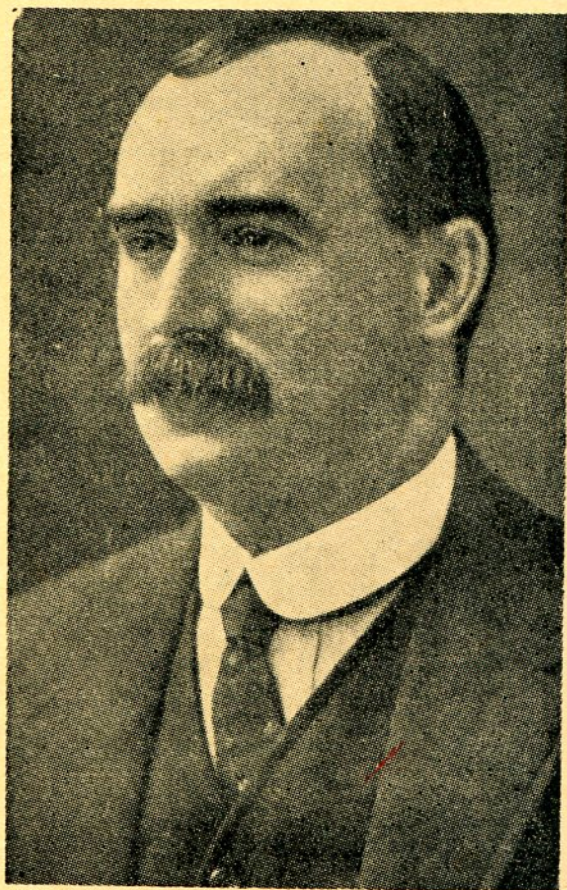


The
James Connolly
Songbook



Published by :
THE CORK WORKERS CLUB

Price - - - - - 15p

OCTOBER BOOKS
99 MOUNT PLEASANT

LIVERPOOL 3
A. C.P.B.M.L.
BOOKSHOP

"No revolutionary movement is complete without its poetical expression. If such a movement has caught hold of the imagination of the masses, they will seek a vent in song for the aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle. Until the movement is marked by the joyous, defiant, singing of revolutionary songs, it lacks one of the distinctive marks of a popular revolutionary movement; it is a dogma of a few, and not the faith of the multitude."

James Connolly

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Introduction

This little songbook is based on a selection of songs and recitation which were performed at a concert, given by James Connolly's comrades of the Socialist Party of Ireland and the Irish Citizen Army, to commemorate the anniversary of his birth. The concert was due to be held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on the 5th June, 1919 with members of the Citizen Army, described in the Souvenir Programme as the "Red Guard of the workers," acting as stewards. However, British Imperialism, which had executed Connolly only three years previously, was intent on coercing those who would

"seek a vent in song, for the aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle "

and acc-

ordingly, the concert was proclaimed under the Defence of the Realm Act (D.O.R.A.). When the people arrived for the concert, they found the Mansion House guarded by armed police and many more police positioned in the nearby streets. Immediately, fully armed groups of the Citizen Army were mobilized. A Citizen Army officer who was trying to resist arrest, fired on the police; his men followed his example and Dublin had its first shooting since Dan Breen and his comrades raised the standard at Soloheadbeg. Several policemen and one civilian were wounded. Later that night, the proclaimed concert was held in the Trades Hall. While the police and the " Red Guard of the workers " faced one another in the street outside,

"the joyous, defiant, singing of revolutionary songs"

could be heard coming from the building.

Among the songs that appeared on the programme were Connolly's rousing "Watchword of Labour" & "A Rebel Song", Meathman Jim Connell's "Red Flag", and the workers' anthem "The International". Many versions of several of these songs have been sung over the years. We are republishing them as they appeared on the Souvenir Programme.

In addition to the songs on that memorable programme, we have included some of Connolly's lesser known recitations and "songs of freedom." The airs of his more popular songs are still well known among workers in Ireland. Many of Connolly's songs, like many working-class songs of the time, were sung to the air of popular songs, but, as many of these airs have long passed on in public memory, we suggest that where possible, workers should adapt his songs to the airs of to-days popular songs and ballads. The music for "Watchword of Labour" was written by J.J. Hughes, a member of the S.P.I. and the music for "A Rebel Song" was by G.W. Crawford, of the Edinburgh Branch of the Socialist Labour Party.

The Cork Workers Club,

October, 1972.

A Rebel Song

Come workers, sing a rebel song, a song of love
and hate;
Of love unto the lowly, and of hatred to the great,
The great who trod our fathers down, who steal our
children's bread,
Whose hand of greed is stretched to rob the living
and the dead.

Chorus

Then sing our rebel song, as we proudly sweep along,
To end the age-long tyranny that makes for human
tears;
Our march is nearer done with each setting of
the sun,
And the tyrant's might is passing with the passing
of the years.

