

The VOICE OF LABOUR

IRISH OPINION.

INCORPORATING

The Workers' Republic.

Founded by JAMES CONNOLLY, 16th August, 1878.

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Enlarged to]

SEPTEMBER 13, 1919.

[SIX PAGES.

ONE PENNY.

The First Hundred Thousand. Transport Union's Marvellous Growth in Every Industry and in Every Sphere.

We publish this week the results of the census of membership taken by the I.T. & G.W.U. for 30th June, 1919. The figures will afford much food for thought to members of the Union and all outside its ranks who take an interest in the problem of Labour organisation, whether from the viewpoint of friend or foe.

If unity is strength, then this combination of 110,000 workers, organised as workers, without distinction as to occupation represents strength of a degree and of a kind hitherto unknown in the annals of Irish Labour.

The O.B.U. is in the making, and with this combination, since swollen by many thousands, we can fairly claim that the foundation at least has been laid.

It remains for the spirit and intelligence of all concerned to make the super-structure worthy of the foundation, and to see that the internal organisation is in keeping with the splendour of its outward form.

A few points of note are:—

That the membership of the food section exceeds the number of those engaged in industries by more than two to one, the number engaged in transport by more than three to one, the number engaged in public services of various kinds by eleven to one.

That the I.T. & G.W.U. is easily the premier Union for farm labourers, who completely outnumber the membership of every other occupation. If we add to their total of 40,000 a certain number of casual labourers and road-workers, the total will not be far short of 50,000, which figure has in fact been exceeded since the census was taken.

That mere size is not everything. Some of the smaller sections, such as drovers, occupy key positions, and their value to the Union is much in excess of the weight of their numbers.

That the value to the older established Unions, mostly catering for town workers, of the increased organisation of labourers in rural areas, can hardly be overestimated. If organisation proceeds at this pace the supplies of free labour will be seriously endangered.

That the Union is like a tree whose roots are so widespread and grip every variety of soil that it cannot be uprooted by force or outward attack.

That the O.B.U. is ceasing to be an academic theory and is fast becoming a fact.

LEAVING CRAFT BANDS BEHIND.

The growth of the Union in mere numbers alone would require a readjustment of outlook on the part of all its members. But the growth is also a reaching out towards the real Industrial Union, and members, new and old, if they are to master the machine they are creating must study the theory on which it has been built.

A large part of the membership is drawn from local trade unions in the towns, and from defunct Land and Labour organisations in the country. These members have in many instances carried over into the One Big Union the narrow vision of the craft union and the parochial outlook of the County Association.

They have seen in the I.T. & G.W.U. a more efficient instrument for raising wages, but they have not realised genuine solidarity nor in their own branches and sections have they adapted their methods to fit in with the development of the Union.

Internal Rectification Needed.

One example from Dublin may be mentioned. In the leather industry there are separate sections for

- Boot and Shoemakers and Repairers,
- Saddlers and Harness Makers,
- Driving Belt Makers,
- Portmanteau Makers,
- Tanners and Curriers.

In so far as the first four sections tend to overlap on one another there should be a close correspondence, and perhaps in good time a complete identity in organisation.

Some of these sections belong to No. 1 Branch and others to No. 3 Branch. In the process of development such an

CENSUS OF UNION MEMBERSHIP, As at JUNE 30th, 1919.

Transport and Fuel.		Tradesmen	
Docks	8750	Casual labourers	7030
Railways	1308	Factory workers (unclassified)	412
Canals	462		
Seamen	80	Total,	28911
Carters, vanmen and porters	4413		
Tramways	163	Food.	
Motor drivers	322	Agriculture (all classes)	40016
Tractor drivers	27	Gardening	56
Road workers	3169	Seedsman	111
Turf	215	Creameries	2122
Coal (including miners)	2427	Dairies	552
Oil	134	Herds	331
Others	778	Drovers	420
Total,	17198	Egg and poultry trade	633
		Bacon factories	859
		Butchers (beef and pork)	926
		Bakeries (including breadvan drivers)	1410
Industries.		Corn and flour mills and stores	3216
Building	3259	Groceries and wines	1411
Brickyards	676	Margarine making	10
Quarrymen	59	Jam making	22
Stonecutters	166	Hotels and restaurants	2460
Timber mills	2800	Breweries, distilleries and malt-houses	2044
Forestry and woods	349	Mineral water works	1044
Ironworks and foundries	1112	Salt works	21
Iron ore miners	29	Tobacco works	298
Shipbuilding and engineering	2123	Chocolate and sweets	690
Bottlemaking	143	Fishing	258
Textile mills	612	Cold storage	30
Woollen mills	802	Total,	58940
Jute factory	232		
Flax workers	46	Miscellaneous.	
Dressmaking	170	Clerks	255
Clothing factories	260	School teachers	27
Lacemaking	25	Shop assistants	1019
Hosiery works	435	Domestic workers	227
Glovemaking	36	Travellers and agents	30
Carpetmaking	70	Insurance	77
Boot and shoemaking	638	Postmen	51
Harnessmaking	40	Public bodies	1335
Skins, hides and wool	345	Cemetery workers	268
Tanning	356	Undertakers and coffinmakers	145
Curled hair and feathers	93	Theatres	430
Laundries	942	Picture houses	267
Starchmaking	10	Piano tuners	83
Blue factory	5	Window cleaners	87
Candlemaking	9	Grooms	655
Papermaking	178	Barbers	36
Printing and stationery	173	Others	711
Pipemaking	100	Total,	6708
Chemicals	344		
Manure works	1039		
Chemicals and manures	312		
Lime works	165		
Gas and electricity	943		

Grand Total - - - - - 110,752.

omalies are bound to occur, but they must not be made permanent or allowed to permeate the Union with the spirit of craft-unionism.

