

THE IRISH VOLUNTEER

EDITED BY EOIN MAC NEILL.

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NOTES

On Saturday evening Mr. Arthur James Balfour, M.P., addressed a mass meeting at Bristol. Memories have become so short in Ireland, and things have been spinning around on such giddy curves, that it may not be out of place to say here what Ireland, for which we are concerned, has to do with Mr. Balfour and what Mr. Balfour has to do with Ireland. It is necessary to be quite clear on this point, for, in view of the excellent sentiments and the exalted principles of public policy expressed in Mr. Balfour's speech, we might very easily be found asking ourselves is Balfour really Balfour, or is he only, like Homer, another man of the same name?

Mr. Arthur James Balfour was selected by his uncle, the late Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister of England, to administer to Ireland Lord Salisbury's prescription for Ireland's cure, "twenty years of resolute government." Mr. Balfour was resolute enough. He did not go as deep as Castleragh in "dabbling his sleek young hands in Erin's gore," though he once issued the celebrated instruction: "Don't hesitate to shoot." He showed his resolution in another way. With a thoroughness that left nothing to chance, he engineered a colossal conspiracy against Parnell and the whole Irish party, and presided over a chapter of modern European history which, when the truth becomes known, will make the statesmen of the world from China to Peru, smile audibly when they read of the devotion of British Governments to justice, liberty, and pure administration.

Mr. Balfour's chief ally was that great Liberal statesman, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who was specially associated with the second line of attack made on Parnell when the resolute method of Mr. Balfour and the "Times" had failed. Mr. Balfour, who knows how to use the particular piece of humbug that happens to be

in fashion and find a ready acceptance, holds up to Bristol's contempt the doctrine of the Superman, the ruthless foreign person who uses superior force to dominate and put down the weak and helpless. His friend Mr. Chamberlain announced once the doctrine of the Super-nation as the ideal principle of England's relation to Ireland: "We are thirty-four millions to four." It was nothing new in facts, only a candid statement. We are still governed on that principle. The Unionists have even discovered their ideal Superman for Ireland, in the person of an individual who served his political apprenticeship under Mr. Balfour, and learned to out-superman Mr. Balfour's superhumanity.

Mr. Balfour told his Bristol audience that "it was quite true that they were at war because treaty obligations and national honour required them to support and defend a nation whose neutrality was violated with every circumstance of military horror and abomination. The tragedy of Serbia and the tragedy of Belgium were but episodes in a still greater tragedy, and the crime that had been committed in Flanders and in the North of France were but episodes in a greater crime than these against civilisation." What a champion of national honour! How much national honour, how much personal honour, governed the right honourable gentleman's conduct of the "Times" conspiracy? Treaty obligations! There was a Treaty of Limerick, and a Renunciation Treaty of 1783, and a "Maamtrasna Treaty." Military horror and abomination! This is a fine phrase from the gentleman who used the British army and navy to drive helpless Irish cottiers from their homes in the attempt to prop up the remains of feudal domination and to break the national spirit of the Irish people.

The sufferings of Serbia and Belgium combined do not amount to a tenth part of the injuries inflicted on Ireland during a century of English government. These sufferings have come through war. Ireland's sufferings have been inflicted in

time of peace, on an unarmed people. Which is the greater crime against civilisation? In a fertile country, well able, according to a recent Unionist authority, to support in comfort fifteen millions of people, the population within two generations has been reduced from eight and a half millions to half that number. And the process is still going on. Our agriculture wiped out—not in war, but none the less through potential war, through the domination of brute force.

"There was a fantastic conception in Germany of what was called the 'Superman,'" said Mr. Balfour, "a monster of aggressive egotism." May it be suggested that a somewhat similar conception was invented by Mr. Balfour's compatriot, Thomas Carlyle, author of another famous prescription for Ireland's cure—"Squelch them, by Heavens, squelch them!" "While the conception of the Superman was merely absurd, it was the idea of their Superman which had brought civilisation into the peril in which it now stood. It was the Super-state with which we had to deal. . . . Was it not essential that we should come to an understanding as to how international relations were to be conducted?" Mr. Balfour's question is calculated to make Irishmen listen to what follows. "Were the powerful always going to trample on the weak?" Here we drop the apostle of resolute government, the statesman who has recently developed an elaborate argument to prove to Englishmen, who, of course, don't believe in Supermen or Super-states, that Ireland should not be allowed national freedom because, in Mr. Balfour's opinion, Ireland is nationally weak and England is nationally strong. He who did not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax used terrible language towards one class of men, terrible and prophetic, when he proclaimed: "Woe to you, hypocrites!"

