

# James Connolly

## Glorious Dublin!

(1913)

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From **Forward**, 4 October 1913.  
Transcribed by [The James Connolly Society](#) in 1997.  
Proofread by Chris Clayton, August 2007.

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To the readers of **Forward** possibly some sort of apology is due for the non-appearance of my notes for the past few weeks, but I am sure that they quite well understand that I was, so to speak, otherwise engaged. On the day I generally write my little screed, I was engaged on the 31st of August in learning how to walk around in a ring with about forty other unfortunates kept six paces apart, and yet slip in a word or two to the poor devil in front of or behind me without being noticed by the watchful prison warders.

The first question I asked was generally “*say, what are you in for?*” Then the rest of the conversation ran thus:

*“For throwing stones at the police.”*

*“Well, I hope you did throw them and hit.”*

*“No, by God, that’s the worst of it. I was pulled coming out of my own house.”*

'Pulled' is the Dublin word for arrested. It was somewhat mortifying to me to know that I was the only person apparently in prison who had really committed the crime for which I was arrested. It gave me a sort of feeling that I was lowering the moral tone of the prison by coming amongst such a crowd of blameless citizens.

But the concluding part of our colloquy was a little more encouraging. It usually finished in this way:

*"Are you in the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union?"*

*"Of course I am."*

*"Good. Well if they filled all the prisons in Ireland they can't beat us, my boy."*

*"No, thank God, they can't; we'll fight all the better when we get out."*

And there you have the true spirit. Baton charges, prison cells, untimely death and acute starvation – all were faced without a murmur, and in face of them all, the brave Dublin workers never lost faith in their ultimate triumph, never doubted but that their organisation would emerge victorious from the struggle. This is the great fact that many of our critics amongst the British labour leaders seem to lose sight of. The Dublin fight is more than a trade union fight; it is a great class struggle, and recognised as such by all sides. We in Ireland feel that to doubt our victory would be to lose faith in the destiny of our class.

I heard of one case where a labourer was asked to sign the agreement forswearing the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and he told his employer, a small capitalist builder, that he refused to sign. The employer, knowing the man's circumstances, reminded him that he had a wife and six children who would be starving within a week. The reply of this humble labourer rose to the heights of sublimity. *"It is true, sir,"* he said, *"they will starve; but I would rather see them go out one by one in their coffins than that I should disgrace them by signing that."* And with head erect he walked out to share hunger and privation with his loved ones. Hunger and privation – and honour.

Defeat, bah! How can such a people be defeated? His case is typical of thousands more. Take the case of the United Builders Labourers' Trade Union, for instance. This was a rival union to the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. Many sharp passages had occurred between them, and the employers counted confidently upon their cooperation in the struggle; Mr. William Martin Murphy especially praising them and exulting in their supposed acquiescence in his plans. Remember also that they were a dividing society, dividing their funds at the end of each year, and therefore without any strike funds. When the members of their union were asked to sign the agreement, promising never to join or help the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, not one man consented – but all over Dublin their 2,500 members marched out “to help the I.T.&G.W.U. boys.” Long ere these lines are written, they have experienced all the horrors of starvation, but with grim resolve they have tightened their belts and presented an unyielding front to the enemy.

It is a pleasure to me to recall that I was a member of their Union before I went to America, and that they twice ran me as their candidate for Dublin City Council before the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union was dreamed of.

What is true of that union is also true of most of the tradesmen. All are showing wonderful loyalty to their class. Coachbuilders, sawyers, engineers, bricklayers, each trade that is served by general labourers, walks out along with the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union boys; refuses to even promise to work with any one who signs the employers' agreement, and, cheering, lines up along with their class.

Or think of the heroic women and girls. Did they care to evade the issue, they might have remained at work, for the first part of the agreement asks them to merely repudiate the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and as women they are members of the Irish Women Workers' Union, not of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. But the second part pledges them to refuse to ‘help’ the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union – and in every shop, factory and sweating hell-hole in Dublin, as the agreement is presented, they march out with pinched faces, threadbare clothes, and miserable footgear, but with high hopes, undaunted spirit, and glorious resolve shining out of their eyes. Happy the men

who will secure such wives; thrice blessed the nation which has such girls as the future mothers of the race! Ah, comrades, it is good to have lived in Dublin in these days!

And then our friends write deprecatingly to the British press of the “dislocation of trade” involved in sympathetic strikes, of the “perpetual conflicts” in which they would involve great trade unions. To those arguments, if we can call them such, our answer is sufficient. It is this: If the capitalist class knew that any outrages upon a worker, any attack upon labour, would result in a prompt dislocation of trade, perhaps national in its extent; that the unions were prepared to spend their last copper if necessary rather than permit a brother or sister to be injured, then the knowledge would not only ensure a long cessation from industrial skirmishing such as the unions are harassed by today, it would not only ensure peace to the unions, but what is of vastly more importance, it would ensure to the individual worker a peace from slave-driving and harassing at his work such as the largest unions are apparently unable to guarantee under present methods.

Mark, when I say “prepared to spend their last copper if necessary,” I am not employing merely a rhetorical flourish, I am using the words literally. As we believe that in the socialist society of the future the entire resources of the nation must stand behind every individual, guaranteeing him against want, so today our unions must be prepared to fight with all their resources to safeguard the rights of every individual member.

The adoption of such a principle, followed by a few years of fighting on such lines to convince the world of our earnestness, would not only transform the industrial arena, but would revolutionise politics. Each side would necessarily seek to grasp the power of the state to reinforce its position, and politics would thus become what they ought to be, a reflex of the industrial battle, and lose the power to masquerade as a neutral power detached from economic passions or motives.

At present I regret to say labour politicians seem to be losing all reality as effective aids to our struggles on the industrial battlefield, are becoming more

and more absorbed in questions of administration, or taxation, and only occasionally, as in the miners' national strike, really rise to a realisation of their true role of parliamentary outposts of the industrial army.

The parliamentary tail in Britain still persist in wagging the British industrial dog. Once the dog really begins to assert his true position, we will be troubled no more by carping critics of labour politics, nor yet with labour politicians' confessions of their own impotence in such great crises as that of the railway strike or the Johannesburg massacres.

Nor yet would we see that awful spectacle we have seen lately of labour politicians writing to the capitalist press to denounce the methods of a union which, with 20,000 men and women locked out in one city, is facing an attempt of 400 employers to starve its members back into slavery.

And thou, Brutus, that you should play the enemy's game at such a crisis! Every drop of ink you spilled in such an act stopped a loaf of bread on its way to some starving family.

**James Connolly**

# **Press Poisoners in Ireland**

**(1913)**

We have in Belfast a Home Rule journal, the **Irish News**, a careful study of whose columns would be an enlightenment to those Socialist comrades in Great Britain who imagine in their innocence that an enthusiasm for Labour is the inevitable accompaniment of the advocacy of a measure of political freedom for Ireland.

