

AN TÓGLACH

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THE WAR

The war of Independence is progressing favourably for the Irish Republican Army. Things have developed for the most part closely in accordance with our calculations, while the enemy calculations have been pretty badly upset. It can be said, however, that the development of military efficiency on the part of our officers and men in some of the most active areas has greatly exceeded our expectations. It is satisfactory to note that there are now many signs of an all-round improvement, and it is hoped that before long all the Brigades will be taking their full share in the war.

It is the duty of AN TÓGLACH to endeavour to impart to officers and men a clear view of the military situation, to trace the development of hostilities from week to week and to record important Volunteer activities in the different Brigade areas. To ensure that this is done properly it is absolutely necessary that reports should be forwarded promptly to G.H.Q. If a Brigade Commandant finds that good work done in his area does not get mentioned in AN TÓGLACH or by the other means of publicity now at the disposal of G.H.Q. he has only himself to thank for it. Many officers otherwise active and zealous are sometimes peculiarly remiss in the matter of reporting promptly. An important action carried out should not be regarded as completed until a full report of it is in the hands of G.H.Q. If this is done with sufficient promptness and regularity by all Brigades, we shall be in a position to publish a regular monthly review of the situation and summary of operations and results throughout the country which will be well up-to-date.

Incessant activity is what is required of Volunteers everywhere at the present time. We cannot always be bringing off big coups but we can always be doing something. Roads must be cut and bridges destroyed; enemy mails and despatches must be continually raided and intercepted; enemy stores seized on every possible occasion; and every possible kind of damage, great or

small should be inflicted on the enemy whenever opportunity arises. The continuous pressure on the enemy already is bringing good results. In those parts of the country where the greatest activity prevails one finds in the reports received continual evidence of growing enemy timidity. Despite the express general orders to enemy officers to "neglect no opportunity of engaging the rebels" there is a growing reluctance on the part of enemy units to stir out of their fortified positions except when in very great strength. Attacks on barracks fail to draw relief parties to their assistance; and it is now a frequent experience that the enemy "won't come out and fight." This is a striking testimony to the efficiency of our troops in those parts of the country where such a state of affairs exists, and incidentally is a reflection on those parts of the country where the enemy is able to operate with ease in small patrols and even in twos and threes. In Skibbereen, for instance, a couple of months ago, the enemy troops remained in barracks while a body of Volunteers occupied the town and paraded the streets without inducing the enemy to come out and fight. Such incidents are examples of how enemy morale can be lowered by vigorous and incessant guerilla activity.

One of the means adopted by the enemy to weaken the Irish people has been the encouragement of emigration from Ireland. We have already stated that the figures of Irish emigration published by the enemy Government are false and are designed to dispirit Volunteers and to encourage those who are contemplating emigration with the thought that they will have many fellow-sinners. Figures bearing on this will shortly be made public. The fact remains that a great many persons have left Ireland without securing a permit from the Government of the Republic; and this is a thing which cannot be tolerated. Arrangements have been made for the issue of permits to all persons who can produce satisfactory reasons for leaving the country. A permit to leave is never refused in a genuine case where the

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entail hardship. Any young man of military age is a traitor to the Republic and all who aid and abet his flight are traitors and deserve to be sternly dealt with. We publish elsewhere a regulation which has been issued by the Home Affairs Minister of Dáil Eireann with regard to shipping and emigration agents. This is a matter of concern to Volunteers who cannot tolerate the traitorous aiding or abetting of enemy policy in a country for which they are risking their lives against foreign aggression.

