

THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL Irish Trades & Union Congress

BELFAST

Whit-Donday, Suesday & Mednesday,

- - ON - -

1908.



"LABOR OMNIA VINCIT."

REPORT

OF THE

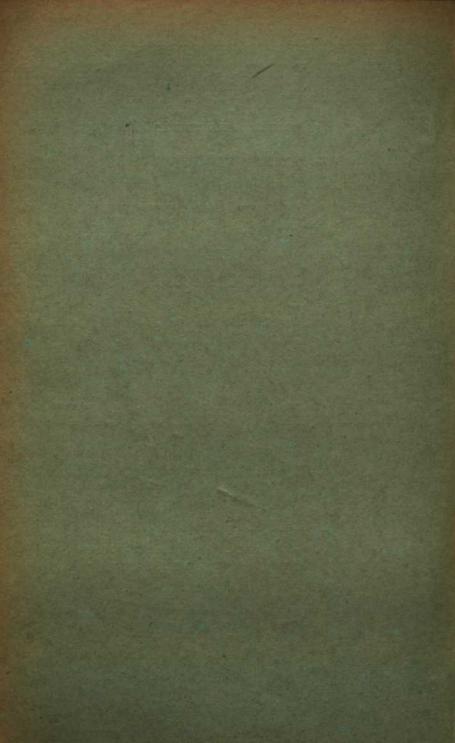
Irish Trades Union Congress,

HELD IN

The Minor Ulster Hall,

BELFAST, On 8th. 9th & 10th JUNE, 1908.

Published by Authority of the Congress and the Parliamentary Committee.



Irish Labour Party & Trade Union Congress

REPORT

FIFTEENTH Irish Trades Anion Congress,

OF THE

HELD IN THE

MINOR ULSTER HALL, BELFAST,

MONDAY, TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY, 8th. 9th and 10th June, 1908.

ON

Edited by E. L. RICHARDSON, J.P.



Published by authority of the Congress and the Parliamentary Committee.

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Parliamentary Committee.

CHAIRMAN : MICHAEL EGAN, J.P., T.C., CORK.

> VICE-CHAIRMAN : GEORGE GREIG, BELFAST.

JAMES M'CARRON, T.C., Derry. | STEPHEN DINNEEN, Limerick. MISS GALWAY, Belfast. JOHN MURPHY, Belfast. JAMES LARKIN, Belfast.

TREASURER :

E. W. STEWART, 179 CLONLIFFE ROAD, DUBLIN. (To whom all Remittances should be sent).

SECRETARY :

E. L. RICHARDSON, J.P., 7 MELROSE AV., FAIRVIEW, DUBLIN. (To whom all Communications should be addressed).

REPORT OF THE

15th Annual Irish Trades Union Congress, BELFAST, 1908.

The following is the Report of the Parliamentary Committee presented to the Congress, the discussion upon which will be found in the third day's proceedings, infra.

FELLOW DELEGATES .- Your Committee beg to present a record of their proceedings for the past twelve months.

At their first meeting, immediately after the close of the Dublin Congress, your Committee directed that letters covering copies of all resolutions bearing upon questions then before the House of Commons should be immediately forwarded to the Secretaries of the Irish Parliamentary Party and Labour Party. The following are the replies received :--

House of Commons, 10th June, 1907.

Dear Sir-I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 8th inst., and to thank you for the kind expression contained therein on behalf of the Trades Union Congress. I have also received copies of the resolutions adopted by them at the meeting referred to, and you may rest assured that the matters mentioned will not be lost sight of by the Irish Party .- Very truly yours,

J. E. REDMOND,

E. L. Richardson, Esq.

House of Commons, 11th June, 1907.

Dear Mr. Richardson-Thank you very much for yours of the 8th inst. conveying from the Irish Trades Union Congress a resolution of thanks for the work of the Labour Party in the House of Commons. I will communicate that resolution, with your further request to act upon certain of the findings of your Congress, to the next meeting of the Party .- Yours very sincerely,

J. RAMBAY MACDONALD.

The Session ended, however, without any labour legislation of importance being placed upon the Statute Book. Only two Acts of minor interest were passed-(1) repealing Section 57 of the Factory and Workshop Acts, 1901, in relation to the employment of women and children (7 Edw. 7, c. 10); and (2) amending the Act of 1901 with respect to laundries, and extending that Act to certain institutions, and providing for the inspection of certain premises (7 Edw. 7, c. 38).

The Irish Councils Bill, which last year's Congress adversely criticised, on a special report of your Committee, was subsequently withdrawn.

Fifteenth Annual Irish Trades Congress,

Railway Nationalisation.—The Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways, appointed in 1906, drags leisurely along, and no indication has yet been given when their report may be expected. Your Committee again pressed upon the Commission the views of the Congress, as expressed by further resolution, and have received the following letter from the secretary :—

Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways,

Dublin, 3rd June, 1907.

Dear Sir—I am obliged for your letter of the 1st inst. The resolutions in favour of the nationalisation of railways, mines, and canals of Ireland, &c., which you were good enough to transmit on behalf of the Irish Trades Union Congress, will be included in the appendix to the minutes of evidence.—Yours faithfully,

GEORGE E. SHANAHAN, Secretary.

E. L. Richardson, Esq., &c.

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A resolution was submitted to the House on the 11th February, 1908, calling for the nationalisation of all the railways of the United Kingdom, but was "talked out."

War Department Contracts, &c.—Your Committee again pressed upon the Army Council the demand of the Congress for the extension of the Ordnance Workshop system to Ireland, the repeated complaints of the Coachmaker's Society of the importation of waggons, &c., for military service, and the alleged violation of the Fair Wages Resolution by barrack contractors in Limerick, with the following result :—

[Contracts/405. Q.M.G. (C).]

War Office, London, S.W., 29th July, 1907.

29th July, 1901.

Sir—With reference to your letter of the 7th ult., forwarding copies of resolutions adopted at the 14th annual Irish Trades Union Congress, recently held in Dublin, I am commanded by the Army Council to refer you to the War Office letter of the 8th August, 1906, as regards the resolutions relating to Ordnance workshops and carriage making for Irish Government departments. I am to add that it is presumed the other two resolutions refer to work that was executed at Limerick in 1906, and about which similar complaints were inquired into at the time, but they were not considered to be substantiated.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

EMD. WARD.

The Secretary, Irish Trades Union Congress.

The letter of the 8th August, 1906, above referred to, stated that the Army Council did not propose to further extend the Ordnance Workshop system in Ireland, and, in regard to the coachmakers' complaint, that they were willing to receive the names and addresses of any Irish firms who may desire to be invited to tender for the supply of vehicles.

On October 29th, 1907, your Committee received from the Limerick Guild of Painters a detailed statement of their complaints against the contractors for painting Limerick Barracks, a copy of which was duly forwarded with letter of protest from your Com-

Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908.

mittee to the Army Council, but beyond a formal acknowledgment, no further reply reached your secretary. In these circumstances it was recommended that application should be made by the Limerick painters to submit their case in evidence before the Committee inquiring into the working of the Fair Wages Resolution on Government contracts.

Sub-letting Plaster Work.—The Operative Plasterers having made further complaints of the continued practice of sub-letting plastering work in ecclesiastical and other building works in Ireland, copies of their resolutions of protest were again submitted to the Standing Committee of the Irish Hierarchy and the Institute of Architects. The Most Rev. Dr. Sheehan, one of the hon. secs. of the Standing Committee, writes in reply :—

Bishop's House, John's Hill,

Waterford, 10th June, 1907.

My Dear Sir—I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th inst. conveying a copy of a resolution adopted at the Irish Trades Union Congress, lately held in Dublin, on the subject of plastering contracts. I will bring the matter under the notice of the Episcopal Standing Committee at the first opportunity, though I do not well see what the Bishops can do beyond what they have already done.—Faithfully yours,

R. A. SHEEHAN, Bishop of Waterford.

Mr. E. L. Richardson.

and the hon. sec. of the Institute of Architects (Mr. J. W. Webb) replied under date 14th June, 1907 :—

Your letter of June 8th has been laid before my Council. I have been instructed to send you a copy of the clause relating to sub-letting that has been adopted by this Institute, and to express a hope that it is in accordance with your views. " Clause 19—No portion of the works shall be sub-let without the consent of the architect, given in writing, and the party or parties appointed to do the same are to be subject to his approval, and the contractor is to be responsible for his or their proper execution of the works so sub-let, in strict conformity with the provisions of this contract."

Workingmen Magistrates.—Your Committee have much pleasure in stating that since their last report the authorities have at length acknowledged the repeated claim of the Congress that Irish trade unionists should be placed upon a proportionate equality with the trade unionists of England in the matter of appointments to the magisterial bench. The following are reported as having received their commissions through the instrumentality of your Committee, on the recommendation of the trades councils of their respective districts :—Alderman Jeremiah Kelleher (Amalgamated Tailors), Cork ; Councillor Michael Egan, (United Kingdom Society of Coachmakers), Cork ; Mr. Robert Wilson (Irish Amalgamated Bakers), Londonderry ; Mr. T. McCallion (Amalgamated Engineers), Londonderry; Councillor Martin Leahy (Typographical Association), Limerick ; Mr. Eugene Daly (Irish Drapers' Assistants), Limerick ; and Councillor Michael Phelan (Coopers), Kilkenny.

Appointments have also been made from the ranks of Labour in Dublin and Belfast. The late Belfast Dockers' Lock-out.—At their meeting on August 17th your Committee considered the question of the Belfast Dockers' dispute and unanimously adopted the following resolution :—

"That this Committee re-affirms the principle of compulsory arbitration adopted by the Irish Trades Union Congress, and believes that it is now necessary that a Conciliation Board Bill should be passed by Parliament making it compulsory on both employers and employed, before a strike or lock-out takes place, to submit the points in dispute to such a Board with a view to a settlement, and thus avoid such unfortunate conflicts as have recently taken place in Ireland."

The action of the Belfast local authorities in calling out the military had at this date been several times referred to in Parliament by questions and statements, without any satisfactory results. But on the 5th March this year the following resolution was moved by Mr. Wardle (Stockport) on going into committee of supply, and accepted by the Government :—

"That in the opinion of this House the powers now vested in chief magistrates to call upon the War Office to supply troops during times of trade disputes are open to grave abuse, are a menace to the liberty of the subject, and ought to be inquired into and reported upon by a Committee of this House."

As a result the Government have since appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the question.

Arising out of the Belfast lock-out, the Harbour Commissioners proceeded against Mr. Larkin for trespassing, without permission, on their property (viz—the dock quays), and on the case coming before the High Court, the King's Bench Division (Lord O'Brien, L.C.J., Madden, and Wright, JJ.) on February 10th, 1908, held that the Trade Disputes Act, 1906, in legalising peaceful picketing does not confer a right to enter upon private property against the will of the owner; and that the words "at or near" do not include "in or on" a house or place where a person resides, or works, or carries on business.

Deputation to the Chief Secretary.—At the earliest opportunity your Committee sought an interview with the Right Honourable Augustine Birrell (who succeeded Mr. Bryce as Chief Secretary for Ireland). Saturday afternoon, the 9th November, 1907, was the date fixed by Mr. Birrell to receive your Committee at Dublin Castle. Accordingly, a special meeting was held early on that day, at which details of the subjects to be submitted to the Chief Secretary on behalf of the workers of Ireland were discussed and arranged with the following results. Your Committee direct special attention to the terms of Mr. Birrell's reply :—

Mr. E. L. Richardson, who introduced the deputation, said the Irish Trades Congress was founded in IS94 on precisely the same lines as the English Trades Congress, and this Committee now represented close on 100,000 organised workers in Ireland. On the other side of the Channel his Majesty's Ministers and the chiefs of Government Departments were easily accessible to deputations from the English Congress, but in Ireland they were practically obliged to rely upon the good offices of the gentleman who for the time being occupied the high position of Chief Secretary in order to get at the ear of the Government. They felt confident that, in accordance with the practice of his predecessors both of the Liberal and Conservative Administrations, the various matters which they purposed briefly to allude to would receive consideration and attention at his hands. Some of the subjects applied generally to the workers of the United Kingdom, and in referring to them they simply desired to declare that the Irish workers' demand for reform was just as strong as that of their colleagues on the other side. But there were a few questions upon their list specially concerning Irish trade and industry which would be emphasied, and for which they invoked his most sympathetic attention and aid.

Mr. John Murphy, P.L.G. (Belfast), said they felt very strongly that prompt action should be taken to prevent the aged poor from being obliged to rely on the degrading Poor Law system for support. They thought that something in the nature of old-age pensions, which would prevent the aged poor from ever having to enter a workhouse, was one of the most desirable things of the present day, and they felt they were justified in placing before him their emphatic endorsement of the idea of the old-age pensions scheme, with the hope that the present Administration would not go out of office before they had placed on the Statute Book some measure of that description. With reference to Irish trade and industry, they felt confident that the Government would secure the confidence and approval of the whole Irish electorate if they attempted to provide some measure of reform in connection with the management of the Irish railways. The evidence given before the Railway Commission now sitting showed how seriously the trade and industry of the country was handicapped from the existing state of affairs, and the crying necessity there was for reform.

Councillor M'Carron (Derry) dealt with the necessity for the enforcement of the Fair Wages Resolution, and for improved conditions in the tailoring trade. He pointed out the dangers to the health of the workers and the general public from the system of having clothes made in the homes of the workers, and said that those who carry on the tailoring industry, and other industries of the kind, should be compelled to provide suitable workshops, and not have the work done under the worst conditions in sweating dens. The sweating system must be entirely done away with, and the only means by which it could be done away with was providing workshop accommodation for those employed by merchants engaged in the business. They thought that the Local Government Board ought to instruct their auditors to be more liberal in their interpretation, so far as the Fair Wages Resolution was concerned.

In introducing the next speaker, Mr. Richardson said they had gone ahead of the English Congress in having elected a lady member.

Mr. Birrell said he was very glad to know that, and that he thought ladies had not yet been given the place to which they were entitled in this country.

Miss Galway (Belfast) then pointed out, at some length, the necessity for the appointment of more female factory inspectors, and the insanitary conditions under which females were obliged to work in the factories, mills, warehouses and shops of Ireland. In some of these places the sanitary accommodation was very defective, and the ventilation was also very bad. She thought that the employers should be compelled to provide proper dining accommodation for the workers. More factory inspectors should be appointed, including two or three Irish, with a head office in Ireland, to which complaints could be made, as the present arrangement caused a good deal of delay. She thought the Truck Act should be amended, and that the system of fining girls for alleged spoiled work, so oppressively prevalent in Belfast, should be made illegal. She also thought it would be much better for the workers, both physically and morally, if the living-in system were abolished.

Mr. Stephen Dinneen (Limerick) advocated the establishment of cottage hospitals throughout the country for the accommodation of sick workers, who were at present obliged to herd with every class in the workhouse hospitals, sometimes with criminals, and also improved inspection of bakehouses, especially in the outlying districts. He knew a man who had been working at his trade as a baker for 21 years, and who never saw the face of an inspector yet. It would be well if the inspectors looked better after the bakehouses, and the condition in which they were kept. In some places even the Lord's Day was not recognised, and in some places men had to work for 17 and 18 hours a day, under the most unhealthy and exhausting conditions.

Mr. George Leahy (Dublin) dealt with the enforcement and amendment of the Merchandise Marks Act, the argent necessity for better housing accommodation for the workers, and the redress of the grievances of those employed in the Postal Service. The present Government had done good work for the rural population by the passing of the Labourers Act, but the workers and artisans of the country had no decent dwellings, particularly in the capital of Ireland, where the rents were exorbitant. They had heard a great deal recently with regard to the best means of arresting the progress of tubercalosis; but the only practical solution of the problem was to erect decent dwellings for the workers. It was lamentable to see between 25 and 35 thousand families in Dablin each occupying one room. The Corporation of Dublin had decided to promote a Bill in Parliament for the erection of dwellings for the working classes, and they hoped the Government would give them every assistance in carrying out the project, and that the other municipalities would also be assisted in the effort to provide decent dwellings for the workers: As to the amendment of the Merchandise Marks Act, it was a very serious thing for the Irish workers to see dumped down on the quays of Dublin goods whose origin was unknown, and with regard to which it would be impossible to know where they came from. The bottle-making industry of this country had been greatly deteriorated owing to the importation of bottles, while it was unknown whence they came. With regard to the Postal Service, he referred to the grievance of giving lucrative appointments to English and Scotch, to the exclusion of Irishmen equally qualified.

Mr. George Greig (Belfast) emphasised the necessity for those in charge of steam-boilers being obliged to have certificates of competency, and also dealt with the question of the unemployed, expressing the hope that sufficient funds would be placed at the disposal of some central authority for the purpose of providing work for those who were genuinely out of employment.

Mr. Michael Egan, J.P. (Cork) urged the necessity for the compulsory insurance of workers against accidents, and improvement in the inspection of hackney cars. He insisted that it was not ex-policemen, but practical coachmakers, that should be appointed as inspectors of the vehicles mentioned, especially in such centres as Dublin, Cork, and Belfast.

Mr. Richardson said he desired to say a word or two on the question of Government contracts, and whathe might call the boycott of Ireland. In addition to Irish Departments, there were, he believed, some fourteen Government Departments or authorities in England now exercising powers in or in relation to Ireland; yet, with an occasional exception, most of the stores, supplies and materials for those branches of the Government in Ireland were brought over from English contractors. Even among the Irish Departments, the Board of Works, the chief employer and contractor for the Government here, could not procure a watering cart, or erect an ordinary greenhouse in the Phenix Park without shipping them from cross-Channel firms. Irish contractors did not get a chance, and as a consequence, Irish workmen had to seek employment elsewhere. With regard to supplies for the troops stationed in Ireland, the Government had partly met their complaints under this heading by establishing, or rather re-establishing, an inspection depot in Dublin for the reception of samples and tenders for centres in England. They maked the Chief Secretary's assistance upon the whole question of Government contracts and supplies, in the direction of securing for Irish firms and Irish workmen fair consideration and just treatment.

