

CONNOLLY :
LABOUR AND EASTER WEEK

LABOUR AND EASTER WEEK

*A selection from the writings
of*

JAMES CONNOLLY

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WITH INTRODUCTION
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To the generous support of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union is due the publication of these collected writings of James Connolly.

In this volume is shown the development of Connolly's ideas on national freedom from the time of the Boer War up to the Irish Insurrection of 1916.

Mr. William O'Brien's introduction links together the scattered writings and speeches of Connolly and brings the vivid story up to the proclamation of the Irish Republic on Easter Monday 1916.

As before the Editor is much indebted to Mr. O'Brien whose unrivalled library of Connolly books, papers and manuscripts, forms the source of the collections.

We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire and to establish an Irish Republic. We believed that the call we then issued to the people of Ireland, was a nobler call in a holier cause than any call issued to them



LABOUR AND EASTER WEEK

INTRODUCTION

“ I WILL not miss this chance.” In these words James Connolly announced, immediately on the outbreak of the European War, in August, 1914, his intention of organising an insurrection having for its object the establishment of the independence of Ireland as a Republic.

Connolly had been an active republican from his earliest years, but hitherto had refused to join the Irish Republican Brotherhood, partly because he did not believe it possible in the existing circumstances to maintain a really secret organisation for revolutionary purposes.

No sooner had war broken out than he spoke to a number of people with the view to combined action in preparation for an insurrection. He made clear his position publicly in the *Irish Worker*, in the first issue published after the declaration of war :

“ What should be the attitude of the working-class democracy of Ireland in face of the present crises ? I wish to emphasise the fact that the question is addressed to the ‘ working-class democracy,’ because I believe that it would be worse than foolish—it would be a crime against all our hopes and aspirations—to take counsel from any other source . . . Should a German Army land in Ireland to-morrow we should be perfectly justified in joining it if by so doing we could rid this country once and for all from its connection with the Brigand Empire that drags us unwillingly into this war. Should the working class of Europe, rather than slaughter each other for the benefit of kings and financiers, proceed to-morrow

to erect barricades all over Europe, to break up bridges and destroy the transport services that war might be abolished, we should be perfectly justified in following such a glorious example and contributing our aid to the final dethronement of the vulture classes that rule and rob the world. . .

“Let us not shrink from the consequences. This may mean more than a transport strike, it may mean armed battling in the streets to keep in this country the food for our people. But whatever it may mean it must not be shrunk from. It is the immediate feasible policy of the working-class democracy, the answer to all the weaklings who in this crisis of our country's history stand helpless and bewildered crying for guidance, when they are not *hastening to betray her*.

“Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord.”

He was then living in Belfast, where he was Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. He came to Dublin early in August and spoke to me about the desirability of acting with all those who would favour organising for an insurrection. He told me that he had seen a number of people who were of the same mind. On his mentioning their names, I advised him they were not of sufficient importance and that nothing could be done without the co-operation of such men as Tom Clarke and Seán MacDermott. He asked me if I could put him in touch with the right people, and I undertook to do so. I discussed the matter with my brother, Daniel O'Brien, who was an officer in the Irish Volunteers. As a result, I saw Eamonn Ceannt, with whom we were both well acquainted, and who was a member of the Executive of the Irish Volunteers as well as a leading member of the Irish Republican Brother-

hood. He undertook to arrange a conference for Connolly and myself to attend.

In the meantime, Connolly had formed contact with people in other districts, and wrote to me from Sligo on September 5th as follows :

“ I may tell you that steps have already been taken in five other districts to act locally upon the lines we conceive of, each district doing this without knowing that such action was being even thought of elsewhere. So the seed is likely to fall upon good ground.”

The Conference arranged by Eamonn Ceannt was held in the Library of the Gaelic League at 25 Parnell Square, on September 9th, and amongst those present were : Tom Clarke, Seán MacDermott, Joseph Plunkett, P. H. Pearse, Seán T. O’Kelly, John McBride, Arthur Griffith, Thomas MacDonagh, Eamonn Ceannt, James Connolly and myself.

Tom Clarke presided and Connolly advocated making definite preparations for organising an insurrection, and, in connection therewith, getting in touch with Germany with a view to military support.

A discussion took place as to the desirability of this, and also whether there should not be an agitation conducted through an open organisation.

Ultimately, it was agreed to appoint two sub-committees, one to endeavour to form contact with Germany, and the other to organise an open organisation to be used for propaganda purposes and as a recruiting ground for the secret movement.

In consequence of these decisions, the Irish Neutrality League was formed with James Connolly as President, Thomas Farren as Treasurer, Seán T. O’Kelly as Secretary, and Madame Markievicz, Arthur Griffith, Seán Milroy, J. J. Scollan, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and myself as Committee.

In a circular issued on October 5th, 1914, it was announced that the Irish Neutrality League had been formed “ for the

purpose of defining Ireland's present attitude towards the Anglo-German War as one of neutrality, watching Ireland's interests at every phase of the war, preventing employers from coercing men to enlist, inculcating the view that true patriotism requires Irishmen to remain at home, and taking steps to preserve the food supplies of Ireland for the people of Ireland." . . . "England's quarrel with Germany cannot," the circular proceeded, "involve Ireland except on the ground that Ireland is willingly subject to England. However much our sympathy or antipathy may be awakened we think steps should be taken to keep the nationalist position well defined. A declaration of Irish neutrality would make a vivid impression upon the world. It would also develop some national dignity in Ireland. It would not affect the Home Rule Act, which will not be put into operation until the war is ended, and will then be subject to an Amending Bill dictated by Sir Edward Carson. This means the partition of Ireland."

The Irish Neutrality League was a short-lived organisation, but did useful work during its period of existence. It had a small membership ; in fact, it was an organisation of leaders without members. Its inaugural meeting in the Antient Concert Rooms on October 12th was well attended, and was addressed by James Connolly (who presided), Seán T. O'Kelly, Seán Milroy, J. J. Scollan, Arthur Griffith, Major John McBride and myself. A number of lectures were given by Tom Ashe, Miss Wyse Power, who had lately returned from Germany, and others, but, after a short period, British Military restrictions made continuance of such an organisation impossible. It was this body which, on the suggestion of Connolly, decided to popularise the wearing of the republican colours—green white and orange.

On September 25th, Prime Minister Asquith was to address a recruiting meeting in the Mansion House in company with John E. Redmond and other leaders of the Parliamentary

Party. Redmond had earlier secured partial control of the Irish Volunteer movement, and, when on Sunday, September 20th, at Woodenbridge, he had pledged the support of the Irish Volunteers to England, it was generally felt that a crisis was reached.

I wrote to Connolly, who was in Belfast, expressing this view immediately on seeing the report of Redmond's speech, and received from him the following reply :

“ Yes, I saw the speech of Redmond. It is a desperate situation, and I am afraid that our friends of the Conference have not got sufficient dash and desperation to deal with the matter. The meeting for Asquith will be a military affair, and the City will be in the hands of the military to carry it through. In a sense all our future is on the cast of that die. I am ready for any call.”

At a further meeting of those who had met at 25 Parnell Square it was decided that arrangements should be made to seize the Mansion House on the night before Asquith's meeting, and hold it by armed force for twenty-four hours to prevent the meeting being held. A joint force of members of the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers was to be organised for the purpose, and it is of interest to note that one of those who volunteered for this enterprise was Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, the well-known pacifist. Meetings were held to perfect the organisation for this job, but it was not found possible to arrange for more than about one hundred and twenty to participate in it—only about eighty Volunteers and forty of the Irish Citizen Army being available.

On the night on which the attempt was to be made, the Irish Volunteer contingent was in the front drawingroom of 41 Parnell Square, and I recall that two of those present were afterwards Ministers of the Irish Free State, viz., Richard Mulcahy and Joseph McGrath. The Irish Citizen Army contingent was in Liberty Hall. Ultimately, when word was

received that the Mansion House was strongly held by a British Military force, and that reinforcements were standing-to in Dublin Castle, it was decided, in view of our small numbers, to abandon the enterprise.

On this date (September 24th) the original members of the Executive of the Irish Volunteers met as a result of Redmond's Woodenbridge speech, and decided on ejecting Redmond's nominees from the Executive and resuming control of the organisation. Redmond promptly established another organisation known as the National Volunteers, and the vast majority of the members of the organisation transferred their allegiance to the new body, leaving the Irish Volunteers with a very reduced membership.

On Friday, December 4th, a force of Military and Police entered the offices of *The Irish Worker*, of which Connolly was the Acting Editor, dismantled and removed portion of the machinery and type and suppressed the paper. Thereupon the printers of *Sinn Féin*, *Irish Freedom*, and *Eire—Ireland*, refused to go to press. Connolly got out a successor called *The Worker*, printed in Glasgow by the Socialist Labour Press, but when the sixth issue arrived in February, 1915, the police boarded the Scotch boat and confiscated all copies.

Connolly then made arrangements to instal a printing plant in Liberty Hall, and some months later issued *The Workers' Republic*. It was on this press that the Proclamation of Easter Week was printed. Arthur Griffith, who edited *Sinn Féin* and *Eire—Ireland*, issued a paper named *Scissors and Paste*, composed entirely of extracts, the only original matter being the headings, but these were so cleverly done that it, too, provoked suppression after a short period. This paper excited a good deal of interest and amusement because of its novelty. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington asked who edited *Scissors and Paste*, and on being told it was Griffith, observed, "I thought I recognised his style!"

On taking up office as Acting General Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union in October, 1914, Connolly had put a large streamer across the front of Liberty Hall with the words "We Serve Neither King nor Kaiser—but Ireland." This attracted a great deal of attention and was taken down by the British Military authorities on 19th December, 1914. All this time Connolly had been criticising the Irish Volunteers for not pursuing a more vigorous policy, and relations between the Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers were anything but cordial.

Then followed a very difficult time for all who stood for an independent Ireland. The Irish Parliamentary Party, the Press, and public opinion generally as represented by those influences, were heavily opposed to the Irish Volunteers. Employers began to force their employees to join the British Army, and there was continued talk of conscription being enforced.

In the summer of 1915 an anti-conscription Committee was formed as a result of an invitation circulated over the names of Harry Boland, Michael Foley, Alderman Tom Kelly and myself, and it met for some months in 41 York Street, with Seán P. Campbell as Secretary.

In October, 1915, the Dublin Trades Council passed the following resolution, on the motion of Peadar Macken, delegate of the Metropolitan Painters' Society, who was also a member of the Executive of the Irish Volunteers :

"That the Dublin Trades Council, while not disposed to obstruct in any way those persons who, through zeal for the British Empire, might be inclined to volunteer for active service abroad, at the same time calls upon the organised workers to join either the Citizen Army or the Irish Volunteers, as being the best means to avert conscription."

Arising out of this Messrs. Eóin MacNeill, President of the

Irish Volunteers, and Seamus O'Connor waited on the executive of the Dublin Trades Council seeking the co-operation of that body in resisting the action of employers in forcing men into the Army, and the following letter was thereupon sent to the Irish Volunteers by me as Secretary of the Trades Council :

“Arising out of the views expressed by your deputation (Messrs. MacNeill and O'Connor) at our meeting on Thursday last with reference to the action of employers in bringing pressure to bear on workers to enlist in the British Army, the following resolution was adopted at a special meeting held yesterday :

“ ‘ Resolved—That this executive of the Dublin Trades Council considers that, before entering on any campaign against economic conscription now being put in force, we should invite the Irish Volunteers to co-operate with us, both bodies agreeing to use all their respective resources to attain the common end.’

“ If your executive is prepared to co-operate on above lines, I am directed to suggest that a sub-committee be appointed from each body to discuss ways and means and, if possible, arrive at a plan of action which can be carried out by both organisations. As this matter is both important and urgent I am asked to request you to take the earliest opportunity of ascertaining the opinion of your executive on it and communicating same to us without delay. Kindly arrange to send reply by Mr. Macken.”

Several discussions took place between representatives of both bodies—Eóin MacNeill, Seamus O'Connor, P. H. Pearse, and Seán MacDermott representing the Irish Volunteers, and James Connolly, Thomas Farren and myself representing the Trades Council, but no agreement was arrived at.

Connolly insisted that if the organised workers were to pledge their support for a certain policy, the Irish Volunteers should

be also pledged to back that policy with military support should that be necessary.

To that, Eóin MacNeill in particular would not agree, and nothing definite resulted from the meetings. During these months, Connolly, in the pages of his paper, *The Workers' Republic*, was severely criticising the attitude of the leaders of the Volunteer movement, and it was generally known that these criticisms were very strongly resented by most of the Volunteer Executive.

Attempts were made by certain of the Volunteer leaders to influence Connolly towards a better understanding, but without success. Tom Clarke, Seán MacDermott and Thomas Ashe had a long talk with him, and on a subsequent occasion he was seen by P. H. Pearse and Thomas MacDonagh, but no agreement was reached.

In *The Workers' Republic*, Connolly continued his advocacy of preparations for an insurrection, and he published many articles describing revolutionary uprisings in other countries. He saw each member of the Citizen Army individually, and explained that the time was approaching when they would be going into action, and that he did not desire any member to remain in the Army who was not prepared to fight.

On January 19th, 1916, Connolly disappeared, and was absent several days.

It is now accepted that he was detained in custody by the I.R.B. He left Liberty Hall on Wednesday, 19th January, at lunch-time, and did not return. I learned of his absence from Thomas Foran on the following day (Thursday) shortly after 1 p.m. Connolly had failed to turn up on the previous night at Surrey House, Madame Markievicz's house, where he resided. Thomas Foran, Michael Mallin, Madame Markievicz, my brother Dan and I had a consultation, but failed to find any explanation for his absence.

Madame Markievicz was keen on the Citizen Army im-

mediately starting the Insurrection on its own, but I used whatever influence I had against this view, and was supported by Michael Mallin who was second in command of the Citizen Army.

Connolly returned to Surrey House late on Saturday night, 22nd January, and I saw him there on Sunday morning.

When I told him that we had been very concerned about his absence, he made an evasive reply, and I did not ask him any questions.

He said he had had a very good night's sleep as he was dead tired when he arrived, and that he had walked about forty miles on the Saturday. I made no comment on this. A lady friend then arrived and, after a few words, she asked him where he had been and he replied with a smile, "Oh, that would be telling !"

During the period of his detention Connolly and the leaders of the I.R.B. reached complete agreement. In the *Workers' Republic* in the following week's issue, January 29, 1916, the following note appeared :

"Our notes this week will be short. The issue is clear and we have done our part to clear it. Nothing we can now say can add point to the arguments we have put before our readers in the past few months ; nor shall we continue to labour the point.

"In solemn acceptance of our duty and the great responsibilities attached thereto, we have planted the seed in the hope and belief that ere many of us are much older it will ripen and blossom into action.

"For the moment and hour of that ripening, that fruitful and blessed day of days, we are ready.

"Will it find you ready ?"

Connolly immediately joined the I.R.B. and became a member of its Military Council, then composed of Tom Clarke, Eamonn

Ceannt, Seán MacDermott, P. H. Pearse and Joseph Plunkett. This was early in February, 1916. Thomas MacDonagh was added sometime later, making a seventh.

Early in February, 1916, Connolly informed me that "things were now going very well with our friends," meaning the I.R.B. From time to time he gave me information as to how the plans for the Insurrection were proceeding. He told me that a representative had been to Germany and had seen the military authorities there.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff would not sanction a military expedition to Ireland with less than 50,000 men with all the necessary artillery support and equipment, and he (the German General) could not see how it would be possible in the then existing circumstances to land such a force in Ireland.

Connolly thought this an extravagant estimate of the required strength of the force. He said that 20,000 men would be ample for this purpose, and that he could be quite satisfied with 10,000.

Connolly expressed the opinion that even if it were not possible to send any German troops, there should be no difficulty in sending a small number of officers and a supply of machine-guns. While anxious for German help, Connolly did not believe in relying on external aid, and always pressed the view that preparations should be made for an insurrection whether or not foreign military help was available.

Some time prior to Easter Week, he informed me that it was intended to form a Civil Provisional Government whose duties would include looking after food supplies and transport, and that he had been authorised to ask me to act as a member of this Civil Provisional Government. The others were to be : Arthur Griffith, Alderman Tom Kelly, Councillor Seán T. O'Kelly and Mrs. H. Sheehy-Skeffington. I agreed to act.

He also informed me as to what the military arrangements were, telling me that only two other persons and himself were

aware of the complete military plans, of which three copies only were made.

He got me to draw a plan of the North Dublin Union Workhouse, where I was then employed, together with the adjoining streets, marking on the plan, doors, windows and height of walls, together with particulars of the normal supplies of flour and other foodstuffs on the premises. This plan was used by Commandant Edward Daly during Easter Week.

Tom Clarke invited me to his house, where we had a long talk as to various plans in connection with the Insurrection.

On March 24th, 1916, a raid took place on the Gaelic Press, Liffey Street, which printed *The Gael*.

While it was in progress, Madame Markievicz arrived at Liberty Hall and announced that it was intended to raid that building also. It transpired that the Gaelic Press and a number of shops were being raided for copies of *The Gael* and, later on, police entered a newspaper shop run by the Union in Eden Quay, seeking copies of that publication.

Connolly, on being informed of the arrival of the police, entered the newspaper shop through a door connecting it with Liberty Hall, and asked the police if they had a warrant to search the premises.

On being told that they had not, he covered the police with a revolver, saying, "Drop those papers or I'll drop you."

The police retired, and returned some time later with an inspector who produced a search warrant. Connolly, on reading this, said, "Very well, you can search the shop, but behind that counter is Liberty Hall, and warrant or no warrant, you don't search that."

The inspector explained that they had no intention whatever of searching Liberty Hall, to which Connolly replied, "I believe you!"

In the meantime, Connolly had issued an order mobilising the Citizen Army, and within a short time Liberty Hall was

crowded with members who, on receiving the mobilisation order, had rushed from their work in all parts of the city, secured their rifles and presented themselves at Headquarters. The rumoured raid proved to be a false alarm, but from that day until Easter Monday, Liberty Hall remained under a guard of the Citizen Army, two of whom were on duty in uniform with rifles and bayonets, on the steps every day for that period.

On April 8th, 1916, Connolly announced in the *Workers' Republic* that the Council of the Irish Citizen Army intended to unfurl the Green Flag with The Harp over Liberty Hall on Sunday, April 16th.

“Where better could that flag fly,” he wrote, “than over the unconquered citadel of the Irish Working Class, Liberty Hall, the fortress of the militant Working Class of Ireland. . .

“The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be dissevered. Ireland seeks freedom. Labour seeks that an Ireland free should be the sole mistress of her own destiny, supreme owner of all material things within and upon her soil . . .

“Therefore, on Sunday, April 16th, the Green Flag of Ireland will be solemnly hoisted over Liberty Hall as the symbol of our faith in freedom, and as token to all the world that the working class of Dublin stands for the cause of Ireland, and the cause of Ireland is the cause of a separate and distinct nationality.”

On the following Wednesday, at a meeting of the Committee of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union objection was raised to this proposal, and Connolly was severely criticised for issuing such an announcement.

A motion was made by William Fairtlough, an old and influential member of the Union, that a meeting of the members be called for the following Sunday to deal with Connolly's

action. He was supported in his protest by John Farrell, William O'Toole, Simon Kelsh, A. Early, P. Maguire and Thomas Fitzsimons. The President of the Union, Thomas Foran, recognising that the majority of the Committee favoured Fairtlough's proposition, moved an amendment that the meeting be adjourned to the following night to enable Connolly to attend and give the Committee an explanation. This was supported by Michael McCarthy and John O'Neill, Branch Secretary, but was defeated by seven votes to five. Thomas Foran then made a further appeal to the majority of the Committee to adjourn to the following night and hear Connolly's explanation and ultimately this was agreed to.

On the following night the Committee met again, when Connolly attended and explained his position. He said that *he did not consider it necessary to apply to the Committee for permission as he had no idea that there would be any objection to the action he intended.*

He did not think that the Committee would object to having the Irish flag unfurled over the premises, and if the day ever came when the Union would so object, he would sever his connection with it.

He refused to appeal to the members against the Committee, saying that since he took up his position as Acting General Secretary he had worked in harmony and good feeling with the Committee, and whatever he might think about their decision he refused to appeal to the members against them. Rather than do that he would resign his position altogether and part from the Committee on friendly terms.

He said that as an Irishman he had taken up a position from which he would not recede, and if the Committee so decided he would hand in his resignation, and at the same time issue a notice that the ceremony was not to take place. John Nolan, who was not present on the previous night, supported Connolly.

As the majority of the Committee were still opposed to his

proposed action, Connolly requested permission to speak in private to John Farrell, one of those who was strongest in opposition. This was agreed to.

Connolly and Farrell left the room, and on returning after an absence of ten or fifteen minutes, Farrell announced that he had changed his views and appealed to the Committee to agree to allow the ceremony to proceed. The Committee agreed.

Connolly had taken Farrell into his confidence, told him that an insurrection was to take place, that the unfurling of the flag was portion of the plan, and appealed to him as an Irishman not to stand in the way. Farrell had responded to the appeal and withdrawn his opposition.

The ceremony of unfurling the Green Flag attracted an enormous crowd and aroused the greatest enthusiasm. Eight days later the insurgent standards were hoisted over the General Post office, then the headquarters of the Irish Republican Army.

After Connolly had made it clear that the Volunteers and himself were definitely working for an insurrection, I referred to Eóin MacNeill's position and said that surely he (MacNeill) would not be in agreement with that policy. Connolly said that MacNeill was not acting with them but that it would be believed that he was. I was alarmed at this statement and said I thought that was a very dangerous position. Connolly replied that :

It had been very carefully considered and they (the Military Council) believed it would work out all right.

On Monday, 17th April, I mentioned to Connolly that I had made arrangements with a friend to spend the week-end in the country. He immediately said very decisively : " No, you cannot leave the city." He then told me that the Insurrection was to take place on the following Sunday, April 23rd, and that I would need to be very careful in explaining to my friend why I could not adhere to the arrangement made. Connolly

explained that the Insurrection was timed to take place in Dublin on Sunday at 6.30 p.m., and at 7 p.m. throughout the rest of the country. Both the Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers were to be mobilised on Sunday, ostensibly for ordinary route marching, but each contingent was to be at its allotted post by 6.30 p.m.

From that day I spent all my spare time with Connolly in Liberty Hall, discussing plans and making arrangements. He told me it was intended to hold a continuous line forming a loop through the centre of the city, and this line was so drawn as to have all the military barracks on the outside of it. This line included most of the positions ultimately held in Easter Week, but they were isolated one from the other because of the much smaller numbers available. I expressed the view to Connolly that it would take very considerable forces to hold such a line, but he said: "No, not nearly as many as you would think." The line was continued right out to the country with a view to a withdrawal from the city, if necessary.

I spent all day in Liberty Hall on Good Friday, and by that time the air was thick with rumours of what was going to happen at the week-end. Connolly took me to the drill hall of the Irish Citizen Army and showed me a large team under Seamus McGowan, who were making bombs, etc. Between 1.30 and 2 p.m., Connolly asked me to remain in his office while he was having lunch in the room which he had occupied as a bedroom for some weeks. While he was absent P. H. Pearse arrived, and I immediately got Connolly for him. They had a consultation, and after Pearse had gone Connolly informed me that Eóin MacNeill had learned of the plans for the Insurrection, and had taken action countermanding all the orders that P. H. Pearse had issued under the guise of Easter manoeuvres. MacNeill had been seen on behalf of the Military Council and had been told that he was powerless to prevent the Insurrection taking place, as all the officers would obey the

orders issued by Pearse, and that all he could do would be to demoralise and dishearten the rank and file. MacNeill was urged not to take that responsibility, and ultimately he agreed to stand aside, and he wrote an order cancelling his previously issued countermanding of Pearse's orders. Pearse had this order with him and showed it to Connolly. Following this, a meeting of the Military Council was held in Mrs. Houlihan's shop, Amiens Street, at 4 p.m. that day, to consider this latest development. The meeting was guarded by William Oman, under the supervision of Michael Mallin and Frank Robbins of the Irish Citizen Army.

Preparations went on that day and on the following day, Saturday, I was in Liberty Hall from 3 p.m. until about 11.30 p.m. It was a hive of industry, large numbers passing in and out receiving orders from Connolly.

In the evening Miss Winifred Carney (Connolly's personal secretary in the General Post Office), Madame Markievicz and I were preparing mobilisation orders and officers' commissions in the room in which Connolly slept, and I remember how pleased Madame was when her commission as lieutenant was typed out by Miss Carney and signed by Connolly.

Michael Mallin, who was Chief of Staff of the Irish Citizen Army, was appointed commandant ; Seán Connolly, Richard McCormack, J. J. O'Neill and Christy Poole as captains ; Robert de Cour, Thomas Kain, Michael Kelly, Madame Markievicz, Seamus McGowan and George Norgrove as lieutenants ; and Joseph Doyle, E. Elmes, George Oman and Frank Robbins as sergeants. Dr. Kathleen Lynn was medical officer.

There was a women's section of which the leading members were Miss Helena Molony, Secretary, Irish Women Workers' Union, Miss Marie Perolz, and Miss M. French-Mullen, and also a boys' section with Walter Carpenter, junior, as captain, and Matt Connolly and Charles Darcy as lieutenants. Miss

Maeve Cavanagh, described by Connolly as the "Poetess of the Revolution," was also closely associated with the Army.

A humorous incident occurred showing the wit of Madame Markievicz in these critical hours. My sister called in to see Miss Carney, bringing a friend with her who was anxious to see Liberty Hall. While my sister was speaking to Miss Carney, her friend noticing the large number of people about, and assuming that preparations were being made by the Dramatic Society known as the Liberty Hall Players for the production of a play, said to Madame :

"Rehearsing, I suppose ?"

"Yes," replied Madame with a knowing smile.

"Is it for children ?" inquired the lady.

"No," said Madame, "for grown-ups !"

The work began to slacken off about 11 p.m. when I remember Tom Kain, Secretary of the Army Council, coming in and showing Connolly a large newly-constructed key. This was for the purpose of opening the Municipal Buildings in Castle Street.

Misstatements have been made regarding what has been termed "an unsuccessful attempt to take Dublin Castle." There was no such attempt. It was never intended to seize Dublin Castle. I learned this from Connolly himself. When I expressed my regret that it was not intended to take the Castle, he explained that consideration had been given to it, but that while it would be easy to take the Castle, it would be difficult to hold it ; it would require a very large force to do this, it being a straggling building with portions of the Castle commanded by higher buildings.

I said the moral effect of having the Castle would be very great, and asked if it were not possible to capture it, why not burn it down ? Connolly pointed out that the Red Cross Hospital being in the Castle would prevent them from doing this. What was intended, he said, was to take certain buildings

commanding the entrance gates, but not to attempt to take Dublin Castle itself.

Accordingly, one of the buildings which it was intended to occupy was the Municipal Buildings, and my brother Dan, who was nominated as one of the officers under Seán Connolly, obtained a wax impression of the key of the Municipal Buildings where he was employed, and a duplicate key was made for the purpose of opening the door as soon as the Insurrection would commence. Kain was to be with this party, and so had the key.

"I will have a good sleep to-night. I don't know when I'll have another one." These were the last words Connolly said to me as I left him about 11.30 on that Saturday night as he was preparing to go to bed. He told me that things had gone marvellously well with all their arrangements and that there had not been a single hitch of any importance.

The *Irish Independent* that morning had carried the news of the discovery of a collapsible boat near Fenit with the arrest of a tall man of foreign appearance.

Connolly must have known that this was Casement, but apparently he was not disturbed thereby. He did not, in fact, have his good night's rest, but was roused up after a couple of hours and told that Eóin MacNeill had again changed his attitude, and had now issued an order countermanding all orders issued by Pearse for Easter Sunday.

I learned of MacNeill's action from the *Sunday Independent*. I immediately went to Liberty Hall and on going to Connolly's room found Captain Seán Connolly guarding the door. He told me a meeting was on, and I went down to the front lobby to wait until Connolly was disengaged. While there Councillor William Partridge arrived and told me of his visit to Tralee. He had gone there in connection with the landing of arms and returned on Good Friday. He said Monteith arrived in Tralee on Friday morning and informed the local Volunteer leaders

that Casement was in favour of calling off the Insurrection as, in his opinion, the Germans had failed to give the necessary support. A little later I saw Francis Sheehy Skeffington and discussed the position with him. I waited several hours, but there was no sign of Connolly leaving his room. At about 1.30 p.m. I passed Seán MacDermott and had a few words with him. He said something indicating that there had been a change of plans, and on my expressing surprise he said: "Did Connolly not tell you?" I said I had not seen Connolly since late the previous night, and he then said: "Connolly will tell you whatever is necessary."

