

James Connolly

Political Action

(1908)

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In our editorial of last month we dealt with the subject of Industrial Unionism, and pointed out that that method of organizing the Working Class provided the only really effective constructive work by which the daily and hourly conflict between the capitalist and the worker could be utilised to generate the steam necessary to carry the Social Revolution through, as well as to provide the forms of administration for the new Industrial Republic. In this issue we propose to say a few words about the structure and functions of Socialist political parties, as such. And as we have not seen anywhere a calm analysis of the different conceptions of political revolutionary action, such as we intend to present, we hope that our readers will extend to us in this instance also the patience and courtesy due and befitting among men and women devoting their lives to the work of emancipation.

The various Socialist parties, the sight of whom contending and attacking each other is so often a source of joy to the capitalist philistine, although they possess a common ideal, and a common concrete object to be worked for do not always possess a common belief in the means by which a political party to attain

their end can be created. In this divergence of belief on the question of how to build a revolutionary political party is to be found the real reason for the warring political organisations of Socialism rather than in any divergence of belief in fundamentals. Of course as a rule neither set will admit this; each, with all the zealotry of partisans will rather ascribe the existence of another party to the wicked designs of their opponents; if not to the machinations of the capitalist class. But such wildly reckless statements may be safely brushed aside. Whatever unclean or compromising elements may creep into a movement after it becomes popular it is fair to assume that Socialist parties are at their inception not very likely to attract any but the idealist or genuine revolutionist.

There are two distinct and opposing ideas as to how best to build a political party to do the political work of Socialism, and an understanding of these two ideas will serve to enable the reader to grasp the political situation better than listening to any amount of heated debate on the subject by the partisans of either. These two ideas may be briefly stated thus:

I. That the work of the Social Revolution can only be accomplished by men and women with a clear understanding of the economics of capitalism, that therefore a clear and definite program is the first essential, and in the interest of maintaining that definite program of the party it is imperative to expel out of the said party all speakers, writers, or even members who are not in the strictest harmony with its 'clean cut' principles, and

II. That the work of the Social Revolution depends in the last analysis upon the growth of class-consciousness amongst the working class, that therefore the chief task of a Socialist political party is to educate and direct that class consciousness along correct lines, that in order to do so allowance must continually be made for the gradual nature of its development, and for the stages thereof, that therefore it must be made possible for all who have accepted the central principles of common ownership to become members of the party irrespective of their knowledge or lack of knowledge of economics, and that the development of the political struggle of the Socialist movement must be depended upon to clear the minds of the members rather than any process of weeding out.

We think that we are right in outlining these two conceptions of the process of upbuilding a political party as the fundamental, underlying ideas which in practice have produced in the past warring parties of Socialism where harmony was looked for and demanded by the working class. The thoughtful unprejudiced reader will perceive that here is a more fundamental and at the same time more creditable source of disunity than is to be found in the usual allegations of 'dictation and despotism' on the one side, or 'compromise and confusion', as freely alleged on the other. On the other hand it must be pointed out that, as was almost inevitable human nature being as it is, each of those parties tended to develop traits which seemed to verify the accusations of their opponents.

Dictation and despotism, interfering with the opinions of members on mere matters of party administration very soon followed upon the heels of the attempts of the first party to purify its ranks by expulsion, and compromise for the sake of getting votes at times treads closely in the wake of toleration and broadminded treatment of unfledged recruits.

In Europe the solution of this problem of uniting the political parties of Socialism has been sought in a unity which embraces both schools of thought and while not concealing their utter divergence provides in press and platform a means for discussion, as members, of the things that divide them, and insists that all must recognize the voice of the majority of the party as supreme. To some this may seem as a virtual surrender of its position by the first party, since it abandons – its insistence upon the duty of a Socialist party to expel all those who are not 'clear' upon tactics, or are not orthodox.

Thus the S.L.P. when its officers declared for unity, virtually went on record in favor of submitting all differences between Socialists to a majority vote, and admitted that there was no longer any reason for its existence as a party.

In a sense that is true. It is no doubt a vindication of the policy of toleration advocated by the second party. But this is in many cases traceable to other causes also. It is traceable to the fact that within recent years there has grown up in the Socialist movement a change of opinion relative to the functions of a political party. That change was indicated in our editorial in the June issue. Among many

of the adherents of the clear cut policy the conviction has gained ground that the political party which exists for the fight at the ballot box is primarily and essentially an agitational and destructive force, and that the real constructive work of the Social Revolution must come from an economic industrial organization. From this conviction two currents of thought have developed. One, that since the economic organization was the constructive one, political action was unnecessary; another, that since the political party was not to accomplish the revolution but only to lead the attack upon the political citadel of capitalism, there no longer existed the same danger in the unclearness of its membership, nor compelling necessity for insisting upon its purification. In other words that Socialism at the ballot box is the dress parade of the army of Labor, Industrial Unionism is the same army with its service clothes on, ready for work.

From all this it is our belief there will evolve, if there has not in principle already evolved, as the fighting army of the workers of this country:

One Socialist party embracing all shades and conceptions of Socialist political thought.

One Socialist Industrial organization drilling the working class for the supreme mission of their class – the establishment of the Worker's Republic.

Between these two organizations – the advance guard and the main army of labor – there should be no war, and no endorsement. As travellers to a common goal they should not quarrel, and the dear bought experience of the past has taught us that when political organizations endorse economic, tacitly or otherwise, they always exact a heavy price for their action, just as when economic organizations have endorsed political, it always cost the former their soul and their integrity.

Finally, we give it as our opinion that until the economic organisation of the workers has attained a power in control of the workshop and therefore in the nation, equal to that attained by the capitalist class before they raised the revolutionary standard in England, America and France, working class politics are but preliminary skirmishing, and that therefore the broadest, most tolerant political party of Socialism may be made useful as a teacher as long as it is kept

distinct from the industrial organization and therefore unable to hamper the movements of the latter when, as the regular army of organised labor, it forms its line of battle for the final attack.

James Connolly

Harp Strings

(1908)

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This month I wish to say a few words about signs of progress. As Socialists we have to spend so much time and energy pointing out the decrepitude and imbecility of capitalist society, so much time and energy in rousing our fellow slaves to a proper hatred of the degrading conditions under which we live and suffer, that we are apt to overlook the thousand and one factors that are making for the regeneration of the social order.

It is well to be discontented; it is well to have a heart hot with passionate hatred of injustice; it is well to be a rebel against a social system that makes for iniquity; it is well to be ceaseless in your denunciations of the wrong that sitteth in the seats of the mighty, but it is also well to have a hopeful spirit, and an eye to

note and appreciate all those manifestations of social activity, organized and unorganized, that indicate the stirring of the human conscience, the restlessness of the human intellect under capitalist conditions.

