

THE PIGOTT PLOT.

(Sydney Freeman's Journal.)

BEFORE we open up the chapter of Pigott's writings and doings in the service of the enemies of the Irish cause and its leader (says Davitt in the *Labour World*), we will summarise the facts we have established, and the charges we have explicitly made against the employers of "Red Jim," the Dublin Castle spy.

Mr. Davitt points out that M'Dermott, after going about in Dublin advocating dynamite and a policy of violence, was next found in Cork, where he attended a meeting of five or six men, and proposed the blowing up of the Government stores in Cork Harbour. He gave money to a man named Fetherston, and to another named Deasy, for the purchase of explosives; that he gave Deasy a recipe for the manufacture of nitro glycerine; that he sent Deasy with explosives to Liverpool, with a note to a man named Flanagan, which was signed in M'Dermott's writing, "Fetherston;" that these three men were arrested, tried, and sentenced to penal servitude for life, for the possession of dynamite furnished by M'Dermott.

M'Dermott next proceeded to London, and, by similar means to those resorted to by him in Cork, succeeded in securing the arrest of men with whom he had planned dynamite outrage for the blowing up of the House of Commons and other Government buildings.

M'Dermott, in a letter to O'Donovan Rossa on the 3rd April, 1888, was told, over his own name, the part which he played in the Cork, Liverpool, and London dynamite plots.

M'Dermott tried to organise in Paris similar dynamite conspiracies, and in that city he cashed a draft of 50,000 francs, payable to him under the name of "Robert Nunan," for the work which he had done for Dublin Castle in Cork, Liverpool, and London.

Shortly after arriving in New York in June, 1883, he was sent to Canada by orders of Mr. Hoare, the present British Consul in New York, to carry on a dynamite agitation in the Dominion, and that money from Mr. Hoare was given him for that purpose.

Mr. Hoare requested Mr. Jenkinson, of Dublin Castle to write to the Canadian Government to obtain its permission for Mr. M'Dermott to perform the work which he was sent to perform, which permission the Canadian Government peremptorily refused.

M'Dermott endeavoured, while in Montreal, Toronto, Quebec and other Canadian cities, to entice Irishmen into dynamite plots, as he had succeeded in doing in Cork, Liverpool, and London.

After his flight from New York, he was arrested by the orders of Mr. Jenkinson, and taken before the stipendiary magistrate in Liverpool, with the intention of deceiving the magistrate and the public, and especially the Irishmen of Liverpool, as to the real character of the spy.

Although he was arrested on the charge of complicity in the so-called conspiracy at Cork, he was ultimately spirited away from the Waltham Gaol by an agent of Mr. Jenkinson and taken to Switzerland.

From that time until now he has been in receipt of the Secret Service money for the work he has done for Dublin Castle and the Intelligence Department of the Home Office.

We have also introduced the case of John Daly and James Egan, who were tried at the Warwick Assizes on August 1, 1884; and we have proved, on the testimony of Alderman Manton, of Birmingham, and the admissions of the Chief of Police of that city, that the bombs found upon the prisoner Daly, and for the possession of which he was sentenced to penal servitude for life, were given to him by an agent of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. Hoare, the British Consul in New York, has attempted to "bluff" us with an indignant denial of our statements. We have issued a challenge to Mr. Hoare to instruct his legal representatives in London to proceed against the *Labour World* for libel, and to vindicate himself in a Court of Law from the allegations we have made against him. To this challenge we have received no reply. Mr. Hoare contents himself by saying "he leaves the matter to Government." Very well, we invite the Home Government, whoever or whatever that expression means to act as his substitute, and to put to the test of a judicial proceeding the truth or otherwise of the charges we have made against him and other Government officials.

Richard Pigott was of obscure origin. His father was a native of the County Meath. Pigott senior made his way to Dublin, where he was for some time employed as a clerk in the office of the *Tablet*, a publication then edited by the late Frederick Lucas. The elder Pigott was at one period in the service of a Government contractor, named Parcell, who, previous to the year 1840, undertook the conveyance of the Irish mails from Dublin to the provinces. George Pigott, the father of Richard, next obtained a position on the staff of a newspaper called the *Monitor*, then published in Lower Abbey street, Dublin, upon premises subsequently occupied by the *Nation*.

It was after the foundation of the *Nation*, in 1842, that Richard Pigott made his debut in the humble role of an office boy.

Pigott's after position of editor and proprietor of the *Irishman* and the *Flag of Ireland* newspapers, the reputed organs of the physical force party, gave him exceptional opportunities of learning whatever "secrets" belonged to the revolutionary bodies. Though never an enrolled Fenian, it was generally believed that he was either a member of the Supreme Council, or, at least, one of the leading lights of the secret organisation. He encouraged this belief when speaking or writing to members or subordinate officers, in order to be made the repository of a confidence which he could turn to account as opportunity might offer. On one occasion the sum of £600 reached him from America for the families of imprisoned Fenians. He inserted an acknowledgment of the money in the *Irishman*, and had a small number of copies struck off which represented the number of subscribers to the paper in the city from whence the money came, and he then had the acknowledgment taken out, and the whole weeks' edition of the paper printed without a word appearing about the large sum having come into his hands.

Pigott was perfectly impartial in his scheming and thieving. He found revolutionists and constitutionalists trusting or using him, and he made them pay for the attention he bestowed upon them.

When the late Mr. Isaac Butt founded the Home Rule movement Pigott subjected him and many of his colleagues to a systematic blackmailing. He threatened them with the active opposition of the Fenian organisation, declaring that if he was not relieved from his pecuniary difficulties he would be compelled to make terms with others.