We sing no song of wailing, and no song of sighs
or tears,
High are our hopes, and stout our hearts, and
banished all our fears,
Our flag is raised above us so that all the world
may see,
'Tis Labour's faith and Labour's arm alone can
Labour free.

Chorus

Out from the depths of misery we march with hearts
afame,
With wrath against the rulers false who wreck our
manhood's name;
The serf who licks his tyrant's rod may bend
forgiving knee,
The slave who breaks his slavery's chain a wrathful
man must be.

Chorus

Our army marches onward with its face towards
the dawn,
In trust secure in that one thing the slave may
lean upon,
The might within the arm of him who, knowing
Freedom's worth,
Strikes home to banish tyranny from off the face
of earth.

Chorus.

Arouse!

Arouse ! The rallying cry
Sends its chorus up on high,
Let craven cowards fly
 To the rear;
While we rally to the fight,
To our combat for the Right,
And Oppression put to flight,
 We swear.

For tyrants we have fought,
And our blood (their gold had bought),
They have lavished, caring naught,
 In red streams,
But the fight we have begun,
On this earth shall ne'er be done
Till the light of Freedom's sun
 On us gleams.

At our lot might angels weep,
While we toil, our masters sleep,
What we make our masters keep,
 And our gains,
Are the wage -- to buy our food,
The poor shelter for our brood,
And the fever which our blood
 Ever drains.

By our toil they keep their state,
On our woes they rise, elate,
Yet wonder when our hate
 To them ascends;
Where we build they enter in,
What we earn those spoilers win,
But we swear our slav'ry's sin
 Soon shall end.

Then arouse ! ye workers all,
Braving scaffold, sword, and ball,
And at Labour's trumpet call
 Quick appear,
For the day we long have sought,

For which our fathers fought --
The day with Freedom fraught
Now is here !

O Slaves of Toil!

When man shall stand erect at last,
And drink at Wisdom's fountain,
And to the earth in scorn shall cast
The chains his limbs are bound in;
Then from his loins a race shall spring,
Fit peer of gods and heroes,
O, blest be they whose efforts bring
That day and hour more near us.

Chorus

O, Slaves of toil, no craven fear,
Nor dread of fell disasters
Need daunt ye now, then up, and clear
The earth of lords and masters.

Like brazen serpent raised on high,
In Israelite tradition,
Our cause in each believing eye,
Mean slavery's abolition,
We see the day when man shall rise,
And, firm on science building,
From Theft's thick mask of fraud and lies
Strip all the specious gilding.

Chorus

O, blest are they whom wind and tide
Are wafting fortune's graces,
And blest the man whose blushing bride
Returns his rapt embraces,
And blest is he who has a friend
To shield his name when slandered
But blest o'er all they who contend
And march in Freedom's vanguard.

For Labour's Right

Up brothers up ! The drums are beating,
And see on high the banners wave,
Close up your ranks let no retreating
Be ours while earth contains a slave;
Till all alike our triumph won
Behold the splendour of the sun,
And drink of wisdom's holiest spring,
This is the prize our armies bring.

Chorus

A holy war for Labour's right,
A holy war for Labour's right,
For Labour's cause, for Labour's cause,
Shall win, shall win --- the fight.

O, brothers, we whose hosts uncounted
Must toil to earn a scanty wage;
Whose backs were bent that robbers mounted
Might ride thereon from age to age.
No longer now in thralldom grown
Your strong right hand must take your own;
And by that act to manhood spring !
This is the prize our armies bring !

Chorus

The tyrant hopes a conquering sword
Shall stem the onward march of right
But truth o'er all their barbarous horde
Leads Freedom's host to Freedom's height !
To break the sword of War and Pain
That Peace and Joy o'er Earth may reign
And conquering hosts of Labour sing --
This is the prize our armies bring !

Chorus

When Labour Calls

When Labour calls her children forth,
A waiting world to win,
Earth's noblest breed, true men of worth,
Her ranks shall enter in.
Then, comrades all, prepare that we
May hear that call anon,
And drive the hosts of tyranny
Like clouds before the dawn;
And drive our foes,
And drive our foes,
Our foes like clouds before the dawn.

Thou knowest, long has Labour groaned,
A robbed and beaten thrall,
Whilst Capital, on high enthroned
Reign'd, lording over all;
But Time rolled on, and Earth and Sky
New powers to man revealed,
And Science echoes Labour's cry,
"King Capital must yield,"
At last must yield,
At last must yield,
King Capital at last must yield!

We work and wait till womb of Time
Shall give fair Freedom birth,
To Labour's hosts that hope sublime
Regenerates the earth;
And by that hope we toilers fired
To nobler deeds shall be,
That we may guide, by it inspired,
Our Class to Liberty,
To Liberty,
To Liberty,
To guide our Class to Liberty !

