

James Connolly

# The New Evangel

Preached To Irish Toilers

(1901)

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*There is a New Evangel  
At this moment preached in France  
And the priests of its great doctrines  
Despise the tyrant's glance;  
Oh, that Holy Gospel echoes  
From distant sea to sea!  
It teaches Men are Brothers,  
It teaches all are Free!*

**Joseph Brennan,  
Irish Tribune, 1848.**

## [State Monopoly versus Socialism](#)

### [Socialism and Religion](#)

### [The Economic Basis of Politics](#)

### [Father Finlay, S.J., and Socialism](#)

### [Socialism And Political Reformers](#)

“Ireland as distinct from her people, is nothing to me: and the man who is bubbling over with love and enthusiasm for Ireland, and can yet pass unmoved through our streets and witness all the wrong and the suffering, the shame and the degradation brought upon the people of Ireland – aye, brought by Irishmen upon Irishmen and women, without burning to end it, is in my opinion, a fraud and a liar in his heart, no matter how he loves that combination of chemical elements he is pleased to call Ireland.”

*James Connolly.*

[Workers' Republic](#),

15 July 1900.

# James Connolly

# The New Evangel

## State Monopoly versus Socialism

**Workers' Republic**, 10 June 1899

One of the most significant signs of our times is the readiness with which our struggling middle class turns to schemes of State or Municipal ownership and control, for relief from the economic pressure under which it is struggling. Thus we find in England demands for the nationalisation of the telephone system, for the extension of municipal enterprise in the use of electricity, for the extension of the parcel system in the Post Office, for the nationalisation of railways and canals. In Ireland we have our middle class reformers demanding state help for agriculture, state purchase of lands, arterial draining, state construction of docks, piers and harbours, state aid for the fishing industry, state control of the relations between agricultural tenant and landlord, and also nationalisation of railways and canals. There is a certain section of Socialists, chiefly in England, who never tire of hailing all such demands for state activity as a sign of the growth of the Socialist spirit among the middle class, and therefore worthy of all the support the working-class democracy can give. In some degree such a view seems justifiable. The fact that large sections of the capitalist class join in demanding the intervention of the State in industry is a sure sign that they, at least, have lost the overweening belief in the all-sufficiency of private enterprise which characterised their class a generation ago; and that they have been forced to recognise the fact that there are a multitude of things in which the 'brain', 'self-reliance', and 'personal responsibility' of the capitalist are entirely unnecessary. To argue that, since in such enterprises the private property-holder is dispensed with, therefore he can be dispensed with in all other forms of industrial activity, is logical enough and we really fail to see in what manner the advocates of capitalist society can continue to clamour for such state ownership as that alluded to – ownership in which the private capitalist is seen to be superfluous, and yet

continue to argue that in all other forms of industry the private capitalist is indispensable. For it must be remembered that every function of a useful character performed by the State or Municipality to-day was at one time performed by private individuals for profit, and in conformity with the then generally accepted belief that it could not be satisfactorily performed except by private individuals.

But all this notwithstanding, we would, without undue desire to carp or cavil, point out that to call such demands 'Socialistic' is in the highest degree misleading. Socialism properly implies above all things the co-operative control by the workers of the machinery of production; without this co-operative control the public ownership by the State is not Socialism – it is only State capitalism. The demands of the middle-class reformers, from the Railway Reform League down, are simply plans to facilitate the business transactions of the capitalist class. State Telephones – to cheapen messages in the interest of the middle class who are the principal users of the telephone system; State Railways – to cheapen carriage of goods in the interest of the middle-class trader; State-construction of piers, docks, etc. – in the interest of the middle-class merchant; in fact every scheme now advanced in which the help of the State is invoked is a scheme to lighten the burden of the capitalist – trader, manufacturer, or farmer. Were they all in working order to-morrow the change would not necessarily benefit the working class; we would still have in our state industries, as in the Post Office to-day, the same unfair classification of salaries, and the same despotic rule of an irresponsible head. Those who worked most and hardest would still get the least remuneration, and the rank and file would still be deprived of all voice in the ordering of their industry, just the same as in all private enterprises.

Therefore, we repeat, state ownership and control is not necessarily Socialism – if it were, then the Army, the Navy, the Police, the Judges, the Gaolers, the Informers, and the Hangmen, all would all be Socialist functionaries, as they are State officials – but the ownership by the State of all the land and materials for labour, combined with the co-operative control by the workers of such land and materials, would be Socialism.

