



THE SPARK

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

Edited by Ed. DALTON

VOL. II. No. 52.

DUBLIN, SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1916.

PRICE ONE HALFPENNY

GAEL AND HUN

Judging by the amount of space it devotes to British "Tommies," the Saturday "Herald" has become quite a "militarist" organ. Recently I was impressed by groups of Dublin "Soccer" players which it reproduced. It would appear that whole teams of Soccerites from Dublin have donned khaki. What thoughts arise in my mind on contemplating this fact. Thoughts of strenuous G.A.A. days when the "anti-police soldiers and sailors rule" was first promulgated, and of successive conventions when efforts were made to repeal that wise and far-seeing measure. I rejoice at and congratulate my G.A.A. sponsors on the wisdom and foresight they displayed in framing a rule which has preserved our national athletic organisation from becoming the happy hunting ground of British recruiting vultures. At times during the past 16 years I felt that this rule was tactless and even stultifying, but I am glad to recall now that I had the sufficient good sense to trust the superior wisdom and experience of my leaders, and vote as they wished for its enforcement. This rule, however, did not stand alone in safeguarding the G.A.A. There was the "alien games" rule which prohibited players of "Association" football ("soccer"), "Rugby" football and Cricket, etc., from participating in G.A.A. games. Numbers of well-intentioned people made a sad hash of trying to understand this rule. And what after all did it amount to? To this—that the national atmosphere should be kept sacred from the taint of West Britain and Great Britain. It was never urged that good Nationalists did not play those alien games, but what was urged, and vehemently insisted on, was and is that the atmosphere of Rugby and Soccer clubs was not, is not, and

never shall be distinctively and exclusively Irish, that, on the contrary, that atmosphere was the vitiated atmosphere of West Britain which choked all national ideas, which sapped all patriotism, and which gave to those who frequented it a distorted outlook on life, and a mistaken conception of their individual responsibilities toward their country. It left them in the national sense weak and limp and flabby, it stole their minds and their hearts from Ireland, and left them stranded, mentally—men without a country. Because England wasn't their country. They would scorn to call themselves English, and yet, the irony of it, when England was in danger, when the hand of the doughtiest foe she has ever encountered in her whole vile and infamous career, was on England's throat, and she howled for men to help her, these men, these Rugby and Soccer players, responded to the "call" and went to fight for a country they despised, because they were easily stampeded, because they lacked national ballast, because their national morale, of which they were but faintly conscious on leaving school, was completely undermined in the "alien" atmosphere of their clubs. And England, through her wily and multifarious agencies, having stolen their minds and hearts from their natural mother, consummated that infamy by stealing their bodies and sending them out in her transports to serve as cock-shots for German, Austrian, Turkish and Bulgarian snipers. Great God, what a fate? To act as a stop gap for England's retreating "warriors," or to pave the way for their advance. And "Ireland" is thus to be honoured. Honoured that men born on Irish soil have been found vile and brutal enough to kill their fellow-

men for pay, for British gold or British silver, and without enquiring of the merits of the fight. And is this an honour? To sell their strength, their bone and their muscle even as a butcher retails beef. Mules are strong and serviceable to England in this war, but they may not boast of being given a place of **honour** in it, and they are not blessed with souls. But men, however big and however strong they may be, and however careless of danger, have something infinitely more valuable than these, they have souls, and it shall profit them little when they are called to account for the slaying of their fellow-men that they answer, "I was led by Le Bas's recruiting posters," or by "Kevin Kenny's recruiting ads," or by the "golden eloquence of Professor Kettle," or the "silver (30 pieces) eloquence of Maurice Healy." No, it availeth nothing. Men must think for themselves, and think in their hearts.

