

AN T-ÓGLÁC

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

Vol. II. No. 17.

AUGUST 15, 1920.

[Price: Twopence.]

OUR PRIMARY DUTY

The campaign of arson and murder initiated by the enemy in those parts of the country where the Irish Volunteers are most active and efficient is being carried on with the utmost ferocity, but the military value to the enemy of such actions has been nothing at all. The citizens of the Irish Republic have not been intimidated; the Volunteers have not lost their heads; no local outrages have provoked bands of Volunteers into rash and ill-considered action. They have kept as cool as we counselled in our last issue; but not in the least inactive. Their guerilla activities against the enemy have been as continuous and determined as ever; some Brigades in the South of Ireland are almost continually in the field. In those Brigades whose military activity is confined to an occasional trivial skirmish the example of those "live" Brigades should awaken a spirit of emulation.

In those parts of the country where the war against the enemy and the enemy's consequent attempts at a counter-offensive are not being pressed forward with full vigour, a great deal of the energies of the Volunteers are being devoted to the preservation of peace and order among the citizens of the Irish Republic.

This is in itself a laudable work; it is quite right that the might of the Irish Republican Army should be employed to enforce the decrees of the lawfully elected Government of the Irish people. At the same time care should be taken by the responsible officers of the Volunteers that too much of the time and energies of the men should not be taken up with police and gaolers' duties. A scheme has been devised whereby police work as such will as far as possible be confined only to picked men in each Brigade, Battalion and Company; but circumstances are liable to arise where there is an incessant call on the assistance of these men and a demand for the co-operation of other members of the units to which they belong. It is

therefore important to bear in mind that there is a war on and that the primary duty and *raison d'être* of the Volunteers is to fight the enemy as efficiently as possible.

There is a growing tendency on the part of all kinds and conditions of people, organisations and public bodies to talk of invoking the assistance of the Volunteers to gain their point, whatever it may be. Many of the persons who thus glibly talk of "calling in the Volunteers" are themselves able-bodied men of military age who are not in the Volunteers. At the recent Oireachtas we heard many such men talking of using the force of the Volunteers to obtain this or that object. It is as well to speak plainly on this subject. There is a war on; the Irish Republic is fighting for its life against a numerous, powerful and well-equipped enemy; we have no conscripts, and we want every Volunteer in the country; and the business of the Volunteers is to fight. The force of the Volunteers may be and has been usefully employed for other purposes, but not to the detriment of this, its primary duty. To those parts of the country where warfare is incessant these words are unnecessary; but in those parts of the country where the amount of Volunteer energy and efficiency available is not very great there is danger that an undue portion of that energy and efficiency may be absorbed by duties not strictly military. It is important that Volunteers everywhere should keep clearly before them the primary object and reason of their existence. They can rest assured that the Government of the Irish Republic does not desire to see their activities deflected from the main purpose, a purpose essential to the triumph of the Republic.

It is necessary, therefore, not only that the Irish Volunteers should keep cool heads and "carry on" with the utmost methodical efficiency, but that they should keep their minds concentrated on the essential service of the moment—the waging of guerilla warfare

against the English enemy with all the skill, courage and activity at our command. Much has been done, but much more still remains to do. The garrisons of enemy spies called "R.I.C." nested in every village have been driven from the countryside and forced to concentrate in the principal towns. Large tracts of Ireland are no longer in enemy occupation; in other places enemy troops are in the beleaguered garrisons and can only move about in strong force with elaborate precautions for their own protection. Our offensive so far has triumphed; the offensive must be kept up at all costs. The enemy's lootings, burnings and murders, whether carried out as a deliberate policy by the responsible heads, or merely connived at, only indicate and make for demoralisation, slack discipline and a deterioration of fighting quality. The burners, pillagers and murderers of old men and children will not put up much of a fight when they are up against armed Volunteers.

The one way to render the enemy's campaign of "frightfulness" ineffective is by keeping up our offensive as strenuously and incessantly as possible. The least sign of slackening on our part would only incite him to fresh ferocity. We have gained many important advantages. It is useful to remember that the enemy's present activities are of very little military value; they are mostly mere displays of blind and impotent fury. His activities against us before we developed a vigorous offensive were far more effective. The break up of the old "R.I.C." has reduced him to a state of comparatively helplessness; they were his eyes and ears and chief executive arm. Without their local knowledge, their trained system of espionage, his big battalions are mere instruments of blind rage. They cannot re-establish the government of the enemy in Ireland. It has been definitely decided and decreed that those Irishmen members of the "R.I.C." who have seen the errors of their way and resigned will be welcomed back to the society of their fellow-countrymen and facilitated in obtaining employment. The knowledge of this, combined with the increasing force of social ostracism, has helped to accelerate the steady flow of resignations from the "R.I.C." force. There is every reason to believe that the flow of resignations from that force will in a short time grow to exceedingly large dimensions, involving practically the complete collapse of the body. Already what is left of the "R.I.C." has ceased to be effective for the purpose for which it was intended; and the new supply of recruits from England are absolutely useless to the enemy in that capacity.