Organising by Industry.

A marked tendency is the establishment of industrial councils. For example, each creamery in the South of Ireland is represented on the Creamery Workers' Council, which controls the labour in the co-operative creameries in Counties Limerick, Cork, and Tipperary. Road-minders, the most numerous class of workers employed by county councils, are acting similarly. A roadmen's council for Co. Limerick was set up the other week. Co. Roscommon has been moving in the same direction.

Joint action in formulating claims is increasingly adopted. The flour and grist-milling trade has been organised nationally by the Union. Owing to the small numbers employed in the lesser mills scattered over all Ireland, delegate conferences were impossible, but through the Union machinery the actual position of the workers was ascertained, demands formulated nationally, discussed locally, and finally agreed to after conferences with the employers.

The Individual and the Crowd.

No matter how few practitioners of a trade, or how much scattered up and

down the country, the Union provides the means of linking them together, and levelling up conditions.

No longer is it necessary for a man to submit to sweating and oppression simply because he works in a small town, remote from his fellow-craftsmen in the towns.

Town and Country at One.

Of old, the town-worker was always threatened by the competition of the unorganised workers of the country, who, under pressure of want, came flooding into the towns, willing to work at any price, and to endure the most fearful conditions in workshop or home if they could but live.

The situation is changed now, thanks to the I.T. and G.W.U. Before the Rebellion, the call to Irish labour to assume the role designed for it by the course of historical evolution had not been heard outside the towns. As our figures prove, rural Ireland is solidly organised, and by the training and discipline of the class struggle bids fair to provide the most reliable battalions of labour's army.

Where Ireland Leads.

This fact has an international, no less than a national significance. The Irish land-workers have been the first land-

workers of any nation to unionise and to confirm their entry into the labour movement by nation-wide victories in their wages' movements. Ireland's lead in this movement will be a signal encouragement to those in Europe and America who are seeking to bring the land-workers into line with their comrades of the towns.

The national significance of the land-workers' rally to the Red Flag is that the last subject class, the rural proletariat, has awakened to the failure of its sacrifices in past generations. Out of a century of political progress, in which Catholic lawyers, doctors, and professional men obtained citizenship and lucrative positions, in which the farmers first became dual owners, and then, on the credit of the Irish nation, became owners of the soil, the labourers as a class brought nothing.

They see now that the essential freedom to be won is industrial freedom, and that national independence on a capitalist basis may be as delusive a benefit as Catholic Emancipation proved to be, giving with one hand and taking with the other, more than was given.

The Pioneers.

Looking back on the years of struggle, the debt of Ireland to the pioneers becomes clear. To Larkin, the founder; to Connolly, the architect; to the faithful dockers of Dublin, Belfast, Wexford, and Sligo, who bore the brunt of the battle from 1909 to 1916, the Union in its fuller development owes its growth and very existence.

Our homage, then, to the pioneers! May the new men and women who have fallen into line with them prove worthy of their suffering and sacrifice.

On OTHER PAGES

EVACUATE!

SHIPPING OWNERS' SOCIAL SABOTAGE.

THE LUST RATION.

ARMED BURGLARY.

Jottings from Ulster.

The Home-made Article.

Belfast, with all its proud boasts of material prosperity, its power in the industrial world, its belief in the home-manufactured article (providing it's cheap), is represented in its Corporation by men who, as was shown during the week, were not much concerned about the home workers, but had given a contract to an English firm for 50 tractors.

A deputation consisting of D. R. Campbell, Trades Council; Wm. Boyd, Coach-builders; and Mr. Malin, Electricians, brought the matter so ably before the hour-headed denizens of the City Hall, pointing out we had the plant and the capable workmen, that the hearts of the City Fathers were touched, or perhaps it's because elections loom near. However, in future, less cars are to be imported from England; the plant at home is to be enlarged; more local men are to be employed, and Belfast men and women ride in the Belfast built car. If as a deputation our three friends were successful in securing this, how much more successful would they be in looking to the interest of the workers as recognised members of the City Council, and we

(Continued on Page 6.)

"IRISH OPINION"

Saturday
Thirteenth
SEPT.,
1919.

The VOICE OF LABOUR

" ALL-IRELAND LABOUR WEEKLY. "

EVACUATE.

There is one cause and only one cause for the brutal and savage action of a number of British soldiers at Inchicore last Saturday.

That action has its root in the same thing as the bloodthirsty murder of young Murphy at Glan, Co. Clare, some weeks ago.

The unrestrained riot at Fermoy last Monday springs from the same source.

All these acts are due solely and simply to the military occupation of this country by the armed forces of the British Crown.

Mr. Maopherson may make excuses. Lord French may make excuses. Mr. Lloyd George may make excuses. Commanding Officers and crown lawyers may make excuses. Press and pulpit and platform may make excuses.

But all excuses are vain. They are just so much wind, so many puerile apologies, so much camouflage.

Against them all we assert two definite and irrefutable things:

The first is that outrage, brutality, and open, cold-blooded murder are inevitable wherever the military forces of one country are in forcible, armed, and unwelcomed occupation of another country.

