries at the extreme limits of the earth while unable to seriously affect the lighting or paving of the street in which they lived. At such a time the propertied Irish patriot would occasionally refer to the unhealthy, squalid conditions of Dublin, for example, as an existence of the evils resulting from British rule; evils which would assuredly disappear before the beneficent hand of a popularly elected Irish administration. Nor can we wonder at such a belief. Assuredly it was within the realm of probability that a people suffering under the smart of intolerable conditions caused by a misuse of political power and social privilege should at the first opportunity set themselves to the task of sweeping away such conditions by a public-spirited use of their newly-acquired control of municipal powers. The concept of the Irish nation as an organic whole, each part of which throbs in fullest sympathy with every other, and feels in the movements of its public administrative bodies the pulsations of its own intellectual heart-beat—a concept vaguely outlined in the dreams of patriotic enthusiasts, poets and martyrs of the past—might reasonably have been expected to take form and substance in miniature with the cities in which hundreds of thousands of Irishmen, women and children passed their lives.

If it has not taken form; if to-day the cities and towns of Ireland are a reproach to the land and a glaring evidence of the incapacity of the municipal rulers of the country, the responsibility for the failure lies largely with those who in the past had control of the political education of the Irish masses and failed to prepare them for the intelligent exercise of those public powers for which they were taught to clamour. That they were not prepared, and that no effort is therefore being made to give form and substance to any conception of civic patriotism is only too evident to those who are even casually acquainted with the majority of Irish cities. A glance at the condition of Dublin, for instance, reveals a state of matters sadly eloquent of the useful lack of public spirit in those who are responsible as municipal rulers, and those who as electors tolerate such rulers. The following comment of the "Medical Press" upon the occasion of the conferring of the Freedom of the City upon Sir Charles Cameron gives in a concise form the facts relative to the health of Dublin in 1911, and is useful also as an illustration of the opinion of enlightened outsiders upon our municipal progress, or lack of progress, and as a comparison with the cities usually reckoned the least progressive in the world:—

"In the resolution conferring the freedom of the city on Sir Charles Cameron," says "The Medical Press," "it is stated that Dublin is a new town of comparative freedom from almost all of the malignant diseases which assail mankind."

"If such a boast were made it would be a lying one. Again, reference is made to the 'excellent state of public health' which 'now obtains in Dublin.' Let us get to facts. According to the latest returns, the death-rate in Dublin was 27.6 per 1,000. This was the highest of any city in Europe, as given in the Registrar-General's list, the next highest being that of Moscow—26.3 per 1,000. In Calcutta, in the previous year, the rate was only 27 per 1,000. Again, in the first three weeks of the present year, there were 63 deaths a week—from four trifling diseases—scarlatina, typhoid, diphtheria, and whooping cough. Yet this epidemic is what an Alderman of the city—generally well informed—airily described at a public dinner the other day as 'trifling.'"

The thoughtful reader cannot but be impressed and saddened by the comparison drawn in the above extract between Dublin and such cities as Moscow and Calcutta. That it should be possible to draw such a comparison, or any comparison but a favourable one, between the capital of Ireland, governed by its own citizens, and a city ruled autocratically by the liberty-hating officials of Russian Czarism is bad enough, but that an even more unfavourable comparison could truthfully be drawn between Dublin and an Asiatic city inhabited by a population destitute of civic power or political responsibility and unacquainted with the first laws of hygienic teaching is surely so much of a humiliation that it should fire every Irish man and woman with a fierce eagerness to remove such a stigma.

Least some of our readers might think that the English source from which this extract is taken may possibly be unduly influenced by national prejudice in their criticism (a most unfair assumption), we may quote the declaration of the Medical Officer of Health in question in his remarkable "Letter to the Lord Mayor" (of Dublin) in 1909. The comparison he draws is even more useful, as the towns instance possesses the same municipal powers and are elected upon the same franchise as Dublin. He says:—

"It must be admitted that the general death-rate is far in excess of the mean death rate in the English towns."