They would find that that journal is one of the most deadly enemies of the Labour movement that this country possesses, and that it never lets slip any opportunity to wound that movement even whilst softly purring its sympathy for Labour on all possible occasions. In all Ireland there is no journal more ready to proclaim from the housetops its readiness, and the readiness of the party whose mouthpiece it is, to do something for the working class, and in all Ireland there is no journal more ready with the poniard to stab to the heart every person on party that dares to organise the workers to do anything for themselves.

In this treacherous attitude it is more up-to-date, more thoroughly modern than its rivals in the Tory press. The latter are clumsy and antiquated in their methods, as befits the exponents of an antiquated doctrine, they still clumsily adhere to obsolete methods of attack.

Let me explain. If you wish to point out the attitude of the Orange Tory press towards the aspirations of Labour, you have just to turn to their editorials, and there you will find their hostility openly and undisguisedly expressed to all that Labour holds dear. Having read the editorials, you know immediately where you are, and how fan to discount the manner in which the paper chronicles the news of the day.

But if you turn to the editorials in the Home Rule Organ, you get no such infallible index to the editorial mind.

On the contrary, you find always a sloppy sentiment sloppily expressed in favour of Labour in the editorials, but all through the news columns, and in all its headings and sub-headings, you notice that always undue prominence is given to every item that tells against Labour, the views of its most unimportant enemies are heralded forth with the utmost prolixity, and the views of its most eminent partisans are slurred over and made to read as unintelligibly as possible. If you compare the telegraphic news printed in the **Irish News** with the telegraphic news printed in the **Daily News** or **Daily Record**, you will find that all three Organs, having the same service and the same material to select from, the **Irish News** has carefully rejected everything that tells for the organised Labour movement, and has carefully suppressed every item the mere chronicling of which might convey to its readers an idea of the justice, power, or growth of the working class in any part of the world.

It has brought to bear against the Labour movement the most refined and insidious arts of character assassination.

It never moves against Labour by direct attack. It suppresses here, exaggerates there, distorts this bit of news, omits this qualifying sentence from some speech, drops casually a favourable paragraph from the report of some strike or Labour meeting, and is ever alert to seize every opportunity to spread the slime of poisonous suggestion over the most apparently innocuous report of the activities of Labour.

As I have said, it is up-to-date. The more astute of the capitalist politicians have long since discovered that the effectual hoodwinking of the working class must not be done by impassioned or long-winded editorials, that in fact the working class voters do not devour editorials as their daily food, but that this hoodwinking and hocussing, to them so necessary, can best be done by a clever manipulation of the news items, by an unscrupulous use of their power to suppress truth and suggest falsehood when apparently only retailing the daily happenings.

You can attack an editor and impale him for false doctrine or slanderous statement in his editorial, but you cannot attack him when your only complaint is

that his choice of what he shall on shall not report is different to what you think the circumstances warrant.

And this line of poisonous suggestion is just the line in which the natural instincts of the editor of the **Irish News** enables him to excel above his Orange contemporaries. Their line is that of naked, unashamed reaction stirring up the blackest passions in the lowest depths of human nature – the line of the obscurantist and the bigot. His line is that of the treacherous feline who purrs, and purrs, and purrs, and scratches with poisonous claws when the purr is most seductive. The following from the **Irish News** of 18 August is a choice sample:

Our Glasgow correspondent writes:–

“The Labour Party announce their intention of trying to increase their strength in the Glasgow Town Council at the November elections at the expense, they state, of a few reactionaries when they retire. Amongst the members of the Labour Party who retire are Councillors P.G. Stewart, A.M. Welsh, Lyon, and Bailie Alston. Councillor Lyon just now represents the Townhead Ward. In this Ward, Councillor Stewart was returned by a majority of about 40 votes through Irish support. He is a Labour Party man. Shortly afterwards Mr. Stephen J. Henry, a well-known Glasgow Catholic, sought election for the same Ward. The now Councillor Lyon opposed him and was returned.

“Certain Labour leaders in Townhead Ward professed anxiety to see Mr. Henry returned, but the real facts were that they were working against him. The Labour leaders in Municipal Glasgow in a few weeks will be anxious to get Irish Votes, and *will pander to the vanity of some men by asking them to speak on their platforms* selecting those men who are supposed to have influence with the Irish electors. At present there is not an Irish Nationalist in the Glasgow Town Council, and it is for the Nationalist electors to see to it that an end is put to Municipal tricksters trying to use them for their own ends, and adopting tactics of a character that hitherto has kept Irish Nationalists out of the Council. In November no candidate whose politics are of the Tory order will oppose certain Labour candidates. When the electors discover the reason there will be a rude awakening for some of the Labour Politicians.”

The methods of the **Irish News** are the methods of a good many of the Irish Home Rule papers; as they have to cater for a class of members whose instincts are all rebellious and revolutionary, and who are therefore drawn towards the Labour movement, it is necessary that the anti-Labour bias of the newspaper proprietors and professional politicians be hidden as carefully as possible, and the anti-Labour campaign conducted as discreetly as it can.

Moreover, the **Irish News** stands as the journalistic exponent of the principles of the party of which Joseph Devlin, MP is the representative in Parliament for West Belfast. And Joe's seat in Parliament is doomed if he alienates even fifty per cent of the Labour votes. That is to say that if we take the Labour men who are Labour men before anything else, before being Nationalists or Unionists, the loss of fifty per cent of such votes means the boss of West Belfast to the Home Rulers, and giving over of the Parliamentary representation of Belfast completely to the Unionists.

The reader will thus see readily how the anti-Labour slime of the editor of the **Irish News**, despite the care with which it is spread, has yet aroused such feelings in West Belfast as to make the editor of that paper the most dangerous ally that the Home Rule party ever had in that division – more dangerous to Joe Devlin than a hundred Orange orators.

Other factors are contributing also that make the seat in question more and more insecure.

Quite recently an attempt was made in Dublin and the South of Ireland to organise a rival railway union to that of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. It was intended presumably to break up the forces of organised Labour on the Irish railways; its inaugural meeting was attended by a number of well-known Dublin politicians, and heralded with a great flourish of trumpets in the capitalist press.

The promoters of this scab organisation were the leading officials of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, of which Mr. Joseph Devlin, MP, is the president. It failed miserably, nevertheless.

For the past few weeks the tram men in Dublin have been preparing for a struggle for better conditions. They have the general sympathy of the Dublin public, as it is well known that they are about the lowest paid and worst treated of any tram employees in these countries. The company is, by the way, owned by the editor and proprietor of the **Independent**, Mr. William Martin Murphy. As soon as these men began to organise, and the possibility of a struggle began to loom large upon the horizon, an effort was made to disrupt them by the organisation of “a tram men’s union of which the directors approved”.

This disruptive effort was in the care of, and organised by the leading officials of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, of which Mr. Joseph Devlin, MP, is president.