The second is that Ireland is now and has been for a long time under such forcible, unwelcomed and armed military occupation, and wanton outrage, unprovoked brutality, and cold-blooded murder on the part of the soldiery are inevitable and to be expected.

The remedy is not to seek out and punish the murderers: they are but part of the machine.

The remedy is not to deplore and condemn these acts: they are but the everyday acts of militarism.

The remedy is not to preach and prattle against the repetition of such acts: they are the regular and continuous accompaniment of the forces which commit them.

The remedy is not to take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, nor yet is it to suffer these things meekly and to turn the other cheek for other blows.

The remedy, the one and only remedy, is: the complete evacuation of this country by these troops and by all troops engaged in the same service.

The remedy, the one and only, the one sure and certain, the only just remedy is: **EVACUATION BY THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.**

SHIPPING OWNERS' SOCIAL SABOTAGE.

The Dublin Shipping Federation are evidently out for blood. Because a small but, as far as the Union is concerned, important section of the casual dockers engaged in the overseas trade have gone on strike, the present shipping ring has decided to lock out all the employees in the port of Dublin unless those on strike immediately return to work.

Now what does that threat mean? To us it simply points out the sinister and significant fact that following the closing of the quays to traffic, the strong possibility at once arises of involving practically every member of the Union in Dublin in the trouble.

The situation looming ahead of us may be even worse than that, and there is no use our trying to minimise matters in any way. As a matter of fact, with the Union now established on real national lines the whole country will be placed in a parlous position. Bear that in mind.

The Nation's Trade Threatened.
The suggested action of the Dublin Shipping Federation, with its ramifications throughout all the Irish ports, if once carried into execution must stamp the authors of the deed as being guilty of a grave national crime.

Let there be no mistake whatever about the impending issue. A vicious inner circle of shipping sharks are now on the ramp for blood—the innocent blood of the innocent working class. In the present circumstances there is not the slightest foundation for their suggested serious step, because, as hitherto, the existing sectional strike does not affect the conditions of employment in the regular cross-Channel companies in the least. They know it. Viewed from any standpoint, the attitude of the Federation in the present instance is incomprehensible.

British Shipping Trust Intrudes.
In the past the claims of the men who have ceased work were dealt with through the medium of the Stevedores' Association. Negotiations, as a rule, with that body always proved fairly successful to adjust matters of wages, but a distinctly new departure has been made on occasion. The case was taken right out of the stevedores' hands, and now, at the behest of one or two big shipping officials (we speak advisedly) the whole city—nay, probably the whole country—is going to be plunged into a terrible industrial upheaval. The shipping Nerods will then fiddle while Rome is burning.

Our case has already been made clear to the shipping owners' side. It was emphatically stated by us that a settlement of the present strike would in no way prejudice the position of the cross-Channel companies. That is to say, a settlement of the present dispute would not be used as a lever to force up the wages of the other port workers.

In plain language, that guarantee was given by the Union at the Mansion House Conference last Saturday to the Shipping Federation representatives.

It was made abundantly clear that any further advance to the men employed in the cross-Channel traffic would be subject to whatever national agreement was ultimately reached on the general port workers' claims, which have already been the subject of a preliminary discussion between the various parties interested through the Ministry of Labour.

Greater than 1913.
Our position, therefore, is perfectly clear and well defined. We have strained every effort to avert a crisis, but so far the adamant attitude of those in shipping circles has made it quite impossible for us to save the situation in the interests of the city and the country generally.

Unless wiser counsels prevail between now and the next couple of weeks, when the lock-out notice expires, an even greater labour war than that of 1913 will eventuate.

The Dublin Shipping Federation must accept responsibility for this campaign of social sabotage just about to be released at last from the stocks.

Shall it be war?

PALTRY DEMANDS.

To the Editor, "Voice of Labour."
A Chara.—Since the beginning of the struggle between the rural labourers and their employers, what has struck me is the paltriness of the workers' demands, compared with the violence of their efforts to obtain them.

Since men maintain they should have higher wages than women doing the same work, because of their dependents, they ought at least to ask for, and refuse to work for less than a living wage. A weekly dole of 35s. is not a living wage, and so long as the workers are willing to live down to that, and to increase and multiply on it, there is little hope of social improvement.

The "Irish Independent" prints a letter from a priest, showing how 30s. is spread over a week. From it one gathers that the family live on bread and dripping. Imagine sitting down every time and all the time to bread and dripping! The husband is, indeed, a shade better off than the others; his dinner is assured to him on six days of the week from his employer, and he family have a burst on Sunday with half-a-pound of meat.

Now, if this is the plight of families on 30s. a week, how much better will they be on 85s.? It is infamous to have people, in the midst of abundance, living on such rubbish as margarine and dripping. As long as the workers are satisfied with this sort of nourishment for their children, the landlords and big farmers are safe. Yours, etc.,
M. CORRIGAN.
Drogheda.

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

Failure.
The outstanding event in the week's news of the world of Labour is the failure of the Triple Alliance on direct action. Explain it away as they may, apologists for the Alliance cannot escape from the fact. The Triple Alliance leaders have run away from their own policy and their own promises. They have not had the courage to challenge the British Government to battle on ground which gave all the chances to the Alliance. That is what the decision to postpone the question of taking a ballot until after the British Trade Union Congress meets means. It is a sorry ending to all the fine words the leaders of the Alliance have been spouting for several months. It may be true, as is hinted, that the ballot would have gone against direct action. Even if it had, that would have shown clearly where the weakness lay. But the leaders didn't wait for that. And now we learn that at last week's meeting the miners' delegates, as a block, would have voted for, but when they were left free to vote as individuals, they voted against. The result: hearty congratulations from Arthur Henderson and the capitalist press. This ought to please Bob Williams, Bob Smillie, and C. T. Cramp. But the working-class in Great Britain, it would seem, must look elsewhere for salvation.

