

GRACE
GIFFORD

THE SPARK

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

Edited by ED. DALTON.

Vol. I. No. 3.

DUBLIN, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21st, 1915.

PRICE ONE HALFPENNY

IRISH PERVERTS AND PARASITES

I turn aside from the little series of talks I had proposed to myself to deal with—a very "serious allegation" which, as the Eloquent Dempsey might say, "has been hurled at me." It is this:

"Surely you, too, Mr. Editor, are a Sinn Feiner." I shall not ram the allegation down the allegator's throat, but carefully consider and reply to it.

I was struck, in recent controversies, by the alacrity which public men throughout the country displayed in protesting that they were not Sinn Feiners; and, in Dublin, by the fact that the ablest and most public-spirited member of the Corporation has been denied the Lord Mayoralty solely because he was of the despised school of political thought.

Is Sinn Fein, then, a political leprosy, and are its adherents unclean beings that men are so prompt in dissociating themselves from it? These are questions which newspaper readers might reasonably ask, particularly readers of the subsidised party press, which never by any chance allows an unorthodox opinion into its column.

Sinn Fein, to my mind, stands for political morality, and Parliamentaryism for political immorality. I am a Sinn Feiner. I believe that Almighty God endowed this Irish land of ours with all the attributes of a favoured nation. For His own inscrutable reasons He has permitted our land to be plundered, oppressed and outraged by a morally inferior people, but a people whose unmatched cunning has carried them in triumph throughout the earth. They are a people alien to us in race, religion, instinct, and ideals, and shall never be brought to view things through our eyes, nor we to view them through theirs.

Sinn Fein accepted that truth, and said: "Let us be true to ourselves! Let us not bother what these people think about us; let us not submit our right to freedom to the opinion of a British jury!"

The Parliamentarians, on the other hand, have relied on the sense of justice of the Britisher for a verdict in Ireland's favour. "We will get a paper verdict—"A Home Rule Bill on the Statute Book," they declared, under certain conditions. What are those conditions?

Our nation at any time within the past 700 years had only to yield to the tempters, to desert her altars, to ignore her moral code, and to surrender her soul to the thinly veneered paganism of England, and all would have been well with her. She would wax fat and prosperous, she would have her seat at the table of the Empire, and rich would be her share of its glories and its spoil. But Ireland's answer was "No."

Not the British bribe, nor the British kiss; not the shootings and the hangings; not the pitch-capping and the burning; not the bayoneting of mothers and children; not the outraging of women; not the assassin's knife nor the poison cup; not even the British-made famine—No, not any, nor all of these, could force from Ireland's lips the word of surrender.

We were told by men who claimed authority, and who spoke with weighty dignity, that Ireland had her price. Men who posed as Ireland's leaders, and the custodians of her destiny; men who professed to love and admire the mother, declared that Ireland would yield—would re-adjust her moral code—would forego her old-fashioned prejudices—if her price were conceded. She would be loyal to the Empire, would adopt the

Empire's moral squint, and would commit her conscience to the tender care of Britannia, if and when her price—"Home Rule" were conceded.

But they lied. Redmond and his party of West Britons lied when they promised to achieve this phenomenon.

Under no circumstances, and for no earthly consideration, can Ireland acquiesce in the violation of God's laws. Home Rule or no Home Rule, Ireland will continue to think and act for herself; and although she may forgive the crimes committed against herself, she cannot condone nor participate in their re-committal against other nations.

The policy which for an alleged material reward would commit Ireland to a contrary course is immoral. The policy which, for material personal gain, has converted eighty Irishmen into that number of political pervers, before whom the victims of souperism assume respectability, is a policy that would damn the soul of Ireland for all time.

I am, then, if for none other than the negative reason of opposition to Parliamentaryism, a Sinn Feiner, though not enrolled in the Sinn Fein organisation.

But Sinn Fein is essentially a constructive policy; its effectiveness may hinge on its opposition to Parliamentaryism, but that is because Parliamentaryism, as we have experienced it within the past fifteen or twenty years, is inimical to the moral and economic progress of our country. Parliamentaryism presumed to usurp the whole attention of our people, and it looked with jealous eyes on any efforts made by people outside the party machine to improve Irish conditions. The old malicious jealousy broke out at the growth of the Volunteers, as it had broken out, though in a milder form, at the growth of the language movement; and as it broke out in the days of Sinn Fein, when the Party became frightened at the growth of the spirit of independence and self-reliance, and when the machinery of Hibernianism was set in motion to disrupt the Sinn Fein Party in Dublin, through the dissemination of scandalous and abominable falsehoods, against the character and reputation of the Sinn Fein leaders.