"In 1908 the mean death-rate in the 70 largest English towns was 15.8. The death-rate in the Dublin Registration Area was 21.5, the rate in the city being 23. The rate in the Metropolitan Area is that which in fairness should be compared with the English rates. The highest urban death-rate in England, namely 19.8, was in Oldham."

A comparison of these figures of Sir Charles Cameron with those cited in the first quotation would seem to point to an actual increase in the death-rate of 1911 as compared with 1908. Viewed from another standpoint the figures in both quotations prove the continued and needless sacrifice of life in Ireland. Accepting the English figures as the lowest at present attainable in the present state of our knowledge and in the efficiency for social purposes of our political institutions in our present hands, it follows that there is permitted in Ireland a state of matters which involves as its necessary result the ceaseless slaughter of precious human life. Other figures quoted by Sir Charles Cameron seem to show that it is upon the poor that the main burden of such slaughter falls, as the death-rate in the "habitants" of Dublin—the higher the social status the lower the death-rate, and the lower the social status the higher the death-rate. Thus, in the Annual Report for the year 1903 he gives the death-rate in Dublin according to the classes represented in the population as follows:—

Class	Per 1000
Professional and Independent Classes	20.1
Middle Class	14.9
Artisan Class and Petty Shopkeepers	18.7
General Service Class and Domestic Work-uses	32.6

In a still more minute analysis he gives the figures of child mortality amongst different classes of the population as follows:—

Class	Per 1000
PROFESSIONAL AND INDEPENDENT CLASSES.	
Population	17,436
Deaths of children under 5 years	76
Proportion of deaths of children per 1,000 of the population of the class	0.9
MIDDLE CLASS.	
Population	67,136
Deaths of children under 5 years	239
Proportion of children's deaths per 1,000 of the population of the class	2.7
ARTISAN AND PETTY SHOPKEEPERS CLASS.	
Population	110,423
Deaths of children under 5 years	630
Ratio of these deaths per 1,000 of the class	4.8
HAWKERS, PORTERS, LABOURERS, ETC.	
Population	39,861
Deaths of children under 5 years	1,145
Ratio of the deaths of children per 1,000 of the population of the class	12.7

Thus we have a steady increase in the death rate from its lowest point—amongst the professional or independent class to its highest point—amongst the street hawkers and casual labourers. This was for the year 1905.

A table showing the death-rate according to the four quarters of the year shows also that the number of deaths in Dublin is highest in the first three months, January, February and March, the winter months when the severity of the season makes its worst ravages amongst the poor, too enfeebled by hunger and cold to withstand its shocks.

Thus the high death-rate of Dublin is seen to be entirely due to economic causes, to rise and fall with economic classes. The rich of Dublin enjoy as long an immunity from death as do their kind elsewhere; it is the slaughter of Dublin's poor that gives the Irish metropolis its unenviable and hateful notoriety amongst civilised nations.

Now, what is the cause of this terrible state of matters—this hideous blot upon the Irish name? The original causes are many, but the one cause of its continuance is the lack of public spirit amongst the municipal rulers, and that again is only possible because of the want of proper training in democratic ideas amongst the mass of the electors. Democracy as a reasoned-out faith has not had in Ireland yet the proper political or social environment in which to grow; whatever democracy there is is instinctive and spontaneous, and is not the result of sound, political teachings or the outcome of deep reflections upon the growth and develop-

ment of social or political institutions. Only the democrats of Ireland have been rebels against political tyranny; the necessity of keeping up the fight for the establishment of the political machinery through which Democracy might express itself interfered with, and indeed destroyed, the possibility of developing as a theory or philosophical system those democratic principles which inspired the rebels personally. And as the fate of the masses of the people have had no opportunity of assimilating democratic thought except in the pitiful flashes of political oratory, or the almost as ephemeral pamphleteering of our more brilliant revolutionists. This is indeed the only assignable reason why our working class voters as a rule use so badly these rights for which so many of our bravest and noblest fought and toiled and agonised during the long dark night of our past.

