

THE SPARK

“KEEP THE FIRES OF THE NATION BURNING”
(G. S. PARNELL)

Edited by Ed. DALTON

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FAMINE-CONSCRIPTION

The readers of the only daily papers England permits to exist in this country, and which pay for the permission by doing her work, have been regaled for months past with “Letters to the Editor,” signed variously “Irishman,” “Irish Nationalist,” “Citizen,” and “Observer.” In two deductions every skilled journalist who has studied these letters agree—First, that they emanate from the one source, although they are not written by the one hand; and, second, that their design is to advance ideas which the Editors of the daily papers shrink from the responsibility of advancing editorially. The climax of this Press campaign was reached by its simultaneous publication in all four Dublin morning papers of the subjoined “Letter to the Editor” :—

“EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITING.

“To the Editor of the Irish Times.

“Sir,—In view of the very important and serious statement of the Prime Minister in the House of Commons yesterday, I venture to suggest that immediate steps should be taken by every employer in Dublin to assist His Excellency in procuring the necessary number of recruits by at once taking a census of their staffs, and informing all those men of military age who can be dispensed with, or whose places could be filled by the employment of women, that the time has arrived when they should join the Colours. It is, of course, open to the employers, in view of the gravity of the issues involved to the nation, to tell such men that the duty rests upon them to give them notice to quit if they re-

main obdurate and refuse to offer themselves for enlistment. At the meeting of city business men held in Grafton Street last Monday the unanimous feeling was that employers should make it clear to their men that their positions would be kept open to them, and any employer who was not prepared to do this should be pilloried.

“I have no desire to single out any particular firm, but it must be obvious to everyone that many important concerns are persisting in retaining able-bodied men in shops and warehouses, whose places can easily be filled by women, and it is up to the ladies of Dublin to refuse to be served by “shirkers.” If concerted action in this direction be taken, an end will be put to this scandal! I suggest that the ladies of Dublin call a public meeting to give effect to their wishes.

—Yours, etc.,

“A CITIZEN.”

“Dublin, November 3rd, 1915.”

A more infamous letter has never appeared in the public Press of this country. It is an attempt to intimidate the Dublin employers into discharging the functions of the English recruiting-sergeant by inciting to boycott—it is an attempt to force unwilling workmen into the English army by urging their exclusion from employment and the consequent starvation of themselves and those who depend upon them.

The identity of the person who is permitted to make such a proposal through the columns of the Dublin morning Press is the identity of no Tom, Dick, or Harry. No editor, Unionist, or non-Unionist in Ireland would insert such a proposal

under an anonymous signature from a person of no account. As we have said, the letters signed "Citizen," "Observer," "Irishman," and "Irish Nationalist," have a common source, although they are not all from a common hand. The present famine conscriptionist, who hides himself under the guise of "Citizen," is Sir John Irwin, waste-paper dealer of Middle Abbey Street, Dublin, and the ex-President of the Dublin Industrial Association.

For reasons unknown to the general public and to the commercial community of which the man represents himself to be a member—although the less said about his commercial standing the greater charity to him—John Irwin was created a Knight by Lord Aberdeen, when that personage was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He is a man of a private and public character fit to be entitled by Dublin Castle, but his services to that institution are not all public ones. At present one of his activities is the preparation of "Citizens," and similar letters for insertion in the Dublin morning papers.

We have now withdrawn the mask from Irwin of the Aliases. We have a question to put to the Dublin Industrial Association. Its members are aware that extreme secret pressure is being put upon Dublin employers who decline to fall in with the plot to dismiss Irish workmen between 20 and 40 years of age in order to coerce them into the English Army. What will it do with Irwin, the hidden press-agent of this intrigue? Will it be silent and tolerate in its membership, a man who is at present occupied in an effort to force Dublin workingmen out of employment? If so, the sooner the Dublin Industrial Association is labelled humbug and fraud the better for Dublin Industry.

Lamh Dearg Abu!

We are coming, Shawn Mac Neill!
 We will muster from each clan;
 We will come with naked steel
 And a rifle—every man.
 With bayonet, pike, and ball
 We will answer to the call—
 Aye! that will we—one and all,
 Shawn Mac Neill!

We'll be there to make a stand—
 From the city, plain, and hill;
 For our homes—for God!—and Land
 We will rally with a will—
 Oh! we'll make a bloody Day
 When Conscription leads the way—
 Aye!—we're ready for the fray,
 Shawn Mac Neill!

TO-DAY.

Tuesday next will be the 48th anniversary of the execution at Manchester of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien. The event will be commemorated to-day (Sunday) by a procession through the city to Glasnevin, and to-morrow night the indoor commemoration will be held in the Mansion House.

