



The Hidden Connolly **part 5: *The Workers' Republic*, 1915-16**

What is a Scab?

[10 July 1915]

The question seems rather superfluous. We will be told that everyone knows what a scab is. In Dublin the idea of being called a "scab" rightly awakens horror in the minds of all honest workers be they men or women. No one likes to be associated with the creature who, when the rights of Labour were in the balance of conflict, when the dignity of Labour was attacked, when the liberties of Labour were in peril, basely abandoned his fellows and "sold the pass" on his comrades. And yet, as simple as it seems the question involves more than can be answered without a good deal of thought.

What is a scab?

A scab is a worker who in the course of a strike or lock out helps the employer to keep his business going – to dispense with the aid of the men or women he formerly employed. To understand what a scab is we must first understand what constitutes a striker. A strike is an attempt to obtain certain concessions from an employer or group of employers by stopping his business, and thus stopping the flow of profits. If a body of workers are on strike the question of whether they are winning or losing is settled in the long run by their success in stopping their employers' business. If they succeed in stopping that business they win, if they do not succeed they lose. If their Union is able to pay Strike Pay for a year or two years they would still lose if the business can go on without them; nay, if the Union could pay a Strike Pay greater in amount than the weekly wages they had earned they would still lose if the employer's business was going on without them. But if the business cannot go on without them then they win. Hence, and this is the pivot of the whole question, whosoever enables the employer to continue his business without the striking workers is scabbing upon those workers.

Now let us imagine a practical illustration of this case. The labourers in the shops and yards of certain Dublin railway depots are on strike for an increase in their miserable wages. The work of these labourers consists mainly in helping or attending certain skilled tradesmen. If the Companies can get men degraded enough to do it they will bring in men to do the work formerly done by the men on strike. These men will be scabs. But what will be the skilled tradesmen who will accept the help of these scabs, who will instruct them in their duties, and work side by side with them in the effort to enable the Companies to defeat the strikers?

Many of the skilled tradesmen have already signified their attitude. All of them have stood firm in their refusal to do other work than their own. On Saturday, July 3rd, six engine drivers on the Midland and Great Western Railway were asked and agreed to wash out the boilers of their engines. On Sunday the local branch of their Union held a meeting and strongly repudiated their action. On Monday the Company requested the attendance of a deputation to discuss the matter in the office. The deputation attended and stood firm in their refusal. The United Smiths are equally firm, as are the Boilermakers.

But looming in the background is the threat of the Companies to get scabs to help the tradesmen. On the Dublin and South Eastern some few scabs have already been obtained. These scabs first worked a coal boat, and then went into the workshops to attend the skilled men as helpers.

As a result these skilled men are already face to face with the question we are treating in this article.

If a labourer who goes into work on a dispute is a scab, what is the skilled tradesman who accepts him as a helper?

We know how our readers would answer the question, we know how the Transport Union has always acted when another Union had its members on strike from the same employment as our members were engaged in, we know what honour and wisdom would dictate, but –

What will the skilled Trades do? How will they answer the question, "What is a scab?"¹

Militarism

[21 August 1915]

Every day gives fresh proof of the gravity of the danger facing the workers of this country from the ever-increasing power of the military. In Belfast the military have been employed to do ordinary labouring work at salvaging in the docks. One of the docks was the scene of a great fire, and members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union were afterwards employed to do the salvage work in sorting out the burnt goods and rescuing any material that could be saved. As these men naturally held out for proper wages they were informed one day last week that they would have to go, and next morning they found the military in their place. The soldiers did not want the job. They had not enlisted to scab upon their brother workers, but they found out that what they fancied they had enlisted for, and what they were really used for were two different things.

Would it be a fair question to ask if such military interference with Labour does not do more to discourage recruiting than all the anti-militarist speeches we could deliver?

In Barrow, in Glasgow, on the Tyne, in short in every great industrial centre, the same tale is being told. All trade union rights are assailed, all trade union liberties are denied, the working class is everywhere menaced by an unscrupulous master class in alliance with a military power in the hands of men who have grown up in hatred of democracy, and with a contempt for the class from which the private soldiers are drawn.

More than ever it is necessary for Labour to spring to arms in defence of its birthright.

Protect Your Women

[11 September 1915]

This is the slogan, the war cry of all the press to-day. Protect your women! To that rallying cry many thousands of this nation have responded; with their blood set on fire by the lying hysterics of a lying press thousands of young men, and men not too young, have left home and kindred and marched forth to foreign lands to battle under a flag they have detested all their lives; marched forth to battle in the belief that their battling was in some mysterious way serving their women.

And whilst they battled and shed their blood abroad what was happening to their women? In the latest exploit of Dublin Capitalism we have the answer. There is in Dublin a firm known as Williams and Woods, manufacturers of preserves, pickles, sauce and confectionery. This firm employs a large number of girls and women.

Their industry is scheduled under the Trade Boards Act as a Sweated Industry. Under the provisions of this Act there is established what is known as a Minimum Wage Board, which has the power to fix the minimum rate of wages in any industry scheduled under the Board. Upon this Board there are representatives of the Employers, of the Workpeople and of the Board of Trade. It is therefore not a wildly democratic or revolutionary body. And it is well known that before fixing wages this Board takes into account the present state of prices, and makes allowance for a "reasonable" profit. In fact every care is taken of the interest of the employer.

The industry of Messrs Williams and Woods came under the notice of this Board. A meeting was held at which the employers were represented, and at which the workers were misrepresented by a creature of the employers, and at this meeting the wages of women and girls in the employment were fixed at—

10/10 for Female Workers of 18 years and upwards, and 22/9 for Male Workers of 22 years and upwards. For younger workers the rates begin for Girls at 5/- per week, and for Boys at 6/-, proceeding by yearly increases to the amount stated for workers at 18 years.

These wages you will say are small enough in all conscience. They are! But small as they are Messrs Williams and Woods refuse to pay them. And in order to evade the law and to continue sweating their women workers, despite the law, this firm of loyal, God-fearing, Christian philanthropists have

Served Notice of Dismissal upon 150 Women and Girls over 18 years of age,

and are making ready to take in a number of young persons to fill the places of the people they are discharging. Some of these women under notice have served the firm loyally for ten and fifteen years, and even longer, and now this firm, with less bowels of compassion than a tiger in a jungle, is preparing to cast them out to starve. What an evil name Dublin is getting because of its greedy,

soulless, unscrupulous employers! Philanthropists, every one of them. Kind, charitable beings, who contribute to charity freely, giving away to charitable societies with one hand as much as a farthing in the pound out of the money they have stolen from the workers with the other.

Oh, let us march out to battle, and fight and die in Flanders or the Dardanelles in order that we may protect our women! And whilst we are fighting and dying abroad our women will be sweated, rackrented, dismissed in hundreds and turned out to starve by kind, loyalist firms like Messrs Williams and Woods.