Mr. Balfour at Bristol was followed by Mr. Brace, M.P., a Welsh labour representative. Mr. Brace "declared they were not there for the belittling of what

was best in the German character, but they were fighting for the sanctity of international law and the right of small nations to work out their own destiny by their own efforts." If Mr. Brace sincerely thinks that there is a duty to go to war in defence of this right, he need not go to far foreign fields from Dunkirk to Belgrade. He has taken his stand beside a man who denies the right of one small nation, which England controls, to work out its own destiny, and he supports a system of government that stifles every Irish effort. Take the beam out of your own eye, dear Englishman, before you cast the mote of your brother Teuton's. There is a hand on our throat. When it is taken off, it will be time enough for us to become eloquent about the wrongs of others.

Eoin Mac Neill.

TWELVE IRISH BATTLES.

In next week's issue of the IRISH VOLUNTEER we will start a series of articles on the most important battles in Irish History. Each battle will be accompanied by a map and an account of the strategy employed on both sides. The series will begin with the Battle of Castlebar, and Humbert's Campaign in the West, and will go on to deal with Vinegar Hill, Aughrim, Benburb, Antrim, the Battle of the Boyne, Kinsale, New Ross, Ballinacorney, Oulart, Rathmines, and the Yellow Ford.

These articles are being specially prepared for the IRISH VOLUNTEER by writers of wide experience, and will be of the greatest interest and utmost value for all Volunteers who wish to study the art of War as applied to the conditions existing in Ireland.

Without a grasp of Military History few men will attain to any proficiency in the art of War, and though the conditions of modern warfare differ in some respects from those of 1798 or 1641, the country has not altered, and the strategy employed would be equally applicable to the warfare of the future. In starting this series, the Editor of the IRISH VOLUNTEER will be giving to men throughout Ireland a work of real value, and it is hoped that no Irish Volunteer will fail to study the whole series.

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FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY ARMIES

III.

We have seen that at the beginning of the campaigns of the French Revolution the French were inferior to their antagonists in every military quality but one—they could outmarch them and only that. But this single point of superiority proved unavailing by itself for various reasons. First of all, the capacity was lacking in the commanders to use the marching power of their men for the purpose of establishing a big numerical superiority at a particular point; and secondly, even if that superiority was by accident established the quality of the troops themselves was so hopeless that no excess of numbers was of any avail. The well-trained Austrians and Prussians simply brushed them aside.

But the gradual hardening process to which the raw French levies were subjected in course of time rendered them sufficiently expert in the business of a soldier to win by weight of numbers once that weight of numbers reached a certain point. It was no longer possible for their enemies to beat any number whatever of them. And once their commanders grasped this fact they of course exerted every possible endeavour to bring numerical superiority into play. Hence, if a French army possessed a slight excess of numbers as a whole over an Austrian or English it was always possible to leave the battle line weak at certain points and accumulate an overwhelming strength at one definite spot. After this it was but a step to victory. As illustrations, the instances of Wattignies and Tourconig will serve very well.

In October, 1793, Coburg, with an Austrian army, was covering the siege of Maubeuge against a French army concentrating for its relief. The Austrians occupied a wooded line of heights with the River Sambre on their right and the village of Wattignies on their left. On the 15th a general move was made against the whole Austrian line and was repulsed. During the night the French marched 8,000 men from left to right, with the result that next morning a vast superiority was concentrated opposite Wattignies, which was held by only three regiments. The French carried the village by sheer weight of numbers, repulsed all counter attacks, forced the retirement of Coburg and raised the siege.