Mark, it was only after these poor slaves of the tram line had become rebellious that an effort was made to get them into a union other than that which had educated them into a knowledge of their power.

Mr. Joseph Devlin is a very busy man, and he may not know anything of these attacks upon Labour by his journalistic ally and his A.O.H. henchmen, but there are a whole lot of voters in West Belfast fully alive to them all. And their opinion is that *somebody had better call off their dogs*.

In the North of Ireland, as in Great Britain, the rank and file of the A.O.H. are generally honest, hardworking Irishmen, Labour in all their sympathies. I wonder what they will say when they find out, as they will some day, that their organisation is being prostituted in the interests of Capital, that it is being made a scab-recruiting agency.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians (Board of Erin) was founded as a weapon against clerical dictation in politics; it has become a weapon of political clerics against all Catholics who refuse to take their politics from the conventional orthodox source.

Mr. Joseph Devlin, MP, used it for Nationalist purposes, it now seeks to use, if not already using him, for quite other purposes. As soon as Home Rule is

passed into activity, and the inevitable reconstituting of parties takes place, should 'Wee Joe' elect to follow the democratic path, I should not be surprised to see the A.O.H. break him and brush him contemptuously aside, thus proving again that it is one thing to create a weapon, it is another thing to keep it in your hands, and still another thing to avoid being bruised by it when the weapon passes into the hands of others.

In other words, that the economic forces at war in society are stronger in the long run than the schemes of the most astute wire-pullers.

## James Connolly

# The Dublin Lock Out: On the Eve

(1913)

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From **Irish Worker**, August 30, 1913.  
Transcribed by [The James Connolly Society](#) in 1997.

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Perhaps before this issue of **The Irish Worker** is in the hands of its readers the issues now at stake in Dublin will be brought to a final determination. All the capitalist newspapers of Friday last join in urging, or giving favourable publicity to the views of others urging the employers of Dublin to join in a general lock-out of the members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. It is as well.

Possibly some such act is necessary in order to make that portion of the working class which still halts undecided to understand dearly what it is that lies behind the tyrannical and brow-beating attitude of the proprietors of the Dublin tramway system.

The fault of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union! What is it? Let us tell it in plain language. Its fault is this, that it found the labourers of Ireland on their knees, and has striven to raise them to the erect position of manhood; it found them with all the vices of slavery in their souls, and it strove to eradicate these vices and replace them with some of the virtues of free men; it found them with no other weapons of defence than the arts of the liar, the lickspittle, and the toady, and it combined them and taught them to abhor those arts and rely proudly on the defensive power of combination; it, in short, found a class in whom seven centuries of social outlawry had added fresh degradations upon the burden it bore as the members of a nation suffering from the cumulative effects of seven centuries of national bondage, and out of this class, the degraded slaves of slaves more degraded still – for what degradation is more abysmal than that of those who prostitute their manhood on the altar of profit-mongering? – out of this class of slaves the labourers of Dublin, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has created an army of intelligent self-reliant men, abhorring the old arts of the toady, the lickspittle, and the crawler and trusting alone to the disciplined use of their power to labour or to withdraw their labour to assert and maintain their right as men. To put it in other words, but words as pregnant with truth and meaning: the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union found that before its advent the working class of Dublin had been taught by all the educational agencies of the country, by all the social influences of their masters, that this world was created for the special benefit of the various sections of the master class, that kings and lords and capitalists were of value; that even flunkeys, toadies, lickspittle and poodle dogs had an honoured place in the scheme of the universe, but that there was neither honour, credit, nor consideration to the man or woman who toils to maintain them all. Against all this the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has taught that they who toil are the only ones that do matter, that all others are but beggars upon the bounty of those who work with hand or brain, and that this superiority of social

value can at any time be realised, be translated into actual fact, by the combination of the labouring class. Preaching, organising, and fighting upon this basis, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has done what? If the value of a city is to be found in the development of self-respect and high conception of social responsibilities among a people, then the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union found Dublin the poorest city in these countries by reason of its lack of these qualities. And by imbuing the workers with them, it has made Dublin the richest city in Europe today, rich by all that counts for greatness in the history of nations. It is then upon this working class so enslaved, this working class so led and so enriched with moral purposes and high aims that the employers propose to make general war. Shall we shrink from it; cower before their onset? A thousand times no! Shall we crawl back into our slums, abase our hearts, bow our knees, and crawl once more to lick the hand that would smite us? Shall we, who have been carving out for our children a brighter future, a cleaner city, a freer life, consent to betray them instead into the grasp of the blood-suckers from whom we have dreamt of escaping? No, no, and yet again no! Let them declare their lock-out; it will only hasten the day when the working class will lock-out the capitalist class for good and all. If for taking the side of the Tram men we are threatened with suffering, why we have suffered before. But let them understand well that once they start that ball rolling no capitalist power on earth can prevent it continuing to roll, that every day will add to the impetus it will give to the working class purpose, to the thousands it will bring to the working class ranks and every added suffering inflicted upon the workers will be a fresh obstacle in the way of moderation when the day of final settlement arrives.

Yes, indeed, if it is going to be a wedding, let it be a wedding; and if it is going to be a wake, let it be a wake: we are ready for either.

## **James Connolly**

# Belfast and Dublin To-Day

(1913)

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**Forward,** 23 August, 1913.  
From the collection: **Ireland Upon the Dissecting Table**, Cork Workers' Club 1975.  
Transcription & HTML Mark-up: [Einde O'Callaghan](#) for the **Marxists' Internet Archive**.  
Proofread by Chris Clayton, August 2007.

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Some four weeks ago I mentioned that Dublin was now the centre of a storm of industrial discontent and rebellious activity on the part of the working class, and that this was, as contrasted with the apathy of Belfast, due to the fact that in Dublin and Nationalist Ireland in general the Home Rule question had passed out of the regions of controversy – was indeed considered a settled question.

A few of my amiable comrades in Belfast chose to consider this as an attack upon the city instead of taking it as it was meant, as a spur to greater activity upon correct political lines. Just as when the sweating for which Belfast is notorious is mentioned, the orthodox Orange press affects to wax indignant – not at the sweaters, but at “those who are besmirching the fair name of Belfast”, i.e., those who expose the sweaters.

The governing factor in winning these battles in Dublin is the fact that practically all classes of general labour are in one Union, and that the leader of that Union does not act, nor does his executive with him act, on old style trade union lines. The general policy is to use the general body of workers who are organised in order to win concessions for those who are being organised ...

The firm and skilful use of this power is what is making for the revolution in wages and conditions in Dublin that is at present going on. But this would not be possible but for that matchless loyalty to their class which I have spoken of as a characteristic of the Dublin workers.

In Belfast, as I have already suggested, there is wanting alike the necessary forms of organisation, and the class solidarity that make that organisation possible and effective.

General labour is split up into many ineffective and comparatively isolated fragments. The dockers and carters are in two distinct, unrelated organisations. The headquarters of the former is in Dublin, of the latter in Manchester. Hence the immense power which these two bodies can use on behalf of their fellows when united action is wanting in Belfast.

