

AN T-ÓGLÁC

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“NEW MEASURES”

The enemy, hopelessly beaten in guerilla warfare and unable to strike effective blows against the armed soldiers of the Irish Republic has fallen back upon a campaign of murder and arson against women, children and unarmed non-combatants of the Irish Republic. Unable to baffle or intimidate us by his armed might he is striving to vent his brutal spite by striking at what is most precious to us and turning the country into a desert and a shambles. All pretence of civilised warfare has been abandoned by him and the excesses of the most brutalised savages are being practised by his hirelings with a zest and energy very different from that with which they face Volunteers with weapons in their hands.

There are several points in regard to the present situation, however, which require to be emphasised. In the first place, the policy of assassination, murder, arson and pillage is nothing new; it has been in practice for many months; the only thing new is that it has now become a regularly systematised official enemy policy with stereotyped features. Some of the earlier orgies might have been regarded as the excess of men whose discipline had broken down under the influence of disordered nerves and degenerated morale. But it is now clear that the enemy have deliberately created a body of little or no discipline and low morale and morality for the specific purpose of carrying out savageries of which men of a different stamp would be unsuitable. Realising the danger of slackening the discipline of the regular army, a body of cut-throats and bandits has been created to carry out the requisite murder, arson and pillage.

There are two things in regard to this matter which require to be strongly impressed upon all Volunteers and particularly upon Volunteer officers. The first is this—that the operations of the “Black and Tans” would be practically impossible without the assistance of the old “R.I.C.” who are the real agents and insti-

gators of the campaign of savagery. Without their local knowledge the “Black and Tans” would be helpless; it is they who mark out men for murder and houses for destruction; and then endeavour to ingratiate themselves with their fellow-countrymen by pretending to have “tried to restrain the excesses” of the Black and Tans. The wretched cut-throats and looters of the “Black and Tans” do not deserve punishment half as much as the cowardly Irish spies of the old “R.I.C.” who remain to carry on the dirty work against their countrymen.

It is significant that it is in those parts of the country where the warfare on the armed spies of the “R.I.C.” was in the past most feeble and insufficient that the worst reign of terror is now being instituted. The secret of this is obvious. In the West the guerilla warfare was not sufficiently energetic to greatly relax the grip of the old “R.I.C.” on the countrysides; and they are now striving desperately to regain their hold, with the aid of the foreign reinforcements by wholesale terrorism. They actually hope to succeed by Christmas, as is shown by a secret order intercepted by us. The Volunteers of those parts of the West where this campaign of terrorism is being carried on have themselves to thank for it. For a year we have been preaching the necessity of a vigorous and sustained offensive everywhere against the enemy's front line, the “R.I.C.”, and pointed out that the slackness of certain parts of the country made the problem unnecessarily simple for the enemy. In the South the guerilla offensive has been carried out for so long and so vigorously that any attempt by the “R.I.C.” to regain control of areas is out of the question and the enemy can only rely on a big military concentration. Months ago we warned those Brigades that were slack and inefficient and failed to take their full part in the guerilla warfare that they would regret it. It is useless however to go back on what has past. We trust that recent events have galvanised even the most indolent

into activity. The service of the moment is to push on our offensive on as widespread an area as possible, with all energy and efficiency available, and, at the same time, to take steps to deal with the enemy's "new measures" of savagery.

This brings us to the second point to be impressed on all. This new campaign of the enemy must be met and caltd with. General Headquarters are considering special measures with a view to this; but apart from this it is the duty of Volunteer officers to devise plans for dealing with the murderers and pillagers. From the military point of view the Black and Tans are a negligible proposition. They have no discipline, are generally in a state of drunkenness on the occasion of their expeditions and behave as a disorderly mob. Volunteers dealing with them would be as trained soldiers against a drunken rabble, and a handful of Volunteers from a prepared position could wreak terrible havoc among their number. They are neither drilled nor prepared for fighting. The impunity with which they have carried out their orgies of loot and arson renders them doubly reckless and has destroyed any trace of value they might have possessed as a fighting force.

