

AN T-ÓGLÁC

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OUR DUTY

In many parts of Ireland the Government of the Irish Republic is now not only the de jure but the de facto Government. Its authority is recognised by all, even the partisans of England, and the enemy dare only show himself in armed raids and filibustering expeditions. Even the partisans of the enemy in those districts are turning to the Republican force for that protection, peace and order which we alone are able to assure them.

So long as the enemy persists in interfering with the operations of the Irish Republic by armed violence, as long as his forces endeavour to create anarchy and chaos among the peaceful citizens of the Irish Republic, so long must the Army of the Republic, the Irish Volunteers, remain the chief instrument of executive power. The Volunteers, the armed and disciplined young manhood of Ireland, are the right arm of the Republic, its guardians and the enforcers of the will of the people, decreed by their elected representatives and the lawful and constitutional Government of the Irish Republic. It is for the Volunteers to make the Republic feared by its enemies and respected by the Irish people. It has been chiefly due to the courage, discipline and efficiency of the Irish Volunteers that our Republic has been established, and it is their loyalty, solidarity and the high standard of conduct shown by them that has won the respect and good will of the people of Ireland. The term "Irish Volunteer" is an honoured one in Ireland. It is for us all to live up to the high standard set, to show ourselves worthy of the company in which we find ourselves, and the proud traditions of our Army.

Many duties devolve on soldiers in times of war which in normal times would be regarded as outside their sphere. As long as the English forces of violence and disorder persist in obstructing the peaceful functioning of the Irish Republic, it will be necessary

for the Irish Volunteers to take steps to protect the rights and liberties of the individual. In those parts of the country evacuated by the enemy, freedom, order, justice and equality of rights for all must be maintained by the armed might of the Volunteers.

A great and lofty responsibility rests on us all at this fateful time in our country's history. We have a grave and a glorious work to carry out; we have also an exceedingly difficult and dangerous work to carry out; and on our earnestness, unity and intelligence depends the success of that work. It is worse than useless or foolish—it is fatal—to underrate the difficulties and dangers of the work we have to perform. Such an idea only makes for slackness, and slackness makes straight for failure.

It is our duty, realising our responsibilities and the gravity of the work before us to keep ourselves physically, mentally and morally healthy and fit. It is our duty to live up to the high traditions of the Republican Army and to do nothing that can sully the flag for which we fight, or bring reproach on the ranks in which we serve. Our services should be given ungrudgingly to the Motherland. A brave fight is being carried out for Ireland's freedom and to-day men are shedding their blood or risking their lives in the cause. Frequently in recent times young soldiers of the Republic have fallen fighting for the Tricolour. When we think of these things it should cause us a blush of shame if we too are not doing our full share of work in the holy war for freedom.

We have had many triumphs; but those triumphs were only achieved as the result of hard work, discipline, self-sacrifice and intelligent action. Mere courage is of little avail by itself; it is the combination of courage with the other qualities that has brought about success; it is the lack of one or other of the required qualities that was responsible for whatever failures have occurred. Where undertakings were well thought out, after a careful study of all the possibilities, where the state of discipline and organis-

ation was good, so that all the details were carefully arranged and all were carried out according to plan, success has been almost invariably the result. Failure is almost always due to carelessly considered plans, obstacles unforeseen and unprovided for, bad discipline or organisation, or inattention to details. If we are to play an effective part in the war we must work hard and systematically and we must use our brains.

We have repeatedly urged a cultivation of the right Volunteer spirit. Drunkenness, slackness, indiscipline, should be sternly suppressed; all squabbling among one another, carping criticism of one another and of officers should be avoided. It is the duty of officers so make themselves respected by the high example they set the men; it is the duty of the men to accord them the obedience due to their position. This does not mean that any abuses or delinquencies should be winked at. On the contrary it is the duty of a Volunteer who becomes cognisant of serious irregularities on the part of a fellow-Volunteer, whether an officer or a private, to report the matter to his officer or, if necessary, direct to H.Q. Cases where serious offences on the part of Volunteers have had to be dealt with are fortunately few and far between; but nothing will be left undone to ensure that the high standard of conduct required of Volunteers both in military and general matters shall not be lowered. Our Army is not a mercenary one; the services of all are given freely, at the risk of their lives, without hope of gain; and no demoralising influences will be permitted to make their appearance.

Our guerilla warfare has been developed to such an extent during the past few months that the offensive has passed entirely out of our enemy's hands into ours. It is our business to maintain that offensive, and not allow the enemy by a change of tactics to recover it. His front line in Ireland, his chief instrument of executive power was the "R.I.C." an armed force of Irish mercenaries with elaborate local knowledge, situated in strongholds in every part of the country, even the wildest and remotest. The "R.I.C." were his eyes and ears and his strong right arm in Ireland. A relatively small body of men as compared to the people of Ireland, they were able by their organisation and elaborate system of intelligence to dominate the unarmed citizens. Their example in the early days of the Volunteers was indirectly an inspiration to many as showing what even small bodies of

men with arms, organisation and local knowledge might do. This was a favourite argument of the O'Rahilly, when endeavouring to establish companies of Volunteers.