Protect our women! Protect them at home! Protect them from dismissal, from hunger, from oppression. We call upon all our readers to warn their women and girls against entering the employment of this firm unless these notices are withdrawn. Down with Sweating.

PROTECT YOUR WOMEN!

Some Irish Slaves and Slavishness

[25 September 1915]

At last meeting of the Dublin Trades Council the secretary of a small affiliated body, the Brassfounders, wrote in intimating the withdrawal of his society from the Council. The reason alleged was that the Council had instructed their representatives on the Technical Education Committee of the Dublin Corporation to oppose the loan of some valuable and delicate machinery to the Government for Munitions Work. The Council and, as it transpired, the majority of the Technical Education Committee took the view that the machines would be rendered useless for the delicate work of the school by such employment, and that a Government that can spend about five millions a day on the war could easily afford £2,000 in buying these machines from the Corporation. If the Government really needed the machines, let them buy them as they buy horses, mules, or provisions at top prices from farmers or merchants.

Surely no more reasonable offer was ever made! In the Technical Schools of England there are hundreds of such machines, and in no one case have these been even asked for on the same terms as these machines were asked for in Dublin—indeed nowhere has an English Technical School been asked to do or give anything without payment. In this as in all others greater sacrifices are asked from Irishmen than from Englishmen, and unfortunately it would appear from the letter spoken of at the beginning of this article that there are Irishmen slavish enough in spirit to deem it right that it should be so.

But the men who ordered this letter written, and the men in the Technical Education Committee who supported the proposal to give away the property of the citizens of Dublin should be made to understand in what company they belong.

What is that company? When a foreign invader plants himself in a country which he holds by military force his only hope of retaining his grasp is either that he wins the loyalty of the natives, or if he fails to do so that he corrupts enough of them to enable him to disorganise and dishearten the remainder.

The chief method of corruption is by an appeal to self-interest. To illustrate: At one time in the history of Ireland the presence of an English garrison in a city or territory was a hateful thing in the eyes of Irishmen, and ever and anon some Irish chief and clan would swoop down upon that garrison and exterminate it, and all who had dealings with it. But gradually with the growth of the capitalist system the English garrisons found Irishmen who for the sake of the gain in gold they would make by supplying the garrison with food and supplies were anxious to see garrisons amongst them and over them. Hence we have seen the spectacle of Irishmen posing as patriots actually petitioning the English Government to establish military garrisons in their districts. Willing that a foreign army should be in a position to coerce them, that their sons may be lured into its bloodstained service, and their daughters ruined by its lustful military—willing to help all this iniquity along if only they were allowed to make a profit by selling something to the army that stood between their country and its freedom.

By such means the invader tightens his hold upon the country. The profit of the merchant supplying the garrison is followed by the jobs and pensions of that portion of the natives which sells itself to assist in administering the laws of the invader, and that again by the smaller jobs and more pitiful pensions of those who sell themselves as bludgeon men in the police or hired assassins in the army which holds the natives down and prevents them ruling and owning their own country.

If you throw a stone into a pond it will make a small ripple upon the smooth surface, but

gradually the ripple spreads, ring follows ring until the effect is felt upon the farthest shore. So with the spread of corruption in a subject nation. Corruption sends out its waves over the souls of the people, and evil begets evil until its loathsome effects are all pervading.

The Trade Union that secedes from the ranks of the Labour Movement because that movement scorns to aid the invader in his murderous conspiracy against a free nation, the trade union that exults in the prospect of being allowed to prostitute its skill in the furtherance of the work of making weapons of murder which may first be used on its own fellow citizens, the trade union that rushes in to proclaim that Irishmen should sacrifice more for the British Empire than Englishmen should – that trade union is a worthy descendant of those who in the past in the armies of the invader saw not the assassins of their country's liberty, but only prospective customers from whom an Irish slave might derive a slave's profit.

We do not believe that the members of the Brass Founders Society ever were consulted before their officials rushed in to proclaim their baseness to the wondering world.

In fact we know they were not consulted. What are they going to do about it?

Without Principle

[9 October 1915]

The recently concluded election in the Harbour Division of the city of Dublin was an illuminating proof of how low politics fall in Ireland when the galvanising force of an opposition based upon a great principle is withdrawn.² There are people in this country who sincerely deprecate anything in politics that seems to break what is called national unity, as there are ten times as many who repeat the parrot cry of "faction" and "factionism" because they will not use the brains with which they are endowed, but are content to be the mouthpieces of every dominant faction that imposes itself upon the nation.

But the sincere patriot who looks beyond the dust of conflict, and refuses to regard politics as an area in which the uniformity of old-time military drill is essential or even desirable, will realise that what is called "faction" is often the vitally necessary stirring of intellectual life without which parties are corrupted and nations die.

It may seem paradoxical to say it, but it is absolutely true that the healthiest nation, the nation most potent in its influence upon the well-being of the world, is ever that which has the most factions in its intellectual life, whose sons and daughters the most readily contend for principles they hold dear. Ireland is a shining example. Had any of the parties which have hitherto spoken in the name of Ireland been in reality the custodian of all the hopes and ideals of Ireland, it is certain that centuries ago the identity of Ireland as a nation would have disappeared. The destruction or corruption of the party would have meant the final conquest of Ireland.

But as it was, Ireland was a land of factions, of contending parties, of diverse ideals. No sooner had the foreign enemy destroyed one party, and joyfully declared that Ireland was done for, than he discovered that another party with another method of fighting, and pursuing a somewhat different ideal, had sprung up in its place, and all his work was to be done over again.

All Irish parties fought for freedom, all did not agree in their ideas of what constituted freedom. All Irish parties loved Ireland, all could not unite in formulating a political policy which embodied their love for Ireland. Indeed, the greatest political parties were those which most resolutely avoided all attempts at definitions.

There is a unity in diversity, an underlying identity in things apparently conflicting, but this great truth is unknown to the shallow-minded windbags and petty wirepullers who to-day pose as Irish leaders. They can only recognise submission and obedience, which for their own purposes they rechristen as unity and discipline. A new principle, a new idea merely represents to them a force they cannot control. The greater it is the more they fear it.

In the Harbour Division we had seeking the support of the electors three candidates between whom there scarcely existed any differences except in the degree of their objectionableness to decent minded men. We refrained from condemning any one of these men in the fear that we might help in returning any of the others. Half of the electors of the Division shared our views on the matter, and refused to go to the poll, and bereft of the vitalising effect of a contest for principles the election became one of the most pitiful travesties ever seen in Ireland.