And as far as class solidarity is concerned, the following quotations from the capitalist press will speak volumes. They illustrate how the campaign of religious and political ruffianism initiated by Sir Edward Carson and his accomplices has broken whatever class solidarity ever existed in this city, and hence how the first task to our hand here is the fronting and throttling of this beast of bigotry.

The first extract is from the Dublin **Daily Independent**, a Home Rule organ, of Tuesday, 12th August:

“From early yesterday morning until a late hour last night the vicinity of the Midland Railway terminus in Belfast was the scene of considerable turmoil arising out of an excursion to Portrush of the Transport Workers and Textile Workers Organisation. The party, which was composed to a large extent of women and children, went in a body through York Street, where a Unionist crowd, mostly composed of shipyard workers, evidently thinking that the outing had a party significance, attacked them with so much violence that a large force of police had much difficulty in getting the excursionists on to the railway platform.

“From seven o’clock in the evening a rowdy gathering began to collect in the vicinity of the railway Station awaiting the return of the excursionists. A strong force of police, under the direction of the City Commissioner, were present.

“Prior to the arrival of the train there was a scuffle between the police and the crowd, who sang *Dolly’s Brae* and other Orange ballads, to the accompaniment of revolver shots, which could be heard in all the adjoining streets and along Royal Avenue. There was also some stone-throwing, and a girl was removed to hospital.”

The second extract is from the columns of the **Northern Whig**, a rabid Orange and Unionist organ:—

“Disorderly scenes attended the departure and return of a dockers excursion to Pontrush yesterday. The excursion had been arranged in connection with the local Branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers’ Union – of which Mr. James Connolly is the Secretary – who were joined in the outing by a number of textile operatives.

“In the morning, when the excursionists, headed by a Labour band, marched through York Street to the terminus of the Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee), their progress was followed by a hostile crowd of considerable dimensions, and largely composed of mill girls, and in the vicinity of the railway station there was some stone-throwing, though apparently no one sustained injury.

“The policemen on duty in the vicinity were quickly assembled, but the crowd dispersed without further trouble, and the excursionists left by the 9:15 a.m. train for the seaside resort.

“In view of the threatening attitude the crowd had adopted in the morning the City Commissioner (Mr. T.J. Smith, J.P.), arranged for a strong force of police to meet the excursionists on their return to the city in the evening about 9 o’clock, and he, with District Inspector Robt. Dunlop, attended at the railway station shortly before that hour, and directed the movements of the constabulary. A

crowd of men, women, and mill girls, numbering about 1,000 people, assembled outside the station premises to await the transport workers, the greater proportion of those present being hostile.

“The gates of the approaches to the station were closed and locked in order that the premises might be kept clean, and so as to obviate as far as possible any disorder within the precincts of the station a strong cordon of police was engaged in keeping the crowd back from these approaches.

“With the arrival of the excursionists at about 9 o’clock the mob in the street outside resorted to stone-throwing, and a few revolvers were discharged into the air, while feeling evidently ran high.

“The transport workers had originally intended to re-form their procession, and march through York Street and other principal thoroughfares, as in the morning, but this idea was abandoned before the city was reached on the return journey.”

A correspondent of **Forward** in a recent edition asked how it was that if the Orangemen were so bad they allowed Mr. Connolly to hold meetings in the principal streets of Belfast? Our answer is that neither Mr. Connolly nor any other Socialist can now hold outdoor meetings in an exclusively Orange district, even those Belfast socialists who “will not have Home Rule” in their programmes, cannot hold open-air meetings in any exclusively Orange district. Socialist meetings in Belfast can only be held in the business centre of the town, where the passing crowd is of a mixed or uncertain nature.

Another answer to my friend’s question is to be found in the incident related. The excursion was of a purely trade union nature, the Labour Band accompanying it was its own band – known as the only non-sectarian band in Belfast, and has never been known to play any party tunes or attend any demonstration under the auspices of either of the orthodox parties in Ireland – and yet this peaceful excursion was attacked by stones and revolver shots by an Orange crowd.

The only reason anyone alleged for the attack being that the unions were Irish organisations with their headquarters in Dublin, and therefore what is known in Belfast as Fenians. This, and a pleasant desire to kill your humble servant, is generally recognised as having been the sole motive inspiring the hostile demonstrations.

All this demonstrates how immensely difficult is the task at present in Belfast. No part of these countries has a part more difficult. It means the propagation of twentieth-century revolutionism amidst the mental atmosphere of the early seventeenth century.

When striving to induce my Belfast comrades to adopt this policy, we are now propagating in our meetings, I was asked did I think it would make our propaganda easier. I answered that I did not, that on the contrary it would arouse passions immensely more bitter than had ever been met here by the Socialist movement in the past, but it would make our propaganda more fruitful and our organisation more enduring.

To this I still adhere. A real Socialist movement cannot be built by temporising in front of a dying cause as that of the Orange ascendancy, even though in the paroxysms of its death struggle it assumes the appearance of health. A real Socialist movement can only be born of struggle, of uncompromising affirmation of the faith that is in US. Such a movement infallibly gathers to it every element of rebellion and of progress, and in the midst of the storm and stress of the struggle solidifies into a real revolutionary force.

Therefore we declare to the Orange workers of Belfast that we stand for the right of the people in Ireland to rule as well as to own Ireland, and cannot conceive of a Separation of the two ideas, and to all and sundry we announce that as Socialists we are Home Rulers, but that on the day the Home Rule Government goes into power, the Socialist movement in Ireland will go into Opposition.

# James Connolly

## A Forgotten Chapter of Irish History

(1913)

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**Forward**, 9 August, 1913.  
From the collection: **Ireland Upon the Dissecting Table**, Cork Workers' Club 1975.  
Transcription & HTML Mark-up: [Einde O'Callaghan](#) for the **Marxists' Internet Archive**.  
Proofread by Chris Clayton, August 2007.

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A writer in **Forward** recently expressed the desire that someone would prepare literature that would be suitable for the conversion to Socialism of Orangemen. It is a desire with which I most heartily sympathise. I cannot resist the feeling that the Socialist movement of these countries has a legitimate grievance against the Socialists in the North of Ireland for never having seriously essayed this task, before. Unfortunately the Socialists of this district seem to have been possessed with the idea that it was good tactics to talk about every place under the sun except about the North of Ireland, to read every history except Irish history, and to profess unlimited faith in the democracy of every country except Ireland.

This it was, and is argued, showed a good broad-minded attitude, proved that they were true internationalists, whereas to talk about Ireland, to dissect and analyse the claims made by Irish politicians, to expose the hollowness of their shibboleths to direct attention to the merciless expropriation that underlay the so-called religious issues of past wars in Ireland, and the equally callous desire to

hide present exploitations on the part of those who seek to keep alive animosities supposedly arising out of these wars – all this is supposed to betray a parochial, Chauvinistic, narrow spirit alien to the true Internationalist.

