

# AN t-ÓGLACH



REGISTERED]

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE ARMY.

[NEWSPAPER.

Vol. IV. No. 31 (New Series).

JANUARY 13, 1923.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

## “Private Murphy’s Questions”

To the Editor of “An t-Oglach.”

Sir,—The letter by “A.J.K.” in reply to “Oifigeach” with regard to the question of Irish-made cigarettes in barracks has tempted me to say a few words on a kindred subject. I do not mind so much about cigarettes; they are a luxury. If a man cannot get the particular brand that he likes, and is so fastidious that he will smoke no other, why, let him do without it. Personally I never smoke cigarettes, and suffer no sense of deprivation thereby. But fires are a necessity; and much as I desire to support Irish manufacture, I submit it is pushing the thing too far when Irish coal (which is totally unsuited for house fires, but only for furnaces) is used exclusively, as is the case in our barracks. It is pathetic to see men hanging over a fire which only shows a little faint red glow in the midst of surrounding blackness, and obstinately refuses, after an hour’s coaxing, to give out any appreciable heat. Surely this is carrying the support of Irish manufacture beyond reasonable bounds. Having no other way of ventilating a grievance which a great many others share with me, I resort to the hospitable columns of our Army journal, and trust you will give the letter insertion.

—Yours truly, T.P.

### WHAT WE WANT.

We want to make AN t-ÓGLACH fully representative of the mentality and outlook of the best elements in the National Army. We want to give the National soldier the reading matter he wants. We want the National soldier to tell us what he wants. Suggestions and criticisms from members of the National Army will be welcomed. Letters and contributions on topics of interest to the soldier will be welcomed. Inquiries from soldiers will be welcomed. AN t-ÓGLACH is for the Army, for the Irish soldier and not for any superior persons. Stories, sketches, rhymes, letters, complaints, inquiries, will all receive proper consideration. AN t-ÓGLACH, which in the past was so intimately associated with the mind and outlook of the Irish soldier of freedom, should to-day be as effective in making the mind of the National Army articulate.

### INFORMATION WANTED.

Soldiers or officers or would-be recruits requiring information on any matters in regard to the Army of personal concern—organisation, conditions of enlistment, pay, leave, examinations, disciplinary regulations, conditions of service, etc., are invited to address their queries to the Editor of AN t-ÓGLACH. The required information will be given in these columns. Furthermore, members of the Army who desire information on matters of a general nature—historical, social, financial, medical, legal, educational, etc., may address their queries to this journal. A column of “Answers to Correspondents” will henceforth be a regular feature of AN t-ÓGLACH.

## “The Poor Old Divel!”

I remember several times when Michael Collins, the “Big Fella,” was talking of some of the men who had done brave work for him when there were few to do it, the plain, uncultured men of the people who did the dangerous jobs and risked their lives and suffered for Ireland, he would ejaculate, with a smile of wonderful tenderness and pity: “The poor old divel!”

To-day when I look on the National soldier I feel just that way. “The poor old divel!”

I look at the lad in the green coat shouldering his rifle, facing storm, rain and cold, danger of death, the abuse and obloquy of some of his fellow-countrymen, and I see him cheerful, courageous, taking it all in the day’s work, and I take off my hat to him.

He goes round on his lorry in his green coat, a target for any silly youngster who thinks it fun to throw a bomb and run; he goes round in his green coat a target for the criticism of all and sundry. If he blows his nose too loudly or spits, somebody will say: “There’s your National soldier for you!”

Somehow everybody expects a higher standard from our soldiers than from any other soldiers whatever. This ought not to annoy us but to make us proud. The criticism may irritate us sometimes, but it all has its origin in something which is felt at the back of all our minds—that our Army ought to be the best in the world—that Ireland expects great things of us.

“The poor old divel!” He is just a plain man of the people, but he is serving Ireland well. The legislators, the writers, the orators, the thinkers, the business men, the educationists, each is doing his work in the building up of Ireland, each is necessary. But the plain green-coated lad with the gun who waits patiently outside, guarding the lives and liberties of the people, is necessary too; is playing an honourable part in the great work of making Ireland a Nation.