Let the “canting fed classes” purr their approval of the preachers of contentment and resignation, I at least wish to reserve my tribute of praise to the men and women who succeed in arousing in their fellows a divine discontent with a system “conceived in sin and begotten in iniquity”.

Discontent, my friends, is the fulcrum on which the lever of thought has ever moved the world to action. Therefore blessed be discontent: Let no man repress within himself the stirrings of hatred of injustice, of discontent; they are the manifestations of the divine impulse towards better things, the workings of the leaven that shall transform the soulless slave into the perfect freeman.

Discontent! Let us see: Have we anything to be discontented with. I quote from a report in the Chicago **Daily Socialist** the following description of conditions in the South, as they were told by a delegate from that territory:

“Little children five years old have to go out and hoe cotton in May, June and July,” he said. “In August and part of September they go to school.

“In September the cotton picking begins and the parents of these little children drive them like so many little ponies back to the cotton fields and drive the little tots to work. It takes constant driving and watching to make them work.

“Later the weather begins to get quite chilly and fires are built where these little workers stop now and then to warm their little toes and fingers. They don’t seem to understand why they have to be driven away from these warm fires back to the frosty fields.

“Finally these people reach the starvation point and are no longer able to work. Then they begin to borrow, beg and finally steal. They lose all moral sense and the landlords drive the families away from the farms.

“The cotton field paupers then become slaves in the factories of the large cities of the South and sink to the lowest depths.”

That is bad, and so some workers are foolish enough to be discontented. But the officials of the capitalist republic of the United States are also discontented. Thus I see that Admiral Robley D. Evans (Fighting Bob), realising that there is a weakness somewhere, rises and in his bluff, sailor like manner demands a remedy. And what is his remedy?

“We need 48 more battleships.”

I am not sure that he meant this as a remedy for the oppression of little children by the capitalist class of the United States, but I am sure that he imagined the need, real or imaginary, of more battleships to be the only thing worth talking about.

And I am also sure that the capitalist press of the United States acquiesced in his point of view, for his remarks were heralded far and wide whilst the awful conditions pictured in the report I have just quoted are scarcely deemed worthy of an occasional paragraph.

Such is the capitalist conception of statesmanship. Untold fruits of the perverted ingenuity of men to be devoted to the task of destroying human life, but at best cold neglect or a passive indifference to every suggestion for the preservation and ennobling of the lives of the workers.

Nevertheless how the heart of the patriotic American must have throbbed within him as he read of the splendid reception given to the US fleet upon the Pacific coast, how he must have felt honored when he reflected that those noble vessels, so ably manned by such a gallant crew, were American, and that he, as an American citizen, was honored also in the honors so lavishly heaped upon ‘his’ sailors and ‘his’ fleet.

Of course those poor oppressed little tots of children working in the cotton fields are American also, and by analogy every cruelty and every outrage inflicted upon them are also inflicted upon the ‘honor’ and ‘patriotism’ of the whole

American citizenship that tolerate such a state of affairs, but then as the great American press does not draw that moral of course the great American public does not allow it to impair its digestion.

As a once favorite writer of mine has said: “Such is modern civilization: brilliant and beautiful where it rises into the sunlight, but within it is full of dead men’s bones – the bones of the poor who built it.”

But what about those signs of progress. Dear, oh, dear, my imagination has led me away from my subject, as it always does when I stop to reflect upon the anomalies of this social system we are living under. My thoughts run ‘a seachrán’, as my father used to say when he would set me to do ten minutes work and find me an hour after sitting, dreaming with the job not yet commenced.

The first sign of progress I wish to note is the formation of the new organization in Ireland whose program will be found on another page – The Irish National Union of Workers. I have as yet no definite information about the persons who drafted that program as I have seen none of their names except that of their secretary, Councillor P.T. Daly, therefore I am judging only from my knowledge of the labor situation in Ireland when I hail that movement with pleasure.

I know P.T. Daly personally. He is a young man, a compositor by trade, and with an absolutely clean record. His first participation in public life was as a speaker at meetings in connection with the Old Guard Benevolent Union, an organization of veterans of the Fenian movement, and of those who subscribed to the principles of that movement.

Most of the members of this body were earnest whole-souled enthusiasts, but quite a few, especially those who joined during the Centenary Celebrations of the Rebellion of 1798, were wire-pullers who desired to use the Old Guard for personal purposes. I have always classed Daly among the former number.

Fortunately for him he had read most of the literature sold by the Irish Socialist Republican Party, and all of the literature published under the authority

of, and by that body. In fact as a compositor he had helped to set it up, as it was printed to a great extent in the shop where he was employed. Such reading helped, no doubt, to steady him at a time when much foolish matter about the 'union of classes' was being preached in Ireland.

Since then he has become a Sinn Féiner, been elected to the Dublin City Council, and has always, so far as we know, lined up on the right side.

Hence whilst it is more than possible that we do not see eye to eye with the new movement in all things we hail it with delight for two reasons: First, Whilst unmistakably Socialist it is unquestionably Irish; Second, It is in honest hands.

A bit of Irish history is apropos. The Irish Local Government Act of 1899 first gave the Irish workers the right to vote in municipal affairs. Immediately upon the passage of this act the Trade and Labor Associations all over Ireland formed bodies for the purpose of contesting municipal elections in the interests of labor. When the elections came these bodies under the name of Labor Electoral Associations contested everywhere against the nominees of the Home Rule and Conservative parties.

The result was surprising. The success of the Labor Electoral Associations was only limited by their own lack of courage. Everywhere the Irish working-class had rallied to the standard of labor and elected their men with surprising majorities. Conservatives and Home Rulers alike went down in defeat not only in the large cities, but in small urban constituencies as well.

In most places practically the whole ticket was elected, and in the city of Limerick the labor men obtained a majority in the City Council, electing the mayor.

It was a moment full of promise for the Irish Labor movement. Had the men elected been men with a true understanding of the situation, had they understood their class position in society, or even been as responsive to the class spirit as the men and women who elected them (for even the women had votes), or had they even grasped the fact that as they were elected in defiance of the opposition of the

Irish capitalist politicians they should respond to the will of their supporters by remaining an independent party, the whole history of Ireland during those few years would have been altered for the better.

But they were for the most part weaklings like Alderman Fleming of the North Dock Ward in Dublin, or ignorant spouters like Alderman Kelleher of Cork, and knew no better than to form alliances with the old time politicians. As a result they disgusted their own supporters, and their actions on the City Councils stemmed the tide of Labor instead of clearing the way for its progress.

In the midst of this upheaval the Irish Socialist Republican Party, the only organised body of Socialists in the country who stood for the Marxist doctrines as understood by International Socialism, could not remain passive if it would be true to its mission. It was however in the position where a false step would have done incalculable harm to the revolutionary cause.

