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Life & Writings of Joseph Mazzini

IN SIX VOLS.

VOL I—AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL & POLITICAL.

LIFE AND ~~WRITINGS~~

OF

JOSEPH MAZZINI

VOL. I.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL

A NEW EDITION

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PREFACE.

WHEN requested to preface the Edition of my political and literary writings with a history of my life, I declined the undertaking, and I still persist in my refusal. The rare joys and many sorrows of my private life are of no moment save to the few whom I love and who love me with deep individual affection. What public life I have had is all summed up and contained in my writings, and how far those writings may have influenced present events, is a question to be judged by the public, not by me.

Indifferent, from the inborn tendency of my mind, to that empty clamour which men call fame; and despising, from natural pride and a quiet conscience, the many calumnies which have darkened my path through life;—convinced, even unto faith, that the duty of our earthly existence is to forget self in the *aim* prescribed to us by our individual

faculties and the necessities of the times ;—I have kept no record of dates, made no biographical notes, and preserved no copies of letters.

But even had I jealously preserved such, I should not now have the courage to use them. In the face of the re-awakening of that people to whom alone God has as yet granted the privilege, in each great epoch of its own existence, of transforming Europe—all individual biography appears as insignificant as a taper lighted in the presence of the rising sun.

I shall, however, intersperse these pages with such records of the events I have witnessed, and the men I have known, as may serve for the better understanding of the European movement during the last third of a century ; and add such personal recollections as may best explain the cause and purpose of these writings, and are identified with the progress and development of those events which at the present day assure of the triumph of the two principal elements of the coming epoch : the *People*, and *Nationality*.

My voice has often been the voice of the multitudes, the expression of the collective thought of

our youth who have been the initiators of the future.

Whatever value my writings may have will be the value of a historical document, and hence the relation of any circumstance that tends to confirm their truth, and prove their intimate connection with the true tendencies of Italy, may—sooner or later—be of use.

Possibly, by inquiring into the sources and origin of the Italian movement, my fellow-countrymen will more readily understand the errors and shortcomings of the present day.

JOSEPH MAZZINI.

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A P P E N D I X



Rules for the Conduct of Guerrilla Bands.

GUERRILLA warfare may be considered as the first stage of a national war. Guerrilla bands should therefore be so organized as to prepare the way for, and facilitate by their action, the formation of a national army.

The general method of organization, the authorization of leaders, the moral and political precepts regulating the conduct of the bands with regard to the country and to individuals, should be under the superintendence of a Centre of Action, whose duty it will be to ensure the greatest possible amount of uniformity even in their apparently most unconnected movements.

The political mission of the bands is to constitute the armed apostolate of the insurrection. Every band should be a living programme of the morality of the party. The most rigorous discipline is at once a duty and a necessity among them. It is a sacred duty towards their country, and a necessity for the bands themselves, which could not long exist if their conduct were such as to deprive them of the sympathy of the people.

Respect for women, for property, for the rights of individuals, and for the crops, should be their motto.

Guerrilla bands are the precursors of the nation, and endeavour to rouse the nation to insurrection. They have no right to substitute themselves for the nation.

To the nation alone belongs the right of declaring its intentions and belief.

Toleration, a consequence of liberty of conscience, is among the first virtues of the republican. The bands are therefore bound to show respect for the churches and symbols of Catholicism, and to the priests, so long as they maintain their neutrality.

The right of compelling expiation, or executing justice upon those guilty in the past, belongs to the nation alone. The bands may not usurp this right. The vengeance of the country must not be entrusted to individuals, be they whom they may.

A commission, elected by the soldiers, and presided over by the captain, will be chosen to watch over and maintain the inviolability of these rules. The names of those soldiers who have either been punished or expelled for disobedience to any of them, will be forwarded by the captain to the Centre of Action, for publication at the proper time.

The captain of each band is responsible to the Centre of Action for the conduct of his men.

Any captain guilty of dishonourable conduct will be deprived of his commission by the Centre of Action, and, if necessary, punished by publicity.

When repeated complaints have been made of the collective misconduct of any band, proving it to be unworthy to represent the national cause, it will be immediately disbanded by the Centre of Action. Should it disobey the command of the Centre of Action, it will be regarded from that time forward as a mere horde of men without flag or mission.

Every band has the right of taking measures for its own safety and preservation, and of promoting the national insurrection. All acts of aggression or resistance, all information given to the enemy by the country

people, and all acts of hostility shown to individual Italians, will be speedily and severely punished by the bands.

The bands have a right to live, and it is their duty to increase the forces of the insurrection by adding to the means of the party.

The bands will subsist upon the booty taken from the enemy, treasure seized from the government, forced contributions imposed upon those of the wealthy notoriously adverse to the national cause, and supplies demanded from the provinces through which they pass.

All booty seized is the collective property of the band. It will be distributed either in value or substance, as equally as circumstances permit, among the officers and soldiers, according to the regulations voted by the bands themselves.

