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The Franco-German War  
OF  
1870-71







FIELD-MARSHAL COUNT HELMUTH VON MOLTKE



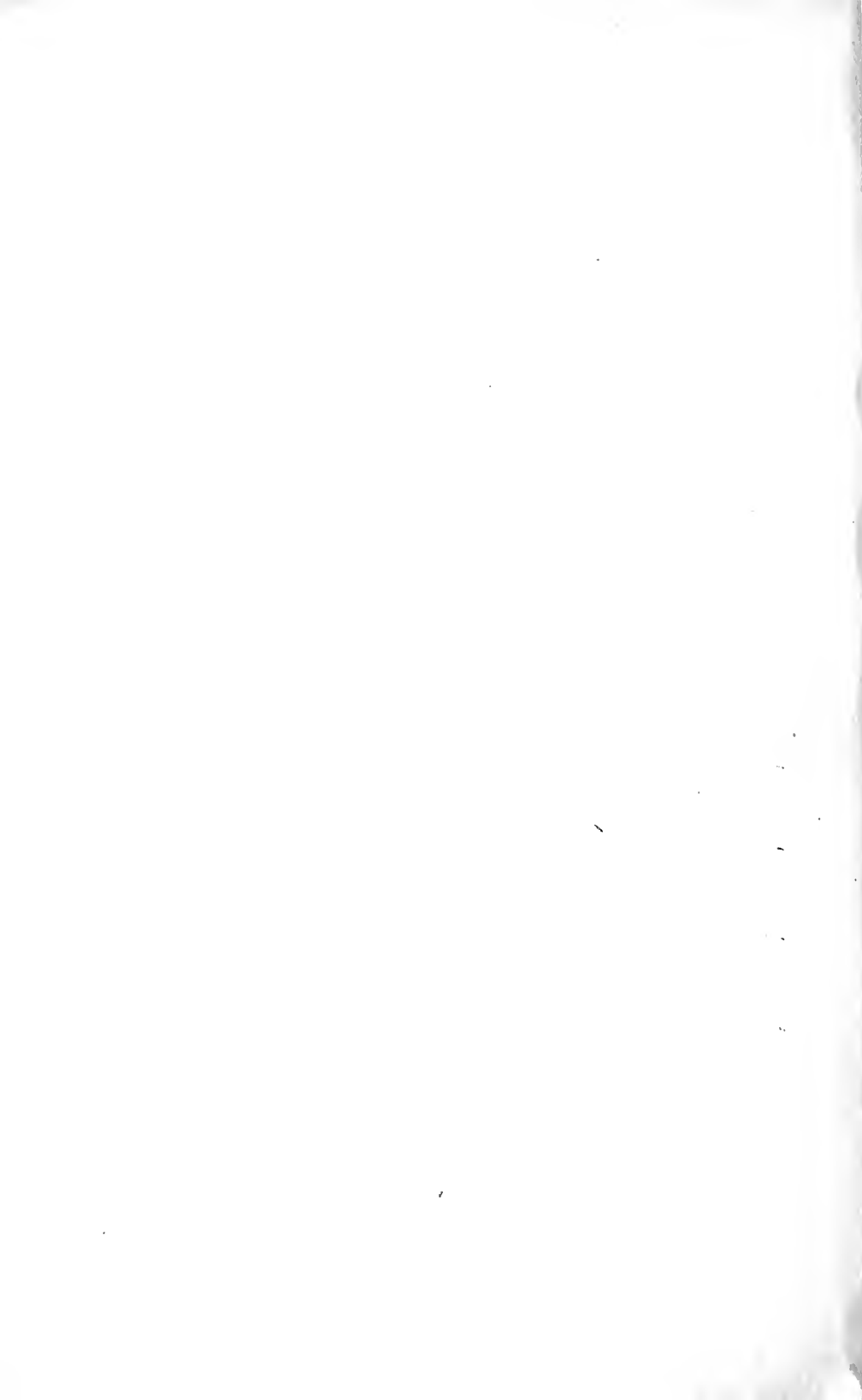
THE  
FRANCO-GERMAN WAR  
OF  
1870-71

BY FIELD-MARSHAL  
COUNT HELMUTH VON MOLTKE

TRANSLATED BY  
CLARA BELL AND HENRY W. FISCHER

WITH A MAP

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### TRANSLATORS' NOTE.

EXCEPT in a few instances, such as Meuse for Maas, Trèves for Trier, Alsace for Elsass, and Lorraine for Lothringen, the names in the text and the accompanying map correspond.

Our best acknowledgments are due to Captain Percy Schletter, of the King's Regiment, for valuable assistance in correcting proofs of the entire work.



## PREFACE.

FIELD-MARSHAL VON MOLTKE began this history of the War of 1870-71 in the spring of the year 1887, and during his residence at Creisau he worked at it for about three hours every morning. On his return to Berlin, in the autumn of that year, the work was not quite finished, but he completed it by January, 1888, at Berlin, placed it in my hands, and never again alluded to the matter.

The origin of the book was as follows. I had several times entreated him, but in vain, to make use of his leisure hours at Creisau in noting down some of his rich store of reminiscences. He always objected, in the same words: "Everything official that I have had occasion to write, or that is worth remembering, is to be seen in the Archives of the Staff Corps. My personal experiences had better be buried with me." He had a dislike to memoirs in general, which he was at no pains to conceal, saying that they only served to gratify the writer's vanity, and often contributed to distort important historical events by the subjective views of an individual, and the intrusion of trivial details. It might easily happen that the character of a man which in history stood forth in noble simplicity should be hideously disfigured by the narrative of some personal experiences, and the ideal halo which had surrounded him be destroyed. And highly characteristic of Moltke's magnanimity are the words he

once uttered on such an occasion, and which I noted at the time: "All that can be published of the history of a war is necessarily colored by the event; but it is a pious and patriotic duty never to disturb the prestige which connects the glory of our army with certain high personages."

Not long after our arrival at Creisau, early in 1887, I repeated my suggestion. In reply to my request that he would write an account of the campaign of 1870-71, he said: "You have the official history of the war. That contains everything. To be sure," he added, "that is too full of detail for the general run of readers, and far too technical. An abridgment must be made some day." I asked him whether he would allow me to lay the work on his table, and next morning he had begun the narrative contained in this volume, comparing it as he went on with the official history, and carried it through to the end.

His purpose was to give a concise account of the war. But, while keeping this in view, he involuntarily—as was inevitable from his position—contemplated the task from his own standpoint as Chief of the General Staff, and arranged events in connection with a general scheme which could only be known at headquarters. Thus this work, which was undertaken in all simplicity of purpose, as a popular history, is practically from beginning to end the expression of a private opinion of the war from the Field-Marshal himself.

The Appendix: "On a supposed Council of War in the Wars of William I. of Prussia," was written in 1881. In a book by Fedor von Koppen, "Männer und Thaten, vaterländische Balladen" (*Men and Deeds: Patriotic Songs*), which the poet presented to the Field-Marshal, there is a poem entitled, "*A German Council of War at Versailles*" (with a historical note appended),

describing an incident which never occurred, and which, under the conditions by which the relation of the Chief of the Staff to his Majesty was regulated, never could have occurred. To preclude any such mistakes for the future, and to settle once and for all the truth as to the much-discussed question of the Council of War,\* the Field-Marshal wrote this paper, to which he added a description of his personal experience of the battle of Königgrätz. It is this narrative which, shortly after the writer's death, was published in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung*, in the somewhat abridged and altered form in which the Field-Marshal had placed it at the disposal of Professor von Treitschke the well-known historian.

COUNT HELMUTH VON MOLTKE,  
Major and Adjutant to his  
Imperial Majesty.

BERLIN, June 25th, 1891.

\* He alludes to it on p. 218, footnote.





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# THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.

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## I.

### FIGHTING ON THE FRONTIER.

THE days are gone by when, for dynastical ends, small armies of professional soldiers went to war to conquer a city, or a province, and then sought winter quarters or made peace. The wars of the present day call whole nations to arms, there is scarcely a family that does not suffer by them. The entire financial resources of the State are appropriated to the purpose, and the different seasons of the year have no bearing on the unceasing progress of hostilities. As long as nations continue independent of each other there will be disagreements that can only be settled by force of arms; but, in the interest of humanity, it is to be hoped that wars will become less frequent, as they have become more terrible.

Generally speaking, it is no longer the ambition of monarchs which endangers peace; the passions of the people, its dissatisfaction with interior conditions and affairs, the strife of parties, and the intrigues of their leaders are the causes. A declaration of war, so serious in its consequences, is more easily carried by a large assembly, of which none of the members bear the sole responsibility, than by a single man, however

high his position; and a peace-loving sovereign is less rare than a parliament composed of wise men. The great wars of the present day have been declared against the wish and will of the reigning powers. Now-a-days the Bourse has assumed such influence that it has the power to call armies into the field merely to protect its interests. Mexico and Egypt have been swamped with European armies simply to satisfy the demands of the *haute finance*. To-day the question, "Is a nation strong enough to make war?" is of less importance than that, "Is its Government powerful enough to prevent war?" Thus, united Germany has, up to now, used her strength only to maintain European peace; a weak Government at the head of our neighboring State, must, on the other hand, be regarded in the light of a standing menace to peace.

The war of 1870-71 arose from just such relations. A Napoleon on the throne of France was bound to establish his rights by political and military successes. Only for a time did the victories won by French arms in distant countries give general satisfaction; the triumphs of the Prussian armies excited jealousy, they were regarded as arrogant, as a challenge; and the French demanded revenge for Sadowa. The liberal spirit of the epoch was opposed to the autocratic Government of the Emperor; he was forced to make concessions, his civil authority was weakened, and one fine day the nation was informed by its representatives that it desired war with Germany.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE WAR.

The wars carried on by France on the other side of the ocean, simply for financial ends, had consumed immense sums and had undermined the discipline of the army. The French were by no means *archiprêtres*

for a great war, but the Spanish succession to the throne, nevertheless, had to serve as a pretext to declare it. The French Reserves were called to arms July 15th, and only four days later the French declaration of war was handed in at Berlin, as though this were an opportunity not to be lost.

One division was ordered to the Spanish frontier as a corps of observation; only such troops as were absolutely necessary were left in Algiers and in Civita Vecchia; Paris and Lyons were sufficiently garrisoned. The entire remainder of the army: 332 battalions, 220 squadrons, 924 cannon, in all about 300,000 men, formed the army of the Rhine. This was divided into eight corps, which, at any rate in the first instance, were to be directed by one central head, without any kind of intervention. The *Imperator* himself was the only person to assume this difficult task; Marshal Bazaine was to command the army as it assembled, until the Emperor's arrival.

It is very probable that the French were counting on the old dissensions of the German races. True, they dared not look upon the South Germans as allies, but they hoped to reduce them to inactivity by an early victory, or even to win them over to their side. Prussia was a powerful antagonist even when isolated, and her army more numerous than that of the French, but this advantage might be counterbalanced by rapidity of action.

The French plan of campaign was indeed based on the delivery of unforeseen attacks. The strong fleets of war and transport ships were to be utilized to land a considerable force in Northern Prussia, and there engage a part of the Prussian troops, while the main body of the army, it was supposed, would await the French attack behind the fortresses on the Rhine. The

French intended to cross the Rhine at once, at and below Strasburg, thus avoiding the great fortresses; and also, at the start, preventing the South-German army, which was destined to defend the Black Forest, from uniting with the North-Germans. To execute this plan it would have been imperative to assemble the main forces of the French army in Alsace. Railway accommodation, however, was so inadequate that in the first instance it was only possible to carry 100,000 men to Strasburg; 150,000 had to leave the railways near Metz, and remain there till they could be moved up. Fifty thousand men were encamped at Châlons as reserves, 115 battalions were ready to march as soon as the National Guard had taken their places in the interior. The various corps were distributed as follows:—

Imperial Guard, General Bourbaki—Nancy.

First Corps, Marshal MacMahon—Strasburg.

Second Corps, General Frossard—St. Avold.

Third Corps, Marshal Bazaine—Metz.

Fourth Corps, General Ladmirault—Diedenhofen.

Fifth Corps, General Faily—Bitsch.

Sixth Corps, Marshal Canrobert—Châlons.

Seventh Corps, General Félix Douay—Belfort.

Thus there were only two corps in Alsace, and five on the Moselle; and, on the day of the declaration of war, one of these, the Second Corps, was pushed forward close to the German frontier, near St. Avold and Forbach. This Second Corps, however, received instructions not to engage in any serious conflict.

The regiments had marched out of quarters incomplete as to numbers, and insufficiently equipped. Meanwhile the reserves called out to fill their place had choked the railway traffic; they crowded the depôts, and filled the railway stations.



The progress to their destination was delayed, for it was often unknown at the railway stations where the regiments to which the reserves were to be sent were at the time encamped. When they at last joined they were without the most necessary articles of equipment. The corps and divisions had no artillery or baggage, no ambulance, and only a very insufficient number of officers. No magazines had been established beforehand, and the troops were to depend on the fortresses. These were but ill-supplied, for in the assured expectation that the armies would be almost immediately sent on into the enemy's country they had been neglected.

In the same way the Staff-officers had been provided with maps of Germany, but not of their own provinces. The Ministry of War in Paris was inundated with claims, protestations, and expostulations, and finally it was left to the troops to help themselves as best they could. *On se débrouillera* was the hope of the authorities.

When the Emperor arrived at Metz, a week after the declaration of war, the regiments were not yet complete, and it was not even exactly known where whole divisions were at that time encamped. The Emperor ordered the troops to advance, but his Marshals declared that the condition of the troops made this impossible for the time being.

It was gradually dawning upon them, that instead of attacking the enemy in his country, they would have to defend their own. Rumor had it, that a strong army of the enemy had assembled between Mayence and Coblenz; instead of sending reinforcements from Metz to Strasburg, they were ordered to proceed from the Rhine to the Saar. The determination to invade South Germany was already abandoned; the fleet had sailed round, but without any troops to land.

Germany had been surprised by the declaration of war, but she was not unprepared. The possibility of such an event had been foreseen.

When Austria had separated her interests from those of the other German States, Prussia undertook the sole leadership, and paved the way to more intimate relations with the South-German States. The idea of national unification had been revived, and found an echo in the patriotic sentiments of the entire people.

The means of mobilizing the North-German army had been reviewed year by year, in view of any changes in the military or political situation, by the Staff, in conjunction with the Ministry of War. Every branch of the administration throughout the country had been kept informed of all it ought to know of these matters. The Berlin authorities had likewise come to a confidential understanding with the army chiefs of the South-German States on all important points. It had been conceded that Prussia was not to be reckoned on for the defence of any particular point, as the Black Forest for instance; and it was decided that the best way of protecting South Germany would be by an incursion into Alsace across the central part of the Rhine; which could be backed up by the main force assembled at that point.

The fact that the Governments of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, and Hesse, denuding their own countries as it were, were ready to place their contingents under the command of King William, proves their entire confidence in the Prussian generals.

As soon as this understanding was arrived at the other preparations could be made. The orders for marching, and travelling by rail or boat, were worked out for each division of the army, together with the most minute directions as to their different starting

points, the day and hour of departure, the duration of the journey, the refreshment stations, and place of destination. At the meeting-point cantonments were assigned to each corps and division, stores and magazines were established; and thus, when war was declared, it needed only the Royal signature to set the entire apparatus in motion with undisturbed precision. There was nothing to be changed in the directions originally given; it sufficed to carry out the plans pre-arranged and prepared.

The mobilized forces were divided into three independent armies on a basis worked out by the general of the Prussian staff.

The First Army, under the command of General von Steinmetz, consisted of the Seventh and Eighth Corps, and one division of cavalry; 60,000 men all told. It was ordered to encamp at Wittlich and form the right wing.

The Second Army, under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, was 131,000 strong, and constituted the central army. It consisted of the Third, Fourth, and Tenth Corps of Guards, and two divisions of cavalry. Its meeting-point was in the vicinity of Homburg and Neunkirchen.

The Third Army, under the command of the Crown Prince of Prussia, was to form the left wing, near Landau and Rastatt, a strength of about 130,000 men. It consisted of the Fifth and Eleventh Prussian, and the First and Second Bavarian Corps, the Würtemberg and the Baden Field Divisions, and one division of cavalry.

The Ninth Corps, consisting of the 18th and the Hesse divisions, was united with the Twelfth Royal Saxon Corps to form a reserve of 60,000 men, and was encamped before Mayence, to reinforce the Second Army, which was thus brought up to the strength of 194,000 men.

The three armies combined numbered 384,000 men.

There were still the First, Second, and Fourth Corps, 100,000 men; but they were not at first included, as the means of railway transport were engaged for twenty-one days.

The 17th Division and the Landwehr troops were told off to defend the coast.

During the night of July 16th the Royal order for the mobilization of the army was issued, and when His Majesty arrived in Mayence a fortnight later, he found 300,000 men assembled on and in front of the Rhine.

In his plan of war, submitted by the Chief of the General Staff, and accepted by the King, that officer had his eye fixed, from the first, upon the capture of the enemy's capital, the possession of which is of more importance in France than in other countries. On the way thither the hostile forces were to be driven as persistently as possible back from the fertile southern states into the narrower tract on the north.

But above all the plan of war was based on the resolve to attack the enemy at once, wherever found, and keep the German forces so compact, that a superior force could always be brought into the field. By whatever special means these plans were to be accomplished, was left to the decision of the hour; the advance to the frontiers alone was pre-ordained in every detail.

It is a delusion to believe that a plan of war may be laid for a prolonged period and carried out in every point. The first collision with the enemy changes the situation entirely, according to the result. Some things decided upon will be impracticable; others, which originally seemed impossible, become feasible. All that the leader of an army can do, is to get a clear view of the circumstances, to decide for the best for an unknown period, and carry out his purpose unflinchingly.

The departure of the French troops to the frontier, before they were thoroughly prepared for service in the field, which is a very serious step to take, was evidently ordered for the purpose of surprising the German army, with the forces immediately at command, and thus interfering with the formation of their advance. But in spite of this, the German commanders did not deviate from their purpose of massing their armies on the Rhine and crossing that river. The railway transport of the troops of the Second and Third Corps, however, was to end at the Rhine; thence they were to march on foot into the cantonments prepared on the left bank of the river. They moved in echelon, advancing only so many at a time as would make room for the division behind them, as far as the line marked by the towns of Bingen, Dürkheim, and Landau.

The final advance towards the frontier was not to be undertaken until the divisions and corps were all collected, and provided with the all-necessary baggage train; and then proceed in a state of readiness to confront the enemy at any moment.

The assembling of the First Army appeared to be less threatened, as its route lay through neutral territory, and was protected by the garrisons of Trèves, Saarlouis, and Saarbrücken, the German outposts on the Saar.

The First Army, 50,000 strong, was concentrated at Wadern, in the first days of August. The Second Army, which meanwhile had been increased to a strength of 194,000 men, had pushed forward its cantonments to Alsenz-Günnstadt, at the termination of the Haardt Mountains, a position which had been thoroughly reconnoitred by an officer of the Staff, and where the troops might boldly await an attack.

The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions were reconnoitring the country in front. The regiments and squadrons of the Third Army were still gathering on both banks of the Rhine.

The French so far had made no serious attempt at Saarbrücken; Lieutenant-Colonel Pestel was able to successfully withstand their petty attacks with one battalion and three squadrons of cavalry.

It had meanwhile been observed that the French were moving further to the right, towards Forbach and Bitsch, which seemed to indicate that the two French corps, known to be drawn up at Belfort and Strasburg, might purpose crossing the Rhine and marching on the Black Forest. It was therefore of very great importance to set the Third Army moving at the earliest opportunity, first to protect the right bank of the Upper Rhine by an advance on the left; secondly to cover the progress of the Second Army towards that point.

A telegraphic order to that effect was dispatched on the evening of July 30th, but the Colonel in command of the Third Army Corps desired to wait for the arrival of the Fourth and its baggage train. In spite of this hesitancy the Second Army was ordered to proceed towards the Saar, where the French were showing much uneasiness.

The time had gone by when they might have taken advantage of their over-hasty mobilization; the condition of the men had prohibited any action. France was waiting for news of a victory; something had to be done to appease public impatience, so, in order to do something, the enemy resolved (as is usual under such circumstances) on a hostile reconnoissance, and it may be added, with the usual result.

On August 2nd three entire divisions were sent for-

ward against three battalions, four squadrons, and one battery in Saarbrücken. The Emperor himself and the Prince Imperial watched the operations. The Third Corps advanced on Völklingen, the Fifth on Saargemünd, the Second on Saarbrücken.

The Germans evacuated Saarbrücken after a gallant defence and repeated sorties, but the French did not cross the Saar. They may have convinced themselves that they had wasted their strength by hitting in the air, and had gained no information as to the resources and position of the enemy.

After this the French generals hesitated for a long while between contrary resolutions. Orders were given and recalled on the strength of mere rumors. The left wing was reinforced on account of a current story that 40,000 Prussians had marched through Trèves, the Guards received contradictory orders, and when a small German force showed itself at Lörrach in the Black Forest, it was at once decreed that the Seventh Corps must remain in Alsace. Thus the French forces were spread over the wide area between the Nied and the Upper Rhine, while the Germans were advancing in compact masses on the Saar.

This scattered state of the army finally induced the French leaders to divide their forces into two distinct armies. Marshal MacMahon took provisional command of the First, Seventh, and Fifth Corps, the latter being withdrawn from Bitsch. The other divisions were placed under Marshal Bazaine, with the exception of the Guards, the command of which the Emperor reserved to himself.

It had now become a pressing necessity to protect the left wing of the advancing Second German Army against the French forces in Alsace; the Third Army was therefore ordered to cross the frontier on August

4th, without waiting any longer for the batteries to come up. The First Army, forming the right wing, was already encamped near Wadern and Losheim, three or four days' march nearer to the Saar than the Second Army in the centre. They were ordered to concentrate in the neighborhood of Tholey and there await further orders. In the first place this, the weakest of the two divisions, was not to be exposed single-handed to an attack of the enemy's main force; and secondly, it was to be used for a flank movement in case the Second Army should meet the enemy on emerging from the forests of the Palatinate.

To execute this order, the First Army had to extend its cantonments in a southerly direction as far as the line of march of the Second Army, and evacuate its quarters near Ottweiler. This was a difficult matter to accomplish, as all the towns and villages to the north were billeted, and quarters had also to be found for the First Corps, now advancing by the Birkenfeld route. General von Steinmetz therefore decided to march his entire forces in the direction of Saarlouis and Saarbrücken. The Second Army had assembled, and was ready for action on August 4th, and received orders to take the field on the farther side of the wooded zone of Kaiserslautern.

#### THE BATTLE OF WEISSENBURG.

(August 4th.)

On this day the united corps of the Third Army, consisting of 128 battalions, 102 squadrons cavalry, and 80 batteries, which had been encamped behind the River Klingsbach, crossed the French frontier, and advanced on a wide front to the banks of the Lauter, from Weissenburg to Lauterburg. This stream offers



opportunities for a strong defence, but on August 4th only one weak division and a cavalry brigade belonging to the First French Corps covered this point, the main body of that corps being still on the march towards the Palatinate.

The Bavarians, forming the right wing, encountered a lively resistance before the exposed walls of Weissenburg the first thing in the morning. But very soon after the Prussian corps crossed the Lauter further down the river. General von Bose led the Eleventh Corps up the Geisberg, in order to outflank the French right wing, while General von Kirchbach, with the Fifth Corps, advanced against the enemy's front. Thirty field pieces had at the same time been drawn up against the railway station of Weissenburg. That and the town were subsequently taken, after a bloody combat.

By ten o'clock General Douay had ordered a retreat, which was seriously threatened by the movement against the Geisberg; and the castle of that name, a very formidable fortress, was most obstinately defended, to enable the French to retire. The grenadiers of the 7th King's Regiment stormed it repeatedly, with immense loss, but in vain; nor did the garrison surrender until, with the greatest difficulty, artillery had been dragged to the summit.

The French division, which had been attacked by three German corps, effected a retreat, after an obstinate struggle, though in great disorder, having suffered much loss. Its gallant commander had been killed. The Germans had also suffered a proportionately considerable loss: 91 officers and 1460 men killed. General von Kirchbach had been wounded while fighting in the foremost rank.

The 4th Division of cavalry had met with much delay in the course of a four miles' march by the crossing of

the columns of infantry. It never arrived on the field, and all touch of the enemy now retiring to the westward was lost.

Uncertain as to the direction whence a fresh attack of the French might be expected, the Third Army advanced on the 5th of August by diverging roads in the direction of Hagenau and Reichshofen; but were ordered to proceed only so far as would be needful to reunite with the corps in a short day's march.

The Crown Prince intended to let his men rest the next day, so as to enable him to lead them to a renewed attack as soon as the situation was made clear. But already, that same evening, the Bavarians, on the right, and the Fifth Corps in the centre, had a sharp encounter with the French, who were drawn up behind the Sauer in considerable numbers.

It was to be assumed that Marshal MacMahon had brought up the Seventh Corps from Strasburg, but it remained to be seen whether he intended to join Marshal Bazaine in the neighborhood of Bitsch, or if he meant to accept battle at Wörth, after securing his retreat on that point. It was also possible that he might commence the attack. The Crown Prince, to secure a preponderating force, therefore determined to collect his forces in the neighborhood of Sulz on August 6th. The Second Bavarian Corps received special instruction to watch Bitsch with one division; the other division was to attack the enemy in flank on the western bank of the Sauer, as soon as they should hear heavy firing at Wörth.

Marshal MacMahon had done his utmost to collect his three corps in their entirety, and he really intended to arrest the advance of the Germans by an immediate attack. A division of the Seventh Corps, which had but just been sent to Mülhausen to strengthen the defence

of Alsace, was at once recalled to Hagenau, where it formed the right wing of the strong position held by the First Corps behind the Sauer, and in front of Fröschwiller, Elsasshaussen, and Eberbach. On the left the division of the Fifth Corps, commanded by Lespart, was expected from Bitsch; the rest of that corps was to come up from Saargemünd, by Rohrbach. Meanwhile Ducrot's division formed a rear flank.

