

The SPARK

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

Edited by Ed. DALTON

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PRICE ONE HALFPENNY

IRELAND, WAKE UP!

Last July Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa told me a story. For over a year before his death the great Fenian lay in a state of almost complete mental as well as physical collapse. When an Irish-speaking person came to him and spoke in the language of his childhood, he was able for a short time to follow the conversation, but only once when addressed in English did he show any sign that he understood. This was when the American papers announced the first Zeppelin raid on London. When Mrs. Rossa read the news she rushed to her husband's bedside and shouted: "Rossa, Rossa, wake up, wake up, the Germans are in London and London is on fire. What are you doing here?" The soul that was asleep flashed back into his eyes, and his whole face for a few seconds was lighted up with enthusiasm and joy.

Rossa died that his country might live. Rossa fell asleep that his country might awake. Ireland showed her first strong signs of awakening at the Rossa funeral. Since then the process of reviving consciousness has proceeded apace. Her hands are moving feebly indeed, but with the promise of great strength when circulation has been restored. Her eyes are open, but they are dazzled yet by the light of freedom that is streaming through her prison bars. We must shout to her. Ireland, Ireland, wake up, wake up. The walls of your prison are tottering. The chains that bind you are eaten through with rust. Your gaoler is weak and distracted, and bleeding at every pore. Wake up, wake up, what are you doing here?

To call meetings for the purpose of resisting conscription is in itself a sign that we are not fully

awake. Resistance to conscription cannot be made the goal of a movement. The men whose ultimate aim is to avoid conscription will never be able to accomplish even that much. Opposition to conscription is only an incident on the march to national freedom. The man who is an Irish Nationalist, and who is prepared to give his life for the freedom of Ireland, will not be troubled much about conscription. Why don't they conscribe the German prisoners? They are veterans, and they could do wonders to stiffen the limp regiments of the English army. They have them under their thumb in the concentration camps, whereas our concentration camp is three hundred miles long. They can catch them all alive without any trouble, whereas they will catch many of our men dead after a great deal of trouble. Why don't the Germans conscribe the Russian prisoners? Because you may conscribe a man's body, but you cannot conscribe his soul. Because you cannot make people love you if they don't want to do it. A man who resists conscription merely because he does not like to fight, can be made fight. But the man who resists conscription because he does not want to desert his own country, and fight for her enemies, can be a far greater danger to the army that holds him, than if he were in the opposing trenches. The English are not likely to put rifles and hand grenades into the hands of the Germans, and place them in the hour of danger in the midst of their troops. And yet the Germans have had only one year to learn how to hate England. How slow we are to learn the lesson after 700 years.

If we would effectively resist conscription we must spread with all rapidity the gospel of Ire-

FRIEZELAND.

land a nation. The people are eager to learn. Last week twenty of the young men of Cliffoney walked over half the province of Connaught rousing the flame of Irish Nationality. They themselves benefited as much as their hearers. They went out red hot, they came home white hot. They went out timid, if promising, country boys, they came home men who will never again fear anything except the God who rules above them. The task of freeing Ireland is too big for one poor old broken-hearted man, who is tottering into the grave under the weight of it. Like the prisoner who loves his dungeon, he will naturally hold on to it as long as he can. Let us gently but firmly lift it from his shoulders and place it upon the broad back of the young men of Ireland. Let us not be hard on him. If any of us were subjected to a stream of votes of confidence for twenty-five years, if we had to do all the thinking for an Ireland that refused to think for itself, we should by this time have been reduced to a state of imbecility quite as abject as he has.

Let the unbought and uncorrupted intelligence of the young men of Ireland do the thinking for Ireland. Every parish in Ireland has got half a dozen intelligent Nationalists who can talk to the people in a language they understand. Let them do once or twice a month on a small scale what the young men of Cliffoney did last week on a big scale. Let them take their bicycles and go to Mass to some place ten or twelve miles away from home and speak to the people.

Let nationality be taught to the people in a language they can understand. Nationality is composed of two things, love and hate. Love of Ireland, and hatred of England. Not love alone, but love and hate. Love without hate is molly-coddle love. Love can build, but it takes hate to tear down. And we cannot build anything in Ireland until we tear down first.

We must speak to the people of every class and of every part of the country in a language which they can understand. England in Ireland is a many headed monster. Every head has a different face. Many people see only one face, and they are unable to see that it is the face of England.—(Rev.) M. O'Flanagan, C.C.

The Charlie Chaplin Volunteers.

Charlie Chaplin is coming again on Sunday night to pay a return visit to the Volunteer Hall. Children half price.—"Evening Telegraph," 2nd December, 1915. Advertisement for concert held by 1st Battalion, Redmondite "Volunteers."