The unfortunate dupes of Hibernianism, the young "knuts" who knew more about billiards, whist-drives and waltzing than they knew about politics, have many of them long since lamented their actions in the Dublin Municipal Elections; and official Hibernianism, when it was somewhat sick from the effects of Larkinism a few years ago, confessed that it felt guilty over its action in impeding Sinn Fein. But if the occasion again arose, Parliamentaryism would have to again employ the same agencies to combat any rival force in Ireland.

It must have ever at its command an army of

moral assassins, political thugs, and register riggers—not necessarily to prolong its own existence, but to defeat and confuse all opposing elements. The life of Parliamentaryism, as we have known it, cannot be preserved, because it is inherently rotten and corrupt, and must perish through the parasites which batten on it.

ED. DALTON.



THE ALLIED MIXTURE.

In addition to the Irish Perverted Party, "Liftinant" Professor Kettle, Con MacSweeney, "Endymion," and the "Patsey Mahers," the following armies are opposing Germany and Austria: Montenegrins, Russians, Servians, Turcomans, Anamites, English, French, Scotch, Japanese, Cossacks, Yakuts, Gonds, Senegalese, Belgians, Fijis, Welshmen, Zulus, Canadians, Irish, Portuguese, Burmese, Rajputs, Australians, Sikhs, Kyberi, Tartars, Usbegs, Kerkhis, Kalmucks, Baluchi, Basutos.

Cruise O'Brien and his fellow dynamic intellectuals may rest assured that those Celtic ideals and culture, for whose welfare they were so earnestly perturbed last August, are safe in the keeping of this combine.



DUBLIN'S BEST GIRL.

By an overwhelming majority, the name selected as the recipient of the first cross is that of Miss Delia Larkin. I am personally unacquainted with Miss Larkin. I don't believe I have ever seen her, nor am I conversant with her various activities, save through the number of eulogistic letters concerning her work which I have received in this competition. I believe from these that Miss Larkin deserves the admiration and thanks of Nationalist Dublin. In due course I shall ask her, on behalf of readers of THE SPARK, to receive and to wear "Ireland's Silver Cross".

The best essay I received does not name Miss Larkin, but was written by Éirne ní Ceitinnig, 9 Vincent Street, S.C.R., who will receive a book prize. It may be interesting to note that a great number of votes were recorded for "John Brennan," Madame Markievicz, Helena Moloney, Aine Paor, C. M. nic Dubhghaill, and Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington. A large number of girls received but one vote each, which merely shows that they are modest and retiring. Their work will tell in due time, and its ultimate fruition will be the reward of their patient, earnest patriotism.

THE EDITOR.

NATIONAL (?) LIFE IN DUBLIN

A circular before me from the Rooney Memorial Hall Committee says, "If you cannot send money, send your blessing." Good, I send them both. The building of a National Hall in Dublin warmly commends itself to me. I have often wondered why there wasn't in Dublin a Central National Club where Nationalists from the Provinces and from overseas could call and fraternise with the men of the Capital.

Often I have dropped into one or other of the firms advertising in the suppressed National papers, only to interrupt an animated discussion on some topic of political interest, the discussion being resumed when I pretended an interest in some of the wares on show.

I have often sympathised with the owners of these establishments, because I realise that they have to cover the same ground of discussion several times a day. One group find the luncheon hour convenient, whilst an earlier group call before that hour, and the afternoon quite flies, so brisk is business for the genial rent-payer, discussing politics. Happy man, happy man!

Now if these various groups of callers could only agree on one hour, I am sure the owner of any one of these establishments would be only too glad to mount a rostrum and deliver a full statement of his views to the assembled multitude or even consent to sit down and *listen* to the views of the meeting for an hour or two.

A National Club where men could drop in at any hour and be sure of meeting kindred spirits would obviate all this and would, I am sure, be warmly welcomed by the victim of the present state of affairs, the Nationalist business-man.

But apart from this aspect of the matter you have to consider the effect on the morale of Nationalist Dublin of the absence of a National social centre. Some "blood and thunder" volunteer will no doubt consign social centres to the same climate that Jim Larkin is reputed to have sent contracts, but this notwithstanding I aver that it is in the interest of the volunteer movement as much as in any other interest, that a National club should exist in Dublin.

The Germans with all their "militarism" are something more than mere "fighting machines." If they were only fighting machines, depending on nothing but brute force and skill and armaments, do you think they would be putting up the fight they

are against half the world? No; it is largely the morale of the German which conquers. The German soldier is the best educated man in the world. His character is refined and cultured, his patriotism is the growth of his education, of his home and of his social life. He likes other people; they have many admirable qualities, he will make allowances for their natural or assimilated defects, but there's no land to him like the Fatherland, and if the world declares that the Fatherland must die, then it only shows to him that the world has gone mad, and a mad world cannot hold out inducements to a German patriot to survive the defeat of his nation.