The Citizen Army had been mobilised for 3.30 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, and in order not to let the British authorities see that they were acting in concert with the Irish Volunteers, *the route march arranged for 4 o'clock was adhered to.* I saw Connolly marshalling the Citizen Army in front of Liberty Hall, and though he saw me there he did not give me the information he must have known I wanted. As he was about to move off, I asked him how long he would be away, and he gave a non-committal answer. The usual Sunday night concert had been announced as a blind to be held in Liberty Hall, but no arrangements had been made for it. The change of plans made it necessary to have a concert, and the Citizen Army returned to Liberty Hall about 8 p.m., and carried through an impromptu concert. I learned of this when Miss Carney, who was staying in our house at 43 Belvidere Place, arrived about 11 p.m., bringing Madame Markievicz with her. Madame told me that she had given her bed in Mrs. Wyse Power's to Dr. Kathleen Lynn, and that she wished to stay in our house. This was arranged, and a little later Madame startled us all by sending a bullet through the door of the room in which we were, when she was removing the ammunition from her automatic. Fortunately the sound did not attract any attention.

On Monday morning I found that Madame and Miss Carney

had left for Liberty Hall early, and when I arrived there about 10 a.m. all was bustle and excitement. Large numbers of Volunteers and Citizen Army men were continually passing in and out. Quantities of ammunition and bombs were being taken out of the premises and loaded into cars and trucks.

Shortly before noon, Connolly came down the stairs and spoke to me on the landing. Putting his head close to mine, and dropping his voice, he said : " We are going out to be slaughtered." I said : " Is there no chance of success ? " and he replied : " None whatever." He then said : " Go straight home now and stay there. There is nothing that you can do now, but you may be of great service later on."

I went downstairs to get my bicycle. I found difficulty in getting it out owing to the large number passing out through the front door. While I waited an opportunity Connolly passed down the stairs and shook hands without speaking. As I cycled across Abbey Street I saw the Irish Republican troops breaking the windows of " Kelly for Bikes," and dragging bicycles and motor-cycles across the street to form a barricade . . . The fight was on.

WILLIAM O'BRIEN.

31,269.



A SELECTION
FROM THE WRITINGS OF
JAMES CONNOLLY
DURING THE YEARS 1898—1916

A. J. J. J. J.

TO THE HONORABLE

THE SENATE

OF THE UNITED STATES

THE ROOTS OF MODERN WAR

THE Cabinets who rule the destinies of nations from the various capitals of Europe are but the tools of the moneyed interest. Their quarrels are not dictated by sentiments of national pride or honour, but by the avarice and lust of power on the part of the class to which they belong. The people who fight under their banners in the various armies or navies do indeed imagine they are fighting the battles of their country, but in what country has it ever happened that the people have profited by foreign conquest?

The influence which impels towards war to-day is the influence of capitalism. Every war now is a capitalist move for new markets, and it is a move capitalism must make or perish. The mad scramble for wealth which this century has witnessed, has resulted in lifting almost every European country into the circle of competition for trade. New machinery, new inventions, new discoveries in the scientific world have all been laid under contribution as aids to industry, until the wealth producing powers of society at large have far outstripped the demand for goods, and now those very powers we have conjured up from the bosom of nature threaten to turn and rend us. . . . Every new labour-saving machine at one and the same time, by reducing the number of workers needed, reduces the demand for goods which the worker cannot buy, while increasing the power of producing goods, and thus permanently increases the number of unemployed, and shortens the period of industrial prosperity. Competition between capitalists drives them to seek for newer and more efficient wealth-producing machines, but as the home market is now no longer able to dispose of their produce they are driven to foreign markets . . . So it is in China to-day. The great industrial nations of the world

driven on by their respective moneyed classes, themselves driven on by their own machinery, now front each other in the far East, and, with swords in hand, threaten to set the armed millions of Europe in terrible and bloody conflict, in order to decide which shall have the right to force upon John Chinaman the goods which his European brother produces, but may not enjoy. Laveleye says somewhere that capitalism came into the world covered with blood and tears and dirt. We might add that if this war cloud now gathering in the East, does burst, as it will be the last capitalist war, so the death of that baneful institution will be like its birth, bloody, muddy and ignominious.¹

Workers' Republic, August 20, 1898.

NOTES

1. Emile de Laveleye, (1822-1892), Belgian publicist, economist, and critic of socialism.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

(1899-1902)

I

AT the time of going to press it seems probable that in a few weeks at most the British Government will have declared war against the South African Republic. Ostensibly in pursuance of a chivalrous desire to obtain political concessions in their adopted country for British citizens anxious to renounce their citizenship, but in reality for the purpose of enabling an unscrupulous gang of capitalists to get into their hands the immense riches of the diamond fields. Such a war will undoubtedly take rank as one of the most iniquitous wars of the century. Waged by a mighty empire against a nation entirely incapable of replying in any effective manner, by a government of financiers upon a nation of farmers, by a nation of filibusterers upon a nation of workers, by a capitalist ring, who will never see a shot fired during the war, upon a people defending their homes and liberties—such is the war upon which the people of England are criminally or stupidly, and criminally even if stupidly, allowing their government to enter. No better corroboration of the truth of the socialist maxim that the modern state is but a committee of rich men administering public affairs in the interest of the upper class, has been afforded of late years, than is furnished by this spectacle of a gang of South African speculators setting in motion the whole machinery of the British Empire in furtherance of their own private ends. There is no pretence that the war will benefit the English people, yet it is calmly assumed the people will pay for the war, and, if necessary, fight in it.

It must be admitted that the English people are at present doing their utmost to justify the low estimate in which their

rulers hold them ; a people who for centuries have never heard a shot fired in anger upon their shores, yet who encourage their government in its campaign of robbery and murder against an unoffending nation ; a people, who, secure in their own homes, permit their rulers to carry devastation and death into the homes of another people, assuredly deserve little respect no matter how loudly they may boast of their liberty-loving spirit.

For the Irish worker the war will contain some valuable lessons. In the first place it will serve to furnish a commentary upon the hopes of those in our ranks who are so fond of dilating upon the " peaceful " realisation of the aims of socialism. We do not like to theorise upon the function of force as a midwife to progress—that, as we have ere now pointed out, is a matter to be settled by the enemies of progress—but we cannot afford to remain blind to the signs of the time. If, then, we see a small section of the possessing class prepared to launch two nations into war, to shed oceans of blood and spend millions of treasure, in order to maintain intact a *small portion* of their privileges, how can we expect the entire propertied class to abstain from using the same weapons, and to submit peacefully when called upon to *yield up for ever all their privileges*? Let the working class democracy of Ireland note that lesson, and, whilst working peacefully while they may, keep constantly before their minds the truth that the capitalist class is a beast of prey, and cannot be moralised, converted, or conciliated, but must be extirpated.

One other lesson is, that Ireland is apparently a negligible factor in the calculations of the Imperial Government. In certain " advanced " circles we hear much about the important position of Ireland in international politics. The exact value of such talk may be gauged by the fact that troops are being taken from Ireland to be sent to the Transvaal. The British Government has no fears on the score of Ireland ; the Home

Rule Party, and their good friends the Constabulary, may be trusted to keep this country quiet. But if the working class of Ireland were only united and understood their power sufficiently well, and had shaken off their backs the Home Rule-Unionist twin brethren—keeping us apart that their class may rob us—they would see in this complication a chance for making a long step forward towards better conditions of life—and, seeing it, act upon it in a manner that would ensure the absence from the Transvaal of a considerable portion of the British army. The class-conscious workers who chafe under our present impotence, and long to remove it, will find the path pointed out to them in the ranks of the Irish Socialist Republican Party.

Workers' Republic, August 19, 1899.

II

... And what about the war? Well, I think it is the beginning of the end. This great, blustering British Empire; this Empire of truculent bullies, is rushing headlong to its doom. Whether they ultimately win or lose, the Boers have pricked the bubble of England's fighting reputation. The world knows her weakness now. Have at her, then everywhere and always and in every manner. And before the first decade of the coming century will close, you and I, if we survive, will be able to repeat to our children the tale of how this monstrous tyranny sank in dishonour and disaster.

Workers' Republic, November 18, 1899.

III

RESOLUTION

DRAFTED BY JAMES CONNOLLY

AND ADOPTED AT A PUBLIC MEETING TO EXPRESS
SYMPATHY WITH THE BOER REPUBLICS, HELD IN
FOSTER PLACE, DUBLIN ON AUGUST 27TH, 1899

WHEREAS the government of this country is maintained upon the bayonets of an occupying army against the will of the people ;

WHEREAS there were in India, Egypt and other portions of the British Empire other and much larger populations also kept down in forced subjection ;

WHEREAS a country that thus keeps down subject populations by the use of the hangman, the bullet or the sword, has no right to preach to another about its duties towards its population ;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this meeting denounces the interference of the British capitalist government in the internal affairs of the Transvaal Republic as an act of criminal aggression, wishes long life to the Republic, and trusts that our fellow-countrymen will, if need be, take up arms in defence of their adopted country.¹

IV

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

The British Army is getting its hands full in South Africa. The defeated, demoralised, disheartened, subjugated, routed, dispersed, conquered, disarmed and humiliated Boers are still

toppling over British battalions, capturing British convoys, cutting British lines of communication, and keeping Lord Roberts and all his generals in a state of almighty panic and unrest, and not a single soldier can be spared from South Africa for a long time to come.

★

The Boxers in China have developed a sudden aptitude for war, are prowling around on the hunt for foreign devils, and with a smile that is child-like and bland are offering to box all Europe, with Japan and America thrown in as appetisers. Great Britain is in want of soldiers there also.

★

Now it only wants a native rising in India, and then would come our Irish opportunity.

★

With war in Africa, war in China, war in India, we of the unconquered Celtic race would rise up in our millions from Malin Head to Cape Clear, from Dublin to Galway, and—and well, pass “strong” resolutions, and then go home and pray that somebody else may beat the Sasanach.

★

The Boers are invulnerable on kopjes, the Boxers are death on missionaries, but we are irresistible on “resolutions.”

Workers' Republic, June 30, 1900.

NOTE

1. This meeting was held by the Irish Socialist Republican Party, and was the *first* public meeting held in Ireland to express sympathy with the Boers.



BRITISH AND RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM

HIS Imperial Highness, the Czar of All the Russias, has issued a manifesto in favour of universal disarmament. This is the silly season . . . His rule is founded on the sword, and can only be maintained by the sword, and whatever seriousness there is in his latest pronouncement may be translated into an appeal to his brother despots throughout Europe to cease warring with each other in order that their hands may be free to throttle the infant liberty in their own dominions. Humanitarians indeed ! Will Russia withdraw her troops from Warsaw and depend only on the loyalty and affection of the Poles . . . ? The Czar, we repeat is having his little joke. He speaks to-day of universal peace, in order that when, in the near future, he hurls his armies across the frontier into China, India or Constantinople, or whelms in blood the aspirations for freedom on the part of his own subjects, he may be able to point to this action of his as proof that the battle was not of his seeking. From the Cabinets of every European Government all the other conspirators against the freedom of the human race echo his cry, and even while they are ordering new armaments and equipping new fleets, protest the intensity of their desire for peace. 'Twas ever thus . . . But universal disarmament is not a dream. The day will come, and perhaps like a bolt from the blue when the frontiers . . . will not be sufficient to prevent the handclasp of friendship between the peoples. But that day will come only when the kings and kaisers, queens and czars, financiers and capitalists who now oppress humanity will be hurled from their place and power, and the emancipated workers of the earth, no longer the blind instruments of rich men's greed will found a new society, a new civilisation,

whose corner stone will be labour, whose inspiring principle will be justice, whose limits humanity alone can bound.

Workers' Republic, September 3, 1898.

When the Russian disarmament proposals were first mooted we, alone among Irish journalists, characterised them as dishonest and the chorus of praise they elicited throughout Europe as hypocritical. One short week has sufficed to prove the truth of our contention . . . There is scarcely a capital in Europe from which Great Britain has not been complimented on the successful outcome of the battle before Khartoum ; complimented by the very men (and newspapers) who a week ago were ostentatiously singing anthems of brotherly love with all men, and deploring the cruel necessity of war . . . The British occupation of Egypt, from the bombardment of Alexandria down to this latest massacre at Omdurman has been one prolonged criminal enterprise, conceived and executed entirely in the interests of the holders of Egyptian bonds and speculating capitalists.¹ The enemy, as our Irish newspapers call them, fought for home and freedom ; the British carried fire and sword and desolation into a land and upon a people who had never injured them, a people who could not have disturbed their conquest, even of lower Egypt, had they been ever so willing. But Britain has triumphed. Glorious triumph !

Workers' Republic, September 10, 1898.

NOTES

1. " India is regarded by its alien rulers as a huge human cattle farm to be worked solely in the interest of the dominant nation. Whatever is done for its vast internal resources, is done for the benefit of the Indian people, but primarily with a view to the dividends which the investing classes of England may draw from such development."

Limerick Leader, July, 1897.

SOCIALISM AND IMPERIALISM

AS socialists—and therefore anxious at all times to throw the full weight of whatever influence we possess upon the side of the forces making most directly for socialism—we have often been somewhat disturbed in our mind by observing in the writings and speeches of some of our foreign comrades a tendency to discriminate in favour of Great Britain in all the international complications in which that country may be involved over questions of territorial annexation, spheres of influence, etc., in barbarous or semi-civilised portions of the globe. We are, we repeat, disturbed in our mind because we ourselves do not at all sympathise with this pro-British policy, but, on the contrary, would welcome the humiliation of the British arms in any one of the conflicts in which it is at present engaged, or with which it has been lately menaced. This we freely avow. But the question then arises : is this hostility to the British Empire due to the fact of our national and racial subjection by that Power, or is it consistent with the doctrines we hold as adherents of the Marxist propaganda, and believers in the Marxist economics?

. . . The English socialists are apparently divided over the question of the war on the Transvaal ; one section of the Social Democratic Federation going strongly for the Boers and against the war ; another also declaring against the war, but equally denouncing the Boers ; and finally, one English socialist leader, Mr. Robert Blatchford, editor of *The Clarion* and author of *Merrie England*, coming out bluntly for the war and toasting the health of the Queen, and the success of the British arms. On the other hand, all the journals of the party on the continent of Europe and in America, as far as we are aware, come out in this instance wholeheartedly on the side of the Transvaal

and against what the organ of our Austrian comrades fittingly terms England's act of " blood-thirsty piracy." . . . Our esteemed comrade, H. M. Hyndman¹ . . . took the position that England ought not to have given way to Russia at Port Arthur, but ought to have fought her and asserted British supremacy in the Far East. His reason for so contending being the greater freedom enjoyed under British than under Russian rule . . .

. . . That we may not be accused of criticising the attitude of others without stating our own, we hereby place on record our position on all questions of international policy :

Scientific revolutionary socialism teaches us that socialism can only be realised when capitalism has reached its zenith of development ; that consequently the advance of nations industrially undeveloped into the capitalistic stage of industry is a thing highly to be desired, since such an advance will breed a revolutionary proletariat in such countries and force forward there the political freedom necessary for the speedy success of the socialist movement ; and finally, that as colonial expansion and the conquest of new markets are necessary for the prolongation of the life of capitalism, the prevention of colonial expansion and the loss of markets to countries capitalistically developed, such as England, precipitates economic crises there, and so gives an impulse to revolutionary thought and helps to shorten the period required to develop backward countries and thus prepare the economic conditions needed for our triumph . . .

Comrade Hyndman claims that we should oppose Russia because her people are ruled despotically, and favour England because her people are politically free. But that is the reasoning of a political radical, not the dispassionate analysis of contemporary history we have a right to expect from an economist and a socialist of Hyndman's reputation . . . Russia is not yet a capitalist country, therefore her people bow beneath the yoke of an autocrat . . . Drive the Russian out of Poland !

By all means ! Prevent his extension towards Europe ! Certainly ! But favour his extension and his acquisition of new markets in Asia (at the expense of England if need be) if you would see capitalism hurry forward to its death.

It may be argued that our Irish nationality plays a large part in forming this conception of international politics. We do not plead guilty, but even if it were so the objection would be puerile. As socialists we base our political policy on the class struggle of the workers, because we know that the self-interest of the workers lies our way. That the self-interest may sometimes be base does not affect the correctness of our position. The mere fact that the inherited (and often unreasoning) anti-British sentiment of a chauvinist Irish patriot impels him to the same conclusion as we arrived at as the result of our economic studies does not cause us to shrink from proclaiming our position. It rather leads us to rejoice that our propaganda is thus made all the easier by this none too common identity of aim established as a consequence of what we esteem the strong and irreconcilable hostility between English imperialism and socialism.

Workers' Republic, November 4, 1899.

NOTES

1. H. M. Hyndman, (1842-1921), English Socialist leader wrote of Connolly after 1916 : "Though Connolly had long gone out of our own movement (sic), he did thorough good service while he was with us, and was unquestionably an honest, determined and capable enthusiast with brains . . . But he had lashed himself up to the conviction that unorganised force could hasten on economic and social growth." (*Last Years of H. M. Hyndman*, p. 125). John Leslie and others of Connolly's old friends in the Social Democratic Federation shared this opinion. Connolly's opinion of Hyndman may be given : "As an exponent of socialist economics Hyndman has no more ardent

admirer than the writer, but we contend that as a political guide his whole career has been one long series of blunders; a fact which explains, as nothing else can explain, the wobbling state of the movement in England. The keynote of his character has been to preach revolution and to practise compromise, and to do neither thoroughly."

Workers' Republic, April, 1903.

Robert Blatchford, 1851-1943, editor of the Socialist weekly, *Clarion*, and advocate of British war preparedness against Germany. His popular pamphlet, *Merrie England*, published in 1894 sold over a million copies. In his autobiography, *My Eighty Years*, (London, 1931), Blatchford wrote that during the Boer war, "nearly all the Socialists and Labour people declared themselves pro-Boer and I remained pro-British."



A CONTINENTAL REVOLUTION

THE outbreak of war on the continent of Europe makes it impossible this week to write to *Forward* upon any other question. I have no doubt that to most of my readers Ireland has ere now ceased to be, in colloquial phraseology, the most important place on the map, and that their thoughts are turning gravely to a consideration of the position of the European socialist movement in the face of this crisis.

Judging by developments up to the time of writing, such considerations must fall far short of affording satisfying reflections to the socialist thinker. For, what is the position of the socialist movement in Europe to-day? Summed up briefly it is as follows :

For a generation at least the socialist movement in all the countries now involved has progressed by leaps and bounds, and more satisfactory still, by steady and continuous increase and development.

The number of votes recorded for socialist candidates has increased at a phenomenally rapid rate, the number of socialist representatives in all legislative chambers has become more and more of a disturbing factor in the calculations of governments. Newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and literature of all kinds teaching socialist ideas have been and are daily distributed by the million amongst the masses ; every army and navy in Europe has seen a constantly increasing proportion of socialists amongst its soldiers and sailors, and the industrial organisations of the working class have more and more perfected their grasp over the economic machinery of society, and more and more moved responsive to the socialist conception of their duties. Along with this, hatred of militarism has spread through every rank of society, making everywhere its recruits, and

raising an aversion to war even amongst those who in other things accepted the capitalist order of things. Anti-militarist societies and anti-militarist campaigns of socialist societies and parties, and anti-militarist resolutions of socialist and international trade union conferences have become part of the order of the day and are no longer phenomena to be wondered at. The whole working class movement stands committed to war upon war—stands so committed at the very height of its strength and influence.

And now, like the proverbial bolt from the blue, war is upon us, and war between the most important, because the most socialist, nations of the earth. And we are helpless ! !

What then becomes of all our resolutions ; all our protests of fraternisation ; all our threats of general strikes ; all our carefully-built machinery of internationalism ; all our hopes for the future ? Were they all as sound and fury, signifying nothing ? When the German artilleryman, a socialist serving in the German army of invasion, sends a shell into the ranks of the French army, blowing off their heads ; tearing out their bowels, and mangling the limbs of dozens of socialist comrades in that force, will the fact that he, before leaving for the front, “ demonstrated ” against the war be of any value to the widows and orphans made by the shell he sent upon its mission of murder ? Or, when the French rifleman pours his murderous rifle fire into the ranks of the German line of attack, will he be able to derive any comfort from the probability that his bullets are murdering or maiming comrades who last year joined in thundering “ hohs ” and cheers of greeting to the eloquent Jaurès, when in Berlin he pleaded for international solidarity ? When the socialist pressed into the army of the Austrian Kaiser, sticks a long, cruel bayonet-knife into the stomach of the socialist conscript in the army of the Russian Czar, and gives it a twist so that when pulled out it will pull the entrails out along with it, will the terrible act lose any of

its fiendish cruelty by the fact of their common theoretical adhesion to an anti-war propaganda in times of peace? When the socialist soldier from the Baltic provinces of Russia is sent forward into Prussian Poland to bombard towns and villages until a red trail of blood and fire covers the homes of the unwilling Polish subjects of Prussia, as he gazes upon the corpses of those he has slaughtered and the homes he has destroyed, will he in his turn be comforted by the thought that the Czar whom he serves sent other soldiers a few years ago to carry the same devastation and murder into his own home by the Baltic Sea?

But why go on? Is it not as clear as the fact of life itself that no insurrection of the working class; no general strike; no general uprising of the forces of Labour in Europe, could possibly carry with it, or entail a greater slaughter of socialists, than will their participation as soldiers in the campaigns of the armies of their respective countries? Every shell which explodes in the midst of a German battalion will slaughter some socialists; every Austrian cavalry charge will leave the gashed and hacked bodies of Serbian or Russian socialists squirming and twisting in agony upon the ground; every Russian, Austrian, or German ship sent to the bottom or blown sky-high will mean sorrow and mourning in the homes of some socialist comrades of ours. If these men must die, would it not be better to die in their own country fighting for freedom for their class, and for the abolition of war, than to go forth to strange countries and die slaughtering and slaughtered by their brothers that tyrants and profiteers might live?

Civilisation is being destroyed before our eyes; the results of generations of propaganda and patient heroic plodding and self-sacrifice are being blown into annihilation from a hundred cannon mouths; thousands of comrades with whose souls we have lived in fraternal communion are about to be done to death; they whose one hope it was to be spared to co-

operate in building the perfect society of the future are being driven to fratricidal slaughter in shambles where that hope will be buried under a sea of blood.

I am not writing in captious criticism of my continental comrades. We know too little about what is happening on the continent, and events have moved too quickly for any of us to be in a position to criticise at all. But believing as I do that any action would be justified which would put a stop to this colossal crime now being perpetrated, I feel compelled to express the hope that ere long we may read of the paralysing of the internal transport service on the continent, even should the act of paralysing necessitate the erection of socialist barricades and acts of rioting by socialist soldiers and sailors, as happened in Russia in 1905. Even an unsuccessful attempt at social revolution by force of arms, following the paralysis of the economic life of militarism, would be less disastrous to the socialist cause than the act of socialists allowing themselves to be used in the slaughter of their brothers in the cause.¹

A great continental uprising of the working class would stop the war ; a universal protest at public meetings will not save a single life from being wantonly slaughtered.

I make no war upon patriotism ; never have done. But against the patriotism of capitalism—the patriotism which makes the interest of the capitalist class the supreme test of duty and right—I place the patriotism of the working class, the patriotism which judges every public act by its effect upon the fortunes of those who toil. That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic, but that party or movement is the most perfect embodiment of patriotism which most successfully works for the conquest by the working class of the control of the destinies of the land wherein they labour.

To me, therefore, the socialist of another country is a fellow-patriot, as the capitalist of my own country is a natural enemy. I regard each nation as the possessor of a definite contribution

to the common stock of civilisation, and I regard the capitalist class of each nation as being the logical and natural enemy of the national culture which constitutes that definite contribution.

Therefore, the stronger I am in my affection for national tradition, literature, language, and sympathies, the more firmly rooted I am in my opposition to that capitalist class which in its soulless lust for power and gold would bray the nations as in a mortar.

Reasoning from such premises, therefore, this war appears to me as the most fearful crime of the centuries. In it the working class are to be sacrificed that a small clique of rulers and armament makers may sate their lust for power and their greed for wealth. Nations are to be obliterated, progress stopped, and international hatreds erected into deities to be worshipped.

Forward, August 15, 1914.

NOTE

1. "But what is the price of war—the price as it must be paid by a nation? That all the young and vigorous men go out to be killed, and all the unfit and diseased stay at home to be fathers of the next generation . . . There are streets in Dublin, in its poorer quarters, where every family has lost a man; there are sections in the country where the toll of death has been so heavy that every man has gone . . . Upon the top of this sacrifice of the living comes the borrowing of money to continue the work of hell, and this borrowing means pawning the labour and genius of the future to the financial leeches and usurious money-lenders of Europe and America . . . The peoples of Europe have held back from violence because bloodshed and armed strife had grown repulsive as a result of socialist propaganda. The war madness has swept away that humanitarian feeling and revealed our rulers as what they are—monsters, red in tooth and claw. Yes, revolution is no longer unthinkable in Europe, its shadow already looms upon the horizon."

Workers' Republic, October 16, 1915.

A MARTYR FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE

AS I am writing this the news appears in the press that our comrade, Dr. Karl Liebknecht, has been shot in Germany for refusing to accept military service in the war. The news is unconfirmed, and will, I trust, be found later to be untrue, but I propose to take it this week as a text for my article.¹

Supposing, then, that it was true, what would be the socialist attitude toward the martyrdom of our beloved comrade? There can be little hesitation in avowing that all socialists would endorse his act, and look upon his death as a martyrdom for our cause. And yet if his attitude was correct, what can be said of the attitude of all those socialists who have gone to the front, and still more of all those socialists who from press and platform are urging that nothing should be done now that might disturb the harmony that ought to exist at home, or spoil the wonderful solidarity of the nation in this great crisis?

As far as I can understand these latter, their argument seems to be that they did their whole duty when they protested against the war, but that now that war has been declared it is right that they also should arm in defence of their common country, and act in all things along with their fellow subjects—those same fellow subjects whose senseless clamour brought on this awful outburst of murder. We are told, for instance, that the same policy is being pursued by all socialist parties. That the French socialists protested against the war—and then went to the front, headed by Gustave Hervé, the great anti-militarist; the German socialists protested against the war—and then, in the Reichstag, unanimously voted 250 millions to carry it on; the Austrians issued a manifesto against the war—and are now on the frontier doing great deeds of heroism against the foreign enemy; and the Russians erected barricades

in the streets of St. Petersburg against the cossacks, but immediately war was declared went off to the front arm in arm with their cossack brothers. And so on. Now, if all this is true, what does it mean? It means that the socialist parties of the various countries mutually cancel each other, and that as a consequence socialism ceases to exist as a world force, and drops out of history in the greatest crisis of the history of the world, in the very moment when courageous action will most influence history.

We know that not more than a score of men in the various Cabinets of the world have brought about this war, that no European people was consulted upon the question, that preparations for it have been going on for years, and that all the alleged "reasons" for it are so many afterthoughts invented to hide from us the fact that the intrigues and schemes of our rulers had brought the world to this pass. All socialists are agreed upon this. Being so agreed, are we now to forget it all : to forget all our ideas of human brotherhood, and because some twenty highly-placed criminals say our country requires us to slaughter our brothers beyond the seas or the frontiers, are we bound to accept their statement, and proceed to *slaughter our comrades abroad at the dictate of our enemies at home*. The idea outrages my every sense of justice and fraternity. I may be only a voice crying in the wilderness, a crank amongst a community of the wise, but whoever I be, I must, in deference to my own self-respect, and to the sanctity of my own soul, protest against the doctrine that any decree of theirs of national honour can excuse a socialist who serves in a war which he has denounced as a needless war, can absolve from the guilt of murder any socialist who at the dictate of a capitalist Government draws the trigger of a rifle upon or sends a shot from a gun into the breasts of people with whom he has no quarrel, and who are his fellow labourers in the useful work of civilisation.

We have for years informed the world that we were in revolt

against the iniquities of modern civilisation, but now we hear socialists informing us that it is our duty to become accomplices of the rulers of modern civilisation in the greatest of all iniquities, the slaughter of man by his fellow man. And that as long as we make our formal protest we have done our whole duty, and can cheerfully proceed to take life, burn peaceful homes, and lay waste fields smiling with food !

Our comrade, Dr. Liebknecht, if he has died rather than admit this new doctrine, has died the happiest death that man can die, has put to eternal shame the thousands of " comrades " in every European land, who, with the cant of brotherhood upon their lips, have gone forth in the armies of the capitalist rulers—murdering and to murder. The old veteran leader of German social democracy, his father, Wilhelm Liebknecht, said in one of his pamphlets :

" The working class of the world has but one enemy—the capitalist class of the world, those of their own country at the head of the list."

Well and truly has the son lived up to the truly revolutionary doctrine of the father : lived and died for its eternal truth and wisdom.

Now we are hearing a new excuse for the complicity of socialists in this war. It is that this war will be the last war, its horrors will be so great that humanity will refuse to allow another.

