

successful raids on enemy aerodromes, railway junctions, etc., and have during the period destroyed sixty-four hostile machines, a large proportion of which were German, and nine balloons, our losses to the enemy during the period being twelve machines and three balloons, a record which speaks for itself.

The Artillery has rendered very useful service. Our gunners soon became accustomed to the altered conditions, and carried out many successful destructive shoots. A comparison of the photographs of hostile battery positions when our artillery entered the line with the positions now occupied shows that the enemy batteries have been successfully forced back almost throughout the whole front. Some British Artillery assisted both in French and Italian operations, and a frequent interchange of British and Italian batteries was made, together with Counter Battery Staff Officers, in order that experience of each other's methods might be gained. Every effort was made to illustrate the value of counter-battery work, the value of which we had learned by experience in France, but which the Italians had not hitherto fully appreciated.

The Italians were only too anxious to profit by any experience we could give them, and this was done not only by frequent interchange of visits of Commanders and Staffs to the various sectors of defence, but by the establishment of Schools of Instruction at which a large number of Italian officers actually underwent the courses. About 100 Italian officers attended the courses at the various schools, together with some French officers. Similarly British officers underwent courses at French and Italian schools.

The organisation of the Intelligence Service in Italy has been carried out very satisfactorily. The adaptation of Italian maps and means of interchange between Italian and British batteries also entailed much work.

The close co-operation between the Artillery, Intelligence and R.F.C. under conditions strange to previous experience was entirely satisfactory.

The organisation of the Lines of Communication was very well carried out by Lieut.-General Sir H. Lawson, K.C.B. The various Base Depôts, Hospitals and Convalescent Camps have been well arranged, and are in thoroughly good working order. The Medical and Sanitary Services have been well organised. The policy of establishing General and Stationary Hospitals at Genoa and on the Riviera worked well, as the effect of these hospitals in such a good climate naturally tended to early recovery.

The health of the troops has been excellent, and the casualties slight. The men felt the cold considerably during the winter, but I am convinced that they have benefited much from the change after the severe fighting they had had in France.

The conduct of the troops has been excellent. They have been very well received everywhere, and have themselves set the high standard expected of them.

I cannot speak too highly of the kindness we have received from the Italian authorities, with whom we established most cordial relations. Everything possible was done to help us. The provision, employment and maintenance of the Force has entailed a considerable amount of work between the Allied Staffs, and this had been conducted throughout in complete harmony.

We are all much indebted to His Excellency General Diaz, Chief of Staff, Royal Italian Army; and to the Staff of the Italian High Command, and to the Commanders and Staffs of the various Armies, and to the Liaison Officers, Colonels Ragioni and Gloria, with my Headquarters, who have given us every assistance; as also to Generals Fayolle and Maistre, who commanded the French troops during the period, and with whom we worked in the closest association, and Commandant De Massignac, French General Staff, at my Headquarters, has been especially useful to me.

I have received the greatest assistance throughout from Brigadier-General Delme-Radcliffe, C.B., C.M.G., C.V.O., head of the British Mission in Italy, whose knowledge of Italian and the Italian Army has been of great value to me.

I feel that the close alliance and interchange of ideas and methods between the three Allied Forces cannot fail to have produced beneficial results.

I shall have an opportunity of bringing to your Lordship's notice the names of the officers of the Force who rendered service of value, but I would like to make a special reference to Major-General C. H. Harington, C.B., D.S.O., the Chief of the General Staff, to whom is due the fact that all the varied and frequently difficult Staff problems were solved, and that complete harmony prevailed between all the Allied Staffs throughout the whole period.

I have the honour to be

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

HERBERT PLUMER,

General,

Commanding British Forces in Italy.

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