Each candidate endorsed the war, but strove to represent to the electors that he was not as recreant to Ireland as his opponents. Each candidate held to a policy which makes loyal addresses

and the flunkeyism of Irish slaves a matter of routine hereafter, but two of them protested that they could not tolerate the man who did in the past what they were prepared to do in the future.

No principle was at stake. It was not a contest for principle, it was a contest for a job at £400 per year.

No principle will hereafter be at stake in an Irish election until Labour chooses to enter in the arena to purify the political atmosphere by the introduction of a higher principle.

Notes on the Front

[16 October 1915]

This week we give first place to an extract from an American writer, William Randolph Hearst. This newspaper man is proprietor of a great number of American daily papers which cover the entire American continent, and whose combined circulation runs into the millions. Yet we quote him not so much for what he is, as for the truth of what he says. He is speaking of the billion dollar loan from America to finance the war of the All Lies, and he warns the American money lenders that the people of Europe may repudiate the loan, and hang the kings and financiers who borrowed it. Read this warning:—

If any reader, accustomed to the sound and stable government of this country, believes that revolution is not now possible in any European State, let him ask himself frankly how long he believes the strong-bodied, stern-minded, plain people of Europe are going to endure the immeasurable misery of this unnatural war into the hellish depths of which they have been precipitated by the vanities and inanities, the enmities and jealousies of their arrogant and ambitious rulers.

Revolutions are not respectful of royalty, nor of constituted authority, nor of the established order. Revolutions are not regardful of the financial obligations of a deposed and discarded system. Revolutions exhibit no such soft and suave consideration for money and the money power as calm and conservative governments do.

The heads of plutocrats and aristocrats dropped side by side into the baskets on the Place de la Concorde from the impartial edge of the revolutionary guillotine. And so it may be that the tongues of the European statesmen and financiers, which so glibly guarantee this loan to-day, may loll mute in mouths eternally silent when the day of repayment arrives.

Strong language that, dear reader, but who shall say it is too strong.

Let us consider our case—the case of Ireland. Consider it, not impartially, but with hearts beating fiercely with anger against all the organised injustice that threatens our existence.

Impartiality in the face of injustice is the virtue of a slave, or of well-fed beneficiaries of the fruits of injustice. Thank God, we are not impartial.

What is our case? England is at war; because England is at war we are dragged into the conflict also. No, that is wrong! To be *dragged* into anything means that the person who drags goes in front. That is not our case. England does not go in front. No, we are *pushed* into war by people who stay behind in safety, or only pass on when the dead bodies of Irishmen have paved the way.

We are pushed into War. Consider what that means. For over 68 years the population of Ireland has been declining, the lifeblood of Ireland has been draining away. Whilst every European state has increased in population despite war and turmoil Ireland has gone steadily down the hill.

We have the most beautiful climate in the world, a climate which a wise national government could even improve by restoring the forests that once covered the island and broke the rainfall that comes in from the Atlantic ocean. We have a lively, quick minded, intelligent people, rich in soft kindness, and graced with womanly beauty and manly vigour.

For centuries this people have been treated as outcasts in their own land, shut out from every chance of developing its resources, and ruled by an insolent class of land thieves and its followers.

A social system the worst in Europe held the people in its grasp, and punished as a crime every improvement their industry added to the soil. A political system based upon this landlordism governed the country, and under its rule every man of free spirit became a suspect, every hater of slavery walked a path hemmed in by prison cells and dominated by a gibbet.

Continued revolutionary action of the people upon the land destroyed the power of the evil social system, but it left behind it the system of government based upon hatred and fear of the Irish people.

Forty-two Boards under the control of the British Government control every elected body in Ireland, and make a farce of free government.

Heartbroken in such a land where the amenities and gifts of life are reserved for those most sordid in soul, where the possession of public spirit damns the career of the possessor, the young men and women have been deserting her as life deserts the things of this world upon whom Death has set its seal.

But still the nation persisted in claiming its right to existence, in determinedly planning a future built upon those young people who remained. But suddenly like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky England rushes into war, and all the unclean things bred by seven centuries of corruption call upon Ireland from behind to rush to England's side.

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. All those splendidly developed young Irish men whose bones now lie mouldering beneath the soil in Flanders or upon the shores of the Dardanelles—all those physically perfect Irish men would in due course have been the husbands of young Irish women, the fathers of Irish children inheriting the vigour and virility of their parents.

But now those young Irish women are doomed to go husbandless through life, or to mate with the diseased and unfit who stayed at home, or the diseased and crippled who will return.

The perfect Irish children of perfect Irish parents will never be born. They who would have been their fathers lie dead in far off countries. Think of the colossal nature of this crime. The children of Ireland are being killed before they are born, the Irish race of the future denied an existence.

A competent English authority says that among the upper class of England there is not left one man of marriageable age for every twelve women of the same class, and that all the chances are against any girl between the ages of 19 and 22 ever getting married if she is not already engaged to some one in civil life.

It is safe to say that in Ireland amongst that section of the community who have yielded to the seductions of the recruiting sergeant the same is true. There are streets in Dublin, in the 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.

Ever and anon we read in the press the gloating remark that out of such and such a village with a small population three-fourths or four-fifths of the men are at the front. It reads to us as the triumph yells of the old time pirates must have sounded as they exulted in the number of the slaves captured in a piratical raid, such as the historic Sack of Baltimore.

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.

Generations yet unborn are to be taxed to pay for the blood madness of the rulers of this; our children and our children's children are to be compelled to pay in sweat and blood and tears for our weakness in submitting to the criminal ambitions of our rulers.

We did not all submit, a fact for which such of the Irish as exist in the future will bless us. Every Irish man or woman who helped to persuade a young Irish man to abandon Ireland and go to Flanders or the Dardanelles helped at the same time to assassinate Ireland, to rob her of her future children, to stifle the coming generation before it was born.

And every man who kept such a man at home helped by doing so to preserve the race, to keep for Ireland and for humanity the fathers of the future generation. That generation, those children yet unborn are the heritors of our hopes, the heirs of all those holy things for which our poets sung, our soldiers fought, our martyrs died.

Who then can doubt the truth of the words of that American whose eloquent sentences are at the beginning of these Notes? Who can believe that the peoples of Europe in general, of Ireland in particular, will consent to pay the leeches whose money has made this war possible after having made it inevitable, will consent to pay in sweated labour after having paid in the blood of their bravest and best.

It is unthinkable! The people of Europe have held back from violence because bloodshed and armed strife had grown repulsive as a result of years 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.

To Hell with Contracts

[16 October 1915]

Dublin is face to face with another Labour War—a war forced upon us as needlessly and as calculatingly as ever was conflict. The docks is the scene of battle, and the ranks on both sides are marshalled for the fray.