The Red Flag

The People's flag is deepest red,
It shrouded oft our martyred dead;
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
Their hearts blood dyed its every fold.

Chorus

Then raise the scarlet standard high,
Within its shade we'll live and die;
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
We'll keep the Red Flag flying here.

Look round ! The Frenchman loves its blaze
The sturdy German chants its praise;
In Moscow's halls its hymns are sung,
Chicago swells the surging throng.

Chorus- Then raise --

It waved above our infant might,
When all ahead seemed dark as night;
It witnessed many a deed and vow,
We must not change its colour now.

Chorus- Then raise--

It well recalls the triumphs past,
It gives the hope of peace at last;
The banner bright, the symbol plain,
Of human right and human gain.

Chorus- Then raise--

It suits to-day the weak and base,
Whose minds are fixed on pelf and place,
To cringe before the rich man's frown,
And haul the sacred emblem down.

Chorus- But raise--

With heads uncovered swear we all,
To bear it onward till we fall,
Come dungeon dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.

Chorus- Oh raise--

The Flag

Lift that flag and tenderly guard it,
Guard it as a lover would guard his love,
Ours be the shame if aught debarred it
Freely floating our ranks above.
Raise that pledge of our hope, and daring
All that the tyrant can do or essay,
Strike, and the fetters they long are wearing,
From the limbs of Labour shall pass away.

Guard that flag, for, brothers, 'tis ours,
Ours the life-blood that gave it its hue,
For us it waved thro' darkest hours,
Waiting till Labour its destiny knew.
Hail that flag, now floating on high
Free, as the eagle flies to the sun,
Token and sign that men may die
But Freedom persists till all is won.

Pledge that flag, my brothers, your glasses
Never were drained to a holier toast --
Never shall Time reveal as it passes
A grander mission than Labour can boast.
Fill up the glass ! no stinted measure
Will serve to toast this day with me,
"The Cause we love, the Hope we treasure,
The Flag that beckons to Liberty."

"After Ireland is free, says the patriot who won't touch Socialism, we will protect all classes, and if you won't pay your rent you will be evicted, same as now. But the evicting party, under command of the sheriff, will wear green uniforms and the Harp without the Crown, and the warrant turning you out on the roadside will be stamped with the arms of the Irish Republic."

JAMES CONNOLLY.

A Festive Song

Comrades, clasp hands,
The time demands
This night we spend enjoying
The jovial word
Round festive board,
Grim, carking care destroying.
Liquor this night
Shall sparkle bright,
With homage pay to Beauty,
And brave men who
Oft conflict knew,
Shall take a rest from duty.

Chorus

Then fill the cup
With liquor up,
Pledge ev'ry man his neighbour,
That in the light
Of Truth he'll fight
To win the world for Labour.

Comrades, the tears
Our Class thro' years
Hath shed the wide world over,
Have taken root,
And soon the fruit
Our tyrants shall discover;
And when at length
We show our strength,
And send each despot flying,
With joy and mirth,
Like ours, the Earth
Shall hail Oppression dying.

Chorus

For who with zest
Can laugh the best
But he who laughs the longest
And in the fight
'Twixt wrong and right
The laugh is with the strongest;

Since Time began
Fate's mighty plan
The laugh gave to the proudest
But History
Shall tell that we
Did laugh the last and loudest.

Chorus

Then, comrades, toast
Great Freedom's host,
And loudly sing her praises,
And honoured be,
O'er land and sea,
Whoe'er her banner raises,
So, ere we leave,
A wreath we'll weave
Of flow'rs of Earth's best gleanings
With Maid and Wife,
With Hope of Life
Free from a tyrant's scheming.

Chorus.

The International

Arise ye starvings from your slumbers,
Arise ye criminals of want,
For reason in revolt now thunders,
And at last ends the age of cant,
Now away with all superstitions,
Servile masses, Arise ! Arise !
We'll change forthwith the old conditions,
And spurn the dust to win the prize.

Chorus

Then comrades, come rally, the last fight
let us face --
L'Internationale unites the human race,
Then comrades, come rally, the last fight
let us face --
L'Internationale unites the human race.

We're tricked by laws and regulations,
Our taxes strip us to the bone,
The rich enjoy the wealth of nations;
But the poor naught can call their own.
Long have we in vile bondage languished,
Yet we equal are every one;
No rights but duties for the vanquished,
We claim our rights for duties done.

Chorus

The kings defile us with their powder;
We want no war within the land,
Let soldiers strike; for peace call louder,
Lay down arms and join hand in hand.
Should these vile monsters still determine,
Heroes to make us in despite.
They'll know full soon the kind of vermin
Our bullets hit in this last fight.