Mr. Birrell, in reply, said he need hardly tell them that he was very pleased to meet the deputation, and to hear the very clear, business-like statements they had made, extending over a great variety of subjects. He had taken a note of these subjects and he found that they numbered 16, most of them of vast national import-

ance, involving the expenditure of great sums of money, and requiring the most careful consideration in order to successfully work them out. He need scarcely say-it had been noted already in the opening remarks of their secretary-that most of these questions dealt with public departments with which he had no practical concern. He could honestly say that he did not wish to add to his duties, which were already as much as any one man could discharge, but he quite admitted that they could not get at the departments that dealt with these matters, and therefore they very properly came before him to make known their wishes and complaints, and he would do what was only his duty, namely, to convey these wishes and complaints to the proper quarters, and if he thought right, give them the support of his own personal recommendation. Therefore it was quite right they should come there, although most of the matters they referred to were outside the department of which he for the moment was head. He would now briefly go through the points they had brought before him. First of all, with regard to OLD-AGE PESSIONS, that, of course, was an enormous question, but happily it had been adopted as a question that had got at once to be dealt with by the present Government. He did not think it was a party question at all, because the Conservative Party, or, at all events, the leading members of that Party, had expressed as eager a desire to establish some system of old-age pension as the members of the Liberal Party had. In a sense it was a branch of the Poor Law question, and any good system of old-age pensions for the aged poor would, of course, effect very great savings in the present costly and unsatisfactory administration of the Poor Law. If they could abolish the workhouse with all their appointments, staff of officials, &c., they would save a great deal of money, some of which, of course, would be carried to the credit of the pensions, but, on the other hand, it must be remembered that although they might hope to get rid of the workhouse altogether, they should always have to maintain infirm people, the sick poor, who could not properly be attended to in their own homes, and who required medical attention and nursing. Therefore, although they might hope in the course of time to get rid of the workhouse, properly so-called, the infirmaries, which need not in any way be assailed on account of their connection with the workhouse, must always continue. The pension system will not finance itself. Therefore they have to deal with a question which involved, despite all the saving that might be made in the Poor Law administration, a very large annual sum. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken upon himself the obligation of starting some provision for the scheme, and he had already ear-marked a sum of money which, although not enormously large in itself, was still a very considerable amount, and in his next Budget he hoped to be able to supplement it by a provision on a larger scale. But although it would take years before they could get a sufficient financial provision to establish anything like a suitable old-age pension, he thought they might all congratulate themselves on the fact that, at all events, they had set the ball rolling in a way that would, he hoped, eventually solve this very difficult question. They must, therefore, wait until they heard what the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be. He (Mr. Birrell) could only ask them all to remember that the problem was a very difficult one on account of the enormous sums of money that would be required to work it. It was, he knew, the fashion here in Ireland to regard the Government as some poor people regarded a rich relative, some old aunt in the country who was going to die and leave them a large sum of money, and it was generally found in such cases that when the old aunt died her fortune had been greatly exaggerated (laughter). Now he could assure them that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a very heavy task before him. Everything was increasing. The estimates were increasing. In the army he might say that they had effected some small saving. In the navy they might possibly reduce some of their present expenditure, although that was not so very desirable a thing to do. But it was not only in the army and in the navy, but in the ordinary Civil Service that the expenditure for years past showed an upward tendency. For a time after the Government came into office they were cheered by the deaths of a number of millionaires, and in consequence large sums came into the Treasury in the shape of death duties. However, they could not rely upon that source as a constant supply for all the enormous demands that were made upon the public service. The Chancellor of the Exchequer showed the most earnest care as to this matter of old-age pensions, and they might rely upon it

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he would continue to give it the most friendly consideration. Their next question was about THE RAILWAYS. That question might be divided practically under two heads. There was first the proposed consolidation of the railways, so that they might work not against but with one another, and then there was a scheme called the nationalisation of railways, which was as much as to say State purchase-that was that the State should buy these railways. Nationalisation was sometimes regarded as a sort of hidden notion that you could take people's stocks and shares without paying for them, but he need hardly say that he should never make any suggestion like that. Everything that you took from the Irish shareholder you would have to pay for. Whether a scheme of State purchase would be desirable it would be absurd for him to say, or to make any suggestions on the point until the Commission presided over by Sir Charles Scotter had furnished its report. All Ireland had read with great interest the reports that had appeared from time to time in the newspapers of that Commission, and he thought that everybody quite agreed that the trade and industries of Ireland were extraordinarily hampered by the rates and other arrangements of the railways. Of course, on the other hand, the shareholder who had put his money into these concerns always pointed to the very small dividend as a proof that he, at all events, was not the person who was going off with any plunder. He got very small remuneration for his shares, and a reduction of rates, therefore, had to be considered scientifically, and over Ireland, as a whole, to see whether they might not be so reduced as to encourage and benefit trade, and yet, at the same time, enable the railways to be carried on at a fair mercantile profit. Sir Charles Scotter was one of the most accomplished railway authorities in Great Britain, and he (Mr. Birrell) was looking forward with expectation to the character of his report, and he was sure the department responsible would pay the closest attention to that report, and if it turned out that Ireland was a fit subject to make experiments with in the way of State purchase, he was sure the idea would be entertained in a friendly spirit, although he was very far from suggesting that any such conclusion would be arrived at. However, the question would not at all be lost sight of. The next question was THE FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION, which had been agreed to by the House of Commons. He was sure that was a resolution that was intended to be carried out, not only in accordance with the letter, but according to the spirit of it. He was aware that difficulties had arisen about public bodies accepting any but the lowest tender, but he had looked into the matter himself, and he had called the attention of the Local Government Board-whom he had always found very willing to consider everything that was pointed out to them-to the observations of the Lord Chief Justice of England as showing that there was no sense of obligation on a public body to accept a tender simply because it was the lowest, and that they were entitled to consider the whole case from their own point of view. At the same time the interests of the ratepayers must not be disregarded, and it was only right that guardians, and other persons who had to see that the rates were not improperly expended, should make very careful examination into the character of any tender before they accepted it, and, therefore, the only thing they could do was to make it perfectly plain to the Local Government Board that local authorities were not bound to accept the lowest tender, but they were bound, of course, to defend the ratepayers against paying improper prices for the goods they were compelled to purchase, and that before making a surcharge the Local Government Board must act in accordance with the spirit of the resolution and with regard to all the facts of the case. He also thought there was a great deal to be said in favour of the point made by one of the members of the deputation-and it would be wise to bear it in mind-that it was a little bit disregarding the spirit of that resolution if tenders were accepted in Dublin which came from places where the rate of wages was much lower than it was in Dublin itself. He certainly did not think such a course of action, if pursued, would be in accordance with the spirit of that resolution. Then the next point was as to the PROVISION OF WORKSHOPS and the regulation of out-door work, in order to get rid of the terrible grievance of sweating dens. That, of course, was one of the most important questions of the day-how in the great towns to prevent poor people, particularly in the tailoring trade, from working their lives out all the hours of the day and night in insanitary dwellings for miserable wages-the slaves practically of their employers. Of course, anybody would feel a horror of that; and if they

could only get into the public mind a sense of personal obligation to look to it, and ask themselves, when they bought extraordinary cheap clothing, where it came from, and who was employed in making it-if they could only get the public conscience to feel that each individual had a responsibility in the matter, and that they could not put it all on the Government, he was sure they would have gone some way towards removing this serious grievance. He would call the attention of the proper authorities to the suggestion that had been made about providing outdoor workshops for work of this description; but they were all practical men and women, and they knew the difficulties that would undoubtedly exist in the way of prohibiting altogether work in private houses. Certainly, however, no exertion could be too great to absolutely destroy these sweating dens. Some reference had also been made to the next question of the insufficient number of FEMALE INSPECTORS UNDER THE FACTORY ACT, and there he was entirely of the same opinion as the deputation. He thought that for factories and also for industrial schools-particularly girls' industrial schools-the employment of proper female inspectors was essential, if the inspection was to be of that searching, close, and domestic character-which it must be to be of any use-and he should certainly call the attention of the Home Secretary to the demand in Ireland for a great number of female inspectors. In fact, there was only one where there ought to be several. The duties of these inspectors were, of course, well known, and they ought to be carried out by competent persons; otherwise they were of no use whatever. Passing Acts of Parliament and setting up expensive and elaborate machinery was quite useless unless they were set to work. Miss Galway's other point was about the TRUCK ACT, and the question of how women were robbed of their wages by an unfair system of fines, fines. That, of course, was no new question, either to the Home Secretary or to him, and he would see that Mr. Gladstone's attention was drawn to the fact that in Ireland it was a serious question. He would like also if, at the same time, Miss Galway would furnish him with the facts and instances to which she referred, so that the Home Secretary's attention might be directed to them. Next they had the question of COTTAGE HOSPITALS AND SANITORA referred to; but as he had already dealt with that in answering another deputation, he would not say any more about it at present. The EIGHT HOURS BILL FOR BAKERS was certainly one that deserved con-sideration. In any town or district which he had the honour of representing in Parliament, the bakers' question had been brought before him again and again, and he was perfectly satisfied that that was a trade which almost more than any other required attention as to its hours and a very careful inspection. He certainly would call attention to the facts which had been laid under his notice by the gentleman who had referred to the subject. With regard to THE HOUSING QUESTION, he was very glad to hear that the Dublin Corporation were promoting a measure for building proper dwellings for the artisans in Dublin. No doubt the state of things in Dublin was very bad, indeed, and there again the question of money undoubtedly came in, but he believed that every member of Parliament would give these things his support. He saw no reason why, if they were not too extravagant, and did not make too costly plans, the working classes in great cities should not be properly housed, at all events in a fashion which suited their condition. It had been done again and again in England, and he saw no reason why it should not be done in Dublin. The people of Dublin could not be said to be exacting in their demands. There were 25,000 families now living in one room and these would not demand palaces. They would be only too happy to be contented with even the worst accommodation that decency and justice required. He did not see why this could not be done in Dublin economically and with such attraction as to impose very little burden upon the exchequer. He felt quite sure that any measure that might be introduced would receive most friendly support and consideration in the House of Commons, and he hoped there would be no reason to suppose that the Treasury would raise any difficulty. With regard to the MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, he was always in favour of goods being marked in the clearest possible way. He was not sure it had a very detrimental effect upon purchase, for he never knew a purchaser who, if his mind was set upon a particular article, would refuse it because it was made in Germany, but at the same time it was most desirable, in the interests of trade, that the source of origin of all goods should be marked in such a way that people would know where they came from. He would call Mr. Buxton's attention to what had been

said with regard to the Postal Service. It was a vexed question that of THE POSTAL SERVICE. Some people, not enamoured of the State purchase of anything, pointed to the dissatisfaction prevailing with the Postal Service, and they complained that when everything belonged to the State, and we were all paid servants of the State, they would all go on strike, and no one would do any work anywhere. It was a fact that the Postal servants were dissatisfied in many ways, but at any rate Mr. Buxton had done his best to meet their demands. With regard to the complaint that English and Scotch officials got jobs over here, he remonstrated once or twice with Mr. Buxton, but he gave him an answer and a reason that he thought it was difficult to get over. But he thought the Postmaster-General was fully alive to the claims of the Irish people in the service. They ought not to be overlooked when remunerative posts became vacant. With regard to the question of THE UNEMPLOYED, there again they had another of these vast questions. If they could secure for everybody standing employment at a fair rate of wages the whole question would be settled, and they should all feel satisfied, and that there was nothing else to be done. That was the problem to find the standing employment for everybody willing to work at a fair rate of wages. But owing to the present state of things, the occasional dislocation of trade, the way trades floated and moved about, the way capital was shifted, he was afraid almost necessitated that there should be occasionally great difficulty in particular places, for a particular time, in getting work even for skilled workers, and more so for unskilled. People who earned their living either by their head or their hands suffered from this change. The artist suffers; his pictures go out of fashion, no one will buy them. The novelist, who writes fiction, suffers; the public taste changes; no one will buy his stuff. The lawyer suffers most terribly in the same way, simply because people won't indulge in the luxury of litigation. Everybody suffers from these matters as well as the workman, and it is only by being members of societies and clubs and insurances, that people get over hard times. At the same time the statistics of unemployment among the skilled, and certainly, among the unskilled, are very lamentable, and if provision can be made for providing work artifically for those people, everybody would jump at so satisfactory a conclusion. With regard to the matter of BOILERS, he would direct the attention of the Home Office to that; he did not himself know about it before, and the same remark applied to the question of the HACKNEY CAR INSPECTION. Mr. Gladstone was fully alive to the importance of the COMPULSORY INSURANCE question which had been raised, but they must remember that the Act they passed last year was one of the most unpopular Acts, he thought, the Liberal Party had ever passed. It had got them into a great deal of trouble. People complained very much of having to insure their servants. Enormous numbers of legal questions arise which would, perhaps, keep his friends at the Bar busy in employment for years. In that matter they would have to go very slowly, though he agreed no system was complete that did not ensure compulsory insurance. In Germany they had this system, but it was done by deduction from the wages of the Everybody was compulsorily insured, but the employer was entitled to men. deduct the cost of the insurance from the wages of the men. He did not think any such measure as that would be popular in Great Britain, and, therefore, he did not think any Government would be wise to proceed further with that at present. With regard to the work of GOVERSMENT CONTRACTS, he quite agreed it was ridiculous to bring over supplies to Ireland when they could be got much more easily and effectively, he thought, in Ireland. He understood what was said about the Board of Works and the green houses, and he quite agreed that people ought to do what they could to utilise and support the labour which was at their doors. With regard to the troops and the ORDNANCE WORKSHOPS, he sometimes heard people talk as if no decent man in Ireland would be a soldier. Well, he was glad to know that Irish-men were quite willing to supply soldiers with what was necessary to keep them going as military factors. He quite agreed that the Ordnance workshops system should be started in Ireland, and that as far as possible the necessary work should be carried on in Ireland. He would also call attention to the fact that complaint was made that Ireland did not get her full share of GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS, and to the fact that she could supply a great deal of the materials required, and he would represent that tenders should be invited from Ireland, just the same as from other parts of the United Kingdom. That practically exhausted the whole of the subjects brought before him. He would do his best to bring them all before the various Departments concerned.

Mr. Murphy thanked Mr. Birrell for his statement, and the deputation withdrew.

The "Lowest Tender" in Public Contracts .- Your Committee direct the attention of the officials of trades interested in the question of public contracts and the observance of the Fair Wages Resolution to the following case decided in the English Court of Appeal on the 20th December, 1907, and reported in the "Solicitor's Journal and Weekly Reporter" of January 11th, 1906: The King v. Carson Roberts—This was an appeal by Mr. A. Carson Roberts, a district auditor of the L.G.B., against a decision of a Divisional Court, consisting of Lord Alverstone, C.J., and Justices Darling and Phillimore, quashing certain surcharges made by the auditor on members of the Highways Committee of the Westminster City Council who were charged by the auditor with negligence in rejecting lower tenders and accepting higher in the case of certain supplies. The members surcharged denied that there had been any negligence, and said they had accepted the tenders which were most advantageous to the Council. The amount of the surcharges was the sum which the auditor estimated as the loss to the ratepayers by reason of the non-acceptance of the lowest tender. He had asked for an explanation but no details were given. In pronouncing the judgment of the Court of Appeal, the Master of the Rolls (with whom Lords Justices Moulton and Farwell concurred) said :--

"The case against the members of the Highways Committee is this. It was their duty to consider and report on tenders. Tenders were invited with an express term that the lowest tender need not be accepted. The Committee in some few instances reported in favour of a tender considerably higher than the lowest. Their report was submitted to the Council, by whom their recommendations were adopted. Loss has been occasioned, as shown by the result in subsequent years. The auditor asked the Committee why they had recommended the acceptance of these tenders. The Committee declined to give their reasons, and the auditor thereupon surcharged them with the amount by which he held the Corporation had been the loser by reason of the non-acceptance of the lowest tenders. In my opinion there is no justification for this charge. The members of the Committee were admittedly honest in their recommendation, and to find them guilty of negligence because they declined to explain their reasons is equivalent to saying that in this peculiar jurisdiction guilt is to be presumed until innocence is proved. In my opinion there is no evidence to justify the finding of negligence . . . and the appeal must be dismissed."

The value of this important decision of the Court of Appeal is obvious when applied to tenders which may be higher than the lowest tender by reason of the work being executed in accordance with the Fair Wages Resolution and by Trade Union Labour. See also the Chief Secretary's reference to this case above.

Compulsory Insurance—Truck Act—Factory Inspection.— Further representations having been made to the Home Secretary on the above questions, the following letter, in reply, has been received :—

[148,686/10]

Home Office, Whitehall, London, 7th January, 1908.

Sir-I have laid before the Secretary of State your letter of the 2nd ultimo, in which you refer to certain resolutions adopted at the last Irish Trades Union Congress, and inquiring whether your Committee can hope that an effort will be made to deal with the questions mentioned in these resolutions in the ensuing Session of Parliament; and he desires me to say in reply :--

With reference to the question of compulsory insurance under the Workmen's Compensation Act, that, in his opinion, this is not a matter which can be dealt with by legislation until further experience has been gained of the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906. That Act, as your Committee will be aware, only came into operation on the 1st July last.

As regards the amendment of the Truck Act, the Secretary of State is awaiting the report of the Departmental Committee which is now inquiring into this subject.

The other matters referred to in the resolutions, namely, inspection and ventilation of factories in Ireland, are both questions which can be, and are being, dealt with under the existing law, and no legislation appears to be necessary. The question of factory inspection in Ireland is receiving careful attention, and in respect to ventilation it is anticipated that a considerable improvement will result from the operation of the regulations for spinning and weaving flax or tow, which will be in full force very shortly.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

M. CHALMERS.

E. L. Richardson, Esq., &c.

Factory Inspection.—On behalf of the Labour Party, Mr. J. A. Seddon, M.P., secured a good place on Tuesday, April 7th, to move a resolution on the question of Factory inspection; but the late Prime Minister's resignation taking place on the 6th, the House adjourned on that day until after Easter. It may be interesting to state that there are now on the Home Office register 260,000 registered factories and workshops, 84,238 of which were not visited during 1907. During the last ten years fatal accidents in factories and workshops increased 62 per cent., and non-fatal accidents 120 per cent, although the number of inspectors and assistants has been increased 50 per cent. !

The Unemployed.—Your Committee, having urged that the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, had failed to alleviate distress from want of employment, and calling for an amending measure and the allocation of adequate funds from the Imperial Exchequer for the working of the Act, the following letter has been received :—

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,

11th December, 1907.