To some minds there is nothing worthier in these commemorations than mere "affectation", or otherwise the satisfying of a morbid passion for brooding on the darker episodes in our history—episodes which we are told are best forgotten. But such minds miss their real purport and significance.

Not for mere parade sake, not for the mere gratification of our morose temperaments, not to stimulate and inflame hatred of the perpetrators of the Manchester infamy do we hold this annual commemoration of the victims, but because it is good for the soul to contemplate the heroism, the nobility, and the unselfishness which our three countrymen displayed in the trying ordeal to which they were subjected.

Why should we ponder on the brutal and merciless conduct of the British rabble on that occasion? Was it not in keeping with British traditions, did it not reveal the wholly opposing standards by which they and we judge men and events? Half a century ago it was the Manchester mob which distinguished itself by howling for the blood of three Irishmen; a few days ago it was the Liverpool mob which continued the tradition, and vented its cowardly spleen against our people. We only think of the British mob as the background to the example of devotion and courage and faith which Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien displayed. It but serves to intensify, by contrast, their sublime act of sacrifice, and in commemorating that sacrifice we disregard altogether British feelings and susceptibilities, and are concerned only that the motive and the spirit of that sacrifice shall live in Ireland's heart and continue to inspire her people until foreign rule in Ireland is at an end.

Manchester Martyrs' Commemoration.

The procession to day leaves Stephen's Green at 1.30. The Mansion House address to-morrow night will be given by Mr. Bulmer Hobson. Eoin Mac Neill will preside, and some prominent artistes will sing and recite.

THE "G" MEN.

Whenever you see a tall man trying to walk an umbrella comfortably, you see a "G" man. He seems to be constantly out of work, but he is not. He is like the "beauty chorus," more or less; he walks on and off. He smokes as he walks, and looks round with a childish air, and then goes home and writes a report as grammatical as may be. He keeps his own counsel, trusts no man, and has an eye to his brother "G" men, in whose derelictions may lie an easy revenue to the observant official. His pay is returned at about £2 per week, yet when he retires, he usually puts £1,000 into slum property, or into "the trade," an index of no ordinary thrift. He is sometimes a "practical" Catholic, and attends the sodality regularly, for an accurate record must be kept of all sermons, especially of those in Irish. He will drop into a Gaelic League class, and has been known to present himself to a hurling club as a prospective member.

You will see a "G" man at all railway stations round Dublin. See his feet and the circumnambient spittle. Years of habit cannot break him off the habit of expectoration—a matter which the authorities might well consider in its regard both to hygiene and efficiency. The railway "G" man smokes with a simper. "A nice young fellow waiting for a friend from Dunmanway." Don't talk Irish near him; he knows it better than yourself. How happy he is, if he can report even one youth with a green, white, or orange badge. It is thus the watch-dog of Empire thrives.

The "G" man will loiter near a Volunteer drill-ground when a full parade is on. He is then a middle-aged, fatherly provincial; large boots, an umbrella, and, generally, an Abbey Theatre appearance. "Them is a fine, strapping, lot of young lads, Glory be to God! I dunno would I be too old to join? And is them real rifles? Well yiz are great chaps."

Some "G" men are hearty, talkative, individuals. They meet you in the tavern, talk horses, give out good tips, and stand drinks. Later, they admit a connection with the police force, and bring you into the snug. There, with a mysterious air, many winks, nods, and contractions of the eyebrows, they begin to talk. They then break off suddenly, and look round as if they expected to see Sir Matthew or John S. Kelly in the offing. At last, holding an index finger near their nose, they whisper: "All the D.M.P. men in Dublin is served out with revolvers at night." This type of "G" man incessantly laments his fate in being in the force. "If

I knew as much twenty years ago as I do now, I wouldn't be where I am now. Tell you the truth, I'm as much a rebel at heart as any iv ye." This particular "G" man is a *very* downy bird.

So far as can be gathered from outside, the "G" man is a machine for carrying out orders. Orders emanate from a nicely dressed staff of resident First Division officers, salaried at £1,000 a year and over. These have studied Greek verse, Old French, Calculus, and other things indispensable to all who wish to have a finger on the pulse of a country. Now and then, an odd "G" man is allowed to stray into a residential position in the Castle, and then he works his brains to think out orders for his less gifted, automaton, brothers.

 INTIMIDATION

The keynote of the new offensive recently launched from the Viceregal Lodge will be dismissal and intimidation, and Irish Volunteers may expect to be the chosen victims unless they prepare at once for a counter offensive. There is no rule in the Constitution of the I.V. which requires men to patiently tolerate gross intimidation. There is little merit in eternally permitting the penalisation of men for their National views.

