

Metz Reclaimed by the French Wildly Cheers Petain's Army

Departing Germans Had Told the People Lorraine Was to Be a Republic, But the People Rejoiced to Find They Were to Rejoin France.

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METZ, Nov. 19, 8 P. M.—Metz came back to France today. Metz which forty-seven years ago the gods of war took away from France, today the gods of war gave back to France. For today Petain and his conquering poilus entered the metropolis of Lorraine, while from the lofty spire of the noble Cathedral pealed the bell that for almost half a century had pealed when the German Kaiser came to town, and every passing poilu saw in front of the Cathedral "Wilhelm" in chains. Years ago Wilhelm had the head taken from the statue of the Prophet Daniel and his own likeness put thereon. Today Wilhelm wore the chains, while from his piously raised hands hung a placard which said to the world: "Sic transit gloria mundi."

There were no Americans in the triumphal entry into Metz because it was most fitting that the ceremony which meant to France the crowning victory should be purely French. But from the tower and the portal I saw flying the Stars and Stripes, and fifty or more Americans who got here to see the ceremony were welcome guests.

The American army of occupation made no advance today, awaiting orders. Therefore, after filing my dispatch from American headquarters, I went to Metz to see the historic entry of the conquering French fighting men. The thing was too big to grasp, too much for the 70,000 population to realize. They seemed dazed. Down the faces of aged men and women who were French before Germany stole Lorraine tears of joy ran in streams. But the great mass of the population seemed dazed. They cheered and cheered, these younger folks, but I thought the tears of the old folks best told the story of Metz.

It was incongruous to hear voices German praising the appearance of French poilus, but they meant it, none the less, with few exceptions. One could not expect the enthusiasm of Paris for these folks, most of them, were born under German misrule, and the German touch could not be rubbed off in one day as it will be in the happy years to come. One felt uncertain standing in the great square, one felt the atmosphere strained, until someone yelled for the Kaiser when Petain passed, and after the police rescued that man I felt again reassured and knew Metz was really glad she was French again.

It was absorbingly interesting to find that the people had been told by the departing Germans that Lorraine and Alsace were to be independent because America wished it, and people to whom I talked told me that Metz was to be the capital of the new republic.

They had been told, too, that the American would occupy Metz. It is no wonder they were dazed when the French troops marched into town today, and when they learned that Metz was again to be really French.

It was these sudden developments which dazed Metz. The Germans had

left a curse upon its joy, even on the day of their leaving. For, after all, there was no doubt Metz was glad. To the Germans who assert that it is really more than half Hun I would tell the story of the French flags which flew there today. The German commanders would not allow the factories to make French flags against the coming of this great day, and so the women set out to make them. They could buy white and red cloth, colors of part of the German flag, but when it came to blue they found that the supply had been corraled, and the price advanced.

It cost \$20 to get enough blue for one flag. But those flags flew by the thousand today. I take that to mean that Metz is really French at heart. Traces of the German curse remain—more than traces—and it will take years to wipe them out. It will take much longer than it took to pull down the statue of Frederick today—much longer than it will take to rename the streets with French names; but the cleansing can and will be done.

The streets and squares were packed when early this afternoon the blast of trumpets told that the conquering heroes were coming. Overhead swept fifty airplanes, dropping miniature French flags, and from a distance came the strains of the "Marche Lorraine." And then French cavalry, and then French Generals and more officers, and then the poilus.

As they swept into the square before the great Cathedral—those handsomest soldiers God ever made—the real French and mongrel French broke into a great demonstration of joy. Then there came some trusty 75s and more infantry and more bands; and so on for two hours Mangin's soldiers swept through the city and the barracks the Germans had built and had just left, and Metz was French again.

Paris Reports the Entry.

PARIS, Nov. 19. — Continuing their march through the Province of Lorraine, French troops under Marshal Pétain entered Metz, where they were received with acclamations. In the advance into Alsace similar demonstrations of joy attended the occupation of Zabern.

The War Office tonight describes the progress along the French front as follows:

"Our advance continued today without incident other than manifestations of joy by the civilian populations. In numerous localities the inhabitants displayed touching thought in bringing forth, notwithstanding the difficult conditions, food for our soldiers.

"The material abandoned by the enemy is accumulating, as well as the number of liberated prisoners who have rejoined our lines.

"In Belgium we have reached the line of Bourseigne-Vieillelenne.

"In Lorraine, in the meantime, a detachment had pushed forward on our left as far as Sarral. Our advanced guards established their front along Klerberg, Hemmorreing, Saverne [Zabern], Allenvillers and Wangen.

"The entry of our troops into Saverne under command of General Gerard was made amid great enthusiasm at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

"Marshal Pétain made solemn entry into Metz at the head of the troops of the Tenth Army, commanded, in the absence of General Mangin, who had suffered an injury through a fall from his horse, by General Leconte. The

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METZ RECLAIMED BY THE FRENCH

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entire population went out to meet our troops, loudly acclaiming them. The old city of Lorraine, captive for forty-seven years and finally reunited to France, has manifested in a never-to-be-forgotten way its love for the mother country.

"In Alsace our soldiers received yesterday the same moving welcome in the loyal town of Colmar."

Belated Report of Monday's Progress.

The text of yesterday's statement follows:

"Our troops continue their march this morning and are being received with growing enthusiasm by the populations of the occupied regions. The enemy has abandoned enormous quantities of material, locomotives, railroad cars, automobiles, and magazines of all sorts. Thousands of French, Russian, English, and Italian prisoners are entering our lines from German prisons. Their condition is indescribable.

"In Belgium we have passed the railroad running between Beuraing and Florenville. Further east we have reached the line of Offagne, Bertrix, and Straimont. Our troops are also in the Jamolgne region south of Neufchâteau.

"In Lorraine we have occupied St. Marie-aux-Chesnes, on the south bank of the Nied River, and are on the road toward St. Avoild. We are in the region of the heights of the Saar. Our troops have made solemn entry into Saarburg, Dieuze, and Morhange.

"In Alsace we have crossed Col Saverne, and have installed our advance guards at the gates of Wasselnheim and Molshelm. Further south we are in the proximity of the Rhine from north of Neu Breisach as far as the Swiss frontier.

"The people of the occupied regions do not cease to give our troops touching evidences of their love for France."

Zabern and Pre-War Prussianism.

The case of Zabern has become famous the world over as the quintessence of Prussian militarism. In 1913 the 90th Regiment of Infantry, under Colonel von Reuter, was quartered in that town. There were clashes between civilians and soldiers, and Lieutenant Baron von Forstner told the latter to use their bayonets. He set an example by running a lame cobbler through with his sabre. This was on Dec. 2; on the 8th he was tried and sentenced to forty-three days' imprisonment, which sentence was quashed on Jan. 9, 1914, by the Military Court at Strassburg.

The affair created great excitement in

Germany; in the Reichstag the Chancellor, while upholding the civilian side in a speech, was sneered at by the Crown Prince, who was later, it was reported, disciplined by the Kaiser for his conduct. Forstner was killed in battle Sept. 15, 1914, and in an address to his troops the Crown Prince did honor to his memory.

PETAIN A MARSHAL.

Hero of Verdun Now Third of His Rank in the Republic.

PARIS, Nov. 19.—General Pétain, the Commander in Chief of the French armies, today was named a Marshal of France at a meeting of the French Cabinet, presided over by President Poincaré. General Pétain today is entering Metz at the head of the French Tenth Army.