It made no false steps. On the launching of the Labor Electoral Association it recognized that although that body was by no means Socialistic it was a spontaneous manifestation of the class spirit on the part of the Irish workers, and therefore worthy of encouragement and support. Accordingly its speakers and its paper, the **Workers' Republic**, vehemently urged the election of the candidates of the Labor Electoral Association.

When, after election, the representatives of that body proved unworthy of their trust the Irish Socialists regretfully, but firmly opposed them. And when in following elections the same body abandoning their former independent attitude formed alliances with capitalist parties of Home Rulers and Unionists the Socialists were unsparing and effective in their denunciation.

This was not inconsistency. It was in conformity with the duty of the Socialist as laid down in the **Communist Manifesto**, that we must not be a sect standing apart from the general labor movement, but be instead a part of the movement, that part which comprehends the whole line of march, in the midst of the interests of the moment takes care of the interests of the whole, and pushes on all other sections of the working class.

This requires encouragement where encouragement is desired, and opposition and censure where opposition and censure are deserved.

I have no authority to speak for Socialists in Ireland to-day, but I believe that they will meet the new movement in the same spirit. Unlike the Labor Electoral Association this new movement is organized in harmony with the central principle of Socialism – the achievement of common ownership in the means of life by and through the organized working class; unlike the mere political Socialist it recognizes seemingly the absolute necessity of combining the economic and political organizations of labor, and in a true spirit of constructive revolution it depends upon the development of the class feeling amongst its members to clarify any obscurity or rectify any omission in its present program.

That is one good sign of progress.

Here is another. As you all know by this time Spailpín is unequivocally a proletarian Socialist, and would rather depend upon the class instincts of the man in the workshop than upon the knowledge of those estimable Socialist men and women who belong to the classes who live upon our labor. Indeed the wisest of these 'intellectuals' are of a similar mind upon that matter.

When Marx had to choose between throwing in his lot with the intellectuals of the Socialist sects of his time, or with the rough men and women with whom he formed the International he unhesitatingly chose the latter. He did so even although the intellectuals at least understood the workings of capitalist society and were able to analyse it, and the working class Internationalists were not.

He knew that once their feet were set upon the right track all the instincts of the working class would lead them aright, and that their material interests would co-operate in the good work. Time has proven his wisdom on this point.

But much as I insist upon the working class as the prime factor, even although a correspondent recently called me an intellectual, yet I hope I will never make the mistake of overlooking or slighting the value of the co-operation of the really educated classes in the work of Socialism.

I want all the intellectual Socialists whom we can get but I have little use for the Socialist intellectual. Now that is a cryptic saying you can ponder over while I am trying to work in the next paragraphs.

Read carefully this chunk of wisdom. If you found it as hard to read as I did to formulate you would either value it highly or – not read it at all.

The decadence of capitalist society is evidenced on every field in which human thought expresses itself; it is seen in the trend of science, in the uprooting of all old beliefs, customs and orthodoxies, in the shakings and readjustments of religious doctrines to suit the new conditions, as is illustrated in the Christian Socialism of Protestantism and the Modernism of Catholicism, it is evidenced in literature, art, and the drama, and in each and every case in which such manifestation comes within the ken of a Socialist it is his duty to recognize the good work that may be in it without abandoning his own view point.

Capitalist society is like an old barrel which has been packed to the rim with unfermented yeast; as soon as the yeast begins to ferment and swell it will burst the old barrel and come streaming out in every direction between the hoops. He is a fool who hails the yeast running to waste as Socialism, he is a greater fool who denounces the activity of the yeast as a capitalist trick; the wise man is he who hails it as a sign of the new life stirring within and breaking through the old environment. The new life will take care of itself obedient to the laws of its creation.

Well, why this thusness? This is apropos of many things. More particularly is it apropos of and an introduction to the following speech of Mr W.B. Yeats in Dublin. Mr Yeats about 4 years ago made a tour of the colleges and intellectual centers of the United States on behalf of the Irish Literary Revival and was everywhere honored and feted. He is an intellectual Irishman, poet, author of many plays, and a son of the Yeats whose fulsome flattery of our race aroused my ire some months ago. Here is what he says of the Irish bourgeoisie – the capitalist class of Ireland:

“Ireland at the moment,” he said, “is running the danger of surrendering her soul to the bourgeoisie, and to a worse bourgeoisie than ever fought in France – to an ignorant, undisciplined bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of France was disciplined, and it had great qualities. If they were to make the people great, the first to be fought was the bourgeoisie, so that the latter might get disciplined. They, artists, stood not for some pleasure, but for the laborious, disciplined soul, because all fine art – everywhere in which there was a personal quality – was the result of long labor. Art for art’s sake was an intolerable toil. Any man could make himself popular if he took a few moral sayings, a few conventional moral platitudes, and put them into pictures, verses or stories. But such a man would be forgotten in ten years, although during that ten years he would be popular and would gain wealth. In art and literature the unconventional always seemed the immoral, because it was not the accustomed. It was easy for a man with his mouth full of commonplaces to sail to popularity. The bourgeoisie of Ireland, being undisciplined and untrained, were, therefore, essentially immoral. At this moment this bourgeoisie were attacking every artist who was sincere, or who was doing unconventional work, and in doing that it was merely doing what everyone said it would do, and what every bourgeoisie had done in this world for the last 200 years.”

My hand goes out to W.B. Yeats. Also my memory goes back to a certain quiet but earnest discussion in which Miss Maud Gonne, Mr W.B. Yeats and your humble servant were the sole participants in the lady’s reception room in a hotel in Nassau Street, Dublin, when Mr Yeats was urging the necessity of a union of classes, even to the extent of inviting loyalists to join the ’98 Executive Committee, and, remembering all that, it seems to me that the speech just quoted shows progress and a better appreciation of the forces that make for or against the uplifting of the human race.

Certainly the intellectuals of Ireland are beginning to see a great light. It is not so long since it would have been impossible to find an Irish Scholar who would admit the essential bond between the language and industry of a people, or rather the dependence of the former upon the latter. In the **Workers’ Republic** I once pointed out to some of my Gaelic friends that capitalism was their real

enemy, that for 600 years Irish had withstood every attempt of England to uproot it by force of arms from its place as a spoken tongue, and that it was only when English goods invaded the Irish market that the Irish tongue gave way. As I said, “the cheapness of English products paved the way for the introduction of English speech.”

This is or was the application to Irish history of the Socialist position that the economic conditions of society – the social system – are the determining factor in shaping history. Now here comes one of our greatest Gaelic scholars, Eoin Mac Néill, and in an article in the Gaelic monthly magazine, **Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge**, attacks his fellow Gaels for their neglect of this point, and for their dependence upon tradition to restore Gaelic to its place in Irish life, instead of applying themselves to show it to be adaptable to the needs of modern industrial life.