The homely Irish proverb has it that " far off cows have long horns," or that " far away hills are always green." It must have been in some such spirit that this latest argument was evolved. For what can happen in the future that is not more applicable now ! In the future this militarist spirit will probably be in the ascendant, new national prejudices will have been born, new international hatreds called forth. There will be memories of recent defeats to wipe out, fresh frontiers

to conserve or to obliterate, and the military caste will have acquired an ascendancy over the popular imagination because the large numbers of the various armies will have given rise to widespread solicitude for their welfare and consequent hopes for their success. If you have friends or relatives whom you dearly love serving in the army, you cannot help wishing for the success of that army, and the defeat of its immediate opponents, and from such a state of feeling to the most intense jingoism is but a small and easy transition. The large armies of to-day draw upon the whole population, all are interested in the fate of their friends or relatives, and we may all be sure that the lying press can be depended upon to convert solicitude for our friends into passionate hatred for those whom war makes their opponents.

No ; we cannot draw upon the future for a draft to pay our present duties. There is no moratorium to postpone the payment of the debt the socialists owe to the cause ; it can only be paid now. Paid it may be in martyrdom, but a few hundred such martyrdoms would be but a small price to pay to avert the slaughter of hundreds of thousands. If our German comrade, Liebknecht, has paid the price, perhaps the others may yet nerve themselves for that sacrifice. On what conception of national honour can we blame them, before what fetish of national dignity can we prostrate ourselves in abasement to atone for their act ?

The war of a subject nation for independence, for the right to live out its own life in its own way may and can be justified as holy and righteous ; the war of a subject class to free itself from the debasing conditions of economic and political slavery should at all times choose its own weapons, and hold and esteem all as sacred instruments of righteousness. But the war of nation against nation in the interest of royal freebooters and cosmopolitan thieves is a thing accursed.

All hail, then, to our continental comrade, who, in a world

of imperial and financial brigands and cowardly trimmers and compromisers showed mankind that men still know how to die for the holiest of all causes—the sanctity of the human soul, the practical brotherhood of the human race !

Forward, August 22, 1914.

NOTES

1. Karl Liebknecht was afterwards shot during the Spartacist rising in Berlin on January 15, 1919 by German officers. The rumour on which Connolly based his article was without foundation.

Liebknecht was born August 13, 1871. As leader of the opposition to the war he was imprisoned several times. His father, Wilhelm Liebknecht, 1826–1900, took part in the 1848–9 revolutions in Germany, and was later one of the founders of German Social Democracy.

Gustave Hervé, mentioned in paragraph three, was for many years an “anti-patriot” and advocate of “revolution sooner than war.” His propaganda earned him repeated imprisonments. Connolly in the *Harp* wrote critically of the Hervé brand of French anti-militarism. On the eve of the 1914 War, Hervé changed his views, and later became a violent nationalist.

CONNOLLY'S SPEECH ON WAR'S OUTBREAK

SPEAKING at a meeting in Dublin, Sunday, August 30, 1914, to commemorate the deaths of James Nolan, John Byrne and Alice Brady, killed during the Dublin Lockout, 1913-14, Connolly said :

He was glad to see so large a gathering to commemorate their comrades, because they were murdered for the sake of great principles. It had not been a mere casual murder, but a cold-blooded and premeditated one, deliberately planned with the idea in mind that as they went to their graves, so went the hopes for which they fought. That when they were murdered all the hopes of the Irish workers would be slain with them ; when they were foully done to death all our aspirations for a cleaner, better city and grander nation would be murdered, too. " Where do we stand to-day ? " he continued. " The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and the hopes of the Irish working class, and that class itself stands erect and resolute, fearing no man, and the British Government is down on its knees praying for the Russians to come and save them. Our fight of last year was not for added wages and reduction of hours ; it was for an opportunity of building up in our midst men and women, a chance to develop nobility and grandeur of character for men and women, a time to realise the nobility of life, to study the history of Ireland, to study our rights as well as our duties ; time to develop men and women for the coming crisis, so that they might take advantage of it when it came. Abject servility there is in Ireland ; whatever of the spirit of a slave that in you lies, lies with those who served to cripple the grandest movement ever started. If labour controlled your destinies, conjure the picture of what might have happened when after Grey and

Asquith had plunged England into war, there arose a clamour for Redmond. And Redmond, without consulting you, the people of Ireland, pledged us to war with as kindly, gracious a nation as God ever put the breath of life into—what happened then? Redmond when they shouted for him might have sat still and let them shout, then before another sun rose got a measure greater than Grattan dreamed of. Redmond, as spokesman of the majority of the Irish people might have risen and said: 'I and my colleagues will go to Ireland and consult the Irish Nation.' Then would Ireland be a nation in reality. 'We have waited and now Germany has come, and we will start our own Parliament. Stop us if you can.' Help would have come from all sides. Why the R.I.C. would have acted as a guard of honour!

"These men have sold you. Sold you? No, by God, given you away. Whether my speech is pro-German or pro-Irish, I don't know. As an Irish worker I owe a duty to our class; counting no allegiance to the Empire; I'd be glad to see it back in the bottomless pit. The Irish workers hold themselves ready to bargain with whoever can make a bargain. England has been fighting Germany. If it were not for the Russians, French and Japanese, the British would not have made a mouthful for the Germans. The Germans are in Boulogne, where Napoleon projected an invasion of Britain. To Ireland is only a twelve hours' run. If you are itching for a rifle, itching to fight, have a country of your own; better to fight for our own country than for the robber empire. If ever you shoulder a rifle, let it be for Ireland. Conscription or no conscription, they will never get me or mine. You have been told you are not strong, that you have no rifles. Revolutions do not start with rifles; start first and get your rifles after. Our curse is our belief in our weakness. We are not weak, we are strong. Make up your mind to strike before your opportunity goes."

Irish Worker, September 5, 1914.

CAN WARFARE BE CIVILISED?

THE progress of the great war and the many extraordinary developments accompanying it are rapidly tending to bring home to the minds of the general public the truth of the socialist contention that all war is an atrocity, and that the attempt to single out any particular phase of it as more atrocious than another is simply an attempt to confuse the public mind.

We in this journal and in our predecessor, the *Irish Worker*, have consistently stood upon that principle. We have held, and do hold, that war is a relic of barbarism only possible because we are governed by a ruling class with barbaric ideas ; we have held and do hold that the working class of all countries cannot hope to escape the horrors of war until in all countries that barbaric ruling class is thrown from power ; and we have held, and do hold that the lust for power on the part of that ruling class is so deeply rooted in the nature and instinct of its members, that it is more than probable that nothing less than superior force will ever induce them to abandon their throttling grasp upon the lives and liberties of mankind.

Holding such views we have at all times combatted the idea of war ; held that we have no foreign enemies outside of our own ruling class ; held that if we are compelled to go to war we had much rather fight that ruling class than any other, and taught in season and out of season that it is the duty of the working class in self-protection to organise its own force to resist the force of the master class. The force available to the working class is two-fold, industrial and political, which latter includes military organisation to protect political and industrial rights. " Those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword " say the Scriptures, and it may well be that in the progress of events the working class of Ireland may be called upon to

face the stern necessity of taking the sword (or rifle) against the class whose rule has brought upon them and upon the world the hellish horror of the present European war. Should that necessity arise it would be well to realise that the talk of "humane methods of warfare," of the "rules of civilised warfare," and all such homage to the finer sentiments of the race are hypocritical and unreal, and only intended for the consumption of stay-at-homes. There are no humane methods of warfare, there is no such thing as civilised warfare ; all warfare is inhuman, all warfare is barbaric ; the first blast of the bugles of war ever sounds for the time being the funeral knell of human progress.

A few illustrations will suffice to drive home these points. One concerns the outcry over the alleged use of what are known as dum-dum bullets. It is alleged by both sides that the others are using those bullets and that they inflict a most grievous wound, and as they inflict such a serious wound they are opposed to the rules of "civilised and humane warfare." The same persons who raise this cry will calmly read of the firing of shrapnel into a body of troops and will exult in the result. Yet a shrapnel shell contains 340 bullets which scatter in all directions, tearing off legs and arms, rending and bursting the human bodies, and in general creating wounds which no surgical science can hope to cure. How hypocritical, then, is the pretence of horror over the grievous wound inflicted by a dum-dum bullet !

Of like character is the outcry over the bombardment of undefended towns. One would think to read such diatribes that it was not a recognised practice of all naval warfare. For generations the public of these islands have been reading of Great Britain sending punitive expeditions against native tribes in Africa, the islands of the ocean, or parts of Asia. It may be that some benighted native has stolen a cask of rum from the compound of a missionary, and thrown a stone at the

holy man of God when the latter demanded the return of the cask in question. Immediately a British man-of-war is ordered to that coast, opens fire upon and destroys the whole town, indiscriminately massacring the majority of its inhabitants, women and old men, and babes yet unborn, all to punish one or two persons for a slight upon a British subject. That thousands of British subjects are subjected to worse slights at home every day of their lives is a matter of not enough consequence to move a policeman, let alone a battleship. Yet up and down the world the British fleet has gone carrying out such orders, and bombarding such undefended places without ever moving the inklingers of the jingo press to protest.

It all depends, it appears, upon whose houses are being bombarded, whose people are being massacred, whose limbs are torn from the body, whose bodies are blown to a ghastly mass of mangled flesh and blood and bones. The crime of the Germans seems to consist in believing that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

But what is the theory of the matter? We have before us the work of M. Bloch on *Modern weapons and modern war*, the famous work in which the methods and results of modern warfare were analysed and foretold long before they had been brought to the test of practical trial on modern battlefields. This author, a Pole but a Russian subject, foretold most of the phenomena accompanying modern campaigns, and has lived to see the results he predicted in a large measure embodied in the practice of armies actually in conflict.

To arrive at such a wonderful accuracy in prediction he was compelled to undertake a systematic investigation of all the conditions of modern warfare on land and sea with modern weapons. On the question of undefended towns he has this to say, and all who have read his works bear witness to his scrupulous impartiality and freedom from national bias :

“ It must be remembered that, as is shown by the practice

of manoeuvres, the principle that undefended towns are not subject to bombardment is not acknowledged, and in a future war no towns will be spared. As evidence of this the following case may be cited. On August 24th, 1889, the following letter was addressed by the commander of the *Collingwood* to the Mayor of Peterhead :

“ By order of the Vice-Admiral commanding the 11th Division of the Fleet, I have to demand from your town a contribution of £150,000 sterling . . . I must add that in case the officers who deliver this letter do not return within the course of two hours the town will be burnt, the shipping destroyed, and factories ruined.”

“ This letter was printed in all the newspapers and called forth no protest . . . It is evident then that England will not refrain from such action when convenient, and as her voice is the most important in naval matters, the other Powers will certainly follow her example.”

M. Bloch here cites as an example the course taken by a British fleet in the course of naval manoeuvres, and as such manoeuvres are always carried out strictly according to official handbooks it is safe to assume that in the bombardment of undefended towns we have a practice authorised by the British Admiralty. Yet whether authorised by British or German practice or theory, how brutal, how repulsive, how murderous it is.

Up to the present no such bombardment has yet taken place, for, of course, the East Coast towns bombarded were all defended by entrenchments and garrison artillery, but what lover of humanity can view with anything but horror the prospect of this ruthless destruction of human life.

Yet this is war : war for which all the jingoes are howling, war to which all the hopes of the world are being sacrificed, war to which a mad ruling class would plunge a mad world.

No, there is no such thing as humane or civilised war ! War may be forced upon a subject race or subject class to put an end to subjection of race, of class, or sex. When so waged it must be waged thoroughly and relentlessly, but with no delusions as to its elevating nature, or civilising methods.

The Worker, January 30, 1915.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIONISM AND WAR

SINCE the war broke out in Europe, and since the socialist forces in the various countries failed so signally to prevent or even delay the outbreak, I have been reading everything in American socialist papers or magazines that came to hand ; to see if that failure and the reasons therefor, were properly understood among my old comrades in the United States.

But either I have not seen the proper publications, or else the dramatic side of the military campaigns has taken too firm a hold upon the imagination of socialist writers to allow them to estimate properly the inner meaning of that debacle of political socialism witnessed in Europe when the bugles of war rang out upon our ears.

I am going then to try, in all calmness, to relate the matter as it appears to us who believe that *the signal of war ought also to have been the signal for rebellion*, that when the bugles sounded the first note for actual war, their notes should have been taken as the tocsin for social revolution. And I am going to try to explain why such results did not follow such actions. My explanation may not be palatable to some ; I hope it will be at least interesting to all.

In the first place let me be perfectly frank with my readers as to my own position, now that that possibility has receded out of sight. As the reader will have gathered from my opening remarks, I believe that the socialist proletariat of Europe in *all* the belligerent countries ought to have refused to march against their brothers across the frontiers, and that such refusal would have prevented the war and all its horrors even though it might have led to civil war. Such a civil war would not, could not possibly have resulted in such a loss of socialist life as this international war has entailed, and each socialist who fell in such

a civil war would have fallen knowing that he was battling for the cause he had worked for in days of peace, and that there was no possibility of the bullet or shell that laid him low having been sent on its murderous way by one to whom he had pledged the "life-long love of comrades" in the international army of labour.

But seeing that the socialist movement did not so put the faith of its adherents to the test, seeing that the nations are now locked in this death grapple, and the issue is knit, I do not wish to disguise from anyone my belief that there is no hope of peaceful development for the industrial nations of continental Europe whilst Britain holds the dominance of the sea. The British fleet is a knife held permanently at the throat of Europe ; should any nation evince an ability to emerge from the position of a mere customer for British products, and to become a successful competitor of Britain in the markets of the world, that knife is set in operation to cut that throat.

By days and by nights the British Government watches and works to isolate its competitor from the comity of nations, to ring it around with hostile foes. When the time is propitious, the blow is struck, the allies of Britain encompass its rival by land and the fleet of Britain swoops upon its commerce by sea. In one short month the commerce-raiding fleet of Great Britain destroys a trade built up in forty years of slow, peaceful industry, as it has just done in the case of Germany.

Examining the history of the foreign relations of Great Britain since the rise of the capitalist class to power in that country, the continuity of this policy becomes obvious and as marvellous as it is obvious.

Neither religion nor race affinity nor diversity of political or social institutions availed to save a competitor of England. The list of commercial rivals or would-be rivals is fairly large, and gives the economic key to the reasons for the great wars of Britain. In that list we find Spain, Holland, France, Denmark

and now Germany. Britain must rule the waves, and when the continental nations wished to make at the Hague a law forbidding the capture of merchant vessels during war, Britain refused her assent. Naturally ! It is her power to capture merchant ships during war that enables Britain to cut the throat of a commercial rival at her own sweet will.

If she had not that power she would need to depend upon her superiority in technical equipment and efficiency ; and the uprise in other countries of industrial enterprises able to challenge and defeat her in this world market has amply demonstrated that she has not that superiority any longer.

The United States and Germany lead in crowding Britain industrially ; the former cannot be made a target for the guns of militarist continental Europe, therefore escapes for the time being as Britain never fights a white power single-handed. But Germany is caught within the net and has to suffer for her industrial achievements.

The right to capture merchant ships for which Britain stood out against the public opinion of all Europe is thus seen to be the trump card of Britain against the industrial development of the world outside her shores—against that complete freedom of the seas by which alone the nations of the world can develop that industrial status which socialists maintain to be an indispensable condition for socialist triumph.

I have been thus frank with my readers in order that they may perfectly understand my position and the reasons therefor, and thus anticipate some of the insinuations that are sure to be levelled against me as one who sympathises neither with the anti-German hysteria of such comrades as Professor George D. Herron nor with the suddenly developed belief in the good faith of Czars shown by Prince Peter Kropotkin.¹

I believe the war could have been prevented by the socialists ; as it was not prevented and as the issues are knit, I want to see England beaten so thoroughly that the commerce of the seas

will henceforth be free to all nations—to the smallest equally with the greatest.

But *how could this war have been prevented*, which is another way of saying how and why did the socialist movement fail to prevent it?

The full answer to that question can only be grasped by those who are familiar with the propaganda that from 1905 onwards has been known as “industrialist” in the United States and, though not so accurately, has been called “syndicalist” in Europe.

The essence of that propaganda lay in two principles. To take them in the order of their immediate effectiveness these were: First, that labour could only enforce its wishes by organising its strength at the point of production, i.e., the farms, factories, workshops, railways, docks, ships—where the work of the world is carried on, the effectiveness of the political vote depending primarily upon the economic power of the workers organised behind it. Secondly, that the process of organising that economic power would also build the industrial fabric of the socialist republic, build the new society within the old.

It is upon the first of these two principles I wish my readers to concentrate their attention in order to find the answer to the question we are asking.

In all the belligerent countries of western and central Europe the socialist vote was very large; in none of these belligerent countries was there an organised revolutionary industrial organisation directing the socialist vote nor a socialist political party directing a revolutionary industrial organisation.

The socialist voters having cast their ballots were helpless, as voters, until the next election; as workers, they were indeed in control of the forces of production and distribution, and by exercising that control over the transport service could have made the war impossible. But the idea of thus co-ordinating

their two spheres of activity had not gained sufficient lodgment to be effective in the emergency.

No socialist party in Europe could say that rather than go to war it would call out the entire transport service of the country and thus prevent mobilisation. No socialist party could say so, because no socialist party could have the slightest reasonable prospect of having such a call obeyed.

The executive committee of the socialist movement was not in control of the labour-force of the men who voted for the socialist representatives in the legislative chambers of Europe, nor were the men in control of the supply of labour-force in control of the socialist representatives. In either case there would have been an organised power immediately available against war. Lacking either, the socialist parties of Europe when they had protested against war, had also *fired their last shot* against militarism and were left like "children crying in the night."

Had the socialist party of France been able to declare that rather than be dragged into war to save the Russian Czar from the revolutionary consequences which would have followed his certain defeat by Germany, they would declare a railway strike, there would have been no war between France and Germany, as the latter country saved from the dread of an attack in the west whilst defending itself in the east could not have coerced its socialist population into consenting to take the offensive against France.

But the French government knows, the German government knows, all cool observers in Europe know, that the socialist and syndicalist organisation of France could not have carried out such a threat even had they made it. Both politically and industrially the revolutionary organisations of France are mere skeleton frameworks, not solid bodies.

Politically large numbers roll together at elections around the faithful few who keep the machinery of the party together ;

industrially, more or less, large numbers roll together during strikes or lock-outs. But the numbers of either are shifting, uncertain and of shadowy allegiance. From such no revolutionary action of value in face of modern conditions of warfare and state organisation could be expected. And none came.

Hence the pathetic failure of French socialism—the socialist battalion occupying the position of the most tactical importance on the European battlefield. For neither Russia nor Britain could have fought had France held aloof; Russia because of the fear of internal convulsions; Britain, because Britain never fights unless the odds against her foe are overwhelming. And Britain needed the aid of the French fleet.

To sum up then, the failure of European socialism to avert the war is primarily due to the divorce between the industrial and political movements of labour. The socialist voter, as such, is helpless between elections. He requires to organise power to enforce the mandate of the elections and the *only power he can so organise is economic power*—the power to stop the wheels of commerce, to control the heart that sends the life blood pulsating through the social organism.

International Socialist Review, March, 1915.

NOTE

1. Professor George D. Herron, American socialist, criticised by Connolly, *Socialist*, June, 1904, as one of those “who were in the movement, not for the cause of socialism, but because they thought they saw in it a means of ventilating their theories on such questions as sex, religion, vaccination, vegetarianism, etc.” Prince Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) Russian revolutionary exile and writer who supported the Allied side in 1914. Author of *The Conquest of Bread, Fields, Factories and Workshops*, and other works.

JAMES KEIR HARDIE

BY the death of Comrade James Keir Hardie labour has lost one of its most fearless and incorruptible champions, and the world one of its highest minded and purest souls.

It is not easy for us who knew him long and personally to convey to the reader how much of a loss his taking away is to the labour movement. We feel it with the keenness of a personal loss.

James Keir Hardie was to the labour movement a prophetic anticipation of its own possibilities. He was a worker, with all the limitations from which no worker ever completely escapes, and with potentialities and achievements such as few workers aspire after, but of which each worker may be the embodiment.

James Keir Hardie himself was ever too modest to say, but we who were his comrades often thought, that he was a living proof of the truth of the idea that labour could furnish in its own ranks all that was needed to achieve its own emancipation, the proof that labour needed no heaven-sent saviour from the ranks of other classes. He had been denied the ordinary chances of education, he was sent to earn his living at the age of seven, he had to educate himself in the few hours he could snatch from work and sleep, he was blacklisted by the employers as soon as he gave vent to the voice of labour in his district, he had to face unemployment and starvation in his early manhood, and when he began to champion politically the rights of his class he found every prostitute journalist in these islands throwing mud at his character, and defaming his associates.

Yet he rose through it all, and above it all, never faltered in the fight, never failed to stand up for truth and justice as he saw it, and as the world will yet see it.

When the vultures of capital descended upon Dublin, resolved to make Dublin the grave of the new unionism, James Keir Hardie was one of the first to take his stand in the gap of danger by our sides. And when many of our friends weakened or were led astray, in the midst of the clamour of reviling tongues, and rising above it, we could always catch the encouraging accents of James Keir Hardie bidding the Dublin fighters to stand fast.

And when the latest great iniquity was being rushed upon the world, and the contending hosts of Europe were being marshalled by their masters for the work of murder, James Keir Hardie stood resolutely for peace and brotherhood among the nations—refusing to sanction the claim of the capitalist class of any nation to be the voice of the best interests of that nation.

May the earth rest lightly over his bosom.

Workers' Republic, October 2, 1915.

NOTE

James Keir Hardie (1856–1915), Labour pioneer, close friend of Connolly, and Chairman of the Bradford conference in 1893 when the Independent Labour Party was founded.

A LABOUR DAY SPEECH IN DUBLIN

MR. James Connolly said that, despite the doubts, the fears, and the hints of some people, we had this year a magnificent turn out. He found some difficulty in speaking to them that day. To make himself heard he would require to have the lungs of a bull, and to steer clear of the Defence of the Realm Act required the subtlety of a lawyer, so they would understand his position. We were living in strange and moving times. The powers that be had seized upon Seán McDermott, Seán Milroy and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington for saying what had already been said a thousand times. He, at least, had no desire to go to gaol. They had powers that they used to think were oppressive and tyrannical fighting for liberty and the freedom of small nations. "And when I," continued Mr. Connolly, "who have been all my life fighting, in my own way, for these same objects, see such a great change come to pass why should I want to go to prison?" (Laughter and applause). He was therefore going to give them good advice. He advised them all to join the army (Cries of "what army?" "Is it the Citizen Army?") "Well, I won't insult your intelligence by saying which army, but if I am charged for anything I may say here to-day I will call you all as witnesses (if I am allowed) to prove that I advised you all to join the army" (Laughter and applause). His advice then was, "join the army." "fight for freedom," "defend yourselves." He had spent a good deal of his life in decrying force as between man and man, but if force was to be the sole arbiter, then let those who have right on their side gather all the force they can to help them. His complaint with the resolutions was that they did not go far enough. They asked the Government to rebuild the slums, but there was more spent every day on the continent



than would rebuild all Ireland. All Governments were doing this, and would continue doing it until the workers took the world into their own hands, and ran it for the benefit of those who alone did the world's work—the workers. Sir Thomas More had well expressed the position when he wrote "I can see nothing in the Governments of the world but a conspiracy of the rich for the purpose of robbing the poor." He was beheaded, and was it any wonder that they cut off a head that gave utterance to so much wisdom? Peace was a virtue they were told, and for forty years the Home Rule party had been preaching peace, and had got very little for their pains. On the other hand Sir Edward Carson had preached force for a few short months, and had got all he demanded; and after Carson had poured contempt on the law, and had on a hundred platforms urged defiance of the law, he was now Attorney-General, having supreme charge of the enforcement of the law (laughter). I am a law-abiding citizen (laughter). I believe in the law—when it's big enough (laughter). Why had not the Government squelched Carson as they had always been prepared to squelch the labour men? As the result of all this law-breaking Carson was now in the Cabinet, and Home Rule was indefinitely shelved. If they turned to the ranks of labour they would see the only class that never sold Ireland (loud applause). When you stand for labour you stand for Ireland. Join your union and help in the fight to win back your own land for labour. Join in the fight for a free and regenerated Ireland, which will emancipate not alone yourselves but your children and your children's children (loud applause).

Workers' Republic, June 5, 1915.

OUR DISAPPEARING LIBERTIES

ONE of the commonplaces of the political orator is the saying that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance," a saying which implies that the liberties of mankind are continually endangered from the inroads of unscrupulous enemies against whose attacks we must ever be on the alert. It implies also that the normal state of society is a state of war ; that mankind, even amongst the most progressive nations, is ever in danger of seeing its painfully acquired liberties wrested from it and fresh chains substituted, and that consequently they who wish to see progress maintained and the bounds of freedom enlarged must be ever on the watch lest upon some specious excuse they lose in a day what their fathers agonised for generations to win.

This political proverb we seem in peril of forgetting in these troublous times. On every side we see fresh inroads made upon our liberties, but no Irish voice is raised in protest, perhaps no Irish voice dare be raised. But no matter what the risk be, we who essay to voice the hopes and defend the cause of Labour dare not be silent. The needs of the multitude call for expression—it shall not be said they called in vain. If fresh chains are forged for the workers it shall not be said that we by our silence allowed those who trusted us to remain ignorant of the fact that the chains were in preparation.

In the first place we direct attention to the fact that the meanest and cruellest form of conscription is already in active operation in this country. Without consulting anyone as to their opinions upon the justification or otherwise of this war employers are every day giving to their employees the intimation that they must choose between enlistment and starvation. It matters not that the employer may himself be young or

vigorous, or have sons young and vigorous, whilst the workman may have a family of little children depending upon him, that employer sits smoking in his office chair and orders the helpless wage-slave to don a uniform he hates, or suffer dismissal and starvation. No greater violation of the right of the individual has ever been known to history. When a man is ordered to take a deadly weapon and proceed to kill a human being with whom he believes he has no grounds of quarrel, personal or national, if the fear of starvation makes him obey that order, then the person issuing that command is guilty of the foulest crime known to humanity—the murder of a human soul. Against such an attack upon the liberty of the individual we protest, and call upon all to protest. Conscription is bad, we hate the thought of it, but conscription is at least openly brutal ; *this conscription by starvation is foul with the foulness of Hell.* We are not alone in this belief. There are thousands who believe in the justness of this war who are sickened with loathing of the means taken to obtain soldiers to carry it on.

Throughout Ireland every day we read of prosecutions under the Defence of the Realm Act in which the triviality of the charges are such as are calculated to bring more contempt than respect upon those responsible. For that we do not repine, nor pretend to repine. But when it appears that the liberty of the most respectable man or woman in this country is absolutely at the mercy of the most disreputable and drunken soldier that ever disgraced a uniform, it is time to call a halt. In many cases we have seen drunken soldiers deliberately pick quarrels with respectable civilians, and after abusing and ill-treating them call upon the police to arrest those whom they had abused and ill-treated. The police always obey, and the magistrates always convict. On the tram, in the streets, in places of amusement or refreshment, nowadays it is a positive danger to be in the proximity of a soldier. Many of these are decent, cleanly enough, but at any time the lowest amongst

them may elect to force his gross conversation upon you, and should you resent, the services of the police are called in and a term of imprisonment is certain.

On Sunday whilst the Dublin Labour Day procession was going to the Phoenix Park one of those rowdies attempted to ride a bicycle right through the thickest ranks of the processionists ; others on the ground in the Park endeavoured by ribald language and horseplay to stir up trouble wherever they saw groups of policemen convenient to their activities, but fortunately the demonstrators strong in the consciousness of their own power were not moved to active hostility.

We wonder if the governing authorities are really aware of all this. Surely no one can be so fatuous as to imagine that the British Army can be popularised by such methods. If we did believe that this kind of thing had really the support of the government we should not waste our space in chronicling it ; it is because we realise that it may spread upward that we speak ere it be too late. Magistrates, and soldiers and policemen and Coalition Cabinets must be made to understand that they all exist in theory for the sake of serving the civilian. If the contrary obtains, if, as seems to be the danger in Ireland, the civilian is subordinated to the soldier, and becomes a dog for all those we have named to kick and abuse, then it will become very difficult indeed to understand wherein lies that constitutional freedom we have lately heard so much about.

The liberty of public meeting is also rapidly becoming a thing of the past in Ireland, as far as it is or may be used for the criticism of the activities of the government or its functionaries ; and yet it is this very right of the subject to criticise the governing bodies which is the very essence of freedom in a constitutionally governed country. Without the freedom of the press and the right of public meeting there is no citizenship ; there are only the relations of subject and rulers, of slaves and slave-drivers. The question of whether the press is or is not

wrong in its criticisms, or whether the public meeting does or does not advocate wise measures or use wise language has no bearing upon the matter. The press criticisms are subject to the judgment of the readers ; the public meeting stands or falls with the justice of its cause. To allow either to be judged or punished by those against whom they are directed, is to abolish all constitutional guarantees and to establish the naked rule of force. Against that we protest with all our strength. It is idle to speak of great national emergencies requiring such suppression of liberties. Great national emergencies can only be met by calling upon the reserves of good in our national character, by invoking the aid of all that is best and ennobling. Whatever cause seeks to flourish by stifling criticism and imprisoning thought is a hateful cause, and can only rely upon the support of those natures who turn instinctively to darkness and obscurity.

