



Edited by Ed. DALTON

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PRICE ONE HALFPENNY

SHOCKING MR. DILLON

For long I have felt that John Dillon considers himself, if not proprietor of Ireland, at least sole guardian of Ireland's moral and material interests. The indignation of the man when any one presumes to differ from him on Irish affairs could only be warranted on the assumption that he possesses a monopoly of patriotism and acumen and that lesser persons disagree with him because they are deficient in intelligence or because they are cursed with a temperament, which revels in dissension solely for its own sake and for the wicked joy it gains from the mere act of hostility to the Irish Party, the fiendish malevolent delight of "stabbing in the back".

This obstinate, narrow-minded, and spiteful old man, Dillon, has recently been advertising himself by writing letters to "correspondents". When a politician now-a-days finds himself sinking from the public gaze the remedy is to "reply" to a correspondent, and send the "reply" to the Press. It doesn't matter if the correspondent is only a "dummy," any excuse will do for keeping before the footlights. When Dillon isn't making speeches, which are to displace Edmund Burkes (that is Edmund Burke, the statesman and orator, who paid his tailor), he is writing letters to a correspondent through the Press. By this means he appears to be an unending nightmare. Was there any Ireland before this man was born? I have often asked myself, because it is very evident that he considers himself an indispensable property in modern Ireland, and he cannot bear not to hear or read himself for even a single day. If the Irish Parliamentary movement had committed no other crime than inflicting this evil

personality on Ireland, it alone condemns it. It is a satisfactory and consoling thought to me that although John Dillon is the product of only two generations back, the present generation in Ireland is more than a century ahead of him. The fact that the man to a large extent commands an entry into the Press, and that he is highly placed in the orthodox political machine, is of little account. His wealth, what I might call the "Duff millions" account for his appearance of power. In a sense, I shall be sorry if I am to witness the rude shock which awaits Mr. Dillon before any great length of time. I have respect for grey hairs, although alone they do not constitute a claim on my admiration; but grey hairs and virtue sometimes *do* go together, and if Mr. Dillon's virtues are not as evident to his countrymen as they are to himself, we can still bear witness to his hairs, which as he might say himself have greyed in the service of Ireland. Because he is a grey old man, I shall witness the shock he is going to get, with regret.

But then has he not deserved it, or is he more to be pitied than blamed? Pitied that his vanity and ridiculous conceit have been pandered to for so long, and that he has been encouraged in the grotesque pose with which we are so familiar, the pose of the infallible and "only possible politician who knows anything". It speaks ill for the passing generation that they have tolerated and exalted Dillon or permitted him to impose himself on them in the way he has. He has stood between Ireland and the light; not because of the bulk of his personality, of his breadth or his depth, or his length, but because Ireland's eyes were turned towards a

narrow inefficient outlook through the *Freeman Press*. Ireland's eyes have been removed from that outlook, which disclosed nothing but "the floor" of the British Parliament and a melancholy man taking himself too seriously. I shall not write too uncharitably of him because I am not altogether decided whether Ireland is responsible for Dillon or Dillon for Ireland. But be that as it may, I feel that some time in the early future I shall awaken in the morning and say "Thank God there is neither speech nor letter from that tiresome old John Dillon to be in to-day's papers."

THE "SUCCESSFUL" IRISHMAN

The diatribes of the "*Freeman*" have been hurled for some time past at a nobleman, Lord Northcliffe. Mr. Meade has joined in the fray, and daily utters warnings to that unhappy man. The Conscriptor Plotter, the Disrupter of the Cabinet, Imperiller of the National Security are among the epithets which Princes Street scribes have launched at their present foe. The general public is being educated into a conviction of the iniquity of this exalted personage. Now and then, a question is heard: "Who is Lord Northcliffe?" varied sometimes to "Who the hell is Lord Northcliffe?" The answer is short—he is an Irishman, a "successful" Irishman. A few years ago Mr. T. P. O'Connor did not disdain noticing the ability of his great countryman. The English democracy, our friendly ally, was invited to consider with respect the commanding ability of Lord Northcliffe, to reflect that a country which could breed such a man was surely not unworthy of a Parliament in College Green, for Northcliffe is a man after the British democracy's heart—he has made good.