CIVILIAN.

### SOLDIER CHUMS.

(Adapted from the German of Uhland).

I had a gallant comrade,  
A lad that knew no fear.  
Mid rain and stormy weather  
We marched and fought together  
Like two old comrades dear.

A bomb was flung between us,  
It stretched him at my foot,  
I saw him bleeding, lying,  
I knew that he was dying,  
And I—I had to shoot.

He stretched his hand to grasp me,  
The firing would not cease  
—Alas! I could not seize it,  
His dying hand and squeezee it  
—God rest his soul in peace.

B.

### FIERY WARRIORS.

Some heroes so eager for strife  
Went to burn a T.D.’s house and wife,  
They got there in the dark  
But the dog gave a bark,  
And each hero just ran for his life.

# AN T-ÓGLÁC

JANUARY 13, 1923.

## Towards Peace

In our last issue we pointed out that many of the ordinary public hardly realised the vast improvement in the situation, and the steady progress towards peace and settled conditions during the past two months, even in the most disturbed districts. The great work of the Army is beginning to bear fruit. The Army is stronger, better disciplined and more efficient, better organised and equipped than ever before, and the disturbers of the peace are daily dwindling in numbers. The position of the Free State is now impregably secured, and those whose perverse mentality led them to seek by crime and outrage the return of the British have been baffled. The work of the Army has been carried out with extraordinary effectiveness, considering the immense difficulties with which it had to contend.

Outside evidence of the force of our observation is given in articles which have appeared in the "Irish Times" from a special correspondent who has revisited Tipperary, Limerick and Kerry after about three months' absence. In former communications to that paper, the same correspondent painted dark pictures of the disturbed condition of the South-Western Command area, and dwelt critically upon defects in the Army and upon the magnitude of the task which confronted them. Today he writes:—"Most people do not realise the considerable change that has taken place during the last three months in those districts, which were at one time the very head and corner-stone of the extremists' resistance."

It is true that most people fail to realise the change. It is the practice of newspapers to give especial prominence to incidents of a sensational nature; and the reports of a few isolated outrages or disturbances here and there through the country are given altogether undue prominence in the Press, and give a misleading impression to the public. It is too much to expect a country which has been torn by revolution, anarchy and lawlessness to settle down to absolutely peaceful and normal conditions with lightning speed, any more than one could expect a man to recover from a protracted and serious illness in a couple of hours. The sick man has to go through a spell of gradual convalescence, and the nation is now in the convalescent stage. Let us listen again to our above-quoted correspondent, who cannot be accused of undue optimism or strong bias for the Free State. He says:—

"To anyone who knew the state of the country in the Limerick and Kerry Commands as short a time ago as the beginning of November, a visit to these areas will reveal a definite improvement. The population is overwhelmingly in sympathy with the present Government; trade is reasonably brisk; communications are restored; social life, outside that of the large country house, is humming, and the discipline and efficiency of the National Army have made marked progress. These statements will be endorsed by anyone who revisits these parts of the country after an absence sufficiently long to permit him to make an unprejudiced contrast between now and then.

"As one started from Kingsbridge, the good and the evil showed hand in hand. It was possible to take a ticket straight through to Tralee—a thing unheard of three months ago—but a warning was given that the journey must be made via Limerick Junction and not via Nenagh; for a bridge had been damaged near that old plague-spot, Birdhill.

"But for the first part of the journey everything else marked the return to prosperity. Commercial travellers filled the carriages, and spoke

favourably of the improvement of trade. Farmers got in and out at the various wayside stations, and, though not satisfied (what farmer from Adam onwards was ever entirely satisfied?) could not point out any very definite cause for complaint. Cattle prices were showing a slight upward tendency at the fairs, and, with the roads now almost free from obstructions, and the railways providing a regular service, the majority of difficulties in marketing their wares had disappeared."

