

THE SPARK

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

Edited by ED. DALTON.

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"FREEMAN" INFAMY

The Castle organ has, since the war began, indulged in many forms of the game of felon-setting, ably seconded by its evening sheet and the weekly wail described as the organ of the "National" Volunteers, but which no decent member of that organisation reads. It has now, acting on Governmental instructions, entered on the same form of infamy on a larger scale. For some weeks past, few days have elapsed without some attempt being made in its columns to identify the Irish Volunteers and the Sinn Fein group with German agents in the United States. Allusions and insinuations are peppered all over Birch's misleading articles and sub-misleading articles, all intended to point out members of these bodies to the British Government as persons who should be promptly and ruthlessly prevented from carrying on in Ireland their alleged pro-German propaganda.

The campaign of felon-setting on a large scale may be said to have opened with the sensational and dastardly discovery that the Treasurer of the Irish Volunteers of America was in correspondence with the Consul-General of the United States at Munich, a Mr. Gaffney, well-known as sympathetic to Ireland's claim to National Independence. The most careful perusal of the letterpress beneath the scare headings with which the Castle organ so liberally bespatters (and fills!) its columns failed to disclose Mr. Gaffney's crime. And, so soon as the American Consul-General heard that, as a result of these "disclosures," he had been recalled from Germany by the U.S.A. Government, he promptly and flatly denied the statement. But Birch is a hardened and inveterate liar. And he did not turn a hair on hearing that the distin-

guished Irishman who represents America in Germany, and whose reputation he was willing and anxious to besmirch for a consideration, had given the lie direct to the story-tellers. The Castle organ has got its instructions, and, so sure as the weekly or monthly (I do not know which) subvention duly arrives, so surely will the character and fair fame of any Irishman named to its proprietors, be fouled and, if possible, destroyed in the interest of its paymaster.

The "Freeman" has received within the last eighteen months many thousands of pounds sterling from the Castle for forwarding the recruiting campaign amongst its ignorant dupes. It has on its directorate an anti-Irish, anti-Catholic person, formerly professing Unionist views, and who a few years ago stated at a public meeting in the North of Ireland that he always slept with a revolver beneath his pillow as a protection against possible attacks on himself by the Dublin Catholic and Nationalist Huns. I do not know, I can merely surmise, how and why this political mountebank joined the directorial staff of the leading organ of Castle opinion in Ireland. The "Freeman," which no one reads and few ever see, has no visible means of support. Yet, since the advent of the gentleman alluded to, a motor van has been obtained, and its bills are paid without undue effort. The question springs to the mind, who provides the funds?

It will be remembered that John Dillon many months ago gave out that he could put his finger on certain persons in Ireland who were in receipt of German gold. Mr. Eoin MacNeill publicly wrote that, as a loyal man, Mr. Dillon was bound by British law to give the name of the criminals

so that they might be placed in the dock at Green Street, with Mr. Dillon to confront them as common informer and chief Crown Witness. Mr. Dillon was dumb. Lord Mayor Sherlock, and others of that ilk, including Paddy Meade of the "Evening Telegraph," took up and spread the story; but a couple of public castigations compelled these gentry to swallow their words, a feat in which long practice has made them quite proficient. The German gold story did not work, so it was dropped. I wonder did it ever occur to Mr. MacNeill that Mr. Dillon was not bound by British Law to publicly inform?

Following the discredited Gaffney story, in which much was hinted and little really said, a new "reel" was let loose. Enter Mathew Cummings, president of the A.O.H. in America, disguised as a dark and desperate conspirator; film name, "Mike Maloney." Other "characters," God-fearing pro-Britons with Hibernian patronymics, also a "big man," being the leader of a desperate gang of pro-German thugs, who have conspired to obtain for the dockers of New York a living wage and compel some of the war profiteers to divide their surplus profits with those who (mainly) earned them. This infamous plot to raise the wages of dockers in New York, mostly Irish and Italian, is exposed by the Castle organ in a many-columned screech, with the usual sensational headlines. The essence of the sound and fury provided by the "Freeman" at the behest of the Castle paymasters was to be found in its attempt to identify Mr. Cummings, and the great organisation over which he presides, with the Sinn Fein group and the Irish Volunteers. If Mr. Cummings, Irishman and American citizen, can be convicted of doing anything calculated to aid or comfort the Germans, with whom our people in America are allied by marriage, by association, and by interest; and if Mr. Cummings can in the same breath be shown to be actively sympathetic with the Irish Volunteers, it follows, as the night the day, that the Irish Volunteers, etc., are persons who should be immediately taken care of by the "Freeman's" paymasters and their "Friendly" troops. The question arises, could Councillor Beattie withdraw the motor van if "Dear Mr. Brayden" refused to felon-set on this magnificent scale.