The train of events at Tourconig in May, 1794, was a little different in details but the fundamental idea was the same. The Allied army started west from Tournai to Lille on May 16, spread over a front of almost twenty miles. The advance of their several columns was badly arranged and the entire movement

was altogether lacking in unity. The wings of the Allied army were resisted stubbornly and only made indifferent progress, but the centre—the English under the Duke of York—made good headway. However, the French centre, falling back before them, was gradually succoured by reinforcements from the flanks falling upon York's column, which was thus attacked on three fronts. As the French had a three to one advantage the English were entirely routed, whereupon the two wings fell back in confusion.

So far the interest has been merely historical, but the main thing is the lesson contained in the historical events. It is easy enough to start off with troops who are better marchers—singly or in bodies—than their adversaries. It is further quite possible that these troops may be men of a naturally quicker and more warlike perception of all the general conditions than those they march against. Also it is possible for the commanders—with the lessons of the Revolutionary Wars before them—to set to work to use these qualities. All that is needed, then, for victory is a certain reasonable degree of soldierly quality in the men themselves. The cardinal thing is to realise that **this necessary degree can be attained in time of peace by the use of foresight.** Consequently the victory that came to the French only by profiting from the lessons of defeat is possible by having at the start a sufficiently large force of fairly well trained intelligent troops. Such men will be eager and willing to make the necessary sacrifices in the way of the forced marches entailed and be good enough to win if their leaders give them a suitable chance.

In view of the stress laid on Cyclist Companies for the Irish Volunteers it is worth while to point out how effective they would prove in a well-roaded country like Ireland in concentrating against a particular point. And they could be further used to increase the extent of victory by seizing points on the line of retreat of a force in anticipation of its defeat.

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THE WAR

As far as can be judged the contending armies in the Western area of war are not in a position to enforce a decisive result one way or another. A slight gain for the Allies at one point is balanced by a similar gain for the Germans at another. Thus the Allies report some success on the Yser, and on the other hand the Germans claim to have beaten off a rather considerable French attack on their bridge over the Meuse in the St. Mihiel district.

In Asia the British have pushed forward their forces from Basra and seem to be consolidating their position there. On the other hand the Turkish reports of 40,000 men near Aleppo and Iskenderun seem to point towards heavy reinforcements destined for Egypt, where doubtless their biggest effort will be made. In the Caucasus it would seem as if the Turks were holding their own in the centre. The Turks are particularly active around Batum, the recent bombardment of which by the "Goeben" indicates that they mean to protect the land operations against the port by preventing aid from the sea.

In Serbia the Austrian advance from the West has met with a set-back, as was inevitable in such a difficult and mountainous country. The Austrian Army from Belgrade has a much easier line of advance and a re-adjustment of the Austrian front can be looked for, which will bring the two armies into co-operation, and by using the northern (Belgrade) Army as an outflanking force all the Serbian positions can be turned and the general advance pushed forward speedily.

The main centre of interest is for the present in Poland. Here the central idea is the Russian attack on Cracow, and to understand the campaign it is necessary to realise the importance of that fortress and the means of its defence. First and foremost Cracow is so situated by nature that before an invasion of Germany or Austria-Hungary is possible Cracow must be taken or at least isolated. Cracow is on the main line of railway in Galicia to Przemyśl and Lemberg, and thus covers directly all the approaches to the interior of the Allied Empires from the East and is, besides, on the flank of the direct Warsaw-Vienna line by Oderberg. Moreover Cracow is so close to the Carpathians on its southern side that no passage exists that way. In other words, an Austro-German Army with its right flank at Cracow cannot be turned on the right, where it is most desirable to achieve a success. North of Cracow the line extends to Czenstochan, thus covering completely all the rest of the railway lines: and all the country in between is now occupied by

powerful works. Now the natural importance of Cracow is merely accentuated by the necessity of possessing or isolating it for the sake of what it covers. There is only one route into Germany—down the valley of the Oder, and one into Austria—down the Gran-Waag valley.

It is now easy to see why the Russians are trying so hard to beat the Austro-Germans round Cracow—for if they merely drive them off from around Cracow they have two intact armies to deal with, one on each flank. In that case a decisive offensive could not be pursued against Germany until Austria was beaten: and the Austro-Hungarian Army would always directly cover Hungary, its real fountain of resources in grain, horses, and largely in men. But it is Germany that Russia must beat if she is to be of use to her Allies.