In some recent instances Volunteer officers who had prepared to deal with the Black and Tans were induced by local influences to refrain. The result was that the towns in question were sacked. It is hard to see how much worse could have befallen them if the Volunteer officers had proceeded with their original plans. In any case, there are more important things than local considerations. It is right for a Volunteer to think of the interests of his own town; but it is his first duty to think of the interests of Ireland. On every day that the Black and Tans are allowed to carry on their campaign with impunity, more towns are sacked, more houses and factories destroyed, more men murdered. The first service of the moment to Ireland is to teach them a few bloody lessons, irrespective of local considerations. In the one place where the raiders were met—in Scariff—a few shots sufficed to disperse them. In this crisis in our country's fate, it is more dangerous for us to remain inactive than to take big risks. We must keep up our offensive; we must increase it and enlarge its scale; we must deal with the new campaign of murder and savagery. We are now far better armed, equipped, trained and instructed than ever before; and the people of Ireland look to us for help. Speed up the work!

AVOIDING THE OLD MISTAKES. I

The present is a critical stage in the War of Independence and it is consequently very useful to consider our position—in the light of showing how we are avoiding the mistakes made by other people in their struggles against the invaders. We can fairly claim to have profited by the lessons of the older Irish Wars in many ways. First and foremost we are now fighting a National War. Former wars were less or more sectional in aim or conduct and therein was largely contained the germ of their failure: Marshal Foch points out with great clearness how Napoleon faced and overcame with ease the armies of dynasties and governments but succumbed to the armies of nations in Spain, Russia and Germany from 1808 to 1814. So with ourselves the now distinctly national character of the struggle renders it more formidable to the enemy in many ways.

For one thing the warfare is more widespread than in former times and our aim is to make it more widespread still. Not all districts are equally active at the present time, but we intend to remedy this—and, indeed in great measure it is being remedied. At all events there is no district where the invaders rule is not challenged to some extent, and the steady following out of this policy will result in an ever-increasing strain being put upon his resources. This strain is greatly increased by the railway aspect of the war: the invaders are very seriously inconvenienced by the inability to use the railways. The numerous and ponderous stores of modern armies are very largely dependant on railway transport. Without it their value decreases enormously.

Besides being more extensive in the area of activity, the national war is always more unified and concentrated in aim. For the first time Irish national forces are acting in the interests and under the direction of a national government that is sure of itself and definite in its aim, unlike the Confederation of Kilkenny that was neither sure of itself nor definite in its aim. A national army acting with singleness of purpose has an enormous advantage over any enemy acting in purely sectional or imperialistic interests.

Definiteness of aim follows as a result of all this—and our definite aim is the destruction of the invaders power by the destruction of his armed forces and strongholds. This destruction we are achieving bit by bit—and at a steadily increasing rate. To realise this it is necessary to look back a bit—to the beginning of the present year, for example. The numbers of the invaders in Ireland is now greater than it was then—in fact they are once and a half as great. But their value as a fighting force is very much less. They have lost the initiative, their attempts to recover it have been futile, and their morale is lowered to an extraordinary degree.

On the other hand, our own forces have gained



enormously in value. Our numbers are greater, our organisation is more widespread and more uniform, our training is greatly advanced, our morale is thoroughly sound. Not only so, but we are still improving: nothing succeeds like success, and we can honestly say that the Irish Republican Army is doing well in all respects: yet there must be no easing-up for all that.

Says Marshal Foch: "Know *why* and *with what* you are acting, and then you will know *how* to act" Translated into the mental outlook of G.H.Q. this means: "We are acting to destroy the armed force of England in Ireland, and we are using the Irish Republican Army to accomplish this." How then are we to act? Have we found the appropriate form of warfare to achieve our aim. This is the next question.

