

The Martyrdom of Ireland.

THE "TIMES" TURNS SINN FEIN.

WILL SINN FEIN GO RED?

News matter from the "Times," September 27th :—
Early this morning the town of Trim was partially wrecked by armed men.

Large Force of Invaders.

Two hundred of the "Black and Tans" entered the little town of Trim early this morning, singled out the shops and business establishments of those residents alleged to be in sympathy with Sinn Fein, and ransacked, pillaged, and burned all. At noon to-day the town had all the appearance of a bombarded town in the war zone of France. Furniture is piled in the main street, houses are still smouldering, and the people are panic-stricken.

At three o'clock this morning a force of "Black and Tans" entered the town. They visited the Town Hall in Castle Street, licensed premises and a mineral water factory in Market Street, and a drapery establishment in High Street. The doors were smashed in. Petrol was commandeered and poured over the shops, and soon all were on fire. To-day nothing remains but the charred walls.

Editorially the "Times" says :—

"Recognising that they had failed to wean Ireland from Sinn Fein by their proposals for self-government, Ministers have sought an alternative policy in rivaling the intimidation of the Irish Republican Army. Their agents are the "Black and Tans," whose methods have, apparently, been borrowed from their opponents. Presumably they hope that Ireland, between the upper and the nether millstone, will be ground to docility. The hope may be vain. *Even if we discount those racial characteristics which sustained the cause of Irish nationality against the oppression of long centuries, we cannot discount the intelligence of the Irish people. The reign of the coercionist is conditioned by the life of the Government; there is no time limit to the reign of the local terrorist.* [Italics ours.] No Government can conceal from the Irish people the immense progress which their cause has made, and is making, in this country and overseas. Ireland may conclude that she can wait and that the Government cannot. The present conditions in Ireland will not react effectively against Sinn Fein, whose power will remain."

In thorough Northcliffean style the "Times" does the Salome wriggle before stern Sinn Fein. But will it be seduced? Will Sinn Fein make a deal with the life-long imperial enemy of Irish labour and freedom to sell the sacred cause of the working people of Ireland? Who can say? Nevertheless, the duty of militant English revolutionaries is plain: Support and aid the Irish Revolution and when Sinn Fein seizes the reins of political power, carry on the revolutionary fight with the Irish workers, whom a bourgeois government of little local capitalists will not be able to dope with reforms after Ireland's industries have been destroyed and disorganised in her struggle against imperial capitalism. The situation of Sinn Fein in Ireland can stand comparison with organised Labour in England. Carson and his vicious crew in their crazy cupidity are but preparing the ground for Irish Communism. When British Capitalism, beaten and confused, decides to withdraw its shameless adventures—the "Black and Tans," the regulars, the raw recruits of the R.I.C., its monolithic top dogs and those in Dublin Castle—the inexorable law of self-preservation will force socialisation and make close co-operation a necessity in Ireland. If the sepulchral White "Times" turns green

to-day, the peasantry and proletariat of Ireland may turn Red to-morrow.

British Labour Impotent.

The solid phalanx of the bourgeois Press raises its voice in protest against the machinations of the British militants in Ireland. The "Manchester Guardian" calls upon British Labour to put an end to the indescribable agony of the Irish workers—an agony that is well-nigh impossible of visualisation. No sensitive mortal mind can bear to contemplate events in Ireland and the inevitable aftermath. And British Labour refuses to take action. Is there any thing that can stir the beer-sodden emotions of the sluggish British mind? (Thomas, Clynes, Smillie, Bob Williams, Bevin and Gosling will not raise a finger to help Ireland. To offset criticism they ask: Is public sympathy behind us, can organised labour stand the consequences of a general strike? Well, even Liberal public opinion is in sympathy with Irish Freedom. The cocoa millionaires and the Quaker bourgeoisie would even pledge themselves to put the Labour leaders in power, and yet these creatures of preferment are afraid. Because they feel they are an incompetent lot. Are they not fed, fat, and contented with their comfortable houses, their salaries and emoluments? Why should they jeopardise their splendid positions? The Labour delegates jauntily proceeded to Russia; they returned lauding and criticising, but they learnt nothing. Whenever the officials are pressed to take action they conjure up the bugbear of the general strike. They will not follow in the steps that Italian Labour took to stop their Government taking any action, open or covert, against Russia. These methods might easily be copied by organised Labour here to stop England's war on Ireland. The issue could be localised—the dockers, the seamen, the transport workers and the railwaymen could prevent the perpetration of this great Capitalist crime upon their brave fellow-workers across the channel. And if the local workers were victimised by the British Capitalist vultures, should not organised labour in Great Britain, the greatest and richest in the world, give them security and protection. Are not the poverty-stricken and ruined Irish compensating their men who, refusing to fight against their country's freedom, resign from the R.I.C.? Are they not supporting the victimised railwaymen who refuse to transport arms and armed men and the Carson-terrorised workers of Belfast? A scheme of local action, properly worked out, to prevent all munitions and all military officers and men being transported from England to Ireland can and should be put into operation immediately. It would demoralise and disintegrate the forces of reaction and even win public approval. The Labour leaders will not act. They tacitly approve of the Government's war in Ireland. The Imperial rape of the Irish people must be laid squarely at the door of British labour. The Irish workers may well hate and despise the British workers, who benefit by their martyrdom. The Labour leaders who told Lloyd George during the Council of Action crisis that if he persisted in his aggressive attitude toward Russia a situation would arise in England which they could not handle, the Labour leaders who are now selling the miners by way of a datum line to Capitalism, these men will never budge to save the honour of British Labour unless the Rank and File put a bayonet behind them and force them to move.

C.E.E.