

# THE IRISH VOLUNTEER

EDITED BY EOIN MAC NEILL.

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## NOTES.

So twenty-eight members of the Dublin Corporation have voted an address to the new Lord Lieutenant and Governor General of Ireland. Twenty-eight is considerably less than a majority of the Corporation, and Lord Wimborne will appreciate the compliment. He will also appreciate the audible searching of souls that went on when the spokesmen of the twenty-eight were producing their carefully formulated apologies for the vote.

Alderman Quaid made a fresh bid for the leadership of the New Imperialists. He described the opponents of the vote as "cranks." A crank, I believe, is a piece of machinery used to convert movement in a straight line into movement in a sharp curve.

Among the various turns of the crank in the apologetic speeches, a few are noteworthy. Once more it was proclaimed that Home Rule is on the Statute Book.

Roisin Dulh—I want this account settled.

Sean Buidhe—But I have drawn a cheque for it.

Roisin—You gave me no cheque.

Sean—Oh, it is all right. I have it in my cheque-book.

Another part of the apology was that Lord Wimborne is a declared Home Ruler. So is Mr. Asquith. So is Lord Crewe. Are the twenty-eight Fathers satisfied with the *latest declarations* of these ministers on the subject of Home Rule? In one respect it is a good thing to have the Home Rule Act in the Statute Book, just as it is a good thing to have the terms of the Treaty of Limerick in our history books. It is there as a record and a warning. It places on record the exact terms, cut down on their side to a minimum, to which the Asquith Ministry stood pledged, and on the faith of which they were maintained in office by the Irish Party. Is Lord Wimborne a Home Ruler according to the record in the

Statute Book, or is he a Home Ruler according to the subsequent violation of that record? On this point, the twenty-eight apologists were dumb.

The "treaty" in the Statute Book was made with the Home Rulers of Ulster as well as of the rest of Ireland. Is Lord Wimborne for keeping it? That treaty concerns Irishmen more closely than treaties guaranteeing the position of Belgium or Egypt. Question, are not the apologists and others of their kind doing their best to condone the violation of the Home Rule Treaty by their obsequious silence on the point?

Perhaps the most amusing part of the apology was the statement that Lord Wimborne was to be addressed as the representative, not of Imperial domination, but of the British Democracy. The British Democracy was consulted about this representative of theirs just to the same extent as the Irish Democracy was consulted on this point, or on any of the political developments of 1914. So far as history shows, the British Democracy never sent but one representative to Ireland, and that one was Cromwell. Cromwell's success in Ireland was due to the double-facing attitude of the Ormondites.

The estimate in which the Irish people are held by the organs of the British Democracy was clearly enough shown when they expressed the opinion that Lord Wimborne would be popular in Ireland because he is fond of horse-racing. "Bread and horse-races" was the prescription of an ancient school of Imperialists for keeping the Roman people in good humour. "Bread and water and horse-races" is the modern dose. And the hard-up apologists, who failed to scrape up a majority of the Dublin Corporation to vote an address to Oliver Cromwell's successor, did not even forget to put horse-racing in the apology.

Horse-racing for Ireland is quite in the Imperial line of business. The horsy community as a class in Ireland have about as

much nationality as their favourite animals have. When Agricola had broken down the struggle of the Britons for liberty, he at once began to provide them with public amusements after the Imperial fashion, and, writes his son-in-law Tacitus, "the ignorant people mistook for civilisation what was in fact a part of their enslavement." The horsy people say that they keep up a great Irish industry. As a matter of fact, the hens and ducks, that are left to do their own cackling and quacking, bring five times as much wealth into Ireland.

It is rumoured that the Liberal Home Rule Ministry has taken the pledge. Some people in Ireland are afraid they may put it on the Statute Book.

Mr. Dillon has been speaking in Glasgow. He is reported to have spoken as follows: "Ireland had pledged her honour that *when her demands were granted* England and her statesmen would find in Ireland a loyal and faithful friend in the hour of danger. The British Government, relying on their honour, and in spite of threats and enormous pressure, passed Home Rule, and was it to be said that they who had never broken a treaty were now to set an example of perjured men and broken faith?"

So, according to Mr. Dillon, Ireland's demands have been granted. The Liberal Home Rule Ministry, or the Unionist-Liberal Coalition, will not fail to note Mr. Dillon's declaration that Ireland's demands, as voiced by Mr. Dillon, have *already* been fulfilled.

Mr. Dillon went on to declare himself now to be "under the flag of England." Not even the flag of the British Empire, not even the flag of the "United" Kingdom, but the flag of England. This, spoken in Scotland, is a great score for the doctrines of Dalmaney and the Predominant Partner.