One hesitates to suggest a boycott, but employers who dismiss young men because of their connection with the Irish Volunteers must be prepared to feel the counter offensive in their pockets. The rich man's most vulnerable point is his pocket. Volunteers will lose nothing and may gain much by remembering that they have a perfect legal right to abstain from purchasing goods from a shopkeeper who makes himself objectionable in this way. Their relatives and friends have a similar right, and should freely exercise it.

If a man deliberately hits me, I am little less than a saint if I do not try to hit back. I claim the right to strike him back in his most vulnerable part, whether that be his pocket or his stomach, whether it be in his person or in his property.

An employer strikes at an Irish Volunteer by dismissing him because of his connection with the I.V. Suppose that Volunteer calls on the customers of his former employer and discusses the matter with them. Some will be unsympathetic, no doubt, but a fair percentage will probably be found to condemn such tyranny. If possible, the utmost publicity should be given to the matter. A statement of the facts might be posted in prominent local positions, and in this and many other ways the tyrannical pro-Englander would be forcibly compelled to submit his

unjust decision to the appeal of public opinion. If it were widely known that such an appeal would inevitably be made, the number of victims would soon be at a standstill.

I invite readers to send me particulars of such cases, and perhaps I will be able to bring the limelight to bear on the Imperialistic Irish employers who consider the Union Jack the staple asset.

MONSTROUS

Did I see them, sir? I did, sir; some thousands of them, strong, healthy fellows playing soldiers. Yes, sir, actually playing soldiers—and at such a time, too, when the Empire is in such peril. I was standing at Carlisle Bridge, looking at them as they passed; and damn me, sir, a more disgraceful sight I never witnessed. I asked a bit of a whipper-snapper standing near me who they were. Of course I knew well enough who they were, but I wanted to hear what he would say. He told me they were Irish Volunteers. I asked him if they were preparing to join their brothers in the trenches, and he replied that he didn't think so. They were founded for the purpose of defending Irish liberties, and nothing else. Irish liberties! Who the devil ever heard of Irish liberties? What does Ireland want with liberties? What would it do with them if it had them? What does Ireland know about liberties? Hasn't everybody liberties enough? Haven't you liberties? Haven't I? Can't we both do what we like? Are we not the free-born citizens of an Empire on which the sun never shines—I mean, never sets. Are we not, sir? Answer me that. But, sir, if there are fools who want Irish liberties, or want to defend them, they should be sent to Flanders, or to Serbia, or to France, or to Gallipoli, or to the devil.

To take a calm view of the case, sir, there is great danger in allowing those fellows to parade the public streets armed to the teeth. Yes, sir, a very great danger, indeed. Do you think they would be allowed to go through the streets of Berlin in a like fashion? No, sir, they would not. They'd be shot, every man jack of them. Have we a Defence of the Realm Act, sir, or have we not? Why is it not put in force? Why are those fellows allowed to parade the streets of Dublin with impunity. Yes, sir, with more than impunity, with rifles on their shoulders. Why is it allowed, sir? What is Birrell doing? Where are the Police? Why doesn't somebody put a stop to it? Had I my way I'd take the

lot of them by the scruff of the neck and pack them into the Irish Guards; by gad, I would, sir; and that would settle Irish liberties once and for all.

Are we not fighting to day, sir, and fighting hard, for the existence of our Empire—for the right to live, for civilisation, for small nationalities, for woman's honour, for the sanctity of our homes, for the liberty of mankind, and for the devil knows what else; and yet, here are a lot of fellows who refuse to take part in our grand cause. By gad, sir, it's exasperating; it's monstrous, sir; monstrous.

The Terrible Telegram.

The gentleman who fills the post of English Viceroy and Director-General of Recruiting among the Natives for the English Army in Ireland, not having heard in reply to his former communication to Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald (at present in Mountjoy Jail for a speech declaring the right of Ireland to be as independent as England) has addressed to that gentleman the following communication:—

[Lion and Unicorn—Lion looking fierce.]

“The Department of Recruiting for Ireland.

“November 8, 1915.

“Dear Sir—I do not appear to have yet received your reply to my recent appeal.

“The general response has given an earnest of what Ireland can do, but the need is still for men and more men. If you are willing freely and voluntarily to come forward, I invite you to sign the enclosed form, and post it in the accompanying envelope.

“Yours faithfully,

“WIMBORNE,

“Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

“and Director-General of Recruiting.

“Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald.”

We understand that if Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald does not respond to this—the second invitation—he and 300,000 more will receive a telegram from the Viceregal Recruiting-Sergeant. Bill Bailey tells them the telegram will frighten the boys.

Ceilidh

FIANNA CAMOG CEILIDH
To-night, (Sunday), Purveyor's
Hall, East Essex St., at 8 p.m.
TICKETS, 1/6 AND 2/6

Green, White, and Orange Celluloid Badges—One Penny each.—WHELAN & SON, 17 Upr. Ormond Quay, Dublin

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