As usual it begins with an act of perfidy on the part of the employers. Our readers are aware that since the great increase of prices following the declaration of war the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has consistently stood by its original position that the Irish Working Class could not afford to lose any standard of comfort it had gained, and that therefore every increase of prices should be met by a demand for an increase of wages.

The capitalist class as a whole have reaped harvests of gold since the war started. Every single article has gone up in price. Even the ordinary agricultural products of our own country have increased, in many cases more than doubled their prices in the shops. More and more the women find it impossible to keep the table supplied, or to buy clothes for themselves and their children. A very large part of the increase is due to the excessive rates charged by shipowners, as well as to the grievous taxation laid upon us by the Budget. In view of all the foregoing circumstances the Union asked for an increase last February of One Shilling per day on the docks, and got it upon the Casual Boats, and on the Constant Boats obtained an increase of 8d per day. Upon the introduction of the War Budget and the instant upward leap in prices the Union again made a similar demand, realising that large as it looked upon paper it was yet not large enough to overtake the increasing price of provisions and other necessaries of life.

Negotiations were opened between the Union and the Shipping Companies, the time fixed for expiration of the notice being October 1.

The first meeting took place between the representatives of the Shipping Companies running Cross Channel steamers other than the daily boats. These Casual Boats as they are called agreed to pay Seven Shillings per day as the established wage, and the Union agreed that the question of Overtime should be adjourned till the ensuing week.

The next Conference was between the representatives of the Scotch Boats, Burns and Laird Lines, and the Union Officials. As in the previous settlement in March it was understood that whatever terms these Companies agreed upon would be accepted by their fellows in the trade. The employers after much haggling and discussion offered an increase of 2/-, which the Union declined to accept. Then the Conference broke up, with the understanding that the terms would be submitted to a meeting of the men on Sunday, October 10.

Before this date arrived things began to move, the Conspiracy of the Employers began to develop. A letter came signed conjointly by the representatives of the Burns and Laird Companies definitely stating that if the 2/- offer was not accepted on Sunday it would be withdrawn, and the matter *placed in the hands of the Board of Trade*.³

Then the Casual companies wrote in *breaking their agreement with the Union*, declining to pay more than they agreed to pay in March, and refusing to discuss the matter of overtime. These are the gentry who howl loudest about breach of contract, and yet are first to go back upon their solemnly pledged word whenever they imagine they can profit by doing so.

In face of this sudden treacherous conspiracy against them the men instantly closed up their ranks, and on Sunday at a General meeting of all concerned resolved to withdraw their labour rather than allow the treason of the employers to bear fruit. Again on Monday this was re-affirmed, and as a necessary preliminary to successful fighting full power was placed in our hands to fight or settle as we thought wise, to call out or leave in just as the circumstances in our opinion dictated.

As the matters stand at time of writing the Scotch boats are withdrawn, the men working casual boats are notified to refuse to commence work until assured that the company concerned will pay the rate of wages agreed upon by them at the Conference of Friday, October 1st, and in view of possible eventualities all the men on strike are undergoing a daily course of military drill.

The Transport Union knows how to fight, and has a rank and file that any union might be proud to have. The War Clouds are hovering over Dublin, but we are not shrinking. Let the battle come; on

whatever field it may be waged it will be met by men with stout hearts and fearless.

We have known all along that the war upon the German nation masked a conspiracy against the rights hard won by the democracy at home. We were not fooled by the war cries; we shall not shrink from meeting and defeating the conspiracy.⁴

The Immorality of Dublin

[23 October 1915]

We are hearing a good deal lately about the increasing immorality of Dublin. A lady member of the Irish aristocracy has aired her views upon the matter, town councillors have passed their verdict, and all the capitalist newspapers have joined in the shriek, and all the world has been duly informed of the terrible degradation of Dublin.

Is it not time we had some straight talk upon this matter? We are not likely to have such straight talk from any of the orthodox sources which to-day we see turning up the whites of their eyes as they prate of this great evil.

We want them to tell us what is the cause of this immorality, and what remedy they suggest. We will not be told the true cause, and we will hear of no remedy except a police remedy, which is just no remedy at all.

Whatever immorality there is in Dublin arises in the first place from the horrible poverty in which the people live, and the awful dens in which such a large number of people are housed. For the horrible poverty the class which makes the outcry about immorality is principally responsible. If we could analyse the sources from which Lady Fingal and all the other brood of unctuous praters derive their incomes we would find that almost all of them are in one way or another interested in maintaining present conditions in Dublin, either as owners of land upon which our slums are built, owners of house property, or shareholders in banks which have lent money to those who do own house or ground rent rights in our city. They are all in the relation to Dublin immorality of cause and effect.

We have said it before, we say it again—we will continue saying it till Dublin sweeps these hell holes away, that the girl or woman who maintains her purity amidst the awful filth, crowding and darkness of our slums has gone through a greater trial than martyrdom at the stake, and deserves a greater veneration than many who suffered in that manner.

Martyrdom at the stake was the brief suffering of a few moments—a paroxysm of exquisite agony with all the world looking on, an agony tempered with the joy of defying your enemy to the last. But the long-drawn-out agony of an ill-lighted, pestilential, fever-haunted, over-crowded slum, where the very air is laden with filthy talk, where the drunken quarrels of one family drown the domestic endearments of its neighbour, where the daily talk of one foul-mouthed slut can teach obscenity to the children of a score of parents, where privacy is impossible, where vice in lazy ease mocks daily at virtue in bedraggled poverty—to come out morally unscathed out of such a fire is to earn the respect and admiration of all who know and think.

One cause of the immorality of Dublin is its awful poverty. Take any large city of a similar size, where the wages of the men are poor, and where there is little work for the women and girls, and where such work as exists is most shamefully underpaid, and we will find the Devil reaping a similar harvest.

Abolish the Slums, the poverty of the men, and the sweating of the women and girls, and you will be making war upon vice in Dublin.

One other cause is *the Garrison*. Every military centre in a large city is a stink-pot of immorality.

Especially since the war broke out, and since every agency in the press and on the platform began praising the military, vice has been running rampant in Ireland. To be a soldier is to be forgiven every crime. Drunkenness, bigamy, assault, theft, perjury, seduction, wife desertion, abandonment of helpless children, are daily forgiven in our courts if only the accused is a soldier. Soldiers charged with rape are discharged even when confronted with evidence which would get any civilian penal servitude. The attitude of the official, loyal, Jingo classes to the soldier is shown in the fact that these people who are protesting against the evil life of Dublin all know that the present saturnalia of vice centres round the soldier, but they dare not say so lest it should discourage recruiting. They want militarism without its results. They cannot have it. An evil tree must bring forth evil fruits.

Let us test this by a simple example, as the writer has tested it.