One way with another Russia has only two points of strength—vast numbers and a general resolute enough to employ them without being perturbed by the counting of losses. Of course, now and for a good while past the Russians have greatly outnumbered their enemies; for in equal numbers they are neither quite so good as the Austrians nor anything like a match for the Germans. The Germans have the further advantage of the one really great General the war has produced on either side—Von Hindenburg. It is interesting to follow the design of Von Hindenburg to meet the Russian attack on Cracow.

As we have seen, on the Czenstochan-Cracow line the Austro-Germans hold a strong defensive line. Here they are holding the main Russian Army with a greatly inferior force, thus setting free large forces for their counter-stroke to the North near Lodz and Lowicz. In between, in the Petrikian region, strong attacks are being made to prevent the Russians reinforcing their threatened right flank. The main German effort is up to the present making very good progress, being some dozen or so miles in advance of Lodz, and the Russians round Cracow are at a standstill. The Austrians—or rather Hungarians—are making a subsidiary counter-stroke south-east of Cracow in the Carpathians. In this region also the Russians are reported to be falling back through the passes.

It is very unlikely that the Russians will be able to increase their present numerical strength. Their best will probably be to maintain their armies at their present strength, and this they will be able to do for some time yet. But it is hard to see what success will be possible for mere numbers in the future that was not possible before. Or, to put it otherwise, there is no convincing proof that Field-Marshal von Hindenburg need ever suffer an overpowering defeat. With better staff arrangements, better communications, better troops, and a more complete intellectual mastery of the military

problems involved it appears as if he should be able to at least hold the Russians to evens indefinitely. It is, indeed, well on the cards that his present great counter-stroke may meet with a very pronounced success, in which case the Russians must begin all over again.

On sea, of course, the main operation is the victory of the British off the Falkland Islands, in which Admiral Graf von Spee's fleet that was victorious in the Pacific fight off Coronel, was destroyed—the only ship to escape being the little "Dresden." Very meagre details are to hand, but the Germans seem to have made a long running fight, as the flagship, "Scharnhorst," sank only after three hours, and the "Gneisenau" and "Leipzig" kept up the fighting for two hours more. New York reports name the British ships as being of the "Natal" class, and, of course, four such ships made victory certain, as the Germans could only count on the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" as effective, the others being unarmoured. Even the two armoured German ships were out-gunned by the British ships individually. Von Spee's fate was inevitable sooner or later, but he went far towards building up traditions for the German Navy in future wars.

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It is earnestly requested that all officers and section commanders of above battalion attend at 41 Kildare Street on Friday evening next, 18th inst., at 8 o'clock sharp, for study of tactics, etc.

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The Irish Volunteer.

DUBLIN, DECEMBER 19, 1914.

HEADQUARTERS BULLETIN

The Central Executive of the Irish Volunteers met at Headquarters on Saturday, 5th inst. Professor Mac Neill, President, in the chair.

The recommendations of the Committee of Military Organisation as to the appointment of a Headquarters Staff and as to the Military Organisation of the company and the battalion were approved of and sent forward to the General Council.

The General Council held its first meeting at Headquarters on Sunday 6th inst., the President in the chair.

The Executive recommendations as to a Headquarters Staff and as to the Military Organisation of the company and the

battalion were ratified, and a Headquarters Staff, comprising a Director of the Staff and Directors of Organisation, Military Operations, Training, Transport and Communications, and Ordnance, were appointed.

Steps were taken to promote a system of Mutual Insurance for the protection of Volunteers.

The Central Executive met at Headquarters on Wednesday evening 9th inst., Mr. P. H. Pearse in the chair.

The following General Orders were issued:—

GENERAL ORDERS.**SPECIAL SECTIONS.**

1. Every Company Commander is, as soon as possible, to constitute the following Special Sections in the Company:—

(a) A Section of Cycle Scouts, including two Despatch Riders, under a Scout Commander.

(b) A Transport and Supply Section.

(c) An Ambulance Section.

Every Company Commander is further to appoint a Company Armourer, a Company Signaller, 4 Section Signallers, and 4 Section Pioneers.

