



[BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.]

I have been keenly interested in the Artillery ever since I had an 18 pounder as a travelling companion over the South of Ireland. Not that the gun in question was as pleasant a fellow wayfarer as it might have been. We had no limber in the accepted sense and had to tow it along behind a Lancia car and, now and again it proved too much for the powers of the latter—especially when climbing mountain sides.

It has always fascinated me to see one of these guns in action—the clean, swift, precise movements of the gun crew are about the most workmanlike thing in soldiering. A few days ago I saw them practising in the Fifteen Acres, that section of the Phoenix Park which has been more famous than any other portion of it for the past hundred years or more.

Think of it! A couple of batteries of *Irish* Artillery practising in a place long sacred to the British Occupation and not so long since swarming with British soldiers in Khaki!

Of course they were not actually firing—these gunners of ours—but they were being put through all the preliminary drill essential to good work in action. It was rather fine to see a battery sweeping over the grass, wheeling and circling, men and horses alike well worth looking at, all in the pink of physical fitness—and, then, at the command: "Halt! Action Rear!" to see in a twinkling the horses, unlimbered and moving off, leaving the gun ready for action and the crew in readiness behind the shields.

The Artillery unit of our army is very young yet, perhaps the youngest corps in the service for it only came into existence in March last, but it is a lusty offspring and promises to develop into something of which we will be very proud in the near future.

It is small as yet both in the number of men and equipment, but it is determined to tolerate nothing but the best in both. In the case of the men the corps stipulates that Drivers shall be at least 5ft. 4in. in height and Gunners 5ft. 8in. The men I saw in the Fifteen Acres were all long-service members of the Volunteers and they seemed to be taking to their new job as ducks take to water.

Colonel P. A. Mulcahy, O/C Artillery, told me that they were anxious that men who join the Corps shall join for a longer period than is customary at the moment in the other branches of the Army. In view of the special training that

artillerymen have to go through it can be realised that at least five years' service would not be too much to insist on. At the same time it must be clear that the artillery provides an ideal training for any young Irishman with a bent for soldiering. Recruits need not have a previous knowledge of artillery work provided they are anxious to learn and are willing to "soldier" in the most thoroughgoing sense of the word.

At present the pay for the Artillery is the same as the corps pay in other units and will remain so until the Army Council passes additional corps pay.

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In the case of the officers young men of good education and good standing are welcome provided they are capable of being made into good artillerymen. They will have to submit to an entry examination which is by no means stiff, yet ensures a certain standard of education and mental alertness. It embraces General Knowledge, Mathematics, Geography, English Composition and a Report Paper. The examinations held up to the present reveal a weakness in Mathematics amongst candidates. But it is a purely non-technical examination.

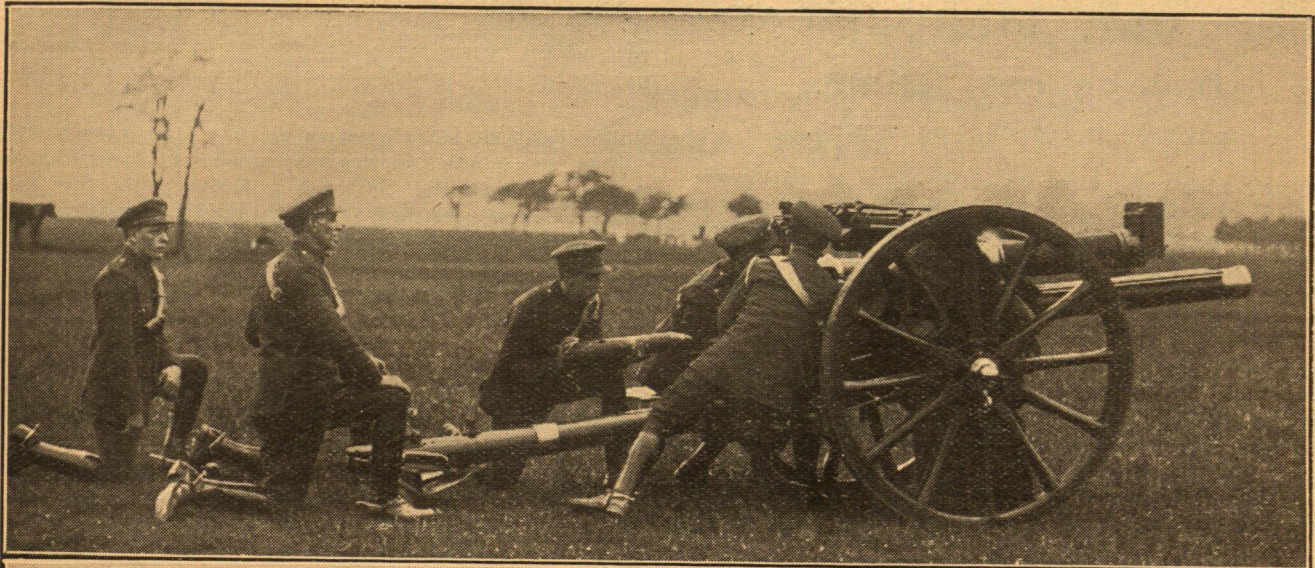
Examinations will be held from time to time and the date of same will be duly notified in G.R.O. Officers from other units will be accepted only through examination.

The training of the Corps is directly under Captain Caulfeild, who is assisted by a capable staff of N.C.O.'s including a gunnery instructor and a rough-riding instructor.

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So far the young Corps possesses just a number of 18 pounders and some French Hotchkiss guns. The latter probably will be used in connection with coastal work.

When Colonel Mulcahy took over command of the Corps on the 23rd March last, there were a number of 18 pounders scattered over the country. They were all brought to the Ordnance workshops and thoroughly overhauled by the staff there. The first completely overhauled and refurbished gun was delivered from the Ordnance to the Artillery as recently as 7th May, and was the first to be used for instructional purposes.



"An t-Oglách"

Top—18-pounder in action. Centre—Limbering up. Bottom—Artillery Officers' ride. Col. Mulcahy is second from the left, with Capt. Caulfield on his right.

[Exclusive Photo.]