

THE IRISH VOLUNTEER

EDITED BY EOIN MAC NEILL.

Vol. 2. No. 2. (New Series).

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1914.

Price One Penny.

"A DESPERATE ATTEMPT."

Mr. John Dillon has written a letter to the Secretary of the Redmond Demonstration Committee, Tuam. Mr. Dillon says:

1. "A wicked scandalous attempt has been made to overthrow Mr. Redmond's leadership," and

2. "To break up the Irish Party," and

3. "To destroy the great movement founded 35 years ago."

4. "To achieve this work of ruin, a desperate attempt has been made to capture the organisation of the Irish Volunteers," and

5. "A flood of scurrility and lies was let loose on the country, such as I never remember in my political experience."

6. "If this attempt had succeeded, the Home Rule cause would have been defeated," and

7. "Ireland, according to the teaching of Nationalists of the new Sinn Fein brand, would have been referred for all future hope of liberty to the Kaiser."

Mr. Dillon's seven articles can be dealt with one by one.

I.

Mr. Redmond's leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party has not been disputed, questioned, or intrigued against in any way that the public has been permitted to hear of. Mr. Redmond holds a definite mandate from the majority of the Irish electorate. That mandate has yet to be fulfilled. No departure from it has been sanctioned by those who gave it.

II.

The Irish Party hold the same mandate. The public has never heard, till Mr. Dillon wrote, of any attempt to break up the Irish Party. The public ought not to be kept in the dark about such things, and Mr. Dillon should explain what he means. Otherwise, he will appear to be writing in order to create an unfounded scare, and to bounce people's judgment by hinting at some hidden conspiracy.

III.

By "the great movement founded 35 years ago" Mr. Dillon no doubt means the constitutional Home Rule movement. There is no doubt that the constitutional movement has been brought to a standstill by an unconstitutional movement financed and supported by the British Unionist Party and backed up by militant anti-Irish Jingoism. It is also known that resistance to this unconstitutional and revolutionary movement has been declared by Lord Crewe, the Liberal leader in the House of Lords, to be "coercion" and contrary to Liberal principles, and by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons to be "unthinkable." The Ministry, headed by these Statesmen, stood pledged for two years to the full text of the Home Rule Bill, now called the Home Rule Act. They now stand pledged against it. We do not know what their next pledge will be. In these circumstances, it seems rather contemptible to be turning the attack on those whom Mr. Dillon calls "Nationalists of the new Sinn Fein brand," the vast majority of whom are men who support the policy to which the Liberal Ministry stood pledged and which the Ministry has now abandoned.

IV.

This statement is open to an obvious retort, but the matter is altogether too serious to be treated in the debating society fashion. Mr. Dillon alleges that a desperate attempt has been made to capture the organisation of the Irish Volunteers with a view to overthrowing Mr. Redmond's leadership, breaking up the Irish Party, and destroying the Home Rule movement. Now either I am aware of that attempt or I am kept in ignorance of it. If I am aware of it, then I am guilty of falsifying every undertaking that has been made by myself and others on behalf of the Irish Volunteers since the first committee meeting at which I

presided, over twelve months ago. The Irish Volunteers are not a secret society. They are not under a secret administration. They have no secret policy. Their membership and their companies consist of Irishmen freely admitted on publicly-known conditions. They have no secret signs or passwords. They are bound by no secret engagements. All their acts are as open and above-board as the friendly Government will permit. How it is proposed to "capture" an organisation of this kind, or who proposes to do it, is a mystery. Since the public knows absolutely nothing of the "desperate attempt," the attempt must be a secret one. Mr. Dillon can do no harm by a full exposure of the plot. As his statement stands, it can be classed with other statements attributed to "responsible" persons, statements which appeared to have for their object the holding up of the Irish Volunteers to persecution by military authorities acting under no small degree of excitement. Already quite a number of Irish Volunteers have been driven from employment and deprived of their livelihood. If the authorities are taken to task for acts of persecution, they will easily find justification in the statements of men claiming to be Irish Nationalists, though till now it has never been known in Irish history that men claiming to be Nationalists were willing to hold up other Nationalists, whatever differences might exist between them, to the anger and hostility of the British authorities; least of all to the anger and hostility of that very class of men whose violent antipathy to Irish nationalism was so clearly manifested a few months ago. What Irish Nationalist could have believed at that time that he would be asked, before the year was out, to implicate himself in providing victims for the spirit that animated the Curragh revolt and the Clontarf expedition? The "sharp curve" is "about turn" in the National march. "By their fruits ye shall know

them." The policy of the New Departure is providing fruit after its kind.

V.