To-day the first line of the enemy, the chief instrument of executive power has broken down and ceased to be effective. The "R.I.C." have been driven from their outposts, nearly five hundred of their strongholds have been evacuated and destroyed, and they have been forced to concentrate only in certain strong centres, where, in some parts of the country they are in the position of beleaguered garrisons. They are no longer effective for the purpose for which they were intended. Many of their barracks have been captured by the Republican forces. Demoralisation has set in in their ranks. Many of them are growing ashamed of their dirty and disreputable work, entailing armed violence and often murder, directed against their own fellow-countrymen. There are lists of resignations from the force daily, and the effort of the enemy to fill up the gaps by English recruits is a confession of failure. The English recruits will not be effective for the purpose for which the "R.I.C." were established. Their advent will probably increase the Irishmen's disgust with their work and accelerate the steady trickle of resignations.

The enemy now proposes to employ English soldiers in cycling patrols for military purposes. The plan has been started in Cork and Tipperary, with the result that a company of Volunteers captured and disarmed one of their patrols without a shot being fired. English soldiers have not the local knowledge of the Irish "constables"; neither, it may be added, have they the nerve. Already a number of incidents in Dublin, Cork and elsewhere have given us a fair sample of their quality. They are not likely to succeed where the "R.I.C." failed.

The enemy is at present endeavouring to flood with troops those districts where the Republican forces are strongest and are waging most active war. Greater activity on the part of the other Brigades throughout Ireland would defeat this part of his plans. It is the bounden duty of every Volunteer officer to throw every ounce of energy, intelligence and enthusiasm into his work at the present time. If every part of Ireland showed the same courage and activity as those parts which he is flooding with troops, it is quite certain that his supply of troops would be

insufficient for his purposes without the introduction of conscription in England; which would be a rather grave proposition for the English people. It is up to us to put every possible obstacle in the way of his plans. We must strike with increased energy everywhere and in every way possible, without waiting for him to develop his plans. We must spread our offensive over the widest possible field of actions. Shame upon those, if there are any such, who are carelessly neglecting their duties at the present juncture, when other men are shedding their blood and facing death in the war for Ireland's freedom.

NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.

THE OFFICER—HIS RESPONSIBILITY AND TRAINING, VI.

It is of vital importance that the officer should be master of all aspects of his profession. We have seen in the case of the Russian army in Manchuria a lamentable example of one-sidedness in the training of officers and in their outlook, and the appalling disasters resulting from it. In the line officers there was practice not directed by sound and intelligent theory—in the staff officers there was indeed theory, sound theory at that, but no real grasp of the practical application of the theory.

For our own Irish Republican officers at the present time there is no excuse for one-sidedness in training. Not only have we time for both practical and theoretical sides, but our actual circumstances lend themselves admirably to the testing of one by the other. Theory we can always acquire—it is in the first instance a simple matter of studying text-books and manuals. And as for practice, it is our business as long as the War of Independence lasts.

In the recently issued official manual, the *Introduction to Volunteer Training*, certain general suggestions are put forward in the direction of combining theory and practice, and it is the business of all officers to apply those general suggestions to the special military problems of their own particular districts. These problems will in great part be of a geographical nature—the officer must know within his own area every point of military importance for whatever reason, and he must know this point and the neighbourhood of it with absolute thoroughness. This is the business of the company officers—unless they can be trusted with detailed matters of this kind it means that the battalion and brigade officers cannot give their proper time to the higher problems that form their special

business. Genius has been defined as “an infinite capacity for taking pains,” and military genius is this more than any other kind.

Now how are the three officers of a company—and the N.C.Os. also—to tackle their problem. It is a problem that really consists of a military survey of the company area. We have said “every point of military importance for whatever reason,” because some points are of military importance for quite different reasons from others. For example, some are important by reason of being enemy posts—such would be a police barrack or hut or the like. Such points are of their nature to be considered as points of aggression or objectives of attack. In the case of such points the fullest possible information must be collected and tabulated in regular form: the situation of the point, the ground near it, the approaches to it, and how these approaches should be blocked, the strength of the garrison of the post, their personnel, their ‘action stations’ as far as possible, any special equipment as wireless apparatus, Verey lights, etc. Unless the officer in command knows all these things he cannot hope to obtain success in his enterprise, because the number of men and the amount of equipment of all kinds that he will need depends directly and absolutely on the strength of the defensive position to be attacked, and if he underestimates his task he will fail in it. The Irish Republican Army has no use for officers who fail through their own fault: the failure of an enterprise that with proper preparation could have succeeded is a serious military crime.

In addition to such points of aggression as we have indicated there will be other points that may also upon occasion require to be attacked or defended, but which are of such a nature as to present technical engineering problems. Such would be demolitions on a big scale and intended to last for a considerable period of time—for instance, the complete destruction of a railway tunnel or an important bridge or pier or dock. In this case the matter must be fully investigated by the nearest engineer officer who will give the required specialist advice to the captain of the company whose area is concerned.