The father of the Home Rule movement, a great lawyer though he was, fell an easy victim to the practised schemer, and frequently, when Mr. Butt, who was himself always poor, had not many pounds to spare, he would share with this unconscionable rogue, who knew so well how to play upon the innate goodness and generosity of the last of Ireland's great lawyers. From the very inception of the Land League Pigott became its underhand and open enemy.

Meanwhile the Land League was growing in influence and power. Members of Parliament were charged with helping themselves liberally out of the League treasury, and so on, the object of these calumnious statements being to sow distrust in the public mind as to the honesty of purpose of the leaders of the League.

Pigott was not slow to avail himself of the means which this line of attack offered to his blackmailing practices. He wrote to Mr. Egan informing him that two strangers, whom he suspected of being emissaries of Dublin Castle, had called upon him, and had offered him a sum of £500 if he would publish a certain document in the *Irishman*, which was to be an *expose* of the squandering of the moneys of the League. This letter of Pigott's was read during the Parnell Commission. It was from this correspondence between Pigott and Mr. Egan we may date the origin of the conspiracy which eventuated in the publication of "Parnellism and Crime." It was, likewise, as if in poetic retribution, from the letters written by Pigott on this occasion and shortly afterwards, when the *Irishman* was sold to Messrs. Parnell and Egan, that the authorship of the forged letters was first discovered by Mr. Patrick Egan.

The plot for the moral assassination of the Land League and its leaders, which "the two agents of Dublin Castle" attempted to set going in February, 1881, with the aid of Richard Pigott, was not abandoned, as the history of the Parnell Commission records.

No sooner had Pigott disposed of his papers in the ill-advised purchase of them by Messrs. Parnell and Egan in August, 1881, than he began to put into execution the scheme of defamation which had been suggested to him by Dublin Castle in the February previous. Pigott was either the inspiration or the author of many of the attacks made upon the Land League for its falsely-alleged identity with outrage and malversation of funds which appeared in leading landlord and Tory organs in Dublin and London from 1881 to the publication of "Parnellism and Crime." And it is only right to say that, years previous to the appearance of these libels in the *Times*, articles similar in character were contributed by Richard Pigott to such papers as the *Dublin Express*, the *(Dublin) Standard*, *St. James's Gazette*, *Evening News*, *Morning Post*, the *Globe*, society journals like *Vanity Fair*, and other organs of anti-Irish opinion. From December, 1881, down to the time in 1885 when Houston employed him to write an enlarged edition of the pamphlet, "Parnellism," and commissioned him to proceed to New York, Pigott kept up a ceaseless attack upon the League and the Irish leaders in the columns of the above papers.

In 1883-4, during the excitement caused by the dynamite outrages which, as we have shown, were organised by James M'Dermott, who was in the pay of Mr. Jenkinson, of Dublin Castle, Pigott may be said to have been "the dynamite editor" of the *St. James's Gazette* and the *Evening News* (now the *Evening News and Post*). Articles and notes tracing the dynamite agitation to Land League policy, attacks upon Mr. Parnell and the more prominent of his lieutenants, denunciations of Mr. Gladstone's Government for the extension of the Franchise to Ireland were regularly contributed by Pigott to the above London papers.

On the 10th of December Pigott received from the *Standard* £11 16s 3d for contribution up to date. On the 24th of the same month, £20; on the 23rd March, 1882, a further sum of £11 11s; while so late as October 1, 1885, a letter was sent to Pigott from the *Evening Standard* explaining that some information inserted from Dublin was "independent of the report sent by you."

Mr. F. MEENAN, King street, reports:—Wholesale prices—Oats: 1s 4d to 1s 6½d (bags extra), good demand. Wheat: milling, 3s 3d to 3s 9d; fowls, 3s 3d—latter firm, sacks included. Chaff: Market bare—£2 5s to £2 10s; hay, oats, £3; best rye-grass, £3. Bran, £2 10s. Pollard, £3 10s. Potatoes, old, none in market; new, 4s per cwt. Flour: roller, £10 to £10 15s; stone, £9 5s to £9 15s. Fresh butter, very plentiful, value from 4d to 7d; salt, nominal, for prime, 6d. Eggs, 9d. Oatmeal, in 25 lb bags, 2s.

A number of relics of the House of Stuart, which were shown at the Stuart Exhibition, were sold on Monday at Howell's. A heart-shaped reliquary containing a lock of the hair and a portrait of Mary Queen of Scots fetched 60 guineas; a locket with the portrait of Prince Charles Edward at the age of one year, 85 guineas; and a pair of silver sleeve links belonging to the same ill-fated prince, 82 guineas.

A number of Ministers of the D. R. Church, now in Synod in Cape Town, took a trip by rail to Stellenbosch. Among them was the Rev. A. P. Kriel, with Mrs. Kriel and their three-year-old boy. After the train had sometime left Durban Road Station the door of the compartment in which the Rev. A. P. Kriel was suddenly flew open, and Master Kriel, who, it appears must have fumbled with the handle, fell out of the train. The distracting cries and signals of both father and friends to both engine-driver and guard to stop the train were unavailing, and the father subsequently felt himself compelled to proceed along the footboards of the compartments to the front of the train, where he at last succeeded in getting the driver to stop. The circumstances of the case having been explained, the train slowly put back to enable a search to be made for the unlucky little passenger. After the train had put back they found the youngster toddling towards it and calling most lustily, "Pa, I have run to meet the train." The youngster was wholly uninjured, to the great joy of father and mother.—South African paper.