"Scurrility and lies." Yes, we know where to find them. Mr. Dillon's experience covers the Parnell crisis, the Healy crisis, and the O'Brien crisis. Now, to tell the truth, notwithstanding the accusations openly hinted and privately circulated against myself, notwithstanding the "German gold" yarn, which nobody believed except a few factious crackskulls and some Tory backwoodsmen, notwithstanding the performances of the Brass Band weekly, there has been really much less scurrility and much less recklessness of statement than we can remember at previous periods of Mr. Dillon's experience; and for a very good reason. The country would not stand it.

VI.

It is well to know that the mysterious attempt has failed, and still better to know that the Home Rule cause is safe.

VII.

If it should ever happen that the Kaiser was able to exercise a predominant influence in Irish affairs, that very argument that has been used to justify the New Departure would be found equally useful for referring all future hope of liberty to the Kaiser. The same combination that is now making sharp curves of their backbones before the anti-Irish prejudices of the English classes would, by the same logic, be found in precisely the same attitude before their new rulers. The people who would have the temerity to keep to the old paths of Irish Nationality would be denounced as pro-Britons or pro-Russians or pro-whatever happened to be the chief effective rival of the masters of Ireland.

If Mr. Dillon knows anything about this desperate attempt, let us have it out. Let us have no more dark hints against Irishmen living in peril of their liberty, perhaps of their lives, under a state of law which is virtually martial law and which has been described by the most Tory of English Tories as a grave departure from constitutional government. "Scurrility and lies" are well avoided, but there are worse weapons, and there is ammunition that is subject to the danger of backfiring.

Eoin Mac Neill.

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THE WAR

Regarding the operations as a whole there has been no very sweeping change in the general situation. In the Western theatre the contending armies are in practically the same positions as a week ago, with the French beginning to be active on their right in some degree. A noteworthy point is that the Germans seem determined to establish some sort of a naval base at Zeebrugge: they are now said to have mounted 11-inch mortars in the defences, and, of course, that means that they will hold them as resolutely as possible against any attack from sea.

In the East the long battle in Poland is still undecided. It is evident the recent Russian success has been successfully met by the Germans, but in front of Cracow the Russians are holding on stubbornly. To Serbia the capture of Belgrade by the Austrians is a heavy blow, and combined with the advance of the Southern Austrian Army towards Nish, goes a long way to eliminate Serbia for the future. By the New Year 200,000 Austrian troops should be free for operations in Poland.

The capture of General De Wet will very likely have the effect of putting an end to the operations in South Africa as a serious diversion. A much more serious diversion, however, is that afforded by Turkey, which has now developed to such an extent as to call for detailed examination. The advent of Turkey on the scene has been repeatedly described as likely to prove a hindrance to her allies instead of a help. But this is certainly not so in a military sense, for Turkey engages large forces that would otherwise certainly fight either in Flanders or Poland. And since she draws in no way on German or Austrian resources her assistance is a net gain to the allied Empires. The actual nature and extent of the gain is what is to be examined.

Considering the Russo-Turkish frontier in Asia, we find that Turkey has permanently stationed in Armenia three army corps at Erzinjan, Erzerum, and Van, while a fourth from Mosul in Mesopotamia is available inside a few weeks. In addition to these four corps of regulars Turkey could employ many thousands of Kurdish irregular cavalry. Clearly, then, the Turkish Army in Armenia is very formidable and will at the very least neutralise the Caucasian army of Russia during the war.

Against England Turkey is called upon to operate in several directions. On Nov. 21st a combined English and Indian force occupied Basra, half-way up from the Persian Gulf to the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. From Basra to Baghdad is over 250 miles as the crow flies, and following the course of the Tigris well

over 300. The river is navigable all the way, and the capture of Baghdad would be a considerable success. But Baghdad is the headquarters of an army corps, and it is very unlikely that the British can spare anything like a sufficient force to make an effective attack against it. Their object in seizing Basra was primarily defensive—to prevent the spread of an Islamic movement to India.

Next in order may be considered Aden and its subsidiary possessions. It is not likely that the Turks will make any attempt against Aden if strongly held. But their mere presence in the Yemen—the most fertile province of Arabia—will compel the British to retain a powerful force there. The Yemen is the station of an army corps, and in the Hejaz province to the north is stationed another division.

But of course the main Turkish activities will be directed against Egypt. The number of troops marching against the Suez Canal has been stated 76,000, and the affairs of outposts which have already occurred in the Sinai Peninsula appear to have turned out favourably to them. This was only to be expected because their vast swarms of Arab irregulars give the Turks a great numerical advantage in this kind of fighting. There is every prospect that the Turks will be able to maintain their numbers in Egypt at a high figure as they have through railway communication practically from Constantinople to the frontier. The report of troops passing from Constantinople to Asia indicate that Turkey has no misgivings of her Bulgarian neighbour, while the acquisition of the "Goeben" safeguards against a Russian naval attack.

