

Telegrams: "DAMP, DUBLIN."
Telephone No. 22.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.


Detective Department.

Dublin, 13th December, 1914.

Subject, ANTI-ENLISTMENT MEETING HELD AT BERESFORD PLACE.

I beg to report that the usual weekly anti-recruiting meeting was held at Beresford Place from 4 to 5.15 p.m. this date. The speakers were Francis Sheehy Skeffington, Michael Mullen, and John Milroy.

Mr. Skeffington. Mr. SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON, who presided, said that the evening was bad, but whatever the weather may be like he thought there should be no break in their series of meetings which were all the more necessary because of the suppression of their newspapers. As long as the newspapers and National Press were allowed to circulate freely and to tell the truth about the war and the question of recruiting the meetings were not so necessary; but now it was absolutely necessary when there were no newspapers to vent their views to hold the meetings and do all they could to put a stop to any more recruiting to the British Army. Four of the National papers, the Irish Worker, Sinn Fein Irish Freedom and Ireland, had been suppressed in the meanest possible way by getting at the printers. The Government did not want to prosecute the people who wrote the articles; that was why the Castle note-taker was present every Sunday, and ~~that~~ that was why he, the speaker, was not arrested so far. They knew if they arrested the speakers that it would give publicity to what they want to conceal, namely that Ireland was not ~~loyal~~ loyal to the Empire, that they had no quarrel with Germany or that they did not intend to fight against Germany. They had got at the printers and that showed the cowardice of the Gov-



ernment. A new paper had come out yesterday called "Scissors and Paste," and he thought it would be difficult for the British Government to suppress that because it was made up of cuttings, some from the writings of Thomas Davis and Ferguson and more from the Irish and English Loyal Press. So far that paper had not been prohibited, but bye and bye a selection of these extracts taken out of the papers would be brought forward as showing a certain amount of disloyalty and to show what militarism is they would come down on that paper too. Heretofore, he was able to quote the figures of recruiting in Dublin for the previous week, but now they had stopped publishing them and that was a good sign that they were not getting the number they want.

He then pointed out at some length the sufferings and discomforts which soldiers had to endure in the trenches at the front, and said that the wounded soldiers who had come home would not advise anybody to go out there. He also devoted some time in showing that England when she found she was being assisted by France and Russia was very anxious to take part in this war in order to destroy Germany's power and trade and thus have command of the seas.

He stroⁿgly criticised ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Mr. Redmond and the attitude he had taken up as regards this war. If he had the interests of Ireland at heart he should play one English Party against the other, and say that they in Ireland had not been consulted or had nothing to do with that war. He had no ~~XXXXXX~~ mandate from the people of Ireland to support England in that war and consequently it was for them to see that Redmond and his tactics did not succeed.

This country had been depopulated too much, and they want men to build up the nation. They wanted to build up a healthy and prosperous nation, and that could not be done if they were sending the strongest and the healthiest men to be sacrificed

in the shambles of France and Belgium. It was the highest duty of patriotism to remain at home in Ireland to make a great and he hoped a free ~~XXXXXX~~ nation. They had not got the scrap of paper, the Home Rule Act, translated into fact yet. They were still under the control of the despotism of Dublin Castle, and the man who had been doing the work for them there, Lord Aberdeen, had not been strong enough. The Tories said they should have a strong man, and so they were going to get Lord Wimbourne, a cousin of Mr. Churchill, and a man equally as unprincipled^{alled} as Winston Churchill. That may be a good thing because when they had a Government that was trying to kill Home Rule or Nationality by kindness a little coercion would possibly do no harm, and if Lord Wimbourne tried to do any of it well ~~XXX~~ they would see.

As a question between England and Germany they had got a promise on the paper value, on the promise of England a mutilated Home Rule Bill. The promise of Germany was a promise of complete independence, so taking them on the face of them on scraps of paper Germany was the best. On the question of keeping promises they had no experience of Germany, but they had a very good experience of how England kept promises and one need not be a pro-German to say that the chance of Germany keeping the promise was as good as England keeping the promise. They knew that if the English Government had anything at all to gain by breaking a promise they would break it, and they knew that as far as their past promises went they had already broken them because the Amending Act was a virtual breach of their promise to Redmond and his party. Therefore as far as that went they had no reason to fight for England, every reason to stay at home and not go out to the front. They could see what they would make of conscription. If they endeavour to force people to the front they cannot do it. They could put them to jail but they would be better in Mountjoy than out on the trenches. If they

went to the extent of shooting it would be better to be shot here at home while not doing England's dirty work than to be shot out at the front fighting for England and fighting for England's naval supremacy.

He then administered the usual pledge to passive resistance by asking them to raise their hands and saying they would not go in the case of conscription being brought in. To this almost all responded.

M. Mullen.

MICHAEL MULLEN, who then spoke, said he had some work to do and would not be there at all that evening but for the fact ~~XXX~~ that some individuals wanted to know if Mullen would turn up because the Defence of the Realm Act was consolidated. He believed it was very treasonable to say anything original, but it was not treasonable to say anything that appeared in the loyal papers. Most of the papers were now calling the Kaiser "Anti-Christ," but some years ago they were calling the Pope the same name. The papers were saying that this was a war in the defence of religion, and of course that meant the Roman Catholic religion, and to show that that was not the case he read an extract from the Evening Telegraph of March 22nd 1913 showing where a priest was beaten to death by Montegrin^{no} subjects with rifles.

