

# AN TÓGLACH

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

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## SPEED UP THE WORK!

The military situation in Ireland has not appreciably changed since the last issue of AN TÓGLACH has appeared, but the pouring into Ireland of fresh enemy troops and the various signs of a disposition to renewed military activity on the part of the enemy and of a determination to increase his military efficiency indicate clearly the strong necessity for bringing every unit of the Irish Republican Army up to the highest effective standard possible. It also shows the necessity of a more widespread activity on the part of the Irish Republican Army. As long as the area from which attack is to be apprehended by the enemy is limited to certain parts of Ireland the problem is rendered far less difficult for the enemy than it ought to be. Our Army is stationed in every part of Ireland, but its military effectiveness varies greatly in different parts. In some, organisation and discipline are excellent and the machine works smoothly; in some there is need for a great deal of improvement before the various units are in a fit position to take effective action. Those officers responsible for Brigades who feel that those under their command are not up to the standard required for intensive, persistent and widespread guerilla warfare, had better set about putting their house in order without further delay. Let it be clearly understood that at the present time every day counts and every day when work is not done and progress reported may be accounted a day lost. The work must be *speeded up*.

At the present time the organs of enemy opinion are revealing the point of view of the invading army in a manner which should be instructive to us all. The enemy regards certain parts of the South and South-West of Ireland as definitely lost to him and has determined on their reconquest. Reflection on this point should cause a feeling of dissatisfaction to other Brigades, for it means that only in certain areas have

the Volunteers carried out to the full the programme of guerilla warfare outlined in these columns. Are the other Brigades going to stand by idly while the enemy is able to concentrate his forces upon those parts of the country where the Republican forces are continually in the field? The more widespread our military activities are the more difficult it will be for the enemy to cope with them; and those activities can only be rendered possible and effective in each district by bringing organisation and discipline up to a high standard. The work must be speeded up!

The value of speed and decision in military work was shown by the recent operations in which some 350 of enemy strongholds were destroyed by the Irish Republican forces. This destruction anticipated the action of the enemy who was making preparations to have them garrisoned by strong forces of soldiers. While the enemy was considering his preparations our troops took action with the result that this particular portion of his plans "ended in smoke." The operations everywhere in regard to the matter in question were conducted with skill and efficiency; but the forces of the Irish Republican Army everywhere must be prepared to tackle far bigger propositions than the destruction of undefended enemy fortresses. And they must be prepared to carry out these more difficult and dangerous propositions with the same intelligent anticipation of the enemy's purpose, the same speed, skill and coolness as was shown in regard to the operations in question.

It is important that Volunteers throughout Ireland should realise how vitally important is the present time in the campaign for Ireland's freedom and how much the efficiency and effectiveness of every Brigade, of every Battalion, of every Company, of every officer and of every volunteer is essential to the success of our operations as a whole. We are all links in a big chain, and every link is essential. We are all portions of the national machinery and every portion is essen-





tial. It is a popular saying that the strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link. It is a saying that should be carefully pondered over by Volunteers. It is true, significantly true. The enemy have found it so; and if we have any weak links in our chain the enemy is bound in the long run to discover them.

So vital do we consider the present moment and so dangerous do we regard slackness at the present time that we think it necessary to repeat ourselves, even though we feel sure that what we have said already on this point has carried weight. Slackness at the present time is nearly as bad as treachery. There is a form of slackness, or rather a cause of slackness to which we have not hitherto referred, as fortunately it is a rare vice among Irish Volunteers—the vice of drunkenness. The Army of the Irish Republic has won the respect of the Nation by the high standard of general sobriety on the part of its officers and men. At the same time the strength of a chain is that of its weakest link, and any individual Volunteers who are prone to the vice of drunkenness are not merely injuring themselves but injuring the Army to which they belong and the Nation which they claim to serve. Isolated cases of drunkenness and of resulting imprudence on the part of Volunteer officers and men have sometimes been reported to us; and in some cases severe measures have had to be taken in consequence. It is quite impossible for a Volunteer officer or soldier to indulge in drink intemperately and maintain his efficiency; and slackers at the present time cannot be tolerated. Intemperance is dangerous in a soldier; in an officer it is fatal. The enemy's uniformed spies are quick to size up the weaknesses of our men and avail themselves of them; and the prominent Volunteer who is prone to intemperance speedily brings, not merely himself, but what he stands for, into contempt in the eyes of both friend and enemy.