Mr. Dillon is naturally not comfortable. When Mr. Dillon is uncomfortable, he becomes



abusive. Those who don't agree with Mr. Dillon's declaration that Ireland is treaty-bound because "her demands are granted" become, in Mr. Dillon's vocabulary, "a faction." This is the new National Imperialism—or, as a lispng adherent calls it, the Nathanal Imperialism—to be "loyal and faithful friends" to "England and her (Partitionist) statesmen and people," and to pour out venom on Irishmen and Irishwomen, who do not perform the compulsory sharp curve at the dictation of the Partitionist conspirators.

The grand merit of this new patriotic attitude is that, as Mr. Dillon's friend (Mr. Patrick Egan) has said in apology to the free Irish in America, it is a compulsory attitude. The Irish public has not failed to watch with interest the gradual and plainly reluctant steps by which Mr. Dillon has been forced to keep pace with Mr. Redmond. "Left incline!" has been the repeated command, until the whole direction of march has been reversed, and Mr. Dillon compelled to announce that "Ireland's demands have been granted."

The report attributes to Mr. Dillon further language which seems strange in the mouth of his father's son. "Others," he is alleged to have said, "whose numbers were very minute, had sent a message to the Kaiser of Germany that if he landed in Ireland there would be a rising in his favour." If Mr. Dillon is as "loyal and faithful to England and her statesmen" as his reported words indicate, his plain duty is to lay his information on this point before the English authorities. To withhold from them the facts on which such a statement is based is a treasonable offence under English law. The authorities, however, will probably be satisfied with the assistance and encouragement afforded to them by Mr. Dillon's King's evidence in the reported form, and the Irish victims of political persecution, still rampant under the guise of "Defence of the Realm," will be for ever grateful to the new compulsory patriotism.

Mr. Dillon would like his Glasgow hearers to believe that those who criticise his "policy," that is to say, the policy which has been forced on him, "are a rapidly dwindling number, and were not ever numerous." The "policy" of persistently saying that all Ireland and all America are wild with enthusiasm for Mr. Dillon's uncomfortable position may be left to work itself out. It is a pity when all is so jolly that Mr. Dillon himself is not more cheerful. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Nathanal organs, over which Sir Matthew has now assumed the position of editor in chief, there is not one Irishman in ten thousand who will consider Mr. Dillon's dictum, that "Ireland's demands have been granted," worthy of any more serious criticism than is contained in the proverb, needs must when the devil drives. And, in spite of the votes of confidence

manufactured in the machine, the vast majority of those who supported Mr. Redmond while he was faithful to his mandate do not disguise from their neighbours that they have no confidence in the situation since the surrender of March, 1914, was forced upon Mr. Redmond.

Fortunately the pressure has not been all on one side. "The small but noisy faction"—which Mr. Dillon's England's statesmen's Chief Secretary's Under Secretary would like to silence—the "faction" that established the Irish Volunteers, has also been able to force developments on the great but noiseless Panjandrum of the new patriotism.

The conduct of the Crown in the Enniscomerty trials has been—well, what might be expected. Mr. Bolger was arrested in February and held for trial in April. Why was he not tried? The case, whatever it is, is complete in the hands of the Attorney General. And yet the accused is denied the right of trial and held a prisoner from February to April, when he should have been tried, and now from April until the next assize, and the Attorney General opposes an application for bail. Under the circumstances, the option of being tried in the ordinary court rather than by a court martial does not appear to be much of a benefit, and the Attorney General might just as well close the courts altogether to trials of this kind and announce by edict his power of imprisonment without trial during his own pleasure.

It is now some years since Mr. Birrell, who is still supposed to be in charge at Dublin Castle, gave a public pledge to Mr. Redmond in the Imperial Parliament that jury-packing would be abandoned in Ireland. Mr. Redmond, less tried and experienced than at present, refrained from demanding that this particular pledge should be placed on the Statute Book. Now that we have got Home Rule and a better constitution than Grattan's, a new era and a union of hearts,—now that "Ireland's demands have been granted" to the satisfaction of Mr. Dillon,—would it be too much for "Irish honour and duty" to insist that the Irish Home Rule law officers of the Crown shall recognise the same rights of trial by jury in Ireland as are recognised in Great Britain?

One of the essential characters of the administration of law through the ordinary courts is the complete publicity of the proceedings. During the Tithe War, when those who were charged with forcible resistance were tried, the public in various places left the courts deserted, and this imposition of privacy on the courts was denounced by the judges as a nefarious abuse. I do not doubt that any attempt to interfere with the publicity of the ordinary courts, if it became known to a

conscientious judge, would be regarded with gross contempt of court and dealt with accordingly. I am credibly informed that an attempt has recently been made, in order to secure that persons politically obnoxious to Dublin Castle shall be tried, as far as can be managed, in secrecy, and to convert the right of public trial into a process of trial by a Chamber. I am likewise credibly informed that this attempt is known to persons in official communication with Mr. Redmond and his colleagues. No doubt, however, Irish honour and duty demand that the right of public trial, like the pledge to give up jury-packing, and the pledges embodied in the Statute Book, shall be offered up as Free Gift of a Free People.