I remember that some years ago a Cork priest urged in favor of Gaelic that it was full of reverent phrases, and was suitable and moulded to holy expressions whereas English was the language of unbelief. The poor sagart did not seem to realise that he was really arguing that Irish was unfit to express certain forms of thought. If this were true it would have been an argument against Irish not for it.

I quote a part of Eoin Mac Néill’s article and wonder if he realises that his appreciation of the essential truths of Socialism has enabled him to see this deduction from Socialist premises. It is a long article, but you can tell your good lady that you are better employing your time reading this than trying to drink a brewery out of business.

About 300 years ago, when printing became general, the languages of modern civilization woke up. Till then they had been content with folklore, or with forms of literature that were closely akin to folklore. The literature of the working mind was monopolised by Latinists. One by one the different languages began to break the monopoly. Intellectuals were keen in those days, and it was clearly perceived that the new art of printing made it not only possible but imperative to write for the multitudes whom Latin could not reach. The vernacular languages set themselves to conquer the entire world of literature and thought.

Even Irish began. This was particularly the great achievement of Seathrún Céitinn (Geoffrey Keating), the clearest and most inseeing Irish mind of his time. Céitinn realised that the Middle Ages were come to an end, that the literary forms of the annals and the uraiceacht were, as the Yankees say, back numbers, that a literature that was to hold its own must seize on the inheritance of Latin and conquer the whole domain of the expression of the working mind. Accordingly, he essayed for the first time to reduce the whole history of Ireland, annalistic and legendary, to straightforward literary form. He also applied the same straightforward literary form to the subjects that were then foremost in all men's thoughts, the great questions of Christian doctrine. He introduced logical and philosophical exposition of difficult matters directly from Latin into Irish, exactly what was being done in the other languages of civilization.

The Latinity of his Irish has been censured. To some extent the censure may be just, but one would like to hear or read the trenchant terms that Céitinn would have applied to the doctrine, implied if not asserted, that the conversational forms of our grandparents or the narrative forms of the traditional storyteller, forms quite familiar to him, were adequate for a theological treatise or for a scientific defence of the sources of Irish history.

Hardly had the victory of the modern languages over Latin been secured, when the whole situation began to take on a new phase. The world's industry had heretofore been based mainly on tradition and experience. The whole knowledge necessary to every craft had passed directly from the journeyman to the apprentice. Gradually the developments of physical science as well as of technical mechanics wrought a great revolution. I need not describe the change. It is enough to point out that 200 years ago industry was practically independent of written thought. Its basis was purely empirical and traditional. At the present day, every form of industry except that of the most primitive peoples has become intimately dependent on physical science. The quill that Céitinn held may have been shaped by himself from a feather plucked from a neighbour's goose. The pen in my hand has been manufactured by Galvani and Isaac Watt, by Kelly the steelfounder and Lord Kelvin, and by a host of other men, theoretical and practical, whose sole contact, however, with this pen itself has been through

vernacular literature. No language that cannot make that sort of contact can ever hope to thrive in the world we live in. Man must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow, and since it has come to this, that literature has an essential function in the earning of every man's bread, people will throw away a language by whose literature they cannot live.

All these things are signs of progress. They show that Socialist philosophy is conquering the mind of the world.

In my notes last month I challenged the **Gaelic American** to give an account of the suppression of the **Peasant** by Cardinal Logue, apropos of the visit of His Eminence to this country. The day after the publication of the **Harp** I received a marked copy of the **Gaelic American** of the issue of January 19, 1907, in which a full account of the matter appeared. The person who so kindly sent me the paper misunderstood me if he believed that I doubted the willingness of the **Gaelic American** to expose such a matter 3,000 miles away from the scene of action. What I did mean to convey was that, as the Cardinal had honored us with a visit, an exposure of his dictatorial action in the past, if made now, would do more to make him and his like realise that clerical oppression was a two edged weapon to use than would any amount of newspaper exposure which did not interfere with his plans.

“The price of liberty is eternal vigilance”, and the liberty of the press can best be safeguarded by making its enemies realize that they are apt to be struck at and punished in the moment that they least expect or desire it.

Now that Cardinal Logue is here a concerted press campaign against him for his action against the **Irish Peasant** would be a lesson his cloth would take seriously to heart, and never forget.

Well, well, my notes this month have covered a wide range! It is another proof of the wide spread range of Socialist influence. Perhaps also it will serve to convince you that there are more things in Socialist philosophy than you dreamed of before. If it does it will help to satisfy

SPAILPÍN.

James Connolly

To Irish Wage Workers in America

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Fellow-Workers:

As all the political forces of the United States are busily engaged to-day in lining up for the great conflict of the Presidential election of 1908, as on every hand there is a measuring of strength, a scanning of 'issues', and a searching of souls we desire on our part to approach you for the purpose of obtaining your earnest consideration of our principles before determining where to cast your support in the campaign. Let us reason quietly together! We speak to you as fellow workers and as fellow countrymen, and we ask where do you stand in politics to-day? Hitherto the Irish in the United States have almost entirely supported the Democratic Party, but the time has come when the majority of thoughtful

Irishmen are beginning to realise that as the causes that originally led to that affiliation are no longer existent, the affiliation itself must be reconsidered. Political parties must thrive or fail according to the present development of the class in society they represent, and cannot be kept alive by a mere tradition of their attitude in past emergencies. The antagonism of the Democratic party towards the Know Nothing movement in the past won for it the support of the Irish Workers, but Know Nothingism is not an issue to-day, and as the Democratic party is going down to an unhonored grave because of its inability to grasp the problems of our own time shall we Irish Workers suffer ourselves to be dragged to social perdition with it?

No; fellow countrymen, political parties are the expression of economic interests, and in the last analysis are carried to victory or defeat by the development or retardation of economic classes. Examine the history of America for the last decade in the light of this analysis of the springs of political action, and the truth of that contention will be at once apparent. The Republican Party is the political weapon of advanced capital, of great trusts and mammoth combination of wealth. Hence as during the last decade the whole trend of industry has been toward greater concentration of capital we find that the Republican Party has grown stronger and stronger and its hold upon the political institutions of the country has proportionately tightened. To-day the governmental machinery of the United States is completely in the hands of the servants of capital, and Senate and Congress are but instruments for registering the decrees of the trust magnates of the United States. On the other hand the Democratic Party is the party of the small business man, and of those narrow ideas upon economics and politics which correspond to the narrow business lines and restricted economic action of the middle class in general. Hence as the last decade has witnessed the continual absorption by the trusts of the business of its petty competitors so it has also witnessed the absorption by the Republican Party of the one time adherents of the Democracy; as it has witnessed the downfall of the middle class as a social factor so it is witnessing the downfall of the political party of the middle class and its elimination as a political factor. And just as the petty business man may hang on to a meagre existence in business whilst no longer seriously considering himself as a competitive factor in industry, so the

political party of the Democracy may hang on to a sordid existence in local affairs by means of its control of graft whilst entirely eliminated as a serious aspirant to national power.