Turkey cannot be anyway immediately injured: her strength in men and supplies lies really in the heart of Asia Minor as it always has done. It is not necessary to achieve any pronounced success to be of material assistance to her allies. She has already, in military phrase, "contained" the Russian army of the Caucasus and also the reinforcements for the British from India, Australia, and New Zealand. There is the additional danger of Mohammedan revolts to be looked for in the event of a considerable Turkish success.

NOTICES.

All men of the 4th Battalion Dublin Regiment will assemble at Larkfield, Kimmage, on next Sunday the 13th inst. at 12 noon. A scheme of operations lasting until about 6 p.m. will be carried out.

The officers of the Battalion meet this Wednesday night at 9, to complete arrangements. Rations to be carried on Sunday, also full equipment and arms. Each Captain to see that four men of his Company are provided with bicycles.

EAMONN CEANNT, Commandant.

USE OF THE RIFLE.

Nothing is more important in learning the use of the rifle than to begin right. If we begin the right way the rest comes very easily. The following rules are not devised by cranks to annoy the men: they are the result of careful and continued study, and are a sound basis by applying which to his own case, the soldier becomes expert in the use of his rifle.

I.

POSITION EXERCISE.

The Instructor commands:

1. Position. 2. Exercise.

At the last command, without moving the body, head or eyes, raise the rifle smartly to the front of the right shoulder to the full extent of the left arm; elbow inclined downward; the barrel nearly horizontal; muzzle slightly depressed, heel of the butt on the line with the top of the shoulder.

(Two.) Bring the piece smartly against the hollow of the shoulder without permitting the shoulder to give way, press the rifle against it, mainly with the right hand, only slightly with the left; the forefinger of the right hand resting lightly against the trigger; the rifle inclined neither to the right nor the left. At the same time bring the left elbow well under the rifle, the right elbow slightly advanced and raised to the height of the shoulder; the head erect; eyes to the front and not looking through the sights.

(Three.) Resume the position of "ready." The Instructor should especially notice the position of each man in this exercise, endeavouring to give to each an easy and natural position. He should see that the men avoid drawing in the stomach, raising the breast, or bending the small of the back.

The butt of the piece must be pressed firmly, but not too tightly, into the hollow of the shoulder, and not against the muscles of the upper arm. If too tightly held, the pulsations of the body will be communicated to the piece; if too loosely, the recoil will bruise the shoulder. The entire surface of the butt should rest against the shoulder. If only the heel or toe touches it the recoil may throw the muzzle down or up, affecting the position of the hit. While both arms are used to press the piece to the shoulder, the left arm should be used to direct the piece and the right forefinger must be left free to squeeze the trigger.

TRIGGER-SQUEEZE EXERCISE.

The Instructor commands:

1. Trigger-Squeeze. 2. Exercise.

At the command Exercise, the men will execute the first motion of the aiming exercise. At the command (two) the second of the aiming exercise.

(Three.) Draw a moderately long breath, hold the breath and slowly raise the rifle with the left hand, being careful not to incline the sights to either side, until the line of sight is on the mark; contract the trigger finger gradually, slowly and steadily increasing the pressure on the trigger, while the aim is being perfected; continue the gradual increase of pressure required to release the point of the sear—can be given almost insensibly and without causing any deflection of the rifle. Continue the aim a moment after the release of the firing pin, if any change has been made in the direction of the line of sight, and then resume the position of ready, cocking the piece by raising and lowering the bolt handle.

Poor shooting is too frequently the result of lack of proper co-ordination of holding the breath, maximum steadiness of aim, and the squeeze of the trigger. By frequent practice in this exercise, each man should know the exact instant the firing pin will be released, and he must be taught to hold his breath, bring the sights to bear upon the mark, and squeeze the trigger at the same time.

TRIGGER-SQUEEZE

The trigger should be squeezed, not pulled, the hand being closed upon itself, as a lemon is squeezed, the forefinger sharing in this movement.

If the trigger has been pulled with a jerk instead of being squeezed, the muzzle of the rifle will probably be diverted to the right or possibly downward at the moment of firing; it is with the object of discovering this error, if made, that the aim is continued after the firing pin has been released, every effort should be made by the men, during subsequent practice at this exercise, to avoid pulling the trigger with a jerk. The value of this exercise lies largely in that by means of it the soldier becomes familiar with the trigger-squeeze of his rifle. Knowing this, he is able at any time to judge, within limits, what additional pressure is required for its discharge. By constant repetition of this exercise he should be able finally to squeeze the trigger to a certain point, beyond which the slightest movement will release the sear. Having squeezed the trigger to this point, the aim is corrected, and, when true, the additional pressure is applied and the discharge follows.

(To be continued.)

THE LATE ADMIRAL MAHAN AND IRELAND.