It is necessary to emphasise this point, not because the persons to whom it could be considered applicable are many, but because it is important that no young men should be misled by bad example, without understanding the ideas and attitude of Headquarters on the subject. We wish to create a healthy spirit of public opinion on the subject. Even when not on active Volunteer duty, it is difficult for a soldier of the Army of Ireland, in this present state of war, to

divest himself of his responsibility to his corps. Just as at the "front" in a state of war, the ordinary soldier is ever and always liable to be called on at a moment's notice and never can regard himself as entirely and absolutely "off duty," so at the present time every Volunteer should keep himself as far as possible "on tap" and never regard himself as entirely and absolutely off duty. If any Volunteers find it hard to realise this it is because the inactivity of the Republican forces in their neighbourhood has failed to bring the realities of the state of war home to them. Every part of Ireland should be regarded, and should in fact be, a portion of our front. The more we act up to this idea, the more strenuous we are at the present time, the easier it will be for us in the long run. The more effective blows we deal against the enemy at the present time, the less we will have to deal at a later date, perhaps under less advantageous conditions. The offensive has passed into our hands and it is our business to maintain it, and not allow the enemy a peaceful moment to develop his plans and make his arrangements for a fresh elaborate military move against us. There must be no "peaceful district" in Ireland in enemy occupation. Speed up the work.

## NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.

### THE OFFICER—HIS RESPONSIBILITY AND TRAINING, IV.

There is no truer saying as regards military affairs than the very old one that "Knowledge is Power." The officer who knows his business is the one who in a trying time will rise to the occasion. To know what is the right thing to do in given circumstances is the easiest way to begin doing it; knowledge of his work is the only thing that will give the officer confidence in his own ability to perform it. If he does not feel that he knows what is the right thing to do, there is a big chance that he will do nothing for fear that what he does may turn out to be wrong.

Very instructive in this respect is the record of the command in the Russian Army in the Manchurian campaign. General Bernhardt (On War of To-day) thus describes it: "But the troops were never clearly and distinctly told what they had to do. Superior commanders hardly ever expressed their will in unambiguous terms. Everybody shirked responsibility. It was never plain whether the desirable was really to be attained by all means. A firm resolution was



never apparent. By this mode of issuing orders the firm will to conquer was ultimately drowned."

This lamentable state of the Russian Command was beyond all question due to the fact that the Russian Corps of Officers was badly educated: the Officers of the Line—except in the Artillery alone—possessed only a very inferior standard of professional knowledge. For this reason they were quite unable to turn to any military account the many excellent military qualities of their troops. The officers of the General Staff were better but this did not mend matters. General Kuropatkin says of them: "The general opinion in regard to the higher command was that, in spite of their excellent theoretical training and their unquestionably high moral qualities, the officers of the General Staff were estranged from the rest of the army." Now this lack of sympathy and co-operation between the Staff and the Line was quite unavoidable by reason of the lack of professional knowledge among the Line officers. The good Staff officers had not—and could not have—any confidence in the poorly trained and incompetent officers of the Line: the Line officers, for their part, experienced a feeling of inferiority and this quite naturally made for slackness and general neglect of duty. Where there is no mutual confidence we need not expect to find intelligent or vigorous or systematic co-operation.