This distinguished individual has gifted Chapelized with immortality by his selection of that locality for his first appearance in this terrestrial sphere. He early realised that Ireland did not offer sufficient scope for his talents, and migrated to London, where he took up journalism. His name at this time was Harmsworth. His writings are of no ordinary calibre. They have won the affection of every section of the friendly democracy from the humble office-boy to the ermined peer. Paper after paper has made its appearance from the Harmsworth Printing Press, until now, it is probable that no one concerns more periodicals than that associated with the plebian name of the great Irish nobleman. The street youth finds solace in "*The Magnet*," "*The Union Jack*," "*The Boy's Friend*"; the servant girl can find instruction, and spiritual elevation in "*The Girl's Friend*" "*The Royal Magazine*." The "*Daily Mail*"

or "*Home Notes*"; whilst paterfamilias forgets his family cares in the perusal of "*Answers*" or discusses the settlement of European problems with a facility which is the unique gift of our able countryman.

The mind which could conceive such a project as the publication of "*The Boy's Friend*" must be one of no ordinary measure; in a just appreciation of this fact, our King was pleased to elevate his beloved subject to the peerage. Mr. Harmsworth is now of noble blood, an aristocrat. How happy that our country can select its nobles and is not tied down to a mere nobility of birth. In France, a great writer is enrolled a member of the French Academy, but we do better: the manager of "*The Magnet*" is ranked among our nobility. What a happy state!

It is a melancholy reflection that in his own country the works of this great man are not appreciated at their true value. A sinister effort, under the guise of religion, is being carried on to beguile the youth of Ireland from those masterpieces of juvenile fiction, "*Comic-Cuts*" and "*Chips*," to papers of a retrograde tone, papers which will never create the healthy Imperial outlook fostered by the Harmsworth Press. However, there is yet a chance that a more enlightened educational system will prevail. Perhaps it is too much to hope that the adventures of Sexton Blake will figure in the programme of the Intermediate Board, but a wise direction by headmasters could turn the youthful mind to those productions which have forced their producer into the front rank of our nobility. Our children may most easily be made good citizens of the Empire if their minds are early directed to the works of one of Empire's greatest sons.

AN AMERICAN LETTER

The following are extracts from a letter by a constant reader of this journal:—

We have direct wireless communication from here to the Continent and so get the FULL official communiques. I may say it is surprising how much is censored for you folk on your side. The tampering with the mails is so perfect that the sealed pouches from Washington to U. S. Consuls abroad, with embassy documents, orders, etc., are even held up and tampered with.

Feeling is steadily changing here. The New York papers were like the "*Freeman*," but the constant holding up of U. S. ships, etc., etc., has led the big copper, cotton, packing, and

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other interests to get a hustle on at Washington. The note to Sean Buidhe, long delayed, is a very pointed one, and surprises the "blood is thicker than water" party.

The German-Americans, who never in their century of settlement here, bothered much with politics or Presidents, are organised by the million now, and will interfere at every parish election to ensure that only a pro-American receives office. A meeting of federated German-American societies in Massachussetts recently stated "Wilson must go." That is the first uncovering of the cold steel and will sober the Congressmen.

I saw some time ago some real cinema films released by the German War Office in the interest of the German Red Cross. It was worth traveling to see them. They took a whole two hours, and you could see men dropping at times in the hundred yards' rushes. The pictures were taken behind the lines in the early advance into Russia.

English financial credit is very badly hit here since the Dardanelles desertion and the commencement of the Balkan "drive"—real details of which have been censored for you. Wall Street is not so keen at all now for English bonds, and the whole of the money promised by Morgan and Co. will never be raised now. Southern banking and financial interests are strongly against the loan. It is only the East and Middle West where munitions, etc., are manufactured, that has subscribed. The action of Ford, the automobile manufacturer, is symptomatic of real American opinion.

It is only a big shortage of cotton, due to climatic conditions, that really prevented insurrection in the South when the Washington administration did not prevent England from declaring cotton contraband. Had there been the usual heavy crop, with Britain holding up the cargoes, there would have been serious work here.

I hear that the organisers of the meetings for Devlin, Dillon, and other Parliamentary envoys here in the past, have sent them indignant letters protesting against their present attitude, and particularly their felon-setting tactics in the Pim and McCulloch case. Parliamentary methods are dead among the Irish here, and the leaders on your side well know it. They dare not send any more missions here; the envoys would be tarred and feathered. Redmond's interview with the New York "World" is for consumption on your side, and was really inspired by his English masters. The only paper he has here to support him is the Chicago "Citizen," run by a relative of Dillon's, and with a circulation of a couple of hundred. All the other Irish papers are dead against him, and he has no organisation of Irishmen here to say a word in his favour. The

poor old U.I.L. is moribund, and even its president, Mick Ryan, of Philadelphia, won't touch it with a forty-foot pole. Irish-America is united now as it never was united before. Those who supported Parliamentary agitation in the past because it promised to do something for the country, have abandoned the Party altogether when they came out in their true colours as Imperialists. A refreshing sign of the new unity was seen when John Devoy, of the "Gaelic-American," and Robert Ford, of the "Irish World," old rivals, walked shoulder to shoulder as pall-bearers at the O'Donovan Rossa funeral here. You may tell the "Spark" people that both these papers frequently quote from its articles.