The recent lamented death of Admiral Mahan—the son of an Irishman, inevitably recalls the fact that the great American naval author was the first to fully recognise the immense strategic importance of Ireland—following of absolute necessity from its geographical position and as such eternal and capable of no change. Where successive generations of famous soldiers, Irish, English, and Continental, saw only dimly or not at all, Mahan—the sailor, saw clearly at last. It was probably outside the province of any landsman to perceive that the fact of Ireland being an island was the really important thing, the thing which distinguished its case from any other.

And having once perceived this, Mahan further recognised that in a military sense Ireland was the most important island in the world. More than twenty years ago he pointed out that Ireland and Cuba were in a class apart, Ireland being the more important of the two. And this is still the case, even though Cuba is much more important relatively than it was then. The parallel between the two islands depended on the fact that Ireland commanded all the sea-routes from Great Britain between the Pentland Firth and the Channel, i.e., all possible routes except those to the Continent of Europe: while Cuba similarly commanded all the routes from the Mississippi and the Atlantic coast to Panama, and so to the Pacific and South America—now vastly important.

But further, Cuba and Ireland differ from other islands as naval bases by reason of their great size—they are **countries** rather than islands. A fleet can be deprived of a base on a small island by a small landing force, but a great island must be **conquered**. It has many harbours, and stores, coal, etc., can be moved by land in complete safety from any fleet whatever, unless a large army can land and destroy all possible ports.

The American Admiral thus infallibly pointed out that in the nature of things Ireland is of extraordinary consequences to whatever Power, native or foreign, enjoys possession of her at any given moment. This importance is absolute and of such a nature that no change in anything relative can alter it in the least. Perhaps, as well as a sailor, it needed one half an Irishman to realise the truth: that the importance of Cuba to its occupier was very great, but that of Ireland to England was vital.

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NOTICE.

All literary communications for the "Irish Volunteer" should be addressed in future to

VOLUNTEER HEADQUARTERS,
41 Kildare Street, DUBLIN.

All communications re Advertisements to be addressed to the

IRISH PRESS BUREAU,
3 Lr. Abbey Street, DUBLIN.

The Irish Volunteer.

DUBLIN, DECEMBER 12, 1914.

"AS A NATION."

In the beginning of the war, when people were thinking and discussing what the attitude of Irishmen ought to be, there was a conversation on the subject among a number of persons in various ways associated with national work in Ireland. One of these, a man of moderate and prudent views, said: "Whatever we do, we should do it as a nation." The others at once agreed that he had laid down the right rule.

The more we reflect on it, the more clearly we shall understand that on the observance of this rule depend the honour, the safety, perhaps the very existence of Ireland a Nation.

Thomas Davis, whose memory we honour but whose praise may hardly be heard in the din of conflict and the war-cries of partisans, was not merely an ardent patriot. He was the wisest and most constructive statesman that Ireland has possessed since the Union. "As a Nation" was his guiding principle. No man more clearly saw the great wrongs

that were inflicted on Ireland by English misgovernment and by English interference. Yet Davis was for Ireland, not against England except where England was against Ireland. He looked forward to the possibility, far off though it was, of peace between Ireland and England on the basis of "Ireland a Nation." He went further, and, in the midst of the worst workings of the so-called Union, he calmly discussed the prospect of Ireland, as a Nation, becoming the ally of England. It is clear that there can be no alliance on other terms. A conquered dependency cannot form an alliance. A country which is deprived of all control over its own resources cannot form an alliance. To serve those who control our liberty is to consent to servitude. We claim to be a Nation, therefore we claim the right to act as a Nation, and we refuse to make any bargain that is not consistent with action as a Nation. If we act as a dependency deprived of national rights, we forsake our nationality. Irish Nation or Britain Province—that is the issue before Ireland to-day. We should say, perhaps, English Province, for it does not appear that Wales and Scotland are inimical to Ireland's claim to be a self-governing nation. If Davis were alive to-day, his advice would be: "As a Nation, not otherwise."

MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

The first meeting of the General Council of the Irish Volunteers was held on Sunday, 6th December, at Headquarters. The following delegates attended:—Eoin Mac Neill, Chairman; O'Rahilly, Treasurer; Bulmer Hobson, Secretary; Sean Fitzgibbon, Seumas O'Connor, P. O'Riain, P. H. Pearse, T. MacDonagh, P. Macken, E. Ceannnt, P. Beasley, M. J. Judge, Sean McDermott, S. R. Etchingham (Co. Wexford), T. MacCurtain (Cork City), P. Hughes (Louth), F. Lawless (Dublin), A. O'Connor (Kildare), E. Comerford (Kilkenny City), J. Ledden (Limerick City), P. McCann (Tipperary), and E. Daly (Dublin City).

