

## GREAT STRUGGLE IN JULIAN ALPS

A Drama of Quite Napoleonic Dimensions.

Courage of Italians Surprises Austrians.

Wonderful Visibility of Bainsizza Plateau.

(By a staff correspondent of the New York Times.)

With the Supreme Command of the Italian Armies, Sept. 20, the Italian front in Austria is the place of all places where war remains a dramatic spectacle.

Here it can be followed by the eye through a thousand cloudlets of breaking shrapnel. The artillery can actually look upon the objective for its shells. The observer can really gaze down into the trench lines, watch troops on the move, and catch the glimmer of sunshine on the bayonets in the Austrian posts many miles distant.

Here one really sees the war. I was told all this before I came by the few correspondents who had been here and come away. It seemed incredible in view of the difficulties on the northern front, where the observatories are low and everything is blotted out in smoke.

Now observers and military experts are discovering this front en masse. Every day new ones arrive at the commando supreme, eager to look at last upon a real battle.

It is a real battle. I doubt if it is yet realized that it is now the biggest battle that had got into full swing upon any front during the entire war.

**Battle of Julian Alps**  
Up to now it has always been referred to as the battle of the Isonzo, but that name has become a misnomer, because the Isonzo, excepting one little portion opposite Tolmino, at the northern extremity of the offensive line, is now well within Italian possession. It might better be called the battle of the Julian Alps, for one by one the peaked valleys and table lands of this gigantic range are coming behind the Italian lines.

The concept of the battle is Napoleonic—seven more than that. The sheer audacity of it is what contributed to its initial success a few weeks ago. The retreat of the Austrians across the Bainsizza plateau was almost a flight, partly because they could not believe the Italians would have the courage to try it.

Plateau is another misnomer, for Bainsizza. There is nothing of a table land in its composition. It is a vast, terribly rocky ground, with hills at least a thousand feet high, and corresponding valleys. It is a plateau only in comparison to the peaks surrounding.

The understanding by the Italian military authorities of what war correspondents are for is so clear and intelligent that I must digress from a description of the great battle to tell first of the extraordinary facilities given me to come and go as I pleased on any part of the entire line.

Without entering into comparisons I might say that on the Italian front a correspondent is credited (once he is accredited) with having common sense and patriotic zeal to see the allies win the war. When I alighted from the train at the commando supreme I found a soldier waiting to take my luggage to the chief censor who is the best informed censor I have ever met, and he is in possession of something that so many censors need, namely, supreme authority.

He handed me a pass bearing my



DUKE OF CONNAUGHT VIEWS WAR PICTURES.  
The photograph shows the Duke of Connaught on a recent visit to the Canadian official pictures of the war, which are on exhibition in the Grafton Gallery, London.

name and personal description which said that I was free to go anywhere I chose in the zone of operations to see what I pleased at my own time and convenience. He introduced me to an officer, appointed as my guide. It was explained that this officer would be necessary at first, just in order to teach me the positions. If I remained long enough and learned the lines, then the officer would no longer be necessary, and I was free to go along with only a military chautaufer as a guarantee that I had the right to take an automobile along with me.

**In Middle of Front Row**  
I will not follow in chronological order my witnessing of the battle of the Julian Alps, but rather I will show the progression of the line from the northern point of the offensive opposite Tolmino to the Isonzo and Bainsizza, over Monte Santo and Monte San Gabriele across the Carso, in front of Hermada, out to the Adriatic. In seeing this battle the correspondent is free to choose his seats from the gallery down to the reserved boxes beside the proscenium arch. Let us first go to the alley entrance and climb many flights to the second balcony, where I managed to find a seat in the middle of the front row.

From there, especially with good glasses, the view is splendid. It is the very top of Mount Zagradian, many thousands of feet above the sea, but not so high as the gigantic snow peaks beyond. On those snow peaks trenches are cut in the solid glacier. On Zagradian they are cut in the rock, but are always provided with coverings to prevent their being filled with snow. It is not a tremendously difficult climb; in fact, we went four-fifths of the way in an automobile, so wonderful and enduring are the Italian mountain roads.

**Special Mountain Roads**  
My officer remarked that these roads would not be of much use after the war. I was surprised, for they seemed to have been there always, but he explained that every road in that whole country was new and had been built just after the Italian occupation. The Austrian roads, always notoriously bad, were mostly paths. Some of the roads now talking their places, and leading almost to the topmost peaks, were built in 21 days under shell fire, after the Italians had occupied the particular mountains about which they climb. I had always imagined that of all the countries at war it would be Italy who would bother least about the

neatness with which her work was accomplished. To my additional surprise I had never seen such neatness on any front, no matter what the operation in hand. On these roads, for example, which often run along precipices thousands of feet down there are continuous lines of concrete posts marking the ledge. There are slabs cut in the granite sides of the mountains at intervals during the ascent to let posterity know what hand of engineers accomplished that particular work. Although up to many points the traffic is so heavy that two roads have been built, one for ascent and another for descent, I will not travel over a single one of these new-made mountain roads where two automobiles could not pass each other safely.

"You can see lines," he said, "you can see lines. Those are our roads. And down some distance from the summit you can see our trenches—a long, zigzag line in the white rock. Just under the crest runs another line. That is the Austrian trench."