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

A traveller lately returned from FriezeLand gives the following interesting account of that little-known island, which, from the circumstance of its being almost constantly submerged in a fog thrown over it from a hot spring in the neighbouring island of Squeezeland, is often confounded with the latter mentioned country, with which, indeed, FriezeLand has been at war intermittently these three hundred years.

FriezeLand is peopled by a hardy and industrious race who, before their subjection by their barbarous neighbours, were known far and wide for their learning and piety. They have never acquiesced in the conquest and have made many attempts to cast off the yoke of their ancient enemies. When I visited the island some months ago I found much excitement everywhere. A distant monarch, of whom little was known, had declared war on Squeezeland, and the King of the latter country straightaway sent emissaries to FriezeLand to procure mercenaries for his army. But wise men said, do not fight for Squeezeland. Remember our ancient wrongs. Trust not the fair words of those sent from that land to beguile our youths into her rotten army. Stay at home, build up a force for your own defence, and who knows but a chance may come during the war to repay the debt of centuries and set FriezeLand free.

But others arose who with foreign bribes in their pockets and false words in their mouths sought to confound the Patriots. Then a struggle began between the False Friends and the Patriots. And although many of the False Friends wore the grey beard of age, and spoke in mellow tones of the friendship, newly discovered, of the people of Squeezeland; and although by their false teachings some were deceived; and many others were cast into prison for opposing these False Friends; nevertheless, in the end truth and sense prevailed.

Then the youth, led by the Patriots, began to arm and engage in military exercises. And the old who had been in despair began to hope again. And the youth despising comfort were gay even in the knowledge that to-morrow might bring imprisonment or death itself.

But those who had enslaved the land poured out gold freely and many leaders of public opinion were purchased for a price. But few were deceived, for the Patriots plotted and conspired to outmanoeuvre their wily foe, a task hard to encompass. Because in addition to soldiers in red and disguised soldiers in black and blue, the Squeezelanders let loose an invisible army who mingled with the people spying upon them. So that no man could leave his home or visit a distant friend without that invisible creature following him. And during this time of espionage and

of terrorism, the False Friends, stroking their grey beards and crinkling the paper money in their fobs, cried out loudly lest men might doubt them:—"We in Friezeland enjoy profound peace. Let Squeezeland be thanked."

A great many petty tyrannies were daily practised against those who adhered to the Patriots. But the young men armed and prayed for the Day. For in the midst of darkness they saw ever the shimmering light of the dawn of the Day. So privation was endured in silence; the sneers of the kept Press were suffered with a smile. Ancient prophecies were recalled which foretold the driving out of the foreigner and the rebirth of the nation.

Then the cowards and the weak of heart counselled prudence and moderation, saying, we have suffered much in the past, why bring the scourge of fire and sword about our homes. The devil we know is better than him whom we do not know. We have to eat and we have to drink. What more do ye desire? Take care that ye do not bring upon yourselves the wrath of our ancient enemy, who has now become our protector. At which the youth laughed immoderately, saying jeeringly: "Behold, the leopard has changed his spots. The toothless lion's roar no longer alarms us. Let us give his tail a twist." Whereat they again laughed loudly and toasted The Day. But in secret they prepared for the fight and steeled their hearts to meet the enemy.

And so time has gone until this very day, when all over the island armed bands are roaming in defiance of the law which their oppressors dare not enforce against them.

A strange thing, too, has come about. The fog which hung over the land has lightened, and far-off peoples have been made to see its separate identity. In fact, it is the One Bright Spot.

Any day now I expect to hear that the manhood of the island has uprisen, and that Friezeland has been renamed, in blood and fire, "Free-land." May it be so, for I have a great love for its green fields and running waters; its autumn skies, its lovely coasts; its simple folk and its big heart. Some day I hope to return to salute the flag of the new Nation born into the world during the Great War.

Death.

Death has claimed another old Fenian in the person of Thomas Brennan, who passed away recently at his home in New York. Deceased was a Dublin man. He left Ireland after the rising in '67, and in 1876 took part with John Breslin in the "Catalpa" rescue. Go ndeanaidh Dia trócaire ar a anam.

What is the use of moaning over the inassailable rights of other nations when we have not yet succeeded in securing those of our own?

What is the use harrowing ourselves with details of suffering nationalities, we who have grown so used to suffering and disappointment? What is the use of protesting against Belgian and Armenian massacres if we are content to watch unmoved the yearly decimation of our own small population, cut down by the relentless hand of circumstance and conditions that still obtain in our Ireland to-day? Surely the first law is to fight for our own, and "who lives if Ireland dies" is as real for us in Ireland as "who dies if England lives" is for Englishmen.

What is the use, I ask our common sense folk, of asking us to thrill to the call of Empire, while all the time deep down in our Irish hearts there is a cruel consciousness of a dying Ireland in the very heart of that Empire, and how in God's name can we be expected to glory in success abroad while our own Motherland bleeds to death at home? When Ireland has taken her rightful place amongst the nations of the earth, it will be time enough to prate of Empire and the glory thereof.