There is a law which instructs the police to arrest at once any woman or girl seen accosting a man

in the street, importuning him to go with her. No other evidence is required than the statement of the policeman that he saw her accost several men. But if the reader will take his stand any night at the corner of O'Connell Street and Bachelor's Walk, of College Green or Dame Street, of Grafton Street, High Street and Christ Church Place, the Quays, Rathmines Road or Portobello Bridge, or a dozen other places where people congregate, he will see soldiers continually accosting and importuning girls and women, and policemen smilingly looking on. We have seen two soldiers under the influence of liquor accost at least a dozen girls, pester them with their presence, and force their company upon them until the victims were compelled to walk out in the middle of the street in order to get past. If the girls themselves or any of their male relatives had slapped the faces of these brutes as they deserved they would have been at once arrested for doing so, but the big lout of a policeman looked on at their bestiality and grinned his approval.

Tommy Atkins must have his pleasures, even although Irish girls are ruined.

Hundreds of Irish mothers in Dublin will yet curse the army whose soldiers ruined their daughters, and curse the government whose courts and police set a premium upon the military uniform as a cloak for and safeguard against the punishment of male immorality.

If you would make Dublin clean in its moral standards

REMOVE THE GARRISON.

But the authorities won't. They must have the garrison to menace our lives and liberties; what matter then if our womankind do suffer. What are the womankind of slaves good for, anyway?

Then for God's sake quit your canting talk about the immorality of Dublin. My lords and ladies, you and your rule are the tree that bears that fruit.

"Enlist or Starve"

"Come on or we will fetch you"

[27 November 1915]

The above seem to represent the attitude of the ruling class to the people of Ireland at present. They represent the dilemma in which the worker finds himself who tries to act up to the dictates of his conscience. The employer whom an absurd social system makes the arbiter of his means of living tells him that he must go and enlist, even should his whole soul cry out in revolt against the degradation of fighting for his own and his country's enemies. That if he does not go he will be thrown on the streets in idleness, and that every other employer will refuse to give him work. That he must enlist or starve.

A meeting of Dublin employers was held on Tuesday in the Mansion House under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor, and at the direct command of the Lord Lieutenant who attended in person. Before attending each employer received a circular marked "private and confidential" asking him to bring to the meeting a full list of all his employees of military age who could be dispensed with, or replaced by older men, boys, or women.

All the employers who locked out their workers in 1913 were there in person or through their representatives. Mr Wm. Martin Murphy, ever prominent in anything that savours of an attack upon popular rights, sent a letter promising his hearty co-operation, and the secretary of the Dublin Employers Association was prominent and zealous in the evil work.

All these employers pointed out to each other in their private conversations that every active trade unionist, or other person of independent mind, could be put first upon the list of eligible men, and that all blacklegs, pimps, and toadies could be certified as "indispensable," and the military would do the rest. Thus trade unionism could be destroyed by sacrificing the trade unionist to the military press gang now being organised.

Thus all the plans are being laid for a wholesale, well organised, and persistent victimisation of the working class. Every man of military age is to be given the choice of slaughter abroad or starvation at home. The Employers are planning well. Their father in Hell could not have done it better.

Behind this terrible conspiracy against the lives of the poor there looms up also the spectre of conscription—a conspiracy against the life and honour of the nation. Lord Derby⁵ and his associates have told us that if by such means as the foregoing they do not get enough recruits before November 30th all the unmarried men will be compelled to serve. When the unmarried men are exhausted, that is to say when they are all killed or wounded, the married men will be seized and sent out as food for cannon.

The carrying out of this plan means the end of the historic Irish nation.

The peaceful carrying out of it means that the Irish Nation will end *in dishonour*.

Will it so end? Could anything be worse than such an end?

Mr Redmond and his supporters tell us that it is useless to struggle against the Empire, that we should devote all our powers to the task of pleasing the Government by services to the Empire. That we might win by favours what we cannot gain by struggling, and that the sole hope of Ireland is to win reward by giving pleasure.

It is a prostitute's argument. The argument of the street walker who sneers at the poverty of her honest and virtuous sister, and flaunts her jewels as a proof that the ways of sin are more profitable than the paths of virtue.

And yet this argument that Ireland as a nation should seek to win her nationhood by advertising her prostitution – that is the last word in the statesmanship of the Home Rule party and its leaders.

Was ever nation so beset by its enemies? Was ever nation so betrayed by its friends?

Comrades! Scripture tells us that the fool hath his eyes on the ends of the earth. Are *all* our leaders fools? Do none of them turn their eyes from the red glare of battle abroad to note the swift poisoning of the race at home, encouraged by enemies sleepless in their hatred?

Dark clouds hover over us. Is there a light beyond these clouds?

Who can tell?

The Housing Problem from a New Standpoint

[11 December 1915]

The magnificent meeting at the Mansion House of Dublin on Tuesday was surely calculated to give food for thought to our rulers. That meeting of serious minded men and women of all classes and religious denominations, in its demand for an adequate loan to the Dublin Corporation to enable that body to provide homes for the housing of the workers, placed before the government of this country a square issue that can neither be avoided nor ignored. That issue may be thus stated:

According to the Report of the Departmental Committee upon the Housing Conditions of Dublin the present state of these conditions are such that thousands of lives are lost needlessly every year from preventable diseases, cleanliness is rendered almost impossible and thus disease is daily spread, every handicap is placed in the way of morality and every evil and vicious tendency fostered and encouraged. In short, the death rate of Dublin is the highest in Europe, and the conditions which have produced that high death rate are acknowledged to be a disgrace to civilisation.

So much being acknowledged by the British Government that Government in a month following the outbreak of the present war voted a large sum of money as a loan to assist in the rebuilding of Dublin. But upon that money being applied for by the Corporation that body was told in effect that it could not be had as it was now required for the prosecution of the War.

As was well emphasised at the meeting this statement of the Government was equal to an official declaration, *that the immediate well-being of Dublin was incompatible with the interests of the British Empire*, that the poor of Dublin must die in their slums in order that the British Empire may continue to shine in its glory.

We can but wonder at the stupidity of a Government that makes such a statement at such a time, that cruelly breaks its solemn promise to a suffering people – appeals to men to die in its behalf whilst it haggles over the loan of a few thousand pounds to provide houses for those they leave behind.

England has had statesmen in the past, as had Ireland. To-day both countries have but a weird collection of second-rate politicians who imagine that they are big men because they stand upon a big platform, and who fancy they show their greatness by haggling over petty items of expenditure whilst at the same time ordering the spendthrift use of human lives.

Whom the gods wish to destroy they first drive mad. Surely madness has seized upon our rulers when we see them telling the people of the Capital of Ireland that they cannot hope to rebuild a city of healthy homes on a civilised basis, and that the reason why they cannot so hope is because Ireland is a part of the British Empire.