He adds that "the roads were entirely free from the trenches and fallen trees which used to make road travelling so difficult and dangerous. This was due, no doubt, largely to the business-like patrolling of the road, which could be observed, and to the numerous small posts which dotted it at intervals."

In a further article he gives details showing how in districts where at the time of his former visit attacks and outrages were of daily occurrence and of a formidable nature, all has been peaceful for the past month. He pays a tribute to the high standard of discipline and determination which has been attained by the troops in those districts since his last visit. As we have said his previous articles were extremely critical and consequently this tribute is the more valuable.

The Army is going ahead with its task undisturbed by that form of "peace talk" which is the latest resort of Irregular propaganda. It is only a symptom of Irregular recognition of the fact that their power for evil is crippled. There can be peace to-morrow on the only possible terms—that all weapons in the country shall be under the control of the elected Government of the people of Ireland.

## Wanted—A Marching Song

To the Editor of "An t-Oglach."

A Chara,—I was delighted to read the timely appeal of "Paddy" for some effort to provide our troops with a suitable marching song. I hope his suggestion that the Army authorities offer a substantial prize for the best suitable air and words will be taken up. I will go further and say that the Army wants not a song only but **songs**. There is a lot of fine old Irish songs to lively airs, but what the soldiers of to-day want are songs up-to-date, with a topical appeal. There would be a good opening for an Irish balladist to give us a book of Irish verses something on the line of Kipling's "Barrack-room Ballads." We have a long way to go before we shall hear our soldiers chanting choruses in the Irish language, but meanwhile one would rather hear them singing songs native to the soil—even vulgar native songs—than English or American music-hall songs. The American Civil War songs—"Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching," "Marching Through Georgia," "John Brown's Body lies mouldering in the grave," etc.—were not very refined or poetic in diction, but they filled a popular want; they "**got there**." We want some Irish Army songs that will get there in just the same way. Surely there are enough brains in the country to supply the want at an inspiring time like this.—Mise,

NED OF THE HILL.

D'Fhear Eagair "An t-Oglach."

A Chara,—Ní aontuighim le "Paddy" gur gá dhúinn amhrán Beurla mar amhrán náisiúnta an Airm. An iomarca den Bheurla atá againn san Arm so againn fé láthair—agus an iomarca den Ghalldachus. Má théidhean tú go dtí éin chéilidhe nó cuirm ceoil go bhfuil baint ag an Arm leis, ní hamháin ná cloisfir focal Gaedhilge, ach is ar eigin a chloisfir siolla de cheól Gaedhlach, ná tagairt d'éin ní a bhainean le hEirinn. Rinne Gallda, amhráin Ghallda, ceol Gallda, drabhuíol is dríodar na "halláí ceoil," lag-aithris ar bhéasaibh na nGall—seadh agus toitiní Gallda dá geatheaibh ag cách. Naech mithid dúinn dian-iarracht a dhéanamh chun ár n-Arm do Ghaedhlú.—Mise,

MAINE.



## Adventures of Moryah

### EXPLOITS AND ATROCITIES.

The following are some reminiscences of the Irregular hero Moryah (said to be a descendant of the famous Baron Munchausen), as related by him to an admiring circle of lady friends, and subsequently retailed by them at meetings and in Irregular propagandist broadsheets and devoutly believed by all Irregulars:—

#### An Explanation.

“No, I wasn't able to turn out on Easter Week. I had a bad toothache. But, Lord bless you, nobody knows what I did against the Black-and-Tans. I couldn't tell you. The time has not yet come when I can reveal it. It wouldn't be safe. But there's no harm in telling you all I did to the hirelings of the Free State.

#### A Marvellous Ambush.

“First I must tell you how I, single-handed, defeated a big force of troops and killed the most of them. I was surveying a position somewhere in the South with a view to preparing an ambush when suddenly I heard the noise of lorries. I looked up and what did I see coming down the hill towards me but eight lorries of troops in the hated green uniform, accompanied by two armoured cars and a Lancia car. I had no weapon but two bombs—no rifle or revolver. What was I to do?