The Test Comes to France.
The English leaders and the English majority have failed and fallen before the test. What of the French leaders and the French majority? This month, too, will show what stuff they are made of when the two great national congresses of the C.G.T. and the Socialist Party are to be held. Already the C.G.T. leaders are trying to explain away their attitude during the war. They know they will have to face the music when their congress meets. The big issue to be decided at Congress is plain and straight: evolution or revolution. It is too early yet to forecast the result of the Congress, but it is a certainty that the revolutionary Left is growing in boldness and numerical strength, and will make it hot for the present leaders. At the Congress of the Socialist Party the dividing line will be the attitude of the Party to the Third International, and the position of the party deputies who were out and out jingoes. The debate will be more than ordinarily lively, and the pace will be made by the Bolshevik Left. At the second Congress of the Seine section of the Party the division was clear cut. Longuet and the Centre again carried the day with a big majority. But the significant thing was that the Left minority was almost as strong as the Right minority. At the National Congress the Seine section will be represented by twenty-six delegates of Longuet's Centre, five Right delegates, and four Left. The section is strong against coalition with bourgeois parties, and is refusing to put forward again the jingo deputies in the forthcoming elections.

Trouble Brewing.
Some of these fine days the troubles brewing now in France will come to a head, and there will be an explosion. A vigorous minority in the Chamber has strenuously opposed the Peace Treaty of Versailles. M. Judet, ex-editor of the ultra-nationalist "L'Eclair," and other prominent politicians are charged with treasonable communication with the enemy during the war. A good deal of this is, of course, Clemenceau's electioneering, but it all forecasts a great deal of washing of dirty linen in the next few months. Better still, the continuous mutinies in the Army show the growing discontent. The sharp difference with England over Syria and Persia indicate coming rifts in the Allied lute. The frequent references M. Albert Thomas, the Socialist ex-Minister of Munitions, makes to Ireland are significant. And the proclamation of the most extreme degree of martial law against the strikers in "liberated" Alsace-Lorraine is a straw showing which way the wind is blowing. Will France rise to the occasion and make an end of all this?

The Spell-binder Again.
Following, as usual, the lead of the English Press, the "Independent" has discovered a momentous pronouncement in favour of Ireland in President Wilson's speech on the League of Nations last week. Ireland is to be settled by the League of Nations. God help us. But it won't work. In Ireland, at all events, the people are not to be put off by Wilson's attempt to repeat on them the tricks Asquith and Lloyd George tried so often and tried in vain. Wilson is an exploded bubble, and everybody knows it. Nobody in Ireland looks for anything from the vain peacock who thought he would go down to history as the saviour of humanity, and is really going down as the greatest fraud and failure of his time. Shantung, Korea,

Egypt, Siberia, Syria, Hungary, Fiume, all these are trumpet-tongued witnesses against Wilson, and their testimony is accepted in Ireland. By the way, is the League of Nations going to settle the negro question in the States; the Mexican question, the Philippine question, or even the question of Debs and the political prisoners? What is the "Independent's" little game, anyway?

The American Socialists.
The meagre news from U.S.A. gives only a hint of what happened at the Special Congress of the Socialist Party of America, held at the end of the month. It is clear, however, that the final breach in the Party has been made. The Centre holds on to the party machinery, press, etc. As their own seceding Communist Party section foretold, the Left Wing was prevented from seating its delegates, and, therefore, also from delegating the Party. Whether it will now unite with the Communist Party is not yet known, but that the famous S.P. has broken up into its constituent elements is the great fact that emerges. At the close of the convention we note that the S.P. issued a call for an International Congress to be held in America. The terms of this call are not at all clear, except that it would exclude the Scheidemann-Renaudel elements in Europe. But we can hardly believe that the American Socialists really hope for an International Congress in the States. Their own present circumstances will hardly commend them as conveners. Had this call from America come a year ago, or even nine months ago, it might have been answered from Europe, and it might have helped to build up a real International. But not to-day.

"New Ireland's" Reply.
One of several things we have wept over in Ireland is the common habit of mis-interpreting the printed word. Something is printed in a paper, and perhaps not less than one-half of those who feel themselves moved to comment on it read into it something different from what it says, and go on to answer some point that has not been raised at all. That has been the fate of our recent criticism of Dail Eireann at the hands of "New Ireland." As our readers ought to remember, we criticised Dail Eireann for (1) making a party organisation its mouthpiece, and for (2) not letting the public know whether adequate discussion, and, if so, of what standard, is given to the measures passed by the Dail. So here comes along "New Ireland" with the discovery: "The Voice of Labour" raises the question of the propriety of the 'Dail' using the Sinn Fein organisation for publishing its work, and of using that organisation for the purpose of carrying out the work. The criticism is really in the air, because there is no other machinery at hand, and besides it is the only really national executive instrument in the country capable of doing any of the work." If we were to analyse that citation carefully we think we could, without any strain on the imagination, produce some wonderful results.