For all who love the light for the help it brings to the cause of progress the duty is plain. Every one of the liberties our fathers won must be fought for tenaciously ! War or no war none of our hard won rights should be, or will be, surrendered without a struggle.

Workers' Republic, June 5, 1915.

WHY THE CITIZEN ARMY HONOURS ROSSA

IN honouring O'Donovan Rossa the workers of Ireland are doing more than merely paying homage to an unconquerable fighter. They are signifying their adhesion to the principle of which Rossa till his latest days was a living embodiment—the principle that the freedom of a people must in the last analysis rest in the hands of that people—that there is no outside force capable of enforcing slavery upon a people really resolved to be free, and valuing freedom more than life. We in Ireland have often forgotten that truth, indeed it may be even asserted that only an insignificant minority of the nation ever learned it. And yet, that truth once properly adopted as the creed of a nation would become the salvation of the nation.

For slavery is a thing of the soul, before it embodies itself in the material things of the world. I assert that before a nation can be reduced to slavery its soul must have been cowed, intimidated or corrupted by the oppressor. Only when so cowed, intimidated or corrupted does the soul of a nation cease to urge forward its body to resist the imposition of the shackles of slavery ; only when the soul so surrenders does any part of the body consent to make truce with the foe of its national existence.

When the soul is conquered the articulate expression of the voice of the nation loses its defiant accent, and taking on the whining colour of compromise, begins to plead for the body. The unconquered soul asserts itself, and declares its sanctity to be more important than the interests of the body ; the conquered soul ever pleads first that the body may be saved even if the soul is damned.

For generations this conflict between the sanctity of the soul and the interests of the body has been waged in Ireland.

The soul of Ireland preached revolution, declared that no blood-letting could be as disastrous as a cowardly acceptance of the rule of the conqueror, nay, that the rule of the conqueror would necessarily entail more blood-letting than revolt against the rule. In fitful moments of spiritual exaltation Ireland accepted that idea, and such men as O'Donovan Rossa becoming possessed of it became thenceforth the living embodiment of that gospel. But such supreme moments passed for the multitude, and the nation as a nation sank again into its slavery, and its sole articulate expression to reach the ears of the world were couched in the fitful accents of the discontented, but spiritless slave—blatant in his discontent, spiritless in his acceptance of subjection as part of the changeless order of things.

The burial of the remains of O'Donovan Rossa in Irish soil, and the functions attendant thereon must inevitably raise in the mind of every worker the question of his or her own mental attitude to the powers against which the departed hero was in revolt. That involves the question whether those who accept that which Rossa rejected have any right to take part in honour paid to a man whose only title to honour lies in his continued rejection of that which they have accepted. It is a question each must answer for himself or herself. But it can neither be answered carelessly, nor evaded.

The Irish Citizen Army in its constitution pledges its members to fight for a Republican Freedom for Ireland. Its members are, therefore, of the number who believe that at the call of duty they may have to lay down their lives for Ireland, and have so trained themselves that at the worst the laying down of their lives shall constitute the starting point of another glorious tradition—a tradition that will keep alive the soul of the nation.

We are, therefore, present to honour O'Donovan Rossa by right of our faith in the separate destiny of our country, and our faith in the ability of the Irish workers to achieve that destiny.

Rossa Souvenir, July, 1915.

THE MAN AND THE CAUSE !

ON Sunday, August First, we propose to pay public homage in Dublin to the remains and memory of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. It is well then that we strive to make clear not only to the public, but to ourselves, upon what grounds that homage is paid. We belong to the working class of Ireland, and strive to express the working class point of view. Always and ever the working class movement seeks after clearness of thought, as a means to the accomplishment of working class aims. The middle class may and does deceive itself with finely turned phrases, and vague generalising of still vaguer aspirations, but the working class can think and speak only in language hard and definite, as hard and definite as the conditions of working class life. We have no room in our struggle for illusions—least of all for illusions about freedom.¹

O'Donovan Rossa represents to us a revolutionary movement the least aristocratic and the most plebeian that ever raised itself to national dignity in Ireland. It was a movement that resting upon the masses of people in Ireland, and drawing its inspirations from the hearts of that people, was successful in inspiring its followers with such a belief in their own ability to conquer and master the future, that it nerved them to conspire for a revolt against the British Empire at a time when that Empire was at peace with all the world. The mere conception of such a struggle, the stark naked fact that such a project was ever even mooted, in itself stamps as heroes all who cherished and suffered for it. Grand indeed must have been the souls, magnificent must have been the courage, splendid the idealism of the men and women who with the awful horror of the famine of Black '47, and inglorious '48, still in their minds were yet capable of rising to the spiritual level of challenging the power

of England in 1865 or 1867. There were giants in those days ! Are we pigmies in these ?

These men realised that no nation is conquered until its mind is conquered, until it accepts defeat. No nation capable of, however futilely and impotently, denying with arms in the hands of even a few of its sons that it is conquered and submerged in its conqueror, can be considered as having lost its existence. In the present European hell-broth the diplomats, writers and speakers of the world freely discuss the chances of re-establishing many nations long subdued and banished from the roll of nations, but in no one of these discussions does the name of Ireland figure. Because Ireland has surrendered its separate national identity—Ireland has become a mere geographical expression. To the world Ireland speaks through its elected representatives, through its press, through its great organs of public opinion, and so speaking has announced itself a loyal province of the British Empire.

The sons of Ireland who are in arms are in arms for England, the blood of Ireland that flows in torrents every day flows for England, the Irish men who die fighting like heroes and demi-gods die fighting for England. Ireland knows them not, can never number them amongst her possessions, can never tell the tale of their sufferings and exploits as sufferings and exploits for her.

And yet Ireland dare not blame them ! The least of these, our brothers, would have fought for Ireland if those who spoke in Ireland's name had but had the courage to call them, to summon them to the sacrifice. But all, all failed in the supreme moment of destiny. And it seems to us that when the eternal reckoning is made, God in His infinite wisdom will deal less harshly with the Irish Tommies in the English service than He will with the unscrupulous politicians, or blatant revolutionaries, who stood by in silence and let our poor brothers march out to their fruitless martyrdom in Flanders or the Dardanelles.

They shrank from the responsibility of giving the word not realising that they thereby took on the more shameful responsibility of failing to give the word.

Rossa was one of the men who in the days of another generation assumed the responsibility from which these men shrank, and assumed it amid greater difficulties. He had to face not only the possibility of defeat at the hands of a foreign tyrant, but he had also to face the certainty of odium and hatred from those he was prepared to die to liberate. Every "respectable" class in the country was against the Fenians, all the press was against them, most of the clergy denounced them from the altar, all the members of parliament hated them with a fierce and malevolent hatred. They were accused of conspiracy to destroy religion, a priest refused to solemnise the marriage of Rossa himself, alleging that he was outside the pale of the Church, every conceivable wickedness was imputed them, they were said to be enemies of the family, of society, of morals.²

Against such enemies they held their own, and if they failed to emancipate their country or win for it a place amongst the nations of the earth, they at least succeeded in establishing in the mind of the world the fact of the independent existence of Ireland. Their greatest enemies were those of their own race. They failed, but it was a failure more glorious than many a victory. But its glory consisted in the fact that against all odds, and in spite of the calculations of the trimmers and wise-acres there were proven to be in Ireland thousands of men and women who were prepared to affirm with their lives that Ireland was a nation with an independent destiny of its own. Neither terrified nor corrupted, the Fenians redeemed the honour of their nation, and we of the working class are proud to remember that those heroes were of our own class.

When we honour Rossa we honour in him the fearless representative of a great movement—a movement that accom-

plished great things. We honour the latest of those who in days of darkness pledged their faith to an Irish Republic, and kept that faith unsullied to the last.

We on our part affirm that we march behind the remains because we are prepared to fight for the same ideals. And we shall be all the more nerved for fight when we remember that the banner of Fenianism was upheld by the stalwart hands of the Irish working class of that day, as the militant organisation of the same class to-day is the only body that without reservation unhesitatingly announces its loyalty to the republican principle of national freedom for which the Fenians stood. We are here because this is our place !

Workers' Republic, July 31, 1915.

NOTES

1. O'Donovan Rossa died in New York on June 29, 1915. His body was brought back to Ireland, and the funeral on August 1st, 1915, to Glasnevin from the Dublin City Hall was an imposing demonstration in which the Irish Volunteers, Citizen Army and thousands of people joined. At the graveside Pearse delivered a historic oration.

2. See Rossa's *Prison Life* (1874) pp. 29-30. After a heated argument, Father Leader, P.P., Clonakilty, finally agreed to give an order to the curate of the parish to marry Rossa to his third wife, Mary Jane Irwin.

IRELAND'S TRAVAIL AND IRELAND'S RESURRECTION

NEVER did Ireland see a more soul-stirring outpouring of the Gael than was witnessed on last Sunday, August 1, 1915.

We do not know whether the McManus Funeral—to name the occasion with which it is most customary to draw comparisons—was or was not more imposing in point of numbers than the turn-out in honour of O'Donovan Rossa, but we do know that in all other respects this latter called for a greater exercise of courage and faith in the future than either the McManus or any other demonstration ever seen in Ireland. Let us set forth the position clearly to our own minds.¹

The McManus Funeral was the first sign of the uprising of Irish Nationality after the shameful, sorrowful days of 1847-48 and 1849. Ireland, in the words of James Fintan Lalor, “sank and surrendered to the famine,” and with no resistance of the importance even of a riot had gone down before the blows of the enemy. So completely had she gone down that many of her rebels formally gave up the struggle, and announced their belief that the cause of Ireland's separate existence was a lost cause. The case of M. J. Barry, the gifted author of that splendid revolutionary song, all too seldom sung nowadays, *Bide Your Time*, may be cited as a notable example. But this surrender of Ireland, this defeat of Ireland, was a surrender and defeat inflicted by the enemy against the protests and vain struggles of the representatives of the Irish people.

All the organised life of Ireland protested against the means by which the potato blight was used to create a famine, against the methods employed to make that famine subservient to English policy. Their protests were ineffectual, they who were

willing to let the case go to the arbitrament of battle waited too long and lost their chance, and they who were not so willing were equally unable to stem the tide of demoralisation. "The soul of Ireland sank where that of other nations would soar," and the cause was lost. But the issues were left clear in the public mind. It was still the existence of Ireland against the public policy of England.

For the year preceding the Rossa Funeral the conditions of Ireland were entirely different. The cause of Ireland as a separate nation, as a nation with a separate life, history, and individuality of its own, was again looked upon as a lost cause, and the fate of Ireland was again accepted as being irrevocably and finally blended with that of the British Empire.

But unlike the days of '48 the days of the past twelve months were remarkable for the fact that the abandonment of the cause of Ireland as a separate nationality, the merging of the hopes of Ireland in the success of England, the definite declaration that the British Empire could count Ireland as finally conquered and made "loyal"—all this came not from without, not imposed upon us in the hour of our weakness, but from within, and accepted in the moment of our greatest tactical strength by the leaders trusted by the majority of our people. For twelve months—twelve long dreary agonising months—we have seen war in Ireland, war upon the soul of the Irish people, war upon the traditions, the religious spirit, the holiest aspirations, the centuried hopes of the martyred men and women who had made Ireland famed and respected wherever there are gathered men and women capable of honouring fortitude in disaster, and sublimity of soul in the midst of defeat.

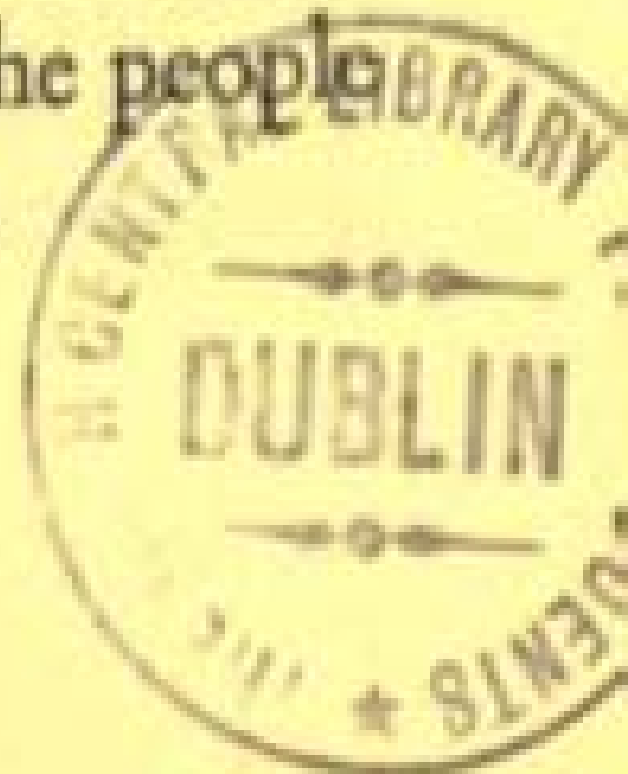
Never has a nation suffered such an onslaught. Belgium in its agonies under the heel of the invaders, nor Poland in its awful travail, cannot claim to have suffered as Ireland has suffered since war was declared. Betrayed and deserted by all but a faithful few, Ireland was attacked by every poisonous

agency ever brought to bear upon the mind and soul of a people. Her religion, her love of nationality, her strict sexual morality, her natural affection for the weak, her sympathy for suffering and distress—every high and noble instinct implanted in her by ages of suffering, was appealed to that her children might deny the past of their country, and surrender their hopes of moulding its future. Ireland was asked, nay, was ordered, to deny all that her martyrs had affirmed, to affirm all that her martyrs had denied. And this assault upon the soul of the country was planned and carried out in all its minutest and most revolting details by the men whom a cruel fate had allowed to become the leaders and guides of Irish public opinion.

The fight in Belgium and in Poland are fights for the material possession of towns and cities, the fight in Ireland has been one for the soul of a race—that Irish race which with seven centuries of defeat behind it still battled for the sanctity of its dwelling place.

Old mediaeval legends tell us how in the critical moments of the struggle of an army, or the travail of a nation, some angel or deliveror was sent from above to save those favoured by the Most High. To many people to-day it seems that the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa came to Ireland in such a moment of national agony—came on such a mission of divine uplifting and deliverance. The mists and doubts, the corruption and poisons, the distrust and the treacheries, were blown away, and the true men and women of Ireland saw with pleasure the rally of the nation to the olden ideas—saw the real people of the country solemnly bearing witness to the faith and wisdom of those who had “fought a good fight, and kept the faith.”

The McManus Funeral rallied the people of Ireland after their defeat by the enemy ; the Rossa funeral rallied the people of Ireland after the onslaught of her faithless leaders.



Will the rallied Irish people stand fast as well as he whom they honoured ?

Workers' Republic, August 7, 1915.

NOTES

1. The funeral of Terence Bellew McManus, 1848 veteran in Dublin, November 10, 1861, was according to T. C. Luby, quoting the press of the time, attended by 200,000 people between marchers and spectators, John O'Leary, *Recollections*, Vol. I, p. 163.

THE PARTY VERSUS THE PEOPLE

ON Monday, August 30th, the *Freeman's Journal*¹ devoted a long leading article to telling of the many changes for the better that have been wrought in Ireland for the past forty years. The political changes, the changes in the laws governing the owning and occupying of land, the various ameliorations of the condition of the poor in the country districts, the increase of public control in affairs of local government—all these things were gone into with a wealth of detail and at the same time with a florid style and boastfulness of description that the mere parliamentarian has made us all familiar with to the point of nausea. And why are we treated to this story? We are treated to this story in an attempt to silence the critics of the Home Rule Party by representing that all the great and beneficent changes mentioned in the *Freeman* are due to the activities of that Party, and that therefore the critics of the Party are foolish and ignorant, or are basely ungrateful.

Readers of the *Freeman's Journal* if they can be deceived by such rubbish are surely unfit to be entrusted with the franchise, or, indeed, with any power over the destinies of their country. The benefits that have been gained, and some of them are undoubted, have been gained by the heroic fighting and sacrifices of the Irish people, and a political party was only one, and not the most important one, of the many weapons forged and used by the Irish people during that fighting, and as a result of their sacrifices. Landlordism in its worst phases was not abolished, the right of a tenant to security in his tenure was not secured, the purchase of proprietary rights by the tenantry was not accomplished by the mere presence of eighty-five spouters in the British House of Commons. On the contrary, these vain glorious gentlemen were only able to secure a hearing

by virtue of the fact that the Land League by its fighting in Ireland had brought this country into civil war, and had so utterly destroyed the value of Irish landed property that not a moneylender in Europe would then loan money upon its security. The Home Rule Party were merely the ambassadors at a Foreign Court—ambassadors who remained powerless until the popular armies in Ireland had struck down landlordism in spite of evictions, battering rams, imprisonment and death. The extent of our indebtedness to the Home Rule Party can be gauged by measuring the relative achievements of the people who fought and won the fight on the land question—a fight fought and won outside Parliament—and the people who fought and lost the battle of Home Rule—a purely parliamentary battle.

The people met all the combined forces of landlordism and the British Crown, broke up the social system they had imposed upon the agricultural population, and tore a measure of social freedom and economic security from their reluctant grasp. The Irish parliamentarians met the British politicians on their own chosen field of battle—and lost every move of the game. Every time the astute British politicians called for a sacrifice on the part of the Irish Home Rule Party that party yielded the point and sacrificed their principles. They yielded to sacrifice Ulster and divide their country, they yielded the control of taxation, they yielded control over the Post Office, Customs and Excise ; in short, they yielded everything that gives life and power to a nation. And finally, when their grandest opportunity came in the breath of war they yielded up countless thousands of the lives of their trusting fellow-countrymen.

And in return they achieved—NOTHING. Home Rule, pitiful abortion as it is, is hung up, and side by side with the law suspending it is framed the declaration of the English Prime Minister that it would in his opinion be unthinkable to force Home Rule upon Orange Ulster. So that the politicians

as a result of their forty years babbling in the wilderness at Westminster can only record their failure to achieve that which was to them as the breath of their nostrils, whereas the Irish people fighting in Ireland upon the battleground of their farms, leagues, and trade unions, have compelled an unwilling legislature to pass measure after measure enacting as law that which the power of the people had already won as rights.

As servants of England the members of the Home Rule Party are perhaps entitled to their salaries, but if their claim to £400 per year is based upon achievements for Ireland the claim is but an impudent attempt to obtain money under false pretences.

Workers' Republic, September 4, 1915.

NOTES

1. Then the daily organ of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Founded by Dr. Lucas—or according to others by Henry Brooke—in 1763 it had a dramatic life until it ceased publication in 1924, being then the oldest newspaper in Great Britain and Ireland.

GOD HELP THE POOR IRISH

TO all thoughtful labour men and women the recent meeting of the British Trade Union Congress presented a rather sorrowful spectacle. Time was when that Congress was regarded as embodying all the bright hopes and aspirations of a working class rapidly freeing itself from the mental and political fetters inherited from ages of servitude. Time was when the most beloved spokesmen of that Congress were those who most passionately declared that it was the duty of the workers to overthrow all the social, political and military tyrannies rooted in the capitalist system of which the British Empire is the perfected fruit. Time was when the unanimous voice of that Congress declared that the working class had no enemy except the capitalist class--that of its own country at the head of the list. Time was when the orators at all the meetings attendant upon that Congress declaimed their love of human brotherhood, and their contempt for all the racial, religious and national catchcries that were used to keep the peoples separate and warring.

But now ! Alas, how have the mighty fallen ! Gone are all the bright hopes of a class fighting to free itself from fetters, and scornfully contemptuous of the interests or ambitions of its masters. Instead, we have a Congress deliberately putting aside the hopes of the workers in order to help the schemes of murder set on foot by the capitalist state. We have a Congress where a leader like George N. Barnes uses his position to attack his own Union for insisting upon its Trade Union rights ; where a leader like the President of the Congress advises his hearers not to read literature presenting a different view on the war to that popularised by the capitalist newspapers ; where a leader like Ben Tillett foams at the mouth against those who

desire peace as a few months ago he foamed at the mouth against those who desired war ; where every voice belched forth hatred of their brothers under a different government, and where the quarrels fomented by the capitalist class were made more important as standards of worth than services in the interests of Labour, or aspirations for a world where men can live guiltless of plotting the murder of their fellowmen. A Congress which declared against compulsory service or conscription, but in the same breath declared it would accept it if its rulers declared it to be necessary.

We have ere now looked hopefully to the British Trade Union Congress, but our hopes are gone. The British Empire is ruled by the most astute ruling class in the world ; the British working class is the most easily fooled working class in the world.

God help the poor Irish as long as they remain yoked to such a combination.

Workers' Republic, September 18, 1915.

IN PRAISE OF THE EMPIRE

WE want to say a few words in praise of the Empire. Now, do not get startled, or shocked, nor yet think that we are only sarcastic. We are not abandoning our principles, nor forgetting our wrongs, nor giving up as hopeless the fight for our rights, nor yet exercising the slave's last privilege—that of sneering at his masters.

We do not love the Empire ; we hate it with an unqualified hatred, but, nevertheless, we admire it. Why should we not !

Consider well what this Empire is doing to-day, and then see if you can withhold your admiration.

At the present moment this Empire has dominions spread all over the seven seas. Everywhere it holds down races and nations, that it might use them as its slaves, that it might use their territories as sources of rent and interest for its aristocratic rulers, that it might prevent their development as self-supporting entities and compel them to remain dependent customers of English produce, that it might be able to strangle every race or nation that would enter the field as a competitor against British capitalism or assert its independence of the British capitalist.

To do this it stifles the ancient culture of India, strangles in its birth the new-born liberty of Egypt, smothers in the blood of ten thousand women and children the republics of South Africa, betrays into the hands of Russian despotism the trusting nationalists of Persia, connives at the partition of China, and plans the partition of Ireland.

North, south, east and west it has set its foot upon the neck of peoples, plundering and murdering, and mocking as it outraged. In the name of a superior civilization it has crushed the development of native genius, and in the name of superior

capitalist development it has destroyed the native industries of a sixth of the human race.

In the name of liberty it hangs and imprisons patriots, and whilst calling High Heaven to witness its horror of militarism it sends the shadow of its swords between countless millions and their hopes of freedom.

Despite all this, despite the fact that every day the winds of the earth are laden with the curses which its unwilling subjects in countless millions pray upon its flag, yet that flag flies triumphantly over every one of its possessions, even whilst its soldiers are reeling discomfited and beaten before the trenches of Turk and German.

The British Empire never fought a white European foe single-handed, never dared yet to confront an equal unaided, yet it has laid upon its subjects everywhere from Ireland to India and from India to Africa, the witchcraft of belief in its luck, so that even whilst they see it beaten to its knees they are possessed with the conviction that it will pull through in some fashion. The Devil's children have their father's luck !

Without that belief, without that conviction of the slaves that their master must remain in possession of his mastership, the British Empire would to-day be everywhere lit up with the fires of mutiny and insurrection.

In the labour movement we have long ago learned that it is the worker who is convinced of the power of the capitalist, who believes that "the big fellows are sure to win," it is he who really keeps labour in subjection, defeats strikes and destroys Trade Unions. The problem before the labour movement is always to find out how this hopeless feeling can be destroyed, and confidence implanted in the bosom where despair usually reigns.

The moment the worker no longer believes in the all-conquering strength of the employer is the moment when the way opens out to the emancipation of our class.



The master class realise this, and hence all their agencies bend their energies towards drugging, stupefying and poisoning the minds of the workers—sowing distrust and fear amongst them.

The ruling class of the British Empire also know it, and hence they also utilise every agency to spread amongst the subject races a belief in the luck of England, in the strength of England, in the omnipotence of England. That belief is worth more to the British Empire than ten army corps ; when it goes, when it is lost, there will be an uprising of resurgent nationalities—and a crash of falling Empires.

Should we not therefore admire the Empire that in face of danger can yet fascinate and enthrall the minds of its slaves and keep them in mental as well as physical subjection . . . ?

Workers' Republic, October 9, 1915.

A WAR FOR CIVILISATION

WE are hearing and reading a lot just now about a war for civilisation. In some vague, ill-defined manner we are led to believe that the great empires of Europe have suddenly been seized with a chivalrous desire to right the wrongs of mankind, and have sallied forth to war, giving their noblest blood and greatest measures to the task of furthering the cause of civilisation.

It seems unreal, but it may be possible. Great emotions sometimes master the most cold and calculating individuals, pushing them on to do that which in their colder moments they would have sneered at. In like manner great emotions sometimes master whole communities of men and women, and nations have gone mad, as in the Crusades, over matters that did not enter into any scheme of selfish calculation.

But in such cases the great emotions manifested themselves in at least an appropriate manner. Their actions under the influence of great emotions had a relation to the cause or the ideal for which they were ostensibly warring.

In the case of the war for civilisation, however, we look in vain for any action which in itself bears the mark of civilisation. As we count civilisation it means the ascendancy of industry and the arts of industry over the reign of violence and pillage. Civilisation means the conquest by ordered law and peaceful discussion of the forces of evil, it means the exaltation of those whose strength is only in the righteousness of their cause over those whose power is gained by a ruthless seizing of domination founded on force.

Civilisation necessarily connotes the gradual supplanting of the reign of chance and muddling by the forces of order and careful provision for the future ; it means the levelling up of

classes, and the initiation of the people into a knowledge and enjoyment of all that tends to soften the natural hardships of life and to make that life refined and beautiful.

But the war for civilisation has done none of those things—aspire to do none of these things. It is primarily a war upon a nation whose chief crime is that it refuses to accept a position of dependence, but insists instead upon organising its forces so that its people can co-operate with nature in making their lives independent of chance, and independent of the goodwill of others.

The war for civilisation is a war upon a nation which insists upon organising its intellect so as to produce the highest and best in science, in art, in music, in industry ; and insists moreover upon so co-ordinating and linking up all these that the final result shall be a perfectly educated nation of men and women.

In the past civilisation has been a heritage enjoyed by a few upon a basis of the brutalisation of the vast multitude ; that nation aims at a civilisation of the whole resting upon the whole, and only made possible by the educated co-operation of an educated whole.

The war for civilisation is waged by a nation like Russia, which has the greatest proportion of illiterates of any European power, and which strives sedulously to prevent education where it is possible, and to poison it where prohibition is impossible.

The war for civilisation is waged by a nation like Britain which holds in thrall a sixth of the human race, and holds as a cardinal doctrine of its faith that none of its subject races may, under penalty of imprisonment and death, dream of ruling their own territories. A nation which believes that all races are subject to purchase, and which brands as perfidy the act of any nation which, like Bulgaria, chooses to carry its wares and its arms to any other than a British market.

This war for civilisation in the name of neutrality and small

nationalities invades Persia and Greece, and in the name of the interests of commerce seizes the cargo of neutral ships, and flaunts its defiance of neutral flags.

In the name of freedom from militarism it establishes military rule in Ireland, battling for progress it abolishes trial by jury, and waging war for enlightened rule it tramples the freedom of the press under the heel of a military despot.

Is it any wonder then that that particular war for civilisation arouses no enthusiasm in the ranks of the toiling masses of the Irish nation?

But there is another war for civilisation in which these masses are interested. That war is being waged by the forces of organised labour.

Civilisation cannot be built upon slaves; civilisation cannot be secured if the producers are sinking into misery; civilisation is lost if they whose labour makes it possible share so little of its fruits that its fall can leave them no worse than its security.

The workers are at the bottom of civilised society. That civilisation may endure they ought to push upward from their poverty and misery until they emerge into the full sunlight of freedom. When the fruits of civilisation, created by all, are enjoyed in common by all, then civilisation is secure. Not till then.

Since this European war started the workers as a whole have been sinking. It is not merely that they have lost in comfort—have lost a certain standard of food and clothing by reason of the increase of prices—but they have lost in a great measure, in Britain at least, all those hard won rights of combination and freedom of action, the possession of which was the foundation upon which they hoped to build the greater freedom of the future.

From being citizens with rights the workers were being driven and betrayed into the position of slaves with duties. Some of them may have been well-paid slaves, but slavery

is not measured by the amount of oats in the feeding trough to which the slave is tied. It is measured by his loss of control of the conditions under which he labours.

We here in Ireland, particularly those who follow the example of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, have been battling to preserve those rights which others have surrendered ; we have fought to keep up our standards of life, to force up our wages, to better our conditions.

To that extent we have been truly engaged in a war for civilisation. Every victory we have gained has gone to increase the security of life amongst our class, has gone to put bread on the tables, coals in the fires, clothes on the backs of those to whom food and warmth and clothing are things of ever pressing moment.

Some of our class have fought in Flanders and the Dardanelles ; the greatest achievement of them all combined will weigh but a feather in the balance for good compared with the achievements of those who stayed at home and fought to secure the rights of the working class against invasion.