Sir-I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter of the 2nd inst., with reference to the Unemployed Workmen's Act, 1905, and to state that the Board have noted the representations of the Irish Trades Union Congress contained in your letter of the 7th June last.-I am, sir, your obedient servant,

J. S. DAVEY, Assistant Secretary.

E. L. Richardson, Esq., Secretary I.T.U.C.

On the 30th January, 1908, the Labour Party moved the following amendment to the Address :---

"And further we desire humbly to express our regret that in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend any legislation dealing with the subject."

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This was defeated by 195 votes to 146. The following Irish members voted in the minority :- Abraham, Barrie (C), Barry, Boland, Burke, Condon, Corbett (C), Cullinan, Delany, Devlin, Dillon, Donelan, Duffy, Farrell, Fetherstonhaugh (C), Ffrench, Field, Gwynn, Halpin, Harrington, Hayden, Hazleton, Healy, Hogan, Jordan, Joyce, Kettle, Law, MacNeill, MacVeagh, J.; MacVeigh, Chas.; M'Hugh, M'Kean, Mooney, Muldoon, Murnaghan, Murphy, N. J.; Nannetti, Nolan, O'Brien, K.; O'Brien, P.; O'Brien, W.; O'Connor, Jas.; O'Donnell, J.; O'Donnell, T.; O'Kelly, C.; O'Malley, O'Shaughnessy, O'Shee, Phillips, Power, Reddy, Red-mond, J.; Roche, A.; Roche, J.; Sheehan, Sheehy, Smyth, White. -59, including three Unionists.

The Labour Party then brought in their Bill, the second reading of which was fixed for Friday, March 13th, and notwithstanding a special appeal by your Committee addressed to the Irish Parliamentary Party asking their support, only the following seventeen Irish members voted for the Bill, which was defeated by 267 votes to 118 :- Clancy, Crean, Delany, Esmonde, Ffrench, Gwynn, Hayden, Kennedy, MacVeagh, J.; Meagher, Murphy, J.; Nannetti, Nolan O'Brien, K.; O'Brien, P.; Redmond, J.; Redmond, W.-17.

The following Irish Unionists voted against the Bill :- Clark, Corbett, Gordon, Hamilton, Long, Lonsdale, M'Calmont, O'Neill, Sloan, Wolff.-10.

Fair Wages Resolution .- The Government having appointed a committee "to consider the working of the Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons of the 13th February, 1891, and to report whether any administrative changes, especially with a view to the prevention of evasion, the enforcement of the rate current in the district, and greater uniformity of interpretation and working, are desirable in order to be more effectually attained," the desires of the Congress were duly forwarded, with the following result :--

Board of Trade, London, S.W., 28th August, 1907. Dear Sir-I am directed by Mr. Willis to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst., and to say that the resolution of your Congress shall be brought before the Committee on the working of the Fair Wages Resolution in due course .- Yours faithfully,

SYDNEY W. CLARK.

E. L. Richardson, Esq., Secretary I.T.U.C.

Overtime.-Your Committee had under consideration a resolution and circular adopted by the English Trades Union Congress on the question of Systematic Overtime, which they endorsed and decided to recommend to Congress. The following are the material parts of the resolution and circular :--

"That unemployment is increased by periodic and systematic overtime, and that as a means of decreasing unemployment it is recommended that manufacturers and workmen co-operate to abolish overtime wherever possible, so as to more evenly distribute work."

"In suggesting this policy to organise labour, we recognise that the matter must be largely left to the initiative and enthusiasm of the trades themselves. We

therefore respectfully urge that trades unionists be asked to abolish systematic overtime, and that where this is not wholly possible, it be restricted to the narrowest limit, and be penalised to the fullest extent."

Hackney Carriage Inspection.—The Dublin Corporation having resolved to promote a Bill in the present session of Parliament under which (*inter alia*) they purpose taking powers to collect and apply to civic improvements the hackney carriage licence duties, your Committee urged that powers should also be taken to enable them to appoint practical coachmakers as hackney carriage inspectors, vice members of the D.M.P. The Town Clerk writes :—

> Town Clerk's Office, City Hall, Dublin, 9th January, 1908.

Dear Mr. Richardson-Referring to your letter of the 23rd November last, I beg to state that at the adjourned meeting of the Council, held on the 9th ultimo, it was referred to the Law Agent for report. As soon as the matter has been finally dealt with, I shall communicate to you the result.--I am, yours faithfully,

HENRY CAMPBELL, Town Clerk.

E. L. Richardson, Esq.

The Law Agent subsequently reported that the question, not being incorporated in the Parliamentary notice, could not be included in the scope of the Bill. The Bill was however eventually rejected by a vote of the citizens.

The Children's Bill.—A Bill for the purpose of consolidating and amending the law relating to the protection of children, and young persons in reformatories and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders, and otherwise to amend the law with respect to the young, was introduced by the Government on February 10th, and at the time of writing this report is being considered by a Standing Committee. The measure has considerable importance for Ireland. Its chief provisions deal with the overlaying of infants, protection of out-at-nurse children, deaths from burns and scalds, abolition of imprisonment for children, juvenile smoking—prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to, and public smoking by, young persons under 16; right of entry for inspection purposes to homes for destitute children; making vagrant children subject to the Compulsory Education Act; and the separation of juveniles from adult criminals. Your Committee have given their cordial approval to the Bill.

Sweated Industries.—The second reading of the Sweated Industries Bill was agreed to without a division on the 21st February, and sent to the Select Committee on Home Work. The object of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of Wages Boards, with power to fix the minimum rate of wages to be paid to workers in particular trades. The Bill will apply in the first instance only to the trades specified in the schedule, viz., tailoring, dressmaking, and the making, altering, trimming, finishing, and repairing of shirts. Power is given to the Home Secretary to say to what other trades the Bill is to be extended, and, no doubt, at first the extension will be made only to what are known as the "Sweated

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Industries "—that is, industries in which the outworkers are largely employed, and in which the rate of remuneration is low. Wages Boards will have power to fix a minimum rate for any single kind of work, and will have the widest discretion as to fixing time-rates or piece-work rates, and as to varying the minimum according to the locality, the kind of work, and the persons employed. The Bill provides that Wages Boards shall be composed of representatives of employers and representatives of employed in equal numbers, with a chairman chosen by the members or nominated by the Home Secretary. It is proposed to entrust the enforcement of payment of the minimum rate to factory inspectors. There seems every prospect of this Bill becoming law.

Old Age Pensions.-Your Committee have pleasure in reporting that after nearly 30 years trade union agitation, in which the Irish Trades Congress since its foundation in 1894, continuously participated, the righteous claim of the worn-out veterans of industry for humane and self-respecting consideration in the evening of their lives, has at length been conceded. The Government, by the mouth of the Prime Minister in his Budget speech on the 7th May, declared that the time had come when by granting Old Age Pensions of 5s. per week at 70 years of age (provided their income did not exceed 10s. per week or £26 per year), the worn-out toilers should "once and for all be placed beyond the machinery and associations of the Poor Law." Your Committee, however, regard the age limit far too high, and think that the income limit might reasonably be increased. But they cordially accept the principle of the measure, and hope, by helping to put further pressure on the Government, to bring these two points more in consonance with the popular desire. It is proposed to make municipal bodies -city, county, and district councils, or committees appointed by them-the pension authorities, and to place at their service Government pension officers for the purpose of making such inquiries as may be necessary into the bona fides of the applications. Applicants will be supplied at the Post Office with a form of application, which, when properly filled up, will then be transmitted to the pension authority, who, with the aid of the pension officer, will investigate the claim, and if both agree that the applicant fulfils the requirements, the pension follows as a matter of right. In the event, however, of a disagreement between the pension authority and the officer, an appeal may be taken to the L.G.B. When the application is granted, the pensioner will be furnished with a book of monthly or weekly coupons, which will be payable at any post office in the United Kingdom. Your Committee being anxious to make clear whether or not the receipt of superannuation benefits up to 10s. weekly from trade societies would debar applicants from the scheme, put themselves in communication with the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns), and received from that gentleman a prompt reply, emphatically declaring that "every

man entitled to receive the maximum superannuation benefit of 10s. weekly from his trade society, will also be entitled to claim and receive the full weekly pension under the Government scheme." Your Committee regard this statement as highly satisfactory, and submit the following extract from "Hansard" (Parliamentary Debates, May 7th, 1908) :—

Mr. Arthur Henderson pointed out the hardship of excluding from the scheme members of trade organisations who by their thrift and industry were entitled to superannuation benefits, and instanced the case of the engineers and printers, and other trades.

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns)—No, no. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member; but he has assumed that 6,000 members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers whose superannuation ranges from 7s. to 10s. per week, would be disentitled to a 5s. pension under this scheme. He is entirely mistaken. The whole of the 6,000 men will be entitled to what this pension scheme confers, and it is over 10s. and not up to 10s. that is the mark.

Mr. Arthur Henderson thanked his right hon. friend for that interruption; but was he not aware that there were in the rules of the engineers arrangements whereby the men could rise to a maximum superannuation allowance of 10s. a week?

Mr. John Burns-Under this scheme every man entitled to that maximum of 10s. superannuation would be able to receive the 5s.

Mr. Arthur Henderson was delighted to hear that. It seemed to him to be going further than what he gathered from the speech of the Prime Minister, &c.

The Shops Bill .- Your Committee have been in frequent communication with Sir Charles Dilke, M.P., who had charge of the Bill promoted by the Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, consequent on the failure of the Shop Hours Act of 1904. The Bill sought to establish two principles in shop-life, viz., compulsory closing, and a limitation of the hours of labour. It came on for second reading on the 1st May, was accepted by the Government, and carried by a large majority. There being no possibility of getting the measure through this Session, its promoters agreed to its committal to a committee of the whole House (which is the Parliamentary method of shelving a Bill), the Home Secretary undertaking to bring in a Bill on the subject next Session dealing with the question on the principles contended for. The following Irish members voted in the division :- For-Abraham, Ffrench, Glendinning, Hogan, Joyce, MacVeagh, J.; MacVeigh, C.; M'Hugh, Muldoon, Nannetti, Nolan, O'Brien, P.; O'Brien, Wm.; O'Connor, John; O'Kelly, J.; O'Shaughnessy, Redmond, J.; Russell, Sheehan-19. Against-Barrie, Corbett, Craig, Chas.; Craig, Capt. ; Long, M'Caw, Wolff-7.

Lord Avebury's Shops (Sunday Closing) Bill has passed all its stages in the Lords.

Use of Buildings of Local Authorities for Trade Union Meetings.—At the instance of the P.C. of the English Trades Union Congress, Mr. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board, addressed a circular (dated March, 1908) to all local authorities in England, pointing out the difficulty experienced by trade

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unions, friendly societies, and similar bodies in finding accommodation for their meetings in existing buildings except in publichouses, and suggesting that local authorities in possession of town halls or offices provided for their own meetings, might place the accommodation thus provided (when not required for their own use) at the service of any of these bodies on terms which may enable them to have a temporary use of the premises without expense to the local authority. Your Committee knowing that a similar condition of affairs exists in many parts of Ireland, where trades are obliged to meet on licensed premises, addressed the Irish Local Government Board on the question urging them to adopt similar action with Irish local bodies. Their reply is as follows:—

[No. 18, 527/1908. Miscellaneous].

Local Government Board, Dublin, 10th April, 1908.

Sir—The Local Government Board for Ireland have had before them your letter of the 1st instant, requesting them on behalf of the Parliamentary Committee of the Irish Trades Union Congress to address the Local Authorities and suggest to them the advisability of granting the use of their buildings for meetings of Trades Unions and other Friendly Societies.

In reply the Board desire to state that it has been decided by the High Court of Justice that Irish Boards of Guardians have no power to allow any portion of the Workhouse premises to be used for purposes unconnected with the administration of the Poor Laws (Ireland) Acts. The Board are, therefore, precluded from taking the action suggested in your letter, and moreover would themselves be liable to be restrained by injunction if they allowed any Workhouse premises to be so used.

restrained by injunction if they allowed any Workhouse premises to be so used. The Board have to add that, as regards Court Houses, Town Halls, and other public buildings not vested in them, they have no authority to take any action in reference to the use of the buildings.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

H. COURTENAY, Assistant Secretary.

E. L. Richardson, Esq., J.P.

Housing .- Your Committee have carefully considered the Housing Bill brought in by Mr. Hogan, on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party; and as the Government Housing and Town Planning Bill is not applicable to Ireland, they have hopes that the former measure will pass this session. In many respects this is a unique private members' Bill, inasmuch as it purports to deal with funds under Treasury control. It is proposed to set apart a sum of £5,000,000 out of certain Irish accounts for the making of advances, by way of loan, for the purposes of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts, at interest not exceeding 21 per cent. per annum; and extends the period of repayment of loans by local authorities to 80 years, such loans not to be reckoned against borrowing powers. Local authorities, having adopted Part III. of the Act of 1890, may establish or acquire lodginghouses for the working classes outside their districts; they may let on lease to any com-pany or society any land acquired by them under Part III. of the Act of 1890, for the purpose of encouraging the construction or improvement of working class dwellings; they may abate or remit whole or part of rates on newly-erected working-class dwellings for a period not exceeding ten years ; and further powers are conferred

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in regard to closing and demplition orders. Your Committee, while conscious that this measure will not accomplish all that Irish workers desire, recommend Congress to approve the Bill; and, if necessary, to empower them to petition Parliament in its favour. At the time of writing this report the Bill is before the Standing Committee.

Miscellaneous.—Bills have been introduced, and are now in various stages, but with little hope of getting through this Session, dealing with—Character Notes, Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities), Death Certificates (Charges), Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge), Factory and Workshop Act Amendment, Handloom Weaving (Ireland), Homework Regulation, Hours of Labour, Hours of Labour (Bakehouses), Merchandise Marks, Payment of Jurors, Railways (Eight Hours), Restraint of Trades (Shops), Workmen's Compensation, &c.

Formal acknowledgments have been received by your Committee from all the Government departments, local bodies, and other associations and individuals, to whom copies of resolutions, or other communications concerning the work of the Congress, were forwarded.

All of which your Committee present as their Report.

(Signed.)

JOHN MURPHY, P.L.G., Chairman. MICHAEL EGAN, J.P., T.C., Vice-Chairman. MARY GALWAY. JAMES MOCARRON, T.C. STEPHEN DINNEEN. GEORGE GREIG. GEORGE LEAHY. E. W. STEWART, Treasurer. E. L. RICHARDSON, J.P., Secretary.

Belfast, June 6th, 1908.

FIRST DAY.-Monday, 8th June, 1908.

The Fifteenth Annual Irish Trades Union Congress was opened on Monday, 8th June, 1908, in the Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast.

The Congress was formally opened by Councillor Michael Egan, J.P. (Cork), Vice-Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee, who extended a hearty greeting to the delegates. He said since the initiation of that Congress a great deal of good work had been done for the Irish workers, North, South, East, and West; but something still remained to be done for their amelioration. He was sure that, following in the wake of past congresses, the deliberations of the delegates would be conducted in a manner creditable to themselves and which would result in great benefit to their cause.

Mr. W. J. Murray, President of the Belfast Trades Council, welcomed the delegates, and trusted that they would have an instructive and pleasant time. He hoped the outcome of their deliberations would be the strengthening and extending of that spirit of toleration, unity and brotherhood which should exist among all workers. He regretted that in Belfast at present trade was in a depressed state. Throughout the North of Ireland thousands of men were walking the streets, while thousands of women were on reduced time through a practical breakdown in their industrial system. That tended to keep the workers so low that they could not rise to the present occasion as they would like. But they had triumphed over adverse circumstances in the past, and he had no doubt they would be victorious in the future.

Councillor Gageby, J.P., as an old trade unionist and a member of the Congress, was pleased, in conjunction with Councillors Collins and M'Keown, to offer the delegates a very hearty welcome to this city. Having in his recollection the meeting of that Congress in Belfast ten years ago and their visits to the various cities throughout Ireland, he felt he could only feebly occupy the position of those who had proceeded him in extending them that welcome. There was at least one matter for mutual congratulation, and that was that, through the instrumentality of the Trades Congress, a platform had been established wide and large enough for all men who held different opinions to meet upon from time to time to discuss and determine upon questions affecting the betterment of the workers. That in itself was something to be thankful forthat amid the many dissensions existing in this country the Irish Trades Congress could meet and freely express their views and sentiments and try to convey to the public some of the things that the workers felt required to be done (applause). And the truth had to be told that their expressions of opinion had not gone for naught. Many changes, industrial or otherwise, effected by the Government had been largely due to the pressure brought to bear upon them by the public sentiment as expressed by the Congress.

He assured the delegates that not only all the trade unionists but the workers generally in the city were highly pleased at having a visit from the Congress. There was only the one subject of regret which had already been expressed, that they met in times of very great depression. Never, in his memory, had this city been passing through such trials. Trade was very bad, employment very scarce, and distress general. Under the circumstances, he was sure the Congress would give them their sympathy, and, if required, give expression to that sympathy. He trusted their visit, short as it might be, would be pleasant and profitable, and that they would be enabled to visit some of the great industrial establishments, so that they might carry back some idea of the magnitude and importance of the industries carried on in Belfast. In conclusion, he hoped their deliberations and decisions would be of such a character as would add weight to the trade union movement in Ireland, and be of considerable benefit in improving the conditions of the working people of the country.

Councillor Collins joined in the welcome, and hoped their proceedings would be conducive to a better understanding between the employer and employed.

Councillor M'Keown referred to the welcome accorded by the Corporation of Aberdeen to the Trades Congress that met in that city. Unfortunately, in Belfast they could not receive such a civic greeting. In Aberdeen the Corporation were in entire sympathy with the workers, but in Belfast the vast majority of the Corporation were not in accord with them, and they could not give them a genuine welcome. The trade union movement generally had made great progress. They had the proposal of the Government in regard to old age pensions, and they accepted it as an instalment. With reference to the Compensation Act, they suffered from a great many accidents. Obstacles almost insurmountable were placed in their way in obtaining compensation, and they had to go to the courts in order to substantiate their claim. Then they had the insurance companies to contend against, for these companies had warned employers not to engage men over a certain age. He thought they should get their Parliamentary representatives to induce Parliament to pass a measure which would prevent insurance companies inflicting such grave injustice upon the workers. It was time they had State insurance. As to the organisation of workers, the agricultural labourers required to be looked after. At present, in their disorganised state, they were a source of menace to trades unionists.