By no known process of faking could the "Herald" publish a photo of a G.A.A. team which had enlisted. And yet I vow the recruiters would sacrifice a good many Soccer teams if they could but secure a brigade of Hurlers or Gaelic footballers. These are the type of men that are wanted, but they are men who have been trained in true ideals of Irish manhood, and they remember the obstacles they had to overcome and the hostility they had to encounter to forward the objects of their Association. Not only the open hostility of "England Faithful Garrison," which resorted to every means that wealth and influence could command to prevent the G.A.A. acquiring suitable playing grounds, but the secret hostility of the Parliamentarians, as exemplified in the boycott of the G.A.A. by their Metropolitan Press. The boycott has, of course, lifted within recent years, but that was because the G.A.A. had grown too powerful to be ignored. Someone will endeavour to refute this charge by appealing to the "Healy Cup" in Louth, the "Redmond Cup" in Clare, and the "Freeman Cup" in Dublin. But what were these but sops to the G.A.A., but bids for popularity. How many of the Healys, or Redmonds, or Braydens are fit to, or have ever taken part in Gaelic games? About as many of them as have ever sat in an Irish class and endeavoured to learn the language of their country.

The Parliamentarians feared the G.A.A. because they couldn't control it. The G.A.A. made MEN, and the Parliamentarians didn't want MEN; they merely wanted political parrots or political ostriches, such as the "Telegraph" reports indicate they possess in the Wood Quay Ward Branch of the U.I.L. They seemed to have thought that the need for MEN had passed away for ever in Ireland. But, thanks to God, there were others who thought differently, others who thought, and taught, that the physical development of young Ireland, its training in courage

and in habits of discipline on lines in harmony with national traditions were essential to the future well-being of this nation. And in pursuit of these objects they even outraged the tender British, and equally tender West British conscience by actually playing outdoor games on Sunday, the only day which modern economic and social conditions place at the disposal of people who have to earn their livelihood in Ireland. But the tender and convenient British conscience doesn't even quiver at the knowledge that Irish workers in British munition factories have never even once heard Mass on Sundays since the factories commenced making those implements of destruction, which are to figure largely in the war for "Christian" ideals. When Satan mounts his rostrum to hand out the Bun, the British Hypocrite may well blush—in anticipation.



THREE GUNS STOLEN

The catch-penny headlines on the placards of our Sunday morning press—"City Sensation. Seizure of Arms and Ammunition. Big Police Raid"—and the additional information in one of the papers that no resistance had been offered, caused a "Spark" contributor to make inquiries in Nationalist circles in Dublin with the following result.

Four houses in different parts of the City were entered simultaneously on Saturday night by a large number of ponderous plain-clothes and uniformed policemen. The raid, it would appear, was not directed mainly against the Irish Volunteers, because only two of the houses raided were houses of Volunteers. The raiders did not specify what they were searching for, but the "Freeman," the official organ of the "G" Division, was able on Monday to inform a wondering public that the search had been made for "explosives." In the case of the two Volunteers' houses searched the men were out, and the raiders had to deal only with women-folk. In one nothing was discovered, but, in the second house, the raiders found two rifles and a Boy Scout miniature rifle standing in the corner of one of the rooms. These they promptly stole. These guns, together with a hand-printing press found in one of the other two houses, completed the "bag," a sorry enough result and one scarcely worth notice on a newspaper placard!

The raid, however, was productive of very satisfactory results in another direction. Immediately the police entered the first house a report was conveyed to the Volunteers that raids for arms were being made all over the city. The report was, of course, grossly exaggerated, but it was a natural inference to draw from the facts available. A general raid for arms was a con-

tingency which the Volunteer Executive had considered in the early days of the movement. The Irish people had successfully asserted the right at Howth Road to arm themselves in defence of their national interests. That right, the Volunteers were determined, they would not forego. Ireland would never again be disarmed; never again be a mere pawn to be used in the English political game. An armed Ireland would have to be treated as a distinct entity; it would no longer be a mere province. The exclusion of Ireland from the English Conscription law was the result of the adoption of this policy. The attempt to deprive Ireland of this safeguard would, it was recognised, be the first move in a villainous attack on the lives and liberties of the Irish people. The Volunteer Executive, therefore, publicly laid down the principle that any attempted seizure of arms should be resisted, and every Volunteer accordingly was bound to defend his arms to the death.