Neither the German nor the French leaders expected the attack before the following day, but where the contending forces are so close upon each other, as in this case, the conflict may occur at any moment, even against the wish of the commanders.

#### BATTLE OF WÖRTH.

(August 6th.)

After a good deal of skirmishing between the outposts during the night, the Commander of the 20th German brigade thought it expedient to secure the passage over the Sauer river, which lay just in front and was a serious obstacle. The bridge over it to Wörth had been destroyed, but the sharpshooters waded through the stream, and at seven o'clock entered the town, which the French had left unoccupied.

They soon became aware of the fact that they were confronting a numerous enemy in a strong position.

The broad meadows by the Sauer all lie within range of the commanding heights on the right; and the long range of the Chassepot rifle must here prove invaluable. On the other side of the river the plain was dotted with vineyards and hop-gardens, thus offering great advantages for defensive purposes.

The preliminary combat at Wörth was hardly of

thirty minutes' duration; but as the artillery of both sides had taken active part in it, the signal was given for the Bavarian Division, under Hartmann, to come up from Langensulzbach, and they soon engaged the left flank of the French in a fierce conflict. The French, on their part, had attacked Gunstett on their right, where they were confronted by the advancing Eleventh Corps.

The battle was now raging opposite Wörth, as well to the north as the south, the Fifth Corps being likewise engaged; and it became imperative to seriously engage the enemy's centre to prevent them from turning all their force on the German flank.

The artillery were brought up, and by ten o'clock 108 guns were in position on the eastern slopes of the Sauer, and had opened fire.

Some infantry waded through the river, breast high, but this attack, undertaken with inadequate numbers, failed, and it was only by strenuous efforts that a foothold was obtained on the other side.

The Crown Prince sent orders that nothing was to be done that would bring on a battle on that day; but by this time the Fifth Corps was so seriously engaged that the fight could not be stopped without grave consequences: General von Kirchbach therefore determined to continue the battle on his own responsibility.

The frontal attack was an undertaking of great difficulty, and could hardly succeed unless seconded by another in flank; and at this juncture the Bavarians, in accordance with the Crown Prince's orders, ceased hostilities, and retired in the direction of Langensulzbach.

There remained, however, the Eleventh Corps on the left, ready for immediate action. They seized the Albrechts-häuser farm and pressed forward into the Niederwald.

In front of Wörth the battle was a succession of attacks on both sides; the aggressor each time getting worsted, in consequence of the nature of the country. By degrees, however, all the battalions, and at last the artillery of the Fifth Corps were got across to the west bank of the Sauer; the Eleventh Corps having previously secured a good basis there for further advance.

About this time, notwithstanding the evident unfavorable nature of the ground, two regiments of cuirassiers and one of lancers of Michel's brigade made a determined attack on the German infantry, near Morsbronn, just as it was wheeling to the right. But the men of the 32nd Regiment, without looking for cover, received while deployed the advancing force of about 1000 horse with a steady fire, which did great execution. The cuirassiers especially suffered immense loss. Only a few broke through the line of firing and gained the open ground; many were taken prisoners in the village, the remainder rode madly off towards Walburg. There they encountered the Prussian 13th Hussars, experienced further losses and disappeared from the field.

The infantry of the French right wing succeeded in driving in the most advanced parties of the enemy at Albrechts-häuserhof, but their further progress was stopped by the newly-unmasked artillery.

When finally the last battalions had crossed the Sauer, the Eleventh Corps made its way through the Niederwald, fighting for every foot of ground. The northern edge of the forest was reached by 2.30, and there the Eleventh were joined by the left wing of the Fifth Corps. The burning village of Elsasshausen was taken by storm, as also the little thicket south of Fröschwiller, after a gallant defence.

Thus crowded together in a limited area, the situation had become one of eminent danger to the French.

Their left flank, it is true, still held out against the renewed attack of the Bavarians, who had re-entered the action, but the centre and the right flank were closely pressed, and even their safe retreat was seriously threatened. Marshal MacMahon therefore tried to regain the open by a powerful counter-attack to the south. By this he succeeded in repulsing the German troops posted to the east of Elsasshausen, who were thrown into confusion, and in part driven back into the Niederwald, but only to be at once re-assembled and brought back to the attack. Here the French cavalry again made an attempt to change the fortunes of the day. The division under Bonnemains, notwithstanding the unfavorable nature of the ground, threw itself on the open front of the adversary, suffered terrible losses, and was scattered before it had really got home.

The Württembergers now advanced from the south, while the Bavarians marched down from the north. General von Bose, though twice wounded, led as many of his division as he could collect to storm the burning town of Fröschwiller, which was the enemy's last post. The artillery advanced to a point within range of grape-shot and thus cleared the road for the infantry which was pushing forward from all sides. The French kept up a steady and gallant resistance until 5 o'clock, and then retreated towards Reichshofen and Niederbronn, in great disorder.

At the Falkenstein stream, Lespart's Division, just arrived on the field, made a short stand, but these fresh forces offered only brief resistance, and were swept away in the general rout.

This victory of the Third Army had been dearly paid for; 489 officers and 10,000 men were laid low. The loss on the French side is not exactly known, but

they left 200 officers and 9000 men as prisoners, besides 2000 draught-horses and 33 guns.

The demoralization of the French troops must have been so complete as to render them unmanageable. Only one brigade of Lespart's Division took the road to Bitsch, to join the main army at St. Avold; all that remained following an irresistible impulse, fled wildly in a south-western direction towards Zabern.

As the General in command of the Third Army had not foreseen a battle on August 6th, the 4th Division of cavalry had not left its quarters in the rear, and was therefore unable to follow in pursuit; nor did it arrive at Gunstett until 9 o'clock in the evening. But, in order to be at hand at any rate for the next day, Prince Albrecht, who was in command, marched on during the night as far as Eberbach; after a three hours' rest he set forth again, and after covering nine miles (German), came upon the rearguard of the enemy near Steinberg, at the foot of the hills. Without infantry it would have been impossible to go further, but the presence of the division had scared the enemy. The First Corps had resumed their march during the night, and reached Saarburg, where it joined the Fifth Corps. Thus the French had a start of five miles, and continued retreating on Luneville, unmolested by the Germans.

#### BATTLE OF SPICHEREN.

(August 6th.)

Let us now turn to the events which occurred, on that same 6th of August, on another part of the theatre of war.

The Second Army, protected on its southern flank by the Third Army, had moved to the westward, while the

corps that had remained behind were brought up by railway. Its front column had, on the 5th, reached the line between Neunkirchen and Zweibrücken, marching unchecked through the defiles of the forest-zone of Kaiserslautern. The cavalry, skirmishing in French territory, reported that the enemy was retreating. All seemed to indicate that the French were preparing to await, in a strong defensive position, the attack of the Germans. The nearest position of the kind that offered was on the other side of the Moselle, where Metz and Diedenhofen secured both wings.

It was decided that if the French were found there, the First Army was to engage the enemy in front, while the Second made a circuit south of Metz, so as to force the enemy either to retire or to accept battle. In case of defeat the Second Army was to fall back on the Third, now advancing over the Vosges.

The extended position of the First Army in a southerly direction towards the Saar, which had not been intended by the Commander-in-chief, had brought its left wing into contact with the line of march laid down for the Second, and they crossed each other at Saarbrücken on the 6th. Thus there was no lack of strength at that point, but as a battle on that day was neither expected nor probable, a simultaneous arrival of troops had not been prearranged, and the several sections arrived there by different routes and at different hours.

The 14th Division of the Seventh Corps reached Saarbrücken first, towards noon on the 6th.

General Frossard, who considered his position there one of great risk, had left the night before, without waiting for permission to retreat, and had retired with the Second Corps on Spicheren, where they threw up entrenchments. The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Corps



were in a position to his rear, at distances of from two to four miles, and the Guards were not more than five miles behind. The Emperor was, therefore, fully able to collect five corps for a battle in the vicinity of Cocheren, or, on the other hand, to support Frossard with at least four divisions, if the General thought his position strong enough to hold.

The range of hills which rise quite close to Saarbrücken can be made a formidable obstacle to crossing the Saar. It was known that the French had evacuated these points, but General von Kameke thought it prudent to occupy them at once, in order to secure the debouching of the columns in rear. When, in the forenoon, two squadrons of the 5th Cavalry Division had disappeared on the drill-ground on the further bank, they met with a hot fire from the Spicheren hills. But as it seemed highly probable, from the previous attitude of the French, that they were only the rear-guard of the retiring enemy, General von Kameke ordered an immediate attack, especially as he was promised help. General von Zastrow, as soon as he observed that the 14th Division had entered upon a serious engagement, sent forward the 13th. General von Alvensleben also ordered up all that could be spared of the Third Corps to Saarbrücken, and General von Goeben directed the entire 16th Division to advance on that point. Generals von Döring and von Barnekow had turned their forces in the direction whence the fighting was heard, from Dudweiler and Fischbach respectively, even previous to receiving orders to that effect.

The position occupied by the French was one of extreme advantage. The centre was protected by the Red Mountain (*Der rothe Berg*), a precipitous and almost inaccessible cliff, while the steep slopes on both

sides were densely wooded. To the left a group of buildings, the iron-works of Stiering-Wendel, formed an additional post of defence.

Had the strength of the enemy been fully known the attack would certainly have been delayed until the 14th Division had completely formed up. As a matter of fact, at the beginning of the fight, about noon, only the brigade under François had come up, and this, with the purpose of facilitating an attack on the enemy's centre, which was well placed, turned first on his two flanks. At first it made some progress. The 39th Regiment drove the sharp-shooters of the enemy out of the Gifert woods, but then exposed themselves to the merciless fire of a French battalion drawn up on the further side of a deep hollow. On the right the 3rd Battalion, together with the 74th, seized the wood of Stiering. But the enemy's superior strength soon displayed itself in violent counter-attacks, and when von Woyna's Brigade appeared on the field it was required to lend support on both sides. Thus, at an early stage, a mixing of battalions and companies began which increased with every repulse, and made the control of the battle a matter of the greatest difficulty. Added to this it happened that three Generals in succession came up to the scene of the conflict, and each in turn took the command.

At about 1 o'clock, when the wings were advancing, the Fusilier Battalion of the 74th Regiment had also pushed forward under a severe fire across the open ground at the foot of the Rotheberg, and under such cover as they could established themselves at the foot of the cliff. When, at about 3 o'clock, the Prussian artillery compelled the foe to move their guns further up the hill, the Fusiliers, with General von François at their head, began the ascent of the rock. The French

Chasseurs, evidently taken by surprise, were driven from the outer entrenchments with clubbed rifles and at the point of the bayonet. The 9th Company of the 39th Regiment followed close upon the Fusiliers, and the gallant General, leading their attack, fell, pierced by five bullets. Nothing daunted, the small body of Fusiliers made good their position on the narrow spur of the cliff.

Nevertheless a crisis had set in. The 14th Division was extended over three-quarters of a mile; its left wing had been repulsed by greatly superior forces into the wood of Gifert, the right wing was hard pressed at Stiering. But at this moment, nearly four o'clock, the heads of the 5th and 16th Divisions arrived, shortly after their batteries, which had been sent ahead, had been brought into action.

The left wing, now strongly reinforced, again advanced. General von Barnekow led efficient help up the Rotheberg where the Fusiliers had almost exhausted their ammunition, and the French were driven out from their entrenchments. Finally, after a determined struggle, the Germans also succeeded in taking possession of the western part of the Gifert Wald, while the right wing had fought its way to Alt-Stiering and drew near to the enemy's line of retreat, the Forbach highway. General Frossard had, however, observed the danger at this point, and reinforced his left wing to the strength of a division and a half. These advanced to the attack at five o'clock. The Germans had no complete force to oppose them, so all their previous advantages were lost.

If the 13th Division could here have made a decisive attack, the battle would have been ended.

This division had reached Puttlingen at 1 o'clock and was not more than a mile away from Stiering,

having marched four (German) miles. When the noise of the fighting at Saarbrücken was heard, the advanced guard moved forward to Rossel; this was at four o'clock. It would seem that the roar of cannon was not distinguishable in the woods of Rossel; the officers were under the impression that the combat was over, and the division bivouacked at Völkingen, which place had been previously appointed as the end of its march by the Commander of the corps at a time when he was, of course, unable to foresee the change in the situation.

The French attack had meanwhile been brought to a stand by the seven batteries in position on Folster Höhe; the infantry then succeeded in making fresh progress, under the personal leadership of General von Zastrow.

The nature of the ground entirely prohibited the twenty-nine squadrons of cavalry, which had arrived from all directions and were drawn up out of the range of fire, from taking part in the action. The Hussars tried in vain to ride up the Rotheberg, but in spite of incredible difficulties Major von Lyncker finally gained the summit with eight guns, amid the loud cheering of the much-distressed infantry. The guns, as each one came up, at once opened fire, returning the fire of three French batteries; but quite half of the gunners were shot down by the French *tirailleurs*, who were under cover, at about 800 paces off. A small strip of ground in front was indeed wrested from the enemy, but the narrow space allowed of no deployment against the wide front of the French.

But effectual assistance was coming from the right. General von Goeben ordered all battalions of the 16th Division, not yet engaged, towards Stiering, where the fortunes of the day were sealed. While one part of these troops attacked the village, the others, turning

off from the high road, entered the ravine of the Spicheren woods, and in a hand-to-hand encounter drove the French off the ridge leading to the Rotheberg and repelled them in the direction of the Forbach Height.

Even as late as seven o'clock did Laveaucoupet's division, supported by part of Bataille's, come out to attack and invade the much-disputed position in the Gifert forest, but the danger threatening the French left wing from the Spicheren wood crippled this move. By nightfall the French were in full retreat over the plateau.

To protect his night-quarters General von Schwerin occupied Stiering at about nine o'clock, while the French call to retreat was sounding from the heights. This was only done, at many points, after a hand-to-hand fight. The advanced guard of the 13th Division marched out to Forbach but did not occupy it, having been deceived by a troop of dragoons in possession.

General Frossard had in any case given up the idea of retreating *viâ* the seriously threatened Forbach and St. Avold route, and retired with his three divisions on Oetingen. The darkness, and the impossibility of manœuvring large bodies of cavalry in such a country, saved him from further pursuit.

General von Steinmetz ordered the re-organization of the German forces that same night. Some of them had marched as much as six miles (German) in the course of the day; two batteries, arriving from Königsberg by rail, had immediately set out for the battle-field; but the Germans, notwithstanding, had at no time attained the numerical strength of the enemy in this engagement, which had been begun with insufficient forces. Only thirteen batteries could be brought into action in the limited space, and the cavalry was excluded from all participation. It was only natural,

under the circumstances, that the losses in attack were greater than those of the defence. The Prussians lost 4871, the French 4078 men. A matter of grave significance was the fact that a considerable number of unwounded French prisoners were taken in this action.

In strong contrast to the good fellowship and helpfulness of the Prussian generals, and the eagerness of their troops, was the strange vacillation of the divisions behind General Frossard's line; only three, indeed, were sent forward to his support, and only two came up when the fight was already ended.

It has been asserted that the battle of Spicheren should never have taken place where it did, as it frustrated plans on a larger scale. It certainly had not been anticipated, but, generally speaking, a tactical victory rarely fails to coincide with a strategic policy. Success in battle has always been thankfully accepted, and turned to account. The battle of Spicheren prevented the Second French Corps from retiring unharmed; it brought the Germans in touch with the enemy's main force, and it gave the superior command a basis for fresh plans of action.

#### THE GERMAN ARMY WHEELS TO THE RIGHT.

Marshal MacMahon, in his retreat, had taken a route which entirely severed his connection with Marshal Bazaine.

As he was not pursued he could have used the railway on the Luneville Metz line to effect his union with the French main army; for on the 9th it was still open, but rumor had it that the Prussians were already in Pont-à-Mousson, and the state of his troops prevented the Marshal from risking another engagement.

His First Corps, therefore, turned southwards, and marched on Neuchâteau, whence Châlons could be

reached by railway. The Fifth Corps was being shifted to and fro by contradictory orders from the Emperor's head-quarters. First it was to proceed to Nancy, then to go in an opposite direction towards Langres. On arriving at Charmes it was ordered to Toul, but at Chaumont another order sent the corps to Châlons with the rest. General Trochu had drawn up the newly-formed Twelfth Corps at that point, and behind this line the Seventh Corps managed to get away from Alsace and reach Rheims by rail *viâ* Bar-sur-Aube and Paris.

Thus by August 22nd a reserve army was formed, consisting of four corps and two cavalry divisions, under the command of Marshal MacMahon, who, being twenty-five miles away, was, however, unable to render immediate assistance to Marshal Bazaine, who stood directly in the line of the advancing enemy.

When the news of the double defeat of August 6th reached the Imperial head-quarters, the first impression there was that it would be necessary to retreat on Châlons with Bazaine's army, and the Sixth Corps, sections of which were already on the road to Metz, were ordered to retrace their steps. But this decision was presently changed. The Emperor had not merely to consider the foreign enemy, but public opinion in his own country. The sacrifice of entire provinces at the very beginning of a war which had been undertaken with such high anticipations, would have provoked the unbounded indignation of the French people. There were still 200,000 men who could be brought together on the western bank of the Moselle, with a strong fortress to support them, and though, even then, the enemy would have the superiority in numbers, his army was posted along a line of twelve miles. His troops had yet to cross the Moselle, and this would

necessitate a disjunction which might weaken them at that decisive point.

The generals of the Third German Army did not know of the disorderly condition of the defeated enemy, nor even the direction of its retreat. It was supposed that the French would rally on the other side of the Vosges for renewed resistance; and as it was impossible to cross the mountains, except as a narrow front, the German advance was very cautious, and by short day marches only. Though the distance between Reichshofen and the Saar is only six miles in a straight line, that river was only reached in five days.

Nothing was seen of the enemy, except in the small but inaccessible villages which close in the mountain roads. Bitsch was avoided by a fatiguing circuit, Lichtenberg was captured by surprise, Lützelstein had been abandoned by its garrison, Pfalzburg was being besieged by the Sixth Corps, and Marsal capitulated after a short resistance.

The German left wing, having no enemy before it, could be brought into closer connection with the centre, and in order to get the three armies on a same front, they were ordered to wheel to the right. The advance of the First and Second Armies had, however, to be delayed, as the Third did not reach the Sàar until August 12th. The whole movement was thus arranged. The Third Army was to proceed by Saarunion and Dieuze, and then southward; the Second *viâ* St. Avold and Nomény and southward; the First was to take the road by Saarlouis and Les Etangs, that is in the direction of Metz.

The cavalry divisions, which were reconnoitring far to the front, reported the enemy as retreating all along the line. They fought close up to Metz, and on both sides of the Moselle, forcing the sections of Canro-



bert's corps, which had again been ordered to proceed from Châlons, to retire.

All these observations indicated that a large army was encamped beyond Metz. From this it might equally be inferred that the enemy intended a further retreat, or that an attack was to be made, by the whole French force, on the right wing of the German army, while the crossing of the Moselle still inevitably divided it from the left wing.

The Army head-quarters restricted itself, in the main, to issuing general instructions, the execution of which was left to the commanders on the scene of war; but in this instance it was deemed necessary to regulate the movements of each separate corps by direct orders. On August 11th the head-quarters of his Majesty were therefore transferred to St. Avold, in the front lines, and between the First and Second Armies, so as to allow of immediate action with either of these bodies at any moment. The three corps of the First Army advanced towards the Nied, a German stream, on August 12th, only to find that the French had evacuated that position. Three corps of the Second Army marched forward to Faulquemont and Morhange on a same front, while two others retired a short distance.

On the next day the Second Army reached the Seille and occupied Pont-à-Mousson without encountering the enemy.

The extraordinary inactivity of the French made it seem probable that they might not make a stand, even at Metz, a notion corroborated by the reports of the German cavalry, which was pursuing its observations as far as Toul and the road to Verdun; but there was still a possibility that the enemy meant to throw himself, with 200 battalions, on the First Army, now in his immediate proximity. The two corps forming the

right wing of the Second Army were therefore ordered to halt for the present, a little way to the south of Metz, so that they might be ready to attack the French flank in case of necessity. If the enemy chose to turn upon these corps, then that order was to hold good for the First Army.

Meanwhile the other corps of the Second Army pursued their route southwards to the Moselle; if the enemy should attack them with superior forces, after they had crossed the river, their orders were, in case of need, to fall back on the Third Army.

So much caution was not deemed essential by all of the leaders; the French were already in full retreat, they must not be allowed to escape without further check, and the German Army ought forthwith to strike a decided blow. The French had, indeed, already resolved on a further retreat; but, when the Seventh Corps became aware of their retrograde movement, during the afternoon, a fight began on the German side of the Moselle, which, by the voluntary intervention of the nearest divisions, developed into a battle in the course of the evening.

#### BATTLE OF COLOMBEY-NOULLY.

(August 14th.)

The Commandant of Metz had declared his inability to hold that fortress a fortnight, if left to his own resources; and the intrenched position on the Nied, taken up for the protection of the city, had been found disadvantageously situated, so the French commander hoped to take up a more favorable position at Verdun.

Strategic necessity outweighed even political regard for public opinion, and the Emperor, although he had transferred the command-in-chief to Marshal Bazaine,

remained with the army, for it would have been impossible for him to return to Paris under such circumstances.

Very early in the morning of the 14th August began the removal of the extensive baggage train through the streets of the city, and towards noon the Second, Fourth, and Sixth Corps set out, while the Third Corps remained in its position behind the deep valley of the Colombey stream, to cover the retreat.

When, at four o'clock, the movements of the enemy became known, General von der Goltz threw the front columns of the Seventh Corps across his path, and seized Colombey and the Château d'Aubigny, on the right flank of the French. But, upon hearing the first sound of cannon, the French columns immediately turned about, fully equipped for battle, and eager, after their previous defeats, to change their fortunes by a determined struggle. Castagny's division at once marched, with greatly superior force, upon the small detachment holding the isolated position of Colombey, which only held its own by a determined effort.

Meanwhile the advanced guard of the First Army Corps came by both highways from Saarbrücken and Saarlouis; and their batteries, being ahead, at once took part in the engagement. The infantry following, ascended the eastern slopes of the plateau of Bellecroix, by way of Lauvallier, and also drove the enemy out of the woods at the east of Mey. But at this point the stand made by the French Third Corps brought about a lull.

The 13th, 1st, and 2nd Divisions had meanwhile followed up their advanced guard, the last two having been kept in readiness by General von Manteuffel ever since his outposts had reported that the enemy was moving. General von Zastrow, too, arrived on the

field, and undertook the command of the left. Very soon sixty field-pieces came into action against the enemy. General von Osten-Sacken succeeded in carrying the 25th Brigade through the hollow of Coincy, and led them up the slope of the plateau. The copse of fir-trees on the road to Bellecroix was taken by storm, surrounded on three sides, again lost in a bloody conflict, and then recaptured. Soon afterwards two batteries succeeded in establishing themselves on the western side of Planchette and driving the French back to Borny; still the most violent conflict was raging on both sides.

But now the German right was in danger of being out-flanked. General Ladmirault, upon hearing that Grenier's division had been driven out of Mey, immediately set out to its relief with his other two divisions, regained possession of the village, and advanced on the road to Bouzonville. General von Manteuffel had meanwhile taken the necessary precautions to remain master, at all hazards, of that part of the Vallières stream which covered the right flank. The 1st Brigade was drawn up behind Noisseville, as a reserve for general emergency, the 4th, and part of the artillery of the First Corps, were sent to face General Ladmirault at Poix, on the Bouzonville road, while the remaining batteries were to enfilade him in his advance from their positions on the southern slopes to the east of Nouilly. On the left Glümer's division had all this time held their ground at Colombey, but now, at seven o'clock in the evening, the brigade under Woyna came to their assistance, and took possession of the woods to the west. A very welcome reinforcement by the Second Army, retained at the Seille, now arrived.

The 18th Infantry Division, after a heavy march, had bivouacked near Buchy in the afternoon, but when

General von Wrangel was informed that firing was audible in the direction where the First Army was known to be, he at once set his troops in motion towards that point. He drove the enemy out of Peltre, and, in conjunction with Von Woyna's brigade, occupied Grigy, somewhat to the rear of the French position at Borny.

The 2nd Division, on the right wing, had also pushed on the line of battle towards Mey, by way of Nouilly and the adjacent vineyards; Mey and the neighboring woods were taken from the enemy before nightfall. The French had not proceeded further than Villers l'Orme, and from thence retreated, all along their line, in the direction of Grigy. The Prussians, as they retired, were only disturbed by heavy firing from the forts, especially from that of St. Julien, which kept it up till after dark.

The Germans lost by the engagement of August 14th 5000 men, among them 200 officers; the French lost only 3600 men, their Third Corps being the heaviest sufferer. The vicinity of a great fortress of course prevented the reaping of the fruits of victory by immediate pursuit.

It was for this reason, indeed, that the First Army had not been prepared to fight on that day, though the possibility of a battle had been anticipated. Although the Second Army had only been able to send one division to the aid of the First at that late hour, its assault on the left flank of the enemy had not failed of its effect.

The manner in which the battle was begun debarred it from being directed by one chief.

The advanced guard of the four divisions were the troops principally engaged. The battle was checkered by many critical moments; some small detachments, sometimes out of reach of immediate support, boldly

attacked a superior foe ; and the result might have been serious if the enemy had made more decisive use of their compact formation. It must, however, be admitted that their Third Corps received no support from the Guards standing close in their rear ; while, on the other hand, all the Prussian commanders, who were within reach, were again distinguished by that *esprit de corps* and mutual helpfulness which had animated them in the previous engagements.

A large share of the success of the day must be attributed to the artillery. Hurrying along in front of the advanced guard, the artillery aided them very effectively in driving the French from their position before Metz, and driving them back under cover of its forts, even before the main body had time to come up.