"When Spain, Russia, and Germany rose they found at the same time the form of war best suited to each." Can we say as much? In great part the form we have selected is the same as that adopted by Spain, though not quite the same. Is it suited to us—making allowance for the altered conditions? Our military aims have been summed up very recently in these columns: "His strongholds must be attacked, his forces surprised and disarmed, his communications interrupted, his dispatches seized, his activities watched, his machinery interfered with, his supplies cut off in every part of the country." Marshal Bugeaud thus describes the situation of the French in Spain in September 1809 after a year and a half: "What we have done till now is of hardly any use. We have occupied several provinces which have risen again as soon as we left them; and even those we hold to-day are filled with little parties who, too weak to attack the army, fall upon small detachments, badly escorted convoys, couriers, orderlies etc."

In view of our peculiar circumstances no other form of warfare is desirable. In '98 we were similarly inferior in respect of arms and equipment—and in respect of training as well. But on that occasion the plan comprised a definite rising-out and action in large masses. The result was to throw ourselves away to no purpose, by adopting a system of military action that was at bottom unsuitable. In contrast to '98 we have now copied rather the harassing tactics of Art Mac Murcha Caomhanach who in many respects was the most successful Irish General of all those who ever fought against the English. So far we have encountered no serious reverse in our operations.

"It is questionable" says Marshal Foch "whether one can put into successful operation similar forms of fighting, unless the individual soldier is directly interested in the war as the accredited defender of a national cause. It is questionable whether a mercenary army or one of old soldiers such as the English could succeed in such a conflict. For such an army appeals forcibly to the solidity and discipline of rank

to take the place of moral qualities, of individual valour and initiative." This brings us naturally to the consideration of the third point with respect to which we are avoiding the old mistakes i.e. regularising our forces.

In former Irish Wars the successes of Aodh O'Neill and Eoghan Ruadh were among the most outstanding. The main reason for this was the fact that they took the trouble to train their troops. The '98 men did not do so, nor did the Fenians: at least not in a sufficiently thorough-going way. We, however, are doing so. We realise that untrained forces are incapable of sustained effort and are easily spirited by reverses. Mere enthusiasm unsteadied by discipline never gets very far. We aim at discipline inspired by enthusiasm.

So we see the three directions in which we are trying to improve on our predecessors: (a) National Character of the war, (b) Suitability of the method of Fighting, (c) Insisting on Training of Troops. The aim of G.H.Q. is to inspire all ranks in accordance with these ideas. As Marshal Foch says: "The teaching of the Principles of war will be in vain, if it is confined to setting forth those Principles without taking account of their application". The aim in fact is to ensure action in accordance with a sound Doctrine of War suited to the conditions. It is valuable for all ranks to understand this; because it helps each to fit himself into the scheme in the most complete and effective way.

ARMY ADMINISTRATION. I

Some weeks ago we announced in this journal that articles would appear dealing with Organisation, Administration and Routine. In the present article it is proposed to indicate something about the position of Adjutants and their Staff Duties. In this way we expect to clear up certain vague notions among our newer and less organised units. The first question is: What is an Adjutant?

The word "Adjutant" comes from a Latin word meaning 'Helper' and this will put us on the right track. The Adjutant is the 'Helper' to the Commanding Officer of the Brigade, or the Battalion, or the Company as the case may be. His work consists of that part of the running of the unit which it would be waste of time for the Commanding Officer to perform himself. For example, he copies and distributes the orders issued by the Commanding Officer; he prepares the Rolls and Parade Returns etc. He must always be in close touch with the C. O. the two work like a well-matched team of horses.

The function of the Adjutant as the C.O.'s 'Helper' will be better understood in one respect if you study the diagrams in Handbooks 2 and 7—'Drill' and 'Cyclist Training'. In the former, refer to paragraph 117 and to Diagrams 5, 6, 7, 8. In the latter refer to

Diagram 1. From these you will learn the position of the Company Adjutant in all formations of the company. You see that while the Captain is usually posted in front the Adjutant is *always* in rear. There he is in the best position to oversee the Company, to correct mistakes and to see that everybody is conforming to Regulations. This matter of regularity and supervision is an important part of the Adjutant's work.