ELECTION OF CONGRESS OFFICERS.

Mr. M'Connell moved that Messrs. E. L. Richardson, J.P. (Dublin) and Joseph Mitchell (Belfast) be appointed secretaries to the Congress.

Mr. H. T. Whitley seconded. Passed.

Messrs. M'Connell (Belfast), Sheehan, T.C. (Dublin), and Patrick Murphy, P.L.G. (Cork) were unanimously elected tellers.

On a vote, the following were elected Standing Orders Committee :—Councillor Patrick Lynch (Cork), 54; Messrs. Alexander Stewart (Belfast), 47; Charles Darcus (Belfast), 41; John M'Mahon (Dublin), 41; and Henry Rochford (Dublin), 38.

Alderman M'Carthy (Kilkenny), and Mr. D. R. Campbell (Belfast) were elected auditors.

On the motion of Councillor Lynch (Cork), seconded by Mr. H. Rochford (Dublin),

Mr. John Murphy (Belfast) was unanimously elected President of the Congress. Upon taking the chair, he delivered the following address :---

FELLOW DELEGATES,—Allow me to tender to you my warmest thanks for the honour conferred in calling upon me to preside at this Congress of Irish trades unionists. I desire to join very heartily in the welcome extended to you this morning on this, your second visit to my native city.

Since the previous meeting in Belfast ten years ago, the Labour movement has advanced with giant strides. That period has witnessed the establishment and growth of the Labour Party as an independent factor in British politics. Its rise and progress have been due quite as much to the persecution and tyranny of the employing class as to the workers' aspirations for independence. The wresting of the law from the obvious intentions of the enacting Parliaments, as illustrated in the Taff Vale decision, had stiffened the back of trade unionism, and the theatre of conflict was changed from the trade dispute to the election platform; and it requires no prophetic eye to see that the champions of labour have taken a position in the political arena from which they will not be driven by either force or fraud. If it be true that the "blood of the martyr is the seed of the Church," it is equally true that the persecution of labour has spurred it into a noble effort to shake off its rusty fetters and stand erect in the sunlight of freedom.

The air is full of rumblings and threatenings and disputations as to the alliance between the trade unions and the Socialists, and dark and malignant prophecies are being uttered as to the future of British industry if this alliance should not be dissolved. Every prejudice is appealed to by the capitalist class to convince the workers that the path of Socialism is that of destruction, and that morality and religion will suffer an eternal eclipse if the people should adopt the enervating doctrines of the new school. However this may be, there seems no immediate necessity to break up the working agreement arrived at, as its opponents are unable to show either evil results up to the present or give good grounds for anticipating them in the future. The Socialist has analysed the human misery connected with our industrial conditions, and has proposed a remedy. Until a better plan is suggested we may reasonably refuse to be drawn aside from the pursuit of a scheme which, while not perfect, is at least comprehensive, and appeals to all that is best in our hearts and minds.

In the region of Labour Legislation some progress has been made recently, but statesmen move very slowly and with great caution. They are timorous in dealing with the "rights of property," albeit they neglect the rights of men. The great question of unemployment still remains unsettled, and a Government with a great majority has apparently taken to the device of marking time on many social questions. The provision of State pensions for aged persons has been brought within the realm of practical politics at last, but the proposals made are very inadequate, and exceed, on the age question, the period of retirement always acknowledged by government in connection with the Civil Service. Mr. Asquith admitted (Feb. 6, 1906) that if the persons over 65 likely to require an old age pension were granted 5s. per week, the cost would probably be about £11,500,000 per annum. But up to the present he has not had the courage to ask the country for so large an amount, although it is evident that the payment of pensions to persons over 65 would result in some abatement of the poor-rate in every district. This Congress has frequently declared in favour of reforming our poorlaw system, but the limitation of old age pensions to persons over 70 years of age will make little change as to the expenditure on poor relief.

If for a moment we look farther away than the boundaries of our country—farther afield even than the United Kingdom—we will find that the many problems of labour legislation have obtained international attention. If due allowance be made for differences in race and climate, we may regard the labour question as being practically the same in all civilised countries. In some European states, such as Russia, the conditions are still violently repressive of organised workmen; but the extension of the self-government of the people is slowly but surely breaking down the political power of the employing class. In this country the belated demand for Protection is made in order to restore that power to the capitalist. Instead of interfering with the purchaser, why should we not try to equalise the conditions of production ?

The establishment of an International Labour Association at Basle, in Switzerland, in 1901, must be regarded as an event of the first magnitude. The co-ordination of labour laws in European countries must be a matter of great moment to the workers in all lands. The signing of the first Labour Treaty between France and Italy on the 15th April, 1904, cannot be regarded as anything but an event of the most far-reaching character. While the treaty only specifically dealt with the question of insurance, it also contained the declaration that the two contracting States pledged themselves "to act together in connection with all international institutions having for their object the extension of existing labour legislation."

In 1906 a Labour Treaty dealing with compensation in the matter of industrial accidents was agreed to between France and Belgium. Under this Treaty a Frenchman resident in Belgium, or Belgian resident in France, retains the rights to compensation he would enjoy in his own country, after six months' domicile. The International Conference on Labour Legislation at Berne, 1905, decided that its resolutions should be compiled in the form of draft international agreements, and submitted to the States concerned through diplomatic channels. The idea that the principles of labour legislation should be realised in practice was accepted by Germany, Austria, Hungary, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The first important question which arose out of this was the prohibition of night work for women. The United Kingdom agreed to the latter reform if it was adhered to by all countries and guarantees given for carrying out the convention. The Treaty has been signed on behalf of 14 States, and others may sign up till December 31st, 1908. The Treaty comes into operation not later than 1st January, 1911, and must be fully carried out from the beginning of the year 1914. In a few occupations the convention will not be fully operative till five years later. No State may withdraw from the Treaty until it has been at least 12 years in operation. In a memorandum on the International Conference presented to Parliament in 1906, the following occurs :-- " Limited as the outcome of the Conference has been in this respect, the signature of the Convention on Night-Work by the representatives of so many industrial countries must be regarded as a remarkable achievement of the movement of which it is the result. To the International Association for Labour Legislation-an unofficial body centered at Basle with branches in several countries-the initiative in that movement has been largely due; its development to the Government of Switzerland. The complete unanimity in all the essential matters relating to this Convention shown by the delegates of the Powers, gives good ground for the expectation that it may be the precursor of other Agreements for the common advantage of industrial classes in the participating States."

A similar convention abolishing the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches has been accepted by seven European Governments, but Italy and England did not join. Let us hope, however, that this and many similar treaties will soon be inscribed on the International Statute Book.

The system of apprenticeship has become very antiquated, and needs reform or abolition. The employers merely look upon an apprentice as a low-paid workman, and take little pains to instruct him in his particular handicraft. He is given work and allowed to shift for himself and learn what he can. This results in the pro-

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duction of workmen of inferior skill, who become a burden on the funds of the trade union. The master should be relieved of all responsibility as to the conduct of his apprentice when away from work, and the apprentice should not be allowed to live with the employer, who cannot be expected to possess the necessary qualifications to give boys a good moral training. Employers may have some fitness in rare cases as teachers of a trade, but they are seldom, if ever, qualified as moral instructors. There is a great desire on the part of employers to have a large number of apprentices as a means of increasing profits, but the number should never be allowed to exceed the requirements of the particular trade, and all attempts to flood a trade by overstocking are injurious alike to the individual and the community. In the case of all well-organised trades, the State should be obliged to contribute to the out-of-work fund, as this would militate against the employment of too many apprentices and remove all temptation to glut the labour market in any particular occupation.

It is a matter of great regret that the Shops Bill, or some equivalent measure, cannot be at once passed into law. The shop workers are so numerous a class, and their grievances are so acute, that no time should be wasted before the State makes a bona fide attempt to improve their condition. The abolition of radius agreements is a crying necessity, and no more iniquitous plan was ever invented for the subjection of a body of employes than the one the shopworkers themselves have so valiantly fought against during the past few years. The Anti-Sweating Bill now before Parliament has some very good provisions, and one of its best principles is that it to some extent places sweaters in the hands of the working community. Nevertheless, sometimes legislation of that kind becomes disappointing either through the apathy or in consequence of the gullibility of the workers. We should, however, at the beginning have been better pleased to have had a longer schedule for the application of the Act.

Attempts are being made to sever the trade unionists of Ireland from their fellows in England and Scotland upon the specious plea that we are able to govern ourselves in all things, and should not, therefore, be allied to the "English" bodies. The patriotic gentlemen who advocate this course do not care about the injury their agitation will do, as they are only anxious to cover themselves with the glory of having begun a new and successful movement. Already some employers have taken advantage of the new doctrine, and have said to representatives of amalgamated unions that they object to deal with English societies, and, of course, that they can manage their business without the help of outsiders. Unfortunately for the aims of these insidious agitators, Ireland is still far from being an industrial country, and the total number of trade unionists in the country would hardly suffice to make one large stable trade union. It will be obvious to all reasonable persons

that discord of this nature at the present juncture in Ireland must result in weakening forces by no means too strong at the best, and this Congress should set its face like flint against a propaganda so foolish and baneful. Trade unionism is largely a thing of English growth and development introduced into this country, and if those who are preaching the new doctrine to which I have referred were only consistent, they would advocate the abolition of trade unionism entirely as a wicked Saxon invention. The labour movement is not of a narrow national character, and should be a bond of union and not a separating sword between the people of England and ourselves. The outlook may be somewhat clouded at the moment, but the necessity for better organisation and closer union is as great as ever. The present stage in our trade union history has only been reached through struggle and suffering, and this Congress should be fully alive to the necessity of holding fast by the principles which have brought about much steady improvement in the condition of Irish workmen.

I am not advocating anything in the nature of contentment among Irish trade unionists. We have no reason to be contented. Much may have been gained, but far more remains to be achieved. The field of social legislation is still overgrown with rank and noxious weeds. Many reforms of a strictly trade union kind ought to be at once undertaken. The hours of shopworkers and railwaymen are in need of curtailment. No contract should be binding upon an employe after he has left the employment of the contracting employer. Employers should no longer be allowed to make deductions from wages duly earned by time or piecework, as they must always be prejudiced judges in their own cause. The women workers are very heavily oppressed in this matter, and they require all the help which the men's societies can render to have justice meted out to them in an even-handed way.

There is little unusual in the character of the motions to be submitted to this year's Congress, and I feel that they will receive that fair-minded consideration the Congress annually gives to the various matters brought forward.

The Parliamentary Committee's Report gives a full account of the interview between the members of the Committee and the Chief Secretary (Mr. Birrell). One could not have listened to Mr. Birrell's address in reply to the deputation without being struck by the fact that he was prepared to go as far as any of his colleagues in the direction of reform or legislation. Since that interview took place, however, one Premier has died and another reigns in his stead, and changes have taken place in the *personnel* of the Ministry, and although the King's present advisers have decided to inaugurate Old Age Pensions, they have quite emphatically decided against doing anything useful on the unemployed question. This is much to be regretted, for a radical attempt to solve the question of unemployment must necessarily cause such an examination of the present unjust conditions of society as would lead to many revolutionary changes and much readjustment of the present unhappy relationship between capital and labour.

The Congress this year meets at a time when we are suffering from a depression of trade, and one which severely affects this city. Wages in the linen trade are low at all times, and when the working week is shortened and wages proportionately reduced, must suffering must naturally ensue. The Belfast linen trade struggled successfully against a high protective tariff imposed by America, but the financial crisis in that country has had a very injurious effect upon the trade here. In addition to this, the manipulations of capitalist syndicates have inflated the price of yarns. These operations of capitalists are made entirely irrespective of the general interests of the workers, about which limited liability companies or syndicates care little. Speaking generally, they worship at the shrine of the "Brute God Mammon," and the bodies and souls of the people are of secondary consideration.

The soul of our movement—its inspiration and guiding light is the genius of equality in matters material. No doctrine which backs up the present condition of society—where the drones revel in luxury and the bees perish for want—will stand the fire of the present day criticism. We are banded together to promote our own happiness and the happiness of those dependent upon us. We shall achieve that object in direct proportion to the solidarity of our organisation, the preservation of our liberties, and the enthusiasm and aggressive work of those who take their places in our ranks. I hope this annual meeting will show that the men and women of our democracy are to-day prepared to make those sacrifices, discount that persecution, and triumph over those difficulties which failed to arrest the progress of our dauntless predecessors.

Councillor Daly (Dublin) moved a vote of thanks to the president for his address. He did so because of the ability and earnestness of the man, but there were things which the president had said with which he was not in agreement. He had said that the Labour Party had become a factor in British politics. He (the speaker) believed that if they confined themselves to the interests of Ireland at Congresses in Ireland, rather than appealing to the interests of the British Parliament, they would be doing more than they could in any other way for Irish labour and the organisation of the workers of the country. The men of Ireland had not done their duty towards the women workers of the country, and he hoped that the Congress would take some steps to have the female workers more efficiently organised. He regretted that the president had not made some reference to the Irish University question. He protested as an Irish worker against the sons and daughters of Irish workmen being severely handicapped by the alleged Liberal Government, who propose to take away from them the benefits of

degrees so far as extern tuition was concerned. There was no question that could come before the Congress that was of greater importance for the working men of Ireland than the question of University Education, and he protested against Ireland being robbed of her due share of the money she ought to get in order to ensure the sons and daughters of Irish workmen getting the same facilities as those in England and Scotland.

Alderman M'Carthy (Kilkenny) seconded the motion, which was heartily passed.

The President, in acknowledging the compliment, said the trade union movement was international in its operations, and he was likely to adhere to the views he had just expressed despite all the eloquence of Mr. Daly (hear, hear). With regard to the Universities Bill, the education controversy had latterly been somewhat fatal to those who had taken the most prominent part in it, and, speaking personally, he might say that he would rather see a good, complete, and well-ordered elementary system of education in Ireland than bother his head about university education, which really did not, after all, affect the general interests of the working classes. At any rate the Congress would have an opportunity of discussing this question freely later, as there was a motion on the agenda regarding it.

The President read the following telegram from Mr. Bernard Doyle, Dublin :---

"Richardson, Trades Congress, Belfast,

Success to Fifteenth Congress. May your deliberations hasten Labour's emancipation."

Letters of apology for non-attendance owing to illness were received from Councillor Moloney (Dublin), and Mr. M. Harvey (Limerick).

The Congress then adjourned until 9.30 Tuesday morning.

At three o'clock the delegates journeyed to Bangor by the Slieve Bearnagh, and at five o'clock they were entertained to dinner, as the guests of the Reception Committee at the Grand Hotel in that town.

SECOND DAY.-Tuesday, 9th June, 1908.

Congress re-assembled at 9.30 a.m., the President, Mr. John Murphy, in the chair.

Minutes of first day's proceedings read and confirmed.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT-1.

Mr. Chas. Darcus, Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, brought up a report recommending the grouping of certain resolutions on the agenda. Also that the Parliamentary Committee's report be taken first business on Wednesday morning, and that an adjournment take place at 11.15 a.m. until 2 p.m. to enable delegates to visit Messrs. Harland & Wolff's shipbuilding yard and other industrial concerns in the city. They also reported that the United Stationary Engine Drivers of Dublin objected to the delegates of the Independent Stationary Engine Drivers taking part in the proceedings of Congress, and recommended that as the matter had been before previous congresses, the dispute be left in the hands of the Parliamentary Committee, no action to be taken at present.

On it being moved and seconded that the report be adopted, a discussion ensued on the Engine Drivers' question, in which Messrs. Lumsden, M'Loughlin, Larkin, and Councillors Daly and Lynch took part, Mr. Larkin suggesting that the Parliamentary Committee be instructed to bring the dispute to an issue, the society declining to accept the Committee's decision to be debarred admission to future congresses. With this amendment the report was adopted.

SECRETARY'S POSITION QUESTIONED.

Mr. Wm. Murphy (Brushmakers) raised the question of the Secretary's status as a delegate, and inquired if Mr. Richardson had the right to act and vote as a member of the Congress.

The Chairman ruled that the Secretary, as *ex-officio* member of the Congress, enjoyed all the rights and privileges of a delegate under the Standing Orders.

The Secretary said he had no desire to force his individuality upon the Congress. He appreciated the attentions of his colleagues from Dublin; but if there was going to be a fight, let it be a straight and fair one—not those under-hand, back-door methods. Before the Congress had concluded he would, perhaps, let some light in on certain doings in the labour movement in Dublin.

The matter then dropped.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

Mr. Lumsden (Dublin) moved :--

"That the Parliamentary Committee be requested to take steps to obtain the support of the Irish Parliamentary representatives for the principle embodied in the Right to Work Bill, recently before Parliament."

Mr. M'Loughlin seconded.

Mr. Murray (Belfast), in supporting, said that the Unionist members should also be requested to support the Bill.

The resolution was adopted.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Mr. R. O'Keeffe (Dublin) moved :--

"That this Congress is of opinion that the present system of Irish Primary Education in National Schools requires improvement; that the majority of those schools require drastic structural alterations in respect of sanitation and classroom accommodation, proper systems of heating and ventilation, open and covered playgrounds, with an all-round increase to the teachers salaries, so as to provide them with a living wage; and that this matter of Irish National Education should have first place in any Irish reform proposed by the Government. And that power should be obtained from Parliament to enable local authorities to levy a rate to provide for primary school accommodation when desirable."

He said he would not be breaking new ground, as this subject had been frequently under consideration at former congresses. The principal defect in the education systems in Ireland was that a poor man's son or daughter, however clever they might be, could not be permitted, or with any degree of facility, be allowed to reach the top of the ladder. There was no co-operation between the National Board, Intermediate, and University Boards. The subjects taught in the National schools were not those likely to be of the greatest value to the boy and girl in after life, and useful subjects were crowded out. The schoolrooms in which the children were taught were a disgrace to any country, while the salaries paid to the teachers were inadequate, and the lowest paid to any civil servants, with the result that the best of their teachers left the country, with the consequent detrimental effect on the children.