A Mare's Nest.
Sure, criticism of the Dail for using the Sinn Fein Organisation for carrying out its work would be very much in the air if it had been made. But it has not been made. We no more criticised the Dail on that score than we did on the score that it was elected on a Westminster franchise, and for the same reason: it quite properly uses the instrument nearest its hand. "New Ireland" itself admits that "the principle of publicity is enormously valuable, and nothing but the gravest reasons should prevent the Irish public from having the fullest information on all points of Irish public affairs." But the methods? Those "New Ireland" suggests are not enough, and we didn't ask for them. We did not ask for fuller reports to be supplied to the Press. We asked that fuller reports be available for the public, and if "New Ireland" looks into the matter it will see there is a difference between them, and that it is the Dail's duty to give that publicity that is needed. From "New Ireland's" notes one would imagine that "The Voice" had some personal or party grievance against the Dail's rather defective publicity. If "New Ireland" thinks that, then "New Ireland" doesn't yet know "The Voice." On the other point, the use of a party organisation for making public the Dail's work, we still hold that it is objectionable, and we said it would be so no matter what that party organisation might be. But the main point is that of adequate publicity. "New Ireland" asks if we can suggest a better. Surely the reply is obvious: the better and the proper arrangement would be for the Dail to print and publish its own proceedings.

The Role of the Labour Unions in the Russian Revolution.

By N. P. AVILOFF (GLEBOFF),

People's Commissioner for Posts and Telegraphs in the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic.

Translated by CATHAL O'SHANNON.
(Second Instalment)

Wages and the Ruin of Industry.

Side by side with the fight for the eight hours' day there was a fight for the raising of the wages and this took up a great deal of the time of the professional organisations. The prices of articles of the first necessity had risen incredibly during the war, while the increase in wages affected only certain industries, few in number, the stopping of which would have caused loss to the imperialist government. Moreover the rise in wages was only so much per cent. and it did not improve the material situation of the working class.

Supported by the bourgeois government of Leon Kerenski, the capitalists showed little or no benevolence towards the workers but haggled with them over every farthing and often drove them into striking. Then the fight for the minimum wage necessary for a living began, and it was only thanks to a spirited revolutionary attack that the workers succeeded in triumphing over the resistance of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie gave way with very bad grace, and when, either by legal means or by the acceptance of collective bargaining or by open fight, the workers had succeeded in obtaining the increase in wages, the bourgeoisie addressed complaints to the Government on the impossibility of keeping their factories going in view of the exorbitant exactions of the workers, saying that the disorganisation of production was the result of these exactions of the workers claiming "fabulous" wages.

In spite of the complaints of the bourgeoisie against the raising of wages, the unheard-of exploitation of the workers went on merrily at high pressure and the price of prime necessities rose enormously, so that from time to time the workers were compelled to demand increases in wages if they were not to die of hunger.

The Fixing of Wages Scales.

The professional organisations and their federations had not only to lead a campaign for the raising of wages, but they had also to establish scales of wages as nearly equal as possible for the different categories of workers in industry. The unions saw the necessity for the most detailed elaboration of scales divided into groups and categories according to the difficulty and the intricacy of the labour. Begun before the October Revolution by the unions of the metal and typographical workers, this campaign was taken up afterwards by all the unions.

Workers' Control of Industry.

However, the organisation of unions and the fight for the eight hours day and the raising of wages was not the whole story. The professional organisations took an active part in the organisation of workers' control and devoted many efforts to preventing the complete disorganisation of production by the plundering capitalists.

In the early days of the Revolution—the period in which the very idea of workers' control was conceived—it was the factory committees which themselves undertook to bring it about and in the following months workers' control became the task of the professional organisations.

The latter believed that it was necessary to bring the workers' control into their own hands in order to centralise it and introduce Committees of Economic Control into every industrial organisation before fixing the economic conditions in each concern in the interests of all industry and the working class of the whole of Russia.

In addition to workers' control, which no doubt contributed to the abolition of capitalist domination and prevented the disorganisation of businesses, the professional organisations sought to extend their influence over the organisation of production and stop the complete destruction of industry. The labour unions sent their delegates into all the managerial and organising offices in order to help in the fight against the disorganisation of manufacturing concerns and against the disorganisers themselves, the capitalists.

Identity of Political and Economic Struggle.

But all this work, which demanded continuity and regularity, was often interrupted by political events. During the eight months of bourgeois-social-patriot power the unions applied themselves not only to economic problems but also to political questions, for they realised that these two questions were inseparable and that if the political situation remained the same the economic position of the working class would become worse and all its conquests would be undone. That is why the unions provisionally abandoned their economic activity in October and gave themselves up entirely to the political fight, playing during the October Revolution the role which corresponded to their organising capacity.

No Strikes After the October Revolution.

The fall of the capitalists from power wrought a great change in the life of the working class and its economic organisations and it became necessary to utilise promptly all the strength of the unions in order to solve the new and hitherto unknown problems.

This important account of organised Labour's part in the making of the New Russia will be CONCLUDED in next week's "Voice."

All at once strikes shed their sharpness and the revolutionary Russian workers who had taken power into their own hands in October, 1917, said to themselves: "Under the government of the workers and peasants there is no room for strikes," and they caused the strike movements to cease as soon as the Revolution was accomplished. Strikes lost *raison d'être*, after the October Revolution, as a method of fighting of the working classes for the improvement of its economic condition. The power of the workers and peasants established the eight hour day by means of a law and later on it regulated wages in the same manner.