But for this protection the Germans would have had some trophies to show for their victory at Colombey-Nouilly, but the Commander-in-chief was very well satisfied with the results obtained. The retreat of the enemy had been intercepted, and a day had been gained to effect the crossing of the Second and Third Armies over the Moselle.

(August 15th.) Early in the morning of the 15th the cavalry had ridden forth to the outworks of Metz, but saw nothing of the enemy on this side of the fortress. A few shells thrown into the camp of Longueville scared the Imperial head-quarters away from that point.

King William had ridden over to the First Army, and immense clouds of dust were observed rising on the other side of the fortress ; it could no longer be doubted that the French were in retreat, and that the Second Army was now free to cross the Moselle with train and baggage.

The First Corps of the First Army had to remain

south of Metz at Courcelles, to protect the railway lines, the other two were withdrawn on the left towards the Seille; they were to cross the river higher up, so as to avoid a separation of the forces by the fortress.

The French had started again on the march, interrupted yesterday, but proceeded no further than about a mile from Metz on August 15th. Their cavalry only went a little further ahead, by the two roads to Verdun.

The Third Corps of the German Second Army traversed the Moselle at Novéant, where the bridge was found intact, and by a flying bridge of boats; its artillery, however, was forced to make a *détour* by Pont-à-Mousson.

It was not until late at night that the troops were all across and encamped close to the left bank. One division of the Tenth Corps was left at Pont-à-Mousson and the others advanced to Thiaucourt. The cavalry went even further towards the Metz-Verdun road, and encountered that of the French near Mars-la-Tour. Several small engagements took place, but when, early in the afternoon, twenty-four Prussian squadrons had assembled, the French thought it wise to retreat on Vionville. The Guards and the Fourth Corps had crossed at Dieulouard and Marbache, higher up the river.

The Third Army was drawn up in the line of Nancy and Bayou. On this day an attempt to seize the fortress of Diedenhofen by surprise, proved a failure.

#### BATTLE OF VIONVILLE—MARS-LA-TOUR.

(August 16th.)

The generals of the Second Army, like the rest, were of opinion that there were no more serious engage-

ments to be anticipated on the Moselle, and therefore two corps, the Third and the Tenth, were ordered to proceed northwards on the road to Verdun, *via* Gorze and Thiaucourt, on August 16, while the others were hastened westwards towards the Meuse.

The French retreat from Metz was, however, not effected on that day. Its heavy baggage blocked every road, and in the forenoon three divisions still remained behind in the Moselle valley. The Emperor alone had departed at an early hour on the road by Etain, which was comparatively safe. He was escorted by two brigades of cavalry. As the right wing of the army could not yet follow, the start was postponed until the afternoon, and the left wing, who were ready, sent back again into their bivouacs. But they were disturbed by Prussian shell as early as nine o'clock in the morning.

Major Körber had advanced with four batteries close up to Vionville, under cover of the cavalry, and the French dragoons, surprised by their fire, fled in confusion through their own infantry-camp. These, however, at once seized their arms and formed into line, while their artillery opened a heavy fire. Unsupported at first by infantry, the Prussian guns withdrew; but matters soon became serious.

General von Alvensleben, fearing to lose sight of the enemy, had started again with the Third Corps after a short night's rest. The 6th Division was marching on the left flank, by Onville; the 5th, on the right, proceeded through the long forest valley, on the way to Gorza. This valley was found unoccupied by the enemy, who indeed had taken very few precautions.

The advanced guard encountered the French division under Bergé on the open plateau south of Flavigny, and General von Stülpnagel soon discovered



that he had to do with an enemy whom it would take all his strength to beat. At ten o'clock the 10th Brigade marched to the attack and opened fire on the enemy with twenty-four guns.

Both sides now assumed the offensive. The Prussians, on the right, fought their way with varying fortunes through the wood, often in hand-to-hand encounter, and, towards eleven o'clock, succeeded in reaching the projecting spur of the wood of St. Arnould opposite Flavigny. Their left wing, on the contrary, was repulsed; even the artillery at that point came near to being overthrown. The 52nd Regiment finally regained the lost ground, paying heavily for its valor. The 1st Battalion lost every one of its officers, the colors passed from hand to hand as its bearers were successively shot down, and the commander of the brigade, General von Döring, fell mortally wounded. General von Stülpnagel rode in the line of fire, encouraging the men, while General von Schwerin collected the remnant of his troops bereft of their leaders, and held the height of Flavigny, whence the French finally retired on the General having been reinforced by a section of the Tenth Corps from Novéant.

On the supposition that the French had already begun their retreat, the 6th Division was sent forward to Etain by way of Mars-la-Tour, to obstruct, if possible, the northern road to Verdun. When they reached the height of Tronville, whence they could see how things really stood, they wheeled to the right in the direction of Vionville and Flavigny. Their artillery, in advance, formed a formidable line of fire, and thus prepared the attack; by half-past eleven the 11th Brigade had taken possession of Vionville in spite of heavy losses. From thence, and from the south, in conjunction with the 10th Brigade, an attack was

directed on the town, now in flames. The different divisions were much mixed, but by taking advantage of every rise in the ground for cover, the regimental officers got their men steadily forward, in spite of heavy fire from the French infantry and guns. Flavigny was taken by assault, and one cannon and a number of prisoners fell into the hands of the brave Brandenburghers.

Vionville, Flavigny and the northern end of the forest of St. Arnould were now the points of support of the Prussian forces facing to the east; their line was nearly a mile long, and the entire infantry and artillery were in one line and engaged in hot fight. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions and part of the 37th Brigade were engaged in an independent fight near Tronville.

The position of the French was one of great advantage. Their left flank was protected by the fortress of Metz, the right by formidable batteries along the old Roman road, and a strong force of cavalry; they might safely await an attack on their centre.

Of course, the march towards Verdun, even under cover of a strong rear-guard, had to be abandoned. If the Marshal had been resolved to proceed, he would have had to engage and get rid of the enemy in front of him.

It is difficult to decide, from a purely military standpoint, why this alternative was not taken. There was hardly a doubt that only part, and probably only a small part, of the German armies could as yet have crossed the Moselle, and when in the course of the day the divisions that had remained at Metz arrived, the French were decidedly the stronger. But it seems that the Marshal's first object was not to be forced away from Metz; almost his entire concern was for

the left wing. By constantly reinforcing this flank, he massed the Guards and part of the Sixth Corps in front of the Bois des Ognons, from whence no attack was made. We are tempted to fancy that political reasons alone induced Bazaine, thus early in the game, to attach himself to Metz.

Meanwhile the Prussians slowly but surely made their way beyond Flavigny and Vionville, and, assisted by a heavy fire from the artillery, compelled the right wing of the Second French Corps to retire on Rezonville, a movement which turned into a flight when the French Generals Bataille and Valazé had been killed.

To regain the lost ground the French Cuirassier Guards turned resolutely on the pursuers, but their attack was cut short by the rapid fire of two companies of the 52nd Regiment, drawn up in line, who did not fire till within 250 paces of the enemy. The cavalry parting to the right and left rushed into the fire of more infantry behind; 243 horses were left on the field, and only the remains of the regiment escaped the pursuit of two hussar regiments from Flavigny. A French battery in front of Rezonville had hardly time to discharge a few shots before it was surrounded. The Prussians could not, indeed, carry off the guns, having no horses to spare; but the Commander-in-chief of the French army, who himself placed the guns in position, was for several minutes in imminent danger of being taken prisoner.

The 6th Division of Prussian cavalry had also been ordered to the front; after passing through the lines of artillery and forming line as well as the limited space permitted, they found themselves face to face with fresh and well-ordered troops. Marshal Bazaine had taken the precaution of substituting the Grenadier Guards Division for the defeated companies of the

Second Corps, having at last brought them up from his disengaged left wing, but not without filling the vacancy by a division of the Third Corps. Thus the Prussian cavalry, on nearing, was received with such overwhelming fire from musketry and artillery that it pulled up short, and then slowly retired, its retreat being covered by two squadrons of Uhlans, who repeatedly attacked the advancing enemy. The heavy horse did no actual fighting, but the artillery had gained time and opportunity to advance on a line from the skirt of the woods to Flavigny.

It was now two o'clock. So far General von Alvensleben had deceived the enemy with regard to the slender number of his troops by incessant assaults. But the battle was now at a standstill, the battalions visibly thinned, their strength reduced by four hours of hard fighting, and the infantry had almost exhausted its supply of ammunition. There was not a battalion, not a battery left in reserve all along the exposed line. There was nothing to be done but to maintain and defend the positions so hardly won.

The left wing was in especial danger, being under the fire of the heavy artillery posted on the Roman road. Their greatly superior numbers permitted the French to extend their right wing, threatening thus to encircle the Prussians.

Marshal Canrobert, in the French centre, had discerned the right moment to press forward on Vionville with all his forces. At this critical instant the Germans had only a small portion of the 5th Cavalry Division available to check him. Two brigades had been dispatched to cover the German left, and of the 12th Brigade, which remained in the rear of Vionville, two squadrons had been sent to the woods of Tronville. The two regiments, the Magdeburg Cuirassiers and

Altmärkische Lancers, ordered to face Canrobert's forces, were therefore only three squadrons, that is 800 horses.

General von Bredow first crossed the valley below Vionville in column, and then wheeling to the right he traversed the eastern slope, after having drawn up both regiments on the same front. Being received with heavy infantry and artillery fire, he made a determined attack on the enemy's lines, riding down the foremost, breaking through their fire and securing the guns and the drivers. The second line of the French again could not withstand this onslaught, and even their remoter batteries prepared to limber up.

But the triumph and excitement of success carried the small body of horse too far, and after an advance of 3000 paces they found themselves surrounded by the cavalry of the enemy, which attacked them from all sides. There was not space enough for a second charge, and so, after several encounters with the French cavalry, the brigade was forced to cut its way back through the French infantry, who followed them up with numerous volleys. Only one-half of the men reached Flavigny alive, where they were re-organized into two squadrons, having succeeded by their devoted bravery in stopping the French from further attack on Vionville.

At three o'clock four of the German divisions were advancing towards the Tronville woods. Barby's cavalry brigade, placed to keep watch on the western side, had to retire before the enemy's fire, and the infantry occupying the forest also had to yield to superior strength; the batteries which were drawn up between Vionville and the wood were attacked in their unprotected rear at the opening of the forest, and were likewise forced to retire. But it took the French a full

hour to conquer the obstinate resistance of the four Prussian battalions.

At the subsequent roll-call, near Tronville, it was ascertained that the 24th Regiment had lost 1000 men and 52 officers, while every officer of the 2nd Battalion of the 20th Regiment was killed. Half the 37th Brigade, who had backed up their comrades voluntarily since noon, took possession of Tronville and prepared it for an obstinate defence. It was not till near three that the Third Corps, which had been fighting for seven hours almost single-handed, received any efficient assistance.

While the Tenth Corps was on the route to Thiaucourt, its advanced guard heard heavy firing from the direction of Vionville, and the General in command, von Voigts-Rhetz, immediately set out for the battlefield. Having personally ascertained how matters stood, he gave the necessary orders to the troops in rear.

Here again the artillery opened the attack. Its fire stopped the advance of the enemy on both sides of the Tronville woods, especially when the batteries of the Third Corps simultaneously reopened fire. Half an hour later the first infantry of von Woyna's brigade appeared on the field, drove the enemy back into the wood, and finally, assisted by the Diringshofen's brigade, took possession of the northern outskirts. The right wing of the Third Corps had also been reinforced.

The 32nd Brigade of the Eighth Corps, on being called upon to assist the 5th Division, immediately advanced from the Moselle *via* Arry, though fatigued by a long march. The 11th Regiment joined the brigade, and three batteries were sent ahead to commence operations; this force emerged at five o'clock from the forest

of St. Arnould. They at once made an assault on the heights of Maison Blanche, but, though renewing their attack three times, failed to take up that position in the teeth of Marshal Bazaine, who had greatly strengthened his lines in front of Rezonville. Then the French, in their turn, assumed the offensive; but they too were unable to establish themselves on the hill, which was fully exposed to the well-directed fire of the Prussian artillery, and they again retraced their steps. Minor struggles for this position were renewed on both sides, but were always frustrated either by the German or the French artillery; and the fight on the right had become more or less stationary.

The fact that on the left two French divisions had retired, abandoning the woods of Tronville to a few newly-arrived Prussian battalions, can only be explained by a report having reached Bazaine's headquarters that the enemy was harrying the right flank of the French near Hannonville.

The enemy referred to was Wedell's brigade, which, having started for Etain according to orders, on reaching St. Hilaire at noon, received instructions to proceed to the field of battle.

General von Schwartzkoppen selected the highway to Mars-la-Tour, with a view to falling on the enemy either in the rear or in flank. The French in the interim had extended their reinforced right wing to the valley, west of Bruville, where three divisions of cavalry were drawn up.

Thus, when General von Wedell's brigade, no more than five battalions strong, advanced to the attack from both sides past Tronville, which the French themselves had fired, he found himself in front of the extensive line of the 4th French Brigade.

The two Westphalian regiments advanced steadily

under the storm of shell and fire of mitrailleuses, when they suddenly reached the edge of a deep ravine. This, however, they soon traversed, but when they had scaled the opposite bank they were met by a murderous shower of bullets from the infantry, which were everywhere close upon them. After almost every one of the officers and generals had been killed, the remnant of the battalions fell back into the ravine; 300 men were taken prisoners, being unable to ascend the steep southern slope after the fatigue of a six-mile march. Those who escaped mustered at Tronville around the bullet-riddled colors which Colonel von Cranach, the only officer who still had a horse under him, brought back in his own hand.

Seventy-two officers and 2542 men were missing, out of 95 officers and 4546 men—more than half. The French pressed after the defeated enemy, but were checked on the right by the dauntless attack of the 1st Dragoon Guards, though that regiment was reduced by 250 horses and nearly all its officers gone; and on the left by the 4th Squadron of the 2nd Dragoon Guards, who faced three times their number of Chasseurs d'Afrique.

But there now appeared on the open ridge of Ville sur Yron a large force of cavalry. These were Legrand's division and the Guard Brigade de France in four compact masses, overlapping each other to the right.

The Germans had only 16 squadrons left, who now joined Barby's brigade; they were drawn up in two bodies to the left of Mars-la-Tour. A little in advance of them stood the 13th Dragoons, to receive the charge of the squadron of the Guards.

The dragoons charged the French first line—the hussar brigade, which had ridden through between



the intervals of the Prussian regiments; but soon afterwards General von Barby appeared with the remainder of his forces on the height of Ville sur Yron, and at half-past six o'clock the bodies of cavalry came into collision.

A mighty cloud of dust concealed the ensuing hand-to-hand encounter of 5000 mounted men, swaying to and fro, fortune gradually deciding for the Prussians. General Montaigu was taken prisoner severely wounded, and General Legrand fell while leading his dragoons to the assistance of the hussars.

The Brigade de France allowed the enemy to approach within 150 paces, and then the Lancer Regiment rushed upon the Hanoverian Uhlans; but the latter outflanked them, and received unforeseen assistance from the 5th Squadron of the 2nd Dragoon Guards, who, on their return from a reconnoissance, plunging over fences and ditches, fell upon the French in flank, while the Westphalian Cuirassiers at the same time broke their front. The Chasseurs d'Afrique tried in vain to hinder the movements of the Hanoverian Dragoons, who more and more enclosed them; the clouds of dust began to move in a northerly direction, and the entire French cavalry drew away towards the valley of Bruville, where they had still five regiments of Clérembault's cavalry. The General ordered one brigade to cross the valley, but the fleeing hussars and some misunderstood signals threw them into confusion. They were borne back, and not until the infantry charged upon the Prussian pursuers in the covered valley did the latter desist from the pursuit.

The Prussian regiments quietly reformed and then withdrew at a walk to Mars-la-Tour, followed at a great distance by part of the Clérembault's division.

This, the greatest cavalry combat of the war, had

the effect of making the French right wing give up all further attempts to act on the offensive. The Germans mourned the loss of many superior officers, who always, at the head of their men, had set them a splendid example.

Prince Frederick Charles had now hastened to the field of battle. The day was nearly at an end, darkness approaching, and the battle won. The Prussians in the evening stood on the ground which in the morning had been occupied by the French. Though General von Alvensleben had in the first instance been under the impression that he would have only the French rear-guard to deal with, he did not hesitate in the attack when he found the entire army before him. With his single corps he kept up the fight till the afternoon, and drove back the enemy from Flavigny to Rezonville, a distance of more than half a mile. This was one of the most brilliant achievements of the war.

Thanks to the valuable assistance of the Tenth Corps the battle could be carried on through the afternoon on the defensive, but only by most decided counter-attacks from the cavalry, and the unflinching tenacity of the artillery.

To renew a challenge to the enemy, who still greatly outnumbered the Germans, would now have been rashness, and as they could hope for no further assistance, might have jeopardized the success so dearly paid for.

The troops were exhausted, most of their ammunition spent, the horses had been saddled for fifteen hours, and without fodder. A part of the batteries could only be moved at a slow pace, and the nearest Prussian troops on the left bank of the Moselle, the Twelfth Corps, were a day's march distant.

Notwithstanding all this, an order from the Commander-in-chief, issued at seven o'clock, decreed a

renewed attack by all troops on the positions occupied by the enemy. The Tenth Corps was quite incapable of responding to this demand, but part of the artillery and a small force of infantry went forward on the right. The batteries succeeded in ascending the much-disputed plateau south of Rezonville, but only to be exposed to the fire of infantry and artillery on both sides, and fifty-four guns of the French Guards alone, drawn up beyond the valley, were taking them in flank. The Prussian batteries were compelled to retreat, but two brigades of the 6th Cavalry Division were still pressing forward, hardly able to see what they were doing in the increasing darkness. They too came within range of the same fire, and withdrew with great loss.

Fighting did not entirely cease until ten o'clock, when both sides had lost 16,000 men. Neither could make any attempt at pursuit. The Germans reaped the fruits of this victory only in its results. The troops, worn out by a twelve hours' struggle, encamped on the victorious but bloody field, immediately opposite the French lines.

Those corps of the Second Army that had not taken part in the battle had marched on towards the Meuse, the advanced guard of the Fourth Corps on the left wing being directed on Toul. This fortress, commanding a railway line of importance for the further progress of the German army, was reported to be but insufficiently garrisoned, and it was resolved to take it by surprise. But the fire of field artillery only proved futile. Stone bastions and a wide moat made it impregnable. An attempt to batter down the gates by shot and thus gain an entrance proved a failure. Finally the undertaking was given up, and not without some loss on the part of the Germans.

At the Army head-quarters in Pont-à-Mousson it

was known by about noon that the Third Corps was engaged in a serious conflict, and that the Tenth and Ninth had moved up to its assistance. The full significance and the far-reaching consequences of this information were recognized at once.

The French evidently had been stopped in their retreat, but it was to be presumed that they would again make strenuous efforts to effect it.

The Twelfth Corps was therefore ordered to set out for Mars-la-Tour as early as three o'clock next morning, and the Seventh and Eighth Corps were to stand in readiness at Corny and Arry.

The bridge over the river was to be constructed with all dispatch during the night. The Commander-in-chief of the Second Army at Gorze ordered the Guards to go at once to Mars-la-Tour and take up a position on the left of the Twelfth Corps.

The execution of these orders was facilitated by the foresight of the generals, who had in the course of the day received news of the battle that had been fought. Prince George of Saxony at once placed his division on the road to Thiaucourt, and the Prince of Würtemberg collected the infantry of the Guards in their northern cantonments to be in readiness for an early march.

(August 17th.) On August 17th at daybreak, the French outposts were still observed occupying the entire line between Bruville and Rezonville. In their rear there was a stir and much signalling, which might indicate an intended attack or preparations for retreat.

The King arrived from Pont-à-Mousson at Flavigny as early as six o'clock. The reports sent in to headquarters until noon by the reconnoitring cavalry were somewhat contradictory; they did not make it clear whether the French were concentrating at Metz, or

retreating by the two still open roads *viâ* Etain, and Brierg. Hostile movements had nowhere been observed.

By one o'clock, after a skirmish on the way, the head of the Seventh Corps had reached the northern skirt of the Bois des Ognons, opposite which the French subsequently abandoned Gravelotte. The Eighth Corps stood ready at Gorze, the Third, Ninth, and Tenth had remained in their positions, the Twelfth and the Guards were marching on. By the next day the Germans could count on having seven corps and three cavalry divisions at their disposal; for the present no attack was to be made.

In preparing for the forthcoming battle on August 18th, two possible issues were to be anticipated. To this end, the left wing was dispatched in a northerly direction past Doncourt towards the nearest of the routes still open for the retreat of the French. If the enemy were already retiring they were to be at once attacked and detained; the right wing would follow to support the left.

In case the enemy was encountered at Metz, the left wing was to turn eastwards and outflank the French on the north, while the right was to keep them engaged in fighting until this movement was accomplished. The battle, under these circumstances, could not be decided until late in the day, owing to the widely turning movement of a portion of the force. A peculiar feature of the case was that both parties had to fight with changed front and break up their lines of communication. The consequences of victory or defeat would thus be greatly enhanced or aggravated, but the French had the advantage of a larger field for action and of reserves behind them.

A decision was arrived at, and by two o'clock orders

were issued to the left wing at Flavigny to advance in échelon. The movements of each corps during the battle were to depend on the reports brought into headquarters. The King then returned to Pont-à-Mousson.

As early as nine o'clock in the morning the Saxon division of cavalry had come up to the west of Conflans, on the road to Etain, and reported no enemy visible except a few scouts. Still, this only proved that the French had not begun their retreat on the 17th.

The Twelfth Corps, behind and to the left of its cavalry, arrived at Mars-la-Tour and Puxieux during the day, and the Guards moved on to Hannonville on the Yron before nightfall. The Second Corps, which ever since it left the railway had followed in the wake of the Second Army, reached Pont-à-Mousson, and was ordered to proceed by Buxières at four in the morning.

#### BATTLE OF GRAVELOTTE—ST. PRIVAT.

(August 18th.)

Marshal Bazaine had not thought it advisable to proceed to Verdun now that the Germans were so close on the flank of such a movement. He preferred to assemble his forces at Metz, in a position which he rightly supposed to be almost impregnable.

Such a position was afforded by the range of hills, bordering on the west of the valley of Chatel. That side facing the enemy sloped away like a *glacis*, while the short and steep decline behind offered protection for the reserves. The Second, Third, Fourth, and Sixth Corps were placed on the ridge of the hills between Roncourt and Rozerieulles, a distance of one mile and a half (German); thus there were eight or ten men to every yard of ground.

A brigade of the Fifth Corps stood at Ste. Ruffine, in the valley of the Moselle, the cavalry in the rear of the two wings.

The positions of the Second and Third Corps were hastily intrenched, batteries and covered ways were established, and the farm-houses in front prepared for defence. To approach this left wing from the west it was necessary to cross the deep valley of the Mance. The Sixth Corps, on the other hand, had no engineering tools; and it is indicative of the general ill equipment of the French that, merely to convey the wounded to the rear, in spite of the enormous baggage-train, provision wagons had to be unloaded and their contents burnt. This corps was therefore unable to construct such defences on the side overlooking the forest of Jaumont as were necessary to strengthen the right wing. This would undoubtedly have been the place for the Guards, but in his fear of an attack from the south Marshal Bazaine kept them in reserve at Plappeville.

The King again arrived at Flavigny at six o'clock on the morning of the 18th. All officers in command were ordered to report directly to head-quarters, and Staff-officers of Army Head-quarters were dispatched in all directions to watch the progress of the engagement.

The Seventh Army Corps, forming the pivot upon which the intended wheel to the right was to be effected, occupied the Bois de Vaux and Bois des Ognons; the Eighth, under the personal command of the King, halted at Rezonville ready to proceed to the north or east, as might be required. The Ninth Corps on its left advanced towards the Marcel, while the Third and Tenth formed the second line. The Guards and Twelfth Corps moved in a northerly direction.

A serious delay occurred when the Twelfth Corps of

the Second Army, which was stationed on the right, was commanded to form the left wing, by the crossing of the two on the march. The Saxon troops did not get through Mars-la-Tour until nine o'clock, and till then the Guards could not follow.

The advanced guard of the Twelfth Corps had meanwhile reached Jarny, and proceeded as far as Briey without encountering the enemy.

Before this could be known, the authorities at headquarters had been convinced that at least the main forces of the enemy were still at Metz; misapprehension, however, prevailed as to the extension of their lines, and it was thought the French front did not reach beyond Montigny. The General in command of the Second Army was therefore instructed not to proceed farther northward, but to join the Ninth Corps in attacking the enemy's right wing, and move in the direction of Batilly with the Guards and the Twelfth Corps. The First Army was not to attack in the front until the Second was ready to strike.

In obedience to this Prince Frederick Charles ordered the Ninth Corps to march on to Verneville, and in case the French right wing should be found there, to open battle by bringing a large force of artillery into action. The Guards were to continue their advance *via* Doncourt to reinforce the Ninth as soon as possible. The Twelfth were to remain at Jarny for the present.

A little later fresh reports came in which indicated that the Ninth Corps, if proceeding in the manner ordered, would come upon the French centre, instead of their right wing. The Prince therefore determined that the corps should postpone the attack till the Guards had done so at Amanvillers. At the same time the Twelfth Corps was pushed on to Ste.-Marie-aux-Chênes.



But while these orders were being given, the first heavy firing was heard at Verneville. This was at twelve o'clock.

The two corps on the left had, of their own accord, taken an easterly direction without waiting for orders, and the Third Corps moved up behind the Ninth at the farm of Caulre.

General von Manstein, in command of the Ninth, had observed from near Verneville a French encampment at Amanvillers, apparently in a state of quietude. From that point of view the great masses of troops on their immediate left at St. Privat were not visible. Mistaking this camp for the right wing, he determined to act on his first orders and take the foe by surprise. Eight of his batteries at once opened fire.