A decree has been issued by Dáil Éireann prohibiting emigration without the permission of the Irish Republican authorities, and it is the business of the Volunteers to make that decree effective. From the military point of view the emigration of the young manhood of Ireland is one of our greatest dangers;

it is a thing which the enemy ardently desires. It is a good sign of the healthy spirit at present in the country that in spite of the efforts of the enemy to facilitate emigration, the bad tradition in which so many have been reared up to and the temptations offered abroad, comparatively few young men of military age have left Ireland; but there should be none at all. Every man is wanted; particularly every Volunteer is wanted. There is a place in the ranks for all in this fight for independence in which we have achieved so much and got so much further than our forefathers—and yet have still so much further to go and still so much stern and difficult work to do.

We have every reason for hope and confidence; but we must not underestimate the difficulties of the task before us nor the resources of our enemy. Only men up to a high standard of military skill, courage and efficiency working on the guerilla lines which have brought us success so far can hope to operate successfully against the numbers, equipment and resources of our enemy. Happy-go-lucky men and happy-go-lucky tactics are of no avail in such a fight. Plans must be carefully thought out, all the details mapped out systematically and carried out with perfect precision and punctuality. All drill and field work should be directed towards practising officers and men in this clockwork precision and methodical performance, combined with a quick appreciation of the realities of a situation and a readiness to think and act promptly. Many fine examples of these Volunteer qualities have been provided in recent times, some of which have never attained publicity. If all Volunteer officers and men were up to the same high standard as in the case referred to the task of the enemy would be rendered very much more difficult and dangerous and the final triumph of our cause would be brought appreciably nearer.

OUR WAR MAP.

This week for the first time we publish a map showing the latest successes achieved by our troops in the war for independence. This map must be diligently studied by all ranks, because it shows far more clearly than volumes of printed matter the actual military situation. It shows where we are most active and successful and also where we are less so and points out the obvious remedy.

During the first half of this year by far the greater number of our successes took place in the South-Western part of the country. The result was the enemy was compelled to concentrate there in great force and endeavour to crush our troops in that region. He has not succeeded, as may be seen by the map which shows that recently we have been doing better than ever there.

At the same time the hostile concentration in the South-West demanded effective counter-measures on

our part, and these are evident from the map: (a) Increased activity in the North-Western areas, and (b) A broad belt of activity across the centre of the country from sea to sea. Both these are measures well calculated to take the pressure off the South-West: the first by reason of its distance from the original theatre of operations and the intricate difficult nature of the country the second because it helps to cut the country in two and to control the lines of communication from Dublin westward.

Unquestionably our position on the map is improving and there is no doubt but that it will further improve. This can happen by organising new areas and pushing on active operations in them and also by re-doubling our efforts in the areas where we have been doing well. For example, the whole North-Eastern area and the whole South-Eastern area are nearly blank on the map. It becomes imperative to start operations in these areas also. There is no reason why these districts should not do as well as any others. It is a question of forming companies and training them: once that is done opportunities for active service will not be lacking.

We must again insist that our operations are seriously tying up the English forces. Even as the map reads they have none too many troops for their purpose—they have not enough, in fact. A uniform success on our part all over Ireland would make still greater demands on their strength until their position became intolerable. To make it intolerable must be our aim.

Henceforward we shall periodically publish our war map and it is the duty of all officers to work up their own areas to the utmost of their ability in accordance with the lessons conveyed by it. Study of the map should be carried out along with study of the map of their own areas, with a view to seeing how operations in their own districts could best be fitted into the scheme of operations embracing the country as a whole.

KEEPING OUR FAVOURABLE MILITARY POSITION.

At the present time it is the hope and aim of the English Army of Occupation to trick or compel us into some other form of action more favourable to themselves. Up to the present they have fared very badly at our hands in this year's operations: there seems to be no reason to think that they can improve their position unless we ourselves commit some grave military fault. We must see to it that we do nothing of the kind, and to review the general position with this in view is certain to be helpful.

Marshal Foch said in one of his Staff College lectures: "Victory will always go to those who deserve

her through having stronger will and higher intelligence than others." We shall take this as our text for the moment, considering the "stronger will" in the first place. Many different factors combine to strengthen the will. One of these is the firm sense that our cause is good: to realise that one is doing what is right in itself and that the enemy is doing wrong is a great help. Another fact that helps us in the same direction is the knowledge that so far we have had considerably the best of it—that in fact the enemy admits this and whines about it in his press. A third factor, to increase our will-power and courage is the knowledge that we are improving our general position. This last we must return to later.

