

term "Nationalist" was almost synonymous with

"Separatist": when, as a rule, to be a Nationalist meant a willingness to sacrifice. Or rather it would perhaps be more correct to say that the idea of sacrifice, of even life, for one's country, had not as yet passed outside the realm of "practical politics."

A Question of Numbers.

Therefore, the midst of the national feeling of the times was it unreasonable that the leaders should believe that 200,000 men could be won to the cause? I think not. I think that you still think so. I may say that the information I gathered up from many sources has convinced me that the number throughout Ireland who have been sworn in is not so large as is generally supposed. It did not fall very greatly below the figures mentioned. I know that the estimates set down by sound authorities on Fenianism put its strength at 100,000 men, and I think that is true; but these take no cognizance of the thousands who, over the country, who were in touch with the local leaders, and who could have been relied on to do the work of the Fenians, but who were not sworn in. I think that this very calculation is fairly made. I stated that I was not exaggerating in putting down the number of adherents to Fenianism (though many of them were not sworn in) at between 160,000 and 180,000 men.

The question then resolves itself into this. If the number I have set out, or even the larger proportion of them, had risen in 1867, could England have held our island? I, for one, think not. Mark you, the facts that plans were disarranged, and that a general rising was not in consequence even attempted, does not in the least blunt the point of my argument. Reasonable men, whether friendly or antagonistic to Fenianism, will concede that if the men were there a better arrangement of plans, resulting in a general rising, was neither impossible nor impracticable.

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A Change of Plans.

The new phase of the work entered upon in the effort to revive and remodel the Fenian movement after '67 involved much recasting of plans and limitation of ideas. The vast numbers could no longer be looked to for active aid. The object would have to be won by a smaller number of earnest whole-hearted Irish Republicans; possibly, and even probably, without the assistance of that great body of more moderate, more contented, or less thoughtful Nationalists, who could have been swept into a general rising in 1867.

Consent to go into a general strike in '67. The active spirits of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, gave up altogether, or weakened on the old idea of a general strike, and I was left with a small group of the vast majority of those men whom I met in the early days in the movement were convinced that the only way to move lay in securing outside assistance—or rather, in securing outside aid—against England. This certainly could never be a bad idea. If Irishmen were even half as intelligent as the English, they would know for their freedom, it should at no time be possible to band together 50,000 men imbued with the same spirit of self-sacrifice and hope! It is the time I speak of, when the spirit of self-sacrifice was still moving throughout the land. If England were actively engaged elsewhere, 50,000 men should be able to do anything. If England were not, much less number could create a landing and fighting base for the army of England's enemy, and I am sure that the Irishmen would be men in every thirteen of those who were clamouring for the nationhood of Ireland to turn out to fight for England's enemy. I strongly advocated this—which is this—hopeless struggle.

Our Suitability for Conspiracy.

I know it is a common argument that Irishmen are not by natural characteristics suited to be members of a secret society; and I shall have a few words to say to that later on. The question is of importance here, because the altered policy of the Fenian leaders of the period following '67 meant not alone the re-building of an organisation, but the holding of it together in quiet working, possibly for years. This, however, does not change the course of my arguments. If it be conceded that 50,000 determined men could, in the

event of a war between England and any other of the greater Powers, enforce a demand for Ireland's freedom, then it justified the Faith of the Fenians, in the belief that separation from England was possible of achievement. It rested with ourselves to make it practicable.

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army, which would probably insist on holding our country. That we would give our aid, yes; that our country could be held, no. You might as well talk of the British holding the Crimea, of the Turks retaining Greece, of the Germans annexing Paris. Why, although the seizure of Cuba from Spain was the main object of the recent war, diplomacy dictated the ratification of Cuban freedom by the victorious States. And, as it was in Cuba, so it would be in Ireland.

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The Importance of Republican Teaching

I kept this problem under close observation for many years, and I am firmly convinced that a member of the Organisation, who was a sincere republican, seldom if ever faltered in his allegiance to the cause of Ireland. I should like to mention to take up half-measures. I was a Fenian, not because of mere love for a particular method of attaining Ireland, but because of a love of deeper principle. I was a Fenian because I was a man of one method of working. It stands to reason that, being a strong Nationalist, he could no more accept the policy of an Englishman than could a Republican than that by an Englishman. I was a staunch Republican, he knew that there was no hope of setting up an independent Irish Republic by the aid of an Englishman. Therefore, he held to the organisation, through good and ill. On the other hand, we had to deal with far too many, who, having given little or no thought to the question, were ready to follow should any man, or men, put forward a policy. I should aim first, allowed their views to be watered down by stress of time or force of argument, and dropped back into the easier path leading only

in, in what might be called the "old school" of Fenianism, many of us, in our recruiting work, before ourselves two aims—firstly, to make the member of our brotherhood a disciplined soldier; and secondly, to make him a man of sense and staunch Republican of him; thus ensuring not alone that he would do a man's part for his country when the time came for active service, but also that he would be a man of sense and courage to Ireland with steadfast, unchanging views, until the time came.