All governmental funds seized are the property of the national party. The captain will be responsible for them. He will leave a document with the official in custody of those funds, stating the amount. With regard to forced contributions, the captain will obey the orders of the Centre of Action.

Demands and requisitions of victuals should be made as seldom as possible, and they are to be paid for whenever the band possesses the means of paying. When they have no such means, the captain or officer in command making such requisition will sign an acknowledgment of the amount of food received, and leave it with the civil authorities of the place. By this means the nation will be enabled, when the war is ended, to note the contributions of each locality.

Whatever monies the captain can dispense with without injury to his band, he will forward to the Centre of Action.

The captain will keep an exact account of all the pecuniary transactions of his band. A copy of this ac-

count will be audited by the civil commissioner, to be employed in all possible cases by the Centre of Action, whose duty it will be to watch over the observance of the rules above mentioned.

The bands will make it a general rule to seek to compromise all large cities, and avert the vengeance of the enemy from all small localities.

In passing through small and unarmed localities, the captain will rather seek to repress than promote any revolutionary demonstration on the part of the inhabitants. Those patriots who are able to join the bands will enrol themselves as simple individuals, and quit the locality.

It will be the aim of every band to increase its numbers, by admitting every possible element into its ranks. But so soon as the band shall have reached the maximum cypher indicated by the Centre of Action as constituting a company in the future army, all fresh recruits will be regarded as forming the nucleus of a new band.

The captains of the first bands will naturally be either chosen or recognised by the Centre of Action. The blanks caused among the officers by war will be filled up upon the principle of universal suffrage, exercised progressively, from the ranks up to the captain. The captain of the new band, formed out of the superabundance of recruits joining the former band, will thus be chosen by the captain and officers next in rank belonging to the first band. The organization of each separate band, with a view to the formation of a company in the future army, will in no way interfere with the practical character of their operations as guerrilla bands.

In order to increase the facilities of obtaining subsistence without serious inconvenience to the country, and to enable them more rapidly to disband or conceal themselves, the bands will be divided into small bodies of from

twenty-five to fifty men, acting as detachments under the orders of a single commander, and within the territory assigned to his operations.

The uniform of the bands will be a shirt or *blouse*. In the first period of the war it is perhaps better to avoid all uniform, and content themselves with the national cockade, which can be easily thrown away or hidden in cases where it is necessary abruptly to disband or disappear. A ribbon, or other distinctive mark, not visible at a distance, will be worn by the officers during action. If the blouse be adopted, the colour should be the same both for the officers and the men.

The essential weapons are a musket or rifle with a bayonet, and a dagger. Each soldier will carry his cartridge-box, a case containing bread and spirits, a thin but strong cord, a few nails, and, if possible, a light axe. The clothes worn by the soldiers should be so made as to allow of rapidity of movement, and of a shape not calculated to betray them in case of dispersion.

The signals and commands will be sounded by a horn or trumpet. The following are the most important movements, and therefore those the bands must first be taught to distinguish :—1. Assault in the front ; 2. On the right ; 3. On the left ; 4. Combined ; 5. Assault of riflemen ; 6. Re-assembling ; 7. Retreat.

The non-commissioned officers will employ all leisure moments in drilling the men in the few movements most necessary in guerrilla warfare, teaching them to acquire rapidity in loading and firing, and in dispersing and re-assembling.

The principal aim of the bands will be, constantly to damage and molest the enemy with the least possible exposure or danger to themselves, to destroy their ammunition and supplies, shake their confidence and discipline, and reduce them to such a condition as will secure

their defeat, so soon as the regular army or the united bands are able to give them battle.

The means by which to attain this aim are—to attack the enemy as frequently as possible in the flank or rear ; to surprise small detachments, escorts, videttes, outposts, and stragglers ; to seize upon their convoys of provisions, ammunition, or money ; to interrupt their communications and correspondence, by lying in wait for their couriers, destroying the roads, bridges, fords, etc. ; to continually break in upon their hours of refreshment and sleep, and seize their generals and superior officers, and so on.

Guerrilla war is a war of judicious daring and audacity, active legs, and *espionage*.

The captain of a guerrilla band must be able to calculate and plan coolly, execute boldly, march unweariedly, retire rapidly, and keep himself thoroughly informed about the enemy's movements.

In this, as in regular warfare, the great secret is to preserve the means of communication. The possibility of contact and communication between the various detachments of each band, and between the different bands acting in the same province, must be jealously maintained, so as to insure simultaneous action at the decisive moment.

The greatest merit in the commander of regular troops is to know when to fight and conquer ; the greatest merit of the guerrilla chief is to contrive constantly to attack, do mischief, and retire.

A band that is surrounded is lost. The retreat must always be left open. The captain will never command an assault without first assigning a point of reunion for his men in case of dispersion.

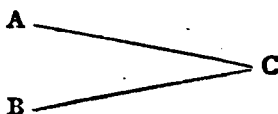
The best time for attacking the enemy is at night, during refreshment, or after a long march.