Consequently, when the rumour spread on Saturday night that the British authorities were making raids for arms, the Dublin Volunteers, as befitted soldiers, faced the situation quite calmly. The officer in command of the Dublin Brigade at once got into touch with the senior officers; instructions were immediately issued that the men were to proceed to their homes and stand ready to defend their arms. Mobilisation arrangements were set working, and every Volunteer whom it was necessary to reach was informed of the order. A few members of the Executive who got into communication with one another saw that there was no necessity for consultations. It was found that orders agreed on many months previously, were being put into operation automatically. Patrols were sent out, and any Volunteers whom they recognised in the streets were at once ordered home. Within twenty minutes of the first alarm an armed guard was on duty at Headquarters. Orderlies were busy the whole night delivering orders and reports. At hundreds of points throughout the City Volunteers arranged to defend with their lives the right of the Irish people to bear arms. Sunday came and produced nothing more exciting than the newspaper placards. The false alarm provided an excellent test of the organisation and discipline of the Dublin Volunteers. There was no panic, no hesitancy, no foolish act of aggression. Calmly and fearlessly the Volunteers awaited the expected attack.

**NOW IS
THE TIME
TO SAVE.**

DEPOSITS from One Penny to £1,000 received and interest allowed on by THE SINN FEIN BANK, 6 Harcourt St. Hon. Secretary Ald. T. Kelly, to whom all communications should be addressed.

THE REAL ENGLAND

Ignorance of the ways and thoughts of those nations near to us, is, even in this century, so well recognised that a stage type of every country is an allowed for and reckoned factor in the thoughts and opinions of European peoples. But although the possession of such type is a confession of ignorance as to the real type it fails to portray—the converse does not hold, for we in Ireland, though laughing at no such stage Englishman as Europe enjoys, are nevertheless quite as abysmally ignorant of the mind of our cross-Channel neighbours as they are in France or in Germany. Definite events usually impress isolated pictures on the mind, and we are indebted to recent history for the very meagre and distorted idea we hold of the thoughts and political opinions of the average Englishman. Fenianism, Land League, Irish Party, John Redmond, conjure up respectively, and, as regards Ireland—The Englishman totally ignorant but frightened; the still ignorant but interested; the now respectful, well informed and well intentioned, and finally, the man devoid of old prejudice, serenely conscious of his great debt to us, and now affectionately noting successive sacrifices as additional incentives—if any were needed—to the righting of our old wrongs. Bearing this in mind, 'tis but a modest thought, to expect—that in their well-instructed country our nationality should command more than mere curiosity—but it comes with something of a shock to see our illusions, so carefully framed from "Freeman" and "Independent" leaders, vanish, one by one, as we chat with representatives of England's vast population, either in the East or West End of London, in the colleges or medical schools, or amongst the stolid munition workers of the North country.

Take a medical student of London, a youth, older than his Dublin confrere and more imbued with school ideals, college habits and the mark of his calling—as a student. We might expect from him a formed opinion, or, at anyrate, a representative one:—"Oh! Irish are you! Why aren't you putting up more recruits over there? I hear you're fearfully slack in that line. Hardly playing the game—is it?" You think of the figures given in the House and groan "You're sorry to say that, altogether, Ireland has comparatively outdone England?" "Oh! come now—you're only kidding me, for I read the rags pretty carefully. I'm no political bug, you know, but it seems queer that you don't get the blue funks at what we'll do to you when the war is over if you don't buck up"—and we think of Redmond's famous speech, and how he pledged us all to the cause.

Another type—a stockbroker of tender years who reads the "rags" every morning, too, but is

the life of me, see why you fellows should hang back like this. If we had done the dirty on you now, there would be some excuse, but it's you who have done all the dirty work, you know, shooting those landlord fellows and all that" (vaguely). "We've been the oppressors! Oh! I see, you're talking of centuries ago when might was right!" And when Bachelor's Walk is put forward:—"Now, I must say I can't blame that chap for ordering those volleys. I saw the mob in the pictures and I can't see how you can decently blame a man for shooting when a mob of that size was around him. Why, it filled up your big street in Dublin!" And the thought of the many large meetings that O'Connell Street and the Movies men have seen simply paralyses further argument and leaves my stockbroker triumphant. Why shouldn't he? His reading has shown him how gentle England has been with us, and when one thinks of how far John Redmond's speech would appeal to him—one must not think too fast.