It is the various tenets of republicanism it is not my province to discuss. I am hoping that your little paper will afford many opportunities of discussing the republican principles of Theobald Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, and John Mitchell; a platform Nationalists to endeavor to make the cloak of Tone or of Mitchell, a tendency which they might check if the cloak were known to be

In the past days to which I refer we generally grouped our teachings under three simple headings—the extension of personal liberty, equality of all men in the eyes of the State, and denial of rights unless accompanied by acceptance of duties. We invariably found when our young member had

fully grasped these that he was ready to fight, not only for a separate Ireland, but for Irish liberty. It may be thought that this was comparatively unnecessary work, but it was worth spreading if only for the fact that there could be no better guarantee to the Protestant Irishmen (of whom large numbers were always to be found in the ranks of Fenianism) that we secured the government of our country, that would secure the transmission of liberty for all our countrymen without distinction. It gave us Fenians one broad principle to stand for whether our land were captive or free.

Revolution by Passive Resistance?

But, passing on—we have next to consider the declaration of a truce, the only method of achieving the object and yet ourselves to attain it by means of resistance. This however, is so wound up with the principle dealt with in the opening of the present article, the possibility of separation from England, that one could not be considered without the other, and what I have already written applies here also. But I may be allowed to say a word or two regarding an idea which had cropped up now and again in our struggles for freedom and of late has been discussed a good deal. I mean revolution by passive resistance—by the banding together of the people of Ireland in a refusal to pay taxes—or some other movement of the kind.

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Practical, if followed up.

I have not made this reference to an idea, which, I understand, is influencing the minds of many of our young men of to-day in any spirit of condescension. I have said that I have been a Fenian movement, if you hear it said, as I have heard, that the men of that movement might have been more useful if they had been more practical. I have said that I have been a Fenian movement, if you hear it said, as I have heard, that the men of that movement might have been more useful if they had been more practical. I have said that I have been a Fenian movement, if you hear it said, as I have heard, that the men of that movement might have been more useful if they had been more practical.

It is right to say on this question that the No Rent Manifesto and the struggle that followed it in the early 'eighties are frequently held up as an example of the success of the Land League. The forgotten Title War might also be put forward as an argument. It should, however, be remembered that in the Land War of the early 'eighties, not only did the Land League have the support of the sections of Ireland united in support of one section, but the still more important factor existed in the Land movement was permeated with the spirit of the Fenian movement. The Fenian spirit, the Fenian movement was stronger throughout the 'seventies than most people of the time realised. The idea of an old, rightly or wrongly, the men engaged in the Land League identifying themselves, with all their energy and integrity, into the Land War. It was disastrous for the Land League, but it did drive the Land League through to a degree that the constitutional influence could ever have reached.

True Freedom Needs Strong Methods

The more one studies out the inner workings of the various Irish movements the more likely are we to come to the conclusion that, for those who seek true and real Irish independence, there is none but the revolutionary road. Irishmen may endeavour to work along a less arduous or dangerous route, but it will be to achieve a less

glorious result. If, as we men of the old Fenian movement are often told, it was a dream to imagine that England could ever be driven to surrender Ireland by force of arms, may we not fairly retort that it is surely a still wider dream to think that she will ever give us anything like real freedom willingly and for love of us. If Irishmen can really believe that there is sufficient freedom for this country within the British Empire, they have a right to be satisfied. But if any Irishman tells us that he has the full independence of Ireland, then he has always told him that he must be prepared to fight for it. There is no middle course.

Having said so much, we are brought straight to consider that article of the Faith of a Fenian on which our brotherhood was founded—that only by a secret and oath-bound combination of Irishmen could practical preparation for a successful revolution be carried out. It was a serious decision to come to, for, all the old workers in the movement, and the younger men well, how often we brought a young Irishman to the Fenianism of various stages of our belief, until we came to this means of giving effect to it—and there he stopped. We found it impossible to get over his want of trust in his own countrymen; his idea that the step once taken could never be retracted; his absurd notion that he might be called upon by lot to die for his country; his repugnance to him; or, more often still, his fear of acting against the mandate of his Church.

Most of the other objections ever raised by an Irishman against taking the Fenian oath centred

around these and I may, therefore, confine myself to them. But I shall put forward for consideration at the same time the two concluding articles of our political faith according to the list I laid before you at the outset—the belief that the advantages of a secret society for aims such as ours far outweighed the objections to it and the risks of it; and our conviction that there could be no sound patriotic, or moral, or theological objections to a secret society, the ideals of which are high and noble, and the members of which, in their daily work for the society, act up to those ideals.

(With a brief statement of my ideas on these points, which are all-important in considering the Faith of a Fenian, I hope to conclude in next month's *Irish Freedom*.)

THE CIVILIZING OF INDIA.

INDIA contains 284,000,000 people—about one-third of the population of the world. England, which is under native rule—subject—controls the destinies of this vast Empire, and the balance is made up of millions of English soldiers and sailors. The British Government has 75,000 English soldiers represent the English garrison in this vast country, and conduct the civilizing process for which the Indian people are subjected. What this civilizing process consists of I wish to briefly record—quoting only *official* English sources, and written by Englishmen living in India.

According to the Government of India—Lord Curzon recently stated that the Government of India "inculcates principles. Lord Muter knew, as we all know, that the English people are not averse to the English language. The Government of India, by its bureaucracy, and regards the interest of the Indian people, and the English people, as people in the moon. It exists for the sole purpose of draining every available rupee out of India, and for the purpose of draining every available rupee out of England manages to drain—without giving one penny in return—the neat sum of over £100,000,000. This is the trading operation which she has undertaken the civilizing of the

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