Mr. D. R. Campbell (Belfast), in seconding, said that the condition of the National schools in Belfast was nothing to boast of, but at the same time it was good compared with other portions of the country, and that was not saying much for it. Many of the schools in the city had very inadequate accommodation, and in nine cases out of ten they were attended by double the number of children they could properly accommodate. In England and Scotland power was given to local authorities to levy a rate for education, in some cases amounting to almost 2s., while in Ireland the rate for education could not exceed 1d. in the £. There was no reason whatever why the education of the young should not have the first claim on the rates, so that they might be properly housed and given a proper, scientific, and sound education.

Mr. James Callaghan (Dublin), and Mr. George Greig (Belfast), supported the motion.

Councillor Gageby, J.P. (Belfast), said he was in agreement with the resolution, but he would like to bring before the Congress what they were doing in Belfast in respect of school accommodation. A joint committee of the Corporation and the school managers of the city had been meeting from time to time, and in addition, in order to get the best information possible, an inspection of schools took place, and they found that forty were at fault in one way or another. They tried to get the Commissioners' help to erect some new schools or improve existing ones. They found that there were 7,000 children in Belfast requiring to be provided for with proper school accommodation, and the Commissioners told them that it would require £40,000 to meet this demand. The Commissioners were prepared to pay two-thirds of this amount, provided that the other one-third was raised locally. The difficulty was, how, or in what way, could they get this money. The question raised in the resolution of obtaining the money by taxation was discussed by the committee without any hope of success, as it was pointed out that there were managers of schools all over the country who would not be in favour of having such a clause inserted in the Local Education Act and applied to Ireland. They were doing all in their power to improve the school accommodation, and at the same time they found considerable difficulty in raising the money required.

Councillor Daly (Dublin) said they should not ask the British Government to tax the country any further for this purpose, but should demand from them to give to Ireland sufficient from the millions taken from Ireland every year when the education of the country was being starved.

Mr. J. Larkin said it was not the Government at all that was at fault, but the people at home, who allowed the present management of schools to be run on sectarian basis. Until they would get rid of the clerical power and get more labour representation in connection with education, there would be no improvement. If they would only go through the country and express their honest opinions—but they dare not; the men of Belfast would not say what they thought, because they were afraid of the people, and the people of Dublin were afraid to do it also. He was one of those who stood for secular education, clear and aboveboard.

Mr. W. J. Murray (Belfast) said the time had come when the Congress should take its stand on this question, and emphatically declare that all clerical control of the schools should be stamped out of the country (hear, hear, and no, no).

The President-You are departing from the subject of the resolution.

Proceeding, Mr. Murray said the salaries of the teachers were not sufficient to induce worthy men and women to join the profession. He was in entire approval with the latter portion of the resolution, and he believed they would not get proper control until they levied rates, and he, therefore, thought the resolution was on the right lines.

On a division the resolution was carried by 48 votes to 10.

TECHNICAL TRAINING OF APPRENTICES.

Mr. E. H. Hayes (Dublin) moved :-

"This Congress of Irish workers declares that the time at the disposal of apprentices for acquiring a thorough technical knowledge of their respective trades is at present entirely inadequate, and urges upon employers the desirability of granting further opportunities, by allowing their apprentices a few hours' leave upon such days as they undertake to attend the technical schools, so as to enable them to become more proficient workmen; that the Department of Technical Instruction for Ireland be again requested to press this matter upon local technical committees and employers' associations throughout the country."

He said the resolution was brought forward in the interests of apprentices being afforded facilities for attending classes after their day's work. He mentioned that the Dublin Corporation had fitted out a Printing School, appointed instructors, but the attendances during the past session was not encouraging. A good deal could be done locally by societies sending deputations to employers asking them to allow their apprentices a few hours off to attend the classes, as eventually it would be to their own interest to turn out good workmen. He hoped the Parliamentary Committee would strongly urge upon the Department to memorialise employers to bring about the desired effect. Although he spoke on behalf of the printing trade, the same thing affected all trades classes at technical schools.

Councillor Daly (Dublin) seconded, and the resolution was adopted.

THE UNIVERSITY BILL.

Mr. Wm. M'Loughlin (Dublin) moved :-

"That this Congress expresses its disappointment at the inadequate provisions of the Irish University Bill, in so far as the children of the workers are concerned, and we request the Parliamentary Committee to take immediate steps to secure its amendment, so as to bring the proposed new institution within reasonable reach of the working classes."

Councillor Daly (Dublin) in seconding, said he had stated time after time that labour-men were afraid to speak out what was in their mind on that sectarian question. Boys who were attending primary schools could have their religious education looked after by their fathers and mothers, but one of the provisions of the Irish Universities Bill was that no question of religious qualification was to weigh in the appointment of a professor, so that young people at the age when they needed a guiding hand were to be taken away, and by what? By the qualification of this beautiful Government. In Belfast there was to be one Roman Catholic on the Senate, and in Dublin there were to be six Protestants. He said that in Dublin the Protestants had equal rights with the Catholics to have full representation on the Senate or the governing body of a constituent college, and exactly the same thing applied to Belfast. There were delegates attending that Congress who had taken their first arts under the system which had existed previously when they could do so outside any constituent college, but the classes of Ireland knew that brains were not found in one particular body, and they saw signs of the children of the working classes beating them in the race, and accordingly this measure was brought in (hear, hear). In the recommendations of the Robertson Commission one of the

first was that extern teaching should be done away with, and that the atmosphere and culture of a teaching university was essential; but he hoped none of his sons would ever inhale such an atmosphere. Between primary education in Ireland and secondary education there was a gap, and between intermediate and university education there was still a bigger gap.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) said that while the son or daughter of a working man could at present take a degree, this would be impossible under the new scheme of a Liberal Government, because it was required that the students should attend college lectures and pay college fees, which they could not afford to do.

The resolution was adopted with a few dissentients.

OLD AGE PENSIONS.

Mr. G. Greig (Belfast) moved :--

"That this Congress, while appreciating the action of the Government in proposing to provide pensions for the aged poor, is of opinion that the age limit (70) is much too high, and that we reaffirm our previous resolution passed on the question of old-age pensions, which, amongst other things, provided—' That the Government should be urged to provide a national system of old-age pensions, which shall be universal in its application to all citizens (men and women) on attaining the age of 60 years (or incapacitated from following their employment): the pension to be at the rate of at least 5s. per week, and the entire cost of such scheme to be contributed by means of Imperial taxation.'"

He stated that nearly every Trades Congress—English, Irish, and Scotch—had for a number of years past urged the advisability of the Government providing old-age pensions. While they were glad to see that some action had been taken in the matter by the Government, the trades unionists of the country could not accept the Bill now before the House of Commons as a full solution of the question. The age limit was too high, and the scheme should be universal in its application. Members of trades unions contributed funds to provide for their old age, but if they had an income of over 10s. per week they could not receive a pension. The Bill would put a premium not upon thrift but the want of thrift, and they should demand its amendment on the lines indicated in the resolution.

Mr. Corrigan (Dublin) seconded.

Mr. Deane (Belfast) reminded the Congress that the scheme was one for old age. In his opinion a man was not past working at 60 or 65 years of age. Something should, however, be done to provide for workers who from affliction were unable to continue at work.

The resolution having been supported by Mr. Lumsden (Dublin) was passed.

Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908.

NOMINATIONS FOR PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE.

The following delegates were nominated for the election of Parliamentry Committee :---

C. Bunworth, Railwaymen; P. T. Daly, T.C., Paviors; S. Dineen, Bakers; M. Egan, J.P., T.C., Coachmakers; R. Gageby, J.P., T.C., Flax Dressers; Mary Galway, Textile Operatives; G. Greig, Labourers; J. Larkin, Dockers; P. J. Lea, Bakers; J. Murphy, Printers; T. Murphy, Railwaymen; W. J. Murphy, Brushmakers: J. M'Carron, T.C., Tailors; J. M'Carthy, Alderman, Bakers; R. O'Keeffe, Carpenters; M. J. O'Lehane, P.L.G., Drapers' Assistants; H. Rochford, Hairdressers; E. W. Stewart, Shop Assistants.

Alderman M'Carthy and Councillors Daly and Gageby withdrew.

The Congress adjourned at 11.15 a.m. until 2 p.m. to enable the members to visit Messrs. Harland & Wolff's shipyard at Queen's Island, and other industrial concerns in the city.

On resuming after lunch,

HOUSING OF THE WORKERS.

Mr. Lumsden moved :--

"That this Congress approves of the efforts which are being made to deal with the Housing question, and demands the extension to Ireland of the provisions of the English Bill; and we call upon all local authorities in Ireland to exercise to the full the powers they already possess in mitigation of existing evils."

He said that, as a Dublin man, he admired the housing system in Belfast as of an excellent and beautiful character, and a wonderful contrast to the garrets and pigstyes which people in Dublin were compelled to live in. He hoped that from Belfast they would send forth a demand on the housing question which would be heard. They had in the present Session a Bill on the Housing Question by the member for North Dublin, and the English Bill. They must do more than hold academic beliefs, and ask the Irish Party and the Northern contingent to support Mr. Clancy's Bill, which would start a new era in house reform.

Mr. M'Loughlin (Dublin) in seconding, alleged that many of the Dublin Corporation were slum owners.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

AMENDMENT OF SMALL DWELLINGS ACT.

Councillor M'Carron (Derry) moved :--

"That we call upon the Government to amend the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act so as to make the title-deeds security for all monies advanced by Municipal or Urban Councils under this Act to tenants desirous of buying out the houses they may occupy." He said that when the Government advanced millions to enable the tenant farmers of the country to buy out their holdings, the same facilities should be given to the workers in the towns to acquire their own dwellings. The Act should be so amended that the title-deeds—viz., the lease—would be security for anybody that advanced the money for purchase. There would be, in that case, no risk of loss to the State or the municipality. By such a step they would make people more frugal and industrious and better citizens.

Councillor Robert Gageby, J.P., in seconding, endorsed the remarks of Councillor M'Carron, and said the sooner there was some remedy in regard to this important question the better for all concerned.

Mr. Greig, in supporting the resolution, said he wished to point out that there was a possibility, unless the purchase was a bona-fide one, of corruption creeping in. The worker was not tied down to any part of the country, but had to go to many places to sell his labour. It would be a better thing for the municipality to erect proper dwellings for the working classes under good sanitary conditions.

Councillor M'Carron pointed out that there was no danger of corruption. A proper valuer would be appointed, and the principal would not be advanced without substantial security.

Mr. T. Murphy (Dublin) disagreed with Mr. Greig's views on the question.

Mr. J. Larkin said that when the workers did not get sufficient wages he did not see how they could advocate their buying out their own houses. What they wanted was good municipal dwellings. No man had any legal, moral, or divine right to own anything in the way of property or land. He was for the socialisation of lands and dwellings.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) said they wanted to see collective ownership in this as in other matters, and he would vote against the resolution.

Mr. Feenan (Belfast) contended that it was a desirable thing for the worker to aspire to the ownership of his own house. If they had no gcal to aim at they would be a nation of drones.

The Chairman wanted to know if Mr. Larkin considered a man should own the property in his own house (laughter).

Mr. E. W. Stewart (Dublin), while in agreement with the principle laid down by Mr. Larkin and Mr. Murray, said that at the present day the worker was being exploited by the payment of rent to the private owner, and it would be no advance to have that exploitation carried on by the municipality.

Councillor M'Carron having briefly replied, the resolution was carried by 42 votes to 9.

EIGHT HOURS DAY.

Mr. M. Canty moved :--

"That this Congress, recognising the material and moral importance of shortening the hours of labour, instructs the Parliamentary Committee to take such steps to bring at once before Parliament the enforcement of an Eight Hours Day by legal enactment."

They had, he said, even in Belfast, thousands of people idle, and at the same time others working overtime. A reduction of the hours of labour was absolutely necessary.

Mr. Cobbe seconded.

Mr. Greig supported the proposition, which was adopted.

SHOP HOURS ACT.

Mr. E. W. Stewart (Dublin) moved :-

"That in view of the grave evils consequent upon the long hours worked in shops and the admitted failure of the Shop Hours Act, 1904, this Congress views with satisfaction the promise made by the Home Secretary in Parliament on 1st May, that the Government would next Session introduce an amending Shop Hours Bill, based upon the principle of compulsory closing, and a limitation of hours to 60 per week."

He said that as the Congress was familiar with the campaign conducted by his Union and the Irish Drapers' Assistants for a reduction of the hours of employment in shops, he would not weary them with a repetition of the arguments in favour. He was glad to say that their campaign, with the assistance of the British, Scottish and Irish Congresses and the help of the Labour Party in Parliament, had so aroused public opinion that they appeared now, if Government promises could be relied on, to be within measurable distance of some legislative relief from the evils complained of. By adopting this resolution he wished them to emphasise the fact of the Home Secretary's admission of the failure of the Act of 1904, and the acceptance of his promise to introduce an amending Bill in next Parliamentary Session.

Mr. O'Lehane, P.L.G. (Dublin) seconded, and said they would be willing to treat with the employers on the question at any time. Voluntary efforts had largely failed, and the conditions were largely due to the apathy of the shop assistants generally. In Belfast the shop system needed awakening very badly. There were close on 6,000 shop workers in the city, and not more than about 200 organised. He appealed to the people not to patronise shops which opened late.

The President said he was sure the Congress sympathised with the shop assistants. They had a very strong case.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

SUNDAY CLOSING.

Mr. Henry Rochford (Dublin) moved :-

"That the Parliamentary Committee be instructed to take such steps as may be necessary to secure the insertion of a clause in the Government's promised Shops Bill next Session providing for the closing of hairdressers' shops on Sundays."

He said that the present system of Sunday morning work entailed great hardships upon the employes, particularly after they had done a day of fifteen hours work on the Saturday. In places like Belfast, and nearly all of the other Irish districts outside Dublin, the practice did not exist of Sunday work in the hairdressing trade. When it could be avoided elsewhere it could surely be avoided in Dublin, and the only satisfactory process by which that result could be brought about was by legislative enactment which would be equally fair to all employers. For this reason he moved the resolution, claiming that the Government should include the Sunday closing of hairdressers' shops in the Bill promised to his friend, Mr. Stewart's Union of Shop Assistants, or, for that matter, in any measure dealing either with Sunday trading or the hours of labour in shops. Many matters of this kind only needed compulsory regulation in order to meet with general approval and support. He believed that if it was made compulsory the abolition of Sunday work would meet with the approval of the overwhelming majority of the employers as well as assistants in the hairdressing trade.

Mr. Feenan (Belfast) seconded.

Passed.

FOREIGN JOINERY.

Mr. O'Keeffe (Dublin) proposed :-

"That this Congress again condemns the importation of foreign joinery, which is on the increase in face of the many resolutions that have been passed from time to time condemning it; we hereby call on architects, engineers, builders, private employers, and all public boards in Ireland requiring joinery, to have same made in Ireland under fair conditions, and by so doing give proof that they are in earnest in supporting one of the principal branches of the building trade in Ireland."

He said that the resolution had been before the Congress on several previous occasions. While so much stuff was being imported, they had hundreds walking the streets, while the idle pay amounted to thousands of pounds.

Mr. Corrigan (Dublin) seconded.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) said the capitalists took care to divide the workers into two sections, while they were combined to import or do anything that they possibly could in order to get cheap articles made under cheap conditions.

The resolution was adopted.

IMPORTATION OF BRUSHES.

Mr. Wm. Murphy (Dublin) proposed :--

"That this Congress deplores the continued importation of all kinds of brushes into this country, and directs attention to the fact that foreign-made brushes are being sold on a large scale as Irish manufacture, and for the guidance of purchasers desirous of supporting home industry the Merchandise or Trades Marks Acts should be so amended that all imported articles should be stamped so as to clearly indicate the country in which they are manufactured."

Mr. Kerr (Belfast) seconded, and both proposer and seconder complained that "Made in Ireland" was placed on brushes made in other countries.

Councillor Egan, J.P. (Cork) pointed out that there was now a national trade mark, and recently people who had committed a fraud were fined, the latest instance being that of Messrs. Lipton, fined for selling goods as Irish which were not Irish. If any such frauds were being perpetrated, the Irish Industrial Association, on being communicated with, would take all necessary steps.

Mr. O'Lehane, P.L.G. (Dublin) expressed surprise that prosecutions had not followed in those cases mentioned by the proposer and seconder.

Mr. James Larkin complained that the Irish Industrial Development Association had no regard to trade union conditions. In the absence of such a condition, he paid no attention to such claptrap about Irish goods.

Mr. O'Lehane, P.L.G., resented Mr. Larkin's method of dealing with the subject, and said that he simply supported the broad principle of support to Irish manufacturers.

Councillor Egan said that they did not support those who did not produce goods under fair conditions. Why did not the trade unionists go into the association and man it?

Mr. Murray (Belfast) said that the association was a capitalistic association. How could workers on 14s. or 15s. a week support goods made under fair conditions? He appealed to the Congress to disregard the association, and have regard only to fair conditions.

Councillor P. T. Daly (Dublin) said that they should allow small industries in Ireland to creep, while as to the larger industries, let them go into the association and insist on fair conditions. They must look at things as they were, and not pay attention to Utopian ideas. He appealed to the Congress to pass the resolution.

Mr. Stewart (Dublin) and Mr. Callaghan (Belfast) having spoken.

Mr. Wm. Murphy, in reply, said the object of the resolution was to protect their trade from brushes made in prisons and in sweating dens in Germany, and have such stamped so that an Irish stamp could not be placed on top.

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Mr. Larkin mentioned some of the more prominent of the members of the Belfast Branch of the Industrial Development Association.

The President-Is it a branch?

Mr. Larkin-It is.

Councillor Egan-That is the fault of the workers of Belfast.

The President said that the Labour Congress held the opinion that marking with the name of a foreign country acted more as an advertisement than otherwise.

The resolution was adopted nem. con.

IMPORTATION OF BUTTER PACKAGES.

Mr. W. J. Leahy (Dublin) moved :-

"That this Congress desires to draw the attention of butter merchants and creamery societies to the great advantage which would accrue from the use of Irish-made butter packages; that it is a well-known and deplorable fact that thousands of pounds leave the country annually for foreign packages, and that we consider it is neither patriotic nor economic for Irish butter merchants or creameries to pack Irish butter in foreign packages; and that a copy of this resolution be sent to every butter merchant and creamery in Ireland."