Reports were received from the delegates as to the state of the Volunteer Organisation in the counties that were represented and arrangements were made to complete the organisation in several places. The appointment of the Headquarters Staff, and details of the scheme of Military Organisation were submitted by the Executive and were ratified by the General Council. The scheme of Military Organisation will be issued to companies in the course of a few days. It was decided that a mutual Insurance Scheme should be put on foot immediately, for the protection of Volunteers. The scheme is in the hands of a small committee, and arrangements will be made immediately for putting it into force. A large volume of other business was attended to.

APOLOGETIC POLICEMEN.

The methods adopted by the forces of the Crown in Ireland are daily becoming more and more extraordinary. The last issue of this paper was sent from our printer to the wholesale agents on Tuesday, 1st December. That evening in Dublin we are informed, the police received instructions to seize the paper. The instructions were given to them at 7 p.m., but before 8 p.m. they were cancelled, and since then the IRISH VOLUNTEER has enjoyed an uninterrupted sale in the city of Dublin. On December 3rd the police went to the premises of our agents in Cork, and seized all copies of the paper, to the great annoyance of our readers in that city. We learn from a current issue of the "Cork Free Press" that after retaining the papers for some time they returned them to the wholesale agents with an apology. In County Cavan the premises of several of our agents were invaded by the local Sergeant, and the papers were confiscated; this occurred early in the morning, but after some time the papers were returned. We have not been informed if the Sergeant apologised. In Belfast the IRISH VOLUNTEER was seized by the police, but we are not aware yet whether it has been handed back or not. We do not know what mysterious force moved the police in their extraordinary action. We really cannot understand why our paper should be seized unless it were to give the police an opportunity of making a graceful and appropriate apology. However, as we cannot solve the mystery we will have to let it pass, but we will be obliged to the authorities in future, if they wish to seize papers and return them with a suitable compliment a day or so later, to confine their attention to the back numbers, and not interfere with the sale of the current issue.

ELECTION TROUBLES.

Irish Volunteers have no concern as Volunteers in election contests. They have their own work to attend to, and it is more important than wrangling about whether this or that gentleman will have the privilege of sitting as a cypher at Westminster until the next General election.

WILLIAM FANAGAN

UNDERTAKER

AND

CARRIAGE PROPRIETOR,

54 AUNGIER STREET, DUBLIN.

Telephone—No. 12.

HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN

The Central Executive of the Irish Volunteers met at Headquarters, 41 Kildare Street, Dublin, on Wednesday evening, 2nd inst., Mr. P. H. Pearse in the chair.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee of Military Organisation, submitted a scheme for the establishment of a Headquarters' General Staff and draft scheme for the military organisation of the Company and the Battalion. The two schemes were referred to a special meeting of the Executive to be held on Saturday, 5th inst.

Reports were received from the various departmental secretaries, and, on the motion of Mr. E. Ceannt, Financial Secretary, several accounts were passed for payment.

A conference between representatives of the Executive and several prominent representatives of provincial centres was held at 25 Parnell Square, Dublin, on 29th ult., when a valuable interchange of views took place.

Headquarters, 41 Kildare St.,
Dublin, 2nd Dec., 1914.

NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.

MILITARY ORGANISATION.

The Committee of Military Organisation, recently appointed by the Executive, has handed in its first report, the recommendations of which will be given effect to immediately. They include the establishment of a Headquarters General Staff, responsible members of which will have charge of the various departments of military efficiency, as Organisation, Training, Strategy, Transport and Supply, Ordnance, etc., etc. The whole will be under the superintendence of a Chief of Staff, who will be responsible for general efficiency and co-ordination.

THE COMPANY.

The scheme of organisation which has been recommended fixes on the Company, not merely as the tactical unit, out of which the Volunteer Army is to be built up, but as, for the present at any rate, the central object of care for all who are interested in Volunteer development. While the grouping of companies into battalions and brigades will be provided for, the first objective is to make the company itself an efficient, self-contained unit. Hard and fast rules are not always applicable to Volunteer Service, but it will be laid down that the company must provide for the representation in due proportion, in its own composition of every branch of the service that is necessary to the effective independent, or semi-independent, action of a body of troops. Each company will have its own Transport and Supply section, its own Ambulance sec-

tion, and its own Scouting section, as well, of course, as its own Pioneers and Signallers.

While special sections will specialise in these particular departments, every man of the company—be he pioneer, ambulance man, or signaller—will be required to make himself as proficient as possible in the three essentials of all Volunteer training,—musketry, bayonet or pike-fighting, and scouting.

Whatever else he is, every Volunteer must be a rifleman and every Volunteer must be a scout.

PRACTICABILITY.

It is a great part of statesmanship to know the limitations of the human and other material one has at one's disposal, the limits imposed by the "who," and the "where," and the "when."