We Irish Workers are then not under the necessity of considering ourselves as bound by tradition to the Democratic Party; political parties are not formed by traditions, but by interests. Where then do our interests lie? Certainly not in the Republican Party – that is the party of our employers, and as our employers we know do not allow their actions to be governed by our interests we are certainly not under any moral obligation to shape our political activity to suit the interests of our employers. Where then? To answer that question properly we must ask ourselves why are we Irish here at all in this country, instead of in Ireland. Certainly we have no complaint to make against our native land, and we for the most part did not come here for pleasure. We came here because we found that Ireland was private property, that a small class had taken possession of its resources – its land, its lakes, its rivers, its mountains, its bogs, its towns and its cities, its railways, its factories, and its fisheries. In short, that a small class owned Ireland and that the remainder of the population were the bond slaves of these proprietors. We came here because we found that the government of the country was in the hands of those proprietors and their friends, and that army and navy and police were the agents of the government in executing the will of those proprietors, and for driving us back to our chains whenever we rose in revolt against oppression. And as we learned that since that government was backed and maintained by the might of a nation other than our own, and more numerous than us, we could not hope to overthrow that government and free our means of living from the grasp of those proprietors, we fled from that land of ours and came to the United States.

In the United States we find that every day the condition of matters for the working class drifts more and more in the direction of the conditions we left behind. Here the resources of the country are also in the hands of a small class – the land, the rivers, the lakes, the forests, the fisheries, the towns, the cities, the factories, the railroads, the entire means of life of eighty millions of people are in the hands of a class which every day grows smaller and whose rapacity and greed

and lust for power grows as its numbers diminish. Here also we find that government is but the weapon of the master class, that the military and police forces of the nation are continually at the service of the proprietors in all disputes just as in Ireland, and that the 'rifle diet' is served out to workers in America oftener than to peasants in the old country. But here the analogy stops. In Ireland the government was a foreign government. It was outside our control and beyond our reach, and hence no political action of ours could completely master the situation or achieve our freedom from the oppression of the master class. That class sheltered behind the British Government, and our vote for freedom was answered by a foreign army shaking thirty thousand bayonets in our faces. But, in the United States, although the master class – the proprietors – rests upon the Government, and although that government rests upon armed forces to maintain and enforce its will, yet all alike, being native and not foreign, are within the reach of the political and economic action of the American workers, and can at any moment be mastered by them. Hence the hopelessness which at one time seized upon the popular mind in Ireland need never paralyze the action of the wage-slaves here. Freedom lies within the grasp of the American wage slave, he needs but the mind and knowledge to seize it.

What then is the lesson for the Irish Workers in America? We are not trust magnates, nor little business men, and the interests which bind us to those who work beside us and suffer with us are infinitely stronger than the traditions which draw us towards those of our race whose interests are those of our despoilers. Hence our duty is plain. We must fight against in America that which plundered and hunted us in Ireland. Here as there, and here greater than there, the enemy of our race is private property in the means of life. In Ireland it was fundamentally private property in land that was the original and abiding cause of all our woes; in America it is again private property in land and in machinery that recreates in the United States the division of classes into slavers and enslaved. In Ireland it was private property, immature but bloodthirsty, in America it is private property, grown mature from the sucking of human blood. In both it is the enemy of the human race. To quote the words of Ernest Jones, the Chartist leader of '48, friend of Ireland and fellow worker of John Mitchel in whose defense he spent one year in prison,

The monopoly of land drives him (the worker) from the farm into the factory, and the monopoly of machinery drives him from the factory into the street, and thus crucified between the two thieves of land and capital, the Christ of Labor hangs in silent agony.

We appeal to you then, fellow countrymen, to rally around the only banner that symbolises hope for you in America as in Ireland – the banner of Socialism. Cast off all your old political affiliations, and organize and vote to reconquer society in the interests of its only useful class – the workers. Let your slogan be, the common ownership of the means of life, your weapons the Industrial and Political Organization of the Wage Slaves to conquer their own emancipation.

James Connolly

Sinn Féin And Socialism

(1908)

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Sinn Féin.

That is a good name for the new Irish movement of which we hear so much nowadays. Sinn Féin, or in English, Ourselves.

It is a good name and a good motto. The first essential for the success of any party, or of any movement, is that it should believe it carries within its own bosom all the material requisite to achieve its destiny. The moment any organization ceases to believe in the sufficiency of its own powers, the moment its membership begin to put their trust in powers not their own, in that moment that party or that organization enters on its decline.

It has been so with Ireland, it is so with the non-Socialist Working Class.

For over a hundred years Ireland has looked outside her own shores for the means of her redemption. For over a hundred years Ireland through her 'constitutional agitators' has centered her hopes upon the possibility of melting the heart or appealing to the sense of justice of her oppressors. In vain! England – the British Empire, was and is the bourgeoisie personified, the incarnate beast of capitalist property, and her heart was as tender as that of the tiger when he feels his victim helpless in his claws; her sense of justice was as acute as that of the same beast of prey when his jaws are wet with the warm blood of the feast.

For over a hundred years the majority of the Irish people begged for justice, and when ever and anon the hot blood of the best of her children would rise in rebellion at this mendicant posture Ireland turned her face from them and asked the enemy to forgive them.

When her rebel sons and daughters were dead, hunted, imprisoned, hanged or exiled she would weep for them, pray for them, sigh for them, cry for them, and when they were long enough out of the way, erect monuments to them.

But as long as they were virile, active and aggressive, Ireland regarded them only as disturbers who gave the country a bad name.

Not that Ireland was or is alone in that respect. To be execrated when living and deified when dead has been the experience of all champions of Freedom in all the countries and ages of the earth.

This attitude, whether it is exhibited by an oppressed nation or by an oppressed class, is the direct outcome of that frame of mind in either which teaches them to look outside their own ranks for the impulse towards emancipation.

To believe that someone else than the slave is going to free the slave makes the slave impatient and intolerant of every effort at self-liberation on the part of his fellow bondsmen.

Now the course of action implied in the name Sinn Féin, is the reverse of all that. It teaches the Irish people to rely upon themselves, and upon themselves alone, and teaches them also that dependence upon forces outside themselves is emasculating in its tendency, and has been, and will ever be disastrous in its results.

So far, so good. That is a part of Sinn Féinism I am most heartily in agreement with, and indeed with the spirit of Sinn Féin every thinking Irishman who knows anything about the history of his country must concur.

Even on the question of the Irish language, Gaelic, a question on which most Socialists are prone to stumble, I am heartily in accord. I do believe in the necessity, and indeed in the inevitability, of a universal language, but I do not believe it will be brought about, or even hastened, by smaller races or nations consenting to the extinction of their language. Such a course of action, or rather of slavish inaction, would not hasten the day of a universal language, but would rather lead to the intensification of the struggle for mastery between the languages of the greater powers.