I studied my glasses on the stone parapet that formed my balcony railings. Although the trench line was always visible, I was gradually able to see more clearly. At several points along the Austrian trenches I discovered vertical shafts of light that seemed to flicker and bob along irregularly. I asked what that meant, and my guide told me it was the sun shining on the bayonets of the Austrian sentries. I looked again, and beside every vertical shaft of light I could see a black patch that moved against the lighter color of the trench wall. The patches were Austrian soldiers.

"Why don't your snipers get them?" I asked. My officer smiled. "They are at least five miles away," he said, while someone else remarked that an observer in that Austrian trench might make the same observation concerning us. We were just as clearly visible.

**Both Sides Visible**  
This matter of visibility struck me so forcibly that my guide recalled something else that I had almost forgotten. The night previous I had dined with a general at his headquarters, nearly ten miles behind the lines in front of Gorizia. A couple of nights before that a shell had crashed through a wing of the general's building.

My officer said: "Did you think it peculiar that a shell should have hit that building? I replied that it had occurred to me it seemed pretty good shooting, and I wondered at the time if they knew it was the general's quarters. The officer said: 'Well, why shouldn't they hit it? It is in plain sight.' In fact, almost everything is in plain sight in that country, so that if the artillery whaled away at everything visible they could use up all the ammunition in the world. I remembered how on that night of the general's dinner we went out on the balcony and watched the fireworks display on Mount St. Gabriele, a dozen miles away.

My guide told me to keep following the trench lines with my glasses down far into the valley, where they disappeared under the hills in the foreground. Then I studied the Isonzo as it wound its way about Tolmino.

That Austrian town was basking in an afternoon siesta. There wasn't a shot fired to disturb its tranquillity. I could see Austrian soldiers lounging in front of the barracks. I could see horses hitched to wagons standing in the village square, and pedestrians moving in and out of the shops. It was all within easy striking distance of hundreds of Italian guns, but an Italian shell has never yet been fired into Tolmino. Perhaps that will never happen. The Italians hope it will not be necessary, and that Tolmino will fall in another way. They don't want to wipe it out in such a fashion as Gorizia.

**Water Pipes to the Peaks**  
In all that land there was no water when the Italians arrived. It is here now—everywhere. It is there because the Italians are the best engineers in the world. They have run pipe lines from the valleys up to every mountain crest.

The last fifty of the journey to the top of Zagradian we climbed as easily as on an ordinary flight of stairs, up treads cut in the side of the mountain. At the very top we found an artillery observatory built of stone, and apparently meant to last through ages. "We do our work much better here if we are comfortable," an officer explained. "That is why we built a house instead of a shack."

I slipped into my seat in the middle front row and unhooked my glasses. The curtain had risen. The morning fog had all gone and the

than this one—for the Isonzo valley. From there one can see almost to the Dolomites on the one side and almost to Laibach on the other.

"You see that long ridge connecting the peak with the mountains beyond? That is where we made a strong feint attack. We sent two columns along that ridge, so that the Austrians thought that was all we intended to do. But the third and principal column went up the precipice. They did it during one dark night. It was important that they should do it without a sound, as they were to take the summit on the rear by surprise. So they climbed up without rifles, which might have knocked against things and sent stones crashing down and they went up in bare feet to avoid slipping and also to avoid sound. They carried only revolvers and hand grenades.

"They jumped on the Austrians just at dawn. But the Austrians, though surprised, were very strong. We quickly used up our revolvers, and bombs and we took Mount Nero with our hands. I mean that the fight became so desperate that our Alpini literally conquered by fighting hand-to-hand, so that hundreds of Austrians were hurled bodily down that cliff to the valley, over a mile below."

I meditated upon what I had been hearing as I looked at that appalling cliff, and it seemed as though I had been reading some ghastly fiction. Then he told me to shift my glasses to the right along the ridge connecting Mount Nero with the Marnek—a lower peak, almost due north of Tolmino.

During July the United Mine Workers of America organized 128 local unions, and now has a membership of over 350,000.

The local of the Laundry Workers' International Union in Seattle, Wash., has more than a thousand paid-up members on its roll.

All contract machine shops in Mobile, Ala., have signed a union eight-hour agreement with the international association of machinists.

Mayor Curley, of Boston, has signed the "one day off in three" ordinance for the city firemen, the act to become operative next year.

After a short strike the furniture manufacturers of Portland, Ore., have agreed to institute an eight-hour day and to advance wages ten per cent.

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**An C**  
(By LO...)

(From Friday's Dal...)

"And—attend to me— to give Adele—or Walter when he gets here, my suspect you've confided in wish everything to go on as it has been going—so far as see. Avoid them as much as possible when it isn't possible them a dose of their own necessary—I mean, fib. The explosion coming, but I don't to happen until I'm sure what are going to be blown and I am quite prepared to enjoy the fireworks. I don't let anybody frighten matter how serious may seem or be represented to implicitly on me. And you said to you that seems of a sequence—or if you should think—find some way to quickly to me. Now what say you did with that? Adele gave you?"

Sally repeated her account hiding place.

"You didn't unwrap it. Well and good." Mrs. Gosdod intently. "Then don't as it is, and some time can manage without being I'll drop into your room to look at the box myself. Be on no consideration who touch it until I give you the 'understand'."

"If Adele and Walter know, when you've done what them the truth—you've doing. Say you've not yet got chance to. Tell them that but assure them it's perfect there."

"Yes, Mrs. Gosdod."

Momentarily the older woman lost in a reverie of soul, cast to judge by the smile shadowed the firm line handsome face.

"A surprise party"—she obscurely.

Of a sudden, with a noise roused herself back to mediate issues. "Oh, c

**WHY MA**