If we attempt to create in Ireland under present conditions a highly organised standing army on the model of the standing armies of England, Germany, or France, we shall certainly fail. If we aim at bringing into existence a series of mobile and self-contained bodies of riflemen-scouts, capable of acting either independently or in conjunction, we shall succeed. It is just as well that we should realise clearly what is really practicable, given our existing circumstance, and that we should set about doing that even if it be a modest thing.

COMBINED TRAINING.

Among the suggestions made at the very useful conference between representatives of the Volunteers' Executive and representative Gaels from all parts of the country who were present at the All-Ireland Football Final was one for occasional combined training of companies in adjoining districts. Two companies can combine in some simple field operation, the one attacking and the other defending, reversing the respective rôles on a future occasion. Two companies can manoeuvre with the object of seizing some strategic point in the neighbourhood, each endeavouring to forestall the other. Inter-company rifle competitions would also be of the greatest service in stimulating healthy rivalry in what is after all the most important part of our training. It is for the company commanders and the various centres to take the initiative in promoting such extension of the company's activities, and capable commanders will ever be breaking new ground and present the old work in a new and attractive way.

The week before last our printed notes contained a suggestion that Volunteers on the march should practice an occasional double of "20 yards." This should have been "one hundred to two hundred yards."

FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY ARMIES

II.

The armies of the first French Republic were not a trained or even half-trained force: they were simply a *levy en masse* sent against the enemy. The only foundation for new armies actually existing consisted of the French soldiers of the old Royal Army, but there was no system by which these could be utilised as a framework on which to build up the new forces. What was actually done was to teach some parade-ground drill and movements to the raw troops and then send them to fight.

At that time all armies fought steadily in line and the revolutionary soldiers were expected to do the same. In other words, they were set the same task as the long-service professional soldiers of the old Royal Army. Of course, their training and experience was altogether insufficient for this; and when they were brought to exchange volleys with their seasoned opponents they commonly fled at the first discharge, with the cry: "We are betrayed." Still, they were easily rallied, and when that happened they commonly ascertained that their losses were by no means heavy—for they fled before there was time to suffer much loss. Finding by experience that a man going into battle stood a reasonable chance of not being killed, they gradually came to be able to endure considerable losses without losing effectiveness.

Meanwhile there were endless affairs of outposts, raids and petty skirmishes, in which, the numbers being very small, the superiority of discipline among their adversaries counted for little, and their own quick intelligence and republican enthusiasm for much. The men engaged in these minor enterprises gained confidence and soldiership, and their comrades from the recital—with embellishments—of their exploits gained the same in at least as great a degree. On the other hand the disciplined victims of these little encounters lost their sense of superiority to the ragged sons of the Republic.

The inevitable result was that the French day by day and week by week became harder to beat, and their opponents less manifestly superior. Also time was gained to teach the French so much of the formal and parade work as was absolutely indispensable to success. Their officers, too, on the principle of "survival of the fittest," attained a high standard of capacity. And so at last and bit by bit the French forces ceased to be hordes and came to be armies.

It was only to be expected that in alertness and intelligence the level among them would be higher than among their adversaries. Their mobility was much greater from the very start: and after

some actual campaign experience their ability in the purely technical business of the soldier was—if not as good as the others'—at least good enough to win battles with if properly utilised. And in due course the way to utilise it became apparent.

THE SIEGE OF TUAM.

The Irish Volunteers of Tuam, when the question "under which flag" came up to them, could not be induced to desert. A sum of close on £250 had been subscribed to provide them with arms, not to award them for abandoning their principles. Up to a month ago, the benefit of this fund was withheld from them. On the same day on which the Volunteers of the Athenry Battalion, drawn from all the parishes surrounding Athenry, held their muster in that place and proclaimed their fidelity to Ireland, Messrs. Hazleton, M.P., and Lundon, M.P., two young men quite eligible for military service, were sent to Tuam to bring the Volunteers into line. Mr. Hazleton is the gentleman who was commissioned early in the year to write to the *Sham Squire's Journal* denouncing and scoffing at the very notion of Irish Volunteers. Tuam is in his constituency. His mission to Tuam was a complete failure. A few days later, the Tuam Volunteers decided to sacrifice the funds and endure the displeasure of Mr. Hazleton rather than be false to their principles. The funds tactics having failed, and the young unrecruited M.P.'s having failed, a grand assault was decided on last Sunday. Mr. Redmond in person addressed a highly-organised demonstration in Tuam. He did not attack the Tory conspiracy against Home Rule. He did not tell the audience that the Tories had rejected his New Departure with scorn and proclaimed their intention of waiting till the war is over "to send Home Rule to the devil." On the contrary, Mr. Redmond devoted his attacks to Irish Nationalists, whom he reviled and misrepresented. In fact, after a short spell of a return towards controversy on seemingly lines, Mr. Redmond once more gave the lead in the campaign of vilification. People will draw their own conclusions as to how things are faring in the country from the tone of Mr. Redmond's speech and Mr. Dillon's letter.