As to Conscription, it is too late now in any case. The men would not be ready for the decisive battles. The brilliant German campaign in the Balkans, and their alliance with Bulgaria, have upset the whole situation, and shortened the war by a year or more. With an uninterrupted highway to Egypt and India in the enemy's hands, and no intervening small nationalities willing to sacrifice themselves for the Allies, the game is up. Peace will have to be patched up somewhere and soon. If the enemy gets near Egypt or India millions of contented subjects of the B.E. will become restive, as it is things are not too rosy in these places at present.



PEELER "BRESLIN."

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

An article in the "Spark" on the G-man made interesting reading and showed clear insight into the character of that mysterious individual. We could picture the child-like mug, the simple smile, the air of bland innocence which he can adopt so well when seeking information or trying to call forth expressions of opinion which would figure well in his "report." We could fancy him adopting almost any guise that would help him in the work he has set himself to do—but prepared as I was by the "Spark" sketch, I got rather a shock last Sunday week when I beheld him disguised as an ordinary, common or garden policeman, a humble private constable, a mere peeler, a bobby of the usual "move on owre that" type. You can't believe it? Well, it's a fact—I'll tell you about him. This particular one rejoices in the name of Breslin. He comes from Kerry, and in many respects was described accurately by the writer of last week's article. He is genial, talks fairly well, displays an intelligent grasp of affairs, knows Irish, is

"sympathetic," and poses as "as good a Nationalist as any man" (when off duty); he lilts national songs (he has not a good singing voice); he can take a drop with the rest—a drop is a good thing to loosen the other fellow's tongue.

Breslin was a plain-clothes man—a kind of forerunner of Johnny Barton. He never appeared in the public eye, however, like Johnny: he was one of the quiet men behind the scenes, the more dangerous perhaps because not known. This is the lad who disguised himself so successfully last Sunday week. In full uniform, he planked himself in the door of Kelly's tobacco shop in Dame Street, armed with a notebook, a stump of a pencil (which he sucked before making an entry) and a sharp pair of eyes. As the Manchester Martyrs' Procession marched past him he tallied the number of men or the number of rifles, possibly both, and on receiving a report from another boy in blue made a further entry. You will probably be able to recognise him yourself the next time he adopts the same disguise: his number was 48 B, but whether that number is a fixture I don't know. Anyhow when you see 48 B. you see either Breslin or the man whose trousers Breslin wore last Sunday week, and, seeing him, keep keep your eye on him.

D'ANNUNZIO

In a recent issue of the "Evening Telegraph" appears an article on Gabriel D'Annunzio, by a Catholic lady, the author of many well-written books, sacred and profane. We are told in the article in question that D'Annunzio is Italy's national poet. This may be true, of the new, pro-British Italy. There was a time when Italy looked with most pride on Dante, the Italian whose genius lends lustre to the human race, and to the Church which he so consistently championed.

D'Annunzio is a man who has openly gloried in a career of profligacy; his works may not be translated into English without danger of proceedings by the Public Prosecutor.

Among the decadent writings of the last century, there is probably nothing more unsavoury, nor bestial y carnal, than the novels of this libertine. We hope the writer in the "Telegraph" was ignorant of her subject, and that she will not seek enlightenment by a perusal of D'Annunzio's works. But the pity of it that Catholic people should find, in an avowedly Catholic journal, articles commending one whose writings are opposed to every tenet of Christian morality.

THE AONACH.

I hope it is unnecessary to impress on readers of the SPARK the importance of the function which Aonach na Nodlag performs each year. Dean Swift declared once that we should *burn* everything English except coal, and again, that Ireland could thrive and prosper even if encircled with a wall of brass. The Aonach preaches the first precept and practises the second in that it boycotts everything foreign and booms and displays Irish-made goods only. Wares of general utility as well as the usual articles suitable for Christmas gifts will be on sale at the Aonach, and the proceedings each evening will be enlivened with the music of a fine orchestra. The Rotunda should be a meeting ground for all the faithful in Dublin during the course of the Aonach.

DUBLIN GAELIC LEAGUE.

To-night (Sunday), Arthur Griffiths will lecture in the Gaelic League Hall, 25 Parnell Square, on the following subject:—"The English Invasion of 1167." All interested in Ireland's story should attend. Tickets (obtainable at door) are only 3d. each.

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