Transforming the Unions into Governing Organs.

But from the moment the fight of labour against capital lost its old importance, the professional organisations had also to change their tactics by transforming their economic fighting organs, until then directed against the capitalists, into auxiliary organisations of the Socialist State itself. And if Comrade Lenin, in April, 1917, could find no other expression than that of "a morass" to define the professional movement he now renders homage to the unions for the fine part they played in the re-organisation of our national economy.

Organising Industry—The Workers' Republic.

Abandoning their old role the unions since then have busied themselves with the most difficult and most complicated problems: the organisation of industry and the determination of the conditions of labour in the Socialist State.

Some decades ago Karl Marx said that the degree of development in a country could be judged by that of its professional organisations. We can now judge the degree of development of our Socialist industry by the role which the labour unions play in the organisation of that industry. It was to attain to that role that we created the unions of production. Before the October Revolution we had need of labour organisations based upon the principle of the craft interest in order to have greater success in the proletariat's fight against capitalism; after the October Revolution unions of this kind were indispensable to us in order to utilise our strength to the fullest in the organising of the economic life of the country. The role of the labour unions in the October Revolution was so important that we have the right to say that they entered as masters into their new Socialist State. As much at Petrograd as at Moscow the centres of the Trade Union movement were the headquarters of the revolutionary forces and all the Trade Union leaders themselves were then in the cockpit in the fight against the power of the capitalists.

The General Staff Seizes Power.

The General Staff of the October Revolution was posted in the Smolny Institute in the flats on the lower floors occupied by the Central Committee of the professional organisations of all Russia. It was there the Government of Workers and Peasants was organised and it was from there the Revolutionary Bureau of the Directorate of the Communist Party in Petrograd directed the labour movement in that city.

The representatives of our Trade Union movement played a great part in the October Revolution. In the first months the unions followed the general current of the working class's revolutionary struggle for the maintenance of the power of the workers and peasants. Then as new problems, the establishment of a Socialist State, the building up of our whole national economy, industry, commerce, transportation, arose, they took over the direction of the organising of the new and Socialist Russia.

Building the Workers' Republic.

In January, 1918, the first Congress of the professional organisations of the whole of Russia established laid it down that:—"The centre of Trade Union gravity has to be transferred to the field of organisation of the economic life of the country." From this time forward the unions devoted themselves entirely to this work of organisation and during the ten months of Socialist building up they helped with all their strength the power of the Soviets in reconstituting the completely disorganised national economy.

At the moment of the October Revolution our industry was on the verge of complete disorder; the factories were closing down in scores and the manufacturers were abandoning their businesses and flying, after pillaging as much as possible. In face of this state of affairs the working class did not remain inactive but set itself to work out, by its own methods, the resumption of production. Labour control was intensified. The works' committees obtained the right, under the direction of the unions, to control the economic life of the workshops and to remove all the elements impeding the development of industry. The productivity of the works had to be raised. The works' committees boldly took this complicated task upon themselves and prevented the complete breakdown of industry.

AN ECHO OF LIMERICK AND DROGHEDA.

(The following letter was crowded from last issue.—ED.)
To the Editor, "Voice of Labour."
Dear Cathal,—I regret to have draw your attention to a rather extraordinary statement appearing in your last issue under the sub-heading "The Limerick Debate."

The writer makes the unqualified statement that the solitary critic of the Executive found himself utterly and openly deserted by what he terms a "loud-mouthed but cunning gang."

Well, I have to come to the conclusion that the writer is either deliberately trying to mislead his readers, or that must be very much misinformed facts. I think I made it perfectly clear to Congress that I had no connection whatever with any person or persons in the hall, and, besides, I know that Congress knew, in stating this, that I spoke the truth. Therefore, Mr. Editor, there could be no desertion of me by anyone as I stood independent of any "gangs," just as I have always done, and have usually found myself in the minority as a result.

Surely, Mr. Editor, the National Executive is not going to set itself above honest criticism, and surely you are not going to allow your paper to hurl such a false charge as the above at the head of one who scorns "gangs" of any kind. The men to whom you refer can speak for themselves, but I at least demand an apology for the statement made, and I shall be only too pleased to take on the writer for any wager he wishes if I fail to produce enough evidence to prove my statement.

I sought no honours or cheers at Congress, and hold my own opinions about quite a few who did. I exercised my right to criticise, in no spirit of hostility, and if, by the "fortunes of war," I was placed in a false light, then I can only say that I am a believer in the philosophy of "truth will out"—even it be sometimes posthumous.

The true story of the Limerick Strike will also come in due course—but, with Tom Johnson, I believe that in doing so we must not take the enemies' time. Thiggin Thu? A few cheers or a little cheap popularity may appeal to shallow minds, but there are some who never take the shadow for the substance, and are content to watch and wait—aye, even for a lifetime.

Apologising, Mr. Editor, for trespassing on your valuable space,—Yours fraternally,

THE SOLITARY CRITIC.