But it did not take the French troops long to move into the position assigned to them. The independent action of a single corps naturally exposed it not only to the fire of the troops opposite, but to an attack in flank.

To obtain some shelter on the field, the Prussian batteries had taken up a position on the shoulder of the hill below Amanvillers facing the south-east, where they were exposed from the north, on the flank, and even in the rear, to the fire of French artillery, as well as to the concentrated fire of their infantry.

To meet this, the battalions nearest at hand were ordered forward. They took possession of the eastern point of the Bois de la Cusse on the left, and on the right seized the farm-houses of L'Envie and Chantrenne, forcing their way into the Bois des Genivaux. Thus the line of battle of the 18th Division gained a front of 4000 paces.

Its losses were very great, for the French with their long-range Chassepot rifles could afford to keep out

of range of the needle-gun; the artillery especially suffered severely. One of the batteries had already lost forty-five gunners when it was attacked by French sharpshooters. There was no infantry at hand to retaliate, and two guns were lost. By two o'clock all the batteries were almost *hors-de-combat*, and no relief arrived till the Hessian division reached Habonville, and brought up five batteries on either side of the railway, thus diverting on themselves the concentrated fire of the enemy. The batteries of the 18th Division, which had suffered most, could now be withdrawn in succession, but even in their retreat they had to defend themselves against their pursuers by grapeshot.

The artillery of the Third Corps and the Guards were likewise sent to the assistance of the Ninth, and those of the damaged guns that were still fit for service were at once brought into line. Thus a front of 130 guns was drawn up before Verneville as far as St. Ail, and its fire soon told upon the enemy. Now, when the Third Corps was approaching Verneville and the 3rd Brigade of Guards had reached Habonville, there was no fear that the French would break through the line.

The main force of the Guards had arrived at St. Ail as early as two o'clock. General von Pape at once saw that by wheeling to the east he would not encounter the right wing of the French, which was to be outflanked, but would expose his own left wing to the forces occupying Ste.-Marie-aux-Chênes. The first thing to be done was to gain possession of this village—almost a town. It was strongly occupied and well flanked by the main position of the French army; but, in obedience to superior orders, he must await the arrival of a co-operative Saxon contingent.

The advance guard of this corps had already reached the vicinity of Batilly, but was yet half a mile distance

from Ste. Marie, so its batteries could not be placed in position west of the town until three o'clock. But as the Guards had sent most of their own artillery to the support of the Ninth Corps, this was substantial aid.

Ten batteries now opened fire upon Ste. Marie, and by the time it was beginning to tell the 47th Brigade of the Twelfth Corps came up. At half-past three the Prussian and Saxon battalions stormed the town from the south and west and north, amid vociferous cheers, and without further returning the fire of the enemy. The French were driven from the place, and a few hundred were taken prisoners.

The Saxons tried to follow them up, and a lively infantry engagement ensued, north of Ste. Marie, which masked the artillery. As soon as the brigade had been ordered to retire, the batteries re-opened fire, and the repeated efforts of the French to regain the lost position were frustrated.

Soon afterwards the Ninth Corps succeeded in taking and holding the farm of Champenois, but all further attempts, by isolated battalions or companies, to force their way on against the broad and compact centre of the French were, on the face of it, futile. Thus, by about five o'clock, the infantry ceased fire, and the artillery only fired an occasional shot. Fatigue on both sides caused an almost total suspension of hostilities in this part of the field.

The Commander-in-chief decided that the First Army should not engage in serious assault until the Second stood close to the enemy; but when the day was half spent and brisk firing was heard about noon from Vionville, it was to be supposed that the time for action had arrived; still, for the present permission was only given to send forward the artillery in preparation for the fight.

Sixteen batteries of the Seventh and Eighth Corps accordingly drew up to the right and left of the highway running through Gravelotte. Their fire was ineffective, as they were too far from the enemy; besides, they were suffering from the fire of the French tirailleurs who had established themselves in the opposite woods. It became necessary to drive them out, so here again there was a sharp skirmish. The French had to abandon the eastern portion of the Mance valley, and the artillery, now increased to twenty batteries, was able to advance to the western ridge and direct its fire against the main position of the enemy.

The battalions of the 29th Brigade followed up this advantage. They pressed forward into the southern part of the Bois des Genivaux on the left, but were unable to effect a connection with the Ninth Corps, occupying the north of the forest, as the French could not be driven from the intervening ground. On the right various detachments took possession of the quarries and gravel pits near St. Hubert.

The artillery meanwhile had got the better of the French guns; several of their batteries were silenced, others prevented from getting into position. The French fire was in part directed on the farm of St. Hubert, on which the 30th Brigade were gradually encroaching. This well-defended structure was stormed at three o'clock close under the face of the enemy's main position, and in spite of a tremendous fire. The 31st Brigade had also got across the valley, but an attempt to reach the farms of Moscow and Leipzig, over the open plain enclosed by the enemy on three sides, proved a failure and resulted in great loss. The 26th Brigade had taken possession of Jussy, on the extreme right, thus maintaining the connection with

Metz, but found it impossible to cross the deep valley of Rozerieulles.

The advanced detachments of the French had been repulsed on all sides, the farms in their front were burning, their artillery appeared to be silenced, and, viewing the situation from Gravelotte, there remained nothing but pursuit. General von Steinmetz therefore, at four o'clock, ordered fresh forces to the front for a renewed attack.

While the Seventh Corps occupied the border of the wood, four batteries, backed by the First Cavalry Division, made their way through the narrow ravine extending for about 1500 paces east of Gravelotte. But as soon as the advanced guard of the long column came in sight, the French redoubled their rifle and artillery fire, which had till now been kept under. One battery had soon lost the men serving four of its guns, and was hardly able to return into the wood; a second never even got into position. The batteries under Hasse and Gnügge, on the other hand, held their own at St. Hubert in spite of the loss of seventy-five horses and of the firing from the quarries in their rear.

The foremost regiment of cavalry wheeled to the right after leaving the hollow way, and galloped towards Point-du-Jour, but the enemy, being completely under cover, offered no opportunity for an attack. Evidently this was no field for utilizing the cavalry, so the regiments retired through the Mance valley under a heavy fire from all sides.

This ill success of the Germans encouraged the French to advance from Point-du-Jour with swarms of tirailleurs, who succeeded in driving the Prussians back from the open ground as far as the skirts of the wood. The bullets of the Chassepots even reached the hill where the Commander-in-chief was watching

the battle, and Prince Adalbert's horse was shot under him.

Fresh forces were now at hand and drove the enemy back to his main position. St. Hubert had remained in the hands of the Germans; and though the survivors there were only sufficient to serve one gun, still every attempt to cross the exposed plateau proved a failure. Thus hostilities ceased at this point also, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, allowing the weary troops on both sides to take breath and reorganize.

King William and his staff rode over to the hill on the south of Malmaison at about the same hour, but could see nothing of the situation of the left wing, which was more than a mile away. The French artillery had ceased firing along the centre, from La Folie to Point-du-Jour; but to the northwards the thunder of artillery was louder than ever. It was six o'clock, the day was nearly at an end, and decided action must at once be taken. The King therefore ordered the First Army to advance once more, and for that purpose placed the Second Corps, just arrived after a long march, under the command of General von Steinmetz.

Those battalions of the Seventh Corps which could still do good service, except five, which were kept in reserve, were again sent up the Mance valley, and the battalions from the Bois de Vaux came to their support towards Point-du-Jour and the quarries. The Second Corps of the French army thus attacked was now reinforced by Guard Voltigeur Division. All the reserves were brought to the front. The artillery was more rapidly served, and a destructive musketry fire was directed on the advancing enemy. Then the French on their side made an attack. A strong body of riflemen dispersed the smaller parties who were lying in the open, destitute of commanders, and drove them

back to the wood. There, however, their advance was checked, and there was still another army corps ready for action.

The Second Corps, the last to come up by rail to the seat of war, had up to this time followed in the wake of the army by forced marches, but had not yet fought in any engagement. It had started from Pont-à-Mousson at two P.M. and, taking the road by Buxières and Rezonville, arrived south of Gravelotte in the evening. The Pomeranians were eager to get at the enemy without delay.

It would have been better if the Chief of the Staff, who was personally on the field at the time, had not allowed this movement at so late an hour. A body of troops, still completely intact, might have been of great value the next day; it was not likely this evening to effect the issue.

Rushing out of Gravelotte, the foremost battalions of the Second Corps pushed forward to the quarries, and up to within a few hundred paces of Point-du-Jour; but those following were soon entangled in the turmoil of the troops under fire south of St. Hubert, and any further advance towards Moscow was arrested. Darkness was falling, and friend became indistinguishable from foe. So the firing was stopped; but not until ten o'clock did it entirely cease.

The advance of the Second Corps resulted in some good, however, for these fresh troops could occupy the fighting line for the night, while the mixed companies of the Seventh and Eighth Corps were enabled to reform in their rear.

The whole course of the engagement had conclusively proved that the position of the French left wing, made almost impregnable by nature and art, could not be shaken even by the most devoted bravery and the

greatest sacrifices. Both parties were now facing each other in threatening proximity, and both fully able to re-open battle next morning. The success of the day must depend on events at the other end of the French line.

The Prince of Württemberg, standing at Ail, believed that the hour had come for an attack on the French right at about a quarter past five; but that wing extended much further north than the line of his Guards, further, indeed, than the French Commander-in-chief himself was aware of. Though the Saxons had participated in the capture of Ste.-Marie-aux-Chênes, the Crown Prince deemed it necessary to assemble his corps at the Bois d'Auboué, to attack the enemy in flank. One of the brigades had to come from Jarny, and one from Ste. Marie; so, as the corps was late in getting away from Mars-la-Tour, it was not expected to be on the field for some hours yet.

The 4th Brigade of Foot Guards, in obedience to orders, proceeded in the direction of Jerusalem, immediately south of St. Privat. As soon as General von Manstein, in command of the Ninth Corps, observed this, he ordered the 3rd Brigade of Guards, which had been placed at his orders, to advance from Habonville towards Amanvillers.

Between these two brigades marched the Hessians, but it was not till half an hour later that the 1st Division of Guards joined from Ste. Marie, marching on St. Privat, on the left of the 2nd. This attack was directed against the broad front of the French Fourth and Sixth Corps. Their fortified positions at St. Privat and Amanvillers had as yet hardly felt the fire of the German batteries, which had found sufficient employment in replying to the enemy's artillery outside the villages.



Several ranks of riflemen, one above the other, were placed in front of the French main position, on the hedges and fences in a slope up the ridge. At their back towered St. Privat, castle-like, with its massive buildings, which were crowded by soldiers to the very roof. The open plain in front was thus exposed to an overwhelming shower of projectiles.

The losses of the attacking Guards were, in fact, enormous. In the course of half an hour five battalions lost all, the others the greater part of their officers, especially those of the higher grades. Thousands of dead and wounded marked the track of the troops, who, in spite of their losses, pressed forward. The ranks, as fast as they were thinned, closed up again, and their compact formation was not broken even under the leadership of young lieutenants and ensigns. As they got nearer to the enemy the needle-gun did good service. The French were driven from all their foremost positions, where, for the most part, they did not await the final struggle. By a quarter-past six the battalions had advanced to within 600 to 800 paces of Amanvillers and St. Privat. The troops, weary from long combat, halted under the steeper slopes offering some, though small, protection, and in the trenches just abandoned by the enemy. Only four battalions now remained in reserve at Ste. Marie, behind the German line, which now extended to a length of 4000 paces. Every charge of the French cavalry and of Cissy's division had been persistently repelled with the aid of twelve batteries of the Guards, which had now put in an appearance, but the German troops, reduced, as they were, by untold losses, had to face two French corps for thirty minutes longer before reinforcements came to their aid.

It was nearly seven o'clock when, to the left of the

Guards, two brigades of the Saxon infantry arrived on the field; the other two were still assembling in the forest of Auboué; their artillery, however, had for some time kept up a lively fire on Roncourt.

When Bazaine, at three o'clock, received word that the Germans were extending the line to enclose his right wing, he ordered Picard's division of the Grenadier Guards, posted at Plappeville, to advance to the scene of action. Though the distance was no more than a mile through the wooded valley on the right of the highway, his all-important reinforcement had not yet arrived at seven o'clock, and Marshal Canrobert, who was hardly able, by the most strenuous efforts, to check the advance of the Prussians, decided to rally his troops closer to the fortified town of St. Privat. The retreat from Roncourt was to be covered by a small rear-guard, as the border of the Bois de Jaumont was to be held.

Thus it happened that the Saxons found less resistance at Roncourt than they expected, and entered the town after a short struggle, together with the companies of the extreme left of the Guards; part of them had previously been diverted from the road to Roncourt to assist the Guards, and marched direct on St. Privat.

There terrible havoc was worked by the twenty-four batteries of the two German corps. Many houses were in flames, or falling in ruins under the shower of shell. But the French were determined to defend this point, where the fate of the day was to be decided to the last. The batteries belonging to their right wing were placed between St. Privat and the Bois de Jaumont, that is, on the flank of the advancing Saxons. Others faced the Prussians from the south, and as the German columns came on side by side they were received by a shower of bullets from the French rifles.

All these obstacles were defied in the onward rush, though again under heavy losses, some stopping here and there to fire a volley, others again never firing a shot. By sundown they stood within 300 paces of St. Privat. Some detachments of the Tenth Corps, who were on the road to St. Ail, now joined them, and the final onset was made from every side at once. The French still defended the burning houses and the church with great obstinacy, till, finding themselves completely surrounded, they surrendered at about eight o'clock. More than 2000 men were taken prisoners, and the wounded were rescued from the burning houses.

The defeated remnant of the Fourth French Corps retired towards the valley of the Moselle, their retreat being covered by the brigade occupying the Bois de Jaumont and by the cavalry.

Only at that period did the Grenadier Guards put in an appearance, drawing up the artillery reserves east of Amanvillers. The German batteries at once took up the fight, which lasted till late in the night, and Amanvillers also was left burning.

Here the retirement of the Fourth French Corps had already commenced, screened by repeated severe onslaughts; the right wing of the Guards and the left of the Ninth Corps had a lively hand-to-hand encounter with the enemy. Still the town remained in the hands of the French for the night. Their Third Corps maintained their position at Moscow until three o'clock, and the Second until five o'clock in the morning, though engaged in constant frays with the outposts of the Pomeranian Division, who eventually took possession of the plateaus of Moscow and Point-du-Jour.

This success of the 18th August had only been made possible by the preceding battles of the 14th and 16th.

The French estimate their losses at 13,000 men. In October 173,000 were still in Metz, which proves that more than 180,000 French engaged in the battle of the 18th. The seven German corps facing them were exactly 178,818 strong. Thus the French had been driven out of a position of almost unrivalled natural advantages by a numerically inferior force. It is self-evident that the loss of the aggressors must have been much greater than that of the defence; it amounted to 20,584 men, among them 899 officers.

Though the war establishment provides one officer to every forty men, in this battle one officer had been killed to every twenty-three; a splendid testimony to the example set by the officers to their brave men, but a loss which could not be made good during the course of the war. During the first fortnight of August, in six battles the Germans had lost 50,000 men. It was impossible at once to find substitutes, but new companies were formed of time-expired soldiers.

The first thing to be done that same evening was to move on the foremost baggage train, and the ambulance corps from the right bank of the Moselle; ammunition was also served out all round. In Rezonville, which was crowded with the wounded, a little garret for the King and quarters for the Staff had with much difficulty been secured. The officers were engaged throughout the night in studying the requirements which the new situation created by the victory peremptorily demanded. All these orders were placed before his Majesty for approval by the morning of the 19th.

#### NEW DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARMY.

The siege of Metz had formed no part of the original plan of campaign; it had been intended to station a

corps of observation in the vicinity of this fortress, while the main army should advance on Paris; the reserve division, consisting of eighteen battalions, sixteen squadrons, and thirty-six guns, detailed for that duty, was now near at hand.

Under existing circumstances, however, the town must be invested, and this necessitated a complete redistribution of the army.

A special army was formed for that purpose under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, consisting of the First, Seventh, and Eighth Corps of the former First Army, the Second, Third, Ninth, and Tenth Corps of the Second Army, the reserve division and the 1st and 3rd Cavalry Divisions, in all 150,000 men.

The Ninth and the Twelfth Corps of the Guards, and the 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions were placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, and called "The Army of the Meuse"; it was 138,000 strong. This and the Third Army, amounting to 223,000 men, were directed to advance against the French reforming at Châlons.

The besieging force was still weaker than the blockaded enemy. It was to be expected that the French would renew their efforts to force their way westward. Prince Frederick Charles' main forces were therefore to remain on the left bank of the Moselle.

All these orders were signed by the King and dispatched to the officers in command by eleven o'clock.

Prince Frederick Charles now directed the Tenth Corps to occupy the woodland districts of the Lower Moselle as far as St. Privat, while the Second was to take up its position on the high ridge between that point and Moscow. The Seventh and Eighth Corps joined them on the right, the first-named encamping on both sides of the Upper Moselle. The First

Corps stood near Pouilly, to the left and right of the Seille, especially commissioned to protect the great magazines, which were to be established at Remilly and Pont-à-Mousson. The 3rd Reserve Division proceeded to the vicinity of Retonfay, north-east of Metz. The Ninth and Third Corps encamped at Ste. Marie and Verneville in reserve. All these troops immediately began to throw up earthworks and dig trenches, while bridges were thrown over the Moselle above and below the fortress.

The corps belonging to the Army of the Meuse were also set in motion, the Twelfth assembling at Conflans and the Guards at Mars-la-Tour; the Fourth Corps, which had not been ordered to Metz, had already reached Commercy.

The Third Army, after crossing the mountains and leaving a Bavarian brigade to blockade Toul, had advanced in three columns. Its foremost corps had already reached the Meuse, but were obliged to encamp there for two days, to cross with the rest of the Meuse army near that point. Its cavalry meanwhile patrolled the territory as far as Châlons and Vitry, and there, for the first time since Wörth, renewed acquaintance with the enemy. The French encountered were only outposts on the Marne railway line, who retired as soon as the transport service was finished.

#### THE ARMY OF CHÂLONS.

Meanwhile a French army had formed at Châlons, consisting of 166 battalions, 100 squadrons, and 380 guns, belonging to the First, Fifth, Seventh, and Twelfth Corps.

The division originally stationed on the Spanish frontier formed its nucleus, to which were added four regiments of marine infantry and two divisions of

cavalry, thus constituting a very superior force. General Trochu, who had been made Governor of Paris, had taken with him eighteen battalions of the *Garde Mobile*, they having behaved in such a refractory manner that it would have been rash to confront them with the enemy.

The Emperor had arrived in Châlons and placed Marshal MacMahon in command of the newly-formed army. At the Imperial head-quarters it was supposed, and with good reason, that Marshal Bazaine was retreating from Metz. The army of Châlons could easily unite with that of Bazaine by proceeding to Verdun, only a distance of a few days' marches, and the combined armies might indeed have held their own against the victorious Germans. MacMahon, on the other hand, had to provide for the defence of Paris, and that capital, no less than his own right flank, was threatened by the advance of the Crown Prince of Prussia's army to the Meuse.

To enable MacMahon to decide whether he should advance or again retire, it was necessary that the direction taken by Marshal Bazaine should be known.

On the 18th Bazaine had sent word that he had maintained his position in a battle near Rezonville, but that the troops, before marching further, must have food and ammunition. From this it seemed only too probable that the communications of the Army of the Rhine were already threatened, and MacMahon determined to march on Rheims, whence he could either reach Paris, though by a somewhat roundabout way, or turn back and effect a junction with the other army.

But when it became known that the Crown Prince of Prussia's army had not even been near Metz, and that Prussian cavalry had already appeared before

Vitry, the Marshal recognized the danger of such an undertaking. He therefore determined to march on Paris, and very wisely refused to obey the order of the Empress and the Ministerial Council when they desired him to take the other course. Outside Paris he could risk a battle with advantage, since the fortifications, even in the event of defeat, guaranteed a safe retreat and made pursuit impossible.

Additional reports from Metz did not help to clear up the situation there. Even on the 18th "they had held their ground," the narrative ran, "the right wing alone had changed front; the troops required two to three days' rest," but the Marshal "was still determined to press forward in a northerly direction," and fight his way to Châlons, *viâ* Montmédy and Ste. Menéhould, "*if*" this road was not too strongly held by the enemy. In that case he would march on Sedan, and even by Mézières on Châlons.

But Bazaine might already have begun this movement, so MacMahon, who would not desert his comrades, abandoned the idea of marching directly on Paris, and, on the 23rd, took the road to Stenay.

This sudden decision left no time for the dispositions necessary for such an undertaking. At the end of the first day's march the troops arrived, late in the evening, on the banks of the Suipe River in a pouring rain. They lacked every necessary, and two corps were entirely without food. The Marshal was therefore forced to move further northward to Rethel, where large victualling magazines had been established, and whence stores could be sent after them by rail. Even on the third day's march the army had made little progress eastward. The left wing was left at Rethel, the right got as far as the Aisne, near Vouziers. On August 26th the main force was still standing between Attigny



and Le Chêne, on the Ardennes canal, while the Seventh Corps and a regiment of hussars were posted in front of Vouziers to cover the right flank.

While the French army was thus making a wide détour to the east, the German forces, which had been put in motion at the same time, were marching in a straight line westward.

According to orders issued from head-quarters at Pont-à-Mousson, the advance on the enemy, who was supposed to be at Châlons, was to be effected in such a manner as to give the Third Army, marching on the left of the Army of the Meuse, a day's start, so as to attack the French wherever they might make a stand, both in front and on the right flank, and thus force them off the Paris route to the northward. The two armies were to converge as they advanced, and to reach the line of Ste. Menéhould and Vitry on the 26th.

On the first day's march, the troops being still twelve miles apart, they reached the Meuse; on the second day, the 24th, they were in a line formed by St. Dizier, Bar le Duc, and Verdun. The attempt to take Verdun and Toul on their route proved futile.

The 4th Cavalry Division, which had greatly extended its reconnoitring expeditions, brought in important news even on that early date. The Rhenish dragoons had discovered that Châlons and the camp at Mourmelon were deserted, and, though the stores in camp had been burnt, they found plenty of loot. A letter, written by a French officer, had been intercepted, which intimated that MacMahon purposed to relieve Metz; and another stated that MacMahon was entrenched at Rheims with 150,000 men; this was corroborated by the Paris newspapers.

On the 25th the Army of the Meuse formed a line reaching from Sommeille to Dombasle, while the fore-

most columns of the Third Army were already on the route to St. Menéhould and Vitry, one day ahead of the prescribed order. The small fortress of Vitry, having been previously vacated by a battalion of Mobiles, surrendered to the 4th Cavalry Division. This battalion, of 1000 men, fell into the hands of the 6th Cavalry Division riding towards Dampierre as they were marching to Ste. Menéhould to take the railway to Paris.

The 5th Cavalry Division reached Ste. Menéhould, and the 12th followed as far as Clermont, patrolling the neighborhood up to Varennes, within two miles of the French outposts at Grand Pré, but without learning anything about the operations of the French army.

Reconnoitring to any great distance on the right of the army was made difficult by the forest of Argonnes, which it would have been rash for the cavalry to traverse unaided by infantry. The inhabitants of that district also became troublesome. The Government had provided them with arms, and organized a general rising. The Germans, who up to that period had made war on the Emperor alone, were now forced to use their arms against the people. The *Franc-tireurs*, though not affecting the operations on a large scale, were a source of much annoyance to small expeditions; and as it naturally harassed the soldiers to feel that they were not safe by day or night, the character of the war became more embittered, and increased the sufferings of the people.

A Paris telegram, sent *via* London, arrived this day at head-quarters at Bar le Duc. It stated that Mac-Mahon was encamped at Rheims and anxious to effect a junction with Bazaine.

It is always a serious matter to abandon, without the most pressing necessity, a once settled and well-

devised plan for a new and unprepared scheme. It would have been unjustifiable to entirely change the line of march on the ground of rumors that might, after all, prove unfounded. Endless difficulties must result from such a course; the arrangements for bringing up baggage and reserves would have to be cancelled, and the confidence of the troops in their commanders was liable to be shaken if they were called upon to perform fruitless marches. The orders issued at eleven o'clock next day, therefore, directed only a slight deviation from the route laid down towards Rheims instead of Châlons. The cavalry, on the right wing, however, was ordered to advance to Buzancy and Vouziers, where a thorough insight into the situation might be obtained.

In war, probabilities alone have often to be reckoned with; and the probability, as a rule, is that the enemy will do the right thing. It could not be thought probable that the French army would leave Paris unprotected and march by the Belgian frontier to Metz. Such a move seemed strange and somewhat foolhardy; still it was possible. The Chief of the Staff, recognizing this fact, worked out a scheme of marches that same day, by which the three corps of the Army of the Meuse, together with the two nearest Bavarian corps, could be brought together in the vicinity of Danvillers, on the right bank of the Meuse, within three days.

These forces, with the two reserve corps left at Metz, which could be brought into action, would constitute a force of 150,000 men, who might give battle there, or compel the enemy to do so a little further on at Louguyon. Even without this reserve the advance of the French could be checked before they could cross the Meuse, while some other corps of the Third Army was brought up.

This plan of action was soon to be carried out. Fresh news arrived that same afternoon. The newspapers let out the secret by publishing vehement speeches delivered in the National Assembly to the effect "that the French General, leaving his comrade in the lurch, was bringing the curses of the country upon his head."

It would be a disgrace, they said, to the French nation to leave the brave Bazaine unsuccored; from all this, and considering the effect of phrases on the French, it was to be expected that military considerations would give way to political. A telegram from London, quoting the Paris *Temps*, reported that MacMahon had suddenly resolved to hasten to the assistance of Bazaine, though an abandonment of the road to Paris placed the country in danger.

The King, before night, approved of the march to the right, and the necessary orders to the commanders of the corps were dispatched that night.

On the 26th his Majesty moved his head-quarters to Clermont. The Crown Prince of Saxony had set out for Varennes early in the morning with the Twelfth Corps, while he ordered the Guards to Dombasle, and the Fourth Corps to Fleury.