Volunteers should understand clearly their unassailable moral position and the proud attitude in which they stand of defending the rights and liberties of the men and women of Ireland. From all the people of Ireland they can rightfully claim all the assistance in their power in the warfare with England; and all who seek to discourage or impede them are acting the part of traitors to their country. Those young men who are not in the ranks of the Volunteers at a time when Ireland is fighting for her life against the forces of murder and brutal wrong-doing are playing the part of cowardly slackers. It is satisfactory to note a steady increase in the numbers of active Volunteers throughout Ireland. The day has passed when nominal membership of an organisation can anywhere be regarded as sufficient. The Army has hardened itself to the task and will continue to wage war with all the means and all the vigour at its disposal against an enemy who disregards every moral sanction, every convention of civilised warfare and even of civilised life. We take up the enemy's challenge and promise him that he shall no have a moments peace while a Volunteer is alive in Ireland. We will fight on relentlessly with ever-increasing strength and efficiency until the last foreign soldier has left our shores.

AN ACTIVE SERVICE PLAGUE

It is a Napoleon's maxim that "health is indispensable in war, and cannot be replaced by anything." The army therefore, that can maintain its health in a prolonged campaign is equipped with a factor which certainly in a large measure, contributes to its success.

However efficient an army may be as a fighting machine, its mobility and moral are likely to be undermined, once epidemic disease breaks out.

The disease which almost invariably attaches itself to armies or active service units when on active service is known as 'Scabies' otherwise known as 'Itch.' It is caused by insanitation, irregular feeding and unclean-

liness. Men on active service have not got great facilities to overcome the above mentioned irregularities and consequently their vitality is weakened which leaves them an easy prey to this disease.

The *Itch* appears on the body in the nature of a rash and generally makes its first appearance on the backs of the hands gradually in the course of a week or so, spreading all over the body. The rash appears of a slightly red colour with minuet white, hard pimples under the skin. The irritation which this causes is tremendous and the inclination to scratch and tear the skin becomes almost unbearable.

The best way to avoid the disease is to wash the body at frequent intervals, constantly change under-clothing, and partake of food at regular times, also, on no account allow the stomach to get out of order. As a preventative (and also as a cure) a teaspoon-ful of flowers of sulphur may be put between the sheets when going to bed.

TREATMENT OF SCABBIES—It is preferable where possible, before applying remedies, to take a *hot* bath in which the whole surface of the body is thoroughly scrubbed with soft soap using a nail brush.

The following remedies are effective in killing the parasites causing scabbies:—

I. Boil together 8 ozs. sublined sulphur, 4 ozs. slaked lime and a gallon of water, for a few hours; allow mixture to rest until the sediment subsides, leaving a bright, clear yellow solution—which is the remedy.

II Sulphur Ointment. It is advisable to rub these remedies into the skin freely and before a fire if available. A change of clothes is also advisable after use of remedies. Underclothing should be boiled before wearing it again. Re-infection can take place from clothing or bed cloths.

FRUSTRATING A ROUND UP

On March 19th the Enemy made an attempt on an enormous scale to surround and wipe out a column of our troops in the West Cork Mountains. 500 Regulars, Auxiliaries, and R.I.C. in 40 lorries, together with 2 armoured cars and 2 aeroplanes, co-operating in a wide encircling movement on the Ballingearry district—conveying from Killarney, Bantry, Dunmanway, Bandon, Ballincollig, and Macroom. The "drive" of the area lasted from dawn until 4 p.m. and resulted in a complete "blow in the air", our troops not losing a single man, fire-arm, or cooking-pot.

The way our forces clipped out of the Enemy net is very instructive. Our report says: "Owing to the fact that the roads were cut the enemy was unable to bring his transport far into the district, the different converging parties came as far as possible

lorries and then marched the remaining distance. The fact that the roads were cut, and the Enemy troops were consequently weary from long marching, gave us the opportunity of retreating." Here we have another very real example of the value of the systematic road-cutting operations. The lesson must not be lost on other areas.

But without proper Protective Measures all the road-cutting in Munster would have been useless. The report goes on: "At 8.30 a.m. the scouts gave the alarm. The column was got out and moved up the mountain, bringing all equipment and spare arms. Here they were rested until the scouts had located the Enemy parties in the neighbourhood and got a fair estimation of their strength. It was then seen that they were in great force and that an attack would be impossible. The retreat was therefore continued." Here we meet again our old friend the "Position in Readiness"—and he proves a true friend as we knew he would. No confusion, no undue haste, good scouting arrangements, safe and handy position for the main column, spirit of the offensive maintained all through—even through the offensive in the end proved impracticable—these are the required conditions, and these are fulfilled.