Chorus

The kings of mines, and ships, and railways,
Resplendent in their vulgar pride,
Have plied their task to exploit always
Those who labour they've e'er decried,
Great the spoil they hold in their coffers,
To be spent on themselves alone;
We'll seize it some day, spite of scoffers,
And feel that we have got our own.

Chorus

We peasants, artisans, and soldiers,
Enrolled among the sons of toil,
Let's claim the earth henceforth for brothers,
Drive the indolent from the soil.
On our flesh long has fed the raven,
We've too long been the vultures prey;
But now, farewell this spirit craven;
The dawn brings in a brighter day.

Chorus.

"Be Moderate"

"Be Moderate," the timorous cry,
Who dread the tyrant's thunder,
"You ask too much, and people fly
From you aghast, in wonder"
'Tis passing strange, and I declare
Such statements cause me mirth,
For our demands most moderate are,
We only want THE EARTH.

Our masters all -- a godly crew
Whose hearts throb for the poor --
Their sympathies assure us, too,
If our demands were fewer.
Most generous souls, but please observe,
What they enjoy from birth,
Is all we ever had the nerve
To ask, that is, THE EARTH.

The Labour Fakir, full of guile,
Such doctrine ever preaches,
And, whilst he bleeds the rank and file,
Tame moderation teaches.
Yet, in his despite, we'll see the day
When, with sword in its girth,
Labour shall march in war array,
To seize its own, THE EARTH.

For Labour long with groans and tears
To its oppressors knelt,
But, never yet to aught save fears
Did hear of tyrant melt.
We need not kneel; our cause is high,
Of true men there's no dearth,
And our victorious rallying cry
Shall be, WE WANT THE EARTH.

Saoirse a Rúin

Thou, saviour yet to be,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Dearer than life to me,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
May all I give to thee,
Grant that mine eyes may see
Thee in thy majesty,
 Saoirse, a rúin!

Hard was our travail past,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Long held in bondage fast,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Weary the road we've passed,
By error's clouds o'ercast,
Thy light breaks in at last,
 Saoirse, a rúin!

Oft hath our master's tongue,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Glibly thy glories sung,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Loudly thy harp they've strung,
Wildly thy praises flung --
 Saoirse, a rúin!

Long have we sought thy light,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Through Oppression's darkest night
 Saoirse, a rúin!
And ne'er shall cease the fight
'Gainst the tyrant's hateful might,
Till thou shalt bless our sight,
 Saoirse, a rúin!
Forth, then we march to-day,
 Freedom our own!
Eager, panting for the fray,
 Freedom our own!

'Neath thy sun's enlight'ning ray
Naught shall our progress stay,
Soon thou shall reign alway,
Freedom our own !

Watchword of Labour

Oh ! hear ye the Watchword of Labour !
The slogan of they who'd be free ;
That no more to any enslaver,
Must Labour bend suppliant knee.
That we on whose shoulders are borne,
The pomp and the pride of the great ;
Whose toil they repay with their scorn,
Must challenge and master our fate.

Chorus

Then send it aloft on the breeze boys !
That watchword the grandest we've known
That Labour must rise from its knees boys !
And claim the broad earth as its own.

Aye ! we who oft won by our valour,
Empire for our Rulers and Lords ;
Yet knelt in abasement and squalor,
To the thing we had made by our swords.
Now valour with worth will be blending,
When answering Labour's command ;
We arise from our knees, and ascending,
To manhood for freedom take stand.

Chorus

Then out from the field and the city,
From workshop, from mill, and from mine ;
Despising their wrath and their pity,
We workers are moving in line,
To answer the watchword and token,
That Labour gives forth as its own ;
Nor pause till our fetters we've broken,
And conquered the spoiler and drone.

Chorus.

The Blackleg

There's a cuckoo in our household,
And he terrifies our young,
For the habits of the traitor,
Have been often told and sung,
Though his feathers flutter softly,
There is murder in his heart,
And all down the toiling ages
He has played the villain's part.

Chorus

Oh, we hate the cruel tiger,
And hyena and jackel;
But the false and dirty blackleg
Is the vilest beast of all.

When we dress our brave battalions,
And confront the Lords of Loot,
We behold the Scab desert us
Ere the guns begin to shoot,
Just to gorge his greedy stomach,
And to save his coward skin,
With salvation in the balance
He betrays his kith and kin.

Chorus

You can tell him 'midst a thousand
By his cringe and by his crawl,
For of dignity or courage
He possesses none at all.
In the aleshop he's a sponger,
In the workshop he's a spy;
He's a liar and deceiver
With low cunning in his eye.

Chorus

Let us flout him in the market,
Let us "cut" him in the street,
Let us jeer him from all places
Where the honest workers meet,
When to his brazen features
Every decent door is slammed,
We will leave him burst and broken
To go down among the damned.

Chorus.