The carnival of murder on the continent will be remembered as a nightmare in the future, will not have the slightest effect in deciding for good the fate of our homes, our wages, our hours, our conditions. But the victories of labour in Ireland will be as footholds, secure and firm, in the upward climb of our class to the fulness and enjoyment of all that labour creates, and organised society can provide.

Truly, labour alone in these days is fighting the real *war for civilisation*.

Workers' Republic, October 30, 1915.

FOR THE CITIZEN ARMY

THE Irish Citizen Army was founded during the great Dublin Lock-Out of 1913-14, for the purpose of protecting the working class, and of preserving its right of public meeting and free association. The streets of Dublin had been covered by the bodies of helpless men, women, boys and girls brutally batoned by the uniformed bullies of the British Government.

Three men had been killed, and one young Irish girl murdered by a scab, and nothing was done to bring the assassins to justice.¹ So since justice did not exist for us, since the law instead of protecting the rights of the workers was an open enemy, and since the armed forces of the Crown were unreservedly at the disposal of the enemies of labour, it was resolved to create our own army to secure our rights, to protect our members, and to be a guarantee of our own free progress.

The Irish Citizen Army was the first publicly organised armed citizen force south of the Boyne. Its constitution pledged and still pledges its members to work for an Irish Republic, and for the emancipation of labour. It has ever been foremost in all national work, and whilst never neglecting its own special function has always been at the disposal of the forces of Irish nationality for the ends common to all.

Its influence and presence has kept the peace at all labour meetings since its foundation, and the knowledge of its existence and of the spirit of its members has contributed to prevent the employers and the government from proceeding to extremes against the fighting unions. It has in a true and real sense added many shillings per week to the pay of the union members, since it and it alone has prevented the Government doing in Dublin what it has done in Barry, namely, send soldiers in to

do dockers' work during a strike. Nationally it has done much more.

When the great betrayal was perpetrated on Ireland, and John Redmond and his followers, aided by all the capitalist press of the country, joined in a conspiracy to rush the young men of Ireland into the ranks of the British Army, the first stirring blow struck against that betrayal was the historic meeting in Stephen's Green on the night of Redmond's Mansion House fiasco.

Who took the field that night in spite of the massed battalions of the British Army, waiting the word in every barrack square in Dublin? It was the Irish Citizen Army sprang into the gap, and by its fearless presence gave new heart and hope to the dismayed and betrayed people of Ireland.

When the first deportation order was issued to the first victim, Captain Robert Monteith, who leaped to arms and invited the people of Dublin to hurl their defiance in the teeth of the Government? Who rallied to the meeting despite torrents of rain, and in face of the open demonstration of armed force by the Dublin garrison? Again it was the Irish Citizen Army.²

Who on every occasion on which the enemy has struck his blow at those who stood for freedom has ever hastened to the side of the victims declaring their cause to be its own? **THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY!**

Who, when the protest meeting was held in the Phoenix Park under directions of the Volunteer Committee, were the only armed body to attend and declare their adhesion to the cause of their imprisoned brothers in arms? **THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY!**

An armed organisation of the Irish working class is a phenomenon in Ireland. Hitherto the workers of Ireland have fought as parts of the armies led by their masters, never as members of an army officered, trained, and inspired by men

of their own class. Now, with arms in their hands, they propose to steer their own course, to carve their own future.

Neither Home Rule, nor the lack of Home Rule, will make them lay down their arms.

However it may be for others, for us of the Citizen Army there is but one ideal—an Ireland ruled, and owned, by Irish men and women, sovereign and independent from the centre to the sea, and flying its own flag outward over all the oceans.

We cannot be swerved from our course by honeyed words, lulled into carelessness by freedom to parade and strut in uniforms, nor betrayed by high-sounding phrases.

The Irish Citizen Army will only co-operate in a forward movement. The moment that forward movement ceases it reserves to itself the right to step out of the alignment, and advance by itself if needs be, in an effort to plant the banner of freedom one reach further towards its goal . . .

Workers' Republic, October 30, 1915.

NOTES

1. James Nolan and John Byrne from injuries during the 1913 baton charges; C. Byrne of Dun Laoghaire who died after ill-treatment in prison; Alice Brady shot by an imported "free labourer" or "scab."

2. The deportation order was served on Captain Monteith, November 13, 1914. The protest meeting was held at Stephen's Green, Sunday, November 15 and addressed by William O'Brien, Sean Milroy, William Partridge, Madame Markievicz, P. T. Daly, The O'Rahilly and Connolly. See *Caseant's Last Adventure*, Monteith, pp. 26-34.

DIPLOMACY

WHAT is diplomacy ? It is the name for the business of conducting the relations between governments. Whatever has to do with the conduct of international relations is diplomatic, and the art of conducting the correspondence and of adjusting those relations is diplomacy.

Now, do you understand ? The language in which all diplomats carry on the business throughout the world is French, just as the predominant language in which trade was conducted internationally until recently was English.

The nations, that is to say, robbed each other in English, and fooled each other in French.

The English have acquired somehow the reputation of being blunt, business-like people, with a frank, open nature, whereas the history of their dealings with other people show them to have been the shrewdest masters of the diplomatic game the world has ever seen.

In Ireland, as their own State Papers frankly declare, they employed forgery, bribery, and murder as part of their daily weapons for the subjugation of the country ; in India their own chief apologist, Lord Macaulay, records that Lord Clive, the founder of their Indian Empire, forged the name of an Indian patriot to serve the interests of the Empire, and Warren Hastings, when put on trial for extortion, blackmail, bribery, torture, wholesale plunder, invasion and conquest of neutral states, was proven guilty but let off scot free on the grounds that he had indulged in those crimes *for the good of the Empire*.

In Europe the same guileless John Bull has assiduously kept stirring the pot of international hatreds and jealousies, pitting nations against nations, and ever fanning the embers of war into consuming flames. Sometimes he supported subject nations

against their tyrants, sometimes despots against their struggling subjects, sometimes preached the doctrine of national rights, sometimes (as at the Congress of Vienna, 1815) acted the part of the chief criminal in dividing and parcelling out ancient nations. Ready to fly to arms to defend the rights of neutrals, still more ready to trample roughshod over neutral rights when it served his purpose ; ever appealing to God and the Bible, and always convinced that crimes committed by John Bull became virtues, and virtuous acts by his enemies became blasphemous mockeries of the Most High.

British Diplomacy is hypocrisy incarnate, but as every false prophet comes in odd moments to believe in the truth of his false doctrine, so John Bull finds Englishmen to honestly believe that which their rulers unctuously pretend. Hence we have the phenomenon of the same section of the English people which honestly denounced their Government's action in betraying Persia to the Russians, quite as honestly believing in the action of the same Government when it cries out against the invasion of Belgium.

Cynical onlookers might say that the rape and betrayal of Persia was regarded as a harmless joke because it was done by England's ally, but the invasion of Belgium was a monstrous crime because it was done by England's enemy.

Even if that were true it would not affect the case. Diplomacy has a code of honour of its own, has a standard by which it tests all things. That code has no necessary relation to the moral code, that standard has nothing to do with the righteousness of any cause.

The diplomat holds all acts honourable which bring him success, all things are righteous which serve his ends. If cheating is necessary, he will cheat ; if lying is useful, he will lie ; if bribery helps, he will bribe ; if murder serves, he will order murder ; if burglary, seduction, arson or forgery brings success nearer, all and each of these will be done.

And through it all the diplomat will remain the soul of honour—a perfect English gentleman.

You remember the Morocco case. England, France, and Spain were engaged in a sweet little plundering expedition to Morocco. Germany thought her interests were being overlooked, and sent a gunboat. There was nearly a war. Then England, France and Spain made a treaty, oh, a fine chivalrous, noble treaty ! They agreed to maintain, respect and guarantee the independence of Morocco. And they showed that treaty to Germany, and Germany was satisfied.

But there were secret clauses of that treaty which they did not show to Germany. These secret clauses bound the signatories to the treaty to divide up and annex the country whose independence the public clauses of the treaty had pledged them to safeguard. They did not show these secret clauses to Germany. Oh, no ! But Germany found out about them, and there would have been war but for the fact that the Germans, though great soldiers, are rotten diplomats.

Just imagine the situation. When your grocer sells you sand over the counter for sugar he is a swindler, and you send him to jail unless he escapes into the Corporation and becomes an Alderman.

But when the representatives of certain European countries sit down at the table with those of another, show them the text of a treaty, solemnly assuring them that it is a correct copy, whilst all the time they have in their pockets a totally different treaty with clauses entirely opposed to the copy shown, the swindling representatives are held in high honour by their governments because it is good diplomacy.

We had the same game here in Ireland. The Irish public have been shown a copy of a Home Rule Bill, and Sir Edward Carson has in his pocket a copy of an Amending Bill which will destroy the Home Rule Bill—said Amending Bill having been agreed upon by the same English statesmen who prepared the Bill it is to destroy.

That is diplomacy. And the act of those who pin their faith to the Home Rule Act and ignore the Amending Bill is—well, foolery.

We have said the Germans are rotten diplomats. It sounds strong, and in view of the espousal of their cause by so many nations in Europe it may seem foolish. But it is cold fact. The German victories, not excepting the adhesion of Turkey and Bulgaria, have been military victories, or due to their unquestioned military superiority on the field of battle.

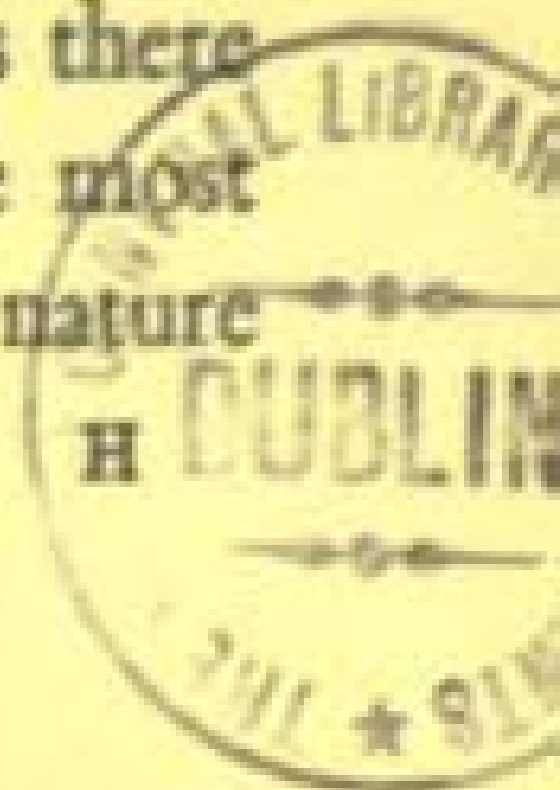
Every dispassionate onlooker in Europe recognises certain facts. They see that no one of the Allies could stand up a day against Germany, if isolated from the others.

To put it in the language of a labour dispute : If Germany struck against Russia the strike would only last a day, and work would be resumed the next morning on German terms ; if Germany struck against France the dispute might drag out till dinner time, but if the strike was only against Great Britain the fight would be over by breakfast time, and the German workmen would be able to finish a three-quarter day after the row was over.

Now observe. The onlookers know that the alliance against Germany cannot last, but must break up as it is made up of so many discordant elements. It is unnatural, and whether it last a year, or three years, or ten years is immaterial, break up it will.

On the other hand, Germany is the one solid factor that must last, which cannot break up, which nature will hold together. *Victorious or defeated, Germany will keep together ; victorious or defeated, the Allies will break up—and probably quarrel amongst themselves.*

Commonsense then sends the neutral nations to Germany's side, and despite the magnificent lying of the daily press there they will remain. Or to put it in another way. The most magnificent military force in the war is the one that by nature



will remain a constant undivided factor in the future, and on the other side is an impotent military force under different commands, with divided allegiances, and with divergent interests.

Who could hesitate? No, the victories of Germany are military victories, not diplomatic ones. If Germany had to depend on her diplomacy she would be defeated. She had one great chance to declare war with the public opinion of Europe on her side, and with the sympathies of Ireland so enlisted, that not all the lying press nor crawling parliamentarians could have turned this country against her.

That chance came when the Mail boats for America ceased to call at Queenstown. Certain patriotic Irishmen persuaded a German steamship company—The Hamburg-America line we believe—to announce that it was about to make Queenstown a port of call so that Ireland would still maintain her communication with America. Everything was ready, and all Ireland was excited over the prospect. But British diplomacy stepped in and intimated to the German government that it would consider it an unfriendly act if the company in question sent in its boats to Ireland.

The German Government gave orders for the arrangements to be cancelled, and Ireland was once more shut out from all regular foreign intercourse, and its people restricted to the necessity of going to England when they wanted to go somewhere else—of going east when they wanted to go west, north, or south.

If Germany had not been a bungling fool at diplomacy it would have fought on that question—fought on the right to assist the people of Ireland, to trade with the people of Ireland, to carry goods to and from the people of Ireland. But the peace-loving German Emperor shrank from the quarrel, not realising that from that moment every agency in the British Government was alert to seize every opportunity to precipitate

a quarrel upon some point not so dangerously appealing to Irish sympathies for German arms as a quarrel over Queenstown would have been.

The pretext for this war is a real humiliation for German diplomacy, as real as the war itself is a triumph for German arms. German arms will win this war, but we would not be surprised to see British diplomacy pluck the fruits of victory from the dust of military defeat. Ireland and Ireland alone could prevent that, but Ireland has the brand of the slave on her brow—numbing fear of the tyrant in her soul. “The British Ambassadors at Paris,” said Andrew Jackson after the war of 1812, “threw dust in the eyes of our United States envoys, but they could not throw dust in the eyes of my Texas riflemen at New Orleans.”

Can Ireland burst through the wiles of British diplomacy in like manner? Who shall answer?

Workers' Republic, November 6, 1915.

RECRUITING THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY

DURING a dispute between the shipping companies and their men at the Dublin Docks in the autumn of 1915 a large number of workers were locked out. Connolly in the *Workers' Republic*, November 6, 1915, showed how this was turned to the advantage of the Irish Citizen Army :

A large section has been formed for drill, and every day the men are instructed in military exercises. We are thus rapidly becoming the best drilled body of men in Ireland. For a time it was difficult to get our men trained, as dock work keeps men employed always in the evenings, but the employers are kindly helping us to get over that difficulty. Company after company locks out its men, and then we bring them up to Liberty Hall and take advantage of the opportunity to drill and train them. When each dispute is settled that squad of men goes back to work, and some other squad gets locked out, and we get a chance to train *them*.

Thus the whole quay is getting drilled, and the Irish Citizen Army has a larger reserve of drilled fighting men than any force in Dublin. It is a great game ! And all these men are ready to fight—in Ireland. Perhaps that is not what the employers are aiming at. Perhaps. But every musketry instructor can tell you that people often hit what they did not aim at. The great danger is that the dispute may be over before the men are thoroughly drilled. And when it is over the men will be back to work at the same rates of pay as their brothers have been conceded. And not a penny less.

Workers' Republic, November 6, 1915.

IRELAND—DISAFFECTED OR REVOLUTIONARY ?

“ Youth of Ireland, stand prepared,
Revolution's dread abyss
Burns beneath us all but bared . . . ”

SO sang Clarence Mangan in the days of '48. But he sang in vain. The music of his verse charmed the cultured intellect of the leaders, but could not break through their refined distrust of the mob, nor inspire them with a confidence in its willingness to respond to the call. And the verse of Mangan never appealed to the emotions of the mob itself.¹

The revolutionary position was there, the people were ready, but the leaders were lacking in dash and recklessness. As another writer has it of another body of leaders similarly situated :

“ Having all their lives sung of the glories of the Revolution, when it rose up before them they ran away appalled.”

These reflections are inspired by the fact that Ireland is at present in the midst of a number of anniversaries of the great days of its patriot dead. On all hands celebrations are being or have been arranged, much oratory is on tap, many verses of more or less merit are pouring forth, and all sorts of men and women are drawing lessons and pointing morals for the edification of the Irish reading public.

It is felt that we are now in stirring times, and many people dare even to hope that we are in a revolutionary epoch. It is well then that we of the Irish working class should try and understand the position of the revolutionists of the past, that we may the better realise our position in the present.

We do not believe that this is a revolutionary epoch, no more than the days of Mitchel were revolutionary in Ireland,

nor the days of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien. An epoch, to be truly revolutionary, must have a dominating number of men with the revolutionary spirit—ready to dare all, and take all risks for the sake of their ideals.

In 1848, as later, there were men who talked much of revolution, but when the spirit of the times called upon them to strike they all began to make excuses, to murmur about the danger of premature insurrection, of incomplete preparations, of the awful responsibility of giving the word for insurrection, etc., etc.

In 1848, as later, the real revolutionary sentiment was in the hearts of the people, but for the most part they who undertook to give it articulate expression were wanting in the essential ability to translate sentiment into action. They would have been good historians of a revolutionary movement, but were ~~unable to take that leap~~ who plunge into insurrection. For, be it well understood, an insurrection is always doubtful, a thousand to one chance always exists in favour of the established order and against the insurgents.

Despite all seeming to the contrary we assert that Ireland is not a really revolutionary country. Ireland is a disaffected country which has long been accustomed to conduct constitutional agitations in revolutionary language, and what is worse, to conduct revolutionary movements with a due regard to law and order.

Our constitutionalists have been ready to defy the law ; our revolutionists shine only in legal quirks to evade the letter of the law. The constitutional agitation of the Land League was one prolonged riot of illegality ; the revolutionary movement of our own day shrinks from an openly illegal act as nervously as a coy maiden shrinks from a desired lover.

It is this paradoxical state of affairs that makes Irish politics so puzzling to the outsider. He listens to the politician appealing to the people to cling to constitutional methods, and at the same time exulting in the agrarian reforms gained by trampling

law and order under foot. He hears the revolutionists telling that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity, and then, when her greatest difficulty comes, postponing action on the opportunity in order to see if the politician cannot yet succeed by legal agitation.²

In his brilliant lecture on John Mitchel in the Antient Concert Rooms, on Thursday, November 4th, our friend Mr. P. H. Pearse treated his audience to a splendid review of the tendencies of opinions and movement of currents of thought, that applied so well to our own days that many of the audience forgot that it was an analysis of '48 to which they were listening or supposed to be listening. It is that very similarity which enables us to so clearly understand the nature of the forces that destroyed Mitchel.

The British Government would not wait until the plans of the revolutionists were ready. It has not held Ireland down for 700 years by any such foolish waiting. It struck in its own time, and its blow paralysed the people. The leaders of the people would not follow Mitchel's lead but held the people back by talk about "premature insurrection," and "the desire of the Government to provoke us to act before we are ready," and such like phrases repeated glibly, with the solemnity of owls and the foolishness of idiots, until the golden moment of hot wrath was passed, and the paraders and the strutters had lost the confidence and destroyed the hopes of the nation.

In vain for Clarence Mangan to call to such a people to prepare for revolution. Revolutionists who shrink from giving blow for blow until the great day has arrived, and they have every shoe-string in its place, and every man has got his gun, and the enemy has kindly consented to postpone action in order not to needlessly hurry the revolutionists nor disarrange their plans—such revolutionists only exist in two places—the comic opera stage, and the stage of Irish national politics. We prefer the comic opera brand. It at least serves its purpose.

John Mitchel was not defeated by the British Government. He was defeated by his own associates. There are no John Mitchels left in Ireland, but of such as those who held back the hands of the people who would have rescued him there are still a goodly brood—all of them as legally seditious, as peacefully revolutionary, and as fatal to the hopes of a nation as ever were their forerunners.

O, we latter-day Irish are great orators, and great singers, and great reciters, and great at cheering heroic sentiments about revolution. But we are not revolutionists. Not by a thousand miles !³ Soldiers of a regular army we can be, soldiers with a well-secured base from which our provisions can come up with clock-like regularity, soldiers with our relatives and dependents securely drawing separation allowances, soldiers with an ambulance service working automatically according to railway time table, soldiers with unlimited reserves of ammunition, arms, and uniforms. For that kind of war we are ready, aye, ready.

But no revolution in history ever had any of these things. None ever will have. Hence we strictly confine ourselves to killing John Bull with our mouths.

We have opened this week with a quotation from our own Irish poet—an impassioned, soul-felt appeal to the heart of a nation whose heart was greater than the spirit of its leaders. We shall close with the words of another poet, an American, a trumpet call to his people on the occasion of a crisis in his nation's history. It would be well if it were laid to heart in Ireland to-day :

Once to every man and nation comes the
moment to decide . . .

Workers' Republic, November 13, 1915.

NOTES

1. "No revolutionary movement is complete without its poetical expression. If such a movement has caught hold of the imagination of the masses, they will seek a vent in song for the aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle. Until the movement is marked by the joyous, defiant, singing of revolutionary songs, it lacks one of the most distinctive marks of a popular revolutionary movement; it is a dogma of a few, and not the faith of the multitude."

Connolly in Introduction, *Songs of Freedom*, New York, 1907.

The quotation in the succeeding paragraph is from Lissagaray's *History of the Commune of 1871*, and refers to the attitude of Louis Blanc and other veterans of the 1848 revolution to the Paris Commune.

2. Referring to rumoured German peace proposals published in the American Press, Connolly asks in the *Workers' Republic*, December 11, 1915: "Where does Ireland come in? Why should Ireland come in? What has she done to deserve separate discussion in the peace terms?" Earlier in the same article Connolly says ironically: "Since the time of O'Connell we have suffered from a peculiar blend of constitutionalism and a mild form of insurrectionism. It might be said with a grain and more than a grain of truth, that our rebel hearts sought articulation through our constitutional mouths, and the sentiments of the rebel heart got distorted in the passage to the lips. Our constitutionalism never loves the Empire, and our rebellion fires no shots at it in anger. Who is to blame? Is anyone to blame? Is the fault in our leaders or in ourselves? Or must we in fatalistic Irish fashion just thank God we are no worse?"

3. "The governing classes can declare unconstitutional whatever political movements they do not like. Knowing this, many Irishmen run into secret societies in order to satisfy their hatred of the Constitution. It is against the Constitution to join a republican secret society. But it is also against the Constitution to keep a dog without a licence. The romance which might attach to the former act is cruelly dissipated by the reflection that the law is as remorseless in hunting down the offender in the latter."

Workers' Republic, September 9, 1898.

THE MANCHESTER MARTYRS

THIS week we are celebrating another anniversary. But it is of a different order to the anniversary of which we spoke of in our last number. That anniversary was of one of Ireland's thinkers—a defiant rebel and preacher of rebellion, but one whose rebellion never got further than the spoken or written word. A thinker and initiator amidst mindless slaves—a scorner and hater of orthodox formulae amidst men who could not think even of rebellion except according to formula, and who refused to rebel because some of the ingredients of their formula were lacking.

This week our Anniversary is not of thinkers, but of doers, of men who when a duty was to be done did not stop to think, but acted, and by their action violated every rule of prudence, sanity, and caution, and in violating them all obeyed the highest dictates of wisdom and achieved immortality.

THE MANCHESTER MARTYRS ! Who were they ? A few words will tell.

Two members of the Fenian organisation—Kelly and Deasy—were trapped in Manchester, and lay awaiting trial in an English prison. The Fenians in that city resolved to rescue them. This they did by stopping the prison van upon the road between Manchester and Salford, breaking open the van, shooting a policeman in the act, and carrying off their comrades under the very eyes of the English authorities.

Out of a number of men arrested for complicity in the deed, three were hanged. These three were ALLEN, LARKIN and O'BRIEN—the three Manchester Martyrs whose memory we honour to-day. Why do we honour them ?

We honour them because of their heroic souls. Let us remember that by every test by which parties in Ireland to-day measure

political wisdom, or personal prudence, the act of these men ought to be condemned. They were in a hostile city, surrounded by a hostile population ; they were playing into the hands of the Government by bringing all the Fenians out in broad daylight to be spotted and remembered ; they were discouraging the Irish people by giving them another failure to record ; they had no hopes of foreign help even if their brothers in Ireland took the field spurred by their action ; at the most their action would only be an Irish riot in an English city ; and finally, they were imperilling the whole organisation for the sake of two men. These were all the sound sensible arguments of the prudent, practical politicians and theoretical revolutionists. But "how beggarly appear words before a defiant deed !"

The Fenians of Manchester rose superior to all the whines about prudence, caution and restraint, and saw only two of their countrymen struck at for loyalty to freedom, and seeing this, struck back at the enemy with blows that are still resounding through the heart of the world. The echo of those blows has for a generation been as a baptismal dedication to the soul and life of thousands of Irish men and women, consecrating them to the service of freedom.

Had Kelly and Deasy been struck at in our time, we would not have startled the world by the vehemence of our blow in return ; we would not have sent out the call for a muster of our hosts to peril all in their rescue. No, we would simply have instructed our typist to look up the office files and see if they had paid up their subscription in the *Cumann Cosanta*,¹ and were entitled to their insurance benefit.

Thus we have progressed in the path of civilised methods, far, far away from the undisciplined hatred and reckless fighting of the '67 men. MORYAH !

ALLEN, LARKIN and O'BRIEN died that the right of their small nationality to independence might be attested by

their blood—died that some day an Irish Republic might live. The song of their martyrdom was written by a man who had laboured hard to prevent the fruition of their hopes ; the prayer of their last moments has become the hackneyed catchword of every political Judas seeking to betray their cause. Everything associated with them has been stolen or corrupted, except the imperishable example of their “defiant deed.” Of that neither men, devils, nor doubters can deprive us.

Oh, the British Empire is great and strong and powerful compared with Ireland. 'Tis true that compared with Germany the Empire is a doddering old miser confronted with a lusty youth—a miser whose only hope is to purchase the limbs and bodies of others to protect her stolen properties. 'Tis true that the Empire cannot stand up alone to *any* European power, that she must have allies or perish. 'Tis true that even with allies her military and financial system is cracking at every point, sweating blood in fear at every pore. But still all the stolen property that England possesses our Irish forefathers have helped to steal, and we are helping to defend.

Was it wise then, or commendable, for the men of '67 to rebel against the Empire that their and our fathers have helped to build or steal? There are thousands of answers to that question, but let the European battlefields of to-day provide the one all-sufficient answer.

All these mountains of Irish dead, all these corpses mangled beyond recognition, all these arms, legs, eyes, ears, fingers, toes, hands, all these shivering putrefying bodies and portions of bodies—once warm living and tender parts of Irish men and youths—all these horrors buried in Flanders or the Gallipoli Peninsula, are all items in the price Ireland pays for being part of the British Empire. All these widows whose husbands were torn from their sides and forced to go to war, their prayers and tears for the ones who will return no more, are another part of the price of Empire. All those fatherless orphans, who

for the last time have heard the cheery laugh of an affectionate father, and who must for years suffer all the bitter hardships of a childhood poorly provided for against want and hunger—all those and their misery are part of the price Ireland pays for Empire. All those shattered, maimed and diseased wrecks of humanity who for years will crowd our poorhouses and asylums, or crawl along our roads and streets affronting our health by their wounds, and our comfort by their appeals for charity—all, all are part of the price Ireland pays for the glory of being an integral part of the British Empire.

And for what do we pay this price? Answer, ye practical ones! Ye men of sense, of prudence, of moderation, of business capacity!

Ireland is rotten with slums, a legacy of Empire. The debt of this war will prevent us from getting money to replace them with sound clean, healthy homes. Every big gun fired in the Dardanelles fired away at every shot the cost of building a home for a working class family. Ireland has the most inefficient educational system, and the poorest schools in Europe. Empire compels us to pay pounds for blowing out the brains of others for every farthing it allows us with which to train our own.

An Empire on which the sun never sets cannot guarantee its men and women as much comfort as is enjoyed by the every-day citizen of the smallest, least military nation in Europe. Nations that know not the power and possessions of Empire have happier, better educated better housed, better equipped, men and women than Ireland has ever known, or can ever know as an integral part of the British Empire.

The British Empire is a piratical enterprise in which the valour of slaves fights for the glory and profit of their masters. The Home Rule Party aspire to be trusted accomplices of that conspiracy, the Manchester Martyrs were its unyielding foes even to the dungeon and the scaffold. Therefore we honour

the memory of the Manchester Martyrs. As future generations shall honour them.

Workers' Republic, November 20, 1915.

NOTES

1. An Insurance Society run by the Irish Volunteers to safeguard its members against victimisation.

CONSCRIPTION

WE see that the time is now here when it may be very dangerous to talk of opposing conscription in Ireland, and yet that opposition must be organised, and to be organised it must be discussed.

It is to be hoped that whatever discussion takes place now, those taking part in it will recognise that the time has gone past for smooth-sounding generalities, or mere political make-believe. We are now living in an era of ruthless brute force, of blood and iron. Whatever effect public opinion may have in times of peace it has little practical effect in time of war. In times of peace human life weighs heavily in the balance, and the most brutal of our rulers shrink from too readily shedding human blood. But in time of war all such considerations vanish, and the spilling of a torrent of blood in the city streets would cause the ruling class no more compunction than the slaughter of game on their estates.