On the other hand a large number of small communities speaking different tongues, are more likely to agree upon a common language as a common means of communication than a small number of great empires, each jealous of its own power and seeking its own supremacy.

I have heard some doctrinaire Socialists arguing that Socialists should not sympathize with oppressed nationalities, or with nationalities resisting conquest.

They argue that the sooner these nationalities are suppressed the better, as it will be easier to conquer political power in a few big empires than in a number of small states. This is the language argument over again.

It is fallacious in both cases. It is even more fallacious in the case of nationalities than in the case of languages, because the emancipation of the Working Class will function more through the economic power than through the political state. The first act of the workers will be through their economic organizations seizing the organized industries; the last act the conquest of political power.

In this the working class will, as they needs must, follow in the lines traversed by the capitalist revolutions of Cromwellian England, of Colonial and Revolutionary America, of Republican France, in each of whom the capitalist class had developed their economic power before they raised the banner of political revolt.

The Working Class in their turn must perfect their economic organizations, and when such organizations are in a position to control, seize and operate the industries they will find their political power equal to the task.

But the preparatory work of the revolutionary campaign must lie in the daily and hourly struggles in the workshop, the daily and hourly perfecting of the industrial organization.

And these two factors for Freedom take no heed to political frontiers, nor to the demarcations of political states. They march side by side with the capitalist; where capitalism brings its machinery it brings the rebels against itself, and all its governments and all its armies can establish no frontier the revolutionary idea cannot pass.

Let the great truth be firmly fixed in your mind that the struggle for the conquest of the political state of the capitalist is not the battle, it is only the echo of the battle. The real battle is being fought out, and will be fought out, on the industrial field.

Because of this and other reasons the doctrinaire Socialists are wrong in this as in the rest of their arguments. It is not necessary that Irish Socialists should hostile those who are working for the Gaelic language, nor whoop it up for territorial aggrandizement of any nation. Therefore in this we can wish the Sinn Féiners, good luck.

Besides, it is well to remember that nations which submit to conquest or races which abandon their language in favor of that of an oppressor do so, not because of altruistic motives, or because of a love of the brotherhood of man, but from a slavish and cringing spirit.

From a spirit which cannot exist side by side with the revolutionary idea.

This was amply evidenced in Ireland by the attitude of the Irish people towards their language.

For six hundred years the English strove to suppress that mark of the distinct character of the Gael – their language, and failed. But in one generation the politicians did what England had failed to do.

The great Daniel O'Connell, the so-called liberator, conducted his meetings entirely in English. When addressing meetings in Connaught where in his time everybody spoke Gaelic, and over 75 per cent of the people nothing else but Gaelic, O'Connell spoke exclusively in English. He thus conveyed to the simple people the impression that Gaelic was something to be ashamed of – something fit only for ignorant people. He pursued the same course all over Ireland.

As a result of this and similar actions the simple people turned their backs upon their own language, and began to ape 'the gentry'. It was the beginning of the reign of the toady, and the crawler, the seáinín and the slave.

The agitator for revenue came into power in the land.

It is not ancient history, but the history of yesterday that old Irish men and women would speak Irish to each other in the presence of their children, but if

they caught son or daughter using the language the unfortunate child would receive a cuff on the ear accompanied with the adjuration:

“Speak English, you rascal; speak English like a gintleman!”

It is freely stated in Ireland that when the Protestant evangelizers, sopers they call them at home, issued tracts and Bibles in Irish in order to help the work of proselytizing, the Catholic priesthood took advantage of the incident to warn their flocks against reading all literature in Gaelic. Thus still further discrediting the language.

I can not conceive of a Socialist hesitating in his choice between a policy resulting in such self-abasement, and a policy of defiant self-reliance, and confident trust in a people's own power of self-emancipation by a people.

But it is in many of the arguments used by the Sinn Féin speakers that the possibility, nay, the certainty of friction between the Irish Socialist and the adherents of Sinn Féin is likely to arise. Some of the arguments are as ridiculous as the principle itself is reasonable.

Thus the Sinn Féin body of the Argentine Republic, as recorded in the **Gaelic American**, states that Sinn Féin demands freedom for Ireland on the basis of the Act of Renunciation in 1782. This is absurd. The act by which the English Parliament renounced the right to make laws binding on Ireland left untouched the power of oppression, political and economic.

The fight which ended with the Act of Union in 1800 was not a fight for freedom, it was a fight to decide whether the English governing classes or the Irish governing classes should have the biggest share of the plunder of the Irish worker. Whichever side won made no difference to the worker; he was skinned, anyway.

As a cold matter of fact all talk about the “restoration of our native Parliament” is misreading history. Ireland never had an Irish Parliament – a Parliament representative of the Irish people. The assembly called by the name of an Irish Parliament was in reality as alien to the Irish people as the Council of the

Governor-General of India is alien to the Indian people. And some of the laws passed by our so-called native Parliament against the poor Irish peasantry were absolutely revolting in their ferocity and class vindictiveness.

Irish workers will not enthuse worth a cent over a proposal to re-introduce the status of 1782. To paraphrase Fintan Lalor, and I would recommend all thinking Irish workers, men and women, to read Fintan Lalor's masterly argument upon this subject, (price five cents, from the **Harp** office). "This is not 1782, this is 1908," and every political or social movement which hopes for success must express itself in terms of present conditions, or on the lines of future developments.

Of a like character are the arguments based upon the achievement of Hungary. As we all know the methods adopted by Hungary to reconquer its Parliament from Austria are the trite illustrations of the Sinn Féin orators. In fact during the early stages of the movement in Ireland before the felicitous name of Sinn Féin was coined the ideas as promulgated got the name of 'the Hungary system'.

I remember one critic declaring that "the Hungary system was only fit for hungry men."

When we remember that Hungary is one of the European countries sending the greatest stream of emigrants annually to America, that the overwhelming majority of the producing classes in Hungary are denied the right to vote by the possessing classes who dominate their Parliament, that the misery of the town and country workers is so great that the country is in a chronic state of rebellion and unrest, and that the military and armed police are more often employed to suppress peaceable demonstrations in Hungary than they are in Ireland we are inclined to wonder if our Sinn Féin orators know these things, or are they only presuming upon the ignorance of the Irish Workers.

Let them advocate their proposals upon the inherent merits of those proposals and they will avoid much criticism; otherwise they will provoke it.

Sinn Féin. Ourselves. I wonder how long it will be until the Working Class realize the full significance of that principle! How long it will be until the Workers realize that the Socialist movement is a movement of the Working Class, and how long until the Socialists realize that the place of every other class in the movement is and must be a subordinate one.