The cavalry, sent forward in every direction, found that the enemy had evacuated the Suiippe Valley and had not yet entered that of the Meuse; that Buzancy and Grand Pré were in the hands of the French, and that their Seventh Corps were encamped in considerable force on the heights of Vouziers.

A small detachment of cavalry proceeded to that point for observation, and their mere appearance occasioned an almost unaccountable excitement.

General Douay, quartered at Vouziers, received the most exaggerated reports, and must have thought that

a general attack by the German army was imminent. The Seventh Corps was kept under arms the entire night, though it was raining in torrents, and the Marshal resolved to advance towards Vouziers and Buzancy with all his forces next morning. Thus the march to the east was brought to an end as early as the 27th, but it was soon discovered that these rumors were unfounded.

The German generals were not less interested in gaining a thorough knowledge of the enemy's movements than the French staff was in knowing those of the Germans. If the enemy had handled their cavalry well on their right flank, a surprise like that above mentioned would have been impossible, but the 1st French Cavalry Division was placed on the left, where there was no danger whatever, and the 2nd were in their rear.

It seemed as though they had paid less attention to repelling an attack than to evading one, and reaching Montmédy, the point of rendezvous with Bazaine, unobserved.

At this period, when the advance of the Germans from the south could no longer be doubted, it would have been best for the French to turn against them and strike a decisive blow, or at least to clear them out of the way of their own line of march. If they had failed in this, they would at any rate have learned that their undertaking was impracticable and its continuation sure to lead to a catastrophe.

It must, however, be admitted that the German cavalry formed an almost impenetrable screen. The Marshal could not know that the Germans were écheloned from Vitry to Varennes (a distance of eight miles), and were not at all in a position to attack him on the spot.

(August 27th.) On this day, as soon as the Marshal had discovered his error, he continued his march, with part of his troops at least. The Seventh and Fifth Corps were directed to cover the movement at Vouziers and Buzaney, the Twelfth advanced to Le Chêne and the 1st Cavalry Division to Beaumont, probably to ascertain when Marshal Bazaine would arrive. The First Corps and the 2nd Cavalry Division remained by the Aisne.

The Saxons, the foremost of the German corps, had received explicit orders to proceed to Dun on that day, and occupy the right bank of the Meuse as far as Stenay in order to secure a crossing. They reached Stenay at three o'clock in the afternoon, and sent an advanced post across the river.

The cavalry hung on to the heels of the enemy and followed all their movements, often engaging in small skirmishes. The departure of the Fifth French Corps from Buzaney for Le Chêne was at once discovered, and so was the advance to Beaumont; the Saxon cavalry division was in consequence sent on that evening to Nouart. The Bavarian Corps reached the Clermont-Verdun road, the 5th Ste. Menéhould; the other corps of the Third Army followed by forced marches northwards.

It now seemed certain that it would be possible to meet the enemy on the left bank of the Meuse. Word was sent to the army before Metz, that the two corps asked for were no longer required, but they had meanwhile set out.

The latest dispositions made by Marshal MacMahon indicated that he was making a last effort to proceed on the pre-arranged lines. He was moving in échelon on the northernmost road to Metz, but had left a strong reserve corps on the Aisne to check a possible attack.

When he now learned that nothing had been seen of the Army of the Rhine at Montmédy, but that it was still at Metz, he resolved on retreat, and, after giving orders to that effect for next morning, reported his intentions to Paris.

From thence, during the night, came the most urgent remonstrances. The Minister of War telegraphed, "If you leave Bazaine in the lurch, revolution will break out," and the Ministerial Council issued a peremptory order to relieve Metz. The troops in front of him, they said, were only part of the investing army; the Crown Prince of Prussia was still several days' march in the rear, and General Vinoy had already started from Rheims with the newly-formed Thirteenth Corps to protect Paris.

The Marshal silenced his military convictions and issued new orders, but the troops had started betimes. The change of route gave rise to much confusion; the roads were bad, and quarters for the night were not reached until darkness had long set in; the men were weary, wet to the skin, and depressed in spirits.

(August 28th.) Hardly two miles' progress had been made east. The Twelfth Corps stood at La Besace, the First was on the way to Le Chêne, the Seventh had halted at Boulton aux Bois, its commander having been misinformed that two Prussian corps were occupying Buzancy, a little further on. On the strength of this report the Fifth Corps advanced on that town, by way of Bar, but went on to Bois-des-Dames in the afternoon. These movements were not interfered with. The German cavalry had express orders to restrict itself to reconnoitring, and, while following the French as closely as possible, not in any way to check or press them. In consequence of these orders, the Saxon cavalry evacuated Nouart on the approach of

the enemy. The Germans were not yet prepared for action till the Third Army had arrived; and the rear of that force, formed by the Sixth Corps, had only just reached Ste. Menéhould.

(August 29th.) It was therefore decided that a non-offensive attitude should be preserved. Even on the 29th a decisive move was deferred until the 30th.

The Marshal, in his head-quarters at Stonne, had been informed that the Germans occupied Dun, and that the bridges over the Meuse had been destroyed. The French had no poutoon-train, and there were no means of crossing the river excepting lower down, at Mouzon and Villers. His Twelfth Corps and the 1st Cavalry Division succeeded in effecting their passage at these points; the First Corps and the 2d Cavalry Division proceeded to Roncourt.

The Seventh Corps, delayed in its progress by skirmishing on its right flank, did not reach its quarters at La Besace, but bivouacked at Oches. The Fifth Corps was to proceed to Beaumont, but the staff officer carrying the order fell into the hands of the Prussian cavalry, together with his escort. General de Failly therefore marched to Stenay, according to his original instructions.

Up to this time the cavalry of the Saxon corps alone had come into contact with the enemy, but the Guards now relieved it at Buzancy, while the cavalry recrossed to the left bank of the Meuse at Dun. Their advanced guard at once took possession of the wooded spur to the north-east of Nouart, repelled the French cavalry, and pressed ahead to Champy, where they encountered a strong force. This was Lespart's division. The purpose of the reconnoissance had been attained, and the advanced guard withdrew. The French having meanwhile received fresh orders from



MacMahon, marched off at the same time in a northerly direction.

Four corps of the Third German Army were now within two miles of the rear of the Army of the Meuse. The 5th Cavalry Division stood at Attigny across the enemy's lines of communication; the 6th was following on the heels of the French, and, besides other exploits, had taken Boucq with a dismounted party. The Royal head-quarters were now established at Grand Pré, and upon receipt of the various reports it was decided to attack the French on the following day, before they could cross the Meuse. The Army of the Meuse was to press forward towards Beaumont, the Third to take the route between that place and Le Chêne. To insure the simultaneous arrival of both bodies, the right wing was not to move until ten o'clock, while the left began the march before six o'clock. Only those sections of the train absolutely necessary for battle were to follow.

## BATTLE OF BEAUMONT.

(August 30th.)

On the 30th of August, at ten o'clock, the King proceeded to Sommauthe *viâ* Buzancy.

Both Bavarian corps were marching by the same route, the Fifth Corps advanced in the centre towards Oches, the Eleventh and the Württemberg division were on the way to Le Chêne, the Sixth to Vouziers. The Fourth Corps on the right was advancing by Belval, and the Twelfth followed the course of the Meuse, with the Guards as a reserve in the rear.

Marshal MacMahon had issued orders that his entire army was to concentrate this day on the right bank of the Meuse, only the baggage and ambulance were to remain.

This First Corps and the 2nd Cavalry Division had left Roncourt at the early hour of seven; they crossed at Remilly, pontoon bridges had been thrown over for the infantry.

The Seventh Corps at Oches struck camp still earlier, at four o'clock, but as its commander insisted on taking the entire train, even empty wagons, it formed a column of two miles in length, and seven of its battalions were forced to march off the road to protect them. The rear-guard, consisting of one brigade, was unable to start before ten o'clock. This long procession soon came into contact with the Prussian cavalry and the artillery following, who by their fire forced the brigade to retire. Not till one o'clock could the march to La Besace be resumed, and as heavy firing was constantly heard from Beaumont, General Douay conceived it right to abandon the road to Mouzon and take that to Remilly.

The Fifth Corps, as had been foreseen, was destined to cover the withdrawal of the other two. These troops had reached the vicinity of Beaumont only at four A.M., and were thoroughly exhausted by the fighting and night march.

General de Failly therefore determined to give his men time to cook a meal before proceeding. Precautionary measures seem to have been altogether neglected, though he must have known that the enemy was near at hand, and at half-past one, while the officers and men were at dinner, the Prussian shell dropped into the lines of the incautious enemy.

The two corps on the German right had to move upon four quite separate columns through the woods, and over roads made heavy by rain. The Crown Prince of Saxony therefore ordered that neither of the columns should attempt to attack before the supporting column was ready to assist.

The Fourth Corps had got off very early, and after a short rest proceeded on its way at ten o'clock. When at noon the advanced guard of the 8th Division left the forest, they discovered, from their elevated position, the camp of the enemy about 800 paces away, employed as above described. General von Schöler would not lose such an opportunity; at all events the presence of his force could not long be concealed, so he made it known by the fire of guns.

He was soon made aware that he had attacked an enemy of superior strength. The French immediately took up arms and sent swarms of riflemen to the front, who, with their long-ranged Chassepots, did great execution, especially among the artillery. The main body of the 8th Division had meanwhile come up, and ere long the 7th Division appeared on the right. The French attacked these too with great impetuosity, and could only be repulsed with the bayonet. Presently, however, the foremost battalions of both divisions made their way into the French camp in front of Beaumont, into the town itself, and finally into a second camp north of that place. Seven guns, of which the teams were missing, and which continued firing up to the last moment, a number of gunners, wagons and horses, fell into the hands of the assailants.

Whilst thus, at two o'clock, the infantry were for a time in action, fourteen batteries of the Fourth Corps, drawn up on the heights north of Beaumont, were engaged in a duel with the French artillery. The Saxon artillery soon came up on the right, and the Bavarian on the left. This formidable artillery line, constantly advancing in *échelon*, presently silenced the mitrailleuses, and at three o'clock the remaining French batteries also went out of action.

The Second Bavarian Corps had advanced on La

Thibaudine, on the left of the Prussian Fourth, when it was suddenly attacked by a strong body of French coming from the west.

These belonged to Conseil Dumesnil's division of the Seventh French Corps, and were still proceeding to Mouzon, according to their original marching orders. They were no less surprised than the Bavarians, who attacked them in front and flank. They gave up all hope of cutting their way through, and at about four o'clock beat a hasty retreat northwards, leaving two guns behind.

The Bavarians had in the meantime taken possession of the Farm of Thibaudine, and the Prussians of Har-noterie. The wooded hills prevented a clear view of the surrounding country; the enemy had completely disappeared.

General de Failly was making strenuous efforts to collect his scattered forces at Mouzon, under cover of his rear-guard stationed at La Sartelle; and General Lebrun, of the Twelfth French Corps, sent an infantry and a cavalry brigade and three batteries back across the Meuse to his assistance.

The 8th Division, headed by the 13th Brigade, worked wearily through the dense forest of Givodeau, on its way to operate against this new defensive position. This was at five o'clock. On emerging from the wood the battalions, who had fallen into some confusion, were received by a heavy fire at short range. The riflemen made several fruitless attempts to advance, and the dense underwood prevented a closer formation of troops in rear. By the time the Saxon Corps had succeeded, by great exertions, in extricating itself from the forest and swamp by the Wamme, and finally reaching Létanne, the impracticability of further progress in the Meuse valley became apparent, since

French batteries, in impregnable positions, commanded the low ground beyond the river. The troops therefore ascended the plateau, and followed the 8th Division through the Givodeau woods, increasing the force on the northern border, where, however, the development of a broader front was impossible. At about six o'clock the infantry engagement ceased for a time at this point.

The 14th Brigade had come into line on the left of the 13th, followed by the 8th Division, in two columns.

The 93rd Regiment had stormed the hill to the north-east of Yoneq, and pursued the enemy to the foot of Mont-de-Brune. The Anhalters captured four mitrailleuses and eight guns, some of them with their entire teams.

When, at half-past five, the artillery were in position, and at the same time the 27th Regiment was approaching, General Zychlinski advanced to the main attack.

The French occupied the entirely isolated hill-top with a strong body of troops; their batteries faced the Bois de Givodeau on the east, whence an assault was imminent, but when the 93rd and the 2nd Battalion of the 27th advanced on them from the south they changed front towards their aggressors, and opened upon them a heavy fire. The Fusilier battalion was at the same time approaching from the west. Regardless of their losses, the assailants eagerly scaled the hill-sides, with the brigadiers and colonels at their head. Six French guns were seized while in action, in spite of a brave resistance from the gunners and their escorts, the enemy was pursued as far as the Roman road, and four more guns, completely horsed and equipped, which had been abandoned by the French, fell into the hands of the victorious troops.

The three battalions hurried on towards Mouzon,

without waiting for the 14th Brigade, who were following in rear, but they suddenly found themselves threatened by a cavalry charge.

Marshal MacMahon had recognized the fact that the best thing he could do was to effect as orderly a retreat as possible from the left bank of the Meuse; the reinforcements sent across had already been recalled. The 5th Cuirassier Regiment alone remained. When a little to the north of the Faubourg de Mouzon, they came within range of the shot of the advancing Prussians, and fearlessly faced the enemy.

The 10th company of the 27th Regiment received the first onslaught. The men, without rushing forward, waited for the signal of their leader, Captain Helmuth, and when the enemy was within short range, fired a volley. Eleven officers and 100 men fell, including their brave commander, who was killed fifteen yards in front of his men. The survivors rushed back to the Meuse, and, as all the pontoon bridges had been removed, they tried to gain the opposite side by swimming.

The French were still in front of Mouzon in considerable numbers, and the batteries of the Fourth Corps now arrived one by one, and opened a heavy fire on them. Two Bavarian batteries took the bridge at Villers, lower down the river, and stopped the way. Then the suburb was taken, after a fierce encounter in and about the houses, and here too the bridge was occupied. The enemy, deprived of every means of retreat, received the 8th Division, emerging from the valley of the Yoneq, with a hot fire, but were gradually driven back to the river. The French sections in front of the Bois de Givodeau, too, were hopelessly committed, and when the 7th Division and Twelfth Corps charged upon them, were dispersed, in spite of an

obstinate resistance. When darkness set in the French gave up the fight on this side of the Meuse. Many of the stragglers were taken prisoners, others hid themselves in the copses and farm-houses, or tried to escape by swimming the river.

In this battle, as in the preceding ones, the loss of the assailants far exceeded that of the defenders. The Army of the Meuse lost 3500 men, the Fourth Corps being the principal sufferer. The French estimated their loss at 1800 killed; but 3000 prisoners, mostly wounded, fell into the hands of the Germans, with 51 guns, 33 ammunition and other wagons, and a military chest, containing 150,000 francs. And, what was worse, this battle had forced them on to most unfavorable ground.

While the Fourth Corps had fought the battle of the day almost single-handed, the Saxon cavalry had made good progress on the right bank of the Meuse, and reconnoitred towards Mouzon and Carignan. The Guards had reached Beaumont, and General von der Tann, with the First Bavarian Corps, was at Roncourt, marching by way of La Besace, with some slight skirmishing on the way. The Second Corps concentrated at Sommauthe, the Fifth at Stonne, the Eleventh at La Besace. Thus seven corps now stood in close communication between the Meuse and the Bar.

The King rode back to Buzancy after the battle, as all villages in the vicinity had been turned into hospitals. Here, as previously at Clermont, was felt the great inconvenience of inadequate lodging for hundreds of illustrious personages and their suites, when, for once in a way, and for military reasons, head-quarters were established in a small village, instead of in a large town.

Quarters for those officers whose duty it was to

prepare the necessary orders for the morrow, were only found late at night, and with considerable difficulty.

The orders, worked out during the night, were that two corps of the Army of the Meuse should cross over to the right bank on the 31st, to prevent the further progress of the French to Metz *viâ* Montmédy, should such a movement be undertaken. Two corps of the besieging army were posted at Etain and Briey. The Third Army was to continue northwards.

As circumstances now stood, it already seemed possible that the Army of Châlons might be compelled to retire to neutral territory, and the Belgian Government was therefore asked, through diplomatic channels, to look to their disarmament should this come to pass. The German troops had orders to at once cross the Belgian frontier should the enemy refuse to disarm.

While the Fifth French Corps were still fighting at Beaumont, and before the rest of the army had crossed the Meuse, General MacMahon had given orders that it was to concentrate on Sedan.

He did not intend to offer battle there, but it was indispensable to give his troops a short rest, and provide them with food and ammunition. Later on he meant to retreat *viâ* Mézières, whither General Vinoy was just then proceeding with the newly-formed Thirteenth Corps. The First Corps, which had arrived at Carignan early in the afternoon, detached two of its divisions to Douzy in the evening to check any further advance of the Germans.

Though pursuit immediately after the battle was prevented by the intervening river, the retreat of the French soon assumed the character of a rout. The troops were worn out with their efforts by day and night, in continuous rain, and with but scanty sup-



plies of food. The marching to and fro, to no visible purpose, had undermined their confidence in their leaders, and a series of defeats had shaken their self-reliance.

Thousands of fugitives, crying for bread, crowded round the wagons as they made their way to the little fortress which had so unexpectedly become the central goal of a vast army.

The Emperor Napoleon arrived there from Carignan late in the evening; the Seventh Corps reached Floing during the night of the 31st, but the Twelfth Corps did not arrive at Bazeilles until the following day. The Fifth Corps mustered at the eastern suburb of Sedan in a shocking condition, followed in the afternoon by the First, which drew up behind the Givonne Valley after many rear-guard actions with the German cavalry. It was impossible to proceed to Mézières that day; but the Twelfth Corps had that same evening to face the Germans at Bazeilles, where the sound of firing announced their arrival. Even the order to destroy the bridges there and at Donchery was neglected, owing to the worn-out condition of the men.

(August 31st.) The Guards and the 12th Cavalry Division, which formed part of the Army of the Meuse, had crossed that river at Pouilly, by a pontoon bridge constructed at Létanne, and then scoured the country between the Meuse and the Chiers. Following close upon the rear of the French and harassing them till they reached their new position, they succeeded in taking many of the stragglers. The Guards crossed the Chiers at Carignan and halted at Sachy; the Twelfth fell back on the Meuse near Douzy, while its advanced guard pushed on past Francheval. The Fourth Corps remained at Mouzon.

The 4th Cavalry Division of the Third Army took

the direct route to Sedan, drove back the French outposts from Wadelincourt and Frenois, and from thence took possession of the railroad under the fire of their artillery. The 6th Cavalry Division, on the left, reached Poix, on the way to Mézières.

When the First Bavarian Corps reached Remilly before noon, it came under the heavy fire from the opposite side of the river, and at once brought up its batteries in position on the near slope of the valley. A furious cannonade ensued, in which finally sixty guns engaged on the side of the Bavarians. The French now only tried to blow up the railway bridge south of Bazeilles, but the well-directed shots of the 4th Jäger battalion drove off the men, the Jägers threw the powder-barrels into the river, and at midday crossed the bridge. The battalion entered Bazeilles in the face of a shower of bullets and occupied the northern quarter of the straggling little town.

Thus the Twelfth French Corps was forced to draw up between Balan and La Moncelle, where, after being reinforced by batteries from the First Corps, it faced, with an expenditure of considerable forces, the bold little troop of Germans.

General von der Tann did not think it expedient, however, to engage, on that day and at that point, in serious conflict with an enemy in a concentrated position, and, seeing that there was no chance of being reinforced, he withdrew from Bazeilles at about half-past three, without being pursued.

Meanwhile two pontoon bridges had been laid, without interference from the French, at Allicourt. These and the bridge south of Bazeilles were barricaded for the night, while eighty-four guns secured the passage.

The Eleventh Corps marched towards Donchery, to the left of the Bavarians, followed by the Fifth. The

advanced guard found the village unoccupied, and spread itself on the other side of the river. Two more bridges were thrown across below Sedan before three o'clock, whilst the railway bridge above, which was unprotected, was destroyed.

The Würtemberg and the 6th Cavalry Division on the extreme left, came in contact with the Thirteenth French Corps, which had just arrived at Mézières.

The King removed his head-quarters to Vendresse.

In spite of long and sometimes forced marches in bad weather, with little by way of supplies beyond what could be requisitioned, the Army of the Meuse on the east, and the Third Army on the south, were now close in front of the combined forces of the French.

Marshal MacMahon must have known that the only chance of safety for his army, or even part of it, was to continue immediately the retrograde movement on that day, September 1st. Of course the Crown Prince of Prussia, who held the key to every passage over the Meuse, would have fallen on the flank of the retiring army, and would have pursued it to the frontier, a distance of little more than a mile. That the attempt was not risked is probably owing to the state of the worn-out troops. They were as yet incapable of a retreat in close order; they could only fight where they stood.

The Germans, on their side, still believed that the enemy would make for Mézières. The Army of the Meuse was instructed to attack them in their position and detain them there; the Third Army to press ahead on the right side of the river, leaving only one corps on the left bank.

The rear of the French was protected by the fortress of Sedan. The Meuse and the valleys of the Givonne and the Floing offered formidable obstructions, but

this line of defence must be obstinately held. The Calvary of Illy was one of their most important points, strengthened as it was by the Bois de la Garenne in its rear, whence a ridge extends to Bazeilles and offers protection in its numerous dips and shoulders. The road ran past Illy, should it become necessary to enter neutral territory. Bazeilles, on the other hand, which, as regards situation, formed a strong point of appui for the line facing the Givonne, stands on a promontory, which, after the loss of the bridges across the Meuse, was open to attack on two sides.

#### BATTLE OF SEDAN.

(September 1st.)

In order to co-operate with the Army of the Meuse and hem in the French in their position, General von der Tann sent his first brigade over the pontoon bridges towards Bazeilles by four o'clock in the morning in a thick mist. The troops attacked the town, but found the streets barricaded, while they were fired on from every house. The company at the head pressed forward to the north gate, suffering great losses, but the others were driven out of the western part of Bazeilles, while engaged in street fighting, on the arrival of the 2nd Brigade of the French Twelfth Corps. However, they kept possession of the buildings at the southern end of the town and from thence issued to repeated assaults. As fresh troops were constantly coming up on both sides, and the French even were reinforced by a brigade of the First and one of the Fifth Corps, the murderous combat lasted for many hours with wavering success; the fight for the Villa Beurmann, situated near the end of the high street and commanding its whole length, was especially

fierce. The citizens took active part in the struggle, and they too had to be shot down.

The strong array of guns drawn up on the left ridge of the valley of the Meuse could not be brought to bear on the crowded streets of Bazeilles, now blazing in several places, but when, at eight o'clock, the 8th Prussian Division had arrived at Remilly, General von der Tann ordered his last brigade into action. The walled park of Monvillers was stormed and an entrance gained to Villa Beurmann. The artillery crossed the bridges at about nine o'clock, and the 8th Division were required to give their aid in a struggle begun by the Bavarians at La Moncelle, to the south of Bazeilles.

Prince George of Saxony had dispatched an advanced guard of seven battalions from Douzy in that direction at five o'clock in the morning. They drove the French from La Moncelle, pressed ahead to Platinerie and the bridge situated there, and, in spite of a hot and steady fire, took possession of the houses on the other side of the Givonne, which they immediately occupied for defensive purposes. Communication with the Bavarians was now established and the battery of the advanced guard drawn up on the eastern slope; but the brave assailants could not be immediately reinforced by infantry.

Marshal MacMahon had been struck by a splinter from a shell at La Moncelle at 6 A.M. He nominated General Ducrot as his successor in command, passing over the claims of two senior leaders. When General Ducrot received the news at seven o'clock, he issued orders for concentrating the army at Illy, and for an immediate retreat upon Mézières. Of his own corps he dispatched Lartigue's division to cover the passage at Daigny; Lacretelle and Bassoigne were ordered to assume the offensive against the Bavarians and Saxons,

so as to gain time for the rest of the troops to retire. The divisions forming the second line immediately began to move towards the north.

The Minister of War had appointed General von Wimpffen, recently back from Algiers, to the command of the Fifth Corps, vice General de Failly, and had also empowered him to assume the chief command in case the Marshal should be disabled.

General von Wimpffen knew the army of the Crown Prince to be in the neighborhood of Donchery, he regarded the retreat to Mézières as an impossibility, and was bent on the diametrically opposite course of forcing his way to Carignan, not doubting that he could rout the Bavarians and Saxons, and so effect a junction with Marshal Bazaine. When he heard of the orders just issued by General Ducrot, and, at the same time, observed that an assault upon the Germans in La Moncelle seemed to turn in his favor, he determined, in an evil hour, to exercise his authority.

General Ducrot submitted without any remonstrance; he was perhaps not averse to being relieved of so heavy a responsibility. The divisions of the second line who were about to start were ordered back; and the weak advance of the Bavarians and Saxons were soon hard pressed by the first line, who at once attacked them.

By seven in the morning one regiment of the Saxon advanced guard had marched to the taking of La Moncelle; the other had been busy with the threatening advance of Lartigue's division on the right. Here the firing soon became very hot. The regiment had marched without knapsacks, and neglected previously to take out their cartridges. Thus they soon ran short of ammunition, and the repeated and violent onslaught of the Zouaves, directed principally against

the unprotected right, had to be repulsed with the bayonet.

On the left a strong artillery line had gradually been formed, and by half-past eight o'clock amounted to twelve batteries. But Lacretelle's division was now approaching on the Givonne lowlands, and dense swarms of *tirailleurs* forced the German batteries to retire at about nine o'clock. The gunners withdrew to some distance, but then turned about and re-opened fire on the French, and after driving them back into the valley returned to their original position.

The 4th Bavarian Brigade had meanwhile reached La Moncelle, and the 46th Saxon Brigade was coming up, so the small progress made by Bassoigne's division was checked.