Forgive and Forget

[18 December 1915]

As we approach the Blessed Christmas Season we are reminded that this is the period of the year when all good Christians are exhorted to follow the above precept. Forgive and Forget. How sweet

the words sound, and how soothing to the mind and conscience of men it is when they can in good faith act up to the counsel!

Can Ireland forgive and forget? Is it wise policy for Ireland to forgive before she has received more than a lip promise that the future will not be as full of wrong as the past? And if she can forgive, would it be, can it be, wise to forget? Ought it not rather be the aim of Ireland, and all who would guide her destinies wisely, to see that she never forgets, but that the memory of the past be forever with her as a lamp for the guiding of her footsteps in the future.

Indeed how can either a nation or an individual be fitted to meet the calls of life, and meet them wisely, if they have not been armed with a knowledge of the experiences of the past?

It will be found that Ireland failed in the present crisis where her children knew least about the past of their race. And Ireland most wisely met the crisis where her sons and daughters knew most of what that past had held for the people of Ireland.

With nations as with individuals it is not wise to forgive an injury whilst the enemy persists in retaining the power to renew the injury, or insists upon the injured person accepting a promise to reform instead of an act of reformation. The first condition necessary for forgiveness is a sign of repentance, and there can be no repentance if the oppressing nation lays it down that the power to oppress shall remain in its hands. Yet this is the condition in which Ireland found itself at the beginning of the present war.

Ireland has for seven centuries struggled in the grasp of England. For seven hundred years Ireland has seen no generation which did not attempt insurrection aiming at driving the English power out of Ireland—for seven hundred years with the exception of one brief period in the 18th century during which religious persecution strangled every thought of national regeneration. This conquest of Ireland, and the battle for the reconquest, has ebbed and flowed, but has never ceased. England insisted that her very life demanded that Ireland should be stripped of all the essentials of true nationhood, that it was not possible that Ireland could be mistress of her own destiny and England live. Therefore that England might remain an Empire Ireland must remain a subject nation. From this standpoint England has not to this day receded one millionth part of an inch. At the beginning of this war England had given Ireland a promise of a Parliament possessing certain local powers, but not possessing any of those national powers possessed by any independent nationality, by the free states of the German Empire or the colonial parliaments of the British Empire.

But this parliament, small and restricted as were its powers, was still too much to give freely and therefore England declared it could not be put in working order until the war was over, and then it would be still further restricted in its powers and curtailed in the scope of its operations. In other words England stood by every power she had gained by her long continued denial of Irish nationality, declared that Ireland was and must remain a province destitute of power to enlarge her status to that of a nation, and then having so affirmed her determination to retain all the spoils of conquest asked Ireland to forgive and forget and send her sons to rally to the defence of her conqueror and despoiler.

When a thief repents he does not expect forgiveness until he has made full and ample restitution—he would not dream of expecting forgiveness if he insisted upon retaining the power to rob his victim in the future. Still less would he expect forgiveness if he continued beating his victim as soon as that victim showed any disposition to arm himself against all future robbery on his part. A thief recognises that he must stop thieving and return the stolen goods before forgiveness can be expected.

England has robbed Ireland of her freedom. England still denies Ireland her freedom. England insists that it is unthinkable that Ireland should ever possess such freedom as would enable her to refuse to do England's bidding. And then England asks Ireland to forgive and forget!

It is the blessed Christmas season, and we are prepared to have Christian charity to all men, but first we wish to see a practical sign of repentance—we wish the thief of our freedom to return fully and completely that, and all of that, which she has stolen. Until that event occurs our counsel to our countrymen shall continue to be like unto that of the Highland Chief in the Scottish poem—

To spoil the spoiler as they may,
And from the robber rend the prey.

In the Gap of Danger

[22 January 1916]

In this week's issue of *The Workers' Republic* we publish figures showing the enormous profits now being made by shipowners and merchants engaged in the import trade, side by side with the demand of the Government that the working class should practise more economy, and avoid all requests for higher wages.

In many other walks of life the same story could be equalled. We find it in the municipal and poor law administration where the freest endorsement is given to the extravagant demands of the higher officials, whilst the most rigid parsimony is exercised against the lowly-paid workers. We find it in every company in the business world, where the rule is to vote outrageous incomes to figure-heads amongst the directors, and princely salaries to the chairmen, even whilst protesting publicly inability to pay decent wages to the workers who produce it all.

On the Imperial scale the same story is reproduced. Untold millions are voted away to the work of destruction, and the work of construction and education is grudged the most paltry allowance.

The magnificent meeting in the Dublin Mansion House on Monday to protest against the withdrawal of the grant to Irish education had and has the support of all Ireland. But of what avail? The robbery will continue—the robbery of which the holy men of old spoke when they denounced as the great sin against God “the robbery of the poor because they are poor.”

Politically we are helpless. Thanks to the militant Labour Movement we are not so helpless industrially, but even on that battlefield the odds against us have increased because of the defection of so many of those whose duty it was to lead, but who when the battle opened either deserted the battlefield entirely or went over wholly to the enemy.

The Irish Transport Workers' Union still stands in the gap of danger. Its flag still flies, its front to the enemy is still unshaken, its serried ranks have retreated not one inch, and behind it rapidly are gathering fresh hosts of zealous fighters. We know that we have since this war began passed through the greatest crisis in our history, that forces have been loosed against us the most deadly if the most silent we have yet encountered.

We know that the storms we have survived are as naught to those gathering to break upon our head, but we know that we must press forward, that we have in our keeping the hopes of all the children yet unborn, and that those hopes must be safeguarded and shepherded to fulfilment. Many will fall by the wayside, many will desert us “ere the guns begin to shoot,” many upon whom we relied will join the enemy, our world will be torn in confusion; but despite all the flag of Labour will yet be borne aloft triumphant in a free nation in which the wrongs of the poor shall be peacefully righted.

Still Fighting

[12 February 1916]

The following resolution was moved at last meeting of the Dublin Port and Docks Board:

That we request the Government to take such steps as are necessary for the purpose of compelling the City of Dublin Company to resume the cross-channel traffic carried on by their steamers previous to November last; and that we further request the Admiralty not to requisition the Laird Line steamers or the steamers of any of the other shipping Companies while a fleet of idle steamers are tied up in Liverpool.

The Chamber of Commerce of Dublin has also through its chairman publicly and most emphatically expressed its opinion of the culpability of the employer who persists in prolonging this fight so long after his cause has been lost in the court of public opinion, as well as upon the industrial battlefield. The opinion of organised labour upon this dispute was well summed up by Mr William O'Brien, Acting Secretary of the Dublin Trades Council, on Monday when he said:

They were always told to secure public opinion in a labour fight. If they had public opinion behind them they were bound to be right. Well, here was a case where for three months public opinion of all shades was at the back of the men (applause). They had the employers and everybody else saying the men were right (hear, hear). Still it did not prevent the alleged Irish representatives supporting the gang who were condemned (applause). The Government subsidy was still theirs to fight their workers and the very men who gave them their sympathy—it was cheap (laughter)—

would support the very men who were stabbing the workers of the City of Dublin in the back (applause). Public opinion was a good thing, but the solidarity of the working classes was more – aye, a thousand times (cheers).