“My mind worked quickly. I crouched under the hedge until they were close on me, and then, rising, hurled a bomb with unerring precision at the leading lorry. As I had calculated I hit it exactly on the petrol tank and exploded it, bringing the car to a standstill. What I had foreseen happened. The other cars, which were following down-hill at a great speed, crashed into one another, and all the soldiers were thrown out. I threw another bomb and exploded another petrol tank, increasing the confusion. Then I rushed out and grabbed a rifle from the nearest soldier that laid about me. They were too stunned and startled by the shock to put up a fight, and I slaughtered them at my ease. In all I killed 73—about ten of them escaped by running. I'm a terrible fellow when I'm roused.

“Of course, there was nothing about it in the papers—these bally Free Staters conceal their casualties.

“Lord bless you, that's nothing. Why, you'll find things just as wonderful—and as true—in ‘Poblacht na hEireann.’

#### Prison Atrocities.

“Yes, I was in a Free State prison once. The ruffians! They actually put me in prison, a thing the British never did!

“The Governor was a terrible scoundrel, and spent all his time inventing new tortures for prisoners. The guards used to pick out a fresh prisoner each day and play football with him round the prison yard. The Governor said the exercise was good for them.

“A favourite trick of his was to give us a good dinner, and then, the minute we got it down, to send round the doctor with a stomach pump to extract it again.

“I hear he chopped one of the prisoners into bits, and had the pieces baked in a pie and served up to the other prisoners. I wasn't there myself at the time, but I'm quite sure it's true. Mention that at the next meeting you speak at anyway.

“Afraid they won't believe it? Nonsense! Why, if you told those ladies that prisoners were being boiled in oil they'd believe it.

#### Another Grievance.

“How did I get out of prison? Well, I'll tell you. I just **made** them let me. I told them if they didn't let me out I'd jolly well blow up their prison to bits and kill them all. They **knew** the kind of man I was—they knew I meant what I said. I tell you that Army Council of theirs was **afraid** of me.

## Fear an Bhosca

Tá se de mhi-ádh orm gur istoiche a bhím ag obair. Fágaim mo thig ar a 6 no 7 a chlog agus tagaim abhaile tréis meán oíche. Mar sin atá an scéal agam le bliain ná hómór. Is mór an iongna, dar lem cháirde, go bhfuilim am' bheahaidh in aon chor mar ba dhó leo i lár na bliana go mbíodh an t-aer lán de philéacha istoiche agus is dó leo fé láhair agus le tamall anuas ná bíon le feiscint ach búmbai agus fuil agus ionahar daoine tréis teacht na doircheachta. Tá dearmhad beag orra mar is anamh a chím aon rud iongantach ar mo shli abhaile maran rudai iongantacha cúpla póilín no larai lán de shaighdiuirí. Measaim ná fuil saighdiuir sa chahair gan aihne aige orm, mar is mise Fear an Bhosca. Bíon an bosca san am' láimh i gcomhnai agam agus me ag teacht is ag imeacht idir mo thig agus an oifig. An chéad uair a chuala an t-ordu: “Stad! cuir suas do lámha!” do bhain se geit asam, do stadas láihreach bonn baill agus do léim mo dhá lámh suas os cionn mo chinn, mo bhosca i gceann acu agus mo phápa sa cheann ele, agus bfada liom gur dhruid an saighdiuir suas liom mar tá an bosca ana-throm. “Cuardaig e,” arsa ceann urraid an ghasra saighdiuirí a bhi in aice liom. Do cuardaíodh mo phócaí agus ní bhfuairhas ionta ach cúpla leabhar, sparán tobac, roinnt pápéri agus pas chun me leogaint isteach i mBeairic Thor an Bhacaig.