Unless circumstances compel the adoption of a different method, the best mode of attack is for the bands to spread their forces like sharpshooters. The greater the extension of the ground they occupy, the less dangerous will be the enemy's fire.

Country abounding in hedges, forests, or broken ground, affords natural entrenchments for guerrilla bands. The mountains are their fortresses.

Their movements must be rapid, constant, and unexpected. The enemy must always be kept in ignorance concerning them. From time to time the bands will hide themselves in inaccessible situations, or temporarily disband, so that the enemy may lose their trace.

As a general rule, the order of march for a guerrilla band may be represented by the following figure :—



A being the position occupied by the band, B the position occupied by the enemy against whom it is proposed to act. The band must be ready to assault when the enemy believe them to be retiring; and to retire when the enemy are prepared to resist their attack.

There are three things which should be the constant study of the captain—the smallest details regarding the nature of the country upon which he has to act; the disposition and special aptitudes of each of his men; the elements, organization, tactics, and numbers of the enemy's forces.

Absolute secrecy must be systematically observed in all things, which it is not indispensably necessary to communicate.

Select for your zone of operations the neighbourhood

to which the greater part of your men belong, and do not abandon it unless compelled. A knowledge of the localities, and friendly relationship between the soldiers and the inhabitants, are advantages of vital importance.

Both as a reserve, in case of a general action, and as a means of obtaining information, it is indispensable that each band should have a certain number of stationary members distributed over the various localities comprised in its zone of operations, who should be unknown to all except the captain and his messengers.

It will be their business to spy the movements of the enemy, their forces, plans, supplies, and scouts—the habits, places of resort, and lodgings of the more important officers ; to note the sympathies of the inhabitants in the various localities, the supplies they are able to furnish, etc. ; and to transmit careful and minute details of such matters to the captain of the band. The captain will apply himself to the careful organization of these auxiliaries, and the method of communication with them.

The captain should transmit his orders verbally, written orders should always be avoided if possible. Endeavour always to obtain information from two different sources, so as to test the truth of the one by the other. Distrust all information received from any spies not your own, or from deserters from the enemy. It is often a cloak for betrayal.

Endeavour to make the peasantry your friends ; it is at once your highest duty and interest to do so.

The bands will do the greatest damage to the enemy by directing their attacks against their officers, their horses, and their provisions.

Set spies upon their convoys, and where you have determined to attack one, send on some of your men to destroy the road at a given point, by encumbering it with fallen trees or otherwise, so as to delay its advance and

create disorder and confusion in the escort. Choose the hour of twilight if possible, or when the soldiers are fatigued by a long march, or passing a bridge, a gorge, or wood.

Let the first of the troop pass, then make a feigned attack upon a given point with a small portion of your force, and concentrate the mass of your men upon the centre. Let the first blows be struck at the first horses of the first waggon ; attack on the opposite side from that whence assistance may arrive for the convoy, and keep back a fourth part of your band as a reserve.

The same rules must be observed in ambuscades, surprises, and assaults while the enemy is engaged in passing a ford. Never attack until part of the troops have passed the ambush, or entered the gorge, street, or ford. Fire a volley at the enemy's flank, and then throw yourselves upon their ranks. Let your action be so rapid as to leave them no time for reflection, and fly as soon as they recover themselves

When you are compelled to retire fighting, in front of the enemy—which should be as seldom as possible—divide the bands into *échelons* at the distance of two musket-shots from each other, and so disposed as to present an oblique front to the enemy. Let each body of men fire as soon as the enemy is within range, and then retire ; running by the shortest path to an equal distance behind the next line, and so on from position to position, from obstacle to obstacle.

Avoid engaging in open country. Never pass a gorge or defile without being masters or at least secure of the heights.

Always remember that, both for yourselves and for the enemy, every mountain has some practicable pass.

Endeavour, by lighting fires in an opposite direction, by bugle-calls, and by false information given by men

really your own but unsuspected by the enemy, to deceive them as to the position you have taken up, and the direction in which you intend to advance.

Teach your men not to be the first to fire when they find themselves opposite the enemy's riflemen, but rather to threaten the enemy, and compel them to fire, reserving their own fire until they see the flash.

The regulation rifle should be pointed at 100 yards at the breast, at 200 higher, and at 300 at the head of the adversary. When firing from below upwards, it is necessary to aim a little above the level ; when from above downwards, a little below.

The numbers of the enemy may be calculated at a distance by the sound produced by their march. As a general rule, the more uniform the noise of their march, the greater the number of troops. The dust raised will be more or less according to the dryness of the ground and to the state of the wind. Much may be learned by listening with the ear close to the ground, and it does not require much practice. One fire generally represents twelve men, but the fires are sometimes multiplied for the purposes of deception.

The bands should endeavour to choose their zone of operations between the enemy and their basis of operations.

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