The right wing of the Saxon contingent, which had been hardly pressed, now received much-needed support from the 24th Division, and they at once assumed the offensive. The French were driven back upon Daigny, and lost five guns in the struggle. Then joining the Bavarians, who were pushing on through the valley to the northward, after a sharp fight, Daigny, the bridge and farmstead of La Rapaille were taken.

It was now about ten o'clock, and the Guards had arrived at the Upper Givonne. They had started before it was light, marching in two columns, when the sound of heavy firing reached them from Bazeilles and caused them to quicken their step. In order to render assistance by the shortest road, the left column would have to cross two deep ravines and the pathless wood of Chevallier, so they chose the longer route by Villers-Cernay, which the head of the right column had passed in ample time to take part in the contest between the Saxons and Lartigues's division, and to capture two French guns.

The divisions ordered back by General Ducrot had already resumed their position at the western slope, and the 14th Battery of the Guards now opened fire upon them from the east.

At the same hour (ten o'clock) the Fourth Corps and the 7th Division had arrived at Lamécourt, and the 8th at Rémilly, both situated below Bazeilles; the advanced guard of the 8th stood at the Rémilly railway station.

The first attempt of the French to break through to Carignan eastwards had proved a failure, and their retreat to Mézières on the west had also been cut off, for the Fifth and Eleventh Corps of the Third Army, together with the Würtemberg division, had received orders to move northward by that route. These troops had struck camp before daybreak, and at six o'clock had crossed the Meuse at Donchery, and by the three pontoon bridges further down the river. The advanced patrols found the road to Mézières clear of the enemy, and the heavy shelling, heard from the direction of Bazeilles, made it appear probable that the French had accepted battle in their position at Sedan. The Crown Prince, therefore, ordered the two corps, that had arrived at Brigne, to march to the right on St. Menges; the Würtembergers were to remain to keep watch over Mézières. General von Kirchbach then pointed out Fleigneux to his advanced guard as the next objective, to cut off the retreat of the French into Belgium, and maintain a connection with the right wing of the Army of the Meuse.

The narrow roadway between the hills and the river leading to St. Albert, about 2000 paces distant, was neither held nor watched by the French. It was not till the advanced guard reached St. Menges that they encountered a French detachment, which soon with-



drew. The Germans then deployed in the direction of Illy, two companies on the right taking possession of Floing, where they kept up a gallant defence for two hours without assistance against repeated attacks.

The first Prussian batteries that arrived had to exert themselves to the utmost to hold out against the larger force of French artillery drawn up at Illy. At first they were only protected by cavalry and a few companies of infantry, and as this cavalry managed to issue from the defile of St. Albert, it found itself the misleading object of attack, for the Margueritte Cavalry Division halted on the Illy plateau. General Galliffet, commander of the division, at nine o'clock formed his three regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique and two squadrons of Lancers into three divisions, and gave the order to charge. Two companies of the 87th Regiment were the first in the line; they allowed the cavalry to approach within sixty paces, and then fired a volley which failed to stop them. The 1st Division rode on a little further, then wheeled outward to both flanks, and came upon the fire of the supports established in the copse. The Prussian batteries, too, sent a shower of shrapnel into their midst, when they finally retired to seek protection in the Bois de Garenne, while a trail of dead and wounded marked their way.

About half an hour later, that is at ten o'clock, and at the same time when the assaults of the French in Bazeilles and at Daigny were being repulsed, fourteen batteries of the Eleventh Corps were erected on and beside the hill range south-east of St. Menges; those of the Fifth Corps were soon added to this artillery park. Thus, with the powerful infantry columns advancing upon Fleigneux, the investing line drawn around Sedan was nearly completed. The Bavarian corps and the artillery reserves remaining on the left em-

bankment of the Meuse, were considered strong enough to repel any attempt of the French to break through in that direction. Five corps were standing on the right bank, ready for concentric attack.

The Bavarians and Saxons, reinforced by the advanced guard of the Fourth Corps, issued from the burning town of Bazeilles and from Moncelle, and drove sections of the French Twelfth Corps, in spite of a stubborn resistance, from the east of Balan back to Fond de Givonne.

Having thus taken possession of the spur of Illy, while awaiting a fresh attack of the French, the most necessary step now was to reform the troops, which were in much confusion.

As soon as this was done the 5th Bavarian Brigade advanced on Balan. The troops found but a feeble resistance in the village itself; but it was only after a hard fight that they were allowed to occupy the park of the Castle, situated at the extreme end. From thence, soon after midday, the foremost battalion got close to the walls of the fortress, and exchanged shots with the garrison. The French were now trying to take up a position at Fond de Givonne, and a steady fire was opened on both sides. At one o'clock the French had evidently received reinforcements, and when, after the artillery and mitrailleuses had done some preliminary work, they assumed the offensive, the 5th Bavarian Brigade was driven back for some little distance, but assisted by the 6th, regained its old position after an hour's hard fighting. Meanwhile the Saxon corps had spread itself in the northern part of the valley towards Givonne. There the foremost companies of the Guards were already established, as also in Haybés. The Prussian artillery forced the French batteries to change their positions more than once,

and several of them had already gone out of action. To gain an opening here, the French repeatedly tried to send ahead large bodies of tirailleurs, and ten guns were got into Givonne, after it had been occupied, but these were taken before they could unlimber. The Prussian shells also fell with some effect among the French troops massed in the Bois de la Garenne, though fired from a long range.

After the Franc-tireurs de Paris had been driven out of Chapelle, the cavalry of the Guard advanced through Givonne and up the valley, and at noon the hussars had succeeded in establishing a connection with the left wing of the Third Army.

The 47th Brigade of that body had left Fleigneux to ascend the upper valley of the Givonne, and the retreat of the French from Illy in a southern direction had already begun. The 87th Regiment seized eight guns that were being worked, and captured thirty baggage wagons with their teams and hundreds of cavalry horses wandering riderless. The cavalry of the advanced guard of the Fifth Corps captured General Brahaut and his staff, besides a great number of infantry and 150 pack horses, together with forty ammunition and transport wagons.

At Floing there was also an attempt on the part of the French to break through; but the originally very insufficient infantry posts at that point had gradually been strengthened, and the French were driven from the locality as quickly as they had entered. And now the fire from the twenty-six batteries of the Army of the Meuse was joined by that of the Guards' batteries, which took up their position at the eastern slope of the Givonne valley. The effect was overwhelming. The French batteries were destroyed and many ammunition wagons exploded.

General von Wimpffen at first thought the advance of the Germans from the north a mere feint, but recognized his mistake when he himself proceeded to the spot towards noon. He therefore ordered the two divisions in the second line, which was behind the Givonne front of the First Corps, to return to the height above Illy and support General Douay.

On rejoining the Twelfth Corps he found it in full retreat on Sedan, and urgently requested General Douay to dispatch assistance in the direction of Bazeilles. Maussion's brigade proceeded thither at once, followed by Dumont's, as their position in the front had been taken by Conseil Dumesnil's division. All these marches and counter-marches were executed in the space south of the Bois de Garenne under fire of the German artillery on two sides. The retreat of the cavalry heightened the confusion, and several battalions returned to the doubtful protection of the forest. General Douay, it is true, when reinforced by sections of the Fifth Corps, retook the Calvaire, but was forced to abandon it by two o'clock; the forest, at the back of the Calvaire, was then shelled by sixty guns of the Guards.

Liébert's division alone had up to now maintained its very strong position on the hills north of Casal. The assembling in sufficient strength of the German Fifth and Eleventh Corps at Floing, could only be effected very gradually. At one o'clock, however, part of them began to scale the hill immediately before them, while others went round to the south towards Gaulier and Casal, and more marched down from Fleigneux. These troops became so intermixed that no detailed orders could be given; a fierce contest was carried on for a long time with varying fortunes. The French division, attacked on both flanks, and also

shelled, at last gave way, and the reserves of the Seventh Corps having already been called off to other parts of the battle-field, the French cavalry once more devoted themselves to the rescue.

General Margueritte, with five regiments of light horse, and two of lancers, charged out of the Bois de Garennes. He fell among the first, severely wounded, and General Galliffet took his place. The charge was over very treacherous ground, and even before they could attack, the ranks were broken by the heavy flanking fire of the Prussian batteries. Still, with thinned numbers but unflagging determination, the squadrons charged on the 43rd Infantry Brigade and its reinforcements hurrying along from Fleigneux. Part of the German infantry on the hill-side were lying under cover, others were fully exposed in groups of more or less strength. Their foremost lines were broken through at several points, and a detachment of these brave troops forced their way past eight guns, through a hot fire, but the reserves beyond checked their further progress. A troop of cuirassiers, issuing from Gaulier, fell on the German rear, but encountering the Prussian hussars in the Meuse Valley galloped off northward. Other detachments forced their way through the infantry as far as the narrow way by St. Albert, where the battalions holding it gave them a warm reception; others again enter Floing only to succumb to the 5th Jägers, who fell on them front and rear. These attacks were repeated by the French again and again, and the murderous turmoil lasted for half an hour with steadily diminishing success for the French. The volleys of the infantry fired at short range strewed the whole field with dead and wounded. Many fell into the quarries or over the steep precipices, a few may have escaped by swimming the

Meuse; and scarcely more than half of these brave troops were left to return to the protection of the fortress.

But this magnificent sacrifice of the splendid French cavalry could not change the fate of the day. The Prussian infantry had lost but few in cut-and-thrust encounters, and at once resumed the attack against Liébert's division. But in this onslaught they sustained heavy losses; for instance, the three battalions of the 6th Regiment had to be commanded by lieutenants. Casal was stormed, and the French, after a spirited resistance, withdrew at about three o'clock to their last refuge, the Bois de Garennes.

When, between one and two o'clock, the fighting round Bazeilles at first took a favorable turn for his army, General von Wimpffen returned to his original plan of overthrowing the Bavarians, exhausted by a long struggle, and making his way to Carignan with the First, Fifth, and Twelfth Corps; while the Seventh Corps was to cover their rear. But the orders issued to that effect never reached the generals in command, or arrived so late that circumstances forbade their being carried out.

In consequence of his previous orders, Bassoigne's division with those of Goze and Grandchamp had remained idle. Now, at about three in the afternoon, the two last named advanced from Fond-de-Givonne, over the eastern ridge, and the 23rd Saxon Division, which was marching in the valley on the left bank of the Givonne, found itself suddenly attacked by the compact French battalions and batteries, but with the aid of the left wing of the Guards and the artillery thundering from the eastern slope, they soon repulsed the French, and even followed them up back to Fond-de-Givonne. The energy of the French appears to

have been exhausted, for they allowed themselves to be taken prisoners by hundreds. As soon as the hills on the west of the Givonne had been secured, the German artillery established itself there, and by three o'clock twenty-one batteries stood in line between Bazailles and Haybés.

Bois de Garennes, where many corps of all arms had found refuge and were wandering about, still remained to be taken. After a short cannonade the 1st Division of Guards ascended the hills from Givonne, and were joined by the Saxon battalions, the left wing of the Third Army at the same time pressing forward from Illy. A wild turmoil ensued, some of the French offered violent resistance, others surrendered by thousands at a time, but not until five o'clock were the Germans masters of the fortress.

Meanwhile long columns of French could be seen pouring down on Sedan from all the neighboring hills. Irregular bands of troops were massed in and around the walls of the fortress, and shell from the German batteries on both sides of the Meuse were constantly exploding in their midst. Columns of fire soon began to rise from the city, and the Bavarians, who had gone round to Torcy, were about to climb the palisades at the gate when, at about half-past four, flags of truce were hoisted on the towers.

The Emperor Napoleon had refused to join with General von Wimpffen in his attempt to break through the German lines; he had, on the contrary, desired him to parley with the enemy. On the order being renewed, the French suddenly ceased firing.

General Reille now made his appearance in the presence of the King, who had watched the action since early in the day from the hill south of Frénois. He was the bearer of an autograph letter from the Em-

peror, whose presence in Sedan had till now been unknown. He placed his sword in the hands of the King, but as this was only an act of personal submission, the answer given to his letter demanded that an officer should be dispatched hither, fully empowered to treat with General von Moltke as to the surrender of the French army.

This sorrowful duty was imposed on General von Wimpffen, who was in no way responsible for the desperate straits into which the army had been brought.

The negotiations were held at Donchery during the night between the 1st and 2nd of September. The Germans were forced to consider that they must not forego the advantage gained over so powerful an enemy as France. When it was remembered that the French had regarded the victory of German arms over other nationalities in the light of an insult, any act of untimely generosity might lead them to forget their own defeat. The only course to pursue was to insist upon the disarmament and detention of the entire army, but the officers were to be free on parole.

General von Wimpffen declared it impossible to accept such hard conditions, the negotiations were broken off, and the French officers returned to Sedan at one o'clock. Before their departure they were given to understand that unless these terms were agreed to by nine o'clock next morning, the bombardment would be renewed.

Thus the capitulation was signed by General von Wimpffen on the morning of the 2nd, further resistance being obviously impossible.

Marshal MacMahon had been very fortunate in being disabled so early in the day, or he would have been inevitably compelled to sign the capitulation, and though he had only carried out the orders forced upon



him by the Paris authorities, he could hardly have sat in judgment, as he afterwards did, on the comrade he had failed to relieve.

It is difficult to understand why the Germans want to celebrate the 2nd of September when nothing remarkable happened but what was the inevitable result of the previous day's work; the day when the army really crowned itself with glory was the 1st of September.

This splendid victory had cost the Germans 460 officers and 8500 men. The French losses were far greater; 17,000 were killed, the work principally of the strong force of German artillery. Twenty-one thousand Frenchmen were taken prisoners in the course of the action, 83,000 surrendered; 104,000 in all.

These, for the present, were assembled on the Peninsula of Iges, formed by the Meuse. As they were absolutely destitute of supplies, the Commandant of Mézières allowed them the use of the railway as far as Donchery.

Two corps d'armée were to effect and escort the transport of the prisoners, who were taken off 2000 at a time by two roads, one to Etain, and the other by Clermont to Pont-à-Mousson, where they were taken in charge by the army investing Metz, and forwarded to various places in Germany.

Three thousand men had been disarmed on Belgian territory.

The trophies, taken at Sedan, consisted of three standards, 419 field-pieces, and 139 guns, 66,000 stands of arms, over 1000 baggage and other wagons, and 6000 horses fit for service.

With the surrender of this army, Imperialism in France was extinct.

## II.

### ADVANCE ON PARIS AND CAPITULATION OF METZ.

WHILE one half of the German army was thus engaged in victorious progress, the other half remained a fixture before Metz.

The foremost line of outposts of the besieging army was over six miles long. Thus an attempt of the collected forces of the enemy to break through would have met with but slight opposition at the outset. It was all the more expedient to fortify the isolated German positions. These works, the clearing of the battle-fields in the neighborhood, the close watch kept over every movement of the enemy, the construction of a telegraph line connecting the various staff quarters, and the erecting of hutments, kept the troops and their leaders amply occupied. Besides the care of the wounded, attention had to be paid to the sick, whose number was daily increased by the rough weather and insufficient shelter. The provisioning of the troops was, however, made easier by their stationary attitude, and the troops were now amply supplied by their friends at home.

The first days of the siege went by without any attempts to break out on the part of the French. They too were busy reorganizing, collecting ammunition and supplies.

On the 20th of August, Marshal Bazaine wrote to Châlons: "I will give due notice of my march if I am

able to attempt it." On the 23rd he reported to the Emperor: "If the news of the extensive reductions in the besieging army are corroborated, I shall begin the march by way of the fortresses on the north in order to risk nothing."

## THE SORTIE FROM METZ.

(August 26th.)

On the 26th of August, when the army of Châlons was still fifteen miles distant from the canal of the Ardennes, and their advance on Metz was as yet unknown, Marshal Bazaine collected his main forces on the right bank of the Moselle.

This movement had not escaped the notice of the outposts, and the field telegraph at once communicated the information to head-quarters.

To support the 3rd Reserve Division at Malroy, ten battalions of the Tenth Corps crossed the Meuse to Arganey, on the right bank. The 25th Division held itself in readiness at the bridge of Hauconcourt, and the First Corps closed up towards Servigny. In the event of the escape of the French towards the north, the Third, Fourth, and parts of the Ninth Corps were to arrest their progress at Diedenhofen.

The crossing of the river by pontoon bridges from the island of Chambière seriously delayed the French; their Second, Third, and Fourth Corps had, however, formed in close order between Mey and Grimont, by about noon. Their advanced guard succeeded in throwing back the German outposts to the south-east of Metz at several points, but instead of entering upon a general attack, Marshal Bazaine called all the commandants of the corps to a conference at Grimont. The Commandant of Metz then explained that the

heavy ammunition at their disposal would suffice for one battle only, that when it was exhausted they would be imprisoned between the German armies without the means of defence; the fortress, he continued, was not defensible in its present state, and could not stand a siege if the army were to be withdrawn. All this might have been—nay, must have been, known to the Commandant before he entered upon the movement. It was especially impressed upon the generals, "That the best service they could render to their country was to preserve the army, which would be of the greatest importance if negotiations for peace should be entered into." The generals present all spoke against the continuation of the march; and the Commander-in-chief, who had refrained from expressing any opinion in the matter, gave the order to retire at four o'clock.

The whole affair of the 26th of August can only be regarded in the light of a parade manœuvre. Bazaine reported to the Minister of War that the scarcity of artillery ammunition made it "impossible" to break through the German lines, unless the enemy were forced to retreat by attacks in the rear, from outside. Information as to the "voice of the people" in Paris was urgently requested.

There is no doubt that Bazaine was influenced, not only by military, but by political considerations; still the question remains, Could he have acted differently in the prevailing confusion? From the correspondence referred to and his behavior in the battles before Metz, he was evidently strongly opposed to quitting the fortress. Under shelter of its walls he could maintain a considerable army in good order till the right moment. At the head of the only unimpaired army in France he might find himself in a position of greater

power than any other man in the country. This army must, of course, first be freed from the bondage in which it was now held. Even if it should succeed in breaking through the lines, it would be greatly weakened; and it was not inconceivable that the Marshal, as the strongest man in power, might be able to offer a price which should induce the enemy to allow him to march out. For if at last peace were to be concluded, the Germans would no doubt ask: Who in France is the authority with whom we are to negotiate, now that the Empire is overthrown, and which is strong enough to give a guarantee that its pledges will be kept? That the Marshal, if his plans had been carried out, would have acted otherwise than in the interest of France is neither proved nor to be assumed.

But ere long, a number of men combined in Paris, who, without consulting the nation, constituted themselves the Government of the country, and took the direction of its affairs into their own hands. In opposition to this party, Marshal Bazaine, supported by his army, could come forward as a rival or a foe; nay, and this was his crime in the eyes of the Paris Government, he might restore the authority of the Emperor to whom he had sworn allegiance. Whether he could thus have spared his country even longer misery and greater suffering need not be discussed. But that he was subsequently accused of betraying his country arose, no doubt, from the national vanity of the French, which demanded a "Traitor" to account for defeat.

Soon after this demonstration—for it was nothing more—of the besieged army, the besieging army was, in fact, reduced, for the Second and Third Corps were sent to Brisay and Conflans, by orders from headquarters. To be sure, from that point they could attack

either of the French Marshals, as might prove requisite; and the Thirteenth Corps, formed of the 17th Division, hitherto retained to defend the coast, and of the Landwehr, was already within a few days' march of Metz.

Meanwhile Marshal Bazaine seems to have recognized the fallacy of his expectations of the release of his army by negotiations with the enemy; he now decided to make his way out, weapon in hand. The troops were supplied with three days' rations, and the commissariat with arms from the magazines of the fortress. That the attempt should again be made on the right bank of the Moselle was only to be expected; the main forces of the enemy being intrenched on the left. It would have been very difficult to traverse the mountainous region, cut up by deep passes, and they were sure to encounter the army of the Crown Prince on the march to Paris. East of Metz, on the other hand, there was ample space for the full development of his army. Thence to the south there was open country, offering no cover to the enemy, whose lines were weakest on that side. The march to the north and along the Belgian frontier offered more danger and greater obstacles, and yet the Marshal had selected this very road. The Army of Châlons was also marching in that direction; their approach was reported, and on the 31st of August, when Marshal MacMahon's forces reached Stenay under such disastrous circumstances, Bazaine's army issued from Metz.

#### BATTLE OF NOISSEVILLE.

(August 31st.)

Of the forces then assembled on the right bank of the Meuse, the Third Corps was to cover the right flank of the others while they were advancing; one

division was ordered to surprise the enemy in the south-east, the other three divisions were to march on Noisseville. Three pontoon-bridges were constructed for the rest of the army, and exits prepared towards the heights of St. Julien. The Fourth and Sixth Corps were to cross at six o'clock and take up a position to the right of the Third, from the town of Mey, past Grimont to the Moselle; the Second Corps and the Guards were to follow and form a second line in their rear. The artillery reserves and the cavalry were expected to reach the other side of the Moselle by ten o'clock; the baggage trains were collected on the Isle of Chambière. Thus there should have been, by twelve o'clock, five corps ready to attack the Germans along a mile and a half, from Retonfay to Argancy, where only two German divisions held the line.

As early as seven o'clock in the morning Montaudon's division issued from Fort Queuleu, and proceeding eastward, drove the German outposts back on Aubigny. But this sham attack did not deceive the Germans. The stir in the French camp had been observed quite early, and when the mist cleared off and large bodies of French troops were seen moving in front of Fort St. Julien, an attempt to break through to the north was confidently expected, and measures were immediately taken to prevent it.

The 28th Brigade of the Seventh Corps was dispatched to reinforce Courcelles; thus the 3rd Brigade of the First Corps could be brought nearer to Servigny. The troops of the Tenth Corps, which could be spared from the line of defence on the left bank, were again set moving to return to the right, and the Ninth Corps made ready to begin the intended retreat. The Third Corps and the 1st Cavalry Division were recalled from

Brisy and sent to the plateau of Privat; the Second was to prepare to march at any moment.

The attempt of the French on this occasion proved even less successful than on the 26th; the routes of the Fourth and Sixth Corps met at the bridges, and they only reached their rendezvous at one o'clock, though it was but half a mile beyond; they then renounced the idea of an immediate assault and set about cooking their dinners. A few skirmishes at Aubigny on the east and on the north towards Rupigny came to nothing. The Guards did not arrive till three o'clock; the artillery and cavalry were still absent.

As everything had now quieted down, the Germans came to the conclusion that the attack had been intended for the following day. Not to waste their strength, a part of the reinforcements had already been sent back, when, at about four o'clock, the French guns suddenly opened a heavy fire.

It appears that the Marshal had again assembled all the generals at Grimont, this time to inform them of his plan of attack. It was evident that the French could not advance towards the north before they had cut their way through by an attack on the eastern side, and covered their right flank; for even if they succeeded in breaking through the German lines between Malroy and Charly, they could get no further so long as the Germans were at Servigny, and as their fire swept the plain by the Moselle, which, at that point, is no more than 5000 paces broad, the Marshal could not in any case reckon on getting through with his artillery reserves, which did not arrive on the field until six o'clock; or, indeed, with the baggage trains he had left on the Isle of Chambière. The cavalry corps was still defiling, and could not arrive until nine o'clock in the evening.



The French commander's orders were based on these calculations.

Marshal Le Bœuf received orders to advance with the Second and Third Corps on both sides of the valley of Ste. Barbe, and outflank the 1st Prussian Division at Servigny, from the south; while the Fourth Corps attacked them in front. The Sixth Corps was to attack the Reserve Division at Charly-Malroy. Marshal Canrobert was to command these two corps, the Guards being kept as reserves.

Thus General von Manteuffel had first to oppose Marshals Le Bœuf and Canrobert with a small force against a very superior enemy. This might be done either at Ste. Barbe, a position that was difficult to outflank, in the line of Servigny—Poix—Faily, which, though more exposed, was favorable to the use of artillery. The latter was selected on the advice of General von Bergmann, in command of the artillery and the Landwehr Brigade brought up from Antilly, where its place was taken by the 25th Division. Ten batteries advanced to within 1000 paces of the villages occupied by the infantry. Their fire was so superior to that of the French that the enemy's batteries were soon silenced. The French attack from Rupigny, supported on the flank by three batteries, was for a long time repelled, and as the Prussians had not yet been driven back on Ste. Barbe, the Sixth French Corps deferred for the present any serious attack on the Reserve Division at Malroy-Charly; Marshal Canrobert received orders to advance, for the time being, only against the village of Faily, the northern stronghold of the Servigny position.

Tixier's division therefore set out at 7.30 in the evening from Villers L'Orme, but met with a most obstinate resistance at Faily. The East-Prussians,

though attacked on two sides and pelted with bullets, maintained their position, and for a time were engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter, till the Landwehr Brigade came to their assistance from Bremy.

South of Servigny the French fared far better than in this angle between two bodies of the enemy; their Second and Third Corps, at that point, had only the 3rd Brigade of the First Prussian Corps to deal with as it advanced from Retonfay. Montaudon's and Metman's divisions had pressed on as far as Nouilly, in the valley of the Vallières; Clinchant's brigade stormed the brewery in the teeth of a heavy fire, and by seven o'clock had compelled the defence of Noisseville to retire. Montoy and Flanville were also taken possession of, and the advanced guard of the 4th Brigade thrown back on Coincy and Château Aubigny. The batteries of the 1st Division, after withstanding for a long time the fire of a strong force of tirailleurs from the southern valley, were forced, at about seven o'clock, to retire in échelon to the position held by the infantry at Poix-Servigny, keeping off the pursuing enemy with grape-shot.

But at Poix-Servigny they now found the Prussians had made a stand, although outflanked on their left. Potier's brigade ascended the northern slope of the Vallières valley, but found it impossible to reach Servigny. A moment later Cisse's brigade rushed up from the west, and seized the cemetery outside the village. The French Fourth Corps made a move against the centre of the Prussian position, but without success, for those battalions of the 2nd Brigade which had hitherto been kept in reserve met the attack. The attempt to break through between Poix and Servigny was met by the last reserve battalions of the 2nd Brigade with a counter attack, in which all the

troops at hand at once joined. Amid beating of drums they fell on the French, forced them out of the cemetery, and drove them over the slope.