(The writer of the paragraph replies: I am guilty neither of trying to mislead your readers nor of being informed. I did not say that the solitary critic had "any connection whatever with any person or persons in the hall," and, therefore, there is no need for the critic's self-righteous offer of a wager that he will disprove what I did not say. I did not accuse him of seeking "honours or cheers at Congress," nor did I deny him his perfect right to criticise the National Executive, or anybody else. So far as my recollection goes, the dictionary meaning of desert is to abandon, to run away, and it was of running away I accused certain people who were expected to say a great deal at Congress about the National Executive and Limerick. I didn't accuse your correspondent of that, but I accused others of it. If they did not run away, I'm damned if I can find an English word that will express their awful silence. I didn't accuse your critic of entering into any league or covenant with them, but I stand by my statement that when your correspondent had spoken, not one of them had the courage to speak after him. Lastly, it wasn't "the fortunes of war" that placed your correspondent in the light he appeared at Congress—it was the misfortune of words which he himself said were used outside after Limerick.)

IRELAND IN THE FOREIGN PRESS.

"La Feuille," Geneva, August 27, in an editorial by Marcel Laurent, says: The Irish question still remains in the front rank. A great effort is going to be made by the Sinn Feiners to capture the local administration. If they succeed, as is very probable, we cannot see how the English Government can get out of the impasse in which it is more and more dragged. M. De Valera continues his propaganda in the United States; and neither encouragement nor money is lacking him. The question of the independence of Ireland has to be settled quickly if England does not want to find herself up against strange complications.

SPIRITUOUS MUNITIONS.

A London correspondent says that among the munitions at Archangel, which Mr. Churchill is reluctant to abandon, is a huge dump of cases of whiskey.

JOTTINGS FROM ULSTER. (From Front Page.)

hope that members of the Co-operators' and Electricians' Society will see to it that in January they send such a deputation to make the laws that the local workmen may be protected from all such importations as that complained of.

Results. The results are not yet to hand of the many applications sent to the different employers in the city, but by the time "The Voice" is published, Dockers—Deep Sea—Carters, Drivers, Broadsewers, Bakers, Grist Mill and Seed Stores will have heard the verdict and will take action in accordance.

Russia. It may interest Ulster readers to hear the opinion of Lieut.-Col. Sherwood Kelly, V.C. (who in 1917 commanded the 1st Batt. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers), upon the British interference in Russia. Writing in the "Daily Express" he says: "I saw the British money poured out like water and invaluable British lives sacrificed in backing up this worthless army (Russian) and in keeping in power this worthless Government (the Government set up in Archangel), and I became convinced that my duty to my country lay not in helping to forward a mistaken policy, but in exposing it to the British public."

"There is not the smallest gratitude among Russian officers fighting against the Bolsheviks for the help given by us. They are simply out to restore themselves to power, and no credit, no thanks, will be given to us when, if ever, they achieve that ambition." It is not so long ago since Belfast trams were covered with advertisements asking the Ulster boys to go to Russia. When his audience shows signs of weariness at his one hundred and ninety-ninth point about Home Rule, the Ulster M.P. raves of the terrors of Bolshevism. It is refreshing to find that the truth is beginning to trickle through of the powers opposed to Bolshevism and the reason, and once again the so-called statesmen learn—you cannot fool the people all the time.

Gavan. The remarkable recovery of this branch is an excellent illustration of what can be done by "nourishment," especially when our special brand of "self-determination" is used. The "City Fathers'" grant of "5s. and a half-holiday" to their employees gave other "bosses" a good headline, while their refusal to give "the crown" to a "blackleg" gave rise to suspicions that "there is something in a Union" after all. That band will be heard to advantage shortly, if only in "a big drum solo." Those workers' houses, too. There's a lot of chaps won't join a "Union" (ye know what I'm coming at) till they're built. Some of them will "blackleg" it till the Cathedral starts. We want a few Councillors for 1920—workers only need apply.

Red Flag. We didn't know fire bands used music. The only form in which the Red Flag air is available in Staff notation is in the song-book issued by the Proletarian School, 590 Argyle Street, Glasgow. (7d.)

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Some Union Problems

IX—WORK.

By J. J. HUGHES.

What an unpleasant sound it has, this word—work! It makes us think of effort and strain and weary hours when all the clocks seem slow, or heavy tasks that stretch out before us like a long, straight road on a hot day. That is, when we are working for somebody else's gain at a job we dislike, which is the lot of the everyday worker.

It's a different story when a man is working for himself or has a chance of working at something that suits his gifts. The planter on his plot beholds with joy the succulent lettuce or the smiling spuds, the produce of his toil, nor reck the labour that brings him such gifts of nature.

The horseman, the chauffeur, the skilled mechanic, the horn teacher will sometimes forgo he is a wage-slave when engaged on something that interests him. Work that appeals to the heart or the mind becomes a pleasure and a gain. Uncongenial work done for a living is

A Burden and a Degradation.

Under Capitalism the average worker is a square peg in a round hole. Some of the surgeons we have might have made good carpenters (workers in wood instead of bone) only for their parents, while no doubt a few of our dockers would have done well as clergymen only it cost so much to go to college. The reason work is unpopular is because it's compulsory, and you've little or no choice. You take what you get, and make what you can of it.

Two changes we have to make when we get that Workers' Republic are—freedom for all to choose their work according to their gifts with a chance to qualify for same, and public service as the driving force in lieu of private profit. But under the workers' regime as under the bosses, work will be compulsory. The idle rich as well as the idle wits, the exploiters of every class and occupation, will get a chance of doing their bit for their fellows or practising McFadden's hunger-cure.