In awaking the working class to a realisation of the necessity of using their votes for the purpose of social regeneration, to make the city in which they live be an aid to their individual uplifting and to their physical and moral strength, it should ever be borne in mind that the representative institutions of that city should, as we have already said, be an expression of the soul of the race, and that, as the soul directs the activities of the body in a clean or unclean direction, so shall our representative governing body make for or against clean living in clean habitations in a clean city.

It is well to remember that the Conquest never interfered with the right or power of the individual in Ireland to make his own life as he saw fit, and that those who had identified themselves with it that Conquest was directed. Hence the reversal of the rights and powers of the community (city or nation) over against those of the individual. The Conquest was in Irish politics the victory of the capitalist conception of law and the functions of law—the Re-Conquest will be the victory of the working class conception, the re-establishment of the community over the conditions of life that assist or retard the development of the individual.

On the Statute Book to day there are certain laws giving to the Dublin workers through the Corporation powers over the conditions of life in their city. These powers if properly and relentlessly utilised would go a long way towards remedying that fearful state of affairs already cited, and would also be in direct accord with the general movement to re-establish the true Irish nation. The Corporation has the power to close and demolish insanitary houses, unless they are put in a state to satisfy the Board of Trade. It has the power to execute necessary repairs to tenement houses, and compel the owners to pay the expense, if these owners refuse to execute the repairs themselves. It has the power to make bye-laws governing tenement houses and can thus enforce the efficient cleaning, lighting, renovating and building of such houses according to the most modern hygienic ideas. This of itself could be made sufficient to completely revolutionise the tenement house system in the city. It has the power to build houses, and any money it borrows for that purpose does not affect its legal credit or borrowing powers as a municipality. It has the power to acquire land for the purpose of creating cemeteries, and can thus put an end to the scandalous robbery of the poor practised by the Catholic Cemeteries' Committee at Glasnevin.

These powers it already has; but other powers are needed, and must be demanded if the workers of Dublin would make the most of their inheritance. What these powers are we intend to indicate when treating hereafter of the possibility of uniting the Irish democracy upon a political programme of social reform. As the further powers required for Dublin are also required for the rest of the country it would be unwise to develop that portion of our plan now before dealing with the evil state of matters with which we find ourselves confronted all over Ireland as a result of our political neglect and social disorganisation in the past.

Our readers will help forward the purpose of this writing if they will always remember that the objective aimed at is

to establish in the minds of the men and women of Ireland the necessity of giving effective expression, politically and socially, to the right of the community (all) to control for the good of all the social or industrial activities of each. This, historically speaking, will mean the enthronement of the (Irish) nation as the supreme ruler and owner of itself, and all things necessary to the life of its people—supreme as against the foreigner, and supreme as against the native usurping ownership and the power dangerous to freedom that goes with ownership.

JAMES CONNOLLY (Belfast).

### Correspondence.

#### THE INSURANCE "FAKE" AND THE HUMBLED WORKER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE IRISH WORKER.

12th May, 1912.

In the current issue of THE IRISH WORKER "Fergus," in an article on "The Advisory Committee and other Humbug," writes:—

"The consideration of the manner in which Ireland has been treated under the National Insurance Act is a fair index of what Irish workers can expect until they wake up and show a determination to look after their own interests."

Further on he writes—and, no doubt, considers it the concentrated essence of sarcasm:—

"I do not expect 'Fergus' to see eye to eye with me, but, to my mind, no stronger argument could be advanced AGAINST the formation of an Irish Parliamentary Labour Party."

What are the facts?

The precious Insurance Act, originally framed to suit British conditions, was extended to Ireland. Why? Not because Mr. John Redmond or the majority of the Irish Parliamentary Party desired it or thought it good, but because some powerful members of that Party, connected and bound up with certain sectarian and other societies in Ireland, saw a chance of increasing their membership, and also securing for themselves lucrative positions and increased influence.

But those people would have been powerless to secure this were they not reinforced by the heaven-sent "alleged" leaders of Labour, the men who sent telegrams and organised deputations for the purpose of conveying to Lloyd-George the unalterable and fixed determination of hundreds of thousands of Irish workers to do something desperate if he didn't take immediate steps to COMPEL these same workers' employers to dock 3d. per week from their already over-abundant wages. Of course, the out little Welshman bowed to the "alleged" demand made by the "alleged" leaders on behalf of the 'Irish workers. English statesmen are always willing to listen to the voice of Ireland when that voice asks them to DO SOME THING which they have ALREADY DECIDED ON DOING.