The Enemy made one very serious enveloping movement. "In one case a party of 50 Auxiliaries were marched across the mountains to the West of Ballingearry to cut off any retreat towards the Kerry Mountains." This again was frustrated by watchfulness and careful scouting. "Having located the party of 50 Auxiliaries, it was possible to work round them without being observed."

It is instructive to note that the Enemy aircraft were a factor to which our troops had to give serious attention. The report says: "The retreat was continued, keeping in cover from the aircraft as far as possible," and again, "The really dangerous thing was being observed by his aircraft; and even then it is doubtful if he would have been able to entirely surround the column." It is necessary to emphasise the need of dulled equipment—nothing that flashes should be carried. Loose formations are also to be adopted.

It would seem as if a form of action was possible in this case which was not resorted to, i.e. some sort of attack or demonstration by local companies against the rear of one or more—or all if possible of the encircling parties. Sudden action of that type is often very effective. On April 12th in an outlying part of the Dublin Area an Enemy party of an officer and fourteen men began searching for possible dumps there, but a picked scout shepherded the Enemy party along the area until he found a favourable opportunity. Then he opened fire with an automatic pistol dropping one of the Enemy. The rest took cover and returned the fire, with the result

the searching operation were suspended for the time being.

GENERAL NOTES

The following Regulation with regard to shipping and emigration agents has been issued by the Minister for Home Affairs of Dáil Eireann:—

WHEREAS it has been the consistent design of the English to weaken the Irish Nation by forcing the young and vigorous to emigrate.

AND WHEREAS to defeat this design **DAIL EIREANN** has decreed that no citizen of the Republic shall leave Ireland without permission of the proper authority.

NOW IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that henceforth Shipping and Emigration Agents shall not accept passage money from, or issue tickets or vouchers to, or otherwise deal with any intending emigrants from Ireland, save such persons as shall produce to such Agents a printed Permit signed by the Minister for Home Affairs and sealed with the Seal of the Republic.

AND FURTHER that any Shipping or Emigration Agents or other persons offending against this regulation shall be deemed guilty of a grave offence against the welfare of the State in time of war and shall be dealt with accordingly.

The Cork No. I Brigade's report for March shows that several successful raids were carried out in which military stores were captured. A party of R.I.C. were ambushed near Rochestown and two of the R.I.C. were wounded.

The Cork No. I Brigade's report contains the following illustration of how the uncivilised enemy wages war: "On the morning of March 22nd. a party of R.I.C. in 6 lorries arrested 6 unarmed Volunteers sleeping in a house at Kerry Pike near the city. The prisoners were arrested about 3 a.m. and were tortured in the most inhuman way from that until 5.30 a.m. when they were brutally murdered. Before being murdered the tongue was cut out of one, the heart out of another with a bayonet, the nose cut off another, one had his skull smashed in with a rifle butt; and all were unrecognisable except by their cloths when handed over to the relatives."

A party of three Volunteer officers encountered a patrol of 4 R.I.C. men at Carrick Kennedy near Cushlough, West Mayo, on March 22nd. They engaged the patrol and after an interchange of shots the four R.I.C. men surrendered all being wounded. The Sergeant subsequently died of wounds. Three revolvers with ammunition, a shot-gun and a bomb were captured.



PROTECTION OF A. S. UNITS

A recently-captured enemy instruction contains the following: "When cars are used it is usually best to pull up 3 or 4 miles off and advance on foot, or the cars will give the show away." That the enemy in some cases is adopting this procedure is proved by a report of one of our own officers in which he says: "In a few cases recently the enemy arrived through the fields in open order—the lorries arriving long afterwards, and it is likely as the summer approaches this mode of advancing will be resorted to to a much greater extent, and will therefore necessitate greater attention to the guarding of a District, as so far it was considered sufficient to watch the roads."