Indeed that lesson has been all too tardily learned by the people and their leaders. One great source of the strength of the ruling class has ever been their willingness to kill in defence of their power and privileges. Let their power be once attacked either by foreign foes, or domestic revolutionists, and at once we see the rulers prepared to kill, and kill, and kill. The readiness of the ruling class to order killing, the small value the ruling class has ever set upon human life, is in marked contrast to the reluctance of all revolutionists to shed blood.

The French Reign of Terror is spoken of with horror and execration by the people who talk in joyful praise about the mad adventure of the Dardanelles. And yet in any one day of battle at the Dardanelles there were more lives lost than in all the nine months of the Reign of Terror.

Should the day ever come when revolutionary leaders are prepared to sacrifice the lives of those under them as recklessly as the ruling class do in every war, there will not be a throne or despotic government left in the world. Our rulers reign by virtue of their readiness to destroy human life in order to reign ; their reign will end on the day their discontented subjects care as little for the destruction of human life as they do.

Hence they who now would oppose conscription must not delude themselves into the belief that they are simply embarking upon a new form of political agitation, with no other risks than attend political agitation in times of peace.

We will not be asked to accept conscription by the British Government unless the British ruling class has made up its mind that only conscription can save the Empire. If it does make up its mind to that measure it will enforce conscription though every river in Ireland ran red with blood.

The people of Ireland have been so long accustomed to temporising, and evading straight issues, that there is great danger that they may fail to recognise the gravity of their action, and attempt to fight conscription as they would attempt a cattle drive, or the making of poteen. That is to say in the spirit of a joke at the expense of the police.

Such an attempt in such a spirit would fare badly against a drastic resolve of the military to "make an example" of the first conscripts who refused to obey. A round dozen corpses of young Irishmen would strike terror into thousands, but would not affect the appetites of those who daily order to their death thousands of young men in the prime of life and vigour.

Oppose conscription, by all means, but let us not teach those who look to us for leadership that such opposition can be conducted on the lines of dodging the police, or any such high jinks of constitutional agitation. Those who oppose it take their lives in their hands. Let them be made to realise that in advance. A fool, and ten thousand times worse than a fool,

is he who would teach them otherwise. Our rulers will "stop at nothing" to attain their ends. They will continue to rule and rob until confronted by men who will stop at nothing to overthrow them.

Workers' Republic, November 27, 1915.



“TRUST YOUR LEADERS !”

TRUST your leaders ! Recently we have been treated to a homily upon the above text. Trust your leaders ; what do you know of their plans and resources, or what amount of confidential information they may possess that is denied to the rank and file ? That is good advice. We endorse it thoroughly ; agree with it in every essential. Your leaders have a right to your confidence. Let them know that you will obey them—that is one kind of confidence. Let them know what the rank and file are thinking and saying—that is another sign of your confidence.¹

The last is the most sacred kind of confidence. It is the confidence you only give to a loved friend, a friend whom you love so much that even at the risk of wounding his feelings you are prepared, for his sake as well as your own, to challenge his judgment and impeach his wisdom. That is the highest kind of confidence—the most sacred kind of trust.

If you are adventuring under a leader of proven judgment in the task you both have set out to perform, do not question his judgment rashly. But if his experience is no more than yours—his judgment untested, and his experience nil, do not leave him to flounder along without that saving criticism which must in peace provide the only possible substitute for the terrible punishment with which mistaken judgment is visited in war. If you do, you are untrue to him, to yourself, and above all to the common cause. “Teach them, O Lord,” said a French writer, “that in the haven of Liberty there are neither heroes nor great men.”

In Ireland, however, we have ever seized upon mediocrities and made them our leaders ; invested them in our minds with all the qualities we idealised, and then when we discovered

that our leaders were not heroes but only common mortals, mediocrities, we abused them, or killed them, for failing to be any better than God made them.

Their failure dragged us down along with them because we had insisted that they were wiser than we were, and had stoned whoever declared them to be common mortals, and not all-wise geniuses. Our real geniuses and inspired apostles we never recognised, nor did we honour them. We killed them by neglect, or stoned them whilst they lived, and then went in reverent procession to their graves when they were dead.

We are raising our voice, or using our pen, to insist upon taking the military leaders of the Irish people into our confidence ; to ask our readers to insist likewise that if the rank and file must obey, so also is it true that the leaders must listen. We see neither heroes nor great men amongst these leaders, and we are devoutly thankful that it is so. Being common mortals like ourselves we shall refuse to invest them with the super-sanctity of gods or the wisdom and foresight of prophets. And above all we refuse, and we counsel all others to refuse, to assume that our policies for Ireland in this crisis are identical until we know that they are. At a time when all they hold dear trembles in the balance, should the armed citizens of Ireland fall in behind leaders without questioning what are the policies of those leaders, or what their outlook upon the immediate future ?

We do not call for public pronouncements from them, but every man is the guardian of his own conscience and responsible to that conscience if he shirks his duty to his country and its cause. By your choice of a leader now you make your choice of the part you shall play in the hour of destiny. How can you make that choice wisely if you do not *know* what that leader's policy for the future is ?

Do not be deceived, nor deceive yourself by words. For instance, when you hear that some one will “ fight conscription,”

push the question until you find out what he means by "fighting" conscription.

The Quakers in England will fight conscription, the Dukhobors of Russia will fight conscription, the "No Conscription Fellowship" is already fighting conscription. But no blows are or will be struck by them—indeed their "fighting" consists in refusing to strike blows. Is that your method, or that of your leaders? Or do you prefer the method of that Catholic priest who recently advised his people to send a deputation of their ten best shots to meet the conscriptors? Words are said to be the medium by which we express our ideas, but in Ireland words are generally the means by which we conceal our ideas. Do not let them be so used in this great game now being played.

It is poor quibbling to say that the *Workers' Republic* stands for reckless fighting and ill-considered action. It does not. The *Workers' Republic* holds that at any time since the war broke out the British Government could have been halted in its inroads upon public liberties in Ireland by a flat refusal on the part of the majority of its armed citizens to allow their rights as citizens to be interfered with.

It needed no insurrection, no flying to arms, no storming of jails, it only needed that the armed Volunteers who claimed to stand for Ireland should mobilise and speak for Ireland. And so speaking should declare that they would not demobilise until all orders of deportation were withdrawn, and full liberty accorded to the Irish Volunteers to organise under their own chosen officers. Not a troop would have been moved against them, nor a shot fired. The competent military authority would have been repudiated as readily as was the gentleman responsible for ordering out the military on Howth Sunday.

Does anyone imagine that at that period of Captain Robert Monteith's deportation, when everything was going wrong with England, that she would have hesitated to sacrifice her

dignity or swallow an affront, rather than provoke in Ireland a conflict that she knew would have tested severely the loyalty of the reserves newly recalled to the colours : Just as Redmond could have gained Home Rule by refusing to speak in the House of Commons until he had called a Convention in Ireland upon the outbreak of the war, so the leaders of the Irish Volunteers could have prevented the flowing over this island of the wave of military despotism by quietly challenging its force when first it broke upon us. But neither had the requisite imagination. Both essayed to grapple a revolutionary situation with the weapons of a constitutional agitation.

The tyranny we have since suffered under has been progressive in its virulence. At first it was only Government employees like Captain Monteith who were arrested or deported, now it is any civilian under any conceivable circumstance. Tyranny grows with what it feeds upon.

We are told that the arrest of our leaders would justify action. Our leaders would have been arrested long ago were it not for the fact that at the protest meeting held by the Citizen Army against the deportation of Captain Monteith it was declared by the chief speaker that the arrest of the Volunteer leaders would be a proof to their followers that the British had been defeated at sea, or that the Germans had landed. Fear lest the people of Ireland should so interpret their arrest has spared them to us up till now.²

We believe in constitutional action in normal times ; we believe in revolutionary action in exceptional times. These are exceptional times.

When General Friend took down the sign from over Liberty Hall he did not do so in order to provoke us to insurrection. He calculated that a body of 100 armed men would scarcely spring to arms at such an insult after a body of 5,000 armed men had submitted meekly to a greater one in the same city. His calculation was right. Had the numbers been changed

his calculation might have missed. We acquit the competent military authority of any intention to provoke a revolt. But we are glad that it was not a Labour paper that pointed out to him that he could at any time provoke a revolt by seizing the leaders of the Volunteers. We are sure that he is grateful for the suggestion, but we do not believe that he needed it.³

What do you think of the wisdom of those who tell you to be patient and trust your leaders whose plans you do not understand, but if those leaders are arrested, fly to arms? If your leaders who alone have plans are arrested your flying to arms will be that of a leaderless mob in a planless insurrection. And you know, don't you, that the same voices who talk thus of flying to arms, would then talk of waiting until your new leaders would have made new plans to meet the new situation? Finally: think over this chunk of wisdom. A revolutionist who surrenders the initiative to the enemy is already defeated before a blow is struck. It is a fine day if it wasn't for the rain.

Workers' Republic, December 4, 1915.

NOTES

1. Connolly here replies to an article in *The Spark*, November 28, 1915, "Courage under Control," believed to have been written or inspired by a member of the Irish Volunteer Executive. It was clearly an answer to Connolly's Manchester Martyrs articles. One sentence runs: "When the enemy deports an organiser or hauls down a sign on Liberty Hall."

2. See note 2, to article "For the Citizen Army." *Irish Times*, November 16, 1914, quoted *Casement's Last Adventure*, p. 34, reports Connolly as saying, "If there was a landing of Germans in England or Ireland, ten minutes after that landing, every Volunteer officer, every leader of rebel tendencies would be sent away to

Mountjoy or Arbour Hill. Any such wholesale arrest of leaders would be proof that the British Empire was tottering to its destruction.”

3. General Friend ordered the removal from the front of Liberty Hall of Connolly's famous streamer, “We serve neither King nor Kaiser but Ireland.” It was removed quietly when the Hall was deserted in the small hours by several policemen who fixed an official notice to the front door, stating action had been taken under General Friend's orders.

ECONOMIC CONSCRIPTION

I

OF late we have been getting accustomed to this new phrase, economic conscription, or the policy of forcing men into the army by depriving them of the means of earning a livelihood. In Canada it is called hunger-scription. In essence it consists of a recognition of the fact that the working class fight the battles of the rich, that the rich control the jobs or means of existence of the working class, and that therefore if the rich desire to dismiss men eligible for military service they can compel these men to enlist—or starve.

Looking still deeper into the question it is a recognition of the truth that the control of the means of life by private individuals is the root of all tyranny, national, political, militaristic, and that therefore they who control the jobs control the world. Fighting at the front to-day there are many thousands whose whole soul revolts against what they are doing, but who must nevertheless continue fighting and murdering because they were deprived of a living at home, and compelled to enlist that those dear to them may not starve.

Thus under the forms of political freedom the souls of men are subjected to the cruellest tyranny in the world—recruiting has become a great hunting party with the souls and bodies of men as the game to be hunted and trapped.

Every day sees upon the platform the political representatives of the Irish people, busily engaged in destroying the souls, that they might be successful in hunting and capturing the bodies of Irishmen for sale to the English armies. And every day we feel all around us in the workshop, in the yard, at the docks, in the stables, wherever men are employed, the same

economic pressure, the same unyielding relentless force, driving, driving, driving men out from home and home life to fight abroad that the exploiters may rule and rob at home. The downward path to hell is easy once you take the first step.

The first step in the economic conscription of Irishmen was taken when the employers of Dublin locked their workpeople out in 1913 for daring to belong to the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. Does that statement astonish you? Well, consider it. In 1913 the employers of Dublin used the weapons of starvation to try and compel men and women to act against their conscience. In 1915 the employers of Dublin and Ireland in general are employing the weapon of starvation in order to compel men to act against their conscience. The same weapon, the same power derived from the same source.

At the first anti-conscription meeting in the City Hall of Dublin we heard an employer declaim loudly against the iniquity of compelling men to act against their conscience. And yet in 1913 the same employer had been an active spirit in encouraging his fellow-employers to starve a whole countryside in order to compel men and women to act against their conscience.

The great lock-out in 1913-14 was an apprenticeship in brutality—a hardening of the heart of the Irish employing class—whose full effects we are only reaping to-day in the persistent use of the weapon of hunger to compel men to fight for a power they hate, and to abandon a land that they love.

If here and there we find an occasional employer who fought us in 1913 agreeing with our national policy in 1915 it is not because he has become converted, or is ashamed of the unjust use of his powers, but simply that he does not see in economic conscription the profit he fancied he saw in denying to his labourers the right to organise in their own way in 1913.

Do we find fault with the employer for following his own interests? We do not. But neither are we under any illusion

as to his motives. In the same manner we take our stand with our own class, nakedly upon our class interests, but believing that these interests are the highest interests of the race.

We cannot conceive of a free Ireland with a subject working class ; we cannot conceive of a subject Ireland with a free working class. But we can conceive of a free Ireland with a working class guaranteed the power of freely and peacefully working out its own salvation.

We do not believe that the existence of the British Empire is compatible with either the freedom or security of the Irish working class. That freedom and that security can only come as a result of complete absence of foreign domination. Freedom to control all its own resources is as essential to a community as to an individual. No individual can develop all his powers if he is even partially under the control of another, even if that other sincerely wishes him well. The powers of the individual can only be developed properly when he has to bear the responsibility of all his own actions, to suffer for his mistakes, and to profit by his achievements.

Man, as man, only arrived at the point at which he is to-day as a result of thousands of years of strivings with nature. In his stumblings forward along the ages he was punished for every mistake. Nature whipped him with cold, with heat, with hunger, with disease, and each whipping helped him to know what to avoid, and what to preserve.

The first great forward step of man was made when he understood the relation between cause and effect—understood that a given action produced and must produce a given result. That no action could possibly be without an effect, that the problem of his life was to find out the causes which produced the effects injurious to him, and having found them out to overcome or make provision against them.

Just as the whippings of nature produced the improvements in the life habits of man, so the whippings naturally following

upon social or political errors are the only proper safeguards for the proper development of nationhood.

No nation is worthy of independence until it is independent. No nation is fit to be free until it is free. No man can swim until he has entered the water and failed and been half drowned several times in the attempt to swim.

A free Ireland would make dozens of mistakes, and every mistake would cost it dear, and strengthen it for future efforts. But every time it, by virtue of its own strength, remedied a mistake it would take a long step forward towards security. For security can only come to a nation by a knowledge of some power within itself, some difficulty overcome by a strength which no robber can take away.

What is that of which no robber can deprive us? The answer is, experience. Experience in freedom would strengthen us in power to attain security. Security would strengthen us in our progress towards greater freedom.

Ireland is not the Empire, the Empire is not Ireland. Anything in Ireland that depends upon the Empire depends upon that which the fortunes of war *may* destroy at any moment, depends upon that which the progress of enlightenment *must* destroy in the near future. The people of India, of Egypt, cannot be forever enslaved.

Anything in Ireland that depends upon the internal resources of Ireland has a basis and foundation which no disaster to the British Empire can destroy, which disasters to the British Empire may conceivably cause to flourish.

The security of the working class of Ireland then has the same roots as the security of the people of Ireland as a whole. The roots are in Ireland, and can only grow and function properly in an atmosphere of national freedom. And the security of the people of Ireland has the same roots as the security of the Irish working class. In the closely linked modern world no nation can be free which can nationally connive at the enslave-

ment of any section of that nation. Had the misguided people of Ireland not stood so callously by when the forces of economic conscription were endeavouring to destroy the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union in 1913, the Irish trade unionists would now be in a better position to fight the economic conscription against Irish nationalists in 1915.

The sympathetic strike with its slogan, "an injury to one is the concern of all," was then the universal object of hatred. It is now recognised that only the sympathetic strike could be powerful enough to save the victims of economic conscription from being forced into the army.

Out of that experience is growing that feeling of identity of interests between the forces of real nationalism and labour which we have long worked and hoped for in Ireland. Labour recognises daily more clearly that its real well-being is linked and bound up with the hope of growth of Irish resources within Ireland, and nationalists realise that the real progress of a nation towards freedom must be measured by the progress of its most subject class.

We want and must have economic conscription in Ireland for Ireland. Not the conscription of men by hunger to compel them to fight for the power that denies them the right to govern their own country, but the conscription by an Irish nation of all the resources of the nation—its land, its railways, its canals, its workshops, its docks, its mines, its mountains, its rivers and streams, its factories and machinery, its horses, its cattle, *and* its men and women, all co-operating together under one common direction that Ireland may live and bear upon her fruitful bosom the greatest number of the freest people she has ever known.

Workers' Republic, December 18, 1915.

II

Conscription means the enforced utilising of all the manhood of a country in order to fight its battles. Economic conscription would mean the enforced use of all the economic powers of a country in order to fight its battles. If it is right to take the manhood it is doubly right to take the necessary property in order to strengthen the manhood in its warfare. An army, according to Napoleon, travels on its stomach, and that being so, all the things that are necessary for the stomach ought to be taken by a national government for the purpose of strengthening its army. Free access to the railways are vital to the very existence of a modern army. For that reason the railways ought to be taken possession of by the Government on the same principle and by the same business method as it takes possession of a conscript. The Government does not pay the mother of a conscript for the long and weary years she has spent in rearing the son of which it takes possession. No, it simply pays him a few pence a day, feeds him, clothes him, and sends him out to be shot. If he is shot she gets nothing for the loss of her son, as she gets nothing for all the love and care and anxiety she spent in giving him life and rearing him to manhood.

The same principle, the same business method, ought to apply to the railways. All the railways ought at once to be confiscated and made public property, no compensation being given to the shareholders any more than is to be given to the fathers and mothers of conscripts.

All ships come under the same general law. The Empire cannot live as an Empire without ships ; the troops cannot be transported, provisioned and kept supplied with the materials of war without ships, therefore as sons are to be taken from their mothers all necessary vessels ought at once be taken from their owners, without compensation and without apology.

No matter how much the ships cost. They did not cost their owners as much as the bearing of sons cost the mothers. Take the ships.

Factories also for the production of clothes for the army. The Government should take them ; of course you cannot expect soldiers to fight unless they are properly clothed, and you cannot clothe them unless you have the factories to make the clothing. So factories are as important as soldiers. Government is going to take the soldiers from their homes, therefore let it take the factories from the manufacturers. Let it be conscription all round.

There is a grave danger of a famine in this country as the food is limited in quantity owing to the export of so much food to feed the armies abroad. At the same time there is an enormous quantity of splendid land lying idle in demesnes and private estates of the nobility and gentry. This land produces no crops, feeds nobody, and serves no useful purpose whatever. By the same law of necessity upon which the Government stands when it proposes conscription of men it ought also to immediately confiscate all this idle land, and put labourers upon it to grow crops to feed the multitude now in danger of starvation during the coming year.

Will the Government do these things ? Will it take the land, will it take the factories, will it take the ships, will it take the railways—as it proposes to take the manhood ? It will not. Should it need those things as it does and will, it will hire them at an exorbitant rate of interest, paying their owners as much for the use of them that those owners will pray for the war to continue for ever and ever, amen.

But the human bodies, earthly tenements of human souls, it will take as ruthlessly and hold as cheaply as possible. For that is the way of governments. Flesh and blood are ever the cheapest things in their eyes.

While we are establishing the Irish Republic we shall need

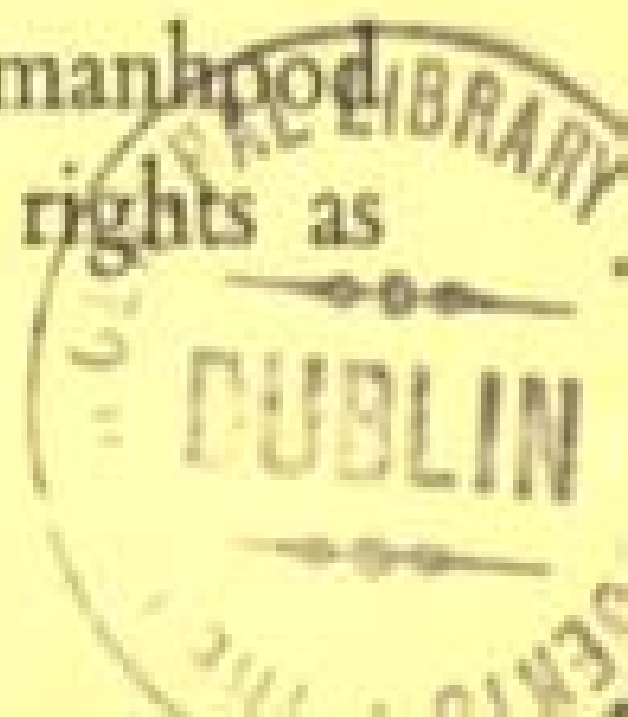
to reverse that process of valuing things. We must imitate those who have so long been our masters, but with a difference.

We must also conscript. We shall not need to conscript our soldiers—enough have already volunteered to carry on the job, and tens of thousands more but await the word. But we shall need to conscript the material ; and as the propertied classes have so shamelessly sold themselves to the enemy, the economic conscription of their property will cause few qualms to whomsoever shall administer the Irish Government in the first days of freedom.

All the material of distribution—the railways, the canals, and all their equipment will at once become the national property of the Irish state. All the land stolen from the Irish people in the past, and not since restored in some manner to the actual tillers of the soil, ought at once to be confiscated and made the property of the Irish state. Taken in hand energetically and cultivated under scientific methods such land would go far to make this country independent of the ocean-borne commerce of Great Britain. All factories and workshops owned by people who do not yield allegiance to the Irish Government immediately upon its proclamation should at once be confiscated, and their productive powers applied to the service of the community loyal to Ireland, and to the army in its service.

The conscription of the natural powers of the land and the conscription of the mechanical forces having been accomplished, the question of the conscription of the men to defend their new-won property and national rights may follow should it be necessary. But as the Irish state will then be in a position to guarantee economic security and individual freedom to its citizens there will be no lack of recruits to take up arms to safeguard that national independence which they will see to be necessary for the perpetuation of both.

England calls upon its citizens to surrender their manhood to fight for an Empire that cares nothing for their rights as



toilers. Ireland should commence by guaranteeing the rights of its workers to life and liberty, and having guaranteed those rights should then call upon her manhood to protect them with arms in their hands.

Whosoever in future speaks for Ireland, calls Irishmen to arms, should remember that the first duty of Irishmen is to reconquer their country—to take it back from those whose sole right to its ownership is based upon conquest.

If the arms of the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army is the military weapon of, the economic conscription of its land and wealth is the material basis for, that reconquest.

Workers' Republic, January 15, 1916.

TWO FATEFUL CHRISTMAS WEEKS

ON the 21st December, 1796, a French Fleet entered Bantry Bay bearing on board arms, ammunition, and an army of fifteen thousand men for the liberation of Ireland. The French army commander had been separated from the fleet in a storm, and his successor hesitated about taking the responsibility of landing his troops. For days the fleet rocked in perfect security in the bay, until another storm arising caused the French commander to raise his anchors and put again to sea, headed for France—and the Empire's danger was over.

Consider it, friends ! One hundred and nineteen years ago the freedom of Ireland lay in the power of one man to grasp, had he but had the decision of character necessary to cause him to act. Two years afterwards it took over thirty thousand English soldiers to conquer the one county of Wexford, and that county was one of those which had been most foolish in surrendering its arms at the demand of a government proclamation. Had Wexford risen, had any part of Ireland risen in December, 1796, even General Grouchy could not have refused to land, and with the diversion his force would have caused the success of the insurrection must have been certain. But the French commander would not risk his troops amongst and for a people who were apparently risking nothing for themselves. The leaders of the United Irishmen hesitated—their arrangements were not complete. The French commander hesitated, everybody hesitated, except the English Government.

One hundred and nineteen years ago. And again Ireland looks across the sea, and perhaps those across the sea look over to Ireland, and wonder.

The doubters asked Christ in His day for a sign. In our day they still ask for a sign. And in both cases it is the same answer.

“The Kingdom of Heaven [Freedom] is within you.”

“The Kingdom of Heaven can only be taken by violence.”

Heavenly words with an earthly meaning.

Christmas week, 1796 ; Christmas week, 1915—*still hesitating.*

Workers' Republic, December 25, 1915.

NOTES

“The mere fact that it is not yet possible to speak or write of '98 without arousing a host of stormy passions, hopes, and fears, proves indubitably that the cause which produced such a host of apostles and martyrs in that fateful year is NOT yet a lost cause ; and is not regarded as such, either by friends or enemies.”

Introduction, '98 *Readings*, 1897.

Tone in his *Autobiography* defends Grouchy, and blames Rear-Admiral Bouvet for the failure. See Lecky, *History of Ireland*, Vol. III, p. 539. The detail, of course, does not affect Connolly's argument. He also refers to Grouchy, *Labour in Irish History*, p. 68.

THE VOLUNTEERS OF '82

A CORRESPONDENT has written to us asking whether there is not a great similarity between the position and actions of the Irish Volunteers of our day, and that of the Volunteers of '82. He points out that the Volunteers of '82, despite the eulogies lavished upon them by the writers of Irish history, were a ghastly and inglorious failure, and that they were so because they lacked the revolutionary quality. They had England at their mercy, and feared to strike, but when England had them at her mercy she struck without hesitation and without scruple.

The comparison is good, but not perfect. Indeed, no comparison is ever perfect. All comparisons and analogies from history fail in some degree, or at some point. If the circumstances are the same the characters of the actors are different ; if the characters of the actors are the same the circumstances are different. Usually there is alike a blending and a dissimilarity on both essentials.

A great socialist writer, Karl Marx, has said that history repeats itself—once as tragedy, and once as farce. We suppose that the real explanation of the supposed tendency of history to repeat itself lies in the tendency of human beings to imitate whatever action has impressed itself much upon the imagination, just as in a company of individuals we generally find some persons almost unconsciously imitating the mannerisms of any obtrusive personality in the group.¹

Take any great historical crisis, and you will find that whenever a similar crisis arises thereafter there will develop amongst the minor actors in the latter a tendency to pattern themselves after the outstanding figures in the first. And a still greater tendency amongst the unthinking multitude to insist upon all

the actors in the second crisis being invested with all the merits and demerits of their forerunners.

In the case we are considering it is indubitable that the Irish Volunteers of our day deliberately patterned themselves after the Volunteers of Grattan's time, adopted their name, and many of their traditions. It is also true that the great international crisis that has since developed has given to the experience of our own Volunteers a great similarity to the experience of the Volunteers of '82.

The Volunteers of Grattan's time were betrayed by their leaders, as the Volunteers of our time were betrayed by the Parliamentary Party. The Volunteers of Grattan's time broke up without having consolidated their legislative victory, owing to their leaders' faith in the promises of English statesmen just as the Volunteers of our time were disorganised by the fact of their leaders trust in the promises of English statesmen.

Despite their enthusiasm for Ireland the greatest section of Grattan's Volunteers became active members of the yeomanry who afterwards achieved notoriety for their crimes against Ireland, just as a considerable section of the Volunteers of our day have become soldiers of the English army—active agents of the military army of the oppressors of their country.

A poem written at the time of Grattan's Volunteers and the United Irishmen somewhat scathingly refers to them in the following manner :²

What did the Volunteers ?

They mustered and paraded,

Until their laurels faded,

This did the Volunteers !

★ ★ ★

How died the Volunteers ?

The death that's fit for slaves,

They slunk into their graves,

Thus died the Volunteers !

And our correspondent seems to infer that in this respect history is again about to repeat itself. We respectfully differ with him. We can see no real analogy between the Volunteers of Grattan's time, and the Irish Volunteers since the split. Up till that period the analogy was perfect. Up till that time the stage was set for just such another betrayal, for at least just such another fiasco. But we cannot see that the present leaders of the Irish Volunteers can at all be compared to the crowd of aristocratic, clerical and capitalist reactionaries who steered the Volunteers of '82 to their destruction.

Nor, and this is even more important, is it at all conceivable that the rank and file of the Irish Volunteer movement could be betrayed as were their forerunners. These Volunteers of '82 were in reality English colonists with a distinctly anti-Irish upbringing and mental outlook. Their enthusiasm for Ireland was the enthusiasm of settlers for their new home, against the government in the home they had left. If they were hostile to English influence they were still more hostile to the vast mass of the natives of Ireland. They considered themselves as British subjects in the first place, and only as Irishmen in the second place. Their appeal was to the traditions of the British Empire, and to the memory of the "glorious Revolution" of 1688—the Revolution that set King William III upon his Irish throne. Irish traditions, Irish heroes, Irish martyrs for freedom, all, all were alien to them, and therefore their betrayal by their leaders was not in their eyes a national betrayal, but only an aristocratic defection in a struggle of two parties within the British Empire. If you grasp that fact clearly enough you will understand why, despite our own criticism of what we deem their lack of vision, we yet refuse to accept our correspondent's comparison as we regard it as unjust to the leaders of to-day.