Besides points like those indicated—which derive their military significance from the fact that they are of value to the enemy, there are points of military value to our own forces for various reasons—they may be points enabling us to observe or dominate enemy positions or resources, they may be points of supply and concentration for our own troops, they may be relay posts for establishing and maintaining communication with adjoining units. Points like these by reason of being in our possession—can be still more fully surveyed and known than points in enemy occupation. Their value for different purposes can be constantly tested both in routine work and in field exercises of different kinds, and in this way

valuable knowledge can be acquired with a view to their improved use. The fullest use of those resources in localities at the disposal of our troops is the biggest factor in our successes to date. This is an advantage, that of local knowledge, that we must spare no pains to develop and use to the utmost.

Obviously such a survey as that indicated calls for a full understanding of the branches of map-reading and field-sketching. Accuracy and simplicity are the things to aim at in this direction. The important matter is to grasp the essentials and then it is not so difficult to fill in the details. The officer who has fully and conscientiously made his survey of his area and then carefully reads through his manual of map-reading, will be able to present his superior with a valuable report containing what he wants to know and containing it in a form in which it is ready for instant use. This is one example—of universal application—of the way in which the practical and theoretical training of the command can be made to fit together.

GENERAL NOTES

The capture from English soldiers in Dublin by a small handful of Volunteers of a machine gun, rifles, ammunition and equipment, and the capture of an English military patrol at Carrigrohilly without the firing of a shot have afforded us fair samples of the mettle of the new warriors sent against us. When this new policy of "military patrols" was outlined in the enemy papers, English military experts lamented that the material available for the purpose was not very good. Evidently!

By the way it is interesting to note that the military correspondent of an enemy newspaper, *The Globe*, fears that the military resources of England are insufficient to meet her Empire's requirements—especially now when her Irish source of supply is dried up. "We have not the army for our policy," he declares. Rekening that the British regular army consists of 158 battalions, he adds that this force is divided into four equal parts. One-fourth is in Britain, one-fourth in Ireland, one-fourth in India, and one-fourth in the Colonies and Egypt. "We are at once impressed," he adds, "by the enormous charge which Ireland alone imposes upon the military resources of the Empire since that by herself she alone absorbs a quarter of them. And yet it is by no means certain that the force is or will be adequate." It will not!

Various reports have been circulated in the Press of Volunteers captured by British soldiers, "raiders pursued by cavalry" and similar rubbish—reports

which proved, on investigation, entirely untrue and in many cases without a scrap of foundation. The object of circulating these lies is obvious. At the same time, the new tactics of the enemy, though so far conspicuously unsuccessful, point to the importance of our paying more attention than before to the efficiency and organisation of our scouting in any operations we may have to carry out.

It is well to remember, by the way, that the reports of attacks on barracks, encounters with the police, etc. which appear in the public Press are in many cases practically British "police" reports. The reporters or press correspondents usually derive their information on the subject from the peelers themselves who take care to give their account of the circumstances the colouring which best suits them. Attempts are usually made to place the peelers in a heroic light, the numbers of the Volunteers are always absurdly exaggerated. It is common to see a body of 25 or 30 men described as "from 200 to 300." Picturesque "No surrender" incidents are thrown in. The silent heroism, the dashing achievements at the risk of their lives and sometimes with fatal consequences of Volunteers are suppressed. But H.Q. will remember and will see that the country will know in due time the heroic achievements of the brave men who are fighting so nobly and silently for their country.

The Gaelic Athletic Association are making a determined effort to raise the standard of athletics in Ireland (a task to which Volunteers have every cause to wish success) and, with a view to that, to put an end as far as possible to the holding of "flapper sports" not held under the rules of their Association nor recognised by them. Volunteers are invited to help them in this laudable project by discouraging the holding of such "flapper sports" and by boycotting any such as are held. The Gaelic Athletic Council is the governing body of athletics in Ireland and all athletic sport meetings promoted by Irish Republicans should be registered under their laws. By strengthening their authority in athletics Volunteers are helping to strengthen influences which are working for objects which every good citizen of Ireland should earnestly desire.

Ta an Ghaedhlig i n-a-teangain oifigeamhail anois ag Dail Eireann agus ag na comhairli puiblidhe nua ar fuaid na tire. Trua gan i n-a teangain oifigeamhail ag Oglagh na hEireann. Oifighigh go bhfuil an Gaeidhlig aca ni ceart doibh dearmad do dheunamh den Ghaedhlig agus obair na nOglach ar siubhal aca. Bhi tuairisc ar na paipeuraibh Gallda ar ionnsuidhe do dhein na hOglagh ar bhearraic airhe i gCuige Uladh agus dubhairt an tuairisc gur i nGaeidhlig do tugad na horduithe dosna hOglagh le linn an troda. San bhfior-Ghaldacht do thuit son amach. Sompla maith don bhreac-Ghaeltacht agus don fhior-Ghaeltacht!