When Mark Twain read a newspaper report of his own death, he wrote to the press to say that the report was greatly exaggerated. The same applies to the opening sentence quoted below from *America*, a leading Catholic organ in the United States. The remainder of the quotation gives such an accurate summary of my advice that I am glad to reprint it:

"The *Irish Volunteer* has been suppressed. The editor, Professor John McNeill, who is president of the section of the Volunteers that adhere to the original purpose of defending Ireland on its own soil, was charged with no seditious utterance or other offence under the Defence of the Realm Act. Speaking to the Cork Volunteers, he attributed the suppression of his paper and the confiscation of its [printer's] properties to his arraignment of the Government for bad faith on the question of Home Rule, and he warned the entire membership that they must not permit the illegal smothering of legitimate opinion, which Under-Secretary Nathan was enforcing throughout the country, to goad them into making rash reprisals or establishing secret societies. They must not go underground, but extend and perfect their military organisation in the open, and hold themselves disciplined and ready to defend their country's interests and preserve its national integrity when better days arrive."

EOIN MAC NEILL.

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## Warfare on Irish Soil.

SPECIALLY CONTRIBUTED TO  
THE "IRISH VOLUNTEER" BY  
THE AUTHOR OF THE WAR  
NOTES RECENTLY PRINTED IN  
THIS PAPER

### NIGHT-APPROACHES IN IRISH COUNTRY.

It is a well-known military axiom that night operations need very good troops, and the occasions are numerous on which night operations have met with disaster. Still there are cases in which the results of a successful night-attack would be so important as to fully justify all ordinary risks. It is quite possible that circumstances might arise to make it advisable for a corps of Irish Volunteers to carry out some enterprise by night, and in such a case it would be quite inexcusable to hold off simply because it was necessary to act at night. In the ordinary way the Irish Volunteer Corps are small enough to be quite well in hand at night. With a certain amount of special training they will prove well equal to any task of this kind that may be set them.

The following extract from a letter of a British officer in Flanders will give a good instance of the remarkable results to be attained by judicious methods at night:—"About 4-30 an engagement started on our left, so we quickly jumped back into the trench and 'stood to arms.' It was still dark, so fearing an attack we opened fire where we imagined the enemy to be, not being able to see anything. At daybreak we were very surprised to find hasty entrenchments across our front about 40 yards away, when the day before they had been fully 250 yards back. We had never heard them digging in spite of having a listening patrol out every hour." This affair is very instructive on several points. It shows how very close it is possible to get under cover of darkness, and the consequent need for the most thorough reconnaissance, even at night. Note also the feigned attack at another point, under cover of which the Germans were able to steal up unobserved.

There is no need to point out how easy a surprise of this kind is in an intersected country like Ireland. By proper use of all the hedges and fences a small, well-handled party could easily steal close in unobserved, beat up the enemy's bivouacs, and create untold confusion in his forces. Continued enterprises of this kind very quickly impair the effectiveness of the troops thus harassed. This method of attacking the enemy's bivouacs was on numerous occasions put in practice by the Boers, with great effect.

The ordinary rules governing the conduct of night operations can be found in any text-book, and should be thoroughly studied. In Ireland it might often be necessary for a small force to pass through a fence in single file by a narrow gap. In such a case one officer should remain on the near side of the gap until all have passed through, and should then bring up the rear. Another officer should be at the head of the column. *Very often it will be found that a space where one man at a time can pass exists at the foot of a large tree.* Such a tree is also a good landmark, and is better to make for than any haphazard section of the hedge. On more than one occasion small parties of the Volunteers have made a very good show at crossing country by night in this fashion.

Another important point to remember is that at night superiority of arms is of no avail. A heavy club is practically as useful as a magazine rifle. In the darkness fire-action is of small account—the men fire wildly and often

hit their own side. Besides, discipline in every way gets relaxed; even good troops are liable to panic, and it is impossible for the officers to restore order. In such a case success is bound to follow from a vigorous and sudden offensive; the defenders must be speedily stabbed or clubbed. It is all-important that the attack be pressed home; every enemy met must be promptly rushed and borne down, and no opportunity given to rally. In such a case a victory may be made decisive in a few minutes.

### THE PREPARATION OF AMBUSCADES

There are many localities in every part of Ireland where a column of troops, a convoy or the like could be ambushed and destroyed. Such operations as this are particularly suitable to the small units of which the Irish Volunteers are composed, and moreover admit of being abundantly practised in the course of Volunteer training. The preparation of an ambush and the subsequent attack can easily be fitted into a Sunday's exercise; and, on the other hand, the fact that the column to be ambushed will be compelled to take special precautions in the way of scouting will also prove of the highest value.