2. When a Company is at full strength the Section of Cycle Scouts will normally consist of 16 men, including the Scout Commander; the Transport and Supply Section of 4 men (one being in command), with a waggon or two pack animals; the Ambulance Section of 8 men (one being in command).

3. When the Company is below full strength, the Company Commander will use his discretion as to the strength of SPECIAL SECTIONS, but he will always endeavour to have each of the prescribed arms of the service represented in the Company.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS AS TO TRAINING.

4. While the members of the Special Sections are to be specially trained for their special duties, all members of the Company are to be trained as riflemen and as scouts.

5. The Scout Commander is to be responsible to the Company Commander for the efficiency of the Section of Cycle Scouts and also of the general scouting of the Company.

6. In addition to the Cycle Scouts, as many members of the Company as possible are to be mounted on cycles, and men so mounted are to be placed in sections together.

7. A member of each Company is to be trained as Instructor in Musketry.

NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.**AFFILIATION FEES.**

Company Treasurers are reminded that the December affiliation fees are now due and should be forwarded immediately.

In several cases the November affiliations also remain due: this indicates slackness on the part of Treasurers and should be attended to at once.

THE HEADQUARTERS' STAFF.

The Headquarters' Staff is now at work and is rapidly getting into touch with the companies and battalions. Company and Battalion Commanders will much facilitate their work by attending promptly to all communications. It is the business of every Company to keep in the closest possible touch with Headquarters, and officers should be faithful and punctual in attending to all orders, inquiries, and communications sent out by the Staff. It must be made possible for the Staff to know exactly the whereabouts, strength, armament and efficiency of every corps in Ireland. In a Volunteer organisation such a linking up and closeness of touch can be effected only by the heartiest mutual co-operation, and this we bespeak for the effort now being made to put the Irish Volunteers on an effective military basis.

SPECIAL SECTIONS IN THE COMPANY.

The important series of General Orders issued at the last meeting of the Executive aims at putting into immediate effect the provisions of the scheme of Military Organisation adopted by the General Council, as far as those provisions affect the internal organisation of the Company. They lay down that every Company is to have its own Transport and Supply Section, and its own Ambulance Section, as well, of course, as its own Cycle Scouts, Pioneers, and Signallers. The strength of these special sections in an ideal Company of 100 men is specified, but Company Commanders who are below full strength are allowed ample discretion to reduce the strength of the special sections, provided always that they endeavour to have all the prescribed arms of the service represented in the Company. In practice it may be found advisable to keep, say, eight of the cycle scouts together and distribute the remaining eight through the sections. The Pioneers, again, may be kept together or act in sections. One Signaller will normally be attached to each section, and one—the Company Signaller—will be attached to the Company Commander for special duty.

The most suitable men in the Company, even if they be officers or Section Commanders, will be selected as armourer and musketry instructor. On the whole, it will readily be understood that local circumstances must always be taken into consideration, and that the object to be aimed at is the practical efficiency of the Company rather than its conformation to an ideal type.

WHERE WE STAND AND WHAT WE STAND FOR.

By A. NEWMAN, Author of "The Pessimist," etc.

The Irish Volunteers have, as a body, been put to a severe test. They have survived two shocks; it remains for them to survive the test of time, which, after all, is the severest test of all.

The two shocks to which I refer are the war and the split. The war came upon the Volunteer movement, as it came upon everybody else, as an avalanche. It buried the righteous and healthy fury which the Bachelor's Walk murders had provoked in Ireland, and it demanded, on the part of the Volunteers, a deliberate and fearless statement regarding their position with relation to the British Army. That statement had to be made. It was made by pen and tongue. But it was made; and nothing more need be said.

It was quite inevitable that the side-tracking of the actual effort of the Volunteer leaders should so provoke the Army authorities as to lead to the suppression of our National newspapers. The risk had to be taken. It was taken. And we can calmly consider that our duty as publicists is at an end; and that the suppression came after all effective work had been accomplished. The episode is over; and we must pass on to begin where we left the beaten track of Ireland's progress in the formation of her National Army.