Hymn of Freedom

Air--- The Holy City

Here, at her altar kneeling,
Sweet Freedom we adore,
And swear to hold her honour
As sacred as of yore.
Did all her holy martyrs,
When, recking life as naught,
They went to death to guard the faith
Her love to man had brought.

+ + +

O Freedom ! O Freedom !
Thy worshippers are we ;
Here, kneeling, our allegiance
We render now to Thee.

And as our fathers prayed to see
The glories of her face,
We, at her altar kneeling,
Beseech her longed-for grace ;
She needs no gory sacrifice
Laid on her altar stones,
Our pilgrimage of poverty
For all our faults atones.

O Freedom, etc.

She comes not clothed in majesty,
No terrors in her tone,
Her priesthood is of Labour,
Her service is our own.
To toil, and pain, and penury,
Wherever manhood dwells,
She speaks, and lo ! responsive
The heart of Labour swells.
She builds her altar in our hearts,
Her ritual on our lives,
And they who yield Her service
Lack not the grace that shirves.

O Freedom, etc.

Human Freedom

Air --- Clare's Dragoons
Come, hearken all, the day draws nigh,
When must'ring hosts the cause shall try
Of Labour's right to live and die

Enjoying human freedom;
Then Labour's force shall take the field,
The liberating sword to wield,
For Labour's own right arm must shield
The cause of human freedom.

Chorus

Shout hurra for freedom's host,
For freedom's banner, nobly borne,
Shout hurra, though tempest tossed
Freedom's barque shall ride the storm.

The rights our heroes lives have bought,
The truths our martyrs, dying, taught,
The hearts of men with passion hot,

Prepare for human freedom;
Its roots are in no barren soil,
But, watered by the tears of toil,
Are spreading fast, no storms can spoil
The plant of human freedom.

Chorus

Our Native Land ! alas, the name
Is but a sound to tell our shame,
What land have they whose spirits tame
Brook loss of human freedom ?
When lake and river, hill and dale,
Hear children's cry and women's wail
Of suffering rise on every gale,
For lack of human freedom.

Chorus

Our banner waves o'er many bands,
Thro' mount and ocean-severed lands,
With active brain and skilful hands
Fighting for human freedom;
For ancient feuds no more divide,
And ancient hates we thrust aside,

Our Class, we know, thro' battle's tide
Must bear the flag of freedom.

Chorus

For this, since ere the world began,
Their troubled course the ages ran,
And earth, in long travail for man,
Bare seed of human freedom.

For us and ours that heritage
Was handed down from age to age,
That we might write on Hist'rys page --
The Birth of Human Freedom.

Chorus.

Freedom's Sun

Air -- Love's Young Dream

O, Freedom's song by workers sung,
Rings loud and clear,
O'er every land, in every tongue,
Afar, anear;
Time passeth by,
Old systems die --

Oppression's course outrun,
But Earth, rejoiced, salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun,
O, rejoicing Earth salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun,

O, all men then their lives may live
From grim want free,
And all the joys that life can give,
Their lot shall be;
And care shall fly,
And sea and sky

Acclaim the work well done,
And Earth, rejoiced, salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun,
O, rejoicing Earth salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun,

No longer now revolt shall hide
In holes and caves,
Whilst those who have Oppression's pride
But find their graves;
No tyrant's ban
Can now make man
The truths of knowledge shun,
But Earth rejoiced salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun,
O, rejoicing Earth salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun.

Our fathers saw the master's sword
His plunder glean,
But specious fraud and lying word
His thefts now screen;
Yet Fraud shall fail
And Truth prevail,
And Justice shall be done,
And Earth rejoiced salute the light
Of Freedom's Sun,
O, rejoicing Earth salutes the light
Of Freedom's Sun.

+ + + + +

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

JAMES CONNOLLY.

The Message

Air --Sean O Duibhir an Gleanna

Our message send again
Peeling thro' hill and glen,
Freedom for working men
 Is freedom for all;
Freedom from dread of want,
From hunger, lean and gaunt,
From all the ills that daunt
 And keep us in thrall.

Up on the mountain side,
Far o'er the ocean tide,
Circling the world wide,
 That message is borne;
Bringing to those whose hearts
Ache 'neath the stings and darts.
Bondage to man imparts,
 Hope of Freedom's morn.

Morning when man shall rise
And face, with gladdened eyes,
The truth that Freedom lies
 In Labour's arms alone;
Labour, which makes to bloom
Mountain steppe and desert gloom,
Yet finds this life a tomb,
 And each hour a moan.

Moaning for manhood lost,
For noble purpose crossed,
For hopes and bright dreams tossed
 In that yawning grave,
Where wealth, the tyrant, stands,
Grasping with greedy hands,
And binding in iron bands,
 The life of its slave.