When all Work,

and all work for all, and all have access to the fruits of the labour of all, our working hours can be cut down by half. "Those who do not work, neither shall they eat," said St. Paul. The workers in Russia have taken St. Paul down from the shelf and are putting him into practice, so there's a row going on out there. No wonder the idle rich of England are spending your money and mine getting the Estonians to shoot the Bolsheviks down. If there was too much St. Paul in England some people would be inconvenienced, so the bad example in Russia has to be stamped out before it spreads. There's not room enough in the "Voice" to even refer to work in all its phases. We just have space for an application or two of some general principles.

Who Are the Workers?

A man unloading grain from a ship is doing work, but so is every one else who helps in the disposal of the grain, and everyone one else who earns his living by helping to keep the grain worker alive and fit.

The clerk who tallies the grain is a worker, and so is the dairyman who supplies the dockers' milk, the insurance agent who calls to his house, the surgeon who patches him up when he gets a fall, the teacher who drills his children, the bank clerk who tallies his boss's gains, and the journalist who writes the letters he reads in the evening papers.

Each of these people dresses and talks according to the nature of his work, but every intelligent grain-worker knows that all wage-earners are his fellow-workers and eligible for membership of the Transport Union.

Some are manual workers, and have no turn for the pen. Others are mental workers, and are not adopted for bodily labour. Others again can do their share of both. All are workers, even though some of the work they do is not as useful or as necessary as the work the dockers does. Under a proper social system, the insurance agent and half the clerical workers would be employed at useful productive work instead of their present "dud" occupations.

The Census of Union Membership

for June 30 last is now available, and illustrates these points very forcibly indeed. The Union has now become the property of well over 100,000 people engaged in 120 occupations.

Whereas a few years ago its strength lay in the Transport workers, at the present time by far the largest body enrolled in its ranks are the farm labourers, and fully half its total strength work at the production or distribution of food.

There are also more members now employed in various industries from building to glove-making than in Transport and fuel combined. So that the older members, whose loyalty and sacrifices have made and kept the Union, are witnessing a complete change in its character and scope.

In addition to all these manual workers, there are some thousands of non-manual workers from clerks to

Dispensary Doctors who have joined us all over the country. This is as it should be.

As the Union develops, the difficulty and complexity of the work of administration requires in its officials a high level of clerical ability.

The correspondence dealing with the affairs of all these workers scattered over 400 branches and the financial work of the Union are daily increasing in volume and importance.

It is the duty of the worker who is trained to book work and the use of the pen to bring his knowledge and skill to the assistance of his fellows, whose employment and training have not fitted them for the business of Union administration.

In many districts indeed branches have failed because no one could be found capable of doing the secretarial work, and many branches that have lived leave much to be desired in this respect.

A Place for All.

We therefore welcome the brain-worker to our ranks equally with the manual worker. Each has his part to fill, each completes the other, and both are entitled to the same rights and consideration from the Union in return for the same loyalty and service.

The work of the I.T. & G.W.U. is the very worthiest to which the members' talents can be applied. The Union is striving to help the poor to help themselves, and to help one another.

It teaches, them to work, fight and make sacrifices for one another.

It intends as the crown of its work to abolish poverty, the source of such misery and degradation.

This programme embraces all that is best in the preachings of Sinn Féin and of Christianity understood as social forces.

Here is a wholesome outlet for all the energy and intelligence we can muster. Talk of "killing two birds with one stone." When we make a success of the Union's work, everything else will follow, prosperity, personal and national, freedom, personal and political, and the fine things of life will flourish verdantly in a congenial atmosphere.

THE AFTERMATH IN MEATH.

Cleaning up After the Big Sweep.

"All Honourable Men."

One of the objections that the M.F.A. had to negotiating with the I.T. and G.W.U. was (so said their vice-chairman) that we "never kept an agreement." He implied that the farmers had a very high standard of honour in this respect. What has Mr Mulvany now to say on the subject? What does he think of his "East Meath" branch? Mr. Sec. Kelly has apparently succeeded in inducing his members to ignore the settlement. The war is, therefore still being waged by the workers in Donore and Duleek. Those honourable gents were until recently keen on adhering to "whatever terms our Union offers." Now, they repudiate their elected representatives, and are deliberately protracting a struggle that they have been so insistent in "deploring" when it could be pretended that it was forced upon them by the Transport Union. We are confident, however, that before many more days pass they will have changed their tune to a prayer, and the prayers will be "Give us peace in our time, O Lord!"

The Recalcitrants.

Several graziers in other areas are still wearing war-paint and feathers. Here are the names of some whose feathers have to be bleached:

Sir N. Everard, Navan (who was actually one of the principal peace-makers).

Fletcher, of Ardmulchan Castle, Navan.

Darcy Thompson, J.P., Trim.

Barbour, Trimblestown, Trim.

Randal Plunkett (alias Lord Dun-sany).

Segrave, of Rathfeigh, Tara.

Wilkinson, of Kilmessan.

Ceraghty, of Kilmessan.

Gilpin, of Kilcock.

Morrin, of Dunshaughlin.

A Land Hog.

Smyth, of Robinstown, is another instance of the Faith of our Farmers. A loyal member of the Meath Farmers' Association who refused to do aught without its instruction, now, despite the agreement that binds him, offers his one employee 26s. a week and £2 bonus.

Smyth is a land hog who has several farms and a sawmill, and one employee. He is a case for the Irish Industries Development Association.

DUNBOYNE BRANCH DRAW.

1st Prize, No. 440, John MacWilliams, Clonee; 2nd, No. 928, J. McGee, Maynooth; 3rd, No. 224, Mrs. Reilly, Cushinstown.—M. REID, Secretary.

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