Schemes of state and municipal ownership, if unaccompanied by this co-operative principle, are but schemes for the perfecting of the mechanism of capitalist government-schemes to make the capitalist regime respectable and efficient for the purposes of the capitalist; in the second place they represent the class-conscious instinct of the business man who feels that capitalist should not prey upon capitalist, while all may unite to prey upon the workers. The chief immediate sufferers from private ownership of railways, canals, and telephones are the middle class shop-keeping element, and their resentment at the tariffs imposed is but the capitalist political expression of the old adage that “dog should not eat dog.”

It will thus be seen that an immense gulf separates the ‘nationalising’ proposals of the middle class from the ‘socialising’ demands of the revolutionary working class. The first proposes to endow a Class State – repository of the political power of the Capitalist Class – with certain powers and functions to be administered in the common interest of the possessing class; the second proposes to subvert the Class State and replace it with the Socialist State, representing organised society – the Socialist Republic. To the cry of the middle class reformers, “make this or that the property of the government,” we reply, “yes, in proportion as the workers are ready to make the government their property.”

**James Connolly**

# **The New Evangel**

**Socialism and Religion**

## The Known and the Unknowable

**Workers' Republic**, 17 June 1899

Perhaps upon no point are the doctrines of Socialism so much misunderstood, and so much misrepresented, as in their relation to Religion. When driven into a corner upon every other point at issue; when from the point of view of economics, of politics, or of morality, he is worsted in argument, this question of Religion invariably forms the final entrenchment of the enemy of Socialism – especially in Ireland.

“But it is opposed to Religion,” constitutes the last words, the ultimate shift, of the supporters of capitalism, driven from every other line of defence but stubbornly refusing to yield. “Socialism is Atheism, and all Socialists are Atheists,” or “Your Socialism is but a fine name to cover your Atheism in its attack upon the Church;” all these phrases are so commonly heard in the course of every dispute upon the merits or demerits of the Socialist doctrine that we require no apology for introducing them here in order to point their illogical character. So far from it being true that Socialism and Atheism are synonymous terms, it is a curious and instructive fact that almost all the prominent propagandists of Freethought in our generation have been, and are, most determined enemies of Socialism. The late Charles Bradlaugh, in his time the most aggressive Freethinker in England, was to the last resolute and uncompromising in his hatred of Socialism; G.W. Foote, the present editor of the **Freethinker**, the national organ of English Secularism, is a bitter enemy of Socialism, and the late Colonel Bob Ingersoll, the chief apostle of Freethought doctrine in the United States, was well known as an apologist of capitalism.

On the continent of Europe many other quite similar cases might be recorded, but those already quoted will suffice, as being those most easily verified by our readers. It is a suggestive and amusing fact that in the motley ranks of the defenders of Capitalism the professional propagandists of Freethought are comrades-in-arms of His Holiness the Pope; the ill-reasoned and inconclusive Encyclicals lately issued against Socialism make of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church belated camp followers in the armies marching under the banners raised

by the agnostic exponents of the individualist philosophy. Obviously, even the meanest intelligence can see that there need be no identity of thought between the Freethinker as such, and the Socialist as a Socialist. From what then does the popular misconception arise? In the first instance from the interested attempt of the propertied classes to create such a prejudice against Socialism as might deter the working class giving ear to its doctrines – an attempt too often successful; and in the second instance, from a misconception of the attitude of the Socialist party towards the theological dogma in general. The Socialist Party of Ireland prohibits the discussion, of theological or anti-theological questions at its meetings, public or private. This is in conformity with the practice of the chief Socialist parties of the world, which have frequently, in Germany for example, declared Religion to be a private matter, and outside the scope of Socialist action. Modern Socialism, in fact, as it exists in the minds of its leading exponents, and as it is held and worked for by an increasing number of enthusiastic adherents throughout the civilised world, has an essentially material, matter-of-fact foundation. We do not mean that its supporters are necessarily materialists in the vulgar, and merely anti-theological, sense of the term, but that they do not base their Socialism upon any interpretation of the language or meaning of Scripture, nor upon the real or supposed intentions of a beneficent Deity. They as a party neither affirm or deny those things, but leave it to the individual conscience of each member to determine what beliefs on such questions they shall hold. As a political party they wisely prefer to take their stand upon the actual phenomena of social life as they can be observed in operation amongst us to-day, or as they can be traced in the recorded facts of history. If any special interpretation of the meanings of Scripture tends to influence human thought in the direction of Socialism, or is found to be on a plane with the postulates of Socialist doctrine, then the scientific Socialist considers that the said interpretation is stronger because of its identity with the teachings of Socialism, but he does not necessarily believe that Socialism is stronger, or its position more impregnable, because of its theological ally. He realises that the facts upon which his Socialist faith are based are strong enough in themselves to withstand every shock, and attacks from every quarter, and therefore while he is at all times willing to accept help from every extraneous source, he will only accept it on one condition, viz., that he is not to be required in return to identify his cause with any other whose discomfiture might