How long it will be until the Socialists realize the folly and inconsistency of preaching to the Workers that the emancipation of the Working Class must be the act of the workers themselves, and yet presenting to those workers the sight of every important position in the party occupied by men not of the Working Class.

We will get the Workers to have trust in their own power to achieve their own emancipation when we demonstrate our belief that there is no task incidental to that end that a worker can not accomplish; when we train the workers to look inward upon their own class for everything required, to have confidence in the ability of their own class to fill every position in the revolutionary army; when, in short, we of the Socialist Working Class take to heart the full meaning of the term Sinn Féin, Ourselves, and apply it to the work of Industrial Reconstruction, the era of the strutters and poseurs will end and we will realize at last what was meant by Marx when he spoke of the revolt of those who

Have Nothing to Lose but their Chains.

James Connolly

**Irish Socialist
Republic**

To the Irish People (Issued 1896)

(Republished 1908)

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The notes, which are © 1997 Pluto Press, have not been included.

Fellow Countrymen:—

We are to-day face to face with a new crisis in Irish political history. The reactionary Tory Party – sworn supporters of every kind of royal, aristocratic, and capitalistic privilege – once more dominates the English Parliament; the Liberal Party, long and blindly trusted by so many of our fellow countrymen, has proven itself to be to-day as treacherous and corrupt as it has ever been in the past, when it succeeded in obtruding its slimy influence across the field of Irish politics; the Home Rule Party, split up into a dozen intriguing sections, seek by senseless vilification of each other's character to hide their own worthlessness and incapacity; in the country the tenantry seek in vain for relief from the economic pressure, born of landlord robbery; and in the towns the employing class strive by every means in their power to still further reduce the wages and deepen the misery of their unfortunate employees. On all sides personal vanity, personal ambition, and overmastering greed are seen to be the controlling factors in public life, and Truth, Freedom, and Justice are forgotten, or remembered only to round off a period or give a finish to a peroration in a speech of some huckstering politician. Such is the state of Irish politics to-day. Fellow workers – the struggle for Irish freedom has two aspects: it is national and it is social. Its national ideal can never be realized until Ireland stands forth before the world, a nation free and independent. It is social and economic; because no matter what the form of government may be, as long as one class own as their private property the land and instruments of labor, from which all mankind derive their subsistence, that

class will always have it in their power to plunder and enslave the remainder of their fellow creatures. Its social ideal, therefore, requires the public ownership by the Irish people of the land and instruments of production, distribution, and exchange to be held and controlled by a democratic state in the interests of the entire community. But every Irish movement of the last 200 years has neglected one or the other of these equally necessary aspects of the national struggle. They have either been agrarian and social, and in the hunt after some temporary abatement of agricultural distress have been juggled into forgetfulness of the vital principles which lie at the base of the claim for National Independence, or else they have been national and under the guidance of middle-class and aristocratic leaders, who either did not understand the economic basis of oppression, and so neglected the strongest weapon in their armory, or, understanding it, were selfish enough to see in the national movement little else than a means whereby, if successful, they might intercept and divert into the pockets of the Irish middle-class a greater share of that plunder of the Irish worker which at present flows across the channel. The failure of our so-called 'leaders' to grasp the grave significance of this two-fold character of the "Irish Question" is the real explanation of that paralysis which at constantly recurring periods falls like a blight upon Irish politics. The party which would aspire to lead the Irish people from bondage to freedom must then recognize both aspects of the long-continued struggle of the Irish Nation. Such a party is the newly-formed Irish Socialist Republican Party. In its resolve to win complete separation from all connection with the British Empire, and the establishment of an Irish Socialist Republic, it embodies to the full the true Irish ideal – an independent nation with a social-democratic organization of society, thus adapting to the altered environment of the nineteenth century the vital principle of common ownership of the means of life which inspired the Brehon laws of our ancient forefathers. In its program of immediately practical reforms will be found the only feasible proposals yet formulated, either for averting from Irish farming the ruin with which it is threatened by the competition of the mammoth farms and scientifically equipped agriculture of America and Australia, for lessening the tide of emigration or for using the political power of the Irish people with potent effect in paving the way for the realization of a revolutionary ideal. We ask you then to join our ranks; to spread our ideas; to work for our success, which means your emancipation; to

help us to blend the twin streams of National and Industrial Freedom into one irresistible torrent, sweeping all obstacles before it, and bearing grandly onward on its bosom the toiling millions of the Irish race, proudly enthusiastic in their desire to join the mighty ocean of lovers of Humanity who in every clime under the sun are working and hoping for the time when oppression and privilege will be no more; when “every man will be a Kaiser, every woman be a queen.”

Youth of Ireland, stand prepared,
Revolution's red abyss,
Burns beneath us, all but bared;
And on high the fire-charged cloud,
Blackens in the firmament,
And afar we list the loud
Sea voice of the unknown event.

Youth of Ireland, stand prepared,
For all woes the meek have dreaded,
For all risks the brave have dared
As for suffering so for deed
Stand prepared!

– *James Clarence Mangan*

James Connolly

The Coming Revolt in India

Its Political and Social Causes

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II

India is regarded by its alien rulers as a huge human cattle farm to be worked solely in the interest of the dominant class of another nation. Whatever is done for the development of its vast internal resources is done not for the benefit of the Indian people but primarily with a view to the dividends which the investing classes of England may draw from such development. The salt tax, a tax upon a first necessary of life, is ten times higher today than it was ever known to be under the Mussulman rulers of India. More than one humane English Governor has confessed his reluctance to increase this tax upon the helpless peasantry, yet it is to-day as high as 1,000 or 1,200 per cent. As in Ireland during the famine years, the Government rated famine-stricken districts for the relief of their own poor, and so crushed into pauperism those who had managed to survive the loss of their potato crop; so in India, whenever the Government extends financial help to a famine-stricken population it seeks to recoup itself for the outlay by an increase in the salt tax. In other words, it gives relief with one hand and with the other increases the taxes upon the food of a famishing people. In the great famine of thirty years ago in Southern India, when it was estimated that no less than six millions of people had perished of hunger, the salt tax was increased by forty-five per cent. The benevolent rulers of India have also, in order to secure this source of income to their exchequer, prohibited under severe penalties all native manufacture of salt, and when the helpless people, unable to buy salt to season their food, endeavored to scrape a condiment from the deposits left by the receding ocean upon the rocks and pebbles of the sea-shore, they were

prosecuted for defrauding the revenue. This devotion of the rulers of India to the letter of the law in this respect stands out in marked contrast to their action in another, viz., in squandering in useless frontier expeditions the Famine Relief Fund, which, as its name indicates, was intended for emergencies like the present.