So much for an example of an army failing in respect to a well-trained and self-reliant command. Now for an example of an army possessing such a command. In the work already often quoted, General Bernhardt says: "Acting with self-reliance in the sense and spirit of General Headquarters and of the uniform plan of battle known to us, is the decisive factor in modern battle." And when we seek to find more fully what the General means we learn that "Everybody must know so much of the general situation as is requisite for him to know within the sphere of his command to enable him to act with self-reliance under any circumstances, even should the conditions be found to differ from what the order presumed, or change in the course of action. He only, who knows the plan of the whole, is able to act suitably in sudden emergencies." Evidently it follows from this that a high standard of officer's training is required; and not only that, but the same standard for all officers.

The fruits of the excellent officers' training of the Germans was nowhere more strikingly shown than in the East African Campaign. There the German officers were few in number, junior in rank, and in many cases were officers who had retired from the army to settle in East Africa in civilian occupations. Yet these men were often called upon to act in great emergencies without orders from a superior and in face of greatly superior numbers. Yet in face of all this their excellent professional training told: they

were scarcely ever at a loss. And if they could not command success they did more—they deserved it.

### LESSONS FROM EAST AFRICA, III.

"Although hardly anybody at Headquarters was either trained or prepared for his functions, harmonious and successful co-operation was secured. It was based on the best spirit, devotion to the cause, and the support of good comradeship." To us of the Irish Republican Army there is something more than ordinarily encouraging in these words of General Lettow-Vorbeck: the three factors he mentions—good spirit, devotion and good comradeship—are possessed by all our ranks in a very high degree. What is necessary is to educate and direct the use of these military qualities.

For example, there must be present from the highest to the lowest a readiness to do everything in our power, however trivial or tiresome it may appear. "Shortage of personnel prevented us from having separate people for each duty. Officers of Headquarters had sometimes in an emergency to act as riflemen or cyclists, the Intendant occasionally did duty as an orderly, the clerk went into action with a rifle and acted as an orderly in battle." So too with us, it is never certain what circumstances may arise and we must look to be adaptable to all. The Intendant *i.e.* the Line of Communications officer may have to become an orderly: but equally the orderly may find upon occasion that he has to take charge of the Communications—hence the need for him to have a quick, intelligent grasp of any situation and be ready to assume control—to *Take Charge* as we have formerly emphasised.

Again we must make intelligent use of the means to our hand. "The work was greatly facilitated by the fact that the railway station, constructed on European lines, afforded us accommodation which, in spite of being rather small, enabled us to settle most matters affecting the Staff by word of mouth. We had good telephone and telegraph installations, and were situated centrally as to the telephone and road systems." The great point is to make the best possible use of all the existing facilities, and here again we come back to the same question of knowing the work thoroughly. We must know fully what it is desirable to strive for; if we don't know that, there is no chance of our getting as near to the ideal as the means to our hand would enable us to get, if we were really competent.

### GENERAL NOTES

Dheineamair tagairt san uimhir ba dheunaighe den OGLACH don iarracht ata da dheunámh ag an namhaid





chun imirce na bhfear og as Eirinn do bhrostu chun cinn arís. Bhi cuntaisi ins na paipeiri a chuirfidh i n-umhail do dhuine go raibh an sean-imirce ag tosnu arís agus go raibh na sluaite d'fhearaibh oga na tíre ag imtheacht tar lear. Is maith linn a radh na fuil an sgeul amhlaidh. Ta oigfir ag imtheacht tar lear nar cheart doibh e dheanamh, ach nil puinn desna daoine sin ann. Meatachain iseadh formhor na daoine ata ag imtheacht, no snamhairi no aindeiseoiri gan spreuch gan sprid. Is trua linn eun Ghaedhal a bheith ag imtheacht, ach níor mhaith linn go samhloch einne go bhuil an sgeul go hólé, mar nil. Is suarach le radh a bhfuil ag imtheacht, agus is beag an chaill-eamhaint a bhformhor.