I have always argued that although the Socialist movement requires a world-literature, a stock of books dealing with capitalism as a world force, constituting as it were the classical literature of the movement, yet that each country requires also a local or native literature and spoken propaganda translating and explaining its past history and present political developments in the light of the knowledge derived from a study of Socialist classics.

Any country which is content to depend solely upon these great Socialist classics will never have a Socialist movement of the working class; it may have a Socialist sect of a few true believers, but it cannot hope for the adhesion of the great mass of the toilers.

It is only when Socialism is brought down from the clouds and is shown to have a direct bearing upon the political life of each country as a reflex of the economic history of that country, and to have a message bearing upon the political problems of the day, it is only then that Socialism has an opportunity of developing from being the cult of a few to become the faith of the many.

In every country this has been learned, and in proportion as the local literature grew, the Socialist movement of which it was the expression grew also. The stronger and the more widespread is that local translation of Socialist generalisations the more deeply rooted, not the less, became the faith in the world-wide nature of the movement.

As long as the movement in this district is content to draw its literature from England and its illustrations from British conditions, so long will it be but an echo of the fight of our British brothers and sisters. So soon as we build up a literature and spoken propaganda dealing with conditions in Ireland, as our fathers knew and as we know them, so soon will the movement here draw strength and power to itself.

Like the mythological character who lost his strength when raised from the earth, but renewed his strength and power whenever his feet once more came in contact with the soil – so the Socialist movement drains itself to mere impotence or raises itself to power in proportion as it rests upon the immediate realities of the people to whom it is appealing.

The industrial movement, the rebellion in the shops, ships, docks, and factories needs to care little for the moment about questions arising out of past history, but the Socialist movement seeking to challenge the political powers of the political lords, or the rights of ownership of the machine lords, cannot evade the duty of an investigation of the historical origins of these powers and rights.

And when we find that the landlords and machine, or mill and factory lords of our own country have become the political leaders of our own district, nothing can absolve us from the duty of investigating and exposing the sources of that social power which has also vested them with their evil political dominance.

These things are of course commonplace among the thoughtful Socialists elsewhere, but are, I am sorry to relate, regarded as extraordinary innovations here. The fact is indicative of the unformed state of our Socialist movement, and the immense spade work that is still to be done.

When that ex-Orange exponent of Socialism does arrive, he will not lack materials to go upon if he is courageous enough to resolve to give his readers the facts about the past record of the Orange aristocracy they now so slavishly worship.

As a humble contribution to his arsenal, allow me to state briefly the story of the Antrim Leases of 1772.

I have pointed out before that the Ulster plantation of James I, was a scheme under which the lands stolen from the natives were given to certain Crown favourites and London companies, and that the rank and file of the Protestant English and Scottish armies were only made tenants of these aristocrats and companies. Tyrone, Derry, Donegal, Fermanagh, Armagh and Cavan were

entirely confiscated. The plan was worked out by Sir Arthur Chichester, ancestor of the Marquis of Donegal. For his share in the transaction he received the entire territories of the clansmen of Sir Cahir O'Doherty; the London companies, which had financed the war, received 209,800 acres out of a total of 500,000 acres, and other ancestors of the Orange aristocracy got the rest. In addition to the above-mentioned plunder, when Sir Arthur Chichester resigned his Position as Lord Deputy in 1616, he received certain lands in Antrim and the title of Baron of Belfast.

All the Antrim lands were settled by a Protestant tenantry, the Catholics being driven to the hills and glens. As was natural from the political circumstances of the time, and in order to preserve the appearance of fairness, these Protestant tenants were at first granted very long leases. Under the security of tenure afforded by these leases, they worked hard, reclaimed the land, built houses, drained, fenced and improved the property. Also under the terms of the promise given by William III, when in answer to the petition of the English woollen manufacturers he suppressed the industry in Ireland but promised bounties to the linen industry as a compensation, the cultivation of flax and the manufacture of linen grew up in Antrim as a further contribution to the prosperity of the tenants of Lord Donegal.

But in and about the year 1772 the leases began to expire all over the country. What happened then is best told in the words of the **Remonstrance of Northern Protestants** sent to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Townsend, in that year:—

“The landlords thirsted to share the people’s benefits by raising their rents, which would have been very reasonable to a moderate degree, but of late they had run to great excesses. When the tenant’s lease was ended, they published in the newspapers that such a parcel of land was to be let, and that proposals in writing would be received for it. They invited every covetous, envious, and malicious person to offer for his neighbour’s possession and improvements. The tenant, knowing he must be the highest bidder, or turn out he knew not whither, would offer more than their value. If he complained to the landlord that it was too dear, the landlord answered that he knew it was, but that as it was in a trading country,

the tenant could make up the deficiency by his industry. Those who possessed the greatest estates were now so rich that they could not find delicacies enough in their own country to bestow their wealth on, but carried it abroad to lavish there the entire day's sweat of thousands of poor people."

The two worst extortioners were Lord Donegal and a Mr. Upton. On the estate of Lord Donegal a large number of the leases expired simultaneously. The landlord refused to renew them unless he received the enormous sum of £100,000 in fines, as a free gift for his generosity. As the tenants could not raise this great sum, they offered to pay the interest upon it in addition to their rent, but this was refused, and then some "hard-headed, shrewd, and enterprising" Belfast capitalists offered the money to my lord and secured the farms over the head of the tenants, who were accordingly evicted. According to Froude in his **English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century** (and Froude was a bitter, malevolent and anti-Irish a historian as ever wrote)–

"In the two years that followed the Antrim evictions, thirty thousand Protestants left Ulster for a land where there was no legal robbery, and where those who sowed the seed could reap the harvest."

Those who remained at home did not accept their fate with complacency, nor show that voluntary abasement before the aristocracy characteristic of their descendants today. They formed a secret society – the "Hearts of Steel" – which strove by acts of terrorism to redress some of their grievances. In a manifesto issued by this organisation in 1772, the following sentence appears:

"The supreme judge himself had excited them to commotion to cause the landlords on whom no mild means will prevail to observe the pale faces and the thin clothing of their honest Protestant subjects who had enriched the country by their industry."

When in the same year six of their number were arrested and lodged in the town jail of Belfast, the members of this society assembled from all parts of Down and Antrim, marched upon Belfast, stormed the jail, and released their comrades. The thin clothing and pale faces of honest Protestant workers are still in evidence in

Belfast, but the only things they are storming nowadays are the homes of their fellow sufferers who profess different political faith.

Here then is the reality as against all the vaunted 'Civil and Religious Liberties' which the Carsons and their bend tell us were established at the Boyne. Some day I will tell the equally shameful story of the suppression of political liberty, of how the Protestant workers were kept outside the franchise whilst the upper classes manipulated the powers of the State to their own enrichment.