Meanwhile we see our task, our duty, lies plainly before us. The ground work and foundation of all our ultimate success is the planting of this real conviction in our own and every Irish heart and soul. We must sing it to the cradled baby, we must teach it in the church and school, we must preach it to the growing manhood, that True Patriotism is the steel resolve and profound Will within us that God's absolute Right, Justice, and Truth must prevail in our land. And they will not prevail till we are a free people. This is a cause to sacrifice all for, to die for, and perhaps, hardest of all, to live nobly and proudly for. To live for such a cause, to consciously die for it, who can doubt that God crowns gloriously such immortal fidelity. We have a gallant example to encourage us in this, our generation, in the fidelity of the Belgian nation to the elements of real patriotism. If we were permitted to watch for one hundred years the untiring resistance of this brave people to an unjustifiable invasion, if we could know that it would continue so for three hundred years, even if in seven centuries we were still to find Belgium clinging to the principle of Nationality, still opposing the bribery and corruption, the threats and irritations of her oppressor, still overcoming every effort to submerge her a mere soulless province of a ruthless Empire, would we not stand amazed at such endurance, would we not marvel

at the moral force of such a brave unconquerable spirit, and we could not but feel certain that such undying loyalty to a high principle, such divine endurance in a God-given cause, must finally result in sweeping and enduring Victory.

After all, it is our lesson. That is precisely what has happened in Ireland. The moral right has been with us from the beginning, passed down from generation to generation a holy heritage through stress and storm. We must still bear up a little longer, we must shake ourselves from these bewildering circumstances and situations, these political trickeries that would trap us in a ruinous compromise. We must renounce those who would tamper with out inviolate principles, principles the conviction of whose truth and sacredness must be our greatest driving force, our rock foundation of indestructibility.

If we are the generation who compromised our rights away, if we are the generation who abandoned all that our fathers died for, then we have betrayed the trust of our noble dead, we have robbed generations of Irish yet unborn of their rightful heritage, we have covered ourselves with ignominy.

No mere brute force of a materialistic Empire can break down the moral force of a united determined people. The raging seas of a mighty ocean rush furiously on the immovable rock, they rise up and sweep over and around it, but when the storm is over and the tide goes out, the rock is still there, unconquerable and unmoved. Let us fix our eyes determinedly on the single vision of what God meant us to be, and we will be so. Free men in a free land.

(REV.) JAMES CAMPBELL.

THE AONACH.

The Aonach, I am pleased to learn, was a gratifying success, a success not alone from the attendance standpoint, but also from the standpoint of sales, which is, when all is said and done, the really vital concern of the Aonach. Unless sales are good, the Aonach fails in its main object, to obtain a proper measure of support for Irish-made goods during the "spending" days preceding Christmas.

The orchestra was excellent, and the programme, arranged by Miss O'Dwyer and performed each night, tempted patrons of the Aonach to outstay the time necessary for their shopping. Of the tea-room, I can speak in highest praise and from personal experience, and I congratulate the caterers, Miss Gifford and Miss Ffrench Mullen on the happy results of their efforts. Why

the cafe was called merely a "tea-room" I cannot understand, as the menu card contained a variety of things more acceptable than tea. I hope that the "Aonach habit" of buying Irish goods only will outlast the period of the Aonach, and be rigorously practised throughout the coming year.

SEANCHUS.

On account of Christmas Day falling on Saturday next, and of Friday being a half working-day, I am obliged to go to press earlier this week than usual. It is too early yet to measure the sales' success of my Christmas Number. In remoter days before their "indigestibility" was discovered the superlative in selling power was expressed in the phrase "selling like hot cakes," but the hot cakes were never yet baked which sold as quickly as "hot Spark's" Christmas Number, and this despite the inconvenience caused me by some disorganisation in my wholesale arrangements. I am taking precautions to ensure that there will be no shortage in supplies, and readers requiring copies can obtain them through any newsagent without delay. Whilst I am on this topic, might I ask readers to request their newsagents to display my contents bill each week? I feel I can consider the great majority of "Spark" readers as almost my personal friends, consequently I am in no way reluctant to ask this little service from them. Newsagents mustn't think that I am making complaints against them, it is only natural that they should sometimes overlook a poster. If their attention is called to it I am sure they will welcome the service also.—Yours,

ED. DALTON, Editor.

Cumann na mBan—Christmas Cake Raffle won by 488.

Mr. Herbert Pim
(A. Newman)

will make a statement of gravest importance and be supported by **Mr. L. Ginnell, M.P.,**

**Foresters' Hall,
Parnell Square.**

at Concert on Monday Night Next, December 27th, at 7.30. Secure a ticket at once.

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