The following system of preparing a field exercise of this kind will be found perhaps the most convenient. The commanding officer of a Volunteer Corps, or some responsible subordinate, selects a suitable spot for the ambush—which should be at least an hour's march from the headquarters—a couple of days in advance, reconnoitres the ground and surrounding country at his leisure, and decides on his plan of action. *In the subsequent tactical exercise this officer should, of course, command the ambuscade, not the main body.* The only information given to the officer commanding the main column marching out would be to march on such-and-such a road at some point on which he would be ambushed. It would be his business then to take the proper counter-measures. The most convenient system will be for the cyclist portion of the corps to form the ambush, for this system greatly economises time. The detachment can ride off quickly to the required point, and should have all its arrangements completed before the advanced scouts of the approaching force can observe them.

Cyclists possess certain great advantages in any enterprise of this kind. Their mobility enables them to reach a suitable point very rapidly, and equally to escape safely if unsuccessful in completely surprising the enemy. Again, it may be possible to withdraw by an entirely distinct route. For example, the ambush may be in a wood between two parallel roads, and the machines may be stacked on the road away from that on which the ambush is being laid. In the ordinary course this will not be reconnoitred at all by the approaching column.

The most favourable time for attacking a convoy is when it is passing through woods, a defile, or over a bridge; when it is going around a sharp bend in the road; when ascending or descending difficult slopes or passing over bad sections of the road; when it is forming laager for the night; when the teams are being watered; or generally when the conditions are such that the escort can not quickly prepare for defence. A column of troops may be attacked in practically similar circumstances—but in this case care must be taken to escape the observation of scouts. The advance guard should be allowed to pass, and the main body attacked. According to circumstances the centre, rear, or head and rear of the column may be attacked. If the party is judiciously handled very inferior forces can inflict grievous loss, and if the attacked column falls into disorder it may easily be completely destroyed.

The strictest precautions must be taken to enforce silence on the troops lying in ambush,

also to prevent premature discharge of fire-arms. Any warning of this kind will have the effect of warning the enemy and ruining the entire enterprise. Moreover, the enemy should be allowed to approach as close as possible before fire is opened on him. If possible the first volley should be instantly followed up with the bayonet or pike, to complete his overthrow.

### THE FORMATION OF SMALL UNITS.

A very considerable increase in the total numbers of the Irish Volunteers can be obtained by the formation of isolated sections here and there. There are many places where in existing circumstances it is difficult for one reason or another to form a company. But there is no place where there do not exist ten or a dozen men of the right stamp; and there are scattered all over Ireland such a number of these localities that the numbers of the Volunteers might possibly be doubled, if separate sections of this kind were formed everywhere.

For such minor units as these a different system of training would be needed. They would be too small to afford a regular instructor, though they could be visited from time to time by an officer from Headquarters. They could, however, easily study the neighbouring country, acquire a knowledge of fire-arms and their use, learn how to adapt the natural features of ground to defence, and keep in contact with the nearest corps of larger size. Much of this kind of knowledge can be obtained by practice out of doors in summer, coupled with intelligent reading of service manuals.

It would be most of all advisable if all the members of such small units as these were cyclists—although this is not indispensable. But if they were all cyclists they would be easily able to join the nearest full company and would prove a very welcome reinforcement to it. It is clear that everything that can be done ought to be done to increase the strength of the Volunteers, and as far as can be judged this is a direction in which with a little effort something certainly can be done. It is not too high an ideal to set before the men of Ireland that there should be a dozen trained men in every parish in the country—a formidable force when all's said and done.

## Undelivered Letters.

As the Garrison stop our letters, why shouldn't we stop theirs? Here is a choice specimen:—

DUBLIN COTTAGE,

Saturday.

My Dear Downing Street,

It has struck me that we might employ against the Irish Volunteers, *a propos* of the stink bombs used by the Huns, a powerful local agent. "Agent" is the word. The *Irish Daily Telegraph* calls the stink in the bombs an *agent*. Therefore, I suggest that we lease the perfume of the Liffey at low tide.

We must be up-to-date in our methods. I have begun to revise Gray's *Elegy*:—

"Full many a bomb is fired to burst unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

I see the *Irish Daily Telegraph* referred to the stink bomb as a "flagrant breach of the Hague Convention"—surely "flagrant" would be a better term.

I'm deadily in earnest about the lease of the Liffey. If we don't get it, those celestial Irish Volunteers will appropriate it.

Your own,

N. PASHA.





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## The Irish Volunteer

SATURDAY, MAY 1st, 1915.

### Headquarters' Bulletin.

The Central Executive of the Irish Volunteers met at Headquarters on Wednesday evening, 21st inst., Professor Eoin Mac Neill, President, in the chair.

Reports on Organisation, Training, and Finance were considered.

Highly satisfactory reports from the Organisers operating in Counties Kerry, Limerick, and Galway were received, and also reports on the special week's training in Kilkenny and Waterford.

The General Council met on Sunday, 25th inst., the President in the chair. The Central Executive reported on the month's work. Finance, Affiliations, Insurance, and Recruiting were specially dealt with.

The forthcoming issue, about Whitsuntide, of a special Recruiting Number of the "Irish Volunteer" was announced.