But this story of the Antrim Leases will serve as an illustration of my point that in the treatment of Protestant workers by Protestant exploiters in Ulster, our coming historians will find plenty of material upon which to base his appeal to the Orange masses.

The worker who grasps that point will then be able to comprehend the teaching conveyed in the following statement of principle upon which the Independent Labour Party of Ireland is based, and which it adopted as its own at the joint conference of Socialist bodies in Ireland which saw its formation:

Whereas the political history of Ireland is a record of the attempts of successive races and classes to obtain possession of the land and other sources of national wealth in order that the yoke of slavery may be laid upon the necks of the non-possessors, and,

Whereas in this fight for economic supremacy the landlords and classes have utilised in the past every possible appeal to racial sentiment, patriotic devotion and religious bigotry, hiding under the various rallying cries the ever-present desire of a dominant section for power and plunder, and,

Whereas the working class of Ireland today, like the working class of every other nation, is the heir and representative of all the defrauded and dispossessed generations of the past, embracing in its ranks the descendants of the men and women who, no matter what banner they fought under or what cause they invoked were despoiled and subjugated alike in victory and defeat:

Therefore be it Resolved –

“That recognising that, despite their diverse origins, the workers of Ireland are heirs of a common spoliation, and sufferers from a common bondage, that the watchwords are rallying cries of the various parties, led by the various factions of our masters, are but sound and fury, signifying nothing to us in our present needs and struggles; and that it is no longer a question of Celt against Saxon or Catholic against Protestant.

“But of All the Workers Against All the Exploiters, we, representing workers from North and South, unite under the following constitution in a common association against the common enemy for the ownership of our common country and the World for the Workers.”

## James Connolly

# North-East Ulster

(1913)

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**Forward,** 2 August, 1913.  
From the collection: **Ireland Upon the Dissecting Table**, Cork Workers' Club 1975.  
Transcription & HTML Mark-up: [Einde O'Callaghan](#) for the **Marxists' Internet Archive**.  
Proofread by Chris Clayton, August 2007.

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A Dublin Comrade once remarked to the writer of these notes that as two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time, so the mind of the working class cannot take up two items at the same time. Meaning thereby that when that working class is obsessed with visions of glory, patriotism, war, loyalty or political or religious bigotry, it can find no room in its mind for considerations of its own interests as a class.

Somewhere upon these lines must be found the explanation of the fact that whereas Dublin and Nationalist Ireland generally is seething with rebellion against industrial conditions and manifesting that rebellion by a crop of strikes, in Belfast and the quarter dominated by the loyalist element, class feeling or industrial discontent is at present scarcely manifested at all.

For Dublin and its Nationalist allies, the Home Rule question has long gone beyond the stage of controversy; it is regarded as out of the region of dispute and consequently the mind of the working class is no more excited over that question than it can be considered to be excited over the general proposition that the whole is greater than its parts.

In North-East Ulster, on the other hand, the question of Home Rule is not a settled question in men's minds, much less settled politically, and hence its unsettled character makes it still possible for that question to so possess the minds of the multitude that all other questions such as wages, hours and conditions of labour, must take a subordinate place and lose their power to attract attention, much less to compel action.

According to all Socialist theories North-East Ulster, being the most developed industrially, ought to be the quarter in which class lines of cleavage, politically and industrially, should be the most pronounced and class rebellion the most common.

As a cold matter of fact, it is the happy hunting ground of the slave-driver and the home of the least rebellious slaves in the industrial world.

Dublin, on the other hand, has more strongly developed working-class feeling, more strongly accentuated instincts of loyalty to the working class than any city of its size in the globe.

I have explained before how the perfectly devilish ingenuity of the master class had sought its ends in North-East Ulster. How the lands were stolen from Catholics, given to Episcopalians, but planted by Presbyterians; how the latter were persecuted by the Government, but could not avoid the necessity of

defending it against the Catholics, and how out of this complicated situation there inevitably grew up a feeling of common interests between the slaves and the slave-drivers.

As the march of the Irish towards emancipation developed, as step by step they secured more and more political rights and greater and greater recognition, so in like ratio the disabilities of the Presbyterians and other dissenters were abolished.

For a brief period during the closing years of the eighteenth century, it did indeed seem probably that the common disabilities of Presbyterians and Catholics would unite them all under the common name of Irishmen. Hence the rebel society of that time took the significant name of 'United Irishmen'.

But the removal of the religious disabilities from the dissenting community had, as its effect, the obliteration of all political difference between the sects and their practical political unity under the common designation of Protestants, as against the Catholics, upon whom the fetters of religious disability still clung.

Humanly speaking, one would have confidently predicted that as the Presbyterians and Dissenters were emancipated as a result of a clamorous agitation against religious inequality, and as that agitation derived its chief force and menace from the power of Catholic numbers in Ireland, then the members of these sects would unite with the agitators to win for all an enjoyment of these rights the agitators and rebels had won for them.

But the prediction would have missed the mark by several million miles. Instead, the Protestants who had been persecuted joined with the Protestants who had persecuted them against the menace of an intrusion by the Catholics into the fold of political and religious freedom – 'Civil and religious liberty'.

There is no use blaming them. It is common experience in history that as each order fought its way upward into the circle of governing classes, it joined with its former tyrants in an endeavour to curb the aspirations of these orders still unfree.

That in Ireland religious sects played the same game as elsewhere was played by economic or social classes does not prove the wickedness of the Irish players, but does serve to illustrate the universality of the passions that operate upon the stage of the world's history.

It also serves to illustrate the wisdom of the Socialist contention that as the working class has no subject class beneath it, therefore, to the working class of necessity belongs the honour of being the class destined to put an end to class rule, since, in emancipating itself, it cannot help emancipating all other classes.

Individuals out of other classes must and will help as individual Protestants have helped in the fight for Catholic emancipation in Ireland; but on the whole, the burden must rest upon the shoulders of the most subject class.

If the North-East corner of Ireland is, therefore, the home of a people whose minds are saturated with conceptions of political activity fit only for the atmosphere of the seventeenth century, if the sublime ideas of an all-embracing democracy equally as insistent upon its duties as upon its rights have as yet found poor lodgment here, the fault lies not with this generation of toilers, but with those pastors and masters who deceived it and enslaved it in the past – and deceived it in order that they might enslave it.

But as no good can come of blaming it, so also no good, but infinite evil, can come of truckling to it. Let the truth be told, however ugly. Here, the Orange working class are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude were more slavish than their own. In Catholic Ireland the working class are rebels in spirit and democratic in feeling because for hundreds of years they have found no class as lowly paid or as hardly treated as themselves.

At one time in the industrial world of Great Britain and Ireland the skilled labourer looked down with contempt upon the unskilled and bitterly resented his attempt to get his children taught any of the skilled trades; the feeling of the Orangemen of Ireland towards the Catholics is but a glorified representation on a big stage of the same passions inspired by the same unworthy motives.