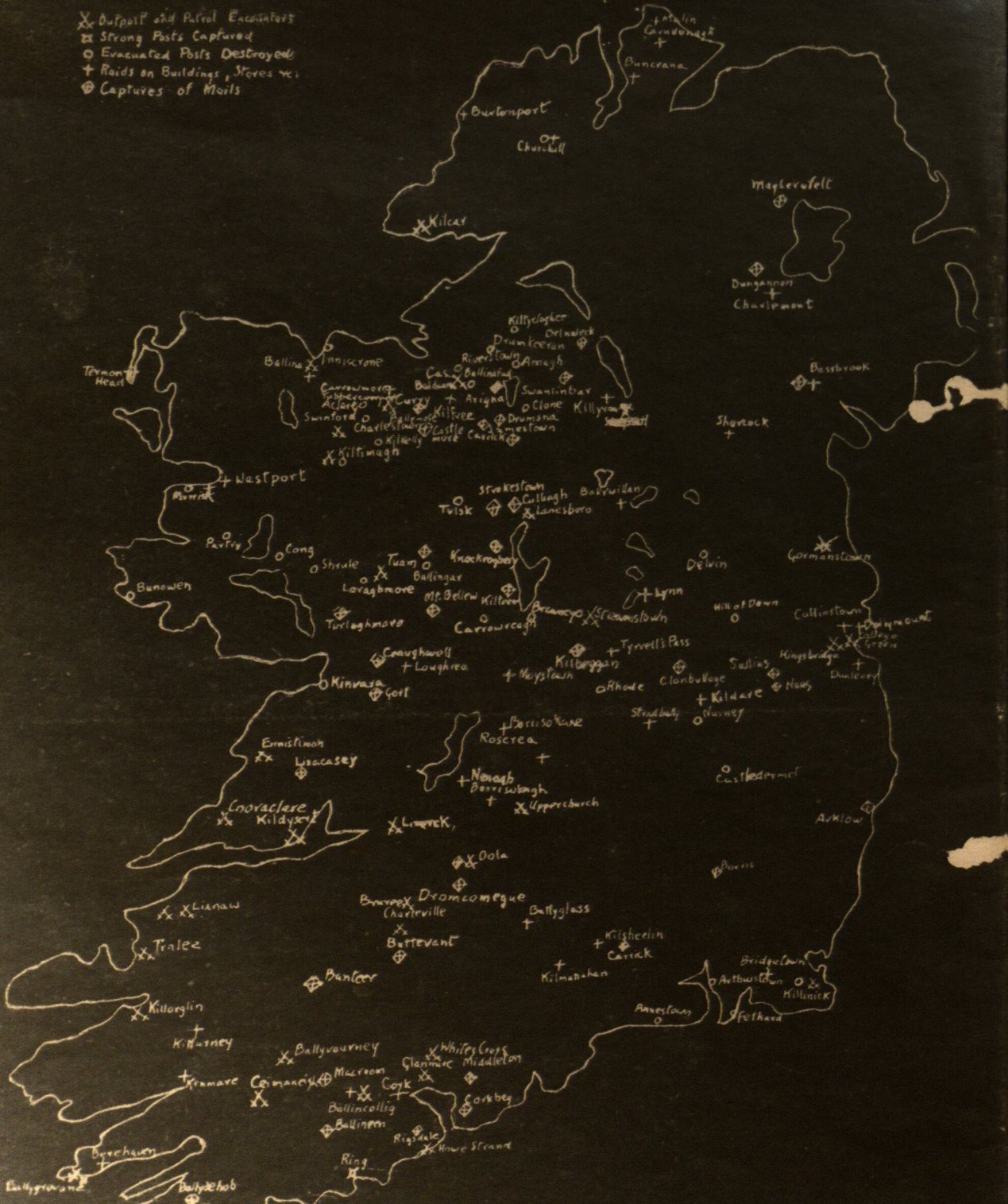
So far for the "stronger will"—now for the "higher intelligence." This is shown in the method of fighting and operations generally that is being followed by G.H.Q. We are carrying out a well-considered plan of campaign in which the object is to harrass and demoralise the enemy without giving them an opportunity to strike back effectively. We realise that it is far more profitable to *kill* for Ireland than to die for her. In short we are turning to account one lesson of Irish History—the mistakes of '98.

In '98 the United Irishmen came out to fight in mass formation without proper arms or training and gave themselves away by so doing. They fought when and how it suited the English—we fight when and how it suits ourselves.

The English realise this and seeing that they cannot ward off our attacks are falling back on sheer ruffianism—burning, looting and murder hoping to get us to follow '98 tactics. We have no intention of doing so—we are perfectly satisfied that our present tactics are sound, and the only change we intend is to improve them and make them more widespread. Mr. Lloyd George has said lately "things will become very much sterner." He is quite right—they will become very much worse *for him*. We are quite well able to punish his ruffians without damaging ourselves, and shall not omit to do so. Our "higher intelligence" will continue to be shown by improving our general work—which we have said should also strengthen the will.

Study the military map in this journal—does it not heighten your intelligence and strengthen your will? It shows you what our troops are accomplishing and where we are most successful. It encourages you to preserve and redouble your efforts. At the same time it shows you where our weak spots are and urges you to strengthen them. Are you in an area that is blank on the map? See that next time the map appears the blank is at least partly filled in. The enemy can ignore any blank space and concentrate on the others. It is our business to see that he can ignore no place and concentrate nowhere. It is good to be able to state that we are improving in this respect. We must improve faster.

- X Outpost and Patrol Encounters
- ⊕ Strong Posts Captured
- Evacuated Posts Destroyed
- † Raids on Buildings, Stores etc.
- ⊕ Captures of Mails



WAR MAP

Second Half of July 1920.