Headquarters, 41 Kildare Street,

Dublin, 26th April, 1915.

### NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.

#### RECRUITING.

All the signs go to show that the Irish Volunteers are in for a period of vigorous and successful recruiting. Companies everywhere are working up to full strength, old members coming back and new members joining. The Executive has decided to seize the moment to push on its Recruiting Campaign. A Director of Recruiting has been appointed whose duty it will be to advise local commanders, to supply them with recruiting literature, and to

get into touch with individuals here and there who are in sympathy with the Irish Volunteers and who would be able, with a little help from Headquarters, to organise new Companies, Half-Companies, or Scouting Sections. Officers and other Volunteers who are in a position to lend a hand in this most important branch of our work should communicate immediately with the Director of Recruiting.

#### A SPECIAL RECRUITING NUMBER.

In connection with the campaign a special Recruiting Number of the "Irish Volunteer" will be issued about Whitsuntide. It will contain matter of a propagandist nature which will make it appeal to a wider circle than the average number of the "Irish Volunteer," with its strictly military tone and its technical articles. The "Irish Volunteer" is published primarily for Irish Volunteers, but the Recruiting Number will be published primarily for those who are not yet Irish Volunteers. Company Officers should make arrangements for a wide and effective distribution of the special number.

#### RECRUITING MARCHES.

Recruiting Marches should be promoted everywhere. In many places they have proved fruitful even beyond expectation. The public of a district cannot fail to be impressed by the orderly march of obviously disciplined and trained men. Our discipline and our training are our most valuable assets, and well-organised marches of trained and disciplined Volunteers will be found by far the most effective of all recruiting devices we can employ. After all, the best claim we can make upon public support is to show that we are not a sham.

#### THE DUBLIN MARCH.

The Recruiting March of the Dublin Brigade on Sunday, 18th inst., was an extraordinarily impressive display. It was the largest turn-out of Dublin Volunteers that has ever been seen in our streets: larger than the Howth muster or any other of the big city musters of last summer. But more impressive than the size of the column was the obvious fact that every man in it was trained. In this it differed from all our early marches. We have now a year and a-half's training behind us, and more especially the steady, systematic, and especially-adapted training of the past four months. It is not surprising that the march made a deep impression on the city, and that practically every Company reports a notable accession of strength.

#### CONFERENCES.

The most largely-attended meeting of Dublin Officers that has yet been held was that which met on the 17th inst. to hear the Director of Organisation's criticism of the Easter Mobilisation and Operations. Another well-attended meeting was held on the 24th inst. to confer with the Director of Training on various aspects of training. These conferences have

proved so fruitful in Dublin that the Headquarters' Staff urges on local Commandants and County Boards to promote similar conferences in their respective districts.

#### HEADLINES.

Here are headlines for all conferences of officers and for the activities of all Battalion and Company Commanders during the next few months:

1. Recruiting.
2. Mobilisation Schemes.
3. Training.
  - (a) Target-Practice.
  - (b) Scouting.
  - (c) Forced Marching.

Taking it for granted that Arming goes on all the time, this may be regarded as a complete Volunteer programme for the present.

## Cumann na mBan.

#### REPORT OF PROGRESS.

Since the Convention in Dublin last December, the work of Cumann na mBan has been progressing satisfactorily. The Executive Committee then elected consisted of fourteen members, two of whom have since withdrawn their names and have been replaced by co-option. The Executive now consists of the following:—Mesdames Colum, McNeill, O'Rahilly, Tuohy, Wyse Power; Misses Bloxham, Dobbs, Gavan Duffy, McCoy, Mac Swiney, O'Flaherty, Treuseach, Walsh.

During the months of March and April the Southern Branches were visited by Miss McCarthy, organizer for Cumann na mBan. She held successful meetings in Cork, Killarney, and Limerick, where the society has flourishing Branches, and also established promising new centres at Tralee and Dingle. She is at present visiting Wexford, meeting the members of existing Branches at Enniscorthy and Wexford town, and arranging to organize new Branches in other districts.

Miss McCarthy's tour having proved so successful and so helpful to country Branches, it is hoped to arrange shortly for a similar tour in other parts of Ireland.

The Executive Committee have pleasure in announcing receipt of remittance for £61 10s. forwarded through their organizer, Mr. Wm. Colum, by Cumann na mBan Branches in the United States.

## A Return to National Sanity.

By A. NEWMAN.