The present-day leaders of the Irish Volunteers do undoubtedly hold allegiance to Ireland as their first and most sacred duty. They are not merely dissatisfied subjects of the British Empire,

they are dissatisfied to be subjects of the Empire at all. Among them there may be some who hold that to have a Volunteer force at all is enough of a gain for one generation ; there may be others who like to play at soldiers but shrink from the reality, and there may be others who were never more than wire-pullers, and who have brought their wire-pulling propensities into their new conditions. No organisation can hope to be quite free of such undesirables, nor even sure of being able to recognise them.

But the one certain mark to distinguish the Irish Volunteers of to-day from their forerunners is the fact that in their allegiance they set Ireland first. Given that, and all other things can be forgiven them. True, the presence upon their Executive of some of the men who voted the betrayal to John Redmond and his party is a standing invitation to suspicion and distrust. These men were either false to their trust, or incapable block-heads. In either case they should have been sent back to the obscurity and harmlessness of private life to live under suspicion or pity the remainder of their days. To place them again in power was to forfeit the complete confidence of the people in a time where complete confidence was necessary. Yet we have heard demands for absolute trust and confidence in a body some of whose trusted members have already abused that trust so vilely.

But granting all this the point remains that the Irish Volunteers of our time have that great quality the want of which betrayed their predecessors. That quality is : complete faith in their own country, complete confidence in her destiny to be a nation, and complete reliance upon the power of Ireland to survive all the shocks an adverse fate may bring upon her.

Workers' Republic, January 8, 1916.

NOTES

1. "But the cult of tradition may be, and in Ireland undoubtedly is, cultivated to an extent which often makes it not only ridiculous but positively harmful . . . Thus the enthusiastic nationalist revering the memory of Wolfe Tone strives sedulously to imitate him, forgetting alike that Tone's greatness lay in the fact that he imitated nobody, and that the line of action required at a time when the democracy were unenfranchised, can hardly be accepted as a rule of conduct when the suffrage is widespread, and public bodies generally under public control . . . while changed conditions do necessitate changed methods of realising an ideal, they do not necessarily involve the abandonment of that ideal, if in itself good."

"The revolutionary nationalist worships the ideals and adheres to the methods of the past; Home Rulers profess to worship at the same shrine, but adopt neither the ideals or methods of past revolutionists; and the Socialist Republicans adhere to the high ideal of national freedom sought for in the past, go beyond it to a fuller ideal which we conceive to flow from national freedom as a natural necessary consequence, but reject as utterly unsuited to present conditions the methods of bygone generations.

"We *agitate* for the Revolution; let those who will *conspire* for it; when the hour for action arrives our only rivalry need be as to which shall strike the most effective blows against the common enemy."

Workers' Republic, June 23, 1900.

2. See *Literary Remains of the United Irishmen of 1798*, edited by R. R. Madden, (1887), p. 246. The verses were actually written by Dr. Madden himself over his pseudonym 'Ierne.'

WHAT IS OUR PROGRAMME ?

WE are often asked the above question. Sometimes the question is not too politely put, sometimes it is put in frantic bewilderment, sometimes it is put in wrathful objurgation, sometimes it is put in tearful entreaty, sometimes it is put by Nationalists who affect to despise the Labour movement, sometimes it is put by Socialists who distrust the Nationalists because of the anti-Labour record of many of their friends, sometimes it is put by our enemies, sometimes by our friends, and always it is pertinent, and worthy of an answer.

The Labour movement is like no other movement. Its strength lies in being like no other movement. It is never so strong as when it stands alone. Other movements dread analysis and shun all attempts to define their objects. The Labour movement delights in analysing, and is perpetually defining and re-defining its principles and objects. The man or woman who has caught the spirit of the Labour movement brings that spirit of analysis and definition into all his or her public acts, and expects at all times to answer the call to define his or her position. They cannot live on illusions, nor thrive by them ; even should their heads be in the clouds they will make no forward step until they are assured that their feet rest upon the solid earth.

In this they are essentially different from the middle or professional classes, and the parties or movements controlled by such classes in Ireland. These always talk of realities, but nourish themselves and their followers upon the unsubstantial meat of phrases ; always prate about being intensely practical but nevertheless spend their whole lives in following visions.

When the average non-Labour patriot in Ireland who boasts of his practicality is brought in contact with the cold world

and its problems he shrinks from the contact. Should his feet touch the solid earth he affects to despise it as a "mere material basis," and strives to make the people believe that true patriotism needs no foundation to rest upon other than the brain storms of its poets, orators, journalists, and leaders.

Ask such people for a programme and you are branded as a carping critic; refuse to accept their judgment as the last word in human wisdom and you become an enemy to be carefully watched; insist that in the crisis of your country's history your first allegiance is to your country and not to any leader, executive, or committee, and you are forthwith a disturber, a factionist, a wrecker.

What is our programme? We at least, in conformity with the spirit of our movement, will try and tell it. Our programme in time of peace was to gather into Irish hands in Irish trade unions the control of all the forces of production and distribution in Ireland. We never believed that freedom would be realised without fighting for it. From our earliest declaration of policy in Dublin in 1896 the editor of this paper has held to the dictum that our ends should be secured "peacefully if possible, forcibly if necessary." Believing so, we saw what the world outside Ireland is realising to-day, that the destinies of the world and the fighting strength of armies are at the mercy of organised Labour as soon as that Labour becomes truly revolutionary. Thus we strove to make Labour in Ireland organised—and revolutionary.

We saw that should it come to a test in Ireland, (as we hoped and prayed it might come), between those who stood for the Irish nation and those who stood for the foreign rule, the greatest civil asset in the hand of the Irish nation for use in the struggle would be the control of Irish docks, shipping, railways and production by Unions that gave sole allegiance to Ireland.

We realised that the power of the enemy to hurl his forces upon the forces of Ireland would lie at the mercy of the men

who controlled the transport system of Ireland ; we saw that the hopes of Ireland as a nation rested upon the due recognition of the identity of interest between that ideal and the rising hopes of Labour.

In Europe to-day we have seen the strongest governments of the world exerting every effort, holding out all possible sort of inducement, to organised Labour to use its organisation on the side of those governments in time of war. We have spent the best part of our lifetime striving to create in Ireland the working class spirit that would create an Irish organisation of Labour willing to do voluntarily for Ireland what those governments of Europe are beseeching their trade unions to do for their countries. And we have partly succeeded.

We have succeeded in creating an organisation that will willingly do more for Ireland than any trade union in the world has attempted to do for its national government. Had we not been attacked and betrayed by many of our fervent advanced patriots, had they not been so anxious to destroy us, so willing to applaud even the British Government when it attacked us, had they stood by us and pushed our organisation all over Ireland it would now be in our power at a word to crumple up and demoralise every offensive move of the enemy against the champions of Irish freedom. Had we been able to carry out all our plans, as such an Irish organisation of Labour alone could carry them out, we could at a word have created all the conditions necessary to the striking of a successful blow whenever the military arm of Ireland wished to move.

Have we a programme ? We are the only people that had a programme—that understood the mechanical conditions of modern war, and the dependence of national power upon industrial control. What is our programme now ? At the grave risk of displeasing alike the perfervid Irish patriot and the British “competent military authority,” we shall tell it.

We believe that in times of peace we should work along the

lines of peace to strengthen the nation, and we believe that whatever strengthens and elevates the working class strengthens the nation. But we also believe that in times of war we should act as in war. We despise, entirely despise and loathe, all the mouthings and mouthers about war who infest Ireland in time of peace, just as we despise and loathe all the cantings about caution and restraint to which the same people treat us in times of war.

Mark well then our programme. While the war lasts and Ireland still is a subject nation we shall continue to urge her to fight for her freedom.

We shall continue, in season and out of season, to teach that the "far-flung battle line" of England is weakest at the point nearest its heart, that Ireland is in that position of tactical advantage, that a defeat of England in India, Egypt, the Balkans or Flanders would not be so dangerous to the British Empire as any conflict of armed forces in Ireland, that the time for Ireland's battle is NOW, the place for Ireland's battle is HERE. That a strong man may deal lusty blows with his fists against a host of surrounding foes, and conquer, but will succumb if a child sticks a pin in his heart.

But the moment peace is once admitted by the British Government as being a subject ripe for discussion, *that moment our policy will be for peace* and in direct opposition to all talk or preparation for armed revolution. We will be no party to leading out Irish patriots to meet the might of an England at peace. The moment peace is in the air we shall strictly confine ourselves, and lend all our influence to the work of turning the thought of Labour in Ireland to the work of peaceful reconstruction.

That is our programme. You can now compare it with the programme of those who bid you hold your hand now, and thus put it in the power of the enemy to patch up a temporary peace, turn round and smash you at his leisure, and then go to

war again with the Irish question settled—in the graves of Irish patriots.

We fear that is what is going to happen. It is to our mind inconceivable that the British public should allow conscription to be applied to England and not to Ireland. Nor do the British Government desire it. But that Government will use the cry of the necessities of war to force conscription upon the people of England, and will then make a temporary peace, and turn round to force Ireland to accept the same terms as have been forced upon England.

The English public will gladly see this done—misfortune likes company. The situation will then shape itself thus : the Irish Volunteers who are pledged to fight conscription will either need to swallow their pledge, and see the young men of Ireland conscripted, or will need to resist conscription, and engage the military force of England at a time when England is at peace.

This is what the diplomacy of England is working for, what the stupidity of some of our leaders who imagine they are Wolfe Tones is making possible. It is our duty, it is the duty of all who wish to save Ireland from such shame or such slaughter to strengthen the hand of those of the leaders who are for action as against those who are playing into the hands of the enemy.

We are neither rash nor cowardly. We know our opportunity when we see it, and we know when it has gone. We know that at the end of this war England will have at least an army of one million men, *or more than two soldiers for every adult male in Ireland*. And these soldiers veterans of the greatest war in history.

We shall not want to fight those men. We shall devote our attention to organising their comrades who return to civil life, to organising them into trade unions and Labour parties to secure them their rights in civil life.

Unless we emigrate to some country where there are men.

Workers' Republic, January 22, 1916.

WHAT IS A FREE NATION ?

WE are moved to ask this question because of the extraordinary confusion of thought upon the subject which prevails in this country, due principally to the pernicious and misleading newspaper garbage upon which the Irish public has been fed for the past twenty-five years.

Our Irish daily newspapers have done all that human agencies could do to confuse the public mind upon the question of what the essentials of a free nation are, what a free nation must be, and what a nation cannot submit to lose without losing its title to be free.

It is because of this extraordinary newspaper-created ignorance that we find so many people enlisting in the British army under the belief that Ireland has at long last attained to the status of a free nation, and that therefore the relations between Ireland and England have at last been placed upon the satisfactory basis of freedom. Ireland and England, they have been told, are now sister nations, joined in the bond of Empire, but each enjoying equal liberties—the equal liberties of nations equally free. How many recruits this idea sent into the British Army in the first flush of the war it would be difficult to estimate, but they were assuredly numbered by the thousand.

The Irish Parliamentary Party, which at every stage of the Home Rule game had been outwitted and bull-dozed by Carson and the Unionists, which had surrendered every point and yielded every advantage to the skilful campaign of the aristocratic orange military clique in times of peace, behaved in equally as cowardly and treacherous a manner in the crisis of war.

There are few men in whom the blast of the bugles of war do not arouse the fighting instinct, do not excite to some chival-



rous impulses if only for a moment. But the Irish Parliamentary Party must be reckoned amongst that few. In them the bugles of war only awakened the impulse to sell the bodies of their countrymen as cannon fodder in exchange for the gracious smiles of the rulers of England. In them the call of war sounded only as a call to emulate in prostitution. They heard the call of war—and set out to prove that the nationalists of Ireland were more slavish than the orangemen of Ireland, would more readily kill and be killed at the bidding of an Empire that despised them both.

The orangemen had at least the satisfaction that they were called upon to fight abroad in order to save an Empire they had been prepared to fight to retain unaltered at home ; but the nationalists were called upon to fight abroad to save an Empire whose rulers in their most generous moments had refused to grant their country the essentials of freedom in nationhood.

Fighting abroad the orangeman knows that he fights to preserve the power of the aristocratic rulers whom he followed at home ; fighting abroad the nationalist soldier is fighting to maintain unimpaired the power of those who conspired to shoot him down at home when he asked for a small instalment of freedom.

The orangeman says : “We will fight for the Empire abroad if its rulers will promise not to force us to submit to Home Rule.” And the rulers say heartily : “It is unthinkable that we should coerce Ulster for any such purpose.”

The Irish Parliamentary Party and its press said : “We will prove ourselves fit to be in the British Empire by fighting for it, in the hopes that after the war is over we will get Home Rule.” And the rulers of the British Empire say : “Well, you know what we have promised Carson, but send out the Irish rabble to fight for us, and we will, ahem, consider your application after the war.” Whereat, all the Parliamentary

leaders and their press call the world to witness that they have won a wonderful victory !

James Fintan Lalor spoke and conceived of Ireland as " a discrowned queen, taking back her own with an armed hand." Our Parliamentarians treat Ireland, their country, as an old prostitute selling her soul for the promise of favours *to come*, and in the spirit of that conception of their country they are conducting their political campaign.

That they should be able to do so with even the partial success that for a while attended their apostasy was possible only because so few in Ireland really understood the answer to the question that stands at the head of this article.

What is a free Nation ? A free nation is one which possesses absolute control over all its own internal resources and powers, and which has no restriction upon its intercourse with all other nations similarly circumstanced except the restrictions placed upon it by nature. Is that the case of Ireland ? If the Home Rule Bill were in operation would that be the case of Ireland ? To both questions the answer is : no, most emphatically, NO !

A free nation must have complete control over its own harbours, to open them or close them at will, to shut out any commodity, or allow it to enter in, just as it seemed best to suit the well-being of its own people, and in obedience to their wishes, and entirely free of the interference of any other nation, and in complete disregard of the wishes of any other nation. Short of that power no nation possesses the first essentials of freedom.

Does Ireland possess such control ? No. Will the Home Rule Bill give such control over Irish harbours to Ireland ? It will not. Ireland must open its harbours when it suits the interests of another nation, England, and must shut its harbours when it suits the interests of another nation, England ; and the Home Rule Bill pledges Ireland to accept this loss of national control for ever.

How would you like to live in a house if the keys of all the doors of that house were in the pockets of a rival of yours who had often robbed you in the past ? Would you be satisfied if he told you that he and you were going to be friends for ever more, but insisted upon you signing an agreement to leave him control of all your doors, and custody of all your keys ? That is the condition of Ireland to-day, and will be the condition of Ireland under Redmond and Devlin's precious Home Rule Bill.

That is worth dying for in Flanders, the Balkans, Egypt or India, is it not ?

A free nation must have full power to nurse industries to health, either by government encouragement or by government prohibition of the sale of goods of foreign rivals. It may be foolish to do either, but a nation is not free unless it has that power, as all free nations in the world have to-day. Ireland has no such power, will have no such power under Home Rule. The nourishing of industries in Ireland hurts capitalists in England, therefore this power is expressly withheld from Ireland.

A free nation must have full power to alter, amend, or abolish or modify the laws under which the property of its citizens is held in obedience to the demand of its own citizens for any such alteration, amendment, abolition, or modification. Every free nation has that power ; Ireland does not have it, and is not allowed it by the Home Rule Bill.

It is recognised to-day that it is upon the wise treatment of economic power and resources, and upon the wise ordering of social activities that the future of nations depends. That nation will be the richest and happiest which has the foresight to marshal the most carefully its natural resources to national ends. But Ireland is denied this power, and will be denied it under Home Rule. Ireland's rich natural resources, and the kindly genius of its children, are not to be allowed to combine for the satisfaction

of Irish wants, save in so far as their combination can operate on lines approved of by the rulers of England.

Her postal service, her telegraphs, her wireless, her customs and excise, her coinage, her fighting forces, her relations with other nations, her merchant commerce, her property relations, her national activities, her legislative sovereignty—all the things that are essential to a nation's freedom are denied to Ireland now, and are denied to her under the provisions of the Home Rule Bill. And Irish soldiers in the English Army are fighting in Flanders to win for Belgium, we are told, all those things which the British Empire, now as in the past, denies to Ireland.

There is not a Belgian patriot who would not prefer to see his country devastated by war a hundred times rather than accept as a settlement for Belgium what Redmond and Devlin have accepted for Ireland. Have we Irish been fashioned in meaner clay than the Belgians?

There is not a pacifist in England who would wish to end the war without Belgium being restored to full possession of all those national rights and powers which Ireland does not possess, and which the Home Rule Bill denies to her. But these same pacifists never mention Ireland when discussing or suggesting terms of settlement. Why should they? Belgium is fighting for her independence, but Irishmen are fighting for the Empire that denies Ireland every right that Belgians think worth fighting for.

And yet Belgium as a nation is, so to speak, but a creation of yesterday—an artificial product of the schemes of statesmen. Whereas, the frontiers of Ireland, the ineffaceable marks of the separate existence of Ireland, are as old as Europe itself, the handiwork of the Almighty, not of politicians. And as the marks of Ireland's separate nationality were not made by politicians so they cannot be unmade by them.

As the separate individual is to the family, so the separate

nation is to humanity. The perfect family is that which best draws out the inner powers of the individual, the most perfect world is that in which the separate existence of nations is held most sacred. There can be no perfect Europe in which Ireland is denied even the least of its national rights ; there can be no worthy Ireland whose children brook tamely such denial. If such denial has been accepted by soulless slaves of politicians then it must be repudiated by Irish men and women whose souls are still their own.

The peaceful progress of the future requires the possession by Ireland of all the national rights now denied to her. Only in such possession can the workers of Ireland see stability and security for the fruits of their toil and organisation. A destiny not of our fashioning has chosen this generation as the one called upon for the supreme act of self-sacrifice—to die if need be that our race might live in freedom.

Are we worthy of the choice ? Only by our response to the call can that question be answered.

Workers' Republic, February 12, 1916.

THE SLUMS AND THE TRENCHES

A SPEAKER at a recent recruiting meeting in Dublin declared that the Dublin slums were more unhealthy than the trenches in Flanders, and the same "bright saying" has been repeated in a circular issued by the recruiting authorities.

It is the English idea of wit. Consider it, my friends, consider it well. The trenches in Flanders have been the graves of scores of thousands of young Irishmen, scores of thousands of the physically strongest of the Irish race have met their death there in desperate battle with a brave enemy who bore them no malice and only wished well for their country.

A very large proportion of these young Irishmen were born and reared in the slums and tenement houses of Dublin. These same slums are notorious the world over for their disease-breeding unhealthy character. All the world over it is known that the poor of Dublin are housed under conditions worse than those of any civilised people on God's earth.

From out of those slums these poor misguided brothers of ours have been tricked and deluded into giving battle for England—into waging war upon the German nation which does not permit anywhere within its boundaries such slums and fever dens as the majority of Dublin's poor must live in.

When at last the common-sense of the people of Dublin reasserts itself, and men and women begin to protest against this suicidal destruction of the Irish race in a war that is not of their making, and for an Empire that they abhor, the cheap wits of the recruiters sneeringly tell them that there is more danger of death in a Dublin slum than in a trench in the line of battle.

But you can die honourably in a Dublin slum. If you die of fever, or even of want, because you preferred to face fever

and want, rather than sell your soul to the enemies of your class and country, such death is an honourable death, a thousand times more honourable than if you won a V.C. committing murder at the bidding of your country's enemies.

These are war times. In times of war the value of the individual life is but little, but the estimate set upon honour is even higher than in times of peace. True, the conception of honour is often all wrong, but the community and the individual in time of war do esteem highly the individual who sets his own conception of honour higher than his regard for his own life.

The boy or man who has a soul strong enough to resist all blandishments to betray the cause of freedom as he sees it, who is strong enough in his own mind and purpose to face the prospect of long unemployment and its consequent misery and want, who can see day by day his strength wasting and his body shrinking for want of nourishment, who knows that that nourishment will be his for a time if he is prepared to sell himself into the service of the age-long enemy, and who in face of all this is yet man enough to hold out to the last, should he die in his Dublin slum is nevertheless a hero and a martyr fit to be ranked with and honoured alongside of the greatest heroes and noblest martyrs this island has produced.

"The trenches healthier than the slums of Dublin." Ay, my masters, but death in a slum may be the noblest of all deaths if it is the death of a man who preferred to die rather than dirty his soul by accepting the gold of England, and death in the trenches fighting for the Empire is that kind of death spoken of by the poet who lashes with his scorn the recreant who

"doubly dying shall go down
To the vile dust from which he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

In the times of the wars at the end of the eighteenth century when all that was best in Ireland eagerly, passionately awaited

the coming of the French, the armies of England were at least two-thirds composed of Irishmen. Are these poor deluded fools remembered or honoured to-day ? Where in all Ireland could a popular demonstration be organised in their honour. Not in any one part of Ireland would any body of Irish men or women spontaneously turn out to do tribute to their memory. Nor yet could all the gold of the British Empire induce any popular body or trade union in nationalist Ireland to walk in a procession to pay the tribute of respect to their record.

But in the same period there were men and women in Ireland who with all the wealth, power, and influence of the country against them, took their stand on the side of England's enemies, and held by that faith to the last, despite poverty, hunger and want, despite imprisonment, torture and exile, despite death by the bullet, the bayonet and the hangman. These men and women held to the creed that England has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, never can have any right in Ireland, and so holding they believed that whilst England so holds Ireland—whilst England is here at all—every enemy whose blows hurt England is a natural ally to Ireland, every blow which weakens England, loosens a link of the chain that binds Ireland in slavery.

These men and women, who were they ? In what estimation are they held in Ireland to-day ? They are the heroes and the heroines of the popular mind—the demigods of modern Irish history. Scarcely more than a century is gone and already they are enshrined in the memories of the Irish race, whilst all who fought for England are forgotten, or repudiated when remembered.

Did you ever hear an Irish man or woman say, “ my grandfather fought for England in '98 ? ” and expect to get popular approval or respect because of that fact ? You did not. But if ever you met a man or woman who could say that their grandfather or great grandfather, fought against England in

'98, were you not proud to meet them, and did not you and all your friends look upon them with respect because of what their ancestor had done against England ? You did. And you were quite right, too.

But some people in Ireland do honour the men who fought for England in '98, or pretend to honour them. Who are these people ? They are the people whose ancestors were the greatest enemies of the Irish race, the evictors, the floggers, the pitchcappers, the exterminators of the Irish people. The descendants of the landlords who

“enforced their rights with a rod of iron and renounced their duties with a front of brass.”

And some people there are who pretend to honour the men who fight for England in our day. Who are they who in press and on platform pour their praises on the heroism of our poor brothers whom they have driven or coaxed to the front ?

Who are they ? Why, they are the men who locked us out in 1913, the men who solemnly swore that they would starve three-fourths of the workers of Dublin in order to compel them to give up their civil rights—the right to organise. The recruiters in Dublin and in Ireland generally are the men who pledged themselves together in an unholy alliance to smash trade unionism, by bringing hunger, destitution and misery in fiercest guise into the homes of Dublin's poor.

On every recruiting platform in Dublin you will see the faces of the men who in 1913-14 met together day by day to tell of their plans to murder our women and children by starvation, and are now appealing to the men of those women and children to fight in order to save the precious skins of the gangs that conspired to starve and outrage them.

Who are the recruiters in Dublin ? Who is it that sits on every recruiting committee, that spouts for recruits from every recruiting platform ?

Who are they ? They are the men who set the police upon the unarmed people in O'Connell Street, who filled the jails with our young working class girls, who batoned and imprisoned hundreds of Dublin workers, who racked and pillaged the poor rooms of the poorest of our class, who plied policemen with drink, suborned and hired perjurers to give false evidence, murdered John Byrne and James Nolan and Alice Brady, and in the midst of a Dublin reeking with horror and reeling with suffering and pain publicly gloated over our misery and exulted in their power to get "three square meals per day" for their own overfed stomachs.

These are the recruiters. Every Irish man or boy who joins at their call gives these carrion a fresh victory over the Dublin working class—over the working class of all Ireland.

The trenches safer than the Dublin slums ! We may yet see the day that the trenches will be safer for these gentry than any part of Dublin.

Workers' Republic, February 26, 1916.

THE DAYS OF MARCH

MARCH 4th is the date which by common consent is set aside in Ireland for the commemoration of the heroic attempt of Robert Emmet. March 6th is the anniversary of the Fenian Rising of 1867. Does March 1916 carry in its womb anything of national importance for Ireland ? Will our children be commemorating an attempt, celebrating a victory, or mourning over a lost opportunity ?

At this date who can tell ? Despite all the pretensions of the British Government during the trial of Emmet, and despite all the alarmist and suspicion-breeding reports of the moderates *since, we now know beyond all doubt* that had Robert Emmet pushed on to the Castle on the day of his rising he would have captured that edifice of evil omen, and roused all Ireland by the blow. The Government were not in the least prepared for the emergency, and were only saved by the reluctance of the young patriot to go on in a fight the first moments of which had been stained, as he conceived it, by the useless shedding of blood.

Dublin Castle is not of so much importance to-day in the political or military government of Ireland, but in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it was the real centre of all the activities of foreign rule in this country, as it had been for centuries before. In the hands of the insurgents Dublin Castle would have been the centre of a revolutionary uprising such as would have shaken the British Empire to its foundations. It did not fall into the hands of the insurgents, as we have said, simply because the revolutionists were not as ready to shed blood as were their rulers.

It is not probable that much blood will ever again be shed for the sake of the capture of Dublin Castle, but it is probable

that the evil example of the Irish and English press in extolling and glorifying deeds of blood in the present war may make future revolutionists less scrupulous as to means, and more determined to be as ruthless as their rulers.¹

The Fenian Rising in March, 1867, was almost foredoomed to failure because like the United Irishmen in '98, and the Young Irelanders in 1848, the leaders had allowed the golden opportunity to slip away, and their attempt when it came was belated. The Government were on the alert, and the Irish regiments suspected of Fenian sympathies had been rushed off to India, and other places where their English masters could rely upon them.

Irishmen in the British Army in India in those days, like Irishmen in Flanders or Gallipoli in our own day, fought the enemies of England because they wanted to get back home to Ireland, not because they loved England, or cared about the Empire. If they did not kill the enemies of England the enemies of England would probably have killed them. The Irish soldiers do not fight for England ; they fight for their return ticket to Ireland, and England always keeps the return half in her pocket as long as she requires their services.

Thus in the days of Fenianism the English Government by shipping off the Irish soldiers out of Ireland did a double stroke of work. She weakened her Irish enemies, and strengthened herself against her Indian enemies. The leaders of the Fenian movement had preached and practised caution, and counselled delay until their plans were thoroughly matured, but the Government struck before that time, and all the sacrifice and suffering bore no immediate fruit.

Remember. It is easy for us now to be wise after the event, and to tell with unerring accuracy just when the blow might have been struck with the greatest probability of success. It is easy for us now because we know certain things which it was impossible for the Fenian leaders to know. If we know

where they made a mistake it is not because our judgment is better than was theirs, but rather because we are judging a crisis that is past and whose happenings are all therefore familiar to us.

The hurler on the ditch sees the most of the game because he *is* on the ditch, and not intent upon keeping his own end up in the place allotted to him on the field. So the student of history is wise, and can justly criticise the mistakes of men whose powers of judgment may nevertheless have been infinitely superior to his own. He may justly criticise their mistakes, but may also in the part he is playing in the historical crises of his own time be making mistakes a thousand times more serious and less excusable.

The United Irishmen waited too long, the Young Irelanders waited too long, the Fenians waited too long. This is the opinion of every student of history worthy of the name. But who dare censure these brave men and women ? Assuredly not the men and women of our generation. To us also a great opportunity has come. Have we been wise ? The future alone can tell.

In these days of March let us remember that generations, like individuals, will find their ultimate justification or condemnation not in what they accomplished but rather in what they aspired and dared to attempt to accomplish. The generation or the individual that is stricken down in the attempt to achieve a high and holy thing is itself therefore high and holy. By aspiring to reach a height the generation or the individual places its soul unassailably upon that height, even should its body be trampled in the mud at its base. Upon what height or in what sunless depth of corruption has this generation placed its soul ?

Judged by the record of its Parliamentary Party, its public press, its capitalist class, this generation of Irish men and women has sunk to a lower depth than has yet been reached by any white race under the sun. Judged by the marvellous fight they have made to save the Irish cause in all its integrity and historic

purity, those who have stood for an independent Ireland have climbed higher against greater odds than ever before were brought to bear against the soul of a people.

Is it not an awe-inspiring, but yet glorious thought, that somewhere above the souls of those martyrs whom Ireland gave to the cause of freedom in March are weighing and judging the actions of those who invoke their memories in March, 1916. Shall our souls rest eternally on the heights with them or in the depths with their betrayers ?

Workers' Republic, March 11, 1916.

NOTES

1. Here Connolly expresses his own view on proposals to attack Dublin Castle. See Introduction to this volume.

THE SLACKERS

I

IRELAND is in the throes of a new invasion. But whereas all other invasions have been invasions of fighting men, this last invasion is an invasion of men who have declined to fight.