That message send again
Peeling thro' hill and glen,

Freedom for working men
Is freedom for all;
Freedom from dread of want,
From hunger, lean and gaunt,
From all the ills that daunt
And keep us in thrall.

Shake Out Your Banners

Come, shake out your banners, and forth
to the fight,
Joy, joy to our heart that this day we
have seen,
When the war-flags of Labour, saluting
the light
Of Freedom for mankind, around us doth
stream;
Oh, the tyrants may quake lest the blood
they have poured
O'er the fields of the earth their crowns
to be-gem,
May rise to our thoughts as we unsheathe
the sword,
And harden our hearts 'gainst the spoilers
of men.

+ + +

Ay, the sword glitters grandly, but not as
of vore.
When brother smote brother in murderous
feud,
Or the nod of a tyrant rushed nations to
war,
And the hopes of our race were o'erwhelmed
in blood.
Nay, the fight that we fight is a fight for
our own,
And "Freedom for Labour" our war's tocsin
shall be,
Through the broad earth resounding, till
Capital's throne
Lies shattered for aye, and the toiler is
free.

Freedom's Pioneers

Air -- The Boys of Wexford

Our feet upon the upward path
Are set where none may tread
Save those who to the rich man's wrath
Dare turn rebellious head.
And heart as brave, no cringing slave
In all our ranks appears.
Our proudest boast, in Labour's host
We're Freedom's Pioneers.

Chorus

Oh, slaves may beg and cowards whine,
We scorn their foolish fears,
Be this our plan, to lead the van,
With Freedom's Pioneers.

Too long upon our toil were built
The palaces of power,
When at our touch those forts of guilt
Would crumble in an hour,
Now each day brings on swiftest wings
To their unwilling ears,
The shouts that greet our marching feet
"Tis Freedom's Pioneers !"

Chorus

The rich man's hate, the rich man's pride
Have held us long in awe.
Our right to life is still denied,
And wealth still rules the law.
But man shall bow no longer now,
But welcome with his cheers
The ringing stroke, to break our yoke,
Of Freedom's Pioneers.

Chorus

A Father in Exile

Written by James Connolly in the U.S., Christmas, 1903.

'Tis Christmas Day in Ireland,
And I'm sitting here alone,
Three thousand miles of ocean intervene,
And the faces of my loved ones
In my little Irish home
Come glancing in and out my thoughts between;
O, to catch the loving kisses
From my little children flung,
To feel the warm embrace when wife
And husband meet,
To hear the boisterous greeting in
The kindly Dublin tongue
That makes brightness of the dullness
Of our murky Dublin streets.

'Tis Christmas Day in Ireland,
And I, my lot bewailing,
Am fretting in this Western land, so cold,
Where the throbbings of the human heart
Are weak and unavailing,
And human souls are reckoned less than gold;
O, the headache and the heartache
And the ashes at the feast
Attend us every hour of our sojourn
In this land,
Till the heart-sick Irish exile turns
His face towards the East,
To that land where love and poverty
Can wander hand in hand.

'Tis Christmas Day in Ireland,
And ringing over yonder
Are Dublin streets with Irish love of life,
And I'm here in exile moping,
In spirit yearning wander
To that Irish land to meet my Irish wife
O, the lovings and the strivings and the
Griefs we share in common,

And the babes that came to bless us
As sweet buds upon a tree,
O, curses on the cruel fate that sent
A father roaming,
And blessings still this Christmastide
My Irish home on thee.

The Call of Erin

Written by James Connolly aboard ship during his return
to Ireland in 1909. Air-Rolling Home to Bonnie Scotland.
With the engines 'neath us throbbing,
And the wind upon our stern,
Little reck we of the distance
That divides us now from Erin.
For we hear her voices calling,
Sweeping past us on the West,
Calling home to her the children
She once nourished on her breast.

Chorus

She is calling, calling, calling,
In the wind and o'er the tide,
We, her children hear her voices
Call us ever to her side.

Oh ! ye waters bear us onward
And ye winds your task fulfil,
Till our Irish eyes we feast on
Irish vale and Irish hill;
Till we tread our Irish Cities,
See their glory and their shame,
And our eyes like skies o'er Erin,
Through their smiles shed tears of pain.

Glorious is the land we're leaving,
And its pride shall grow through years;
And the land that calls us homewards
Can but share with us her tears.
Yet our heart her call obeying,
Heedless of the wealth men crave,
Turneth home to share her sorrow
Where she weeps beside the wave.

The Legacy

A Dying Socialist To His Son

Come here my son, and for a time put up
your childish play,
Draw nearer to your father's bed, and lay
your games away,
No sick man's plaint is this of mine, ill-
tempered at your noise,
Nor carping at your eagerness to romp with
childish toys.
Thou'rt but a boy, and I, a man outworn
with care and strife,
Would not deprive you of one joy thou
canst extract from life;
But o'er my soul comes creeping on death's
shadow, and my lips
Must give to you a message now ere life
meets that eclipse.
Slow runs my blood, my nether limbs I feel
not, and my eyes
Can scarce discern, here in this room, that
childish form I prize.