To reinforce the troops thus engaged, the 3rd Brigade had, at about half-past eight, marched on Noisseville, whence they drove out the small detachment they found in possession, but they subsequently yielded to superior numbers, and withdrew to St. Marais.

The din of battle had now ceased on all sides, and the fight seemed to be ended. The infantry of the 1st Division found quarters in the villages, the artillery had bivouacked, when suddenly, at nine o'clock, a strong body of French were seen through the darkness marching on Servigny. This proved to be Aymard's division; it advanced without firing a shot, and surprised the detachment which occupied the place, ejecting them after a fierce hand-to-hand fight. This attack remained unobserved for some time, even by the troops nearest at hand; but they then rushed to arms, and, pouring in from all sides, drove the French back beyond the churchyard, which was now held by the Germans.

It was now ten o'clock. The 1st Division had kept its ground against an enemy of superior strength; but the French had found their way across the unoccupied ground between the 3rd and 4th Brigades, and threatened the German flank at Servigny from their position at Noisseville.

(September 1st.) The 18th Division, by a night march, crossed from the left to the right bank of the Moselle at four o'clock in the morning and reinforced the two wings in the line of Malroy, Charly, and Bois de Faily, sending a brigade to each. The 25th Division could now retire from Antilly to Ste. Barbe,

where, with the 6th Landwehr Brigade, it formed the reserve of the Poix-Servigny position.

On the morning of the 1st of September a thick mist still shrouded the plain, where all troops stood ready for action.

Marshal Bazaine again pointed out to his generals that, first of all, Ste. Barbe was to be taken, that place being the key to the northern route they intended to pursue; and he added, "failing this, we must stand by our own position." He evidently meant, the position under shelter of the cannons of Metz, and this shows great lack of confidence in his own success.

The 3rd Brigade had deployed on the Saarlouis route as early as five o'clock, to forestall the further progress of the French on the left flank of the 1st Division. Twenty guns swept the plain in the direction of Montoy, and when Noisseville had been for some time under the fire of the artillery of the 3rd (German) Brigade, at seven o'clock the 43rd Regiment stormed the village. A violent fight ensued in and about the houses; two French brigades engaged in the combat, and after a long struggle the regiment was again repelled. The battalions of the 3rd Brigade arrived just as the fight was over, but the attack was not renewed.

When the plan of Marshal Bazaine's attempt was made evident, the 28th Brigade started from Courcelles at six in the morning to reinforce the First Corps; its two batteries silenced those of the French at Montoy and then fired on Flanville. The enemy soon began to abandon the burning village, into which, at nine o'clock, the Rhinelanders marched from the south and the East-Prussians from the north. Marshal Le Bœuf ordered Bastoul's division to make another charge on

Montoy, but the deadly fire of the Prussian artillery compelled them to turn back.

The 3rd Brigade had meanwhile taken up a position parallel with Retonfay, where it was joined by the 28th. The 3rd Cavalry Division was reinforced by the Hessian Horse Brigade, and these troops, with the artillery, which was made up to 114 guns, formed a rampart against any further progress of the Second and Third French Corps.

Everything was now quiet on the right wing of the French army; but the Fourth Corps had been enjoined to await their advance before renewing the attack on the artillery defences and village intrenchments of the French line from Servigny to Poix, as its strength had been tested the day before. At eleven o'clock, after Noisseville had been severely bombarded, the 3rd Prussian Brigade, supported by the Landwehr, advanced from the south and compelled the French to withdraw from the burning village.

Marshal Canrobert, commanding the northern attack, had drawn up his batteries at Chieulles by half-past eight, and their fire, seconded by that of the artillery of the fortress, drove the Germans from Rupigny for a time; but the village was soon retaken.

Tixier's division made two fruitless attempts to seize Faily, when the 36th Brigade of the 18th Division, which had just arrived, combining with the Reserve Division, assumed the offensive, and at ten o'clock drove the French back over the Chieulles stream. They made still another onslaught on Faily, but a sharp flanking fire made this too a failure.

Marshal Le Bœuf, though he still had two divisions at his disposal, retreated before the advance of the 3rd Brigade on his right flank; and when Marshal Bazaine

heard of this he ordered a cessation of hostilities at all other points at about midday.

The 137,000 French of the Army of the Rhine, who had issued from Metz on August 31st, had been repulsed by 36,000 Prussians. For the first time in this war the attack had been opened by the French, while defence fell to the lot of the Germans. That the Germans lost 3400 men against 3000 on the French side, must be attributed to the superior quality of the Chassepot rifle. But the effects of the Prussian artillery proved decisive, and enabled Manteuffel to maintain an unshaken resistance.

The Seventh Corps remained on the right of the Meuse, where the invading line was now strengthened by the arrival of the Thirteenth Corps with the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg.

The Second and Third Corps were again drawn up on the left bank of the river. On the same day and at the same hour, when the destruction of one French army was completed at Sedan, the other returned to almost hopeless interment in Metz. Thus the issue of the war had already been decided after only two months' duration; though the war itself was far from ended.

#### THE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION IN PARIS.

When, in the night of the 4th of September, the news of the defeat at Sedan and the Emperor's surrender became known in Paris, the Legislative Body met for a series of sittings in rapid succession to select an Administrative Committee. Riotous mobs cut these deliberations short by forcing their way into the Chamber and proclaiming the Republic here and at the Hôtel de Ville, amidst the acclamations of the people. Though the troops were under arms in their bar-

racks, the Government till now in power offered no resistance; the Empress left Paris; General Trochu and several members of the Minority in the Chamber combined to form a Government, which they styled "The Government of National Defence and War." "War to the bitter end" was their motto, and the entire nation was called to arms. Not an inch of territory, not a stone of the fortresses was to be yielded up to the enemy.

A Government, devoid of legitimate foundation, must achieve some manifest success, and could not afford to allow the war to end in peace.

Notwithstanding all previous reverses, France was too rich in resources to find herself defenceless yet. General Vinoy was still in the field. The dispersed members of all the corps, the marine troops, and the *Gendarmerie* could rally around him. There was, too, the "Territorial Militia," numbering 468,000 men, an institution due to Marshal Niel, whose far-seeing work of reorganization had been cut short only too soon. Then the Garde Nationale could be called out, as well as 100,000 newly levied recruits. France was thus able to send a million men to the front, without reckoning *Franctireurs* and volunteer corps.

Four hundred thousand Chassepots and 2000 guns lying in store would arm these troops, and the workshops of England, as a neutral power, were ready to complete their outfit as a matter of business.

Such means of war, backed by the active patriotism of the nation, might offer a prolonged resistance if governed by a powerful will. That will was Gambetta's.

As Minister of War, by the French system of government, he was, at the same time, Commander-in-chief, and he certainly would not resign the command. For

a victorious General at the head of the army, under a Republic, would at once have become Dictator in his stead.

M. de Freycinet, also a civilian, served under Gambetta as a sort of Chief of the General Staff, and the energetic, but dilettante, commandership exercised by these gentlemen cost France very dear. Gambetta's rare energy and unrelenting perseverance availed, indeed, to induce the entire population to take up arms, but not to direct these masses on a uniform plan.

Without giving them time to be drilled into fitness for the field, he sent them out with ruthless cruelty, insufficiently prepared to carry out ill-digested plans against an enemy on whose firm solidity all their courage and devotion must be wrecked. He prolonged the struggle with great sacrifice on both sides, without turning the balance in favor of France.

But the German army had still great difficulties to overcome.

The battles it had won had cost it dear; the loss in officers especially was irremediable. Half the army was detained before Metz and Strasburg. The transport and guard of more than 200,000 prisoners required the services of a large part of the new levies in Germany. The frontier fortresses had not indeed hindered the invasion of the German army, but they had to be invested or kept under observation to secure communications with the rear, the forwarding and victualling of troops, and every advance into the enemy's country demanded increased supplies of arms. After the battle of Sedan only 150,000 were available for further operations in the field. There could be no doubt that they must be directed against Paris, as the seat of the new government and the centre of gravity, so to speak, of



the whole country. On the very day of the capitulation of Sedan, arrangements were made for the advance.

To spare the troops, the movement was to be executed on the widest possible front, for of the French corps, only the Thirteenth could detain them. Still, Blanchard's division alone of that corps was still at Mézières; the other two had but just begun their march when they received orders to return.

#### GENERAL VINOY'S RETREAT.

General Vinoy's first anxiety was—very rightly—to reach Paris with the least possible loss. This was not very easy to accomplish, for the Sixth Corps (Prussian), which had taken no part in the battle of Sedan, was at Attigny in such a position that, between that place and Laon, it could intercept any line of the French retreat by reaching the spot before, or as soon as the enemy. General von Tümpling, with the 12th Division, had taken possession of Rethel by the evening of September 1st, thus closing the high road to Paris. Only extraordinary forced marches and a succession of happy circumstances could save from destruction Blanchard's division, which had already spent all its ammunition in small conflicts.

General Vinoy supplied the troops with several days' rations, enjoined a strict observance of order and discipline, and during the night of September 2nd began his retreat to Rethel, where he expected to find Créa's division; this, however, availing itself of the part of the railway which was still undestroyed, had already gone on to Soissons.

It was still quite early when the French column came into collision with the 5th and presently with the 6th Prussian Cavalry Divisions, without being seriously attacked. It was not till about ten o'clock,

and within a mile and a half of Rethel, that the French General learned that that place was in the hands of the Germans, and decided on making a *détour* by Novion-Porcien. He sent his rear guard against the enemy's horse artillery, but seeing hardly anything but cavalry in front, they soon resumed the march. They reached Novion, where they bivouacked, at about four in the afternoon.

General von Hoffmann had taken up a position at Rethel, awaiting the French, of whose approach he had been warned. Having ridden out in person, he became aware of their deviation from the route, and at four in the afternoon marched on Ecly, where he arrived late in the evening. Part of his troops reconnoitred the country round Château Porcien.

General Vinoy, on learning that this road too was closed, left his bivouacs at half-past one in the morning, leaving the fires burning, and set out for a second night's march in pouring rain and total darkness.

At first he took a northerly direction, to reach Laon at any rate by the cross-roads. Knee-deep in mud and often alarmed, but without coming into collision with the enemy, he arrived at Château Porcien at half-past seven in the morning, and halted for a couple of hours. The state of the roads compelled him now to proceed in a southerly direction, and when the head of his column reached Séraincourt, the sound of firing told him that the rear had been attacked by the Germans.

The Prussian cavalry had, early in the day, discovered the French line of march, but when this important information reached him, General von Hoffmann had left Ecly. He had already started to look for the enemy at Novion-Porcien, where he was naturally to be expected after his first night-march, but

at half-past nine had found the place deserted. Thus, during the forenoon, the German and French division had crossed on the road at a distance of about a mile apart. The thick weather had prevented them seeing each other. General Vinoy got, this day, as far as Montcornet, in what condition may be imagined. The 12th Division (German) had persevered in its westward march, but had only come up with the rear of the fast-retreating enemy, and took up quarters in Chaumont-Porcien.

This march of the enemy ought not indeed to have remained unobserved and unchecked under the eye of two cavalry divisions, but these were, it must be owned, called off at an unfortunate moment.

It was, in fact, in consequence of a report that the French forces were assembled at Rheims, that the Commander-in-chief of the Third Army had ordered the immediate return of the Sixth Corps and the two divisions of cavalry. These at once relinquished the pursuit, and General von Tümpling ordered his two infantry divisions to march at once on Rheims; the 11th, which was holding Rethel, set out forthwith. General von Hoffmann, on the contrary, followed up the French, on his own responsibility, as far as was possible without any cavalry to overtake them. It was not till the following day that the 12th reached the Suippe.

(September 4th.) General Vinoy made his way northward again, beyond Marle, where he received the news of the Emperor's surrender and the outbreak of the revolution in Paris. It was now of the greatest importance that he should arrive there, and by the 13th he had reached the capital with the two other divisions of his corps from Laon and Soissons.

THE THIRD ARMY AND THE ARMY OF THE MEUSE MARCH  
ON PARIS.

While all this was going on, the Germans, on the 4th September, had begun their advance on Paris. The first thing to be done was to re-form the mass of troops assembled in the cramped space by Sedan. The Third Army, of which the Eleventh and the First Bavarian Corps were still there, had to make two long marches to the front in order that the Army of the Meuse could occupy their old lines in its rear.

The news of the great concentration of troops at Rheims was soon proved to be unfounded. So early as on the 4th, companies of Prussian horse had entered the excited and hostile city, the 11th Division arrived that afternoon, and on the following day the German King's head-quarters were established in the town which had seen so many French kings crowned.

On the 10th of September the Third Army had reached a line from Dormans to Sezanne, and the Sixth Corps had pushed forward to Château Thierry. The Army of the Meuse, after failing in an attack on Montmédy, occupied a line between Rheims and Laon. Cavalry sent far in advance protected this exceptionally wide marching front. They everywhere found the inhabitants in a very hostile frame of mind; the franc-tireurs attacked with conspicuous daring, and could only be ejected from several villages by a dismounted force. The roads were in many places broken up and the bridges destroyed.

At the approach of the 6th Cavalry Division, Laon capitulated. Some small detachments of troops of the line were taken prisoners, with twenty-five guns, 100 stand of arms and stores were plundered, and 2000 Gardes Mobiles dismissed to their homes on parole.

Friend and foe were still collected in large numbers in the courtyard of the citadel when the powder magazine blew up, having probably been intentionally fired, and did great damage, both there and in the town. The Prussians had fifteen officers and ninety-nine men killed and wounded; among the wounded were the General of Division and his staff officer. The French lost 300 men; the commandant of the fortress was mortally wounded.

On the 16th the Army of the Meuse stood on the Ourcq, between Nanteuil and Lèzy, the 5th Cavalry Division was at Dammartin, the 6th had advanced beyond Beaumont, sending patrols as far as St. Denis. The Third Army occupied the ground from Meaux to Comte Robert. Strong pontoon bridges had been thrown over the Marne at Trilport instead of those which had been blown up, and by the 17th, the Fifth Corps had already reached the Upper Seine.

To secure the pontoon works at Villeneuve-St.-Georges, the 17th Brigade was sent down the right bank of the Seine towards Paris, and at Mont Mesly was met by Créa's division, ordered out by General Vinoy to bring in or destroy a large store of supplies. The fight which ensued ended in the French being driven back under shelter of the guns of the fort at Charenton.

The Second Bavarian Corps also arrived on the Seine on this day and bridged it over at Corbeil. The 2nd Cavalry Division were observing Paris from Saday. The King removed his head-quarters from Château Thierry to Meaux. The complete investment of Paris was now imminent.

The works completed by Louis Philippe effectually protected the city from being taken by storm. The armament consisted of 2627 guns, including 200 of

the heaviest calibre of naval ordnance. Each had 500 rounds of shot, and there were 3,000,000 kilogrammes of powder in the magazines. In numerical strength, besides the Thirteenth Corps arrived from Mézières, a new corps, the Fourteenth, had been raised in Paris itself. These 50,000 troops of the line, with 14,000 highly efficient and trustworthy marines and sailors, and about 8000 gend'armes, customs officers, and chasseurs, formed the kernel of the defence. There were besides 115,000 Gardes Mobiles which had been called into the capital at an earlier date. The National Guard was divided into 130 battalions which, however, being defectively equipped and ill-disciplined, could only be employed in the defence of the inner circle of walls. The volunteers, though numerous, proved for the most part useless.

On the whole, the besieged force may be reckoned at 300,000, twice as many as the besiegers as yet on the spot, who had only about 60,000 men available, with 5000 cavalry and 124 field batteries. There were five floating batteries on the Seine and nine section-built gun-boats, originally intended for the Rhine; on the railway line a few guns were mounted on armored cars.

Great difficulties attended the victualling of two million human beings for any length of time; however, the French had succeeded in bringing 3000 oxen, 6000 pigs, and 180,000 sheep into Paris, with considerable stores of other provisions, so that they were sure of holding out for six weeks at least.

The commands issued from the head-quarters at Meaux were that the Army of the Meuse should invest the capital on the right bank of the Seine, and the Third Army on the left bank. As a general rule, the troops were to remain beyond the range of fire from

the forts, but, short of that, were to keep as close as possible so as to reduce the line of blockade. The connection of the two armies was to be secured above Paris by several bridges across the river, and below the city, by the cavalry occupying Poissy. The Third Army were to scour the country about Orleans. In case of any attempt to relieve the capital, it was to march up within a short distance and then, leaving the blockade to the weaker forces, to use all its strength to defeat the enemy. Without some relief from the outside, the mere investment of the city must reduce it to capitulate, though probably not for some weeks, or even months. The most obvious alternative was a bombardment.

At the time when Paris was fortified, it was inconceivable that the improvements in artillery would double or treble the range of fire. The outworks, especially to the south, were at so short a distance from the main work that the latter could easily be reached by the fire of heavy batteries.

The Germans have been blamed for not having recourse at an earlier date to this form of attack; but this shows a deficient appreciation of the difficulties in the way. It may safely be asserted that an attack on a large fortified place in the heart of the enemy's country must always be impossible so long as the invader is not master of the railways or waterways, to bring in endless supplies of the necessary *matériel*. Its mere conveyance by ordinary highways, even for a short distance, is a gigantic undertaking. At this period the German army had the control of only one railway on French soil, and this was fully occupied in the transport of supplies for the forces in the field; food, reinforcements, and arms to bring in; the wounded, sick, and prisoners to carry back. Even

this ended at Toul; and the attempt to construct a *ceinture* line outside that fortress was rendered impossible by the nature of the ground. A scarcely inferior obstacle was the complete destruction of the Nanteuil tunnel, which would probably take many weeks to restore.

Even then, for the further transport beyond Nanteuil of 300 heavy guns, with 500 rounds of shot, 4500 large wagons would be needed, such as were not in use in the country to be traversed, and 10,000 horses. Thus a bombardment was, in the first instance, not to be thought of, and, in any case, the object of it would not be to destroy Paris, but to exert a final pressure on the inhabitants; and this would be more effectual when a long blockade had shaken the resolution of the besieged than it was likely to be at the beginning.

(September 8th.) In obedience to the supreme command, the Generals of Division began the march on the enemy's capital. By the 18th the Army of the Meuse, by a deviation to the left, had brought the Twelfth Corps as far as Claye, the Guards to Mitry, and the Fourth Corps to Dammartin, one march from Paris.

All the villages beyond St. Denis were occupied by the French. It seemed as though the blockade on the north side would be opposed, and the Crown Prince of Saxony took measures to follow up and support the Fourth Corps, which led the way, on the following day. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions, hastening on to Pontoise, were reinforced by two companies of Jägers and a pontoon train, and, after constructing a bridge, they crossed the Oise.

The Fifth Corps of the Third Army passed over the Seine at Villeneuve-St.-Georges and advanced to Palaiseau and the Upper Bièvre. The advanced guard



came into collision with the French cavalry brigade under Bernis. The (German) 47th Regiment at once proceeded to attack, and stormed the walled farmsteads of Dame-Rose and Trivaux. But on the southern skirt of the wood of Meudon the whole of the Fourteenth Corps was drawn up; on its left stood a division of the Thirteenth Corps. The regiment retired on Petit-Bicêtre without being pursued, and there took up a defensive position.

The 2nd Bavarian Corps marched from Corbeil by Longjumeau to a line parallel with the Fifth, and on the right the Sixth occupied both banks of the Seine. These corps, too, had several brushes with the French.

The Würtemberg Division at Lagny and Gournay was to cross the Marne forthwith, and so establish communication between the two armies.

## INVESTMENT OF PARIS.

(September 19th.)

On the 19th of September the Fourth Corps, advancing to St. Brice, met with no opposition; they drove out the enemy's troops from the neighboring villages under cover of the heavy guns of St. Denis, and advanced on the Lower Seine. The Guards followed them as far as Dugny, and took possession of the Morée, which was dammed up at its confluence with the Marne, and afforded good protection for the investing lines along a considerable distance. Further to the left the Twelfth Corps took up a position on the Marne, and on the left bank of that stream the Würtemberg Division advanced to Champigny.

On this day the Fifth Corps of the Third Army advanced to Versailles in two columns. The 47th Regiment was again told off to cover the march on

the French front. The enemy evidently were anxious to remain masters of the important heights in front of the fortifications of Paris, and it was still early in the morning when two divisions of the Fourteenth Corps (French) marched out of the neighboring wood of Meudon on Petit-Bicêtre and Villacoublay. Supported by a strong force of artillery, which set the farm-buildings of Petit-Bicêtre on fire, they drove back the German posts; but at Villacoublay the Fifth presently came up to Abbaye aux Bois to support the Second Bavarian Corps.

The left flank brigade of the Bavarians had crossed the columns marching on Versailles in the valley of the Bièvre; but the sound of fighting on the field of battle induced General von Dietl to advance with his detachments, which had come up singly, on both sides of the high road to Bicêtre. By charging at the same time with the Prussians, who were still fighting in the Bois de Garenne, they succeeded in repulsing the French at Pavé-blanc. Meanwhile the enemy, by half-past eight, had formed a front of fifty guns, and three regiments of foot advanced to renew the attack on Petit-Bicêtre and Bois de Garenne. They were received with a destructive musketry fire, and not even General Ducrot's personal influence could persuade the troops, who were young recruits, to go forward. The Zouaves posted at the farm of Trivaux were finally thrown into such confusion by the German shell that they fled wildly back on Paris.

The General had to give up the attempt. His divisions retired in evident disorder on Clamart and Fontenay, under cover of the artillery and of the cavalry, which had steadily stood fire; the German foot pursued them. The Bavarians stormed Pavé-blanc under a heavy fire of their guns, the Prussians

retook Dame-Rose after a short struggle, and forced their way past the farm of Trivaux into the wood of Meudon. The French still held the heights of Plessis-Piquet, which were to them of such vast importance and easy of defence, as well as the bastion at Moulin-de-la-Tour, where nine batteries were at once placed in position, and their fire commanded the whole of the western field of operations.

The main body of the Bavarians had meanwhile advanced to the south, and, marching on, after nine o'clock, on Fontenay aux Roses, they came under a hot fire from the hill, as well as a flanking fire from a fort on Hautes-Bruyères. Being informed of the situation at the scene of conflict on the plateau of Bicêtre, General von Hartmann at once sent forward a detachment of artillery as a reinforcement, and gave orders for the 5th Brigade to effect communication on the left, at Malabry. As soon as this brigade had deployed under a hot fire of Chassepots and artillery between Pavé-blanc and Malabry, General von Walther proceeded to attack Plessis-Piquet. After making a short stand, the artillery retired round the park wall, and then the infantry came out from the wood of Verrières, and, after a brief but sharp struggle, took possession of the southern mill. After half an hour's firing, the Bavarians advanced on Hachette by rushes, and broke into the park of Plessis. The French kept up a hot fire from the fort of Moulin de la Tour on the spots seized by the Germans, by which the Bavarian field batteries suffered severely; but they still effectively supported the further advance of the infantry, who now got close in under the earthworks. However, the defenders were already on the point of retiring, and when the Bavarians got up, at about three o'clock, they found the place deserted and guns left in position.

Caussade's division had left Clamart to march on Paris; Maussion's had abandoned the hill of Bagneux, in consequence, it was said, of mistaken orders, and Hugues' division was with difficulty brought to a stand at the Fort of Montrouge.

The Bavarian Corps now took up the position it had won on the plateau of Bicêtre to the right of the Fifth Corps. The fight had cost the Bavarians 265 men and the Fifth Corps 178; the French lost 661 killed and above 300 prisoners.

The condition in which the French Fourteenth Corps returned to Paris caused such dismay that General Trochu found himself obliged to withdraw a division of the Thirteenth from Vincennes for the defence of the city fortifications.

It was subsequently supposed that it would have been possible to capture one of the forts as early as on this day, by forcing a way in upon the heels of the enemy; and so very appreciably shortening the siege. But the forts did not open their gates to shelter fugitives, to whom those of the capital were always open. The scaling of walls eighteen feet high can never be done without much preparation. Besides, such perilous attempts cannot be made to order; they can only be achieved in a propitious moment by those who are on the spot. In this case almost certain failure would have endangered the important success just obtained.

The Fifth Corps had meanwhile proceeded on its way to Versailles; a few National Guards, who had collected at the entrance to the town, were driven off and disarmed by the German Hussars. The 9th Division held the eastern road out of the town, the 10th was encamped at Rocquencourt, and strong outposts were placed on the Bougival-Sèvres line. The 18th Brigade, which remained at Villacoublay to support

the Bavarians in case of need, was only moved forward at nightfall.

The 3rd Division of the Bavarian Corps was left on the heights opposite Plessis-Piquet, its outposts extending towards the wood of Meudon, where the French were still in possession of the château, and the sappers at once converted the trenches at La Tour-du-Moulin so as to front north. The 12th Division was encamped at Tousenay, and to the rear as far as Chatenay.

The main body of the Sixth Corps had taken up a position at Orly, its outposts extending from Choisy-le-Roi past Thiais to Chevilly. Maud'huy's division attempted to repulse them at this village, but without success. A brigade of the same corps at Limeil, on the right bank, was engaged in skirmishing with the French at Créteil. Within touch, further to the right, the Würtemberg Division occupied the banks of the Marne from Ormesson to Noisy-le-Grand, and behind that place the pontoon bridge at Gournay assured communication with the Saxon Corps.

Thus on the 19th of September the blockade of Paris was complete on all sides. Six army corps on a line of eleven miles were drawn up immediately in front of the enemy's capital, in some places within range of his guns, and protected in rear by a large force of cavalry.

#### FIRST NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE.

In full expectation of a battle to the north of Paris, the King had ridden out to join the Guards, and in the evening head-quarters were moved to Ferrières.