"Germany over all" is graven on every German's heart. It doesn't mean as some clever critics have suggested a German ascendancy, but it means that nothing on earth or of earth must come between the German and his Fatherland. If there is a fault in the Fatherland the German will remove it. He doesn't want to worship any fictitious ideal, or any figment of the imagination of his Press men. The German is the last man in the world who can be deceived, and if Germany is not full worthy of his heart's love and devotion, if its women folk are not fit mates for the hero hearts of its sons, if its innocent joyous-hearted little children are not the pledge of high heaven for Germany's future glory, then he would never have buckled on his armour for this war, he would never have invoked the God of battles to his aid, and he would never have marched against the foes of his Fatherland with an inspired light in his eyes and an all-conquering love for the Fatherland in his heart.

This is what sustains the German soldier in the battle. Not of secondary importance to the armaments of an army is that army's morale. We in Ireland might have the best-equipped army in the world, and yet if the morale of that army was low, arms would count for little. If the spirit of patriotism, which, after the love of God, is man's greatest inspiration, is absent from the hearts of our men, they are inferior to forces which can "establish a moral ascendancy over them," because of their more earnest ideals. And before you have the spirit of patriotism you have got to *know* your country first.

These thoughts come into my mind on reading that pregnant sentence in the circular before me. "No man (it says) for generations *knew* Ireland better than William Rooney." How few, alas, of us *know* our Motherland even now!

In writing of the German soldier I have expressed no opinion on the merits of either side in the war. I endeavour to show on which side is the finer spirit of patriotism. The English Press has

vigorously condemned the English people for their lack of patriotism, and I must assume that it would not do so without good reason. If the old-time patriotism of the English people has decayed, even under native government, to what miracle is the survival of patriotism in Ireland under alien rule, to be attributed? Because it must be due to some unseen influence, some influence greater and more potent than the machinery of the British Government in Ireland.

That influence is the inspiration we derive from the lives of men like William Rooney. Davis and Rooney and Bulfin get to the heart of Ireland. Every sanctified sod of our land speaks a message to them, as it would to us if we could but interpret it. There are to-day in Ireland, thank God, schools of patriotism where Ireland is interpreted to her children; but for the young men and women who have left school, and whose souls have not been crushed by alien influences, we need other agencies through which to reveal the greatness and worthiness of Mother Eire.

This is what a National Hall or Club could accomplish in Dublin. It could be made a live centre of National thought, a rallying ground for National workers, and a social centre with an atmosphere uncontaminated by the hostile and degenerating influences characterising most social functions in Dublin. It could be made the training ground for future apostles of Irish Nationalism, and therein could be relighted the olden fire of patriotism which shall burn brightly on Ireland's Easter morn.

I hope the Rooney Memorial Hall will be realised. I pledge the project my personal support, and I ask readers of THE SPARK to give a hand in a genuinely constructive National work.

IRELAND'S SILVER CROSS

"It has been said that Ireland is too poor to reward those who are faithful to her." I pay myself the compliment of quoting from our first No.

I denied the charge, and I maintain that Ireland is not too poor, but *too thoughtless* to show appreciation of the loyal and faithful hearts, which, through good and ill repute are faithful to her. And when I say Ireland I mean that section of the people of Ireland who are concerned in the National movement.

I understand that the Dublin Sinn Féin Society

has cultivated a coldness and a calmness which would turn the old-time Stoics green with envy. At the meeting of this body, the chairman, I am told, generally tells the audience, "We, Sinn Féiners, don't want any votes of thanks at all" and I hear that he even glares around the hall ready to eject the first man or woman who as much as dares to say "Thank you." Now this is all Stoicism gone mad, and should be deprecated.

There are men and women in our movements to-day who deserve at least a word of thanks for their work, but we apparently have made up our minds that we mustn't show our appreciation of their worth or say anything in their favour until they are either dead or emigrating to America, and then we'll either tearfully panegyriser them or alternatively hand them a purse of sovereigns to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne."

To relieve my feelings, I have instituted this order of "Ireland's Silver Cross". Readers of this paper are going to help me to pay the cost, and I have already had evidence that they will do so cheerfully. The men and women who deserve thanks of readers of THE SPARK for their work for Ireland will receive that thanks in the form of a silver cross.

THE MAN FOR DUBLIN.

Who is the Irish Nationalist man whom Dublin wishes most to honour?

[The Editor of this paper is not a qualified candidate.—Manager THE SPARK.]

Result will be announced in issue dated Sunday, March 7th. The Hand that "rocked" many a Municipal candidate will *not* "rock" in this election.

:: The Man for Dublin ::

Name.....

Address.....

Competitor's Name

.....

Address.....

1D.
STAMP.

Printed for the Proprietor by the Gaelic Press, 30 Upper Liffey Street, and published at 3 Findlater Place, Dublin. Trade Union Labour. Irish Paper and Ink.