also involve Socialism in discredit. This is the main reason why Socialists fight shy of theological dogmas and religions generally: because we feel that Socialism is based upon a series of facts requiring only unassisted human reason to grasp and master all their details, whereas Religion of every kind is admittedly based upon 'faith' in the occurrence in past ages of a series of phenomena inexplicable by any process of mere human reasoning. Obviously, therefore, to identify Socialism with Religion would be to abandon at once that universal, non-sectarian character which to-day we find indispensable to working-class unity, as it would mean that our members would be required to conform to one religious creed, as well as to one specific economic faith – a course of action we have no intention of entering upon as it would inevitably entangle us in the disputes of the warring sects of the world, and thus lead to the disintegration of the Socialist Party.

Socialism, as a party, bases itself upon its knowledge of facts, of economic truths, and leaves the building up of religious ideals or faiths to the outside public, or to its individual members if they so will. It is neither Freethinker nor Christian, Turk nor Jew, Buddhist nor Idolator, Mahomedan nor Parsee – it is only *human*.

**James Connolly**

# **The New Evangel**

**The Economic Basis of Politics**

## **The Stomach, not the Brain**

**Workers' Republic**, 12 August 1899

Nothing more strikingly illustrates the crude and unscientific theories of the ordinary middle class politician than the desperate attempts at present being made to build up a great political party in Ireland on the lines of the late Home Rule movement. Apparently all sections of the Home Rule party are possessed with the belief that great political movements can be constructed at will, and that an effective, aggressive political force may have its origin, not deep down in the daily life of the people, but in the brains of some half dozen gentlemen in parliament. Viewed from this standpoint the toiling multitudes are mere automata, and the really effective national force is to be found in the men whom the Home Rule press and orators point out to the multitude as leaders. The truth that the political movements of a country spring from the pulsations of its economic life; that all political parties are the instruments of a class, and are great and powerful only in the proportion in which the development of the struggle for existence forces their particular class interest upon the majority of the nation as a dominant factor in their daily life – all this seems to a quite unheard of philosophy amongst capitalist politicians.

Yet a slight survey of the history of the world in general, or of Ireland in particular, could not fail to bring the truth of this eminently Socialist doctrine home to the mind of the thoughtful student of events. The great political organisations which have successfully revolutionised the systems of governments under which they lived, have had their origin, not in the brains of mighty leaders, but in the daily and hourly needs of the multitude, and have acquired force and power only in so far as those needs became sharp and pressing enough to goad that sluggard multitude to action. When at such a crisis there arose a man lucky enough, or astute enough, to make himself the mouthpiece of the discontented multitude; to coin its inarticulate groanings into political phraseology, and give its hunger-inspired desire for change in intelligent formulation, then such a man became a 'great leader', and the organisation following the course he advocated the leading political force. To the minds of the superficial middle class thinkers – always ready to believe that the world turned around their heroes and successful

persons as upon its axis – the leaders had created the movement which they led; to the mind of the scientific Socialist the leaders and the movements were both the product of the quickening of intellect caused by social conditions adversely affecting the life of the people at large.

Examine the great revolutionary movements of history and you find that in all cases they sprang from unsatisfactory social conditions, and had their origin in a desire for material well being. In other words, the seat of progress and source of revolution is not in the brain, but in the stomach. The fact that this truth has hitherto been obscured, or even denied; that the pioneers of progress uniformly clothed their political demands in the most idealistic language and the most flowery phraseology; or that they constantly appealed for the support of ‘all unselfish and generous souls’, rather than to commonplace interests, only proves that we are all too prone to hide even from ourselves the real nature of our impelling desires, and, even when most stubbornly following our grossest instincts, to throw around our actions all the glamour of ‘spiritual cravings’, or ‘patriotic hopes’.