Another of the Castle organ's discoveries is the circulation in America of an appeal for contributions to the "Defence of Ireland Fund." This is the second annual collection, as anyone with the slightest knowledge of Irish affairs knows, made for this fund. In common with most other people in Ireland, I received more than twelve months ago an appeal for money "to arm the men of Ireland." The circulars were printed in Irish and English, and public subscriptions were organised in every district

throughout Ireland for the "Defence of Ireland Fund." All this is known to the "Freeman" liars. The first collection was in full swing in those unhappy days when the country felt that the Volunteer movement was being strangled by Nugent and Gaynor and Hand and Burke of Belfast (now a Government placeman at £1,200 a year) and the other "representative" public men whom the two Johns and Joe foisted on the original committee (the present leaders) of the Irish Volunteers. But as Birch's job is to lie—for a consideration—he boldly prints a pro-British yarn that the "Defence of Ireland Fund" is a German plot into which the leaders of the Irish Volunteers have entered, little knowing that the keen eye of "Dear Mr. Brayden" was on them, and that his Castle pen would expose them to the world (and incidentally to the Government) as pro-German traitors, whose miserable heads should suitably ornament the railings of Dublin Castle, over which blinded justice stonily presides. On Saturday night, the evening sheet astutely discovers that the fund now in full swing for the Irish Volunteers is identical in tale with that run by the "Germans" like Spellissy and Devoy and John Quinn and Judge Cohalan of New York. All which, in addition to creating the proper atmosphere in which the British Government might strike with impunity (perhaps!) is intended likewise to hamper the collection now on foot.

If Messrs. Brayden, Gaynor and Co. continue their present profitable campaign behind a curtain of anonymity, I shall feel bound, in the interest of truth, honour, civilisation and the Small Nationalities, to give my readers more interesting details of their scribes' identity in future issues of "The Spark."

THE ASCENDENCY FACE-PIECE.

A. Newman, in an interesting pamphlet, announces the following,—

"Now, there is something about the Ascendancy party which most people have all noticed, and that is the peculiar smile which most of them wear. Amongst themselves they pride themselves upon that smile. It is supposed to indicate honesty, good nature, and common-sense. But it merely indicates, as every Nationalist knows, sheer bovine contentment and stupidity."

This is right so far as it goes, but the writer completely neglects another aspect of the Ascendancy face. The practical, common-sense, self-satisfied Ascendant wears either the bovine smile, or a look calculated to produce the effect of intense intellect and purpose in life. The latter appearance is readily

produced. The eyebrows are contracted so as to form a slight protuberance on the top of the nose; the eyes are slightly squinted, and their owner looks intently away into a vacuity as deep as that vacuity which in him replaces mind; the mouth is closed; at tense intervals the teeth are brought together, and every effort is concentrated on forcing the nether jaw-bones into prominence. The jaw-bone in this position indicates hard, steadfast strength of character. An Ascendency man at a meeting, whilst sitting on the platform awaiting his turn to speak, always cultivates the serious aspect, the mighty intellect appearance. When his physiognomy has been thus disposed, he is ever ready to bring down the index finger of the right hand in impressive style; "Mark my words," enunciated with painful slowness, drive home his arguments, and in moments of great emotion, to prelude a cheer, he will rise to, "and under Heaven."

This restriction of facial expression to two phases, the bovine and the mighty-intellect, is of foreign origin. It was first practised by the members of the British oligarcy.

As the photographic art progressed, it was realised how valuable a standard form of expression would be. Accordingly public men had two photographs taken of themselves, showing respectively the bovine and the mighty-intellect feature. The artist had special instructions to produce, by a subtle arrangement in the re-touching, that system of light and shade which would most effectively make the actual image approximate to the desired standard type. The bovine photograph must show the teeth prominently, and the corners of the mouth well turned up, whilst a mighty-intellect picture, which has not a preponderance of hard, Kitchener, iron jaw is worse than useless.

A picture of Sir Edward Carson buying flowers for the Serbian relief fund brings out magnificently the bovine ideal. The frontispiece of a year-old "Daily Sketch" showing Mr. Redmond as the man who holds the Empire, to make or break, in the hollow of his hand, typifies, to a nicety, the mighty-intellect face.

