

could find no fair reason to dismiss Fitzpatrick, and placed as I was amid 'strangers not of my own creed, I would do nothing without the clearest proof. One part of his character did give me real uneasiness. He hated, or professed to hate, the priests of his own communion. He forsook his "duty," seldom going to chapel, never to confession. The language he ventured to use towards his own priest was unmeasured in abuse; yet the parish priest was a gentle, aged man, kindly and charitable, never interfering in politics save to condemn the Fenians.

Early in the month of October, Fitzpatrick requested me to sign, in evidence of his identity, an American draft for one hundred and eighty dollars, drawn in his favour at New York. This, he said, was the amount of his savings at Chicago, which he had left in bank until "gold got cheap." His account was not improbable, for I knew him to be hard-working and thrifty. On the third Sunday of December he brought another note, but this time for two hundred and fifty dollars. I refused, but in quiet terms, to sign such a document on Sunday. A sudden fear flashed across my mind, for these American bills were objects of suspicion. I determined on the moment, come what would, to dismiss Fitzpatrick. On my refusal to sign the note his face grew purple, and he dashed from the room, more resembling a maniac than a sane man. On that night he fled.

There was no rest for the remainder of the night. We closed the yard gates, bolted and barred the rooms below, and waited for the winter's dawn. To send for the constabulary, I should leave the house to females and children. I should have to pass through the wood to reach the lodge; and who could tell whether the keeper was not in the plot? An hour passed away, and then came the tramp of men upon the gravel. They paused before the house, and the sound of grounded arms was plain. A short rapid glance from the window showed us the police. There was twelve in the patrol. Three, and the sergeant a little in advance, faced the hall door full in the moonlight, two were dimly seen in the dark shadow of the trees on either side; the rest had mounted the yard gate, for we heard them moving on the payment.

"Werry sorry to disturb you, sir, but we have orders."

"Wait one moment, sergeant, I will let you in."

"We have a warrant, sir, against Fitzpatrick which is his room?"

A few words sufficed to show that Fitzpatrick, had known the warrant was issued almost as soon as the police themselves. The accurate and timely information possessed by the leading Fenians was sometimes a complete puzzle to the authorities. They seemed to know beforehand when and where, and in what force, a search would be made. The escape of Stephens from Richmond Bridewell was only one of a series of proofs that the conspiracy had active and unsuspected agents in offices of trust. Two, if not three years had been spent by Stephens and his colleagues in preparation. Efforts were made, often aided innocently by most loyal men, to obtain situations for confederates in prisons, hospitals, and public offices. There were confederates in the camps, in barracks, and in the neighbourhood of police-stations. The slightest movement on the part of the constabulary, the receipt of a letter at an unusual time, the arrival of a mounted orderly at a guard-house, the silence and mystery generally observed by men about to be engaged upon a movement of importance, were all noted by vigilant, but unseen or unsuspected watchers. A simple system of light signals by night, scouts on the tops of hills during the day, betrayed the line of route taken by military or police. The uncouth and silent peasant screening the sand on the mountain-side; the tramp who infested your grounds, the pedlar with his "lucifers," and song books, and bits of showy ribbon; the labourer looking for work with his spade upon his shoulder, the ragged and shoeless urchin pretending to mind the sheep; the girl half hidden among the turze playing with her kid, were all scouts, well-paid scouts—for a trifle serves as a great bribe where

the wages of a working man are but seven shillings weekly—doing the bidding of an unknown agent under pain of death. Chiefly the leaders sought to place confederates, or persons likely to be seduced, about the families of persons holding office under the crown. A word casually dropped at the breakfast-table would be repeated in the servants' room or stable-yard. During the crisis the master of the household generally stated where he would be found at any hour of the day, and when he intended to return. Any movement out of the routine course was suspected and watched. A sentence heard at the dinner-table, and most innocently mentioned in the kitchen, seemed to have wings. The purport of it, if it concerned the conspiracy, was known miles away before nightfall.

A search was made in the room so recently occupied by the fugitive. Little was found: a pair of military gloves, two copies of the Irish People—not the genuine Irish People suppressed by the government, but an American publication transmitted in quantities to Ireland, either separately or folded in the pages of other New York newspapers. A plank of the floor had been taken up, and lay on its side against the wall. Here, it was supposed, "the rifle" had been secreted. Bedding was tossed up and carefully examined, with no result. In passing down the stairs leading to the room, the lamp held by the sergeant flashed its light upon a paper affixed to the wall. It was wafered up, and covered with short pencil strokes, opposite words written in ink. Under the words "Head," "Hands," "Fingers," "Feet," "Toes," were marks I did not comprehend. The sergeant knew at once the importance of the document. These names indicated the position held by the members of the conspiracy. The "hands" were superior to the "feet," but both had authority. The "fingers" were the "privates" who had been supplied with arms. The "toes" were unarmed as yet. The down-strokes indicated the attendance at drill.