People have been going about—I mean the people who are not actively associated with either Mr. Redmond or ourselves—and they have been saying of us: "The Irish Volunteers have won." When they come to us they say:



"You have won, there's no doubt about it. Now it is not my desire, nor, I can assure you, is it the desire of those with whom I am associated, to do any crowing. I have not quite made up my mind whether it is desirable to analyse what anyone might mean about us when he says: 'You have won, there's no doubt about it.' Analysis often disturbs one's sense of proportion. You know what is meant by the phrase, 'You have won,' as applied to us; so do I; and that's enough for both of us. Don't you know what queer things people are? Haven't you sat in the room with someone who was very angry or frightened; and without a word being said, you were conscious of that individual's emotion? It is so with the crowd. There are dull crowds, interested crowds, angry crowds. You can feel their being one of these things without a single individual uttering a word. It is so with nations. You can feel the way the National sympathy is tending, and it is through a consciousness that the National instinct is sound, that the National instinct is with us, that people are led at the present time to come to us and say: 'You've won, there's no doubt about it.' When people talk of winning, one immediately thinks of a contest. And, after all, what contest are they talking about in this particular case? How we take things for granted! And when we come to consider some apparently simple idea, how very complex it turns out to be! Take an intellectual jump to the year 1905, and look back, and ask yourself: 'What were these people in conflict about in the year 1915? What represented one side, and what represented the other?' From that distance of time you will have little difficulty in coming to a true conclusion. You will discover that the easiest way of arriving at the cause of the conflict will be to consider the symbols which distinguished the combatants. And then you will say to yourself: 'Oh, the Irish Volunteers stuck to the Green Flag and the Golden Harp from the very start; and the leaders of the Parliamentary Party tried to force the Union Jack upon their followers; and it seemed, at first, as though their followers were prepared to discard their National Flag and adopt the symbol of Empire.' And then you will look back and read the history of these present days. You will read about suppressed papers, imprisonments, felon setting, loss of employment, house-searching for those who would not accept the Union Jack. And you will see that the people of Ireland began to wonder if, after all, there was real liberty under the flag of Empire in the land where men, who clung to the ancient banner of their nation, were persecuted; and whether, after all, it was an honourable and a decent thing for men to be satisfied with the comfort and security which is the reward of any obedient slave. And then you will see that the Irish people openly admitted that the men who refused to change their flag were the winning men, and that any policy which demanded a change of flags was no policy for the Irish Nation!

## VICTORIES OF IRREGULAR TROOPS.

### VI.—MAJUBA HILL.

In April, 1877, England annexed the Boer South African Republic to her Empire. The Boers, thinking it useless to resist, remained in a state of sullen quiet. Sir Garnet Wolseley declared that "so long as the sun shone and the Vaal river flowed to the sea the Transvaal would remain British territory." In March, 1880, Mr. Gladstone became Premier in England, and the Boers, imagining that he would act up to his speeches when in opposition, called on him to repeal the annexation. Of course their request was curtly refused, and at last, in December, 1880, they held a mass meeting to proclaim their independence. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius were elected to carry on the government of the re-established republic, whose capital was fixed at Heidelberg. Immediately the English garrisons at Pretoria and elsewhere were besieged, and a relief column marching from Lydenburg to Pretoria was destroyed at Bronkhorst Spruit.

#### PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS.

Although the Boers were only capable of putting at most 8,000 men in the field, the English hurried reinforcements to Africa which would soon have brought their garrison there to a strength of 20,000. But Sir George Colley, the High Commissioner, was determined to set out at once to relieve the besieged garrisons. He left Newcastle on January the 24th, 1881, with 60 officers and 1,200 men, and entrenched himself at Mount Prospect on the 26th. His force was utterly inadequate for the task before it, but Colley had great contempt for the Boers, and expected to accomplish his object rapidly and easily. The Boers, as a matter of fact, were quite untrained, but were all crack shots.

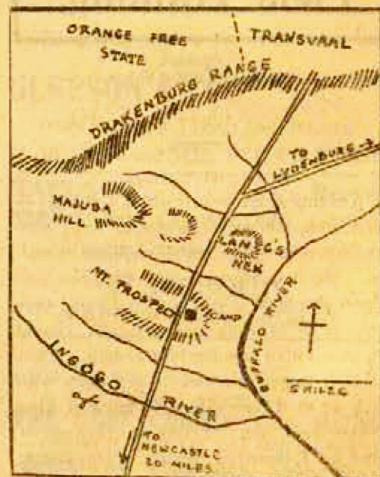
On the 28th Colley's further progress was stopped by a severe reverse at Lang's Nek, where the Boer marksman showed what he could do in face of artillery. The "Relief Column" was now practically in a state of siege itself in its camp on Mount Pleasant, being surrounded by Boer commandoes which completely cut off its communications. An attempt to re-open the communications resulted in another bloody reverse on the Ingogo River on the 8th of February.

On the 17th Sir Evelyn Wood arrived at Newcastle with reinforcements from India. He was met here by Colley, who sent him back to Pieter Maritzburg for further assistance, promising to make no move in his absence, and led the Indian contingent without opposition to the Prospect camp. In spite of his promise to Wood, the Boer camp near Majuba Hill proved an irresistible temptation to him, and he decided to attack it.

#### THE GROUND.

Majuba Hill is a plateau with saucer-shaped

top, across which is a rocky reef about 4 feet high. Its circumference is about 1,200 yards. The lower slopes are grassy, but near the top the sides of the hill are rocky, with deep hollows. The Boer camp was on the lower ground to the north-west.



