

PAYS HIGHEST TRIBUTE.

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forest of Argonne, was taken over, the Second Colonial French, holding the tip of the salient opposite St. Mihiel, and the French Seventeenth Corps on the heights above Verdun being transferred to General Pershing's command.

The combined French, British and American air forces mobilized for the battle, the report says, was the largest aviation assembly ever engaged on the western front up to that time in a single operation.

Of the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, General Pershing says:

After four hours artillery preparation the seven American divisions in the front line advanced at 5 a. m., on September 12, assisted by a limited number of tanks, manned partly by Americans and partly by the French. These divisions, accompanied by groups of wire cutters and others armed with bargalore torpedoes, went through the successive banks of barbed wire that protected the enemy's front line and support trenches, in irritable waves on schedule time, breaking down all defense of an enemy demoralized by the great volume of our artillery fire and our sudden approach out of the fog.

"Our First Corps advanced to Thiaucourt, while our Fourth Corps curved back to the southwest through Nonsard. The Second Colonial French Corps made the slight advance required of it on very difficult ground and the Fifth Corps took its three ridges and repulsed a counterattack. A rapid march brought reserve regiments of a division of the Fifth Corps into Vigneulles in the early morning, where it linked up with patrols of our Fourth Corps, closing the salient and forming a new line west of Thiaucourt to Vigneulles, and beyond Fresmes-en-Woevre.

"At the cost of only 7,000 casualties, mostly light, we had taken 16,000 prisoners and 443 guns, a great quantity of material, released the inhabitants of many villages from enemy domination, and established our lines in a position to threaten Metz.

"The signal success of the American First army in its first offensive was of prime importance. The allies found they had a formidable army to aid them and the enemy learned finally that he had one to reckon with."

The report shows for the first time officially that with this brilliantly executed coup, General Pershing's men had cleared the way for the great effort of the allied and American forces to win a conclusive victory. The American army moved at once toward the crowning achievement, the battle of the Meuse.

The general tells a dramatic story of this mighty battle in three distinct phases, beginning on the night of September 27, when the Americans quickly took the places of the French on the thinly held line of this long quiet sector. The attack opened on September 26 and the Americans drove through entanglements, across No-Man's-Land to take all the enemy's first line positions. Closing the chapter, General Pershing says:

"On November 6 a division of the First Corps reached a point on the Meuse opposite Sedan, 25 miles from our line of departure. The strategic goal which was our highest hope was gained. We had cut the enemy's main line of communications, and nothing but surrender or an armistice could save his army from complete disaster.

Many Prisoners Taken.

"In all 40 enemy divisions had been used against us in the Meuse-Argonne battle. Between September 26 and November 6 we took 26,059 prisoners and 468 guns on this front. Our divisions engaged were the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, Thirty-second, Thirty-third, Thirty-fifth, Thirty-seventh, Forty-second, Seventy-seventh, Seventy-eighth, Seventy-ninth, Eightieth, Eighty-second, Eighty-ninth, Ninetieth and Ninety-first. Many of our divisions remained in line for a length of time that required nerves of steel, while others were sent in again after only a few days of rest. The First, Twenty-sixth, Forty-second, Seventy-seventh, Eightieth, Eighty-ninth, and Ninetieth were in the line twice. Although some of the divisions were fighting their first battle, they soon became equal to the best."

The commander in chief does not lose sight of the divisions operating with French or British armies during this time. He tells of the work of the Second Corps, comprising the Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth Divisions in the British assault on the Hindenburg line where the St. Quentin canal passes through a tunnel; of how the Second and Thirty-sixth Divisions got their chance in October by being assigned to aid the French in the drive from Rheims and of the splendid fighting of the Twenty-sev-

enth and Ninety-first Divisions sent to join the French army in Belgium.

Of the total strength of the expeditionary force, General Pershing reports:

"There are in Europe altogether including a regiment and some sanitary units with the Italian army and the organization at Murmansk, also including those en route from the States, approximately 2,053,347 men, less our losses. Of this total there are in France 1,338,169 combatant troops. Forty divisions have arrived, of which the infantry personnel of 10 have been used as replacements, leaving 30 divisions now in France organized into three armies of three corps each."