At first public men find it hard to limit their face to two expressions; but, as time goes on, the face loses all but the two expressions necessary to impress the democracy. Yet it is difficult wholly to train a recalcitrant face, and report has it that some of the faces at about 10.30 at the annual dinner of the Incorporated Law Society show how years of schooling will fail before an unusual excitement.

THE DARDANELLES.

My fellow-expert, Colonel Maude, has been giving his opinion about the Dardanelles. I'd better give mine. Nobody wants my opinion. Nobody ever did, but then I have yet to meet somebody who wants Colonel Maude's, except the "Independent" which having no opinion of its own, must take Colonel Maude's and very likely pay for it.

The Dardanelles are, well, the Dardanelles. I can't say any more or I might give information to the enemy, and, of course, a war expert can't give information to the enemy, or to anybody else either, but should anyone be anxious for a little more knowledge about the Dardanelles he can address a question to Professor Burke or Lieutenant Healy at any Recruiting Meeting, although I would like to observe that Maurisheen's answers or remarks are neither reliable, trustworthy, nor in good taste; but then he's not a war expert, he's a warrior.

There is a lot of talk about forcing the Dardanelles. Quite an error. No one wants to force the Dardanelles. Such a thing never entered into anybody's head. You might as well try to force the U.I.L. to re-organise itself, or a member of the Irish Party to live on less than £400 a year. It's something in and about the Dardanelles that requires forcing—Turks and guns. Now, it would be an easy matter to force the Turks if there were no guns, and I see no difficulty in forcing the guns if there were no Turks; but, since both have raised an objection to being forced, the operation becomes very serious, and it likewise shows the stupidity of both in not knowing that, if they allowed themselves to be forced, it would be to their own interest, and they would help the cause of civilisation, Humanity, and Small Nationalities.

There has been recently a disembarkation at the Dardanelles. I'd better explain a disembarkation. A disembarkation means getting out of a boat. You can't get out of a boat without getting into it. That stands to reason. The same thing applies to bed or trouble. You can get out of a bed or a boat much more easily than you can get out of trouble, and you can also get out of bed on the wrong side if you like, but it isn't considered advisable to get out on the wrong side of a boat. I haven't an earthly notion how anybody gets out of trouble. I have never been out of it myself.

The idea of this disembarkation was, as well as forcing the Turks and guns, to get into Constantinople, an idea which for the moment has been

delayed by the obstinate action of both Turks and guns, and is likely to be delayed much longer for the same reason. There are other ways to get to Constantinople, of course, but, for the present, any route must be considered dangerous, yet, if any male between 18 and 45 cares to take his chance, he will be supplied with a free pass, free clothes, and a free identification disc.

It's one thing getting into Constantinople; it's quite another affair getting out. Some years ago two cargoes of wheat tried to get out of Constantinople in order to come to Ireland where the British Government was trying the effects of an artificial famine on the natives, but the humane British Government declined to allow the cargoes to be landed in Ireland on the ground that they might seriously interfere with its experiment which on the whole was progressing satisfactorily, or at any rate to the satisfaction of the "London Times." That organ was so delighted with the success of the experiment that, for the first and only time in its existence, it actually praised the Lord, an incident which produced such consternation in Heaven that the Recording Angel made a wrong entry and the "Freeman" got the credit. God knows it wants it.

WAR EXPERT.

WATCH REDMOND.

The Registrar-General's Staff are working overtime sorting out the Registration forms filled in by the Constabulary for the country districts. Our Irish bureaucrats have through the complete system of espionage and surveillance carried on by the Constabulary docketed the farmer, his sons, and labourers, as well as the shop-assistants and other eligibles, and all the information is now ready without any of the fuss of a general registration such as they had to have in Great Britain, because portion of the "United Kingdom" does not happen to possess the smoothly-running machinery of our Castle administration.

Redmond has had an interview with Kitchener on the subject of recruiting in Ireland. If the result be another somersault on the part of our heaven-inspired leader, I shall not be surprised. John Dillon, while denouncing the conscription policy of the Harmsworth Press, declared he would not accept conscription unless "an overwhelming case were made out for it." We refuse to accept the verdict of England in this matter. A free Irish parliament alone is competent to settle that question for Ireland. The Irish people's demand now must be exemption from any new defence law passed by the British Parliament.

Note how Dillon leaves open an avenue of retreat for himself and the Party, and note also that all their energy has been directed not so much against conscription as against the Harmsworth Press. The Party, as I have already pointed out, will sell the country in this matter, if the country allows itself to be gagged any longer. But it will be the end of the Party politically. In such an event I should not care to be Redmond facing the fierce resentment of a betrayed Irish people.

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