Aye, death's grim hand is on my frame, and
helpless it lies here,
But to my mental vision comes the power
of the seer,
And time and space are now as nought as
with majestic sweep,
I feel my mind traverse the land and
encompass the deep;
Search backward over history's course, or
with prophetic view,
And sounding line of hope and fear, gauge
man's great destiny, too,
The chasm deep 'twixt life and death, I
bridge at last to-night,

And with a foot on either side absorbs
their truth and light,
And thus, though reft of strength,
my limbs slow turn to clay,
Fired by this light I call you here to hear
my Legacy.

"My Legacy." Ah, son of mine ! Wert thou a
rich man's pride,
He'd crown thee with his property, possessions
far and wide,
And golden store to purchase slaves, whose
aching brain and limb
Would toil to bring you luxury as such had
toiled for him.
But thy father is a poor man, and glancing
round you here,
Thou canst see all his property --- our
humble household gear,
No will we need by lawyers drawn, no witnesses
attest,
To guard for you your legacy, your father's
last bequest.

"Thy father is a poor man," mark well
what that may mean,
On the tablets of thy memory that truth
write bright and clean,
Thy father's lot it was to toil from earliest
boyhood on,
And know his latent energies for a master's
profit drawn;
Or else, ill-starred, to wander round and
huxter-like to vend
His precious store of brain and brawn for
all whom fate may send,
Across his path with gold enough to purchase
Labour's power
To turn it into gold again, and fructify
the hour
With sweat and blood of toiling slaves, like
unto us my son;
Aye, through our veins since earliest days,
'tis poor man's blood has run.

Yes, son of mine, since History's dawn two
 classes stand revealed,
The Rich and Poor, in bitterest war, by
 deadliest hatred steeled,
The one, incarnate greed and crime,
 disdaining honest toil,
Had grasped man's common birthright and
 treasure house, the soil.
And standing 'twixt their fellow men and
 all that earth could give,
Had bade them render tribute if they
 would hope to live.
And, building crime on top of crime, had
 pushed their conquests on,
Till, arbiters of life and death, they
 stood with weapons drawn,
And blades athirst to drink the blood,
 on land and over sea,
Of him who dared for human rights to stem
 this tyranny,
They held our lands, our bodies ruled,
 and strove to rule the mind,
And Hell itself could not surpass their
 evil to mankind,
And all who strove for human rights to
 break their cursed yoke --
The noblest of our race, my child --went
 down beneath their stroke,
And over all earth's sweetest spots, in
 nature's loveliest haunt,
Each built his fort or castle grim the
 poor of earth to daunt.

And issuing forth from walls of stone,
 high over cliff and pass,
With sword in hand would gather in the
 tribute for his class,
And grimmest emblems of their rule
 flaunting to human ken,
The pit to drown our women, the gibbet
 for our men.
Stood, eye, beside their fortresses; and
 underneath the moat

Tier under tier of noisome cells for
those the tyrant smote.
Thumtscrew and rack and branding rod,
and each device of Hell
Perverted genius could devise to •
torture men to sell
(For brief respite from anguish dire
to end their wretched lives)
The secrets of their comradeship, the
honour of their wives.
As fabled as the tree of old, by ancient
poets sung,
Consumed with blight each living thing
that 'neath its branches sprung.
The rich man's power o'er all the earth
had spread its baleful blight,
Respecting neither age nor sex to sate
its lust for might.
It stole the harvest from the field,
the product from the loom,
Struck down the old man in his age, the
young man in his bloom,
It robbed the carrier on the road, the
sailor on the tide,
And from the bridegroom of an hour it took
the new-made bride,
Such crimes it wrought-not Hell itself
and its Satanic school
Could fashion crimes to equal those
wrought by the rich man's rule.
"The past?" Ah, boy, the method's past;
the deed is still the same,
And robbery is robbery yet, though
cloaked in gentler name.
Our means of life are still usurped, the
rich man still is lord,
And prayers and cries for justice still
meet one reply -- the sword !
Though hypocrites for rich man's gold
may tell us we are free,
And oft extol in speech and print our
vaunted liberty.

But freedom lies not in a name, and he
who lacks for bread,
Must have that bread tho' he should give
his soul for it instead.
And we, who live by Labour, know that
while they rule we must
Sell Freedom, brain, and limb, to win
for us and ours a crust.