And this is only the beginning. Both these men are merely types of a huge number who read the same carefully expurgated London Edition of the "Daily Mail," who think in one huge herd, and whose opinions vary just as frequently as the leader writer of this great journal is elevated or depressed. We begin to perceive a general air of hostility pervading all classes, and to find the name of Irish arousing a thinly veiled dislike that the "Freeman" and its fellows do not prepare us for.

One is forced to the conclusion that these people whom we meet, who are not of any outstanding ability, are merely voicing a logical doubt when they talk as they do. For, while we are used to, and enjoy, anomalies, they fail to gather the threads of a story whose chapters merely succeed each other in a bewildering maze. They see Ulster springing to arms to preserve the Protestant faith; they see Ireland furiously and justly enraged at the wanton butchery of the Dublin people at Bachelor's Walk; they see the same enraged people patting soldiers on the back when John Redmond made Irish opinion—for the nonce—execute such a volte face as history can scarcely equal—and finally the felon setting in Ireland, the Mike O'Leary madness, the pitiful treatment of that petty Liverpool episode by the Irish leader, all combined to set the English public at an absolute loss. The data is puzzling, and they may be well excused for allowing shrewder minds to do the thinking for them, and so to reach a conclusion by a line of little resistance—a line that takes no cognisance of Redmond's juggling with Irish thought and Irish Volunteers; that forgets the unfortunate poor fools who have spilled their blood in England's defence from Mons to Macedonia; that strays from the quarter million of men whom England's

English people where they wish to be led to—where an annoying sense of gratitude for all these sacrifices will not hamper their after work. The student says:—"I hear you are putting up no recruits?" while Redmond asks us to be glad because three hundred and fifty thousand Irishmen fight for "our" Empire to-day. No—there is a profound difference between the England that Mr. Redmond talks of and the England which speaks through her students and stockbrokers, and the question which everybody in Ireland must ask himself is—Am I justified in now following a policy that is manifestly no longer one of security? This policy is—give all to England now and she will remember and return this all—and more. It is but too painfully evident that England wants our all, but wishes to hide our generosity from all save ourselves. She pictures us as an ingrate and a foe. Well, so be it! Why give and give always? Far better forsake every attitude save the one of absolute hostility until we are sure that England is under no delusion. She calls us her foe. So we are, now—for we know that the sacrifice of our national honour, and the prostitution of our party, has advanced us as much in England's affection as the Queen Elizabeth advanced the British Expeditionary Force through the Narrows of the Dardanelles.

New Stories by P. H. Pearse.

Mr. W. Tempest, of the Dundalgan Press, Dundalk, has just published a new book of short stories in Irish by P. H. Pearse. They are described as "Studies of Iar-Connacht Interiors" and include all the short stories written by Mr. Pearse since the publication of his "Iosagán" in 1907. The new volume, which takes its title of "An Mhàthair" from the opening story, is published at one shilling net; postage twopence.

G Company. Don't Miss Hearing Add res
2nd Battalion . by Mr. P. H. PEARSE, on
Irish Volunteers' February 6th, at 41 Parnell
Square. Selection of Songs
and Recitations, etc.

Equipment Fund Admission 6d., 1s., 2s.

Ard Craobh On Wednesday, Feb. 2nd,
Sinn Fein . Miss Maire nic Shiubhlaigh
will Lecture at 6 Harcourt
Street. Chair at 8.30.

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

"Spark," "Nationality," "Republic," "Hibernian," "Honesty" "Volunteer"—6d. weekly, post free. J. J. WALSH, 26 Blessington Street, 19 Berkeley Street, Dublin.

Printed for the Proprietor by the Gaelic Press, 30 Upper Liffey Street, and published at 4 Findlater Place Dublin. Trade Union Labour. Irish Paper and Ink.