He said that it was strange that Irish butter, which could compete with any in the world, should be sent out of the country in foreign packages.

Mr. Buckner (Limerick) seconded.

LINEN TRADE DEPRESSION.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) proposed :---

"That we desire to place on record our firm conviction that the excessive competition at present prevailing in the Ulster linen trade is largely responsible for the existing depression in that industry, with the consequent dearth of employment, and we approve of the proposal to protect Irish hand-woven damasks by effective trade marks."

He said that while it was competition brought about the present depression, it was also a ring of employers. At present 20 out of every 100 were idle in the workers of the linen trade. Proceeding, he gave individual instances. The wages of many of the men totalled from 5s. to 13s. per week of 35 or 37 hours, and the women 2s. 6d. to 8s. The little children of loyal Belfast worked for 30 hours for 1s., and never more than 2s. 6d. That was prosperity in the prosperous North, of which they heard the patriotic members they sent from the North talk so much. The marking of the goods was necessary. He advocated a co-operative industrial system, which would stop the rigging of the market by the linen spinners and the importation of Russian flax and the re-labelling it as-Irish.

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Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908.

Mr. Campbell (Belfast) seconded, and said that the condition of the textile workers was such as to merit the attention of the Congress. The people were being slowly crushed and starved, and how they were to exist to the end of a year was a mystery. He instanced a case of men who earned last week 7s. 11d., and of that there was 3s. for rent, which left 4s. 11d. for the support of a wife and family. Then there was the system of fines. What they should suggest was an inquiry into the real cause of the depression. It was singular in the depression that there were no failures on the part of the owners, while at the same time factories were being rushed up. From that Congress they should express their disapprobation of the system of keeping the workers on short time.

Mr. Callaghan (Belfast) said that there was competition between the Spinners' Association and the Powerloom Weavers, and between the two the workers were being crushed. Under the circumstances, they required the sympathy of the organised workers of Ireland. He cited examples of depression prevailing. They suffered a very great deal from the importation of foreign yarns. He held the Government officials were not doing their duty in this matter.

Councillor Gageby, J.P. (Belfast), said it was highly appropriate that the matter should be discussed by the Congress. He was in thorough agreement with the other speakers as to the destitution prevailing. He had recently given examples of the destitution in certain quarters. While the trade boom was on the manufacturer was unable to buy yarns at a price which would enable him to produce it at a price satisfactory to the consumers, who ceased to buy. The American depression was the first set-back the linen trade got. Foreign yarn was being rebundled and reticketed, and sold as Irish manufacture. There was a hope, but only a slight hope, that there would be an improvement shortly, but owing to the disturbance of American trade by the Presidential election, that would not come to any extent until the election was over. It was of great importance that the damask industry should be conserved by a trade mark.

Miss Galway (Belfast) said no matter who were at fault the workers were suffering. In January last the Home Secretary, in reply to Mr. Devlin, stated that 10s. was the average per week for men in the linen trade—tenters, linen lappers, yarn dressers, weavers, spinners, &c., while the conditions were growing worse and food was going up. What was to be done with the mills that were being built, and why were they being built? They were advised to prevent consumption, to open their windows, and eat better food; but where were they to get it? It was a shame that the employers should have created such a ring. A Committee of Inquiry should be appointed by the Government to see who was to blame for the depression and suffering in the trade.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

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STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT-2.

Mr. Darcus reported that there were 84 delegates present, representing 70,000 workers. They recommended that the Congress continue in session until 6 o'clock; that the election for Parliamentary Committee be taken at 12 o'clock on Wednesday, the doors to be closed five minutes before that hour, and not to be opened until the ballot has been taken. Also that the time limit be reduced to two-and-a-half minutes for each speech.

A discussion arose on the last recommendation; but eventually the report was adopted with the amendment that the movers and seconders of non-contentious motions be allowed five minutes each.

SHEET METAL WORK.

Mr. Bent (Dublin) proposed, and Mr. Walsh (Dublin) seconded, and it was agreed :--

"That this Congress calls on the master bakers and confectioners of Ireland to get their tin and sheet-metal work made and repaired in Ireland under Trade Union conditions."

NON-UNION NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. John Christie (Limerick) proposed :--

"That in the opinion of this Congress the existing evil of nonunion newspaper, general printing, and magazine production, by means of underpaid man and excessive boy labour, should be brought under the notice of all public bodies and Irish workers generally, with a view to securing their co-operation in helping to crush out a system of sweating of the worst description, whereby the wages paid on many provincial newspapers (existing on public Boards' advertisements) are not only inadequate to the skill required, but are insufficient to give the workers the bare necessaries of existence; and that this can be best accomplished by exposing all such newspapers and their methods, and publishing them in a manner to be approved by the Parliamentary Committee."

He stated that very many of the newspapers of Ireland in the country districts were got out under anything but fair conditions. The majority of them—particularly the Nationalist papers—were either owned or controlled by past and present Nationalist Members of Parliament. The latter would like to see great reforms passed for the working classes, but when their own workmen want a living wage they couldn't hear of such a thing. Near where he (the speaker) came from a newspaper proprietor pays his printers down as low as 12s. a week !

Mr. Sullivan (Dublin) seconded, and the resolution was adopted.

BELFAST CARTERS' EMPLOYMENT.

Mr. A. Farrell (Belfast) proposed :--

"That this Congress is of opinion that the present system of receiving goods at the Belfast railway stations is most unsatisfactory, as it involves carters either having to do the work of railway porters in addition to their own, or wait, especially after working hours, without any remuneration, owing to the small number of porters employed; and it is our opinion that the carters' agreement should be altered so as to allow overtime to carters for all time worked after the stipulated hours for working."

He said their principal grievance was with the railway companies as to overtime. In the evening, when the rush came, the companies did not provide enough waggons, so that the carters had to remain sometimes as long as nine o'clock. Very few of the firms would allow overtime. They were supposed to have a 58 hours' week, but it often amounted to 65 and 67 hours.

Mr. Ward (Belfast) seconded, and also complained of the want of sufficient facilities in the goods yards of the different railways.

Mr. Richardson (Dublin) said in that resolution and others the Committee were placed in a difficulty to get at the proper persons to effect redress. The matter was largely local, and, he understood, had not been brought under the notice of the Belfast Trades Council.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) said that the society was not affiliated to the Trades Council.

The President-Oh, yes, they are.

Mr. Murray said that a portion were, but they wanted the support of the Parliamentary Committee in bringing the matter before the Board of Trade.

Mr. Moore (Belfast) supported the resolution. Up to last year they were in a poor position, but he was glad to say Mr. Larkin had put them on their feet.

Councillor M'Carron (Derry) thought the matter was one for the society.

Mr. Larkin said that they had an agreement on the subject, but the masters had walked through it. He expressed the opinion that if the Congress approved of the resolution it would greatly strengthen the hands of the Belfast carters in their present agitation. The master carters were railway shareholders, and what was required was to invoke the powers of the Board of Trade. After the way Mr. Lloyd-George got over the trades union leaders in England—

Mr. Thomas Murphy (Dublin) said he objected to that. Mr. Lloyd-George did not get around the leaders. It was a fair agreement.

The resolution was carried.

NIGHT WORK IN THE BAKING TRADE.

Mr. Dinneen (Limerick) proposed :-

"That this Congress again affirms that night work in the baking trade is unnecessary; that it gives the employers who work by night an undue advantage in competition over those who work by day, by destroying their trade, and in many cases forcing the

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operative to emigrate for want of employment, or, what is much worse, to seek the shelter of the workhouse. It impairs the health, has an evil effect on the morals, and destroys the happiness of those engaged in it, and it deprives the head of the house from exercising that due supervision which is requisite in bringing up a family as fit members of the community. And as night work prevents a very large percentage of the operative bakers from attending Divine Service on the Lord's Day, we hold it to be the duty of the clergy of all denominations to use their influence in having it abolished. That we pledge ourselves to assist, by every means in our power, those bakers' organisations which work by day in helping them to obtain legislative prohibition of night work in the baking trade, and that the Parliamentary Committee be instructed to at once bring this matter under the notice of the Home Office."

Mr. Murphy, P.L.G. (Cork) seconded the resolution.

Mr. M'Connell moved to leave out all after the word " unnecessary," on second line, and add the following :--

"And urges upon the bakers of Ireland the advisability of directing their energies towards the public ownership or municipalisation of the manufacture and sale of bread, as, in the opinion of Congress, this is the most practical method of abolishing this and other evils connected with the trade."

He agreed that night work should be abolished, but it was a question of method. He was in favour of municipal ownership.

Mr. South seconded the amendment.

After discussion, in which Messrs. Deane, Irvine, Murray, Canty and Alderman M'Carthy took part, the amendment was adopted by 40 to 10, and passed as a substantive motion.

NATIONALISATION OF RAILWAYS.

Mr. W. J. Murray (Belfast) moved :--

"That this Congress desires to re-affirm its previous resolutions in favour of the nationalisation of Irish railways and canals as a stimulus and practical help in the development of Irish industries, which are now so heavily handicapped by high freights and fares."

He said the condition of the workers on the railways and canals in Ireland was very deplorable, and the freight rates were higher in Ireland than in England, Scotland, and Wales. If there was a proper railway system in Ireland the workers would be carried out of the towns into the pleasant and healthy country after their day's work was done. In Belgium they had a State-owned system, and there was nothing in these islands to compare with the beneficial results attained under that system.

Mr. Thomas Murphy (Dublin) seconded, and said the railways in Ireland were worked solely in the interests of the capitalists and the highly-paid officials. The workmen should take every opportunity to urge the nationalisation of railways. Why waste time in opposing emigration? Didn't the railways encourage it? In Germany last year the State railways handed over $37\frac{1}{2}$ millions to the State. If they had the ownership of the railways they could develop the industries of the country, and assist trade and commerce.

Councillor Daly (Dublin) was opposed to the resolution on the ground that their acquisition by the British Government would not lead to any benefit to the country. He was in favour of nationalisation, but British purchase was not that. If there was an amendment that the County Councils bought the railways, he would support it.

Mr. Stewart (Belfast) supported the resolution.

The resolution was adopted.

CO-OPERATION AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. Lumsden (Dublin) moved :--

"That this Congress is of opinion that immediate steps should be taken to establish on a practical basis a co-operative organisation which would be the means of welding more closely together the workers of this country, and at the same time helping the development of native industries."

Mr. O'Lehane, P.L.G., seconded, and referred to the resolution passed at last Congress appointing a committee, and to that committee's report presented to the Parliamentary Committee.

Councillor Lynch (Cork) said he hoped that in any co-operative system in Ireland there would be a preference for Irishmen and Irish goods.

Mr. Stewart (Dublin) said that recent experiments in co-operation in Dublin had not been encouraging, but he was in favour of the principle.

Mr. George Greig, speaking for the Parliamentary Committee, explained that, while agreeing with the principle of the resolution, disclaimed any responsibility for the sub-committe's report, inasmuch as they (the Parliamentary Committee) were not consulted as required by last year's resolution. He maintained that the cooperative movement had not been initiated by trade unionists alone, but by all sections of the community, and that its success depended entirely upon local effort.

The resolution was carried.

The Congress adjourned at 6 p.m. until 9.30 Wednesday morning.

Through the courtesy of the management of the Royal Hippodrome, the delegates witnessed a capital variety performance in the evening.

THIRD DAY .- Wednesday, 10th June, 1908.

Congress re-assembled at 9.30 a.m., the President, Mr. John Murphy, in the chair.

Minutes of second day's proceedings read and confirmed.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

The Parliamentary Committee's Report for the past year was then taken, paragraph by paragraph (see pp. 3-20); and on the motion of Mr. Jas. Callaghan (Belfast), seconded by Mr. Thomas M'Connell (Belfast), was adopted *nem. con*.

IRISH PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

On the motion of Mr. Whitley, seconded by Mr. Chas. Darcus, it was resolved :---

"That this Congress is fortified in expressing the general opinion now held by all sections of the people in Ireland, that the present system of Private Bill Legislation (involving serious, costly, and totally unnecessary delay and damage to the community, and pressing heavily upon trade and agricultural industry) demands immediate reform; and it is absolutely essential, to conduce to such reform and economy, that all necessary and relevant inquiries should be conducted locally, and all the incidental printing executed in Ireland."

A MINIMUM WAGE.

Mr. O'Lehane, P.L.G., moved :-

"That this Congress is of opinion that the time has arrived when a fair minimum wage should be established for all workers."

Mr. Lumsden seconded, and Miss Galway supported the motion, which was adopted.

AMENDMENT OF FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION.

Mr. Whitley moved :-

"That this Congress urges upon the Irish members of Parliament the necessity of having the 'Fair Wages' Resolution amended by inserting the words 'Trade Union rate."

Mr. Leonard (Dublin), in seconding, after referring to a case in point that happened not long ago in Dublin, urged that they should impress on all public boards the necessity of appointing officials for the purpose of visiting and inspecting the factory, workshops or other premises of the persons entrusted with contracts, and asking the persons working on the job to produce their trade society cards.

Messrs. Greig, Murray, and O'Lehane supported the motion.

Mr. James MacDowell (Amalgamated Painters), in supporting the resolution, complained that the Board of Works in Ireland frequently employed labourers and handymen to perform painting and glazing work on the several Government buildings under their control. He trusted the Parliamentary Committee would do all in their power to put a stop to this encroachment upon skilled tradesmen's work, and that they would make such representations to the Board as would in future secure the employment of trade unionists when the Board undertakes painting and similar work by direct labour.

The resolution was adopted.

PUBLIC BODIES AND DIRECT LABOUR.

On the motion of Mr. R. O'Keeffe, seconded by Mr. William M'Loughlin, it was resolved :---

"That this Congress calls on all members of Corporations, County Councils, Poor Law Guardians, and Rural District Councils in Ireland to have all works in connection with same done by direct trade union labour. We consider by so doing they will get better work done, be a saving on the rates, and go some way in solving what is called the 'unemployed problem.'"

PUBLIC BODIES AND WINTER WORK.

Mr. Buckner (Limerick) moved :-

"That this Congress desires to draw the attention of corporate and other bodies to the necessity for getting public work executed in winter time, thereby alleviating the great dearth of employment which exists in the winter months."

Mr. Dinneen seconded.

Passed.

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL BODIES.

Mr. Wm. Murphy proposed, and Mr. Murray seconded :-

"This Congress desires to direct the attention of public bodies, such as Boards of Guardians, Asylums, and other boards that until municipal workshops are established, and in order to give proper effect to the Fair Wages Resolution, it is desirable when giving contracts for supplies, that none but manufacturers be considered, thereby ensuring not only the standard rate of wages being paid and the work being done by qualified tradesmen, but a saving to the rates of middlemen's profit."

The resolution was adopted.

PRINTING CONTRACTS.

Mr. John Christie (Limerick) moved :-

"This Congress again expresses strong condemnation of the system of tendering for printing for public boards in Ireland without the enforcement of the fair contracts clause, whereby the legitimate interests of fair employers, competent workmen, and local ratepayers are unprotected from shoddy materials, "scab" and boy labour, and sweating conditions so detrimental to Irish

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industrial progress and development; and we demand that the quality of the goods and workmanship should always have the best test in every contract determined by tender; and value and promptitude in the execution of work be the chief factors, compared with the nominal 'lowest prices' tender for each contract."

He said it was time every public body was induced to have fair wages resolution on their books.

Mr. Michael Sullivan (Consolidated Bookbinders) seconded the resolution, which was passed, an addendum being added as follows :--

"And, further, that no firm be eligible to compete for Government or public contracts unless they employ fair labour on all classes of work."

SANITARY AND WATER INSPECTORS.

Mr. John Kelly (Operative Plumbers) moved :-

"That all public bodies, Corporations, and Poor Law Boards, should have none but qualified plumbers for the positions of sanitary officers and water inspectors."

He said this resolution had been adopted at previous Congresses, and though there had been no public results it would be well to adopt it again.

Mr. Walsh (Dublin) seconded.

Mr. Murray (Belfast) opposed the resolution, while Mr. Greig said they should have properly qualified and efficient officials to fill such important positions.

Considerable discussion took place, in which Messrs. Campbell, Kerr, M'Carron, T.C.; Callaghan, Egan, T.C., and M'Loughlin took part.

Mr. Kelly having replied, the resolution was passed with a few dissentients.

THE LIVING-IN SYSTEM.

Mr. M. J. O'Lehane, P.L.G., Irish Drapers' Assistants' Association) moved :--

"That this Congress again condemns the present system of boarding and lodging shop employes as being most objectionable from every point of view, more especially from the fact that it prohibits a large and intelligent class from exercising the ordinary rights of citizenship; and we declare that the Truck Acts should be amended so as to make a continuance of the system impossible."

He said they believed the men should have perfect freedom as regarded where they should live and what they should have to eat. Another great objection to the system was that it disfranchised assistants, and nowhere was there a class who would exercise their votes more intelligently.

Mr. James Feenan (Belfast) seconded, and told the Congress that in one particular firm in Belfast the department which paid the biggest dividend was that in which the living-in system was in vogue. The average cost of keeping assistants in that house was 2s. 9d. per week. They gave more than that to the pauper. He had himself seen assistants going out to buy their goods in preference to eating the food supplied in the house.

Mr. Callaghan supported the motion.

Mr. Murphy, P.L.G. (Cork) said they should never cease exposing those employers who compelled their employes to live-in under the conditions described.

The President said the workhouse was an undesirable place to live in, but he did not see much difference in the conditions which existed in a Belfast house where the assistants lived in. In this supposed enlightened age such systems should be wiped out completely, and he had hearty sympathy with the shop assistants.

The resolution was carried.

THE TRUCK ACT.

Miss Mary Galway (Belfast) moved :-

"That all deductions from wages in the form of fines inflicted as punishment for alleged offences or as indemnity for spoiled work should be rendered illegal, either by a special Act of Parliament or by a requisite amendment of the Truck and Factory Acts."

She said she had prepared a list of some of the more glaring cases in which fines had been imposed and sent it to the Chief Secretary. The women suffered in this matter because of their unorganised helpless condition. In Belfast it often happened that the whole price of their cuts of cloth was taken off them. The local trades society had exposed the barefaced robbery that was carried on in almost all public works in the city in which women were employed, and she hoped that the Parliamentary Committee which was now sitting would recommend the abolition of all fines. She did not know of any place where fines were more frequent or heavier than they were in Belfast, and it was important that something should be done without delay to provide a remedy. "We have," Miss Galway added, "the most unscrupulous lot of employers to deal with in the civilised world." The speaker urged the Congress to press the Government to put an end to a cruel system of robbery.