—Cad tá sa bhosca san agat?” arsan ceann urraid agus a shúil is a ghuh lán d'amhras orm.

—Leabhair, arsa mise.

—Oscail e.

Dosclas e. Dféach se isteach ann agus do chonaic ná hach mianach talmhan ná búmbai ná piostail a bhi ann ach leabhair, gachaon tsaghas ruda i bhfuirm foclóra Ghaelge, agus buideul go raibh rian bainne ar an dtaov istig de.

—Tá cahu orm gur chuireas moill ort ach tá's agat . . .

—Go dtiocfadh amhras ag saighdiuir ar bih ar an mbosca san in aimsir chogaidh, arsa mise.

—Sea díreach.

—Oíche mhah agat!

—Slán leat!

Is minic a dinti me stad mar sin i lár an tsamhraidh nuair a bhi an rí-rá mór ar siúl sa chahair. Ni foláir no is mór an fhoidhne atá ag na saighdiuirí. Nuair a chídís mo bhosca is dócha gur mó duine acu adereadh: “Sin duine desna bligeáird úd; ni foláir no tá rud égin i bhfuirm pléascáin sa bhosca san aige.” Dá mbeinnse am' shaighdiuir bheadh diomá an domhain orm nuair ná faighinn i mbosca den tsaghas san i lár na hOíche ach leabhair. Ni fheadar an mar sin a bhíon an scéal ag lucht na laraihe nuair a gheibhid ná hach mise a bhíon ag déanamh an fhohraim go léir. Tá taihe acu orm anois, mar is anamh a stadaid siad me. Do ghaibh larai thorm an oíche fé dhère. Stad se. Stadassa, leis, agus bhíos ar ti an bosca d'oscailt, mar ba ghnáh liom breis is ráihe o shin. Do thúirling saighdiuir óg—o Cho. na hIarmhi, saoilim—ach, in ionad a rá “cad tá sa bhosca?” ni duairt se ach “bhfuil lasán agat,” agus thugas roinnt do.

Ná ceapadh éinne go gcuirean se fearg orm me stad agus me chuardach mar sin. Tá's agam ná hach fearg is ceart a veh ar dhuine ar a lehédi d'ócáidiv ach áhas, áhas go bhfuil arm againn ná tujan failli ina ngnó agus a chuirean a n-anam i gcéintúirt chun esean agus daoine dá shórt a chosaint. Ni fhéadfimís na sráidena shiúl mara mbeadh iad.

—AODH RUADH.

That's why they let me out. They thought they'd curry favour with me when **we won**—in ten years time or so. But I'm not to be got at so easily.

“Of course, the scoundrels pretended that I signed a form promising to behave myself. But it's a lie, one of their usual Free State dirty tricks. I didn't sign any undertaking. And anyway if I did, I didn't mean to keep my undertaking, so it doesn't count. I know lots of lads who signed the undertakings who are now out with their guns looting—I mean shooting.”

(To be continued).

## Earl Desmond and the Banshee

Now cheer thee on my gallant steed,  
There's a weary way before us;  
Across the mountain quickly speed,  
For the storm is gathering o'er us.

Away, away, the huntsman rides,  
His bounding steed's dark form  
Seem'd e'er the soft black moss to glide—  
A spirit of the storm.

Now, rolling in the troubled sky,  
The thunder's loudly crashing,  
And through the dark clouds driving by,  
The moon's pale light is flashing.

In streets of foam the mountain flood  
Comes roaring down the glen;  
On the steep bank one moment stood  
The horse and rider then.

One desperate bound the courser gave,  
And plunged into the stream,  
And, snorting, stemm'd the boiling wave  
By the lightning's quivering gleam.

The flood is passed—the bank is gained—  
Away with headlong speed;  
A fleet horse than Desmond rein'd  
Ne'er served at lover's need.

His scattered train in eager haste  
Far, far behind him ride;  
Alone he's crossed the mountain waste  
To meet his promised bride.