THE CARE OF THE FEET.

It is quite as important for the infantry soldier to be able to march as it is for him to be able to shoot, and to march it is imperative to have the feet in good condition. The following few hints will give some idea of how to keep the feet in trim:—

The boot should have a strong heavy sole—on Irish roads with plenty of nails.

The uppers should be strong, but unless the man is used to having stiff uppers they should be fairly soft. The tongues should be bellowsed. The socks should be woollen.

Before starting on a march see that your socks are clean and fresh and the feet washed. The toe-nails should be kept cut short or they will hole the socks and the toe itself may get sore. Have two pairs of socks and wear each pair every other day. Air them when you take them off and beat them well between the hands when dry. Don't wash them the day you take them off. If you can't change socks wear them on different feet next day. That takes the creases out and eases the feet more than you would imagine. You can always tell which foot a sock was on by leaving it at night hanging out of the boot it was in. Always take off boots and socks at night if possible and cover them from the dew. At evening in camp it will ease you greatly to knock about barefooted in the grass, unless it is damp.

Always carry a piece of soap for your feet. If your boot rubs anywhere take it off first chance you get and soap the sore spot. If your feet are tender soap your socks all over in the morning. Vaseline is also very good for sore or tender feet. Above all be careful that the skin doesn't blister and break: that means a soldier is out of action—as much a casualty as if he was dead. You can escape that by taking care of them in time.

GAELIC GREETINGS.

We have received from Seaghan O Peatáin some specimens of his Irish hand-painted Christmas cards, which are published by Muintear na Laimhe Deirge, 34 Berry Street, Belfast, and we can commend them to our readers. They are not only artistic; the designs are characteristically Irish, and carry the genuine atmosphere of Gaelic piety. The wording on all is in rich, cordial Irish; and all things considered, the cards are point-device the very thing for those who want something dainty in form and national in character.

Warpipes Bands.

VOLUNTEERS, we ask your support when starting Bagpipe or other Bands. We are actual makers in Ireland and can give you better and cheaper Instruments than those who are merely importers.

Best Uilleann Bagpipes always in stock, Chanter, Bag and Bellows, 57s. nett.

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D. McCULLOUGH,
MUSICAL WAREHOUSE,
8 HOWARD STREET, BELFAST.

"C" COY., 3rd BATTALION (Dublin).

This Company's training is now well in hands. Last Thursday night the men were put through skirmishing drill, company formation in battle, company as advance guard, etc. Satisfactory progress is being made at the musketry training, and a selection of the ten best shots will shortly be made from which a team of five will be chosen for inter-company competitions. To-morrow (Thursday) night a change in the usual working will be made. The Company will be taken out for scouting. All men to assemble at Harold's Cross Park (Kimmage Road end) at 8.15. All cyclists to bring their machines.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT.

The Company will run a concert in aid of the Company's funds for equipment in 41 York Street early in January.

THE FIREARM AS A CLUB.

The reports of the contending armies in Europe fighting with clubbed rifles need surprise no one. At close quarters the rifle—even without the bayonet fixed—is a formidable weapon in the hands of a soldier who knows how to use it. A shot-gun is practically as good a weapon as the rifle in the same conditions.

There are two ways in which the butt of the rifle or shot-gun can be used. In the first the weapon is held as if for bayonet combat, the right hand at the small of the stock, the left just inside the sling of the rifle or mid-way on the barrel in the case of a shot-gun. A terrific blow can be delivered by holding the left hand in front of the junction of the neck and left shoulder and smashing up the butt by straightening the right arm; the muzzle of the piece then points back over the left shoulder and the butt crashes into the opponent's face. The same blow may be delivered at the pit of the stomach: a single glance will show which of the two points of attack promises best.

The second form of attack is by swinging the piece like a club. Grasp the barrel firmly with both hands—hands together—about six inches from the muzzle: swing it up over the right shoulder so that the butt is a little behind the line of the shoulder. Don't bring it back very far or you'll lose control and the weapon will put a dead weight on your wrists. The arms should not be fully straightened. Smash the rifle down on your opponent's head. In this case the head is the point of attack because if your rifle drops too far you lose control.

There is just a single case where you could select another point of attack. If your opponent is on a slight height over you—for instance, a man on a bank thrusting at you—you will probably be able to break his leg by a smashing blow

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munntear na laimhe deirge.

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near the knee. The soldier who knows these few points is a formidable enemy even after his ammunition is all fired away, and even if he has no bayonet at all.