Now, the men who manipulated the "voice" cry out because the Secretary of the Joint Committee in London who is, of course, under the thumb of Lloyd-George, refuses to even acknowledge by a haltpenny postcard a complaint which they make as to a distinct breach of the undertaking given by Lloyd-George in the British House of Commons on November 14th, 1911, as to the control of the Irish monies under this Act.

The Parliamentary Committee of the Irish Trades Congress are hotly indignant because of this (and also, it may be added because only one of them was provided for on the Advisory Committee).

If they are in earnest, why content themselves with windy resolutions, "full of sound and signifying nothing"?

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Dublin Operative Bakers and Confectioners.

Re-Organizing Meeting on Sunday.

SPEECHES OF Messrs. JOHN SIMMONS JOHN FARRIN, JIM LARKIN, TOM McPARTLIN, MICHAEL CANTY, Etc.

A largely attended meeting of the members of the Bridge-street Bakers was held on Sunday last, under the presidency of Mr. Thomas McPartlin, for the purpose of re-organizing the Society.

The Chairman in opening the proceedings, said they were met there that day to take counsel together as to the best way in which to place their Society on its feet again.

Mr. W. Magee proposed that a provisional committee of six members with a Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and two Trustees be appointed to conduct the affairs of the Union.

Mr. W. Graham seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. James Barry proposed that Mr. James Hughes be elected Chairman and Treasurer. Mr. P. Gaynor seconded the motion.

Mr. J. Barry was unanimously elected Secretary on the motion of Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. John Harlow.

Messrs. McGee and Richard Keeley were elected Trustees on the motion of Messrs. Harlow and Gaynor.

Messrs. Francis Moran and John Barry were elected Delegates to the Dublin Trades Council, on the motion of Messrs. Hughes and Barry, seconded by Messrs. McGee and Kinsella.

Messrs. George McQuillan, Richard Connell, Richard Madden, John Slavin, George Hopper, and James Reahford were elected as the provisional Committee.

Mr. John Simmons, secretary of the Trades Council, said he had had a lively recollection of the Baker's Society for twenty-five years. They were represented at the initial meeting to establish the Dublin Trades Council, and from that day they had been amongst its most loyal supporters.

Mr. J. Barry was unanimously elected Secretary on the motion of Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. John Harlow. Messrs. McGee and Richard Keeley were elected Trustees on the motion of Messrs. Harlow and Gaynor.

were embarking; there must be no bitterness, no recriminations towards men who were not there that day, perhaps because of feelings which they understood as well as he (Mr. Simmons) did (hear, hear.)

Mr. Jim Larkin said that he, too, hoped that if they recognized that mistakes had been made that they would see to it in the future that these mistakes would be guarded against (hear, hear.)

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So should they (applause). Their society was never dissolved (applause). Call for their assets. Get every baker into their union, and always bear in mind that they were friends inside, and that outside of their ranks they were enemies (applause).

Mr. John Farrin, Treasurer of the Dublin Trades Council, said he was very glad to note the spirit of cohesion which they had displayed there that day, and he congratulated them on the work they had done.

Mr. Michael Canty said he congratulated the men upon the meeting, in which they had attended that meeting, and upon the spirit they had displayed. He felt that there was no opposition excepting from a section that it was not judicious to know anything about.

Mr. P. T. Daly also spoke. The Chairman said he must congratulate them on the resolution they had made of Chairman Mr. Hughes was one of the men who need not have attended that meeting, but his attendance showed his heart was in their cause, and he suggested from their proceedings that a great future was before them.

The bluff was carried out by the captain until midnight when he consented to employ men and to pay the port rate of wages which, I believe, was a good deal of the cause for prolonged delay.

see such a man elected as a Trustee (hear, hear). Mr. James Hughes then took the chair amid applause and thanked the members for the honour they had conferred upon him.