As the result of further operations in the middle of May the total number of enemy fortresses of all kinds destroyed by the Irish Republican forces has been brought up to over 400. The recent operations were conducted with a secrecy, speed and success all over the country which speaks well for the state of organisation. In only a very few cases were partial failures recorded. The destruction of unoccupied barracks is now admitted by the enemy to have forestalled his own plan of having those places occupied by strong forces of soldiers.

In those parts of the country which enemy forces have been compelled to abandon, Volunteers have accepted the responsibility of maintaining peace and order, and have done so most effectively. In certain places very drastic action has had to be taken to prevent selfish or evilly disposed persons from taking advantage of the unsettled conditions for their personal benefit. In Galway, Clare, Kerry and Cork, desperadoes have been arrested and dealt with. Volunteers have also been entrusted with the duty of enforcing the decrees of courts established by Dail Eireann. As long as the state of war continues, the Army of the Irish Republic must remain the chief executive instrument of the Irish Republic, and the visible emblem of the power and authority of the Irish Republican Government.

We have often already pointed out that raids on private houses for arms without the express sanction of H.Q. are strictly forbidden. If any case comes to the notice of a Volunteer where any member of the Irish Republican Army participated in any such unauthorised raid, it is his duty at once to report it to the nearest responsible officer with whom he is in touch and be prepared, if necessary, to come forward and give evidence at the ensuing court-martial. Stern measures will be taken to deal with any irregularities or improper conduct on the part of Volunteers, whether acting officially or otherwise. In any cases where the raiding of premises is sanctioned, it is the duty of the responsible officer to see that no private property is touched or interfered with except under his personal supervision.

The ostracisation of Irishmen in the enemy police

service must be carried out vigorously and effectively. Barrack servants, friendly tradesmen and all in social intercourse with these men should be boycotted. One of the principal arms of the enemy forces of occupation in the past has been his intelligence department. To-day it is our principal weapon against them. The Irish members of the enemy police were specially trained in the art of extracting information, and making observations, under the guise of social intercourse. To-day, for the first time in many years, their activities in this respect are rendered largely ineffective in a considerable portion of the country; and they can be rendered wholly ineffective if the boycott and social ostracisation is rendered sufficiently rigorous.

The following is a translation of a paragraph which appeared in a recent issue of the *Petit Journal* under the heading: "A Wicked Frenchwoman Condemned to Death."—"A wire from Marseilles states that the Council of War of the 15th Corps has just condemned to death the woman Berne who at Saint-Quentin, during the German occupation, had informed the German authorities that one of her neighbours, M. Joly had given a night's shelter to a French soldier."

English military experts are discussing in the enemy press plans for the "reconquest" of Ireland. One of them estimates that it will take a quarter of a million soldiers (with all their tanks, aeroplanes, artillery and armoured cars) "a very long time" to do it. The English Chancellor talks about perhaps having to reintroduce Conscription into England in order to raise an army large enough for the purpose. One thing all the English military experts and English leaders seem fairly well agreed on in all their calculations—that one Irish Volunteer is worth a great many English soldiers, with their tanks, aeroplanes and artillery thrown in. This tribute from an enemy is indeed touching.

Volunteers should never undertake any operation without a firm determination to see it through. Work undertaken in a faint-hearted manner, with an expectation of failure is pretty certain to fail. It would be better not to undertake such work at all than to set about it in such a spirit. If a place is attacked, it *must be taken*. The plans should be made out so carefully and intelligently as to provide for every difficulty and every possibility; and if the state of organisation and discipline are what they should be, the putting of these plans into operation should be a smooth and simple matter.

Steps are being taken to ensure that in future unless some unforeseen accident occurs each copy of the OGLACH shall be in the hands of the Brigade Commandants on the day of issue. This arrangement should be fully in force in regard to the next issue but one and from that out. After that date Volunteer officers are requested to report any undue delay in the receipt of their copies of the current issue.