With regard to Adjutants we differ from other armies in one respect—we have Company Adjutants with very important duties. The others have only officers corresponding to our Battalion and Brigade Adjutants. The reason is that in our case the Company is the unit for purposes of Organisation and Administration as well as for Tactical purposes; with them the Company is only a tactical unit. For us it is imperative to have small self-centered units capable of acting alone if necessary. In fact this is our great strength in the War of Independence—that we are at home with small units while the invaders are only useful in great numbers.

But though we act in small units we still must act as an Army, not as isolated bands. For this Staff work is required. An example will show this: the Boer Commandos though individually excellent units had no regular Staffs and so there was a looseness and indefiniteness in their operations that prevented complete success. Lettow-Vorbeck in East Africa, on the other hand *did* possess trained Staffs and his operations were far more vigorous and effective. Now this Staff work of ours must take its rise from the Company Adjutants.

It is necessary, therefore, to tackle systematically this question of Adjutants and systematic study on the part of Company Battalion and Brigade Adjutants is necessary. We intend in subsequent articles to consider in detail the qualifications and duties of this post. Raw soldiers are inclined to overlook the importance of Staff Work, but as things develop the need of better and smarter Staff Work, becomes more and more urgent. Even at this moment really first-rate Staff Work would add fifty per cent to our power as a fighting force.

GENERAL NOTES

Is oth linn AN T-OGLAIGH a bheith deunach an bobhta seo, ach is dócha go dtuigeann ar léitheoirí go bhfuil alán constaicí fé leith a bhaineann le clóbhuailadh agus le foillsiú an OGLAIGH ná baineann le haon phaiper eile in eirinn. Ní beg d'ionna a fheabhus d'eirigh linn an paiper a thabhairt amach gach coicis le fada d'aimsir i n-aindeoin dhéill ar namhad.

The enemy is taking leaves from our book and paying us the flattery of imitation. His latest resource is the periodic raiding of the mails carried by his own officials. In our last issue we warned Volunteers

against trusting any communication of any importance to the British post. We again reiterate the warning.

Volunteers are warned against the practice of talking among friends about something that "should be done." For all they know the very line of action advocated by them may happen to be actually under contemplation by G.H.Q. and arrangements may be well on their way and talk of the sort may spoil everything by percolating through gossip to the enemy's ears and putting him on his guard. This is not merely a theoretic possibility; instances of the kind have occurred. If any Volunteer has a plan or a suggestion which he thinks feasible, the proper procedure for him is to communicate it to his O.C. (who will forward it to the proper quarters) and then to keep his mouth shut about the subject.

The capture of enemy barracks and enemy patrols is being carried on with increasing vigor and efficiency. Since our last issue two barracks have been captured and destroyed and a number of well planned and successful ambushes and surprises have been carried out in different parts of the country. Whenever it comes to a fight on anything like fair terms the Irish Republican forces invariably get the best of it, which is not surprising considering the decline in discipline and morale of enemy forces in Ireland.

As we mentioned in our last issue the enemy is now resorting to the torture of prisoners and threats of death with a view to extracting information from them. Several such cases have occurred. In a recent case in Dublin a Volunteer prisoner before one of the enemy "courts" made a statement of the tortures he had been subjected to so grave that the President of the "court" seized the reporter's notes, took their names and threatened them with penalties if the facts were published. Steps are being taken to secure widespread publicity for it. Volunteers are warned that they may expect the enemy when he captures prisoners whom he considers suitable subjects to resort to all kinds of stratagems with a view to extracting information. Men are placed against a wall, blindfolded and told they will be shot unless they give the names of their associates. Where two prisoners are taken together they will be separated, and efforts made to lead each of them to believe that the other has given information. All stratagems and brutalities of the enemy so far in regard to this matter have proved a lamentable failure. No Volunteer has flinched under the trying ordeals, the physical and mental torture to which they have been subjected. The efforts of the enemy to suppress the publication of these facts shows how nervous he is feeling about it. There is no cowardly meanness, no savage barbarity, no baseness, no treachery to which the enemy is not resorting in his warfare with us. Meanwhile the Republican Army goes on steadily with its successful guerrilla offensive, observing the rules of civilised warfare.