To my mind it is necessary that the original manifesto of the Irish Volunteers—which like a trumpet called Erin's sons to her standard, united as they had never been united since the days of Brian—should be reprinted and brought before the eyes of the people again. The Volunteers themselves should read it and refresh their memories. They have been tested, indeed. They are like an army which starts upon a crusade to liberate some holy place from the forces of a hostile and unappreciative power. This army, let us suppose, would make its journey through strange lands, meeting new conditions, fighting battles to maintain its integrity with the peoples through whose territory it passed; and fighting and struggling along so vigorously that at last it might possibly forget the object of its crusade in the actual dangers of the adventures with which it was confronted.

And then, we can picture the most dangerous stage of all in the crusade: the stage after the last necessary battle of the journey has been fought, when before the crusaders lies a long empty plain, over which it may take years to pass, before they actually undertake to liberate the holy place for love of which they first set out.

Unless as a body of crusaders they

kept, as they marched unhindered for many days, the object of their journey before them, how could they avoid disaster and depression and desertion from their ranks?

This is a parable, a poor one at best; but there is truth in every word of it as applied to ourselves at this moment.

Our second shock was the split. That is over and done with. Let us forget it. We must remember our object. There are men calling themselves Irishmen who, possibly from the best motives, believe that it is wiser to put party before principle, who believe that they can serve Ireland's cause, as they understand Ireland's cause, in the ranks of a political body that is pledged to a policy which, to put it mildly, is at variance with the principles of their country's heroes. Their motto is something more than "Your country needs you." And yet, in my heart I believe that many of these men are honestly intent on serving Ireland. They are the National Volunteers. They are willing to trust men who have failed to gain even the meagre measure of liberty called Home Rule. They trust men who have allowed the principle of a divided Ireland to become a constitutional possibility. Yet they stand for something as precious and valuable to Irishmen as their life, that is, the right of Ireland to a National Army of her own—the right of freemen to bear arms.

Many Volunteers made the dropping out of the ranks their form of protest. They have objected to Mr. Redmond's recent policy, and they have silently objected. But let them know that we, as Irish Volunteers, invite them to join with us, with men who have all to lose and naught to gain for ourselves. And if they will not come to us, let them know that we urge them to be Volunteers of some sort, rather than nothing at all. Ireland suffers loss through every man who drops out of the ranks of the Volunteers! Ireland gains through every man who rejoins his Company in the National Volunteers! But let me say a word to those who are National Volunteers in fact or intention. It is their duty as well as ours to recollect the object for which the Irish Volunteer movement was started. That object was to arm the men of Ireland not with gas-pipes but with proper rifles and with ammunition. All rifles are equally useful without ammunition! They simply become so many pieces of metal and woodwork, and rather a nuisance at that. But a good rifle and a good cartridge is the badge of a free and fearless patriot. Let National Volun-

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teers be satisfied with nothing less. Let them get the rifles and the ammunition from their leaders; and if their leaders refuse their demand they can then make a clear choice between serving Ireland as so many voting machines while the unconstitutional Ulster movement opposes them, or serving Ireland as armed soldiers in our ranks.

The Irish Volunteers stand for a properly armed and efficient body of patriots; and the Irish Volunteers are pledged to maintain the dignity and secure the freedom of Ireland. They regard the possible struggle for the mutilated corpse of Home Rule as a mere episode in the journey to the holy place of Ireland's liberty. Their duty is to be men and obedient soldiers, and to let no man make them afraid.

I read again to-day, on the Parnell monument, those words which are so sadly in need of remembrance at this most critical time: "No man can set bounds to the onward march of a nation." And to our friends and our foes I say, in the name of the Irish Volunteers: "No man should set bounds to the onward march of the Irish Volunteers!"

THE PESSIMIST: A CONFESSION.

By A. NEWMAN.

The nature of this work may be judged by a sentence from the author's apology: "Had John (The Pessimist) been an Englishman he would have talked, and done nothing very terrible; but as he was an Irishman he talked a great deal about things in general, and did the most terrible thing that could possibly be done. In one respect he may be considered typical of the Irishman who possesses the alien culture of Oxford or Cambridge, but whose nature prevents his conforming to the type."

"The Month," in the course of a review, says: "It is a book which is the product of profound thinking, and itself demands and challenges thought. . . . The whole idea—the gradual recognition of a highly intellectual and deeply sensitive man of the divine purpose underlying the apparent chaotic scheme of things—is developed by conversations, many of them brilliant, wherein current convictions are questioned and analysed with a boldness that makes one pause to reconsider their foundations, and by a skilful use of the 'dramatis personæ' the author manages to ventilate every side. It is a book which many people will want to read twice."