Since the passing of the military service law and its coming into force in England this country has been flooded daily with fresh hordes of English and Scotch, who have run away from military service in their own country and settled down like a swarm of locusts upon Ireland.¹

Simultaneously with this invasion by British shirkers we have witnessed a concerted and sustained effort on the part of the Labour Exchanges, and also on the part of firms in England under Government control, to entice able-bodied Irishmen out of Ireland to work in England. Advertisements are appearing in the daily press calling for the services of Irishmen to work in England, some even particularising Dublin men as being the kind of men they want. Thus we find that young able-bodied Irishmen are being seduced out of Ireland after being denied work on the grounds that they were fit for military service, and even whilst they leave Ireland in despair the country is filling up with cowardly runaways from England for whom these same employers are gladly finding employment at the jobs they refused to give Irishmen.

We are aware some captious critics will say that it is a new position for the Editor of the *Workers' Republic* to take to calling men cowardly runaways because they are trying to evade conscription. Whoever does so misses the whole point of our complaint. We are against conscription until we have

something worth defending. The British workers, no more than the Irish, have not any stake in "their" Empire worth risking their lives to defend. That we freely grant.

But that being the case the duty of English workers is to stay at home and fight conscription, not to run away from that fight. We here in Ireland have been exempted from conscription for the present because, and only because, the best fighting material in the country have got arms in their hands and would have resisted conscription to the last drop of their blood. We have always admitted that we cannot remain at peace if the British Government wants us to fight. That Government can force us to fight whether we like or not. But neither that Government, nor any other Government, can decide for us *the place where we are going to fight*, if fight we must. And the best men in Ireland, the only men whom the Ireland of the future will care to remember, have decided long ago that if they must fight they will fight in Ireland, for Ireland, and under Ireland's flag.²

The knowledge of these facts has temporarily saved Ireland from conscription. There are in England and Scotland thousands of young men eligible for military service who have banded themselves together to resist conscription. All honour to them ! These men are upholding the sanctity of the individual soul against the tyranny of empires. As rebels ourselves we cannot refuse them our admiration. But what shall we say of the thousands of young, able-bodied English, Scots, and Welsh, now settling down upon Ireland—recreants, runaways, traitors to both sides, who will neither fight under conscription, nor fight against it ! Loyalists to a man, jingoes and "Rule Britannia" shouters every last one of them, they form the bulk of the audience at all West British functions, and sport the colours of the British Army on their persons as they parade our streets. But they are here to take our jobs, to take the bread out of the mouths of Irishmen whilst urging those same



Irishmen to go and fight for the Empire. Surely such unmitigated curs are typical products of Empire—of an Empire that has accustomed itself to the practice of hiring slaves to fight freemen.

We wonder what is thought of these slackers and recreants by those Irish men and women whose relatives are at present risking their lives in the British Army, or have already lost life or limb in the British service. What a picture ! Irish soldiers fighting for England ; English slackers staying at home to grab the jobs of Irish soldiers. And Irish employers driving out Irishmen of military age to serve the Empire, and giving their jobs to Englishmen and Scotsmen who refuse to risk their precious skins for the Empire.

No work in Ireland for Irishmen, lots of work in Ireland for Brit-Huns—every ship that goes to England carrying away Irish men to jobs in England ; every ship that comes to Ireland carrying over Brit-Huns to jobs in Ireland.

Was ever a nation so beset ?

And John E. Redmond's appeal for recruits to fight for this British Empire which these Britishers refuse to fight for is pasted on every hoarding and dead wall in the country.

If the devil is not immortal he must surely die of laughing at the work of his agents in Ireland.

Workers' Republic, March 11, 1916.

NOTES

1. " Here in Ireland we have another kind of dilution of labour. Everywhere since the conscription act was first mooted there has been a rush of Englishmen and Scotsmen to Ireland to escape the military net. These Englishmen and Scotsmen—let us call them Brit-Huns for short—are appearing as if by magic in every sort of

job hitherto held by Irishmen. There is not a week and scarcely a day, that goes by without some unfortunate Irishmen being told by his employer that the firm is going to reduce its staff, and that his services are therefore no longer required. He goes, and in a day or two a Brit-Hun appears in his place . . . all up and down the city the loyal capitalists are weeding out Irishmen and slyly substituting English and Scots—Brit-Huns—in their places. The Irish are wanted to fight the battles of the tottering British Empire—to set the “glorious example” of dying for the Empire that denies their country the merest shadow of national freedom—and as the Irish will not go willingly they must be starved into going . . . It is a new plantation, this time with the blessing and connivance of the Parliamentary leaders of the Irish race at home and abroad. And as the Brit-Huns come in the Irish boys march out in khaki, puzzled, misled, betrayed, the wonder of the world for stupidity, and the despair of their country . . . It is the product of crime and folly—of British crime and Irish folly.”

Workers' Republic, February 5, 1916.

2. Writing to decline an invitation to speak at a Glasgow anti-conscription meeting from Arthur McManus, Connolly, November 23, 1915, used almost the same words. (See *Socialist*, Edinburgh, April 17, 1919. “James Connolly, Socialist and Revolutionary,” A. McManus.)

II

We have received the following letter from a correspondent in Glasgow. We gladly publish it in order that our readers may have the pleasure of seeing us pilloried by an able writer, and judge for themselves as to the correctness of our position.

To the Editor of *The Workers' Republic*.

“Dear Comrade,

“As a regular and admiring reader of the *Republic*, permit me to express my disappointment with your leading article, entitled “The Slackers,” in which you criticise those young

men who are landing in Ireland to escape conscription. You dip your pen in vitriol and in the most intemperate language denounce them as slackers, recreants, cowardly runaways, Brit-Huns, and unmitigated curs.

“Before opening your flood-gates of abuse you would surely make certain of your ground, and although you do not produce it, you doubtless possess abundant evidence that the men you denounce are everything you brand them. You have enjoyed their acquaintance for a few days now, and must have collected extensive proof that they are the ‘curs’ you so charitably describe them to be. I would not ask you to produce this proof, only your lurid description does not tally with the impression of the men I formed during years of association with them.

“You tell us the new arrivals are English, Welsh, and Scotch. Well, they were Irish when they sailed from here. Irish to a man. Fifty of my personal acquaintances are now basking in your comradely scowls. Half of them are Irish born and have returned to their natal roof-trees. The other half are born of Irish parents and have crossed to the hospitality of relatives. They don’t sing ‘Rule Britannia.’ They never sport the loyal colours. They duly ‘hate England,’ and although they came here some years ago to steal the jobs (by selling their labour cheap) and ‘take the bread out of the mouths’ of Scotchmen, they are not willing to be pressed into the Army if by the simple device of changing their locus they can evade it.

“You are opposed to conscription. So are they. You say they should remain in Britain and fight against it. Don’t you know the fight is over? Conscription has won. It is the law of the land. Those who fought against the Bill must now enter the Army, or devise some means of avoiding it. There are only two ways of keeping out of the Army—to step into prison or over to Ireland. Scotch

and English resisters will go to prison ; those who have friends in Ireland are choosing the lesser punishment of returning to their native land.

“ Whose applause do you hope to gain by such an article? What are your motives for writing in a strain that does you so little credit? If you believe it is wrong to join the Army, why deny a refuge to those who believe with you? If you believe the Irish workers are poor because of capitalist oppression, why mislead them to regard the Scotch and English workers, who may compete for jobs, as the authors of Irish misery.”

“ *Glasgow Reader.*”

OUR ANSWER :

The above is about the most amusing criticism we have ever come across. The writer coolly ignores our very explicit description of the men whom we attacked in our article, and proceeds to a totally unnecessary defence of people whom we did not attack. Then he waxes eloquent in defence of those men whom we did not attack. It is easy being virtuously indignant over an article if you persist in denying the facts upon which the article is based, and spread your ink over a totally different series of facts, that have nothing to do with the case.

For example : Our critic says the people whom he is defending “ Don’t sing ‘ Rule Britannia,’ don’t sport the loyal colours.” But the people whom we were attacking *do* sport the loyal colours, and *do* sing “ Rule Britannia,” and *do* shout for the war, and *are* blatant jingoes to a man ; they are not Irish refugees returning to the land of their birth, or the land of their fathers. Oh, no, they are boys of the bull-dog breed, publicly and privately asserting that Irishmen should go out to fight for the Empire they will not shed their own blood to defend.

Dublin, Ireland, is rotten with these carrion ; our patriotic jingo employers are continually discharging Irishmen and

filling up their jobs with English and Scots and Welsh, and these Brit-Huns are neither socialists, radicals, no conscription fellowship members, nor people who believe with us that it is wrong to join the Army. So why does our "Glasgow Reader" get so excited, and indulge in such unworthy insinuations about our "motives," and ask "whose applause do we hope to gain," etc. He may be proud of his deftness in making such insinuations; we are willing he should enjoy all the credit of such literary finesse.

His last sentence is a gem of illogical and topsy-turvy reasoning. Let us repeat it :

"If you believe the Irish workers are poor because of capitalist oppression why mislead them to regard the Scotch and English workers who may compete for jobs as the authors of Irish misery ?"

Is not that a gem ? Here is the position. The capitalist class of these countries have committed a great international crime. We stand solidly alongside of all those in Ireland who have opposed that crime from its inception to its latest development, and we have opposed and denounced all those who in Ireland have been accomplices of that crime whether those accomplices were of our own class, our nearest and dearest friends, or members of the exploiting classes.

Our attitude to parties in Great Britain has been exactly the same. We have encouraged the enemies of the war, and have exposed and denounced its friends and sponsors, regardless of the class to which they belong.

But because some of the shouters for the war, some of the blatant jingoes and union-jackers came over to Ireland, to help their rulers to depopulate Ireland by grabbing our jobs whilst our brothers are elbowed out to starve or enlist, our critic has nothing but covert insults for us when we dare to criticise them. *He* criticises the same element in Glasgow ;

insinuates that we are misleading the Irish workers when we criticise them after they have crossed the channel. So a Scotch jingo in Glasgow is fair game for a socialist writer, but when he crosses to Dublin we have to look upon him as a sacred person—to attack whom is an offence against internationalism. A jingo is a jingo wherever we meet him, and as far as we are concerned there is no close season for jingoes. Nor game preserve in which they may not be hunted.

Our critic has allowed his generous sympathies for his comrades who have returned to Ireland to becloud his mind. We did not attack them. We know many of the Irish refugees who have left Great Britain for Ireland rather than serve in the British Army and we admire them and welcome them in our midst. We know also some English and Scotch fighters who have been against the war from the start, have braved unpopularity with their own countrymen in opposing it, and if they find that they can continue their fighting better in Ireland than in Great Britain they also are welcome. But neither of these classes of immigrants into Ireland were in our mind when we wrote our article, and nothing but the most jaundiced imagination or the most slipshod reading could make the article apply to them.

And finally, let us say that we are sick of the canting talk of those who tell us that we must not blame the British people for the crimes of their rulers against Ireland. We do blame them. In so far as they support the system of society which makes it profitable for one nation to connive at the subjection of another nation they are responsible for every crime committed to maintain that subjection.

If there is any section of the British people who believe that Ireland would be justified in ending the British Empire if she could, in order to escape from thralldom to it, then that section may hold itself guiltless of any crime against Ireland. But if

there is any such section, how small and utterly insignificant it is, since it nowhere gives public proof of its existence.

Of all the bodies called into existence by the fight against the war, and against conscription, is there one British organisation that claims for Ireland (or would even allow to Ireland) the same right to determine its national fate as all the British peace parties insist upon being secured to Belgium ? There is not one.

The burden of all their cries is that no *further* conquests must be made. This means that all countries conquered before the war should remain conquered, subject countries. Especially does it mean that the British Empire should remain intact, and in possession of all its plunder.

This pirate Empire holds as a subject population, unrepresented in any parliament, one-sixth of the human race. Whosoever is of any of these subject races and dares to aspire to an existence for his country apart from the British Empire is seized as a criminal, and imprisoned or executed by our rulers. India, Egypt, Ireland, have all supplied examples in recent years. Yet this pirate crew who have seized upon and held in bondage this vast mass of humanity, one-sixth of the human race ; who treat as a crime the noblest aspirations of freedom amongst that mass, the crew of this pirate Empire have always the enthusiastic support of the people of Great Britain in frustrating any attempt of a subject population to escape from the Empire.

As the glutton who has gorged himself to suffocation demands that everybody else should rise from the table so the " noblest minds of England " declare against further conquests by any of their national rivals. An Empire whose sword is ever drinking blood in some part of the world poses as the champion of the nations against the doctrine of force.

Such hypocrisy ! We will believe in the guiltlessness of the British people when their spokesmen dare to recognise publicly that the British Empire cannot last, and so recognise the right

of each one of its subject nations to free itself by the aid of any ally it can attach to its side.

For our part we take our stand openly upon the fundamental truth that Ireland is a subject nation, and that therefore Ireland has no national enemy in Europe save one, and that one is the nation that holds her in subjection.

Workers' Republic, March 25, 1916.

THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL

THE question often arises : Why do Irishmen celebrate the festival of their national saint, in view of the recently re-discovered truth that he was by no means the first missionary to preach christianity to the people of Ireland ? It is known now beyond the shadow of a doubt that the christian religion had been preached and practised in Ireland long before St. Patrick, that christian churches had been established, and it is probable that the legend about the shamrock was invented in some later generation than that of the saint. Certainly the shamrock bears no place of any importance in early celtic literature, and the first time we read of it as having any reference to or bearing on religion in Ireland occurs in the work of a foreigner—and English monk.

But all that notwithstanding there is good reason why Irish men and women should celebrate St. Patrick's Day. They should celebrate it for the same reason as they should honour the green flag of Ireland, despite the fact that there is no historical proof that the Irish, in the days of Ireland's freedom from foreign rule, ever had a green flag as a national standard, or indeed ever had a national flag at all.

The claim of the 17th of March to be Ireland's national festival, the claim of St. Patrick to be Ireland's national saint, the claim of the shamrock to be Ireland's national plant, the claim of the green flag to be Ireland's national flag rests not on the musty pages of half-forgotten history but on the affections and will of the Irish people.

Sentiment it may be. But the man or woman who scoffs at sentiment is a fool. We on this paper respect facts, and have a holy hatred of all movements and causes not built upon truth. But sentiment is often greater than facts, because it is an idealised

expression of fact—a mind picture of truth as it is seen by the soul, unhampered by the grosser dirt of the world and the flesh.

The Irish people, denied comfort in the present, seek solace in the past of their country ; the Irish mind, unable because of the serfdom or bondage of the Irish race to give body and material existence to its noblest thoughts, creates an emblem to typify that spiritual conception for which the Irish race laboured in vain. If that spiritual conception of religion, of freedom, of nationality exists or existed nowhere save in the Irish mind, it is nevertheless as much a great historical reality as if it were embodied in a statute book, or had a material existence vouched for by all the pages of history.

It is not the will of the majority which ultimately prevails ; that which ultimately prevails is the ideal of the noblest of each generation. Happy indeed that race and generation in which the ideal of the noblest and the will of the majority unite.

In this hour of her trial Ireland cannot afford to sacrifice any one of the things the world has accepted as peculiarly Irish. She must hold to her highest thoughts, and cleave to her noblest sentiments. Her sons and daughters must hold life itself as of little value when weighed against the preservation of even the least important work of her separate individuality as a nation.

Therefore we honour St. Patrick's Day (and its allied legend of the shamrock) because in it we see the spiritual conception of the separate identity of the Irish race—an ideal of unity in diversity, of diversity not conflicting with unity.

Magnificent must have been the intellect that conceived such a thought ; great must have been the genius of the people that received such a conception and made it their own.

On this Festival then our prayer is : Honour to St. Patrick the *Irish* Apostle, and Freedom to his people.

Workers' Republic, March 18, 1916.

THE CALL TO ARMS

ON Friday, March 24th, 1916, Dublin was the startled witness of a sudden mobilisation of the Irish Citizen Army in the middle of a working day—a mobilisation in response to a call coming with the most dramatic unexpectedness. Never was the call so sudden, never was the response swifter or more reassuring in its promise for the future.

For some occult and inexplicable reason the British Government decided upon the instant suppression of a nationalist journal, *The Gael*. The journal in question was the latest recruit to the ranks of true Irish journalism, and circulated mostly in the south and midland counties, but as far as we are aware had not in any sense exceeded the limits of candid and outspoken criticism of those who govern Ireland, and those who support them. It was not jingo, it was Irish, but quietly and thoroughly educational rather than aggressive.

But swift upon the decision of the Government a body of military and police raided the premises of the printers in Liffey Street, seized all the type forms, dismantled the machinery, and carried all the vital parts off to Dublin Castle along with all books and papers connected or believed to be connected with the journal. No explanation was given other than a notification that action was taken by virtue of a warrant from General Friend.¹

Simultaneously with this raid the police all over the city entered the shops of newsagents, and totally without warrant or legal sanction proceeded to search their premises and confiscate all copies of *The Gael* they could find. Right here in their illegal and bullying proceedings they encountered their first reverse.

A number of the Dublin Metropolitan Police entered the

shop of the Workers' Co-Operative Society at 31, Eden Quay, and demanded all copies of *The Gael*. The little girl in charge was not at all daunted by the bullying of the uniformed daylight burglars and coolly answered that she had no authority to give up the property placed in her charge. Then the policemen proceeded to rummage around among the papers. Meanwhile word of the raid had been sent to Mr. James Connolly, who is also Manager of the Workers' Co-Operative Society, and he arrived on the scene just as one of the police got in behind the counter. Inquiring if the police had any warrant they answered that they had not. On hearing this, Mr. Connolly turning to the policeman behind the counter as he had lifted up a bundle of papers, covered him with an automatic pistol and quietly said :

"Then drop those papers, or I'll drop you." He dropped the papers. Then he was ordered out from behind the counter, and he cleared. His fellow burglar tried to be insolent and was quickly told that as they had no search warrant they were doing an illegal act, and the first one who ventured to touch a paper would be shot like a dog. After some more parley they slunk away vowing vengeance.

Immediately they had gone the Countess Markievicz arrived with news of the raid upon the printing plant of *The Gael*, and in the belief that this was a prelude to a further general suppression as in 1914,² it was resolved to mobilise the Irish Citizen Army to protect the *Workers' Republic* and Liberty Hall.

Whilst the mobilisation papers were being signed, there came a fresh invasion of police headed by a sergeant and with reinforcements of the police. This invasion was met in the same manner with a request for the production of the warrant. The sergeant said he could assure Mr. Connolly that a warrant was issued, but was told that the reputation for veracity of the police was not good enough for his word to be taken without the document. As the police saw that the forces of the defenders

had been augmented, and the Countess amongst others was lovingly toying with a large automatic whilst a number of rifles were peeping round the corner, the sergeant concluded that we had "reason" on our side and withdrew.

After they had withdrawn the office staff wondering what article in *The Gael* had caused such an action on the part of the British Government, resolved to look through the paper and see. But lo, and behold, we discovered that the current issue had not yet arrived, none but old copies were on the premises, and consequently *we had been fighting the police to keep them from taking from us papers that we had not got.* We were like Irishmen fighting for freedom in Flanders, and not knowing what it means at home.

Just as we made this discovery we were "honoured" by a visit from Inspector Bannon and a largely augmented force of constables, all ready for business. To our civil inquiry for his authority the Inspector produced the document in question and proceeded to read it for our benefit, whilst both parties stood lovingly eyeing each other, with their fingers upon the triggers of their weapons. The warrant produced by the Inspector was the original warrant for the seizure of *The Gael*, and its concluding paragraph authorised the police and military to enter all newsagents' shops, and seize all copies of the paper they could discover.

As we had just discovered that we had none of the paper in the shop we informed the Inspector in our politest manner that he could search the shop for it as he had brought the warrant, but would not be allowed to search Liberty Hall, "warrant or no warrant." To which the Inspector answered that he would not dream of entering Liberty Hall. We believe him, but they were not always as considerate. No search at all was made, beyond a mere formal turning over of the papers on the counter.

Meanwhile the messengers with the call to arms had been

speeding all over the city, and everywhere the boys responded in the most loyal manner. In the machine shops of the railways, in factories, in the dockyard, along the docks, in the holds of coal boats, in stables, on carts, lorries and yokes of every description, in buildings in process of erection, the call reached the men, and on the instant tools were dropped, work abandoned, coats hastily snatched up, and within five minutes of receiving the summons the men were on their way despite the threats, promises, or supplication of foremen, bosses, superintendents or owners. Staid middle-class men in the streets, aristocratic old ladies out shopping, well-fed Government officials returning from lunch were transfixed with horror when they beheld the spectacle of working men with grimy faces and dirty working clothes rushing excitedly through the streets with rifle in hand and bandolier across shoulders, on the way to Liberty Hall. Visions of guillotines in College Green, and battues of loyal sweaters fled across their visions, and Dublin Castle and the Viceregal Lodge were immediately attacked by batteries of telephone calls imploring the British authorities for news.

In an hour from the first issue of the summons Liberty Hall was garrisoned by a hundred and fifty determined armed men, and more were trooping in every few minutes. It was splendid to see the enthusiasm of the men, and when in the course of the evening all the Women's Ambulance Corps trooped in, closely followed by the Boy Scouts, excitement and longing for the battle was running high in all our veins. The Irish Volunteers also were on the alert and stood, we are informed, under arms until after two a.m. on Sunday morning. Since then Liberty Hall has been guarded day and night.

All through Saturday the wildest rumours were current, but at Liberty Hall everything was quiet. The men were on the job, and every man was confident of his neighbour as well as himself.

It is understood that every military preparation was made

for an attack upon Liberty Hall, but the preparations were countermanded at the last moment. This is confirmed by a writer in the *Belfast Northern Whig* of Tuesday, March 28th.

The Royal Irish Constabulary in Portobello Barracks professed to be anxious to attack us, but the soldiers, being soldiers and not professional spies and bullies like the R.I.C. did not express any desire to make war upon their own countrymen.

The British Government thought to make a coup that would demoralise the national forces, and suppress all their papers, but they reckoned without the splendid discipline of the armed manhood of Ireland.

So endeth the first chapter. Who will write the next ?

SEQUEL

As a sequel to this military raid upon the liberties of the Irish people, and as a counter to her activities at Liberty Hall, the Countess Markievicz was served with a notice from General Friend forbidding her to enter the County Kerry for the purpose of delivering a lecture at Tralee on Sunday, March 26th. As we had no desire to hear of our comrade being arrested at some obscure railway station on the way down, and interned, another lady was sent in her place with a message. This messenger, Miss Marie Perolz, got safely through, and had the time of her life entertaining policemen, soldiers and detectives who informed her that she was a Russian subject, etc., in the apparent belief that they were interviewing Madam Markievicz.

Workers' Republic, April 1, 1916.

NOTES

1. Commander of the British Forces in Ireland.
2. The suppression of *The Irish Worker*, *Sinn Féin*, *Irish Freedom*, and *Ireland* in December, 1914.

THE IRISH FLAG

THE Council of the Irish Citizen Army has resolved after grave and earnest deliberation, to hoist the green flag of Ireland over Liberty Hall, as over a fortress held for Ireland by the arms of Irishmen.

This is a momentous decision in the most serious crisis Ireland has witnessed in our day and generation. It will, we are sure, send a thrill through the hearts of every true Irish man and woman, and send the red blood coursing fiercely along the veins of every lover of the race.

It means that in the midst of and despite the treasons and backslidings of leaders and guides, in the midst of and despite all the weaknesses, corruption and moral cowardice of a section of the people, in the midst of and despite all this there still remains in Ireland a spot where a body of true men and women are ready to hoist, gather round, and defend the flag made sacred by all the sufferings of all the martyrs of the past.

Since this unholy war first started we have seen every symbol of Irish freedom desecrated to the purposes of the enemy, we have witnessed the prostitution of every holy Irish tradition. That the young men of Ireland might be seduced into the service of the nation that denies every national power to their country, we have seen appeals made to our love of freedom, to our religious instincts, to our sympathy for the oppressed, to our kinship with suffering.

The power that for seven hundred years has waged bitter and unrelenting war upon the freedom of Ireland, and that still declares that the rights of Ireland must forever remain subordinate to the interests of the British Empire, hypocritically appealed to our young men to enlist under her banner and shed their blood "in the interests of freedom."

The power whose reign in Ireland has been one long carnival of corruption and debauchery of civic virtue, and which has rioted in the debasement and degradation of everything Irish men and women hold sacred, appealed to us in the name of religion to fight for her as the champion of christendom.

The power which holds in subjection more of the world's population than any other power on the globe, and holds them in subjection as slaves without any guarantee of freedom or power of self-government, this power that sets Catholic against Protestant, the Hindu against the Mohammedan, the yellow man against the brown, and keeps them quarrelling with each other whilst she robs and murders them all—this power appeals to Ireland to send her sons to fight under England's banner for the cause of the oppressed. The power whose rule in Ireland has made of Ireland a desert, and made the history of our race read like the records of a shambles, as she plans for the annihilation of another race appeals to our manhood to fight for her because of our sympathy for the suffering, and of our hatred of oppression.

For generations the shamrock was banned as a national emblem of Ireland, but in her extremity England uses the shamrock as a means for exciting in foolish Irishmen loyalty to England. For centuries the green flag of Ireland was a thing accursed and hated by the English garrison in Ireland, as it is still in their inmost hearts. But in India, in Egypt, in Flanders, in Gallipoli, the green flag is used by our rulers to encourage Irish soldiers of England to give up their lives for the power that denies their country the right of nationhood. Green flags wave over recruiting offices in Ireland and England as a bait to lure on poor fools to dishonourable deaths in England's uniform.

The national press of Ireland, the true national press, uncorrupted and unterrified, has largely succeeded in turning back the tide of demoralisation, and opening up the minds of the Irish public to a realisation of the truth about the position

of their country in the war. The national press of Ireland is a real flag of freedom flying for Ireland despite the enemy, but it is well that also there should fly in Dublin the green flag of this country as a rallying point of our forces and embodiment of all our hopes. Where better could that flag fly than over the unconquered citadel of the Irish working class, Liberty Hall, the fortress of the militant working class of Ireland.

We are out for Ireland for the Irish. But who are the Irish? Not the rack-renting, slum-owning landlord; not the sweating, profit-grinding capitalist; not the sleek and oily lawyer; not the prostitute pressman—the hired liars of the enemy. Not these are the Irish upon whom the future depends. Not these, but the Irish working class, the only secure foundation upon which a free nation can be reared.

The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be dissevered. Ireland seeks freedom. Labour seeks that an Ireland free should be the sole mistress of her own destiny, supreme owner of all material things within and upon her soil. Labour seeks to make the free Irish nation the guardian of the interests of the people of Ireland, and to secure that end would vest in that free Irish nation all property rights as against the claims of the individual, with the end in view that the individual may be enriched by the nation, and not by the spoiling of his fellows.

Having in view such a high and holy function for the nation to perform, is it not well and fitting that we of the working class should fight for the freedom of the nation from foreign rule, as the first requisite for the free development of the national powers needed for our class? It is so fitting. Therefore on Sunday, April 16th, 1916, the green flag of Ireland will be solemnly hoisted over Liberty Hall as the symbol of our faith in freedom, and as a token to all the world that the working class of Dublin stands for the cause of Ireland, and the cause of Ireland is the cause of a separate and distinct nationality.

In these days of doubt, despair, and resurgent hope we fling our banner to the breeze, the flag of our fathers, the symbol of our national redemption, the sunburst shining over an Ireland re-born.

Workers' Republic, April 8, 1916.

LAST STATEMENT OF JAMES CONNOLLY

“ To the Field General Court Martial, held at Dublin Castle, on May 9th, 1916.

“ (Evidence mainly went to establish the fact that the accused, James Connolly, was in command at the General Post office, and was also Commandant-General of the Dublin Division. Two of the witnesses, however, strove to bring in alleged instances of wantonly risking the lives of prisoners. The Court held that these charges were *irrelevant* and could not be placed against the prisoner.)

“ I do not wish to make any defence except against charges of wanton cruelty to prisoners. These trifling allegations that have been made, if they record facts that really happened, deal only with the almost unavoidable incidents of a hurried uprising against long established authority, and nowhere show evidence of set purpose to wantonly injure unarmed persons.

“ We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire, and to establish an Irish Republic. We believed that the call we then issued to the people of Ireland, was a nobler call, in a holier cause, than any call issued to them during this war, having any connection with the war. We succeeded in proving that Irishmen are ready to die endeavouring to win for Ireland those national rights which the British Government has been asking them to die to win for Belgium. As long as that remains the case, the cause of Irish freedom is safe.

“ Believing that the British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence, in any one generation of Irishmen, of even a respectable minority, ready to die to affirm

that truth, makes that Government for ever a usurpation and a crime against human progress.

“ I personally thank God that I have lived to see the day when thousands of Irish men and boys, and hundreds of Irish women and girls, were ready to affirm that truth, and to attest it with their lives if need be.

“ JAMES CONNOLLY,

Commandant-General, Dublin Division, Army of the Irish Republic.”



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NOTE

This statement was handed by Connolly in Dublin Castle hospital on the eve of his execution to his daughter Nora.

