

FRENCH FORTS QUITE WEAK

Most of Them Old-Fashioned and Easily Crumble.

GUNS ARE ALL SHORT-RANGED

Heavy Weapons Generally Outdistanced by the More Modern Pieces of the German Invaders.

(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)

THE HAGUE, Oct. 31.—According to recent reports in the German press, not all the French fortifications are so strong as has been believed. Several of those which have been taken by the Germans are said to have been antiquated, little effort to modernize them having been spent on them. A noteworthy example of this and one which is rather typical of what the Germans assert they have found, is the case of Fort Lee Ayvelles, which, located almost due south of Metziers-Charleville, guarded the bridges and fords of the Meuse in that locality.

Describing what he saw in the fort after it had been occupied by the Germans, Henry Binder, war correspondent of the Berliner Tageblatt, says in the issue of that paper of October 9, among other things:

"All French forts along the Belgian border have been constructed with such carelessness that one can easily determine the degree to which the French depended upon their Belgian neighbor. Generally the forts were left in the state they were when built, and since the plans of their construction date back to fifty years ago the strategical weakness of several or most of them, is plain enough.

Example of Weakness.

"A typical example of this is Fort Lee Ayvelles, which guarded the bridges and fords of the Meuse south of Metziers-Charleville, and which was shot out of the ground with 300 shots from our twenty-one-centimeter mortars. The fort was built in 1871 and was armed with forty pieces. Its main armament were two batteries of six guns each of nine-centimeter caliber, dating from the years 1875 and 1880, and which had a range of only four kilometers. (The range of even the smallest German siege pieces is never less than eight kilometers.)

"In addition there were found in the fort several twelve-centimeter bronze guns which had been cast in 1854, while in the casemates we found several mill-railguns and five-barrelled revolver guns which had been intended to sweep the moats. In the fort were also found several old mortars from the year 1823—old muzzle-loaders with the typical pyramids of round cannonballs beside them—guns of a type we use in our villages to fire salutes.

"The fort showed neglect everywhere. Not alone was its armament antiquated and primitive, but the management before and during the attack must have been defective. The road to the fort had been blocked merely by felled trees and an occasional barbed-wire entanglement, and trees before one of the batteries of the forts made it necessary to replace it after our troops had arrived. To do this which had to be used. But they succeeded only in getting one of the pieces into position. This gun was intended to serve against aircraft above the fort, and an effort had been made to give it the necessary high-angle elevation by digging a trench around it in which the timber rested. Even at that the elevation secured was insufficient.

Artillery Were Feeble.

"Our artillery bombarded the fort from a northwesterly direction and worked with a precision that would be hard to equal. One of the batteries in the fort had been put out of action by a bull's-eye shot for each piece, and in other cases the barrel of the gun had been torn from the carriage, leaving a scrap heap of barrel, wheels, lumber parts and masonry. One of the barrels had dents four centimeters deep where fragments of our bursting shells had hit it.

"In this 'helpless cage' a garrison of about 500 men had been stationed. It is understood that the men fled as soon as fire was opened by our artillery. Instead of placing this force in trenches, they depended upon their poor position, with the result that their defeat was complete morally and physically.

"There is the grave of the poor commandant who witnessed the futile struggle and then saw his men utterly routed by a numerically superior enemy. The poor man ended his life. Simple German soldiers have honored this deed by a massive cross of wood upon which they inscribed in good lettering the words:

"Here rests the brave commandant. He found it impossible to survive the fall of the fort in his charge. R. I. P. With this simple cross of wood the German soldier honors in you the hero who did his duty.—Second Landwehr-Pioneer Company VIII A-K, September, 1914."

CO-OPERATION WITH FARMERS

Many Failures in the Past Offset by the Success of Present Day.

The American farmer has not been noted for his success as a co-operator, and many farmers' co-operative organizations have met with failure. Such failures were generally attributed to the highly "individualistic" nature of the American farmer which disinclined him to work in community, or to over-ambitious plans. That farmers' organizations are an entire success when not attempted on an article in the Forum by E. E. Miller, who calls attention to many examples of successful co-operation.