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CONDUCT OF INFANTRY IN DEFENCE.

PREPARATION.

Let us repeat once again what has often been said before, that attack is the surest form of defence. In other words, a commander who has to hold a position will never content himself with sitting tight in his entrenchments, but will always endeavour to embarrass the enemy's attacks by counter attacks. He must, therefore, see that the frontage he occupies should not be so great as to require more than half his force to defend it, the other half being in reserve for the purpose of ultimately securing a complete victory by taking the offensive.

As this article concerns mainly the conduct of troops we shall not say anything about the choice of position, except that it should be one which leaves a good field of fire for the enemy to advance over. A party will be sent to clear this ground of shrubs, trees, or other cover, while a screen of scouts, both cavalry and infantry, will be thrown out far in advance. Meanwhile, the other troops will be engaged in digging entrenchments—a subject which will require a separate article—and in strengthening the position generally. It should be remembered that the stronger the position can be made, the more men can be spared for the general reserve, thereby rendering the final attack more decisive.

If the line is extensive it will be divided into sections, each with its own firing line, supports, and local reserves. The supports may number from one-fifth to half the firing line, and the local reserves will equal the combined strength of supports and firing line.

The machine-gun section will train their guns to sweep open spaces that must be crossed by the enemy.

PRELIMINARY ACTION.

The enemy will seldom make his attack at all points at once, and it is necessary for the scouts to ascertain where he is strongest and most likely to deliver it.

The scouts, having done their work, are withdrawn, and while the attack is still developing, it will be harassed by a thin firing line of skirmishers. These men must not let themselves get drawn into the offensive.

The remainder of the troops will keep in cover until the attack develops, when a heavy fire will be opened to prevent the enemy establishing himself within range. This will be effected by straight firing from the front assisted by enfilading fire from flanking parties.

MAIN ACTION.

The action will now probably develop into a struggle for fire supremacy, where

accurate shooting on the one hand, and efficient use of cover on the other will be the deciding factors. The defenders will have two objects:—

(1.) To wear down the enemy's firing line, and check its advance.

(2.) To drive it back, and so compel the enemy to use his local reserves.

To achieve these objects, local commanders will try to establish local fire superiority, and then deliver counter attacks on unsupported parts of the firing line. These local attacks must not be made on strong points, **nor must they be followed up too far.** This last point is important. Men must not get out of hand as a result of a small local success. The original firing line, of course, must not be used in such attacks. They will be needed to support them by enfilading fire from their trenches.

Local reserves will not be used to reinforce the firing line. The men in the firing line must understand that if their line is pierced, the enemy will be repelled by a local counter attack from the reserves, not by strengthening the original line. The casualties in the firing line will, of course, be replaced from the supports.

When the enemy finally is in a position to assault, rifle and artillery fire must not be spared, and fire positions must, if necessary, be occupied. Firing will be kept up as long as possible, but the troops will not remain in their trenches for the final assault. They will fix bayonets and charge forward to meet it.

THE COUNTER ATTACK.

The most favourable moment for the counter attack is when the enemy has exhausted his reserves in trying to storm the trenches. No hard and fast rule, however, can be laid down.

The attack may take the form of breaking the enemy's centre, or more usually of turning one flank and so threatening his retreat.

The advance will be conducted in the usual manner, but obviously will have little preparation. Not only the general reserve, but the whole force, will be utilised in this last decisive movement to destroy the enemy.

A FEW WORDS TO INFANTRYMEN.

1. When you're not advancing lie down and take cover. If there's no cover, make some. Pile a few stones together, or turn up a few sods with your pike or bayonet.

2. Don't waste ammunition. Take your range, adjust your sights, mark your man, and aim at the lower part of his body.

3. A soldier and his rifle are never parted. Don't throw it over a wall and climb after it. Take it with you.

4. Don't lose your head at a slight success. Keep your ears open for the officer's whistle.

5. If you feel the battle going against

you, don't lose heart. Your comrades are probably winning at another point, and if you give way you may spoil their success. Besides, you have reserves behind you, and more reserves behind them. Fight on till they come to your help.