At some meetings he had heard people cheering for the Kaiser and some of them thought they were doing their duty when they called three cheers for the German Kaiser. The German Kaiser would rather see a Uhlan behind a German gun than all the cheers for him. They should consider and think of their own country and not cheer for Germany. They were getting into a great fuss because the German eagle and the English lion had been at one another. He thought it was a good thing that they were tearing each other. At the present time




they were living under martial laws. Some of them who were claiming themselves not as pro-Germans or pro-English but pro-Irish may find themselves in Arbour Hill or Mountjoy. If he found himself in Arbour Hill he could pride himself that Tone was in Arbour Hill, and if he went to Mountjoy there were better men than him there.

There was one thing and that was that everybody should ask himself what he should do for Ireland. The British Government did not care a hang about public meetings; they would allow them to pass all the resolutions they like at public meetings. He would tell them a little story about Augustine Birrell and the Castle note-taker would consider it a mischief how these things were found out. William Redmond made a speech in Clare at the time that Mr. Birrell came over here and the Castle Authorities believed one thing to arrest the leaders and shove them into jail, so when Birrell came they were going to arrest William after one of his blood and thunder speeches. They said they must be arrested, and Birrell said 'they must not and I am the boss.' So John Redmond got another patriotic speech off his stomach a week later and they said these men ~~will~~ must be locked up or we will have the country in revolution, but Birrell said 'I am not going to have these gentlemen making themselves cheap patriots at my expense.'

He would ask those present to join the Irish Volunteers or the Citizen Army. He did not see the use of them coming to that meeting and cheering for the Kaiser. The Kaiser did not care a hang about them; he valued them at ~~their~~ their worth and the British Government valued them at their worth.

Parts of the country had shown that they were sick of Redmond; they would have an opportunity of showing later that they are tired of him. At the coming Municipal Elections they should ask the candidates whether they stood for Ireland



or for the Empire, and the man who stood for Ireland and Ireland only should be supported. Any man who believed he had a country to save should join the men who were out to save it. They would never save it by coming along and cheering for the German Kaiser.

J. Milroy.

JOHN MILROY, who next spoke, said when Mr. Skeffington was speaking his own thoughts went to the American Bacon Factories where they have a sort of machine where the pigs go in at one end and come out at the other as sausages. The British Military Machine there was an analogy between them, the Irishmen go out as recruits and come out the other end as casualties.

The points that dominated the whole question of Ireland's interests in this war were two: England's attitude which is to Ireland 'you have got to fight for us in this war;' and Ireland's attitude to England 'why the devil should we?' He wanted to know why Ireland should fight for England in that war; and read some extracts from Mr. Redmond's recent speech giving the reasons why. He was prepared to discuss the ~~XXXXXX~~ question with any of the members of the Dublin six and to challenge them that Ireland had nothing to gain by participation in this war and if they lost on that debate he would see that they should forfeit one year's salary not to the Belgian Refugee Fund but to the Irish Refugee Fund.

Within the past week they had the absolute domination of martial law in Ireland; they had the suppression of these journals which had put calmly and clearly what was the truth about the war. The authority by which that suppression of the public journals took ~~place~~ place came into force in Ireland with the Act of Union in 1801, and when that Act was being discussed an eminent member of the Irish Parliament said you may make the Union binding upon law but not upon conscience. The Irish people in their controversy with



England have asked for national freedom. They had heard the phrase of asking for bread and presented with a stone. They were presented with a piece of paper which was in reality Carson's charter of ascendancy. They had asked for self-government, and now they were ^{getting} Mr. Masterman and Lord Wimborne. Mr. Birrell said a few months ago that he expected to be the last Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was not going to be the last Chief Secretary, but he was going to be the last English Chief Secretary who was going to humbug the Irish people.

After commenting on the present day criticisms of German culture, he read an extract from the Dublin Evening Telegraph of March last relating to instructions issued by Lord Roberts on 17th June 1886 as to providing younger and more attractive women for the use of the Connaught Rangers in India. Such, he said, would corrupt ~~XXXXXXXX~~ the morality not only of the native womanhood of India, but the Irish recruits principally the Connaught Rangers referred to. That was the atmosphere that Irishmen were asked to plunge themselves into at the bidding of England. He also read extracts from a magazine comparing the economic conditions of Germany with those of England, and said that such went to show that German civilization had at least as much to recommend it as British civilization.

Whether they judged the question from the highest standpoint that was Ireland's possibility of securing ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ national liberty or the lowest standpoint that was Ireland's chance of improving her material conditions, he would say whichever standpoint they would take it from the answer would come 'Ireland had nothing to gain by participation in the war and everything to gain by keeping out of it.' He was not advocating that Englishmen should not enlist in this war. If England want to fight Germany for the commerce of the world, then let England fight Germany with her own men, her own guns, and her own brains. Ireland has no quarrel with Germany;

Ireland was not challenging Germany in the matter of world-wide commerce. Let as many Englishmen as will join the Army; let Irishmen stay at home. The sources of commodities during this war will be much depleted. It was Ireland's chance to recover her industrial stability. If the men who should be engaged in that process go to France to fight for England that chance will be lost to Ireland. That was the low standpoint. The standpoint of politics and of national liberty was that the only argument that count in a struggle for national freedom was how many men were prepared to fight and die in asserting the right of the people to liberty. If the men of Ireland went to France to fight for England there would be a great many less to fight for Ireland when the war was over. Ireland's political reasons, Ireland's political interests demand that Ireland should conserve her physical strength which was the only argument that counts with England when it comes to asking it in the right way the demand for national freedom.

The chairman, who announced that a similar meeting would be held on next Sunday at same hour, put the resolution which was carried as usual:

"That Ireland has no quarrel with Germany; and that no Irishman should enlist to fight England's battle for naval supremacy."

So much enthusiasm was not manifested as on other occasions, in fact there were some interruptions when Mr. Redmond was being adversely criticised by the chairman. The meeting was also a small one, only about 100 persons being present including Mrs. Skeffington who had suffragist papers there on sale.

Patrick J. Mc Larty,

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The Superintendent,

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