Never was a fight more justified, and more unexpected, than the one the men have been compelled to make in this case. The employer was given notice at the same time as the notice for an increase was served upon all his fellow-employers in the port, negotiations were carried on with other companies, the negotiations were broken off and a fight took place lasting two weeks, the negotiations were resumed and a settlement arrived at, companies not directly concerned in the negotiations such as the British and Irish, and Tedcastle companies agreed to accept the settlement as binding them also, and everything seemed settling down to peaceful industry when this company suddenly refused to conform, and plunged the port into another prolonged and useless conflict. Yet this company is the only one of the companies concerned in receipt of a Government subsidy, and is therefore the best able to pay, and at the same time the most amenable to Government pressure.

We wish again to reiterate our contention of some weeks ago:⁶ If the head of this company says he is not able to pay the same rate as his competitors then the statement is a confession of bungling incompetence. The shareholders should dismiss him for the same reason as he would dismiss a dock labourer who said he could not work under the same conditions as his mates.

As was well said at the Trades Council meeting it is absolutely impossible that the men should lose, as such a defeat would be a signal for a wholesale attack upon labour in Dublin. Therefore the Trades Council has decided to organise financial assistance to the Union to help the splendid fellows who have fought so long and so well.

We thank our fellow Trade Unionists, and we assure them that if ever their time comes we will in return battle as zealously for them as if it were for ourselves.

For our brothers' Cause IS our Cause.⁷

Unemployment in Ireland

[26 February 1916]

The mass meeting in the Mansion House of Dublin, under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council, to protest against the restriction upon Irish importation of paper materials, though not attended as well as it might have been, served nevertheless to draw attention to a great evil. That evil, the war made by the British Government upon every form of employment in Ireland that does not directly subserve the interests of the Empire, is taking on daily more and more significance. For months not only the Government but also all the subsidiary Boards and Commissions by which it governs Ireland have set their faces against any form of activity that might serve to give employment to Irishmen of military age and capabilities. In the building trade every kind of public work has been held up by the orders of the Government, and within the past week notice has been given that the War Office has power to forbid any building operations in Great Britain and Ireland, whether such operations be public works or purely private enterprises. We are all aware that such power will be most drastically enforced in Ireland, even if loosely applied in England. The whole trend of the Government's policy at present is to force into the army through stress of unemployment all Irishmen capable of bearing arms, and to seduce out of Ireland into England all Irish men and girls whom it can persuade to accept war work in the latter country.

Within the past week a number of young Irish girls have been deported out of the County Kerry to take up munition work in England. These girls are being sent off among strangers out of their own country, away from all who could counsel and advise them, and left subject to a thousand temptations. No indignant protests against these deportations have been heard of from the people who raised such outcries in Dublin when homes in England were being provided for some of the children of the starving strikers.⁸ No AOH rowdies have attempted to prevent these young Irish maidens being sold into slavery. Although every trade union in England protests that the Munitions Act binds the workers hand in foot in galling bondage, the vile crew that shrieked out their lies against us in 1913 are now openly conniving at the deportation of young Irish girls to England to serve in that bondage, without a trade union, without a counsellor, without a friend to help them should they repent the bargain they have made in their innocence and ignorance.

From the same district a number of labourers also recently left for government work in England. One of the number who came back since the Conscription Act was passed has just received a notice

from the War Office informing him that he is called up under the Military Service Act. The notice reads:

I beg to give you notice that under the Military Service Act (1916) all single men are now considered to be in Army Reserve whether attested or not. You are therefore liable to be called up any time after the 2nd March.

Thus the traps are being set everywhere for the Irish. The armed men of Ireland cannot be conscripted. They have resolved that if they must fight they will themselves decide where they will fight. No government can take that power out of their hands. But if they cannot be conscripted by force then their weaker or more foolish brothers can be conscripted by hunger and trickery.

And the brave Irish girls can be deluded into trusting themselves into the service of a government which will visit upon their heads in England vengeance and spite for every manly stand made in Ireland.

The Printing Trades are now marked out for the next open blow. They also must furnish their quota to the army of England. Unemployment is the whip that is to lash them into the ranks. Perhaps no trade union in Ireland has so consistently shown itself to be so subservient to its masters, so ready to abandon the ranks of the fighters as have the printers under the rule of the present governing body. For that very reason it is probable that they have been chosen as the first trade body in Ireland to be openly attacked. They failed to learn that their greatest safety lay in audacity, that the capitalist cannot be conciliated. Attempt to conciliate the capitalist and, like all bullies, he assumes that your peacefulness is cowardice, and immediately forces the fight upon you. On the other hand if you force the fight upon him he whines for mercy immediately.

It is in vain that the printers will call upon the employers in the printing trade to resist this new move of the Government. The employers have recently planned the formation of a Scab Union for Printers. They will welcome a period of restriction which will increase the number of members on the Unemployment Benefit of the bona-fide Union. Such drain upon its funds will soon destroy its resources, and a little judicious (?) management will pave the way for all the further attacks the employers have planned upon the status of the employees in the Printing Trade. Restrictions upon apprentices, girl labour, division of labour, and all the other questions the employers want re-opened are at the back of the minds of the Employers in the Printing Trade when they consider the effects of the restriction order. If it means bad trade for a while, they argue, it also means an opportunity of smashing the printers' trade union. They will bear with the bad trade for the sake of the greater freedom it will give them to exploit the workers.

Nor is that all they see in the effect of the order. They also see in it an opportunity to still further concentrate the industry. Time was when Dublin was as full of small bakeries as it is now of small printing establishments. Nowadays the baking trade is concentrated in the hands of a few firms. The hope of the great guns of the Master Printers Association is that the restrictions upon the importation of paper materials will before long bankrupt the small printers by the score, and all their trade will fall into the hands of the great firms who alone have capital enough to tide them over the crisis. Then when the restrictions are removed the ground will be cleared for a few firms to monopolise the business in the printing trade as completely as a few firms monopolise it in the bakery trade.

Thus the capitalist class use governmental power to develop the power of the great capitalists.

Thus the British government of British capitalists use their power to aid their fellow thieves in Ireland in return for help in holding Ireland for the British Empire.

Irish Trade Union Congress

[15 April 1916]

The approach of Easter reminds us that on the next succeeding National Holiday, Whit Monday, the Congress of the Irish Trade Unions will open at Sligo.