Mr. McPartlin briefly replied, and the meeting terminated. A meeting of the newly elected Committee was then held, at which important business was transacted.

Waterford.

In my last contribution I promised to give the names of some of the shopkeepers here who trade in the stamp fraud, and so append the following few of the many who have by this time been tempted to use those stamps in the hope of increasing their trade.

Hand bills, boldly headed "Something for You," are being scattered broadcast through the city, drawing attention to this fraudulent trading, inviting housekeepers to call for a collecting book and list of houses supplying their stamps.

I have been informed (and I have no reason to doubt my informant) that one of the shopkeepers above mentioned, had been threatened with arrest in connection with these stamps.

The St. Latchford, with timber bound for Garston, made an attempt to leave this port on Saturday evening last short-handed to the extent of three men, but the Local Secretary of the N. S. F. U. was on the alert, and accompanied by the Transport Union Secretary, had an interview with the skipper.

The bluff was carried out by the captain until midnight when he consented to employ men and to pay the port rate of wages which, I believe, was a good deal of the cause for prolonged delay.

If what I hear about certain other quarters be true I think it is high time to take things up somewhat more determinedly than at present immediately the opportunity presents itself, and by such action as played by the men in the case of the Latchford may those who are now trying to defy and terrorize the workers be taught what workers combined can do.

There is no doubt whatever that the opportunities required in every case shall present themselves, and if our men are men enough to prove themselves men there shall be no further obstacles thrown in their way towards organization, combination and progress.

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THE ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS.

The Annual Trades Union Congress of Ireland which opens on Monday of next week at O'Connell, promises to be a big success. A Reception Committee has been engaged, in conjunction with the local Trades Council, for some time past in arranging for the comfort of the delegates, and whilst we regret to note that owing, we assume, to a number of causes, some of the old-time unions are not sending on delegates, nevertheless, the number appointed is equal to that of former years.

National Health Insurance Joint Committee.

The under-mentioned persons have been appointed from Ireland (under Section 58 of the National Insurance Act, 1911) by the Joint Committee of the several bodies of Commissioners for the purpose of giving such Joint Committee advice and assistance in connection with the making and altering of Regulations under Part I of the Act.

The Right Hon. Lorcan Sherlock, Lord Mayor of Dublin; J. D. Nugent, National Secretary, Ancient Order of Hibernians; Joseph Hutchinson, Irish National Forester; John Murphy, Belfast Trades Council; Duncan Kirkwood, Independent Order of Rockites.

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Carroll Still Running.

Table with 3 columns: Donations, £ s. d., and names of donors including J. B. Shaw, T. O., Sale of Post Cards, Mr. Hughes, Jones's Road, J. Shan.

Sailors' and Firemen's Union.

A Committee meeting of the above was held on Thursday evening at Liberty Hall, when matters of importance, including the question of the undermanning of ships, life belts, boat drill, &c., was discussed, and instructions given to men to keep a close watch on all matters in connection with steamers sailing in and out of the port, and report same to the secretary.

It is advisable that all sailors and firemen should communicate to the Secretary, Liberty Hall, all matters in connection with accidents before going to the Shipping Federation.

There will be a Committee meeting next Thursday at 1 o'clock. All Committee men requested to attend.

MOUNTJOY'S NEW PATRON.

TO THE EDITOR IRISH WORKER.

Sir—I would kindly ask you to let the working-men of the city, especially of the Mountjoy Ward, know who the man is that is opening a new Picture House called "The Mountjoy" under the patronage of the Lord Mayor, also giving several performances to do so the proceeds of several performances to the United Irish League for charitable and other purposes—whether under the idea that the Corporation will let him down lightly as regards the conditions for the safety of life and limb that they (the Corporation) are bound to see carried out in all Picture Houses, or to delude the working-men with the belief that he is both charitable and patriotic, I cannot say.

ANTH-SWATER. ALL WORKERS should support The Workers' Benefit Stores; 47a New Street, Greenock; Eggs, Butter and Tea all of the best at 1/- West Pri...

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