Mrs. M'Caughey seconded the resolution, which was supported by Councillor Lynch (Cork) and Mr. W. Murray (Belfast), and adopted unanimously. OUTWORKING IN THE TAILORING TRADE. Councillor M'Carron (Londonderry) moved :----

"That this Congress urges upon the Parliamentary Committee the necessity of having the Factory and Workshops Act amended so as to make it imperative on all employers in the tailoring trade to provide sufficient and suitable workshops for all those in their employment, as in our opinion, home working is the chief cause of the sweating system. Further, as long as employers are allowed to send their work to people's homes, complete and efficient workshop inspection is impossible without an enormous and absurd increase in the number of inspectors. It is also our opinion that where bedrooms or living rooms are used as workshops they become a danger to the public health, and tend to demoralise those engaged therein."

Councillor Lynch (Cork) seconded. The motion was supported by Messrs. Graham, M'Loughlin and South, and adopted.

SWEATED INDUSTRIES BILL.

Miss Galway moved :--

"That this Congress desires to express its earnest hope that the Sweated Industries Bill, now before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, will be speedily passed into law, and that its scope may be extended by the committee to include the manufacture and making up of cuffs, collars, and handkerchiefs, blouses and underwear—the workers in these trades needing protection against sweating as much as those specified in the schedule of the Bill."

She urged that women should have the same political rights as men, and that they should be admitted to Parliament. Men had sufficient to do in looking after matters which directly concerned them, and women's interests were neglected because they were not properly understood.

Mrs. M'Caughey seconded the motion, which was passed.

STEAM ENGINES (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Mr. Wm. Murphy moved; Mr. Hanlon seconded, and it was resolved :--

"That inasmuch as the Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill passed the ordeal of a Select Committee inquiry in 1901 without amendment, this Congress instructs its Parliamentary Committee to urge upon the Government and the Irish Party the necessity of having this measure placed upon the Statute Book at the earliest opportunity."

INSPECTION OF BOILERS.

Mr. R. Emery (Locomotive Engine Drivers) moved :-

"That this Congress calls upon the Government to prepare a Bill for the greater safeguarding of human life and property from accidents by explosions of locomotive steam boilers or fireboxesIst, by providing for the proper inspection and testing of locomotive boilers by the Board of Trade; 2nd, by providing certificates of competency by the Board of Trade for drivers in charge of boilers and engines, and insisting that all such shall be in possession of such certificates, and that, where attendants are left solely in charge of boilers of steam, rail, or motor carriages, that such men be in possession of a certificate of competency, and be senior attendants; 3rd, that it be embodied in this Bill that no man receive a certificate who has not done five years on the footplate as fireman, and that applicants for such certificates must pass through the various stages of locomotive work as at present—cleaner, fireman, then driver."

He hoped the Parliamentary Committee would press the matter forward to the proper quarter, so that locomotive boilers might be inspected by Government inspectors, as other classes of steam boilers were, and so prevent the possibility of such accidents on their railways as sometimes occured, and the consequent loss of life and limb. The second portion of the resolution was intended to ensure that only competent men were placed in charge of locomotive engines. That would increase the safety of the public, protect the property of the various companies, and raise the status of locomotive men.

Mr. J. Boyd (Belfast) seconded the motion.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT-3.

Mr. Darcus reported that the Standing Orders Committee recommended that the motions on the supplemental agenda be taken in the order printed after the principal agenda had been disposed of; but that it be an instruction to the Secretary that in future any propositions sent in after the time fixed by Standing Order 6 are to be rejected. Also that leave be given to refer to the projected Labour Paper in Dublin, and to the strike of Paviors in Cork. That the Congress do not adjourn until business is finished; and that the proposer and seconder only of remaining resolutions on the paper be allowed to speak.

On the motion of Mr. Whitley, seconded by Mr. Greig, the report was adopted.

RAILWAYMEN'S INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES DEMAND SHORTER HOURS.

Mr. Thos. Ward (A.S.R.S.), Belfast moved :-

"That this Congress, while duly observing the evolution in the methods of railway transit (by the introduction of larger and more powerful locomotives, the running of longer and heavier trains, and the adoption of other modern means of traction, resulting in the railway companies securing greater economies in working) which have so largely increased the responsibilities and risks and mental and physical strain upon the men so engaged on long runs and continuous duty, is of the opinion that the circumstances of their condition demand immediate relief by the adoption of a shorter working day, and appeals to all workers to help to secure by organised effort, in addition to Parliamentary interference, an eight hours day."

He said that the safety of the travelling public depended upon the rank and file of the railway service, and a sense of discontent did not conduce to the exact performance of duties. The conditions of the Irish railwaymen were far below the standard of the Scottish and English companies. He proceeded to give some comparisons of the standard hours worked on the railways in the Three Kingdoms. The men employed on the eight-hour system in England and Wales were 41 per cent ; in Scotland, 31 per cent. ; and in Ireland only 12 per cent. That referred to men working in the traffic and locomotive. Those working ten hours per day-standard hours, not actual hours of work-in England and Wales were 44 per cent. ; in Scotland, 33 per cent.; and in Ireland, 40 per cent. Here the Irish figure was higher, comparatively, because these were longer hours. Next he came to the twelve-hour system-one which they were determined to abolish, because a twelve-hour day, as a standard rate, was too long for any railwayman, no matter in what capacity he was employed. In the twelve-hour day there were in England and Wales 15 per cent. of the men ; in Scotland, 36 per cent. ; and in Ireland, 48 per cent.

Mr. Thos. Murphy (Dublin) seconded, and the resolution was adopted.

CHARACTER NOTE BILL.

Mr. E. W. Stewart (Shop Assistants Union) moved :-

"That this Congress heartily approves of the Character Note Bill, whereby it is sought to be made compulsory upon employers in those occupations wherein the reference system exists to give a person leaving or being dismissed from their employment a written character note as to his or her general conduct and competence when such reference is applied for. And we further urge that any employer refusing same or making false statements in such references should be liable to a penalty of £25.

He said that the present state of the law left employes entirely at the mercy of venemous employers who desired to injure an exemploye by giving an indifferent reference or withholding one altogether. As the reference system existed in many occupations, and notably in the distributive trade, and as it was almost impossible for a shop assistant to obtain employment without a satisfactory reference from the last employer, they desired to make the giving of such compulsory upon employers. He had known many cases of hardship occur through employers spitefully refusing a reference, simply through chagrin at the departure of an assistant or manager, or on account of some personal differences having no bearing upon the trade ability and capacity of the employe. It was unjust that employers should wield this unfettered power to injure others, and while he did not allege that such action was very general, still cases occurred, and the only remedy was an alteration of the law on the subject.

Mr. Ward (A.S.R.S., Belfast) seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

WAR DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS.

Mr. Buckner (Limerick) moved: Mr. W. J. Leahy (Dublin) seconded, and it was agreed :--

"That it be an instruction to the Parliamentary Committee to bring under the notice of the War Department the necessity for having a clause inserted in tenders that the contractor shall observe the conditions, hours of labour, and pay the wages recognised and agreed upon between the employers and trade unions of the district (the rate to be paid irrespective of piecework earnings) in which the work is carried on, and a schedule of wages paid shall be posted in some conspicuous place in the works where the work is done. Failing such agreement as to conditions, hours, or wages, those in operation in the nearest town or district in which the work is carried on under such agreement shall be taken to apply; any firm or contractor not recognising the above-mentioned conditions on all their work, shall be deemed an 'unfair' house, and not eligible for Government work."

FEMALE FACTORY INSPECTOR.

On the motion of Miss Galway, seconded by Mrs. M'Caughey, it was resolved :---

"That we urge upon the Government the necessity for the appointment of an additional female inspector of factories whose whole time would be devoted to the work of inspection in Ireland, as we believe such appointment essential for the protection of the female workers of the country."

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE.

Mr. E. L. Richardson, J.P., moved :-

"That this Congress strongly urges upon the Government the necessity of immediately promoting a measure for compulsory insurance under the Workmen's Compensation Act, which came into force on the 1st July, 1907."

Mr. James Larkin seconded. Passed.

TRADE UNION PROPAGANDA AND REPRESENTATION. Alderman M'Carthy (Kilkenny) moved :--

"That as the activities of our Parliamentary representatives have for many years past been almost entirely devoted to the

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interests of the tenant farmers and landlords, this Congress declares that a systematic trade union propaganda campaign should be undertaken, for the purpose of organising the forces and directing attention to the demands of the artisans and labourers of Ireland; and this Congress further declares that organised labour should claim, and make every effort to secure, proportionate representation in Parliament and in the local councils of the country."

Mr. M. Moore, P.L.G. (Kilkenny) seconded.

Mr. James Feenan (Belfast) moved as an addendum :--

"That it be an instruction to the Parliamentary Committee to enter into negotiations with the proper authority with a view to securing representation for Irish trade unionists at open conferences called to select Parliamentary candidates."

After some discussion the addendum was withdrawn, and the motion passed.

LABOUR REPRESENTATION.

Mr. D. R. Campbell (Belfast) moved :--

"That this Congress of Irish trades unionists heartily recommends to the trades unions of this country an immediate affiliation with the Labour Party to promote the formation of independent labour representation in Ireland."

He said that last year the Congress gave voice to a pious opinion on the subject, but on the present occasion he proposed to go a little better, and recommend the trades unions of the country to affiliate with the Independent Labour Party. That the Labour Party had voiced the opinions of the organised workers he thought could not be gainsaid. The chief objection of the one-time trade unionist was that trade unionists should take not part in politics, and that was quite true so long as politics meant party politics, but if there was anything in connection with politics that did not affect them all, then he would withdraw the resolution. But politics which meant all that was going to govern them, and surround and take care of their life socially and individually, was a thing they should all take an interest in. They had been content hitherto to send to Parliament men who had glib tongues, and were able to help themselves, but he held that no person should be asked to do another's work unless he was recompensed, if it was necessary. The miners had decided to affiliate with the Labour Party by a majority of two to one, and at the next General Election the miners' representatives must go back to the House of Commons as members of the Independent Labour Party. He appealed to the delegates that inasmuch as the Labour Party had voiced in no uncertain sound the demand of the organised workers during the last two years, that they should recommend Irish trades unions to affiliate to the party, keeping in mind the old saying-"The Lord helps those who help themselves."

Mr. Alexander Stewart (Belfast) seconded. He entirely disagreed with the opinion that Parliamentary representation in any way detracted or diminised their usefulness in the trades unionist cause. He thought that when the opportunity afforded they ought to assist in this development of trades unionism.

The resolution was passed, a few of the delegates dissenting.

PRACTICAL HELP.

On the motion of Mr. Darcus, seconded by Councillor Daly, it was resolved :--

"That in the opinion of this Congress much more practical help could be given to the work of the Parliamentary Committee during the year if each delegate and his constituent society embodied and materialised the resolutions adopted during the sittings of Congress by bringing the matters discussed more prominently before their fellow-workers and the various public boards in their several localities by deputations and other methods."

BALANCE SHEET.

Alderman M'Carthy and Mr. Campbell (Auditors) presented a report on the finances of the Congress, which showed a balance to credit of £135 9s. 6d. Several suggestions having been made as to the closing of the Congress accounts a week before the opening day, the balance sheet was passed. (See statement of accounts, &c., page 61).

IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES.

Councillor M. Egan, J.P. (Cork), moved, Mr. William Gardiner (Belfast) seconded, and it was resolved :---

"That in the opinion of this Congress we deplore the continual importation of such vehicles as tramcars, railway and private carriages, floats, vans and waggons into this country; and we call on all railway and tram companies, traders and merchants, to encourage home industry by insisting on having their vehicles manufactured in Ireland. The members of the community who foster and encourage such importation are unworthy the support of the public."

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT-4.

Mr. Darcus reported that the attention of the Standing Orders Committee had been directed to standing order *re* qualification of delegates, and they report that one delegate had been brought before them on the subject of his credentials. The Committee, after full consideration, are of the opinion that said delegate's credentials are not strictly in conformity with the obvious meaning and intention of Standing Order No. 2; but no formal objection having been made by any delegate to the Standing Orders Committee, they felt that under the circumstances it would be in the best interests of the Congress to take no action in the matter. But that this should not form a precedent for future guidance.

Mr. Deane (Belfast) wanted to know who was responsible for permitting a non-eligible delegate to sit. He mentioned that the credential of the delegate referred to in the Standing Orders Committee Report should have been rejected by the Parliamentary Committee.

Mr. Richardson explained that the Parliamentary Committee had no authority to reject the credential of any delegate. That duty devolved entirely upon the Standing Orders Committee, who had the sole control of the Congress proceedings.

After further discussion the report was adoped.

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL BODIES, &C.

Mr. Walsh (Brassfounders), Dublin, moved :--

"That this Congress condemns the system practised by corporations, poor law boards, and other public bodies, in giving contracts to firms that are only agents for foreign manufacturers, and do not even keep a single tradesman in their employ; and that we call upon these bodies, the clergy of all denominations, the heads of religious houses, drapers, and the public at large, to encourage home-made brass work, made under fair conditions of labour according to the recognised trade union rules of the district; and to insert clauses in all contracts against the sub-letting of any work supplied to them, and, where possible, to see it in course of manufacture."

Mr. Sullivan seconded. Passed.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE INSPECTION.

Mr. Gardiner (Belfast) moved, Councillor Egan, J.P. (Cork), seconded, and it was resolved :--

"That in the opinion of this Congress it is of the first importance that a practical coachmaker should be appointed to the position of Hackney Carriage Inspector, as we believe it is against the interests of the public health and the Coachmakers' Society alike that inexperienced individuals should hold the position of inspectors of hackney carriages without the assistance of practical men, and that the attention of the Parliamentary Committee be called to this grievance."

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP SANITATION AND VENTILATION. Mr. John Walsh moved :---

"That in the opinion of this Congress the existing facilities for sanitary accommodation in most of the workshops of the country is inadequate and ventilation very defective, and directs the attention of the Inspector of Factories especially to the want of wash-hand conveniences in brassfounders, plumbing, and other establishments connected with the metal and engineering industries, and to the entire absence of proper means of ventilation, particularly in wet weather."

He complained that although this resolution had been on the agenda for many years past nothing had been done.

Mr. Larkin seconded the motion.

Mr. Richardson said it was not fair that new delegates to Congress should state that nothing had been done in the matter of the various resolutions that had been brought forward in past years. The Parliamentary Committee had done all in their power to rectify their complaint, and as a proof he read from the Congress report of 1907 an extract from a letter from the factory inspector for Dublin district in regard to the Brassfounders' complaint, in which he asked to be supplied with the names of any firms where irregularity in this respect is known. The Committee had made repeated applications for that information without effect, and they, therefore, could do nothing further.

The resolution was passed.

COMPULSORY CULTIVATION OF LAND.

Mr. C. Bunworth moved :--

"That this Congress requests the Parliamentary Committee to instruct the Labour Party in the House of Commons, in conjunction with the Irish Party, to have a scheme framed and submitted to Parliament by which the Land Act could be amended, compelling owners of land to cultivate in proportion to the extent of their holdings. We believe it would materially assist in stopping the large influx of labourers from rural districts into the cities and towns of Ireland—a system which works out to the detriment of the workers in those places."

Councillor Lynch seconded. Passed.

CONGRESS FOR 1909.

On the invitation of Mr. Buckner (for Mr. Harvey, secretary Limerick Trades Council), seconded by Mr. Stephen Dinneen, it was unanimously resolved that the Congress for 1909 he held in Limerick.

THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE.

The following was the result of the ballot for the Parliamentary Committee for the ensuing year:-C. Bunworth, Cork, A.S.R.S., 14; Stephen Dinneen, Limerick, Irish Bakers' Union, 50; Michael Egan, T.C., J.P., Cork, U.K. Soc. Coachmakers, 45; Mary Galway, Belfast, Textile Operatives, 49; George Greig, Belfast, National Amalgamated Union of Labour, 32; James Larkin, Dublin, Dockers' Union, 32; P. J. Lea, Dublin, Dublin Operative Bakers, 23; John Murphy, Belfast, Typographical Association, 48; Thomas Murphy, Dublin, A.S.R.S., 10; W. J. Murphy, Dublin, U.K. Brushmakers, 20; James M'Carron, Derry, Amalgamated Society of Tailors, 53; Richard O'Keeffe, Dublin, Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, 13; M. J. O'Lehane, P.L.G., Dublin, Irish Drapers' Assistants, 28; Henry Rochford, Dublin, Hairdressers' Assistants, 31; E. W. Stewart, Dublin, Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, 36.

The following were declared elected :--

53 Councillor M'Carron, Tailors.

50 Mr. Stephen Dinneen, Bakers.

49 Miss Mary Galway, Textile Operatives.

48 Mr. John Murphy, Printers.

45 Councillor Egan, J.P., Coachmakers.

Mr. E. W. Stewart, Shop Assistants.

2 Mr. George Greig, Labourers.

32 Mr. James Larkin, Dockers.

VOTES OF THANKS.

Councillor James M'Carron (Derry), in moving a vote of thanks to the local Reception Committee, said that Belfast was coming to the front, so far as genuine trades unionism was concerned, more rapidly and more earnestly than any other town in the United Kingdom. The people of Belfast were thinking of the interest of the workers, and party politics was going to divide them no longer (applause).

Councillor Lynch (Cork) seconded the motion, which was enthusiastically adopted and responded to by Mr. W. J. Murray.

On the motion of Councillor Egan, J.P. (Cork), seconded by Councillor Daly (Dublin), a similar vote was accorded to the various firms who had granted permission to the delegates to visit their establishments.

A vote of thanks was given to the Press, on the proposition of Mr. W. J. Leahy (Dublin), seconded by Alderman M'Carthy (Kilkenny), and a similar compliment having been paid to the president, on the motion of Mr. P. Murphy, P.L.G. (Cork), seconded by Mr. Thomas Murphy (Dublin),

The proceedings of the Congress concluded.

The Municipal Tramway Committee kindly placed the entire city tramway system at the convenience of the delegates.

Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908

GREETINGS FROM SCOTTISH CONGRESS. The following letter was received :--

"Scottish Trades Union Congress, Parliamentary Committee. 156 George Street.

Glasgow, June 4th, 1908.

Dear Mr. Richardson,—I understand your Congress meets next week. I am directed by the Parliamentary Committee of our Congress to convey to your delegates their most cordial greetings and best wishes, and to express the hope that their labours will eventually result in much gain to their fellow-workers.—With kind regards and best wishes, yours fraternally,

GEO. CARSON, Sec."

The Secretary was instructed to forward a suitable acknowledgment.



IRISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS, 1894-1908.

Year.	No. of Delegates.	Locality.	President.	Secretary.	Treasurer.	
1894 1895 1896 1897 1898 1899 1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908	$ \begin{array}{r} 119\\ 121\\ 93\\ 86\\ 90\\ 62\\ 77\\ 73\\ 98\\ 86\\ 74\\ 72\\ 72\\ 87\\ 85\\ \end{array} $	Dublin Cork Limerick Waterford Belfast Londonderry Dublin Sligo Cork Newry Kilkenny Wexford Athlone Dublin Belfast	 Thomas O'Connell (Carpenter) J. H. Jolley (Printer) James Dalton (Printer) P. J. Leo (Pork Butcher) Richard Wortley (Tailor) James M'Carron (Tailor) George Leahy, P.L.G. (Plasterer) * Alex. Bowman, T.C. (Flax Dresser) Wm. Cave, Alderman (Bootmaker) Walter Hudson, M.P. (A.S.R.S.) Wm. Walker, T.C. (Carpenter) James Chambers, P.L.G. (Saddler) James M'Carron, T.C. (Tailor) John Murphy, P.L.G. (Printer) 	", ", ", ", ", E. L. Richardson, T.C. ", ", ", ", ",	Patrick Dowd. J. H. Jolley. " P. J. Tevenan. Alex. Taylor, T.C. Geo. Leahy, P.L.G. " E. W. Stewart. " "	

*In 1901 and from 1903 the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for the year was also President of the Congress.

BALANCE SHEET of Fifteenth Irish Trades Union Congress, Belfast, 1908.

INCOME.	EXPENDITURE.					
£ s. d.	£ s. d.					
To Balance from last Congress 119 5 1	By Standing Orders Committee 2 10 0					
» " " Dublin Reception Committee 10 5 0	" Congress Secretaries 200					
"84 Delegates' Fees at 15s 63 0 0	"Tellers 0 10 0					
"Affiliation Fees 74 17 9	"Auditors 0 10 6					
" Sale of Congress Reports 7 5 6	" B. Doyle, Printer 38 7 0					
	"Attendants (Dublin Congress) 100					
	"Hall Porter " 0 10 0					
	" P.C. Meetings 59 0 0					
	"Secretary's Honorarium 20 0 0					
	" Treasurer's " 5 0 0					
the state of the second s	" Banking Expenses 0 5 0					
	" Postage, stationery, &c. (Treasurer) 0 15 6					
	"Secretary's Petty Cash Account 6 10 0					
	" Refund Limerick Typo. Association 0 15 0					
	" Co-operation Committee's Expenses 0. 9 10					
	" Labour Bulletin 1 1 0					
	" Balance in hands 135 9 6					
£274 13 4	£274 13 4					

Audited and found correct.

JOHN M'CARTHY, DAVID CAMPBELL, } Auditors. Fifteenth Annual Irish Trades Congress,

AFFILIATION FEES.

					3.	8.	u.
Dublin Silk Weavers	A. 1 4	1.1.1.1			1	1	0
Amalgamated Carpenters					5	10	0
Typographical Association (Exec	utive)				and the second s	10	0
	erick Branch	h)			100 Aug 201	10	0
Amalgamated Society of Railway	Servants	A. 1 1 1	A		10	0	0
Royal Liver Agents Union					0	8	4
Amalgamated Society Tramway	and Vehicle	Workers			1	10	0
Dublin United Stationary Engine					1	2	7
Irish Bakers' Amalgamated Unic					1	10	0
Irish Linen-Lappers Union			***		0	15	0
Dublin Operative Brassfounders			***		0	12	9
Amalgamated Cabinetmakers (D	ublin Branel	h)	··· . · · · · ·		0	3	80
Dublin Operative Coopers	a				2	2	
Belfast Hackle and Gill Makers			***		0	8	4
Amalgamated House and Ship Pa	ainters				1	10	0
Electrical Trades Union (Dublin		***			0	4	2
Textile Operatives' Society				***	1	10	0
Belfast Journeymen Butchers		No.		***	0	14	1
Limerick Trades Council				***	1	0	0
Bookbinders (Dublin Branch)		1. 2 2 57			0	16	8
Amalgamated Society Tailors					3	10	0
Dublin Independent Stationary I	Engine Driv	ers .			0	13	4
Belfast Bakers' Society	the total	Martin Party and	1. 70 0		1	8	4
Dublin Journeymen Hairdresser	8	3.0 = = =:	See. 3 22		0	6	0
Dublin Corporation Labourers					1	10	0
Belfast and Dublin Engine Drive	ers	1	tere in the later		1	0	0
Belfast Trades Council					3	0	0
Amalgamated Union Labour	A. Carrier		10 0 0 0		1	10	0
Flaxdressers' Union					1	10	0
Derry Dock Labourers		***		***	0	16	8
Irish Drapers' Assistants				***	3	15	0
Dublin Typographical Society			2002 5 5		2	10	0
U. K. S. Coachmakers					1	10	0
Belfast Branch Brushmakers			and the offe		0	3	4
Dublin Branch Boilermakers	***				0	10	. 0
Dublin Sheet Metal Workers			See. 2	***	0	5	0
Kilkenny Trades Council		2.			1	0	0
Dublin "		***			3	0	00
Cork " "	***		***		1	0	
Dublin Saddlers' Society	See. 1.	***	avr		0	5	6
Dublin Branch Brushmakers				***	0	5	0
Belfast Typographical Society		1	here the		2	0	0
Limerick Mechanics' Institute	***			***	0	5	0
Drogheda Trades Council					1	0	0
Dublin Operative Bakers			THE THE P		1	10	0
Shop Assistants' Union			***		0	10	0
Dublin Operative Plumbers					0	15	0
Amalgamated Furnishing Trade	88	100 C 100			1	8	4
" Wood Cutting Ma		Sector And	See 5 3		1	8	4
" Litho Printers (B		h)	and the second		0	Contraction of the	6
Dublin Paviors' Society					0	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	6
Limerick Branch Bakers' Amal	gamated Uni	ion			0		4
Belfast Dock Labourers	die de la composition				1	10	0
						-	-

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Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908.

List of Delegates.

Amalgamated Union Carpenters—Laurence Corrigan, 25 Erne Street, Dublin. (Dublin 5th Branch)—E. J. O'Neill, 35 Lower Gloucester Street. (Dublin 6th Branch)—R. O'Keeffe, Newtown Park, Blackrock.

Amalgamated House and Ship Painters-James M'Dowell, 31 Darley Street, Harold's Cross.

Amalgamated Society Litho. Printers-W. D. Darlon, Belfast.

Amalgamated Tramway and Vehicle Workers—A. Farrell, 104 Hillman Street. R. J. Moore, 14 Walbeck Street, Belfast.

Amalgamated Cabinetmakers-M. Leonard, 12 Little Denmark Street, Dublin.

 Amalgamated Tailors—James M'Carron, T.C., Derry. John M'Mahon, 28 St. Alban's Road, Dublin.
 (Dublin Emerald Branch)—John Moloney, T.C., 10 Norfolk Market. John Breen, 5 Adelaide Place, Dublin.
 (Belfast No. 1 Branch)—G. Burns. Belfast No. 2 Branch)—John Windsor, Abercorn Rooms, Victoria St.

Amalgamated Society Railway Servants—T. Murphy, 1A Findlater Street, Dublin. T. Ward, 29 Eliza Street, Belfast.

Amalgamated Society Wood Cutting Machinists (Belfast No. 1 Branch)-James Noble, 16 Grampian Avenue.

Amalgamated Union of Labour-George Greig, 41 Elgin Street. S. Bradley, 68 Harrybrook Street, Belfast.

Amalgamated Furnishing Trades-Thomas Murray, 9 Mary Street, Cork.

Amalgamated Union Shop Assistants—E. W. Stewart, 179 Clonliffe Road., Dublin. (Belfast Branch)—J. Feenan, 24 Clondara Street. J. A. Coote, 182 Donegall Road, Belfast.

Belfast Trades Council—J. Murphy, 33 Paxton Street. W. J. Murray, 6 Chelsea Street. Alex. Stewart, 38 Church Street, East. D. R. Campbell, 11 Kimberley Street.

Belfast Typographical Society —S. Daley, 5 Little Brunswick Street. Charles Darcus, 30 Delhi Street. H. T. Whitley, 291 Ardenlee Avenue.

Belfast Hackle and Gill Makers-Jas. M'Crossan, 2 Elizabeth Terrace, Ardoyne. Belfast Journeymen Butchers-Jas. Forsythe, 39 Urney Street.

Belfast Bakers' Society-Thomas M'Connell, 58 Old Park Avenue, Belfast. Jas. Irvine, 28 Greenmount Street. Alex. South, 54 Nansen Street.

Edward Deane, Artizan's Hall, Garfield Street.

Belfast and Dublin Engine Drivers and Firemen-R. Emery, 186 Grosvenor Road, Belfast.

J. Boyd, 70 Templemore Avenue.

Boilermakers (Dublin Branch)-Edward Brooks, 36 Gray Street, Dublin.

Bookbinders (Dublin Branch)-M. Sullivan, 3 Synnott Place, Dublin.

Cork Trades Council—Patrick Lynch, T.C., P.L.G., 47 Grattan Street, Cork. P. Murphy, P.L.G., 47 Grattan Street, Cork. C. Bunworth, 47 Grattan Street, Cork. Coachmakers, U.K.S.-Michael Egan, T.C., J.P., Cork. William Gardiner, 31 Walnut Street, Belfast, Dublin Trades Council-John Lumsden, 8 Emerald Cottages, Grand Canal Street. W. M'Loughlin, 85 St. Ignatius Road, Dublin. Dublin Typographical Society-E. H. Hayes, 33 Denmark Street. Dublin Operative Coopers-W. J. Leahy, P.C.C., 25 Blackhall Street. P. J. Quinn, 9 Merchants' Quay. Dublin Operative Brassfounders-John Walsh, 33 Drumcondra Park. Dublin Journeymen Hairdressers-H. Rochford, 28 Fairview. Derry Dock Labourers-Patrick Mallen, 29 Nailor's Row, Derry. Dublin Corporation Labourers-M. Canty, 24 Winetavern Street. T. Cobbe, 24 Winetavern Street. M. J. Tarleton, 24 Winetavern Street. Dublin Paviors-P. T. Daly, T.C., Trades Hall. Dockers Union-James Larkin, 146 Corporation Street, Belfast. P. Cummins, 146 Corporation Street, Belfast. J. Flanagan, 146 Corporation Street, Belfast. Drogheda Trades Council-F. Collins, Duleek Street. Electrical Trades Union (Dublin Branch)-T. J. Sheehan, T.C., 6 Stamar Street, S.C. Road, Dublin. Flaxdressers Trades Union-R. Gageby, J.P., T.C., 17 College Street, Belfast. James Callaghan, 17 College Street, Belfast. Irish Drapers' Assistants-M. J. O'Lehane, P.L.G., 56 Henry Street, Dublin. Irish Bakers Union-S. Dinneen, 23 Mount Vincent Cottages, Limerick. Independent Stationary Engine Drivers (Dublin)-J. Morgan, 20 Lower Gardiner Street. E. Hore, 7 St. Brigid's Cottages, North Strand. Kilkenny Trades Council-Alderman M'Carthy, P.L.G., Kilkenny. M. Moore, P.L.G., Kilkenny. Limerick Trades Council-M. Harvey, 42 Wolfe Tone Street. J. Buckner, Gerald Griffin Street, Lower. Limerick Typographical Association-J. Christie, 3 Mountpleasant Avenue. Operative Bakers and Confectioners (Dublin)-Patrick Brady, 8 Upper Bridge St. P. J. Lea, 8 Upper Bridge Street. Operative Plumbers (Dublin Branch)-J. Kelly, Corporation Buildings, Foley Street, Dublin. Royal Liver Agents Union-J. Hanlon, 21 St. Ignatius Road, Dublin. Textile Operatives-Mary Galway, 31 Crocus Street. Elizabeth McCaughey, Sebastopol Street. Sarah Ogle, 12 Ambrose Street, Belfast. Tinsmiths and Sheet Metal Workers (Dublin)-John Bent, 2 Swift's Row. United Society Brushmakers (Belfast Branch)-J. M. Kerr, 22 Cumberland Street. United Society Brushmakers (Dublin Branch)-W. Murphy, 12 Muckross Parade, N.C. Road.

United Stationary Engine Drivers (Dublin)-J. Coffey, Trades Hall, Capel Street.

E. L. RICHARDSON, J.P., Secretary.

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STANDING ORDERS.

1. Opening Proceedings.—The Congress shall assemble at 9.30 a.m. (except the first day, when the proceedings shall commence at 11 a.m.) prompt, adjourn at 1 p.m., reassemble at 2 p.m., and adjourn at 5 p.m. each day.

2. Delegates' Qualifications.—The Congress shall consist of Delegates who are or have been bona-fide workers, and are legal members of trade societies, and who shall have worked or be working at the trade they represent, or members of trades councils or similar bodies by whatever name they may for the time being be known. The expenses of such Delegates must be defrayed by the association they represent. No delegate shall leave the Congress during the progress of business without the consent of the Chairman. The fee for each Delegate shall be 15s.

3. Financial Support.—That the minimum Annual Contribution from affiliated societies (assessed on their Irish membership) payable to the Treasurer not later than fourteen days previous to the meeting of Congress, shall be One Penny per member from all Societies of 250 members or under; over 250 and up to 500, £1 8s. 4d.; over 500 and up to 1,000, £1 10s. 0d., and £1 for each 1,000, or fractional part thereof, after the first 1,000 members, assessed on Irish membership. Trades Councils shall pay £1 for each 5,000 members or part thereof represented.

4. Standing Orders Committee.—A Standing Orders Committee of five shall be elected from the Members of Congress, whose duties shall be to verify and report upon the credentials of the Delegates, see to the proper conduct of the business of Congress, and have control of the distribution of all literature, introduction of deputations, and other special business not provided for in these Orders. The Standing Orders Committee shall meet not later than half an hour previous to each sitting of Congress for the purpose of the despatch of business.

5. Mode of Voting.—Tellers.—The Voting upon all matters shall be by show of hands. Tellers shall be appointed at the opening of Congress, whose ruling as to numbers shall be final. In cases where the Tellers disagree, the Chairman shall order a re-count.

6. Resolutions.—RESOLUTIONS intended for the Congress, with the name of the proposer, shall be in the hands of the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee at least SIX WEEKS before the meeting of Congress in Whit week, and shall be at once printed and sent out by the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee to the various trades and labour societies and trades councils in Ireland.

7. Amendments to Resolutions.—AMENDMENTS to the propositions on the Agenda, written and signed in the following manner, viz.:—"Amendment to Resolution No. 3, to be proposed by Mr. John Smith, Belfast." must be sent to the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee at least ONE CLEAR WEEK before the meeting of Congress, and shall be printed and in the hands of the Delegates, along with the Parliamentary Committee's Report, on the assembling of Congress, before the commencement of business.

8. Resolutions and Amendments.—ALL RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS must be endorsed by and sent through the authorised officials of trade or labour organisations or trades councils sending Delegates to Congress. The names, addresses, and societies represented by the Delegates shall be printed and ready for distribution at the commencement of Congress.

9. Limitation of Speeches. - The mover of a resolution or amendment and each succeeding speaker, shall be allowed five minutes each. No one shall speak more than once upon each resolution or amendment except the mover of the original motion, who shall be given an opportunity to reply. No second amendment or rider to an original proposition shall be put to a vote until the first amendment is disposed of.

10. Parliamentary Committee.- A Parliamentary Committee of nine including Secretary, shall be elected on the last day of the Congress, whose duties shall be-(1) to endeavour to give practical effect to the resolutions of Congress; (2) to watch all legislative measures directly affecting the question of Labour in Ireland ; (3) to initiate such legislative and other action as Congress may direct ; and (4) generally to support the Parliamentary Committee of the United Trades Congress upon all questions affecting the workers of the United Kingdom. The Committee shall meet quarterly, or at such times as, in the opinion of the Chairman and Secretary, the exigencies of the Labour Movement in Ireland call for immediate action, and shall present a report of their proceedings to the next Congress. No candidate shall be eligible for election on the Parliamentary Committee unless he is a Delegate from his own trade society, labour union, or trades council. In no case shall more than one member of the same trade or occupation, or more than one representative of the same trades council, be allowed to sit, but this condition shall not apply to the election of Secretary. The Secretary shall be elected by Congress, and be *ex-officio* a member of the Congress and the Parliamentary Committee, and shall remain in office so long as his work and conduct give satisfaction to the Parliamentary Committee and the representatives attending the Congress. Should a vacancy occur between the annual meetings of the Congress the Parliamentary Committee shall have power to fill the vacancy.

11. Parliamentary Committee's Report.—The Congress having been duly opened, the Parliamentary Committee shall present their Report for the past year, which shall be laid on the table for discussion, after the disposal of which their tenure of office shall terminate. A printed Balance Sheet, duly certified by the Auditors, to be presented to each delegate on the second day of the meeting.

12. Labour Meeting.--That at least one General Labour Meeting shall be held, under the auspices of the Parliamentary Committee, in each town during the sittings of the Annual Congress—the local trades council to render such assistance in arranging for halls, advertising, &c., as shall be requisite.

13. Suspension of Standing Orders. -Standing Orders shall not be suspended unless previous intimation shall have been given to Standing Orders Committee, and the motion agreed to by a two-thirds vote of the Delegates present.

14. Next Place of Meeting.—Nominations for next place of meeting shall be forwarded to the Secretary for inclusion on the Agenda of Congress, and only places so nominated shall be eligible for consideration

Minor Ulster Hall, Belfast, June 8-10, 1908.

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