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The formation of the Fianna Cadet Corps was one of the most practical and necessary acts of the Dublin Military Council. Up to the present the lectures in strategy, tactics, and musketry have been most interesting. By the summer it is hoped the cadets will be sufficiently trained to pass the tests for officerships in the Dublin Battalion. The lectures are not confined to the present Fianna members. Boys between fifteen and eighteen years of age are invited to attend. Applications must be made to Headquarters, 12 D'Olier Street.

There has been a great rush on the sale of "Nodlaig Na bhFiann" (The Fianna Christmas). It has received a rather mixed reception in the Fianna. Amongst the opinions I have solicited I find a strong critique by Captain Padraic O'Riain. He writes as follows:—

The most heartening thing about "Nodlaig Na bhFiann" is the pluck and enterprise of its staff. The credit of producing the first Fianna paper rests with Percy Reynolds and Patsy O'Connor. "Those lads," said a shrewd Dublin business man, "would tackle anything," and to show his admiration he gave them a substantial advertisement. The paper, I am told, is a financial success. In other respects it is a huge disappointment.

It is the most unboyish boys' paper I have ever seen. I am at a loss to understand why the two stories in the paper deal with incidents not in any way connected with the Fianna or with Ireland. Surely the numerous wars in this country afford young authors plenty of scope for boys' stories. Thrilling yarns might be written around Putnam McCabe, Willie Nelson, or the Rapparees.

A.P.H.R., in "The Christmas Carol Singers," relates an amusing escapade of four members of the Dublin Fianna. The dialogue is characteristic, as, for instance:—

"Oh," said Walpole, we were just thinking of annoying the aristocracy of Rathmines and neighbourhood. Go carol-singing you know—who do you think?"

"Such a question, I could never think. I could always do the ballad singer, but I never sang in the street yet, but if there's going to be sport, I'm with you, and I'm sure I can get Mac to come along too."

"As sure as you're into it, so sure am I out of it," said Patsy. "I don't want to be laughed at."

"Cowardly as usual," said Walpole.

Five illustrations by Miss Grace Gifford accompany this article, two of which are almost vulgar.

There are two rather heavy articles by Mr. James Connolly and Bulmer Hobson. Neither are very interesting. The chief merit of both is that they are brief. There are three poems in the paper—"To a Statesman," by Æ; "On the formation of the Donegal Volunteers," by Seumas O'Sullivan; and "The Fortress of Boyhood," by Maeve Cavanagh. The first has been set by the printer in a form that makes it peculiarly difficult to read. The subject matter incorporated might have made an epic, and the result of crowding it all into twenty-two lines is a congestion rather than a poem.

The idea in Seumas O'Sullivan's poem is excellent, but it reminds one of George Moore's account of a joke which was attempted by W. B. Yeates on a certain occasion. "It got lost in the folds of his style."

The last, by Maeve Cavanagh, is one of her best. I think it is the most appropriate of the three for a Fianna paper. With this essay in ill-humoured criticism I will dismiss the poets.

Col. Moore gives the Fianna a word of advice. It is interesting and makes one think. I have not made up my own mind whether I will follow the Colonel's advice. I think it is better postponed till after the war.

Countess Markievicz relates "How the Fianna was started." This article occupies two pages of the paper. Many incidents related are very amusing and made me wish Madame would continue to relate many of her exciting experiences after the formation of the Fianna in Camden Street.

A portrait of the President, beautifully printed on art paper, is issued as a supplement.

The other features of "Nodlaig Na bhFiann" include a full-page cartoon by Miss Grace Gifford, jokes and illustrations by E. K., and an account of the part taken by the Fianna in the Howth gun-running, told by Corporal Willie Nelson, entitled "Sealed Orders." For the edification of this budding Corporal I quote the bardic conception of Cuchulain, Ireland's greatest boy hero:—

"He spake not a boasting word

Nor vaunted he at all,

Though marvellous were his deeds."

Excepting the title there is not a line of Irish in the paper."

This ends the Captain's invective against all and sundry. Next week I will comment myself on the paper and the Captain's critique.

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