The robbers made our fathers slaves,
then chained them to the soil,
For a little longer chain --a wage --
we must exchange our toil.
But open force give way to fraud, and
force again behind
Prepares to strike if fraud should fail
to keep man deaf and blind.
Our mothers see their children's limbs
they fondled as they grew,
And doted on, caught up to make for rich
men profits new.
Whilst strong men die for lack of work,
and cries of misery swell,
And women's souls in cities' streets
creep shuddering to hell.
These things belong not to the past, but
to the present day,
And they shall last till in our wrath we
sweep them all away.

"We sweep them !" Ah, too well I know my
work on earth is done,
Even as I speak my chilling blood tells
me my race is run.
But you, my last born child, take the
legacy I give,
And do as did your father whilst he yet
was spared to live.
Treasure ye in your inmost heart this
legacy of hate,
For those who on the poor man's back
have climbed to high estate,

The lords of land and capital, the slave
 lords of our age,
Who of this smiling earth of ours have
 made for us a cage,
Where golden bars fetter men's souls, and
 noble thoughts do flame
To burn us with their vain desires, and
 virtue yields to shame.
Each is your foe, foe to your class, of
 human rights, the foe,
Be it your thought by day and night to
 work their overthrow;
And howsoe'er you earn your wage, and
 wheresoe'er you go,
Be it beneath the tropic heat or mid the
 northern snow.
Or closely pent in factory walls or burrow-
 ing in the mine,
Or scorching in the furnace hell of steamers
 'cross the brine,
Or on the railroad's shining track you
 guide the flying wheel,
Or clamouring up on buildings high to
 weld their frames of steel.
Or use the needle or the type, the hammer,
 or the pen,
Have you one thought, one speech alone to
 all your fellow-men.
Then men and women of your class, tell
 them their wrongs and yours,
Plant in their hearts that hatred deep that
 suffers and endures.
And treasuring up each deed of wrong, each
 scornful word and look,
Inscribe it in the memory, as others in
 a book.
And wait and watch through toiling years
 the ripening of time,
Yet deem to strike before that hour were
 worse than folly --- crime.

This be your task, oh, son of mine, the
rich man's hate to brave,
And consecrate your noblest part to rouse
each fellow-slave,
To speed the day the world awaits when
Labour long opprest,
Shall rise and strike for Freedom true,
and from the tyrants wrest ---
The power they have abused so long.
Oh, ever-glorious deed !
The crowning point of history, yet, child,
of bitterest need.

Ah, woe is me, thy father's eyes shall not
behold the day.
I faint and die: child, hold my hand ---
Keep -- thou -- my -- Leg-a-cy !



Connolly & Marxism



Karl Marx

KARL MARX--- the ablest exponent of socialism the world has seen, and the founder of that school of thought which embraces all the militant socialist parties of the world.

From "The New Evangel"
by James Connolly

James Connolly first developed an interest in the writings of Karl Marx when in the early 1890's, as a member of the Scottish Socialist Federation in Edinburgh, he absorbed himself in the study of socialist writings. He was greatly influenced in the direction of Marxism by John Leslie, a socialist propagandist of Irish descent. Later, in the columns of "The Worker's Republic" (late 1890's), in his pamphlets published before his departure for the U.S. (1903), in his classical book "Labour in Irish History" (1910), and his other writings, right up to a few weeks before his execution, he quoted Marx, referring to him always in glowing terms. On one occasion, during his controversy with the Belfast Orange "socialist" William Walker, Walker complained of Connolly's "Copious extracts from Karl Marx," and stated: "May I assure Comrade Connolly that, much though I admire Karl Marx, he is not a deity to me, and I will always preserve the right to exercise my own judgement, and not merely when

in trouble, turn to Marx to have his ex-cathedra opinions rammed down my throat." Undeterred, by this opportunist form of criticism (still in use to-day), Connolly continued, where relevant, to quote from Marx's writings.

In the Connolly Souvenir Programme which inspired the publication of this songbook, a full-page advertisement for socialist books and pamphlets appeared. Inserted by Connolly's comrades of the Socialist Party of Ireland, it offered for sale, "A Workers Library of Bolshevism" which included several pamphlets by both Lenin and Marx. Along with a large selection of "Hands Off Russia" pamphlets, they could be purchased at 42, North Great George's St., Dublin, any evening from 8p.m." In addition to the fine selection of revolutionary songs performed that night in Connolly's honour, it was appropriate that the Souvenir Programme should promote the sale of Marx's writings, for after all, did not Connolly himself take inspiration from these same writings and consider Marx "the ablest exponent of socialism the world has seen." In the same spirit that motivated his comrades to promote the sale of socialist literature at a Connolly commemoration, we, in this Connolly songbook, offer to workers a similar selection. The pamphlets "Wages, Labour and Capital" and "Wages, Price and Profit" by Marx, as well as Lenin's "Collapse of the 2nd International", which we offer, were also among the S.P.I. selection. It should interest Irish workers to know that Marx's "Civil War in France", was sold on the streets of Cork, by members of the Cork Branch of the First International, in 1872.

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