The power and unconquerable optimism of the socialist party is due to their recognition of this materialist basis of history, this economic basis of politics. Knowing that their ultimate ideal and immediate demands are in a line with the progress of the human race towards prosperity, and that every scheme for better social conditions at all likely to effect its purpose must be of the nature of a step in their direction, Socialists cannot lose courage, because even in the midst of temporary defeat they know that the needs of the workers, who are in the majority, will eventually impel them into line with the Social-Revolutionary forces. From this fact our Irish politicians – and revolutionists – may gain, not comfort, perhaps, but wisdom. The history of the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Irish Volunteers, the risings of 1798, 1848, and the Irish Land League, all bear out our argument upon the economic basis of great political movements.

The American Revolution was a revolt against the action of England in throttling the infant industries of America, and came to a head with a tax upon tea – all ‘base’ material reasons; the French Revolution was the revolt of an oppressed and

famished people against outworn, medieval landlordism (feudalism) and the vexatious taxes upon industry imposed by a corrupt Court; the Irish Volunteer movement was, in its anti-English aspect, a revolt of the Irish manufacturing class against the restrictions put upon their trade by England, – “*Free Trade, or else*” was the motto they hung up on their cannon, and when that one point was gained all the ‘patriotic enthusiasm’ of the leaders vanished; Grattan termed the Volunteers, upon whose backs he had climbed to political eminence, ‘an armed rabble’, and the whole movement collapsed as suddenly as it had arisen – the economic basis being gone the patriotism was no longer evident. 1798 was an abortive Irish edition of the French Revolution – despite the lying twaddle of the present day about the society of United Irishmen being a ‘Union of *All Classes*’, there is not in history any record of a movement, except the Paris Commune, in which the classes and the masses were so sharply divided; 1848 found its inspiration in the promptings of famine – and its failure in the total incapacity of the doctrinaire Young Irelanders to understand the difference between revolutionary action and ‘heroic’ posings; the Land League found its inspiration in a partial failure of the crops, and in the newly developed competition of America – and the collapse of the Land League came with reduced rents and partial prosperity.

In every case the social condition of the mass of the people was the determining factor in political activity. Where the mass of the people find existing conditions intolerable, and imagine they see a way out, there will be a great political movement; where the social conditions are not so abnormally acute no amount of political oratory, nor yet co-operation of leaders, can produce a movement.

The great Labour uprising at the Irish Local Government elections of 1898 sprang up spontaneously without a leader, and despite the political parties; when the men who supported it have realised the futility of trying to effect any great improvement in their condition by the action of local bodies, they will seek for a political party which can express their class interests upon national basis – and seeking it find the Socialist Party, ready and equipped for the task. By our action to-day we are preparing the ground for more aggressive revolutionary action when the working class of Ireland at last recognise in our principles the

embodiment of their hopes; firmly grounded upon our knowledge of the economic basis of all political action, we confidently await the day when the ever-increasing pressure of capitalist society shall bring the workers into our ranks and the destinies of the nation into our hands.

## James Connolly

# The New Evangel

## Father Finlay, S.J., and Socialism

### An Exposition of Social Evolution

**Workers' Republic**, 1 July 1899

“Those who seek a comprehensive remedy for the sufferings of the working classes look beyond trades unionism. They perceive that they must modify more profoundly the relations between Labour and Capital; to bridge across the chasm dividing them, and so abolish that rivalry of interest out of which has grown so much inhumanity to man. One class of reformers propose to effect this change by the absolute abolition of private capital – by taking capital, or the material instruments of wealth production, out of the hands of the individuals and classes, and making it the property of the community, vesting it in the State. This scheme – the dream of the Socialist – impossible to work out in practice, hopelessly breaking down wherever it has been tried, violates the fundamental conception of all property. What a free man creates by his labour, that is his property; if it is his property he can do with it what he wills – consume it by present use or reserve it for further production. To forbid him the right to reserve it or use it as capital

would be to deny him the right to possess property. From this point of view – as well as from others – Socialism is seen to have much in common with slavery.”

The above quotation, from the paper on *Co-operation* read by Father Finlay, S.J., before the fourth annual general meeting of the Maynooth Union, calls for more than a passing notice, is deserving of more intelligent criticism than our capitalist contemporaries have been able to bring to bear upon it. For this reason we propose to place before our readers a brief statement of our position, in so far at least as it is affected by the assertions contained in the paper quoted from above.