"There is evidence here to hang him, if he's caught," said the sergeant. "A document like this we do not often find."

So the very man whom we had, until lately, trusted most, and who was thoroughly acquainted with the whole tenor of our lives, was the chief organiser and paymaster of the Fenians in our district!

Before mid-day on Monday we knew all. They amongst whom we lived, and who never had uttered one word of warning, were voluble in offering information now. Every one knew something about Fitzpatrick, and came to tell it. On holidays, or in the evenings after the hours of work, "our man" drilled his recruits among the sand-hills, or seduced and swore men in at the canteen. He reviewed his levies and distributed pay, on starry nights, at the edges of the moor. Now was explained why we often heard the sound of horses' hoofs so late at night, and why our ponies appeared exhausted and spiritless in the morning.

Five arrests were made early in the morning of Fitzpatrick's flight. Two publicans, who had a thriving trade, disappeared, without informing their nearest relatives why, or whither—at least, so they said. The whole district was in commotion, and every labourer was suspected, or professed to hold others in suspicion. I sent my family up to Dublin, although we were guarded more securely than we had reason to suppose. Our children told us how they had seen "the sergeant and his men" lying flat among the trees around the house by night. My wife and daughters found that, on their visits to the village, men of soldier-like bearing, but in civilians' clothes, hovered near them. Often I hailed and spoke to the patrol, who appeared to rise up out of the earth. Our servants, however, gave warning, and we feared to engage others. The lodge-keeper alone stood his ground, and kept the house with me.

Gradually the alarm through the district subsided. Arrests were no longer made, and not the slightest injury was done to person or property. I had my family safe in Dublin, and my mind was free. Six days before the rising there

had not existed with us the slightest suspicion that an outbreak was intended. The military authorities and police thought otherwise, and they were right. The precautions taken by the State were now the chief proofs that the conspiracy still existed, and the very means wisely adopted to obviate or anticipate danger gave birth to apprehension.

A hot pursuit was set on foot after James Fitzpatrick, but in vain. He had timed his flight cleverly, and taken the railway to Dublin at a station nine miles off, although there were two stations nearer. My ponies were brought back next day, and gave proofs of having been ridden desperately hard. Who accompanied Fitzpatrick we never knew. It was supposed he had made for Liverpool, and had hidden himself amongst the dockyard labourers for a time, and then started for New York. The constabulary gathered up and carefully recorded all the evidence they could collect concerning him—to little purpose, as I imagined. But they said, if ever a rising should actually take place, "Fitzpatrick would surely be in the thick of it." He would dare anything, they believe, and could not settle down.

During the interval between the flight of Fitzpatrick and the rising at Tallaght, we heard occasionally vague rumours concerning him. "He had become a great man, entirely;" "He was full of money," and "would soon be back in Ireland with the States army." But we gathered some decided information from the New York papers which, in their reports of Fenian meetings, recorded his name as that of an accredited agent of "the Irish republic," regularly commissioned to explain the position of the conspiracy in Ireland. He was named in small capitals as "Head Centre" and "District Organiser of the I.R.B." His story harmonised with that told by all the rest who had fled from Ireland, and appeared as "agents" in the cities of the United States. "There were thousands of men, wholly or partly drilled and disciplined, ready to rise, if they had but arms." Arms, or money to buy arms, would enable "the men in the gap" to liberate Ireland from the British yoke. He openly announced his determination to return to "the front," and to join in striking "the final blow" against British tyranny. All this was considered as a device to induce the Celtic element in the United States to subscribe once more to the Fenian treasury. We believed Fitzpatrick to be but a type of a numerous class, Irish in nothing but their birth. Habituated to violence and rapine during the American civil war, the return of peace found them unfitted for industrial employment, and ready to become the instruments of any American intrigue which promised them congenial occupation, Whiteboyism, Terry-altism, Ribbonism, the Phoenix mystery, had been carried to America by a million of emigrants, and there developed into secret societies of vast extent and considerable political influence. The Irish element in these societies was believed to have combined to a man in Fenianism, and to be wielded by clever and unscrupulous leaders for political objects or pecuniary advantage. As a theoretical organisation on paper, the Fenian scheme was remarkably complete; but, as the emissaries of the conspiracy must have known, that not one person worthy to be called, by the most liberal application of the term, a citizen—not one in decent position or respectable employment, could be induced to take part in the scheme from first to last, it was not generally believed they would ever oppose to the enormous power of the government the loose and hungry waifs and strays, the debauched and dissolute idler of the towns, and the weak-minded and feeble-bodied youths, who constituted in Ireland the Fenian army.

When this army had melted away at the first touch of the constabulary on Tallaght Hill, Fitzpatrick was diligently sought for. The authorities were aware that he had acted as one of the leaders in the affray, and it was supposed, rightly or wrongly, that he would willingly purchase his own safety by supplying informa-