An atavistic survival of a dark and ignorant past!

Viewing Irish politics in the light of this analysis, one can see how futile and vain are the criticisms of the Labour Party in Parliament which are based upon a comparison of what was done by the Nationalist group in the past and what is being left undone by the Labour group to-day. I am neither criticising nor defending the Labour Group in Parliament; I am simply pointing out that any criticism based upon an analogy with the actions, past or present, of the Irish party, is necessarily faulty and misleading.

The Irish party had all the political traditions and prejudices of centuries to reinforce its attitude of hostility to the Government, nay, more, its only serious rival among its own constituents was a party more uncompromisingly hostile to the Government than itself – the republican or physical force party.

The Labour party, on the other hand, has had to meet and overcome all the political traditions and prejudices of its supporters in order to win their votes, and knows that at any time it may lose these suffrages so tardily given.

The Irish Party never needed to let the question of retaining the suffrages of the Irish electors enter into their calculations. They were almost always returned unopposed. The Labour party knows that a forward move on the part of either Liberal or Tory will always endanger a certain portion of Labour votes.

In other words, the Irish group was a party to whose aid the mental habits formed by centuries of struggle came as a reinforcement among its constituents at every stage of the struggle. But the Labour party is a party which, in order to progress, must be continually breaking with and outraging institutions which the mental habits of its supporters had for centuries accustomed them to venerate.

I have written in vain if I have not helped the reader to realise that the historical backgrounds of the movement in England and Ireland are so essentially different that the Irish Socialist movement can only be truly served by a party indigenous to the soil, and explained by a literature having the same source: that the phrases and watchwords which might serve to express the soul of the

movement in one country may possibly stifle its soul and suffocate its expression in the other.

One great need of the movement in Ireland is a literature of its very own. When that is written people will begin to understand why it is that the Irish Catholic worker is a good democrat and a revolutionist, though he knows nothing of the fine spun theories of democracy or revolution; and how and why it is that the doctrine that because the workers of Belfast live under the same industrial conditions as do those of Great Britain, they are therefore subject to the same passions and to be influenced by the same methods of propaganda, is a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity.

## James Connolly

# July the 12th

(1913)

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**Forward,** 12 July, 1913.  
From the collection: **Ireland Upon the Dissecting Table**, Cork Workers' Club 1975.  
Transcription & HTML Mark-up: [Einde O'Callaghan](#) for the **Marxists' Internet Archive**.  
Proofread by Chris Clayton, August 2007.

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As this Saturday is the 12th of July, and as I am supposed to be writing about the North of Ireland in particular, it becomes imperative that I say something about this great and glorious festival.

The Anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne is celebrated in Belfast by what is locally known as an Orange Walk. The brethren turn out and take possession of

the principal streets of the city, and for the space of some hours they pass in processional order before the eyes of the citizens, bearing their banners, wearing their regalia, carrying symbols emblematic of the gates of Derry, and to the accompaniment of a great many bands.

Viewing the procession as a mere 'Teague' (to use the name the brethren bestow on all of Catholic origin), I must confess that some parts of it are beautiful, some of it ludicrous, and some of it exceedingly disheartening.

The regalia is often beautiful; I have seen representations of the Gates of Derry that were really a pleasure to view as pieces of workmanship; and similar representations erected as Orange arches across dingy side streets that, if we could forget their symbolism, we would admire as real works of art.

The music (?) is a fearful and wonderful production, seemingly being based upon a desire to produce the maximum of sound in the minimum of space. Every Orange Lodge in the North of Ireland, and many from the South make it a point to walk, and as each Lodge desires to have a band without any regard to its numbers, the bands are often so near that even the most skilful manipulator cannot prevent a blending of sounds that can scarcely be called harmonious.

I have stood on the sidewalk listening to a band, whose instruments were rendering:

Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly.

Whilst another one about twenty yards off was splitting the air with:

Dolly's Brae, O Dolly's Brae,  
O, Dolly's Brae no more;  
The song we sang was kick the Pope  
Right over Dolly's Brae.

But the discord of sound allied to the discord of sentiment implied in a longing to fly to the bosom of Jesus, and at the same time to kick the Pope, did not appear to strike anyone but myself.

For that matter a sense of humour is not one of the strong points in an Orangeman's nature. The dead walls of Belfast are decorated with a mixture of imprecations upon Fenians , and, the Pope, and invocations of the power and goodness of the Most High, interlarded with quotations from the New Testament. This produces some of the most incongruous results. What would the readers of **Forward** say to seeing written up on the side of a wall off one of the main streets, the attractive legend:

God is Love,  
Hell Roast the Pope.

Of course, the juxtaposition of such inscriptions on the walls appears absurd, and yet, the juxtaposition of sentiments as dissimilar is common enough in the minds of all of us, I suppose.

To anyone really conversant with the facts bearing upon the relations of the religious in Ireland, and the part played by them in advancing or retarding the principles of civil and religious liberty, the whole celebration appears to be foolish enough.

The belief sedulously cultivated by all the orators, lay and clerical, as well as by all the newspapers is, that the Defence of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne were great vindications of the principles of civil and religious liberty, which were menaced by the Catholics, and defended by the Protestants of all sects.

The belief we acquire from a more clear study of history in Ireland is somewhat different. Let me tell it briefly. In the reign of James I, the English Government essayed to solve the Irish problem, which then, as now, was their chief trouble, by settling Ireland with planters from Scotland and England. To do this, two million acres were confiscated, i.e., stolen from the Irish owners. Froude, the historian, says:

“Of these, a million and a half, bog-forest and mountain were restored to the Irish. The half a million of fertile acres were settled with families of Scottish and English Protestants.”

A friendly speaker, recently describing these planters before a meeting of the Belfast Liberal Association, spoke of them as:

“Hardy pioneers, born of a sturdy race, trained to adversity, when brought face to face with dangers of a new life in a hostile country, soon developed that steady, energetic, and powerful character which has made the name of Ulster respected all over the world.”

And a writer in the seventeenth century, the son of one of the ministers who came over with the first plantation, Mr. Stewart, is quoted by Lecky in his **History of England in the Eighteenth Century**, as saying:

“From Scotland came many, and from England not a few, yet all of them generally the scum of both nations, who from debt, or breaking the law or fleeing from justice, or seeking shelter, come hither, hoping to be without fear of man’s justice in a land where there was nothing, or but little as yet, of the fear of God ... On all hands Atheism increased, and disregard of God, iniquity abounded, with contentious fighting, murder, adultery.”

The reader can take his choice of these descriptions. Probably the truth is that each is a fairly accurate description of a section of the planters, and that neither is accurate as a picture of the whole.

But while the Plantation succeeded from the point of view of the Government in placing in the heart of Ulster a body of people who, whatever their disaffection to that Government, were still bound by fears of their own safety to defend it against the natives, it did not bring either civil or religious liberty to the Presbyterian planters.