We readily allow that no man in Ireland within the clerical body, and few men in Ireland outside the ranks of the adherents of scientific Socialism, can bring to bear upon questions of political economy, and the effect which theories of political economy have had upon the industrial life of the people, such a wealth of knowledge as the reverend gentlemen whose paper we are now discussing. The feeble and ineffective efforts of the Home Rule pressmen to criticise the co-operative movement to which Father Finlay devotes so much of his energy and ability is in itself proof enough that, however efficient our journalistic guides may be as caterers to the palate of a reading public ready to forgive every inconsistency of statement, or colouring of fact, if only it is seasoned with a dash of ‘patriotism’ or true religion, as helps to the intelligent discussion of an economic question they are worse than useless. The economic theories held by the non-Socialist parties of Ireland to-day and voiced by the publicists on press and platform are in fact the theories which prevailed in England more than 50 years ago – during thin agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and for Free Trade in general. Such ideas are now regarded throughout the remainder of the world as outworn and obsolete; it is only in Ireland they survive, and in Ireland only among men who having failed to keep step with the intellectual march of the world would fain convince themselves that the intellectual incapacity which shuts them off from sympathy with the thought of the age is the distinguishing birthmark of a true Celt. That the criticism of such persons should be of little effect in adding to our knowledge any important truth on an economic subject is, of course, to be expected, and we do not propose to waste our own or our readers

time in discussing them, but the arguments of Father Finlay naturally carrying more weight, deserve, we repeat, a much more serious study.

To begin with we would like to remind the reverend lecturer that he did not place before his hearers such a clear and definite idea of the true Socialist position as he himself possesses. In a lecture delivered in Dublin before the Statistical Society, some few years ago he, in dealing with the teachings of Karl Marx – the ablest exponent of Socialism the world has seen, and the founder of that school of thought which embraces all the militant Socialist parties of the world – Father Finlay laid before his hearers an exposition of the evolutionary nature of the Socialist doctrine, its historical derivation and materialistic basis, which is not at all compatible with the crudely false conception of Socialism to be found in the foregoing quotation. Modern Socialism, he showed, is not the product of the brains of any man nor of any number of men; it is the legitimate child of a long, drawn-out historical evolution, and its consummation will only be finally possible when that evolutionary process has attained to a suitable degree of development. As capitalist society – the system of wage – labour and ‘free contract’ between master and man – was only developed according as the system of feudalism – or serf labour under a hereditary, landowning nobility – broke down owing to the demand for new methods of industry produced by the opening up of new markets through the discovery of America, and the perfection of means of transit and communication, in like manner will Socialism also come when the development of capitalism in its turn renders the burden of a capitalist class unbearable – and the capitalist system unworkable. Socialists point out that the capitalist system depends upon the maintenance of equilibrium between the producing and consuming powers of the world; that business cannot go on unless the goods produced can find customers; that owing to the rapid development of machinery this equilibrium cannot be maintained; that the productive powers of the world are continually increasing whilst the virgin markets of the world are as continually diminishing; that every new scientific process applied to industry, every new perfecting of machinery, increases the productivity of labour, but as the area of the world remains unaltered the hope of finding new markets for the products of labour grows ever less and less; that a time must come when all the world will be exhausted as a market for the wares of commerce, and yet invention

and industrial perfecting remain as active as ever; that capitalism – able to produce more in a few months than would supply its customers for years – will have no work for the workers, who, constituting the vast majority as they do, will have to choose between certain starvation and revolt for Socialism. That the same economic development which will create the necessity for revolt will also provide the conditions required to make that revolt successful, in so far as it will have forced out of business the multitude of small capitalists, and replaced them by huge companies, stores, and trusts – a unification of industry, requiring only the transference of the right of ownership from the individual to the democratic community to bridge the chasm between capitalism and Socialism. That the private property which the worker should possess in the fruits of his toil is continually confiscated to-day by the capitalist process of industry, and that Socialism by making *all* citizens – society – joint heirs and owners of the tools of production, will restore to the workers that private property of which capitalism deprives them.

Here then is a statement of the aims and principles of modern Socialism. The intelligent reader will observe that this is not a mere piece of speculative philosophy, nor yet the product of disordered brains acted upon by hunger-weakened stomachs. On the contrary it is primarily a scientific analysis of the past and present structure of society – a comprehensive *summing up of the facts of history*.

In face of this fact, which we would most respectfully remind Father Finlay he has himself most lucidly explained ere now, what becomes of his statement at Maynooth that Socialism “had hopelessly broken down wherever it had been tried.” The statement was crudely false, mischievous, and misleading, and Father Finlay would not risk his reputation by repeating it before any audience of scientists in the world. That he thought it quite safe to make such an utterance at Maynooth is an interesting indication of the low estimate in which he held the intellectual grasp of his hearers on the thought of their generation. Socialism has not “broken down wherever it has been tried,” because, being the fruit of an historical evolution yet to be completed, *it has never been tried*.