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Militia Air Rifles, shoots accurately up to 25 yards ...	32s.
Goth, 20th Century Rifles, 22 cal. ...	12s. 6d.
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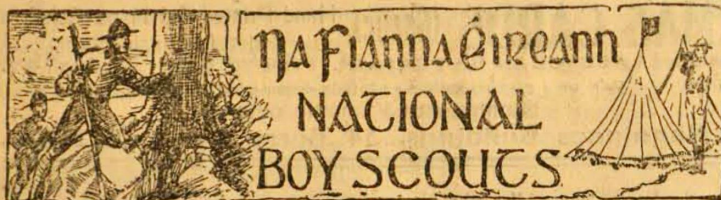
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VOLUNTEERS,

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Last week I paid tribute to the Boer boys for their usefulness and bravery during the South African War, and also to the Belgian boy scouts for their heroism in the present great war. This week reports of the work of German and French boys have reached this country. German boys of fifteen and sixteen years of age have been engaged in the fighting in France and some of them, we are informed, have been captured. With characteristic hypocrisy the Press effects a pious horror of this latest phase of "German militarism." A German boy scout has been awarded the Iron Cross for his pluck and cleverness in saving the lives of several German officers. An equally clever and plucky French boy saved ten English soldiers from captivity when the Germans took Roye. So you see that what I said last week is quite true. In times of peril the Nation does not ask how old you are but how efficient you are.

It is therefore up to every boy in this country to try to train vigorously in the arts of war. There is no time to be lost for we do not know how soon we may be called upon to defend our country against the foreigner. Since the time when the youth of Uladh went forth from the playing fields of Emhain against the army of Maev there has been no lack of military ardour amongst the boys of Ireland. In the Fianna Éireann of to-day we have boys no less daring than the Macraadh of Ulster or the boy heroes of 'Ninety-eight. The lads who stood up to the military and police on the 26th of July will stand up against any force with whom the Irish Nation has a quarrel and will give a good account of themselves.

Our training in the past will help us very considerably if we are called on to give military service to our country. Discipline and obedience to officers to us

is now quite natural and obvious. Our scouting and signalling; our pioneering and camping will help us to withstand the rigours of a campaign if need be. There are still some things to be learned and I am glad to see that the Fianna Cadet Class in Dublin is concentrating on the essential subjects. We must practice continuously until the Fianna become first-rate sharpshooters. We must know something about tactics and entrenchments before we can say we are fitted to do effective fighting for our country. A few years ago we put into operation a great scheme in the Fianna. Some boys were trained to be expert signallers, others specialised in first-aid, pioneering, and the other branches of our work. At that time we were all specialists. But somehow the scheme did not work. When signalling was required on the field we sought in vain for a signaller, for I, being a first-aid, knew little of signalling. However, we learned our lesson, and decided that every boy was to train as far as he was able in order to become a clever scout, an expert signaller, an efficient first-aid, an adept pioneer, and an artful campaigner.

Although few of us have reached the acme of success in all of these subjects, I think it was the proper course to adopt. A good all-round man, when thrown on his own resources, will give the specialist a bad beating. If there is one subject more than another which requires special attention it is musketry. Good shooting is, according to one eminent warrior, five-eighths of the soldier.

This week a Christmas paper, entitled "Nodlaig na bhFiann," will make its appearance. The staff (Percy Reynolds, Manager and Sub-Editor, and Lieut. O'Connor, Editor and Assistant Manager) have been working with great energy to make this enterprise a literary and finan-

cial success. I think they have succeeded in the former, and it is up to us to crown their success in the latter. The contributions include poems by Æ (Geo. Russell), Seumas O'Sullivan and Maevé Kavanagh. Cartoons and illustrations by Miss Grace Gifford, Ernest Kavanagh, and Louis O'Connor are (we are informed by the staff) worth more than I am fit to pay for, whilst the stories and articles would put a strain on the resources of Croesus if the proper value of the paper was charged.

However, as the price of "Nodlaig na bhFiann" is only a penny we will speculate this week and give you a critical review in this column next week. In order to appreciate my review of the paper it will be necessary for you to speculate also.

The Fianna alone celebrated the Manchester Martyrs' anniversary this year in Waterford. There was no public procession, so Sluagh Thomas F. Meagher held a memorial parade through the city. The "Munster Express" reported the parade, which attracted a good deal of attention. The thoughtfulness and consistency of the local Fianna were commented on and appreciated by the people along the route.

This Sluagh also found it necessary to repudiate the reports circulated by a section of the local boss politicians that the Fianna was governed or connected in any way with the Sinn Féin Organisation. Of course it is inconceivable to these wiseacres, who have themselves failed to conduct a boys' organisation, that boys are capable of managing their own affairs.

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