During the nineteenth century India lost no less than sixteen million (16,000,000) people by starvation. All this time she has enjoyed the ameliorative influence of civilization on the British Imperial pattern, and in the full felicity borne of that enjoyment her children have died off like rotten sheep, while the hack-apologists of the English governing classes have vied with each other in unctuous laudations of 'our civilizing mission', and our 'benign rule'.

Yet, in spite of all their anxiety to suppress the truth about India, the official class in whose interests this systematic distortion of facts is practised cannot entirely exclude even from their own organs in the press the awful record of the results of their rule. Here for instance is an extract from the **Indian Pioneer**, an organ of Anglo-Indian officialdom, of 7th February, 1880, which tells its own tale:

The hired laborer is always on the verge of starvation. Out of the 109,000,000 in British India, laborers are estimated at 30,000,000. Last year after the heavy rainfall there was frightful mortality from fever, according to the recent sanitary report an increase of 900,000 on the average rate of mortality. There would appear to be a good deal of truth in the opinion of one officer, who reported that *the disease is aggravated by want of food, which at all times prevails amongst the lowest classes.*

Yet that great Home Ruler, Mr. Alfred Webb, not so long ago informed the readers of the **Freeman's Journal** that "the Indians know their duty to their Sovereign *and are loyal.*" To what?

But, at least, we may be told, India has profited intellectually by her subjection; is not education fostered by the Imperial Government? Yes; it spends on education in India one-fiftieth part of its net revenue there, whereas in England and Scotland alone it spends under the same heading about one twenty-

fourth part of the revenue of the United Kingdom. Again, as Irish Nationalists remember that it was the wholesome fear engendered in the English governing classes by the Fenian conspiracy, which led to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, so thoughtful Indians are not likely to forget that the year which saw the establishment of the universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras had also seen the smoke and fire of the Indian mutiny.

But has not religion benefited by the British Conquest of India? Well, for every Christian Church in India maintained by the free contributions of Christian people at home the Government establishes brothels for the use of its soldiers, the one frequently in sight of the other. For every Christian made the example of the British garrison from Tommy Atkins upward has made an hundred drunkards. Am I exaggerating? Listen to the words of this Englishman, Mr. Alfred S. Dyer, writing some years ago from Allahabad to the **Christian Commonwealth**:

If the people of Great Britain, and especially the Christians of Great Britain, do not interfere to stop the mad career of the handful of sin-supporting politicians who are at present in power in India, there can be no doubt that that career will be stopped by other means ...

As I stood amid the scenes of the mutiny at Cawnpore, and then at Lucknow, and then at Delhi, I realized how easily national judgment can follow national sin, as effect follows cause. I realized it afresh as a few weeks since at Peshawur, the border city of India and Afghanistan, I looked towards the entrance of the Khyber Pass, of disastrous memory, and remembered the tale of the first British Afghan campaign. History uses the convenient word 'emeute' to cover the character of the incident which led to the fatal ending of that unjustifiable enterprise. The truth seems to be that the indignation of the Afghans at the treatment of their women, principally by officers, led to the rising which turned the tide against the licentious English, and led to the retreat to Jellalabad, in which the whole army perished with the exception of one man.

Another so-called 'emeute' similar to that may occur among the hardy race in northernmost India at any time. Licensed sin is in full blast at Peshawur and

other cities and places near. At Peshawur, from the door of their compound, the women can see the men, for whose lust they are licensed, paraded for 'divine service'. The people talk about these things. The impurity of the officers, as well as the rank and file, is thrown up in the faces of the missionaries, as two at Peshawur themselves told me.

Religion, in fact, in India, as everywhere else, loses by being identified with the forces of a tyrannical government.

The earlier English East India Company, when it totally prohibited the teaching of Christianity to the natives under its control, did not do as much to prevent its adoption by the Indians as the present governors do when they ostentatiously parade their Sunday religion before a people who have witnessed the immorality of their week-day lives. Even the ordinary administration of law in India in the most peaceful times is saturated with a barbarism unknown elsewhere, and only partly approximated to by the expiring Russian despotism in its present fight against freedom. For instance: According to Sir Henry Cotton, M.P., K.C.S.I., floggings in India are publicly inflicted upon adult male and female offenders, and for petty theft and the like. The last year for which figures are available, 1902, no fewer than 25,186 judicial floggings were inflicted. These are carried out in public. "The triangles," he writes, "are an unpleasant feature outside every Court in India. I have known floggings so severe that the victims have died in the triangles to which they were tied."

England, in short, has only one use for India. She sees there a spot revealed by an All-wise Providence for the specific purpose of providing comfortable positions and fat salaries and pensions to the younger sons and poor relations of the English moneyed classes. Therefore, as any efforts to entrust the government of India to the children of the soil would necessarily displace those sinecurists from their snug berths and salaries, all suggestions pointing in that direction must be branded as rank heresy, if not political incendiarism. In Java, under the rule of the Dutch, the natives share in the government of their country. In the words of Sir David Wedderburn, "the Asiatic races are subordinated to their own recognized chiefs, and these are responsible to the Government for the maintenance of order." Thus the most important official positions are open to the

natives. In the independent native States of India, before the Conquest, all posts, according to the Anglo-Indian writer, Marshman, were open to universal competition. What, then is the net result of British rule in India? "The main evil of our rule," said Sir T. Munro, Governor of Madras in 1819, "is the degraded state in which we hold the native," and as a corollary to this statement one of our contemporary writers, Sir James Caird, informs us from personal investigation that "in the native States the people are more prosperous than under our rule, and they have not been driven into the evil hands of the sowcars (money-lenders) as our ryots (peasants) have been." A few months ago famine in all its horrors was once more devastating the country, and once more the native States were exempt from the calamity. The English Government officials for months denied the accuracy of the reports which, despite their vigilance, filtered through to Europe, and then, when the awful truth could no longer be concealed, they, like Pilate of old, called heaven and earth to witness they were guiltless of the blood of this people. And once more they called upon the charitable to contribute to the relief of the destitute, whilst they prepared, horse, foot and artillery, to insure that not one penny of the tribute, the exaction of which has created the destitution, shall be withheld from the British Exchequer, or devoted to the people they have ruined. The people in India require justice, but justice is exactly what they must not expect. Justice is prosaic, dull and unsentimental, and cannot be advertised in Mansion House Funds, or prated about by royal and aristocratic dignities. Charity, however, though utterly useless for the purpose of staying the ravages of famine among a population of thirty-six millions perishing beneath it, yet fulfils the purpose of those who desire to hear their own trumpet blowing and see their names advertised side by side with the elite of society and in company with royalty. Above all, it does not interfere with the ceaseless flow of Indian tribute into the, coffers of their conquerors. Therefore, justice India must not expect, but charity (D.V.) she will have. "Look well at the background of this fine picture, and lo, the reeking shanks and yellow chapless skulls of Skibbereen, and the ghosts of starved Hindoos in dusky millions."