The clouds across the moon's dim form  
Are fast and faster sailing,  
And sounds are heard on the sweeping storm  
Of wild, unearthly wailing.

At first low moanings seem to die  
Away, and fairly languish,  
Then swell into the piercing cry  
Of deep, heart-bursting anguish.

Beneath an oak whose branches bare  
Were crushing in the storm,  
With wringing hands and streaming hair  
There sat a female form.

To pass that oak in vain he tried,  
His steed refused to stir,  
Though furious 'gainst his panting side  
Was struck the bloody spur.

The moon by driving clouds o'ercast  
Withheld its fitful gleam,  
And louder than the tempest blast  
Was heard a woman's scream.

And when the moon unveiled once more,  
And showed her paly light,  
Then nought was seen save the branches hoar  
Of the oak-tree's blasted might.

That shrieking form had vanished  
From out that lowly place,  
And, like a dreamy vision, fled  
Nor left a single trace.

Earl Desmond gazed—his bosom swell'd  
With grief and sad foreboding;  
Then on his fiery way he held  
His courser madly goading.

For well that wailing voice he knew,  
And onward hurrying fast,  
O'er hills and dales impetuous flew,  
And reached his home at last.

Beneath his wearied courser's hoof  
The trembling draw-bridge clangs,  
And Desmond sees his own good roof,  
But darkness o'er it hangs.

He passed beneath the gloomy gate,  
No guiding tapers burn;  
No vassals in the courtyard wait  
To welcome his return.

The hearth is cold in lonely hall,  
No banquet decks the board;  
No page stands ready at his call  
To tend his wearied lord.

But all within is dark and drear,  
No sights or sounds of gladness;  
Nought broke the stillness on the ear  
Save a sudden burst of sadness.

Then slowly swelled the keeners' strain  
With loud lament and weeping,  
For round a corse a mournful train  
The sad death-watch were keeping.

Aghast he stood, bereft of power,  
Hope's fairy visions fled;  
His fears confirmed, his beautiful flower—  
His fair-haired bride was dead.

### A PUZZLE.

Inquiring Foreigner.—So you're one of the insurgents, are you?

Irregular.—Yes, sir.

Inquiring Foreigner.—You shoot Irish soldiers, burn Irish houses, blow up Irish bridges, destroy Irish roads and railways, and loot—I beg your pardon, "commandeer"—the private property of Irishmen.

Irregular.—Well, it's all for a good cause.

Inquiring Foreigner.—What cause? Why do you do it?

Irregular (proudly).—It's all for love of Ireland.

Inquiring Foreigner (very much puzzled).—But, tell me, what would you do if you hated Ireland?

### A MAIMED SOLDIER.

"He taunts me with the loss of one of my hands. If my wounds move his scorn, they will at least win me the regard of those who know how they were got. A soldier makes a nobler figure as he lies bleeding in the field of honour than safe in an inglorious flight; and I am so far from being ashamed of the loss of my hand, that were it possible to recall the same opportunity, I should think my wounds but a small price to pay for the glory of sharing in that brave fight for country and right. The scars in a soldier's face and breast are the guiding stars that light others to the harbour of honour and glory."—CERVANTES.

### OFFICERS' CADET CORPS.

The following letter appears in the *Irish Independent*, over the signature of "A Willing Recruit":—

"There are many respectable and trustworthy students who would join the national army, but are too young. Why not get up an Officers' Training Corps and have a competitive examination which would include Irish?"

### A HIGH RESOLVE.

"We here highly resolve that our dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that the government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."—*Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg during the American Civil War.*

### "MAD!"

"General Wolfe is mad, is he? I wish he would bite some of my other generals."—*GEORGE II. OF ENGLAND.*

### "FIGHT FAIR!"

Said a fiery young man of Kildare  
"For danger I don't really care,  
It's much better fun  
To burn houses and run  
And that's what I call 'fighting fair.'"

Printed for Army Headquarters at Mahou's Printing Works, Yarnhall Street, Dublin.