The Congress of last year was not held as it was felt that the intense political feelings engendered by the war would probably inject themselves into the proceedings of Congress with the possible result that in the heat and passion things might be said and done that would cause irreparable breaches in the ranks of Labour. Notably it was appreciated that the position of many delegates from Unions in the North would be seriously compromised, and the adhesion of their unions to the Congress endangered, if any discussion of the War should be brought on, and result in the deliverance of any anti-British pronouncement from leading delegates. It was also realised that no

amount of caution could prevent some delegates from perhaps inadvertently raising some point connected with the administration and regulation of Labour under war conditions. In the then temper of the people of Ireland any spark might have set fire to a big conflagration such as might have consumed the whole edifice so painfully set up by the labours of past Congresses. For these reasons it was agreed to abandon the holding of the Congress in 1915.

But the prolongation of the war, and the increasingly evil condition of Labour in face of the greater power exercised by departments of the Government, the alarming increase of prices, the dearth of employment in the country, and the thousand and one other questions pressing for treatment make it imperative that this year the Congress be held.

The delegates will have a hard and difficult task set before them, and will need to bring to bear upon it all their wisdom and forethought. Timidity and rashness will be alike out of place, the delegates must be cautious, yet bold and courageous once a course of action is determined upon. They will be handicapped by the bad example set by the Labour Leaders of Great Britain in so shamefully surrendering all their hard won rights, but that handicap can be overcome. The arguments that justified the holding of separate congresses for Trade Unions in Ireland will also serve to justify the setting aside of the evil examples of so many of our British brothers.

We trust that all the bodies represented at previous Irish Trade Union Congresses, and more besides, will strain every effort to make the representation this year, alike in numbers and in quality, the greatest yet held.

Time presses. The date is Whit Week, the place is Sligo.

Labour and Ireland

*Dublin Working Class, amid Great Emotion, Hoist and Salute the Flag of Ireland*⁹

[22 April 1916]

On Sunday, April 16, 1916, let the date be forever remembered, Dublin witnessed a scene that moved thousands of men and women to tears of joy and thanksgiving. On that day the Irish Citizen Army, the armed forces of Labour, on the top of the headquarters of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, hoisted and unfurled the Green Flag of Ireland, emblazoned with the Harp without the Crown, and as the sacred emblem of Ireland's unconquered soul fluttered to the breeze, the bugles pealed their defiant salute, and the battalion presented arms, strong men wept for joy, and women fainted with emotion.

From early in the day the historic square was the center of Dublin. Crowds were continually arriving to assure themselves that the ceremony was really to take place. All sorts of rumours were current all the week. Field guns were to level the Hall with the ground, all the avenues of approach were to be occupied by masses of troops with machine guns, Mr Connolly and all his officers were to be arrested at dead of night, martial law was to be declared on Saturday, and so forth; the stories were endless, and the bearers of the stories came from all quarters and ranks of society. But the preparations were quietly proceeded with, and the appointed hour found Beresford Place and all its avenues of approach blocked indeed, not by troops, but by tens of thousands of a breathless, excited, and jubilant crowd.

The duty and honour of unfurling the flag was allotted to Miss Molly Reilly, a young and beautiful member of the Irish Women Workers' Union.

In front of the Hall the Irish Citizen Army cleared a space and formed into three sides of a square. Inside their formation positions were occupied by the Women's Section, who made a splendid and beautiful show, the Citizen Army Boy Scouts, under Captain Carpenter, and the Fintan Lalor Pipers' Band. Captain Poole and a Colour Guard of sixteen men escorted the Colour Bearer who was accompanied also by the three young girl dancers known as the Liberty trio.

The flag was deposited first on a pile of drums in the center of the square. After inspecting the troops, Commandant Connolly took up his position in front of the drums with Commandant Mallin on his left and Lieutenant Markievicz on his right. Then the Colour Bearer, Miss Reilly, advanced from her escort, received the Colours from the Commandant, and turned about to face the Colour Guard. As she did so the Guard presented arms, and the buglers sounded the Salute. When the Colour Bearer had retaken her place in the center of the Guard that body moved off around the square, whilst the Pipers' Band played appropriate music.

As the Colour Guard reached the entrance to the Hall again, and reformed to their original front the Colour Bearer carrying the Colours across her breast bore them into the hall, and up to the roof.

At this point the excitement was almost painful in its intensity. So closely had the crowds been packed that many thousands had been unable to see the ceremony on the square, but the eyes of all were now rivetted upon the flag pole awaiting the re-appearance of the Colour Bearer. All Beresford Square was packed, Butt Bridge and Tara Street were as a sea of upturned faces. All the North Side of the Quays up to O'Connell Street was thronged, and O'Connell Bridge itself was impassable owing to the vast multitude of eager, sympathetic onlookers.

The Fintan Lalor Pipers' Band is among the very first rank of the Pipe bands of Ireland, but so anxious and prayerfully eager were the people that its fine music was scarcely heeded as the hearts of all beat rapidly with longing for the appearance of the Flag upon its position.

At last the young Colour Bearer, radiant with excitement and glowing with colour in face and form, mounted beside the parapet of the roof, and with a quick graceful movement of her hand unloosed the lanyard, and

THE FLAG OF IRELAND

fluttered out upon the breeze.

Those who witnessed that scene will never forget it. Over the Square, across Butt Bridge, in all the adjoining streets, along the quays, amid the dense mass upon O'Connell Bridge, Westmoreland Street and D'Olier Street corners, everywhere the people burst out in one joyous delirious shout of welcome and triumph, hats and handkerchiefs fiercely waved, tears of emotion coursed freely down the cheeks of strong rough men, and women became hysterical with excitement.

As the first burst of cheering subsided Commandant Connolly gave the command, "Battalion, Present Arms," the bugles sounded the General Salute, and the concourse was caught up in a delirium of joy and passion.

In a few short words at the close Commandant Connolly pledged his hearers to give their lives if necessary to keep the Irish Flag Flying, and the ever memorable scene was ended.

Red Banner 7-12

Notes

- 1 The employers agreed to an increase of 2s a week for the railway labourers on 14 August.
- 2 The election, on 1 October, was won by Alderman Alfie Byrne, but all three candidates had pledged to join the Home Rule party in parliament if elected.
- 3 In other words, referred to binding government arbitration.
- 4 On 23 October, the casual lines agreed to pay the increases as negotiated, and all other lines (except the City of Dublin) conceded an increase of 3s.
- 5 Secretary of State for War.
- 6 See 'A Lesson of the Strike' in *The Lost Writings* (London 1997), p 192-4.
- 7 The dispute continued until October 1917, when the company was taken over under wartime regulations, and all the workers were offered their jobs back.
- 8 During the 1913 lockout.
- 9 This report by Connolly provided the editorial for the final *Workers' Republic*.