The Southern Produce company, an organization of truck growers, was organized in 1910, and now has a membership of 400. It handles most of the truck grown in the vicinity of Norfolk, Va., selling the produce and buying seeds, fertilizers and other supplies for the members. It has bought and equipped an experimental farm, turning it over to the state to run, and lately has erected a six-story office building in Norfolk at a cost of \$135,000.

The Hood River apple growers and the California citrus fruit growers have equally successful organizations. These organizations are formed with the one purpose of selling the fruit the members grow. The members' crop belongs to the association, and is picked, graded and packed as the association directs. Details of cultivation and spraying are also looked after and the organizations are said to have brought about a uniformity of distribution which has resulted in a lower retail price to the consumer and gives a larger proportion of the retail price to the producer.

A Texas fruit and truck association does a business of \$1,500,000 annually, and Colorado has an association which does a thriving business. Florida citrus growers claim to have succeeded in raising prices to the producer remarkably and western North Carolina fruit growers and Georgia peach growers have successful organizations.

Creameries and cheese factories seem particularly amenable to co-operative management. In 1911 2,129 out of a total of 6,294 creameries in the United States were conducted on the co-operative plan, and out of 346 cheese factories 249 were co-operative. In Minnesota 99 out of 238 creameries were co-operative, and in Wisconsin 37 out of 1,099 creameries were co-operative and 24 cheese factories out of 174.

In Sves, Minn., the farmers are said to be conducting successfully a co-operative creamery, a co-operative grain elevator, a co-operative telephone company, a co-operative store, a co-operative insurance company, and a co-operative stock shipping association, and a co-operative bank is in process of formation.

Such organizations do not necessarily raise the price of produce to the consumer; in some cases they have lowered the price, and Mr. Miller thinks that, in addition to being financially beneficial, they have quickened the moral and intellectual life of the communities interested.

BOY TREED BY BOLD COON

Searching Party Holds Gun to Lad and He Kills the Animal.

Harry Dickinson, 15, of West Livingston, N. J., went into a tree clump recently and began to pull himself up a big trunk looking for butternuts. Half way aloft he had to put his foot into a hole to raise himself to a higher limb.

There was a snarl and a snap. The boy looked down to see an angry raccoon peering out of the hole, baring its teeth.

Harry began to figure on how to descend. The only way was past the 'coon's nest. Darkness came, but still the raccoon kept at its post, its eyes showing greenish. The lad's parents became alarmed and searched a pond for him. Then they sent a posse through the woods, firing guns.

A party found him at last at 9 a. m. next day. They threw a rope up to him, attached a shotgun to it and he blew the 'coon's head off. Then he descended. The animal proved to have been guarding a family of baby coons in the hole in the tree.—New York Tribune.

Work for All.

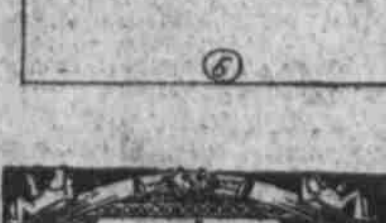
An epigram of John D. Rockefeller is being quoted with approval in Tarrytown.

Mr. Rockefeller, on the occasion of his wife's seventy-fifth birthday, said at Pocotico Hills to the grandchildren gathered round the great white birthday cake with its decoration of seventy-five wax candles:

"Children, remember this, success means hard work—but failure means harder."

Krazy Kat

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Much of the property placed on the market in recent years was acquired a long time ago as a speculation by men who realized that the time would come when the natural growth of the city would make their holdings worth fortunes.

Property under such ownership develops slowly, however, and in most cases not at all. When these properties are offered for sale, they are bought by a thrifty, ambitious people who set about to building homes, beautifying the grounds and in all ways making the property a credit to themselves and the city, as well as enhancing its market value.

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