If Father Finlay can tell when and where such an industrial order as would be recognised by the Socialist parties of the world as Socialism, has been tried and failed, then we will publicly recant our errors. Wanting such information we, and with us an ever-increasing band of the wage-slaves of capitalism, will continue to prepare for that revolt which shall establish the Socialist Republic.

**James Connolly**

# The New Evangel

## Socialism And Political Reformers

**Workers' Republic, 8 July 1899**

Among the many developments of Socialist activity at which the man in the street is apt to be astonished, perhaps none are more difficult to comprehend at first sight than the implacable hostility shown by the Socialist parties of the world towards the political parties hitherto identified with the agitation for political reform. The uninitiated find it hard to understand why there should be such marked hostility between parties, both of whom place on their programme planks of political reform seemingly almost identical in character; why the Socialist party, which represents the most revolutionary ideas of our day, should seek the downfall of political reform parties with a zest and eagerness which the most bigoted Conservative could never hope to excel. It is observed that wherever the Socialist party is strong, as in Germany, France, or Belgium, it is the Liberal party – the party of mere political reformers – which has been the first to suffer in loss of prestige and membership in exact proportion as Socialism has advanced.

Strange, though the circumstance may seem to the unreflective mind, it is but what might have been expected to result from the appearance upon the

political field of a force which like the Socialist party had at once a programme of political reform embracing all and more than the old reform parties had striven for, and a programme embodying demands for economic changes which receive no support from middle-class reformers, though a crying necessity of the times. The development of acute economic problems, side by side with the extension of the franchise – economic problems are, in fact, most acute in the politically freest countries – has borne in upon the minds of the working-class voters the conviction that, except as a means to an end, political freedom is a valueless acquisition for their class. They therefore demand the right to use that political power in the direction of their own class interests, but on making such demand are surprised to see their quondam middle-class leaders the first to denounce them and call upon the State to oppose them. When this point has been reached, as in the countries above named and to a lesser degree in England and America, the thoughtful observer of politics cannot but see that middle-class parties of reform have outlived their usefulness; that whatever political change is still required to establish the democracy in power can be sought for as well under the banner of the new political force of Socialism as under the old banner of Liberalism, and that this new power by basing its agitation upon the material wants of the producing class gathers to its aid a potential power, in the passion and self-interest of the majority of the nation, which the mere doctrinaires – Liberal, Radical, or Republican – could never hope to rally. Therefore political reform parties decay as the Socialist Parties thrive; the latter early the political demands of the former on their banner side by side with the economic demands of their class, and thus deprived of their sole reason for existence the capitalist reform parties lose their attraction for the multitude – now pressing eagerly onward to the inspiration of a new and better hope.

On the other hand Conservatism is, as a party, secure of an existence as long as the present system lasts. It may be set down as an axiom that there will always be a Conservative party as long as there is tyranny and privilege to conserve. Hence we find the old reform parties shedding their members at both ends – the wealthier section falling over into the ranks of Conservatism, in order to strengthen the only party able to defend their monopolies, and the working class section joining hands with the Socialists as the only party embracing the cause

alike of political and industrial liberty. The Socialists are naturally desirous of hastening this process, in order that the political battlefield may be left clear and open for the final struggle between the only two parties possessed of a logical reason for existence – the Conservative party defending the strongholds of monarchy, aristocracy and capitalism; and the Socialist party storming those strongholds in the interest of human freedom. This consummation cannot be realised as long as there exists a political party which, like the Liberals of England and the Continent, and the Home Rule parties of Ireland, attempts to blend the principles of progress and reaction – now blatantly declaring for political freedom, now vigorously defending economic slavery. Therefore the Socialists uniformly seek the discomfiture of Liberalism, regarding it as a buffer between the contending forces of tyranny and freedom; and hence the clear-sighted workmen of the Continent have already reduced that once formidable party to a mere cypher in politics, and win ore long completely wipe it out of existence.

The fact is not without its lesson to us here in Ireland. We too have so-called parties of reform – Home Rule in all its phases is now but a cloak for the designs of the middle class desirous of making terms with the Imperial Government it pretends to dislike. It is but capitalist Liberalism, speaking with an Irish accent. As such it is the enemy of every effort at working-class emancipation, and if the workers of Ireland as are alive to the interests of their class as are their brethren on the Continent, they will help build up that Socialist Party which is destined to march over the grave of Home Rule Liberalism to the final assault and destruction of the strongholds of oppression.