Of their equipment he says:

"Our entry into the war found us with few of the auxiliaries necessary for its conduct in the modern sense. Among our most important deficiencies in material were artillery, aviation and tanks. In order to meet our requirements as rapidly as possible, we accepted the offer of the French government to provide us with the necessary artillery equipment of seventy-fives, one fifty-five millimeter howitzers and one fifty-five G P F, guns from their own factories for thirty divisions. The wisdom of this course is fully demonstrated by the fact that, although we soon began the manufacture of these classes of guns at home, there were no guns of the calibre mentioned manufactured in America on our front at the date the armistice was signed. The only guns of these types produced at home thus far received in France are 109 seventy-five millimeter guns.

Help From French.

"In aviation we were in the same situation and here again the French government came to our aid until our own aviation programme should be under way. We obtained from the French the necessary planes for training our personnel and they have provided us with a total of 2,676 pursuit, observation and bombing planes. The first airplanes received from home arrived in May, and altogether we have received 1,379. The first American squadron completely equipped by American production, including airplanes, crossed the German lines on August 7, 1918. As to tanks, we were also compelled to rely upon the French. Here, however, we were less fortunate, for the reason that the French production could barely meet the requirements of their own armies.

"It should be fully realized that the French government has always taken a most liberal attitude and has been most anxious to give us every possible assistance in meeting our deficiencies in these as well as in other respects. Our dependence upon France for artillery, aviation and tanks, was of course, due to the fact that our industries had not been exclusively devoted to military production. All credit is due our own manufacturers for their efforts to meet our requirements as at the time the armistice was signed we were able to look forward to the early supply of practically all our necessities from our own factories."

HOPES FOR COOPERATION.

Everybody is Requested to Mail Xmas Parcels Early.

Christmas shoppers are speeding up as the great world holiday and sacred yuletide season draws nearer, according to most merchants and shopkeepers. Postmaster A. W. Knight says packages for distant points are moving more rapidly every day and that the people appear to be taking advantage of the warning to shop and mail early.

This week packages should be mailed to all points between the Atlantic and the Mississippi river. Owing to the vast amount of postal business incidental to the demobilization of soldiers and sailors in the service and heavy commercial business, Christmas packages add a new burden to the already heavy mails and for that reason the first class mails, the second class mails and all merchandise are moving slower than in normal times.

Shops of the city are displaying their most attractive lines of gifts suitable for the Christmas season this week and a record business is expected to be done between now and next Saturday night. Money appears to be plentiful and the spirit of buying is more buoyant now than in many years, it is said.

Postmaster Knight and his assistants have worked hard to keep the Christmas business moving along at regular paces and he says that if the people keep on buying and mailing their gifts and of sending many smaller presents in the Bamberg zone by members of the family, much as they did last year as a war measure, that there will be no sort of jumble at the postoffice and that mail will be moving as freely and regularly on Christmas eve as it does on any other days.

MANY REQUESTS TO GET OUT.

Senator Smith Publishes Letter of Interest to Soldiers.

Washington, Dec. 1.—Senator E. D. Smith is receiving many requests from relatives of soldiers and sailors for assistance in having the men discharged, especially where good reasons exist for trying to have them released from further service.

In reply to an inquiry regarding the policy of the War Department in such matters, the Senator has just received the following letter from Adj. Gen. Harris, giving information of value to all who are interested:

"With respect to soldiers now serving in the United States, department commanders, commanders of ports of embarkation and commanders of camps not under the jurisdiction of department commanders or of chiefs of bureau of the War Department, have been authorized to discharge enlisted men, excepting those who voluntarily enlisted prior to April 1, 1917, on their own application where there is sickness or other distress in the soldier's family, or where he is needed to resume employment in an industry or occupation where there is urgent need of his services, provided such discharge will not disrupt or cripple an existing organization, and if the soldier's services can be spared.

"With respect to soldiers now overseas, no definite policy with regard to their return to their home stations has been formulated. When a state of order has been restored overseas and the military situation has improved to such an extent as to justify the withdrawal of American troops, the War Department will adopt the most effective and speedy means to

hasten the return of all soldiers to the United States at the earliest practicable date, and the policy to be adopted in connection therewith will be published for the benefit of all concerned. Until then it will be impracticable to entertain requests for the discharge or return to the United States of individual soldiers."

Senator Smith assures his constituents that his services in these matters are at their command, but he desires to stress the fact that in all cases it is necessary for the soldier or sailor to file with his commanding officer an application for discharge, and it will help considerably to have several certificates or affidavits setting forth the reasons for desiring release accompany the application.

Virtually the same regulations apply to men serving in the navy. Senator Smith has been informed by Secretary Daniels, who stated that special efforts would be put forth to release young men who desired to complete their education, but in every case application must be made by the man himself, to his commanding officer, and reasons for seeking the discharge should be given.

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