

FRENCH ARTILLERY USES LARGEST GUNS IN WORLD CONFLICT

Government War Film Reveals "520" Gun and Use of Steel Shields.

EMPLOYMENT IS LIMITED

Necessity of Special Roads, Bridges and Railways Makes General Use of Mammoth Gun Impracticable.

Paris, Oct. 2. — (By Mail.)—(I. N. S.)—First official confirmation of the fact that the French artillery is equipped with the largest calibre guns in the world has come through the release in Paris motion picture theatres of the government's film entitled "The Military Power of France in the War."

The action shown in the film—wherein for the first time also is officially revealed the fact that French storming troops carry steel shields—is more stirring than that in any other war picture presented. One of the most stirring scenes in General Petain's review of the troops of General Guillaumat's army which recently drove back the crown prince's forces to practically the identical line from which they started in the terrible drive which began February 21, 1916. Thousands of short, sturdy poilus filed past the cameras.

"520" Proves Big Surprise Heretofore the "quarter cent" howitzer—as the 400-millimeter gun is called—has been regarded as the most powerful weapon in use by the allies. It is slightly smaller in calibre than the 42-centimeter or 430-millimeter Skoda howitzer which the Germans sprung on an astonished world at Liege in August, 1914. The fact that France had devised, constructed and perfected a weapon four inches larger in calibre than the greatest German piece has been kept a profound secret, even the soldiers at the front being unaware of the exact bore of the monstrous cannon.

I have seen French official photos of the German "big Bertha" of 42-centimetres and, comparing the Skoda product with the French "520," one finds the allies' gun a much more efficient weapon, due, primarily, to its greater range. The 42-centimetre piece is in reality more of a mortar than a howitzer, having a short, squat barrel and always being fired at a very high elevation.

Long Barrel Is Used Naturally, it was necessary that the length of the barrel of the French gun should be longer, owing to the greatly increased calibre of the piece, but as a matter of fact, the French rifle is lengthened to such a degree that the huge piece is in fact a howitzer and capable of hurling its three-ton shell at high velocity and therefore on a relatively flat trajectory.

The "520" was used in the great Verdun surprise attack of August-September last and again in General Maistre's operation along the western end

of the Chemin Des Dames in the neighborhood of Laon. Its great projectiles rained down on the quarries where the enemy reserves were stationed, wrecked the entrances to these underground positions and prevented the men inside from debouching to aid the first line troops actually engaged. Two shells from a "520" made debris of Fort De Malmaison, which the Germans had reconstructed into a supposedly impregnable position.

Too Big for Ordinary Use Obviously the mammoth 25-inch gun is too massive for ordinary use. Roads, bridges, railways and other transportation lines have to be specially constructed to bear even the weight of carrying up projectiles for the weapon. Smaller shells are able to accomplish the necessary work of demolition against German field positions, trenches, "pill-boxes" and block-houses. The sphere of the "520" is reserved to itself and limited to such operations as smashing in quarries or other great natural strong points which the Germans have consolidated into fortified positions.

Albany City Council Adopts New Budget

Albany, Or., Nov. 15. — The city council, at its regular meeting Wednesday night, adopted its budget for the coming year, based on the 1917 valuation, exclusive of the public utilities, the valuation of which is in the hands of the state tax commission and not available at this time.

The assessed valuation of the city is \$2,232,565, without the utilities. The amount to be raised will be \$49,490. Of this amount \$28,700 is estimated required for general running expenses and \$1897 for the public library; \$10,092 is set aside for interest on the sinking fund for outstanding warrants and proposed bond issues, and the rest for interest on bonded indebtedness and sinking funds.

Instead of making a millage levy, the council acted in accordance with the new law and stated the definite sums required. The millage is figured by the county assessor.

Speed Law May Be Modified Albany, Or., Nov. 15. — Hereafter, motorists passing through this city may not be troubled so much by Albany's speed "cop." The city council at Wednesday night's meeting considered a bill introduced by Councilman J. H. Robinett, which will raise the speed limit in the outlying districts from 15 miles an hour to 20 miles an hour. The speed is left at 15 miles in the downtown section, bounded by First, Baker, Washington and Fifth streets. The ordinance was read twice and left over for the next meeting, November 28. A bill was passed lowering the minimum fine for violation of the traffic ordinance from \$10 to \$5. The maximum was left at \$50.

Trains Head-On in Yakima N. P. Yards

North Yakima, Wash., Nov. 15.—There was a head-on collision this morning when a trainload of 25 cars of logs for the Cascade Lumber company and 50 cars of coal ran into the Moxee local on the tracks in front of the

Northern Pacific station. The local was on a siding waiting for the oncoming freight to pass when the latter took an open switch and bore down upon the local with warning whistles. George Vance, conductor of the Moxee local, sensed the situation in time to warn his train crew and the nine passengers, and had the train clear when the crash came. The heavy freight smashed the lighter engine but suffered severely in the impact. Two of the cars loaded with logs for the mill telescoped and the debris piled up on the track. The railroad officials are making inquiry as to how the switch came to be open.

Miners Must Keep Tab on Explosives

Regulations prepared by the United States bureau of mines for carrying into effect a federal law enacted October 6, to regulate the manufacture,

sale, distribution and storage of explosives, went into effect today. The national bureau of mines, however, has been unable to supply the

necessary blanks for carrying out the provisions of the law, so it has been arranged, according to word received by H. M. Parks, director of the state bureau of mines, from the national bureau, that until such blanks are received, mines will continue in operation as in the past, but they will have to keep an accurate account of stock on hand, used and sold from this date.

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