The Episcopalians were in power, and all the forces of government were used by them against their fellow-Protestants. The planters were continually harassed to make them adjure their religion, fines were multiplied upon fines, and

imprisonment upon imprisonment. In 1640, the Presbyterians of Antrim, Down, and Tyrone, in a petition to the English House of Commons, declared that:

“Principally through the sway of the prelacy with their factions our souls are starved, our estates are undone, our families impoverished, and many lives among us cut off and destroyed ... Our cruel taskmasters have made us who were once a people to become as it were no people, an astonishment to ourselves, the object of pittance and amazement to others.”

What might have been the result of this cruel, systematic persecution of Protestants by Protestants we can only conjecture, since, in the following year, 1641, the great Irish rebellion compelled the persecuting and persecuted Protestants to join hands in defence of their common plunder against the common enemy – the original Irish owners.

In all the demonstrations and meetings which take place in Ulster under Unionist Party auspices, all these persecutions are alluded to as if they had been the work of “Papists,” and even in the Presbyterian churches and conventions, the same distortion of the truth is continually practised.

But they are told

“all this persecution was ended when William of Orange, and our immortal forefathers overthrew the Pope and Popery at the Boyne. Then began the era of civil and religious liberty.”

So runs the legend implicitly believed in in Ulster. Yet it is far, very far, from the truth. In 1686 certain continental powers joined together in a league, known in history as the league of Augsburg, for the purpose of curbing the arrogant power of France. These powers were impartially Protestant and Catholic, including the Emperor of Germany, the King of Spain, William, Prince of Orange, and the Pope. The latter had but a small army, but possessed a good treasury and great influence. A few years before a French army had marched upon Rome to avenge a slight insult offered to France, and His Holiness was more than anxious to curb

the Catholic power that had dared to violate the centre of Catholicity. Hence his alliance with William, Prince of Orange.

King James II, of England, being insecure upon his throne, sought alliance with the French monarch.

When, therefore, the war took place in Ireland, King William fought, aided by the arms, men, and treasures of his allies in the League of Augsburg, and part of his expenses at the Battle of the Boyne was paid for by His Holiness, the Pope. Moreover, when news of King William's victory reached Rome, a *Te Deum* was sung in celebration of his victory over the Irish adherents of King James and King Louis.

Therefore, on Saturday the Orangemen of Ulster, led by King Carson, will be celebrating the same victory as the Pope celebrated 223 years ago.

Nor did the victory at the Boyne mean Civil and Religious Liberty. The Catholic Parliament of King James, meeting in Dublin in 1689, had passed a law that all religions were equal, and that each clergyman should be supported by his own congregation only, and that no tithes should be levied upon any man for the support of a church to which he did not belong. But this sublime conception was far from being entertained by the Williamites who overthrew King James and superseded his Parliament. The Episcopalian Church was immediately re-established, and all other religions put under the ban of the law. I need not refer to the Penal Laws against Catholics, they are well enough known. But sufficient to point out that England and Wales have not yet attained to that degree of religious equality established by Acts XIII and XV of the Catholic Parliament of 1689, and that that date was the last in which Catholics and Protestants sat together in Parliament until the former compelled an Emancipation Act in 1829.

For the Presbyterians the victory at the Boyne simply gave a freer hand to their Episcopalian persecutors. In 1704 Derry was rewarded for its heroic defence by being compelled to submit to a Test Act, which shut out of all offices in the Law, the Army, the Navy, the Customs and Excise, and Municipal employment, all who would not conform to the Episcopalian Church. The alderman and

fourteen burgesses are said to have been disfranchised in the Maiden City by this iniquitous Act, which was also enforced all over Ireland. Thus, at one stroke, Presbyterians, Quakers, and all other dissenters were deprived of that which they had imagined they were fighting for at “Derry, Aughrim, and the Boyne.” Presbyterians were forbidden to be married by their own clergymen, the Ecclesiastical Courts had power to fine and imprison offenders, and to compel them to appear in the Parish Church, and make public confession of fornication, if so married. At Lisburn and Tullylish, Presbyterians were actually punished for being married by their own ministers. Some years later, in 1712, a number of Presbyterians were arrested for attempting to establish a Presbyterian meeting house in Belturbet.

The marriage of a Presbyterian and an Episcopalian was declared illegal, and in fact, the ministers and congregations of the former church were treated as outlaws and rebels, to be fined, imprisoned, and harassed in every possible way. They had to pay tithes for the upkeep of the Episcopalian ministers, were fined for not going to the Episcopalian Church, and had to pay Church cess for buying sacramental bread, ringing the bell, and washing the surplices of the Episcopalian clergymen. All this, remember, in the generation immediately following the Battle of the Boyne.

The reader should remember what is generally slurred over in narrating this part of Irish history, that when we are told that Ulster was planted by Scottish Presbyterians, it does not mean that the land was given to them. On the contrary, the vital fact was, and is, that the land was given to the English noblemen and to certain London companies of merchants who had lent money to the Crown, and that the Scottish planters were only introduced as tenants of these landlords. The condition of their tenancy virtually was that they should keep Ireland for the English Crown, and till the land of Ireland for the benefit of the English landlord.

That is in essence the demand of the Unionist Party leaders upon their followers today. In the past, as the landlords were generally English and Episcopalian, they all, during the eighteenth century, continually inserted clauses in all their leases, forbidding the erection of Presbyterian meeting houses. As the uprise of democracy has contributed to make this impossible today in Ireland, the

landlord and capitalist class now seek an alliance with these Protestants they persecuted for so long in order to prevent a union of the democracy of all religious faiths against their lords and masters.

To accomplish this they seek insidiously to pervert history, and to inflame the spirit of religious fanaticism. The best cure I know of for that evil is a correct understanding of the events they so distort in their speeches and sermons. To this end I have ever striven to contribute my mite, and while I know that the sight of the thousands who, on July 12, will march to proclaim their allegiance to principles of which their order is a negation, will be somewhat disheartening. I also know that even amongst the Orange hosts, the light of truth is penetrating.

In conclusion, the fundamental, historical facts to remember are that:

The Irish Catholic was despoiled by force,  
The Irish Protestant toiler was despoiled by fraud,  
The spoliation of both continues today  
under more insidious but more effective forms,

and the only hope lies in the latter combining with the former in overthrowing their common spoilers, and consenting to live in amity together in the common ownership of their common country – the country which the spirit of their ancestors or the devices of their rulers have made – the place of their origin, or the scene of their travail.

I have always held, despite the fanatics on both sides, that the movements of Ireland for freedom could not and cannot be divorced from the world-wide upward movements of the world's democracy. The Irish question is a part of the social question, the desire of the Irish people to control their own destinies is a part of the desire of the workers to forge political weapons for their own enfranchisement as a class.

The Orange fanatic and the Capitalist-minded Home Ruler are alike in denying this truth; ere long, both of them will be but memories, while the army of

those who believe in that truth will be marching and battling on its conquering way.