#### THE BATTLE.

On the night of February 26th, Colley left the camp with 650 officers and men. Dropping some detachments at Inguela Hill and the Nek between it and Majuba, the force commenced the toilsome climb up the sides of the latter. The men were heavy laden with rations and cartridges, and only 400 succeeded in reaching the summit at 5 o'clock in the morning.

When the Boers, 2,000 feet below, saw that the hill was occupied their first impulse was to fly. General Smijt however rallied them, and sent a number of young men to skirmish up the mountain side. They went up, using the scrub and stones as cover, while picked shots among the older men acted as supports from below, sniping at any English head that showed itself on the skyline.

The English were not strong enough to hold the whole plateau, and gradually were surrounded on north, east, and south-west. As the Boer skirmishers worked their way up almost undaunted, their accurate shooting began to tell on the morale of the English. Their reserves hesitated to come to the help of their firing-line, and finally bolted. There was general panic. Small bodies of men clung to scanty cover. The remainder rushed down the hillside in rout.

The Boers now reached the summit, and, abandoning cover, shot them down at their leisure. The disaster was only prevented from being complete by the entrenchment on the Majuba-Inguela Nek. General Colley was killed, and the total English casualties amounted to 283, over forty per cent. of their



number. The Boers lost one man killed and five wounded. These figures are sufficient comment on the battle. They show on which side good shooting and use of cover were employed.

As a result of the battle the Boers regained their independence, and still "the sun shone and the Vaal river flowed to the sea."

## Field Training.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### EXERCISES IN THE ATTACK.

(Continued.)

##### A—RECAPITULATION.

Up to this we have dealt with a Company in action from the training point of view, with very little reference to actual conditions of warfare. We have shown how a firing-line and support should be taught how to advance over 2,000 yards of moderately irregular ground such as is within easy reach of Dublin. When in a later chapter we come to deal fully with attack we shall have to modify much of what we have said, but for training purposes it should be followed accurately. The matter contained in the present chapter, though easier from the training point of view than what has gone before, requires some knowledge of the general principles of the attack to be properly understood.

An infantry attack normally consists of three stages:—

*First*—An advance to fire positions as close to the enemy as possible.

*Second*—The establishment of fire superiority.

*Third*—The assault.

When the original firing-line reaches decisive range it halts and opens fire to hold the ground gained until it is built up by reinforcements from the rear to a strength sufficient to gain superiority of fire over the enemy. It is with this aspect of the attack that the following notes deal:—

##### B—LOCAL RESERVES.

The Company Commander will take his men to a suitable field and detach six men to act as a skeleton firing-line. He should explain that these men are going to act the part performed by the whole Company before, while the Company will now act as a local reserve.

Extend the six men to an interval of 12 paces, and send them forward about 600 yards. Explain that they are now within decisive range of the enemy. The six men lie down and open fire. Now deploy each section in turn and send it forward to reinforce the firing line. Practice this once or twice.

##### C—COUNTER ATTACKS.

Explain to the Company that it is one of the duties of Local Reserves to repel counter

attacks by the enemy. Send out six men as firing line as before, and indicate to one of the Section Commanders a counter-attack by the enemy on one or other flank. He must then rapidly deploy his section and advance to a suitable firing position. Let each Section Commander have a chance to practice this.

##### D—PREPARING AN ASSAULT.

Extend one of your sections to 4 paces and send it forward to "Decisive Range." This position (which in actual warfare is about 500 to 800 yards from the enemy) must be carefully chosen so as to afford a continuous line of good cover. Let the section halt and lie down. This section represents the original firing-line and supports of the attack. The other three sections are local reserves. Extend these sections and send them forward in successive lines to build up a solid firing line. (In all this let us repeat once more that everything said in the previous chapters, especially as regards section commanders, must still be remembered.)

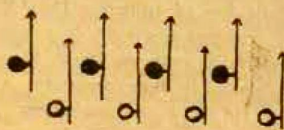
Units are now completely mixed up. In actual warfare companies and even battalions are similarly affected. No re-organisation is necessary, but the line must be re-divided into sections and the men informed as to who is their new commander. This must be done rapidly, and, of course, under cover.

Now continue the advance by alternate rushes for 200 yards. Then practice "ragged rushing" for another 200. Then deliver the assault.

##### E—A NOTE ON THE ASSAULT.

In former chapters the assault was assumed to be delivered by a single line. In this case, if the men are prevented from spreading out, a charge probably 3 deep would be made. This approximates to actual conditions.

If your men have long poles or sticks available, you should practise them in pike charging. Arrange them 2 deep, with the pike of each man in the rear rank projecting in front of the man in front of him, as in the cut.



Some manipulation is required to teach the men to charge in this way without opening out. When they have learnt how to do it, form them into a skirmishing line and teach them how to close into this formation while running fifty yards.