The fact is this is one of the developments we must expect from the systematic road-cutting operations. The enemy can no longer freely rush troops hither and thither, so he must work slowly towards our stations on foot. This is, therefore what we must take precautions against.

The officer whose report we have already quoted makes one suggestion that will prove useful in many cases: "Observation Posts of high altitude should be utilised and men supplied with Field Glasses where the country could be surveyed for miles around. In the summer the country would be constantly under view except for an hour or so of darkness." Again he suggests: "Escape if necessary should be arranged through a wood as in many cases men were followed through fields until they got to a wood when the pursuit ceased." These two suggestions should be noted and practised where suitable.

Another method of security would be to shift quarters just after nightfall. If this was done any information that had filtered through to the enemy would be of course altogether wrong. If the second locality was not too far away the opportunity of attacking the enemy while raiding the first locality might present itself and a wholesome lesson be administered to the raiders.

The best way of all is to have scouts pushed up right against the enemy's base to fire on his parties as they come out. In this way any offensive attempt he makes is effectively nipped in the bud.

Then light and sound signals of various kinds can be employed. Apart from the ordinary Semaphore and Morse Codes simple signals could be pre-arranged to convey warnings from one Company Area to another. Such for example would be ringing of chapel bells by day or lighting of tall turf torches at night. An elaborate and reliable system of despatch riders should also be established.

But the key to all Protection is to be warned *in time* of the enemy's movements. Early information enables us to get ready for him without fuss or anxiety. A recent report of one of our officers says: "Scouting

must be done in future in a far wider area," and this is really the key of the whole situation. Reconnoitre early and reconnoitre often and you will never be taken by surprise.

"BIRDS IN THE HAND"

At Spicheren in 1870 Moltke's generals won a battle that he had not provided for and that compelled him to change his plan somewhat. His comment was "*Success in battle is always thankfully received.*" This gives a valuable headline for us to copy. We must not be too anxious for a success on a very big scale, and let a chance of a small one slip in the meantime. It is better to attack and destroy one Crossley tender when it passes, than to let it go because a big convoy is expected in a few hours time.

Of course there are exceptions: such was the case at Clonbannin on March 4th. Our report of that action says: "At 10.30 a.m. three Crossley lorries went west and took no notice of our positions. At 2 p.m. a convoy consisting of three lorries, one touring car, and one armoured car came east. We attacked." But, remember, this case was very exceptional, because the convoy was known to be the escort of an Enemy General and therefore a very special object of attack. Otherwise it would have been a mistake of judgment to forego the easy success in hopes of a more difficult though more valuable enterprise later on.

In guerilla warfare it is the number and distribution of actions that counts, more than their magnitude. Cutting off small enemy parties blinds him and breaks the morale of his troops. His mobility is greatly impaired if he is compelled to act in very large bodies. Besides his numbers are not sufficient to act in large bodies everywhere.

In addition to this there is the question of material loss inflicted—every lorry attacked and destroyed represents a loss of £1,000 to the enemy; apart entirely from any casualties inflicted, arms or material captured etc. The winning of the War of Independence can be furthered just as much by losses inflicted on English war material as in any other way. G.H.Q. has prepared and is issuing an exhaustive table setting out all values or amounts of money loss that may be inflicted on the English forces in this manner. This table will show possible losses in an exact fashion, but in any case the War against War Material must be pushed vigorously everywhere.

Is trua linn nach féidir linn níos mó Gaedhilge a bheith againn san pháipeur so ach nil leigheas againn air. Páipeur beag iseadh é agus spáráil ann. Tá fhios againn go bhfuil a gcaighid Gaedhilgeoirí imeasc na n-Oglách agus go nábhíeamn gcion féin den obair a dheunamh aca go dícheallach.