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## A Lesson of Neuve Chapelle

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE WAR NOTES.

It has been repeatedly pointed out in the "Irish Volunteer" that an officer commanding in such an intricate country as Ireland cannot be too careful and thorough-going in the duty of reconnaissance. All his men should be thoroughly instructed in this branch of military training, and there must be no excuse for the neglect of it. A very striking example of the importance of this point is offered in the following quotation about the recent bloody fighting at Neuve Chapelle:—

"Eye-Witness explains that the heavy toll of regimental officers was largely due to the fact that in advancing over the intricate country, intersected with hedges and ditches, the platoon commanders had to go forward to discover the best way round or across these obstacles. They were forced to risk their own lives in order to save their men from the danger of being crowded together in narrow places, such as bridges or gaps in hedges."

Now every word in that paragraph deserves careful study. It would appear that the troops employed—largely recently-trained men—had not what is called an "eye for country." Because if they had, a judicious use of the existing cover could have been used to aid their advance. The only course left, consequently, was for those who understood the requirements of the case to risk their own valuable lives to make good the deficiency. Of course, the officer is always quite ready to risk his life; but, all the same, to have to force officers to risk their lives unnecessarily is a great calamity. One wonders what would Wellington think of such an explanation being put forward for heavy losses among the officers of his old Peninsular Army. In the Light Division the men could take care of themselves in difficult country without hazarding the officers.

Fortunately the Volunteers are not in such a serious way. The great majority of the men—even in town corps—have a much better eye for country than men reared in large cities. What is required is to develop this natural instinct on strictly military lines. Sound general ideas as to the best method of moving quickly across difficult country—whether held by the enemy or not—should be frequently explained to the men on the blackboard or otherwise. Afterwards continuous practice in large or small bodies should be the order of the day. It is extraordinary what an amount of good can be done in this way by a competent instructor taking even half-a-dozen men for an outing. The knowledge they acquire can be imparted by them to their comrades, and thus they will take the part of a leaven to work on the mass.

Of course all the Volunteer units have given a large share of attention to this matter. But all the same, such a very remarkable lesson from actual warfare, at the precise time when Volunteer training is being systematically renewed after the bad weather, should not be allowed to pass unnoticed. The English losses at Neuve Chapelle included over 700 officers, and the proportion of officers was quite unusually high. Similar heavy losses in the commissioned ranks would have been impossible if every N.C.O. and man had been thoroughly practised in the use of ground.

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## A WORD TO YOUNG VOLUNTEERS.

I think I am right in saying that the big majority of Irish Volunteers fully realize the value of a boys' organization like the Fianna Éireann, and are sincerely desirous of helping the movement as far as they know how. The importance of the boys' movement to the Irish Nation and to the future of the Irish Volunteers is, I think, obvious to every man who has given the matter any thought. A strong and vigorous boys' organization is not only a guarantee of the permanence of the Volunteer movement, but is a guarantee of its efficiency and strength.

The ultimate aim of both organizations are identical. The work of one is complimentary to the other. They are different, perhaps, in this respect. In the Volunteers the training and keeping fit of a large military force as an efficient weapon for national defence is the main issue. In the Fianna it is the *boy himself*, not the scouting or drill that is the main factor. The training—in scouting, drill and military exercises—is the means to the end. To direct his military instincts, to guide his natural impulses, and to develop all the finer characteristics of the boy—that is the object. The Volunteer organization takes up the work where the Fianna Éireann leaves off. A large and strong Fianna means a steady stream of good material to the adult movement.

The work of organizing the Fianna throughout the country is a task beyond the resources of Fianna Headquarters, unless we receive the active co-operation of the Irish Volunteers. A year and a half ago the centres where the

Fianna existed were the first to start the Volunteers. In many cases our officers hold commissions in the I.V. as well as in the Fianna. In Dublin two of our captains and two lieutenants hold the same rank in the Dublin Regiment of the I.V. The duties need not necessarily conflict. I therefore appeal to the young members of the Irish Volunteers to stand in with us and help us to train the boys. If no sluagh exists in your district, and if you consider it in your power to organize a new sluagh, then make a start now in *aian Dé*.

The young volunteer who undertakes the training of boys must fully appreciate the importance and nobility of the work. It is not all jam running a sluagh of the Fianna, and one must endure many trials and make a good many sacrifices before he learns the secret of governing boys. The chap who imagines that all that is necessary is to teach a bit of drill, &c., and to boss "kids" will not take long to discover his delusion. Nearly every boy is different, and will have to be treated differently. It is the duty of the Fianna officer to know and understand the different types of boy in his sluagh, and to know how best to stimulate each individual boy to his best endeavour.

I would urge the Volunteer who would like to assist in organizing a sluagh of the Fianna to write at once to the Hon. General Secretary, Fianna Headquarters, 12 D'Olier Street, Dublin. Full particulars regarding the formation of Sluaghte will be forwarded with the least possible delay. WILLIE NELSON.

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