Here Monsieur Jules Favre made his appearance to negotiate for peace on the basis of "not a foot of soil." He believed that, after so many victories and such

heavy losses, the Germans would be satisfied with a sum of money. It need not be said that such proposals could not be considered, and only the possibility of granting an armistice was seriously discussed.

It was to the political interest even of Germany to afford the French the opportunity of establishing a government by their own free and legalized election; a government which should have full right and powers to conclude a peace; for the self-constituted Government at that time ruling in Paris was the offspring of a revolution, and might at any moment be strangled by a revolution. But, from a military point of view, every pause in the operations of war was a disadvantage. It would give the French time to push forward their preparations, and by raising for a time the siege of Paris, would enable the capital to obtain the most necessary supplies.

The armistice could, therefore, only be granted in consideration of an equivalent. To secure supplies to the invading army, Strasburg and Toul, which intercepted communications by railway, must be given up. The siege of Metz was to be maintained; but with regard to Paris, either the blockade was to continue, or, if it were raised, one of the forts which commanded it was to be held by the Germans. The Chamber of Deputies was to be at full liberty to meet at Tours.

These conditions, especially the surrender of the fortified towns, were absolutely rejected by the French, and the negotiations broken off. A week later Toul and Strasburg were in the hands of the Germans.

#### THE TAKING OF TOUL.

(September 23rd.)

As soon as the German coast seemed free from any danger of an invasion of French troops, the 17th Di-

vision, left on guard there, was ordered to join the forces in France. It arrived before Toul on September 12th.

This place, in itself impregnable, but commanded by neighboring heights, had till now been invested by part of the troops of the Third Army, and shelled by the guns seized at Marsal and with field-guns, but without any particular effect. The infantry, on the other hand, had established a footing behind the railway embankment and in the suburbs quite close to the foot of the glacis, so that sorties were rendered almost impossible. In view of these circumstances half the division was ere long sent to Châlons, where sixteen battalions and fifteen squadrons were barely sufficient to deal with the extremely hostile demeanor of the country people, to keep the roads open and keep open communications with Germany. Thus only seven battalions, four squadrons, and four field-batteries were left outside Toul.

On the 18th there arrived from Nancy by railway ten guns of 15 cm. bore and sixteen of 12 cm. bore. It was decided to direct the attack on the place, on its western face, which was enfiladed from Mont-St.-Michel, and to breach the south-west bastion; but first an attempt was to be made to reduce the place by the shorter process of an artillery attack.

On the night of the 23rd platforms for the siege artillery were constructed by the infantry; three on Mont-St.-Michel, seven on the heights on the left bank of the Moselle, and one on the right bank. Next morning sixty-two guns opened fire, and by half-past three the white flag was flying from the Cathedral.

The place surrendered on the 23rd, on the same conditions as had been granted to Sedan. A hundred and nine officers were released on parole, 2240 rank and file

were taken prisoners. Six companies took possession of the city that evening; on the whole, it had suffered little.

Twenty-one heavy guns, about 3000 stand of arms, and large stores of provisions and forage were seized.

#### THE SIEGE OF STRASBURG.

(September 28th.)

Immediately after the victory at Wörth, the reduction of Strasburg became a primary object to the Germans. This strong position, as a bridge-head commanding the Rhine, was a standing threat to Southern Germany.

When Marshal MacMahon evacuated Alsace, only three battalions of the line were left with the commandant of Strasburg. Stragglers escaping from various regiments engaged at Wörth, the remnants of some four battalions and relief detachments, and of the Garde Mobile and National Guards, had, however, increased the garrison to 23,000 men. There was a complete absence of engineers, but 130 marine infantry formed a company of trustworthy men; the armament of guns was also ample.

So early as on the 11th of August the Baden contingent had been detailed to observe Strasburg. Notwithstanding their small number, they had advanced unchecked on the plain known as Ruprechts Au, as far as the Rhine and the canal; had occupied the village of Schiltigheim, almost within rifle range of the fortifications; and, after preparing it for defence, pushed forward into the suburb of Königshofen.

In the course of eighteen days the Landwehr Guard arrived, under the command of General von Werder, and the 1st Reserve Division, with one cavalry



brigade, 46 battalions, 24 squadrons, and 18 field-batteries; followed by a siege-train of 200 field-pieces and 88 mortars, with 6000 foot artillery and ten companies of sappers and miners; 40,000 men in all.

The unloading of the guns brought from Magdeburg, Coblenz, and Wesel was begun on August 18th by a detachment of the Railway Battalion, at the station of Vendenheim.

The engineers' depôt was established at Hausberge, a gun-carriage depôt at Lampertsheim, and magazines were constructed. The city was blockaded on all sides, and a field telegraph kept up communication between the posts.

To attain the desired end with the least possible delay, an attempt was made, contrary to the advice of General Schultz, of the engineers, though with consent from head-quarters, to force the town to surrender by means of a bombardment. The request to remove the women and children had to be refused.

The erection of the batteries for bombardment in the dark, wet nights was attended with great difficulties. Meanwhile only the field-guns could fire on the fortress; however, the batteries whose armament of heavy pieces was complete were able to open fire on the night of the 24th-25th; and part of the town was soon in flames. Kehl, on the right bank of the river, was also set on fire by shell.

The Bishop of Strasburg came out to the outposts at Schiltigheim to crave quarter for the citizens. Much as the injury of a German town was to be regretted, as the Prelate was not empowered to make terms, the firing had to be continued through the night of the 25th, when it was at its hottest. At the same time, it was fully acknowledged at head-quarters in Mundolsheim that the end would not be attained by

these means, and that the more deliberate method of a regular siege must be tried. General von Mertens was placed in command of the engineering operations, General Decker of the artillery.

During the night of the 29th-30th of August the first parallel was opened very near the glacis, and thence extended from the Rhine and Marne canal, past the churchyard of St. Helena, to the Jewish cemetery at Königshofen.

The number of batteries on the left bank of the Rhine was soon increased to 21; on the right bank to 4; so that 124 guns of the heaviest calibre were ready in intrenched positions to begin the duel with the guns of the fortress. Further preparations for attack were directed against bastions Nos. 11 and 12 on the north-west salient of the fortress. In the night of August 31st the second parallel was occupied without opposition. A strong sortie of fourteen companies of the garrison was driven back at daybreak on the 1st September from the island of Waken, and from Kronburg and Königshofen.

The forts now opened a sharp fire, sending such a storm of projectiles down on the siege works that they had to be abandoned, till at about nine o'clock the German artillery had silenced the French guns. A second attack followed on the 3rd September, which was not repulsed before it had reached the second parallel.

A short truce was granted at the request of the commandant, to allow of the burial of the dead lying outside the trenches. And on this day a grand *feu-de-joie* announced to the besieged the fall of Sedan.

Incessant rain had filled the trenches of the second parallel, 2400 paces in length, ankle-deep with water, and it was not till the 9th that they were completely repaired. Five batteries from the first parallel were

moved to the front. Special batteries had to be constructed for the attack of lunette No. 44, which flanked all the siege works. These soon silenced its guns, and it was abandoned by the French.

The Germans had now got 96 mounted field-pieces and 38 mortars in full fire, at a very short range.

Each gun fired twenty grape-shot a day and ten shrapnel every night. The large Finkmatt Barracks were destroyed by fire, and the Steinthor Gate was so much injured that it had to be buttressed up with sandbags. The garrison withdrew the guns behind the parapet, and only fired their mortars. Nevertheless, to carry on the siege works the sap-rollers had to be called into requisition.

When the French discovered that mining galleries had been constructed in front of lunette No. 53, Captain Ledebour was let down by ropes into the trenches, and with the help of his sappers removed the charges of powder.

During the night of the 13th, the crest of the glacis between lunettes 52 and 53 was reached. The crowning of the covered way was begun, by means of double saps with traverses, and finished in four days.

The attack henceforth was exclusively directed against bastion No. 11.

To divert the water from the moat the sluices by the Judenthor (gateway) must be destroyed. They were invisible from any part of the scene of operations, and the work could only be very inefficiently done by artillery at a distance of a quarter of a mile. Detachments of the 34th Fusilier Regiment, therefore, on the 15th, marched on the sluices under a heavy rifle fire from the besieged, and destroyed the dam.

The island of Sporen was at the same time occupied by the Baden Corps.

When the mortar-batteries had for the most part been moved up to the second parallel, the guns were also advanced to the second position, and the rifle-pit detachments did such execution by their excellent practice that the French never dared show themselves by daylight.

The inner wall of lunette No. 53 could only be hit by indirect fire; but 1000 shells made a breach, and on the 19th of September two mines were fired which blew up the counterscarp and laid it level with the water-line. The Germans immediately began laying a fascine-made dam across the moat. A party sent over in boats found the work abandoned. The gorge was closed under heavy fire from the ramparts, and the parapet turned so as to oppose the fortress.

The next lunette, No. 52, was merely an earthwork, and the attack had already been pushed forward as far as the edge of the moat, but blinded saps had first to be thrown up and covered in with rails, as a protection against the heavy fire of shell from bastion No. 12.

The construction of a dam of fascines or earth, more than sixty paces across, and in water more than breast-high, would have taken a long time; so it was decided to make a cask-bridge of beer-barrels, of which a quantity had been found in Schiltigheim. This work was begun at dusk on the 21st, under no better protection than a screen of boards to prevent observation, and it was finished by ten o'clock. Here again the defenders had not expected that the wall would be scaled, and this lunette too was immediately prepared for further attack. Both lunettes were now furnished with batteries of mortars and guns to silence the fire from the ravelins and counter-guards of the front of attack, against which five dismounted guns and counter-batteries were also directed.

During the night of the 22nd the Germans advanced, partly by a flying sap and partly by the sap-roller from lunette No. 52, and at once proceeded to take up a position on the crest of the glacis in front of counter-guard No. 51. A breaching fire was opened against the eastern side of bastion No. 11, and the western side of bastion No. 12, and the splinters of stone compelled the French to abandon the counter-guards. The walls of bastion No. 11 fell in on the 24th, after a shelling of 600 rounds. The breach in the earthwork at the angle, which remained standing, was postponed till the storming of the place.

In bastion No. 12 it was more difficult to make a breach, because of the limited means for observing the effect of the fire. It was not till the 26th that a breach of thirty-six feet wide was made, after firing 467 minié shells. And even now, to really storm the place, the deep moat surrounding the bastion must be crossed.

News of the fall of the Empire had by some means reached Strasburg, but General Uhrich would not listen to the prayers of the citizens that he would put an end to their sufferings. The Republic was proclaimed.

The siege had lasted thirty days, but the place was still well supplied with food and stores; the garrison was not materially weakened by the loss of 2500 men, but their heterogeneous elements prevented any action in large bodies outside the walls. From the first the small blockading force had been allowed to approach close to the works; and the one moment when the artillery of a fortress has the advantage over the enemy had not been fully utilized.

The German artillery had proved much the stronger, both as regards *matériel* and in its advantageous employment. Under protection of its fire the sappers

and infantry carried on the works with equal courage and caution, never swerving from the object in view. The storming of the inner wall was now imminent, and no relief from outside could be hoped for.

On the 27th of September, in the afternoon, the white flag was seen flying from the Cathedral tower; firing ceased and the engineering works were stopped.

At two in the morning the capitulation was signed, on the same conditions as at Sedan. Five hundred officers and 17,000 men were made prisoners, but the officers, if they chose, were free on parole. The National Guards and franc-tireurs were dismissed, after laying down arms and pledging themselves to fight no more. All the cash in the bank, 1200 guns, 200,000 small arms, and considerable stores proved valuable trophies.

At eight o'clock in the morning of the 28th companies of Prussian and Baden troops mounted guard at the gates (the National, the Fischer, and the Austerlitz gates). The French garrison marched out at the National Gate, General Uhrich at their head. At first the march was conducted in good order, but before long numbers of drunken men broke the ranks and refused to obey, or threw down their arms. The prisoners were taken first to Rastatt, under the escort of two battalions and two squadrons.

The old German town, which had been seized by France in time of peace nearly 200 years before, was now restored by German daring to German rule.

The besiegers had lost 39 officers and 894 men. The city, of course, had suffered considerably. Four hundred and fifty houses were utterly destroyed, 10,000 inhabitants were roofless, nearly 2000 killed and wounded. The museum and picture gallery, town hall, theatre, new church, gymnasium, Commandant's

residence, and a public library of 200,000 volumes had been burnt.

The noble Cathedral showed many traces of shot, and the citadel was a heap of ruins. Under the wreck of the west front of the fortifications lay shattered guns.

The fall of Toul and of Strasburg made a not unimportant change in the conduct of the war. Considerable forces were now free for other uses, and transport by railway could be effected much nearer to the armies.

The *matériel* which was no longer required at Strasburg could not indeed be at once employed for the artillery attack on Paris; it needed considerable additions, and was to do duty meanwhile in the reduction of several smaller places.

The newly-opened railway line was used at once to convey the Landwehr Guards Division to assist in blockading Paris. A new army corps, the Fourteenth, was created out of the Baden Division with a brigade composed of the 30th and 34th Prussian Regiments, and one cavalry brigade; and this, under the command of General von Werder, marched on the Upper Seine. The 1st Reserve Division remained in occupation at Strasburg.

#### OPERATIONS ROUND PARIS TO 18TH OF OCTOBER.

The Government, in the now closely-blockaded capital, could not make themselves heard and obeyed in the provinces. They therefore decided on sending two of their members to the scene of deliberations at Tours.

Even these could only quit Paris in a balloon. One of these delegates was Gambetta, whose restless energy soon made itself conspicuously felt, and for as long as the war lasted.

Monsieur Thiers, meanwhile, had visited every European court to invite some intervention in favor of France. After the failure of the attempt of September 19th the feeling in Paris was against any great offensive demonstrations; but the troops of the line still remained outside the walls under protection of the forts. The divisions of the Thirteenth Corps were encamped on the south side and on the plains of Vincennes; the Fourteenth were at Boulogne, Neuilly, and Clichy, behind the Seine, with Mont Valérien in their front. This fort was held by two battalions of the line, after the Gardes Mobiles had fled, on the 20th, from that perfectly impregnable stronghold, in great disorder back into Paris. The northern front of the city was still defended by the Gardes Mobiles.

On the German side the posts of the Army of the Meuse, which were to be occupied and defended under all circumstances, extended from Chatou, along the Seine, to the heights of Montmorency, and from the Morée and the skirts of the forest of Bondy as far as the Marne. In connection with these were the lines of the Würtemberg contingent from Noisy-le-Grand, across the Joinville peninsula to Ormesson. To fill the gap from thence to Villeneuve-St.-Georges the Eleventh Corps arrived from Sedan on the 23rd, and the 1st Bavarian Corps occupied Longjumeau for security against Orleans. The Sixth Corps could now be transferred to the left bank of the Seine, where the line of defence extended along the wooded heights south of Paris to Bougival.

The head-quarters, occupied by the King and the Third Army, were at Versailles; those of the Army of the Meuse were transferred to Vert-Galant. Numerous bridges connected the various portions of the forces, telegraphs and signal lights insured their rapid



concentration, and every movement of the French was watched from posts of observation.

There was no lack of quarters for the men. Every village was deserted; but the difficulty of obtaining supplies was all the greater. The fugitive inhabitants had driven off their cattle and destroyed their stores; only the wine-cellars seemed inexhaustible. For the first few days all the food needed had to be drawn from the commissariat stores, but ere long the cavalry succeeded in obtaining fresh provisions. High prices and good discipline made traffic safe. Only the advanced companies had to bivouac or build huts, many within range of the fort guns, some even within that of the French rifles. Near St. Cloud, for instance, no one could show himself without becoming a mark for the Chassepots behind the shutters of the houses opposite. The sentries here could only be relieved at night, and sometimes had to remain on duty two or three days at a time. The posts of the Bavarians at Moulin-la-Tour were also much exposed, and the officers on their rounds were always subjected to a sharp cannonade. Le Bourget, which stood within the line of inundation, was especially liable to a surprise. It had been taken on the 20th by a battalion of Guards, at whose approach 400 Gardes Mobiles had fled, leaving all their baggage. Only one company was left there, as it was close under the heavy fire of the neighboring fort.

Some minor sorties from St. Denis met with no success; but detachments of the Sixth Corps (German) vainly endeavored to take up positions in the hamlet of Villejuif or the earthworks on Hautes-Bruyères. They made their way in several times, but always had to retire under the fire of the neighboring forts of Bicêtre and Ivry, and the superior numbers of Maud-

huy's division. The French then placed heavy guns in Bicêtre.

(September 30th.) Early on this day a cannonade of an hour and a half's duration from the southern forts announced a sortie in that direction. By six o'clock two brigades of the Thirteenth Corps (French) had deployed near Thiais and Choisy-le-Roi. Strong parties of tirailleurs drove in the outposts of the Sixth Corps, and forced the field-guns between those two villages to retire; but then the fire of the infantry in occupation checked any further attack on the part of the French. Further to the west a third brigade got into Chevilly and seized the buildings of a manufactory on the road to Belle-Epine; still their determined attack failed to get possession of the whole village.

The 11th Division, in their quarters in the rear, took alarm, and advanced to the support of the 12th. The factory was recovered from the French, and the Prussian batteries now opened fire, and worked such havoc among the enemy as they retired on Saussaye, that under the further attack of the infantry they fled in the greatest disorder to Hautes-Bruyères and Villejuif. A brigade which had forced its way into L'Hay was in the same way repulsed, leaving 120 prisoners, for the most part unwounded. In the farmstead at the north end of Chevilly, however, the French still held their ground with great obstinacy. Not till they were completely surrounded, and had made an ineffectual attempt to force a way out, did they surrender, to the number of about 100.

The whole attempt was defeated by about nine o'clock, and General Vinoy vainly endeavored to incite the diminished battalions at Hautes-Bruyères to return to the charge.

These few morning hours had cost the Sixth Corps

28 officers and 413 men; and the French several times as many.

Two simultaneous feint attacks on Sèvres and on Mesly, on the right bank of the Seine, came to nothing. The German outposts, at first driven in, returned to their posts by about nine o'clock.

After thus failing to force an exit to the south by this sortie, the garrison proceeded to secure the position they held by outworks. They fortified Villejuif and extended their lines from Hautes-Bruyères, past Arcueil to the Mill of Pichon, so that the Bavarian outposts had to be withdrawn somewhat nearer to Bourg-la-Reine.

But throughout the first half of the month of October the garrison of Paris restricted itself, for the most part, to daily cannonades. Guns of the heaviest calibre were directed on the smallest objects. It was waste of ammunition, just as though their object was to get rid of the stores they had by them. If one of the gigantic minié shells happened to fall on a picket, the destruction was of course terrific; but on the whole they did little execution.

Apart from the noise, to which they soon became accustomed, at Versailles, whence none of the residents had fled, it might have been a time of perfect peace. The admirable discipline of the German troops allowed the townfolk to pursue their business undisturbed; the hosts were well paid for the soldiers quartered on them, and the country people could cultivate their fields and gardens in peace. At St. Cloud every room was kept in the same order as when the Imperial family had left it, till the shells from Mont-Valérien reduced that delightful palace, with all its treasures of art, to a heap of charred ruins. It was the French fire too which wrecked the Château of Meudon, the

porcelain factory of Sèvres, and whole villages in the neighborhood. And, without any necessity, the French themselves felled half the Bois de Boulogne.

The blockade was considerably strengthened between the 10th and 16th of October, when the 17th Division arrived from Toul to relieve the 21st at Bonneuil, and the 21st took up a position between the Bavarian and the Fifth Corps, in the line from Meudon to Sèvres, while the Landwehr Guards Division came to occupy St. Germain.

These movements were observed from Paris, and, to clear up the situation, General Vinoy advanced, at nine o'clock on the 18th, with about 25,000 men and 280 guns, on the position held by the Bavarian Corps.

Four battalions of Gardes Mobiles, protected by the fire of the forts, proceeded to attack Bagneux, and forced their way over the battered-in fortifications into the heart of the place, whence the German defenders retired to Fontenay, when, at eleven o'clock, the 10th Regiment of the line (French) had also come up. Reinforced by a fresh battalion, and supported by an effective flanking fire from Châtillon, they now made so firm a stand that the enemy could make no further progress, but began to put Bagneux in a state of defence. Meanwhile the 4th Bavarian Division had formed up, and by about 1.30 General von Bothmer came up from Seeaux and from Fontenay, on both sides at once, on Bagneux. They climbed over the barricades erected by the French, who, however, still offered an obstinate resistance in the northern part of the village.

A French battalion had also made its way into Châtillon, but the Bavarian battalion on guard there held its own until assistance came, and the enemy was driven out of the place after a sharp conflict.

A third brigade seized Clamart, which at that time was not included in the German intrenched lines; but they failed to climb the slopes leading to Moulin-de-la-Tour, although the Germans occupying the plateau there were under fire from the fort.

General Vinoy had convinced himself that a sufficient force was prepared to make head to him at every point, and at three o'clock he decided on giving up the struggle. The French detachments gradually disappeared behind the forts, and had all vanished by dusk. The Bavarians returned to their former positions, and the force at Bagneux was strengthened to two battalions.

France had all this while been arming with zealous haste. Armies of considerable strength were being massed at Rouen and at Evreux, at Besançon, and especially beyond the Loire, of very various composition, no doubt, and with a serious lack of professional officers to drill and discipline them. Great battles were therefore to be avoided; the enemy was to be harassed by constant small engagements.

Thus, towards the end of September, General Delarue had already advanced from Evreux with his troop of scouts (*Eclaireurs de la Seine*) close on St. Germain. But the 6th Cavalry Division, supported by two Bavarian battalions, drove these, too, back across the line to Dreux.

The woods in front of the 5th Cavalry Division were full of detachments of the French, who were, however, repulsed without much difficulty to Rambouillet and Epéron.

Matters looked more serious to the south of Paris, where the 4th Cavalry Division were observing the Loire.

The newly-formed French Fifteenth Corps had as-

sembled at Orleans, in three divisions, 30,000 strong, and they occupied the whole forest belt on the right bank of the Loire. To avert the danger here of being outflanked, the First Bavarian Corps and the 22nd Division of the Eleventh had, as has already been mentioned, started to march on Arpajon and Montchéry as soon as they were released from Sedan; and on the 6th of October they were placed, with the 2nd Cavalry Division, under the command of General von der Tann.

#### THE BATTLE OF ARTENAY.

As soon as General von der Tann had received instructions to act on the offensive against Orleans, he marched, on the 9th of October, to the vicinity of St. Pérvay without meeting any serious opposition, and on the 10th advanced on Artenay. The 4th Cavalry Division covered the right flank, the 2nd remained near Pithiviers, where the French had collected in great force.

But General La Motterouge had on the same day advanced to Artenay with the Fifteenth Corps (French), having the wood in his rear occupied by Gardes Mobiles, so the advanced guards of the two armies met at a short distance to the north of the goal of their march.

While the Bavarian light horse, on the right, drove the French cavalry before them, the infantry deployed across the road close to Dambron. The 22nd Division (German) marched on Dambron with a cavalry division on each flank. Under the fire of the Bavarian batteries, the French had turned off towards Artenay, where the Germans were ready to receive them. Attacked in front and threatened by bodies of horse, at about two o'clock, leaving their tents behind them, they began a retreat, which soon degenerated into

flight. The cavalry seized four field-guns, and took above 250 prisoners. Six hundred more, who had reached Croix-Briquet, surrendered there to the Bavarian infantry.

The German troops had made a long march; General von der Tann therefore called a halt in and around Artenay, and only the advanced guard went on to Chevilly, to proceed to Orleans next day.

## THE ENGAGEMENT AT ORLEANS.

(October 11th.)

The 22nd Division, only 6000 strong, set out on October 11th, on the right of the advancing forces, and drove the French out of several villages partly prepared for defence; it was not till about ten o'clock that they met with any serious opposition, from an intrenched position at Ormes.

The French commander, after the disaster at Artenay, decided on a retreat behind the Loire, and to cover it he placed about 15,000 men on the ground on the right bank of the river, which possessed many essentials towards a good defence.

General von Wittich first marched his 44th Brigade against the French position at Ormes, and then opened fire from seven batteries. His left wing, supported by the Bavarian right, made their way but slowly over the plain to the east of the enemy's position, and various enclosures and buildings had to be stormed and taken as they advanced. This threatening movement on their right flank, however, shook the firmness of the French, and, after some hours' hard fighting, they began to yield. No sooner was this observed by the Germans than two batteries were brought up to within 800 paces, and the 83rd Regiment stormed the place at

two in the afternoon, but with much loss. Detachments of the 43rd Brigade had meanwhile reached the road in the rear of Ormes, and took 800 prisoners. The villages, orchards, and vineyards which line the road to Orleans for above a mile on either side were serious obstacles to the advance of the Germans, and the division did not arrive at Petit-St.-Jean till three o'clock; there they stormed the most advanced buildings.

The Bavarian Corps, which had met with a stout resistance at Saran, pushed forward to Bel-Air, but with great loss, especially among the artillery. Here the nature of the ground did not allow of the alignment of the guns, and the attack came to a standstill; at half-past four the French were still holding their own at Les Aides, till the advance of the 4th Bavarian Brigade on Murlins threatened to cut off their retreat. Then they again made a stand behind the railway embankment, 1000 paces in front of the town, and the station and gas works had also to be taken by storm.

It was five o'clock when General von der Tann led his Reserve Corps, the 1st Bavarian Brigade, to a decisive attempt on Grand-Ormes. The 32nd Prussian Regiment crossed the embankment on the left flank of the French, who now retired to the suburb of St. Jean. The 1st Bavarian Regiment, hurrying up in its rear, was received with a hot fire at the gate of the town; but all the officers led the advance, and by seven o'clock they had reached the market-place.

The French hurried down to the bridge over the Loire, the 43rd Prussian and the 1st Bavarian Brigades seized the principal buildings and the passages across the river; but as darkness fell they gave up all further advance and bivouacked on the squares in the town.



The day had cost the Germans 900 men, the 3rd Bavarian Brigade having suffered most. But their hard-won victory had gained security to the investing troops; and 5000 rifles, ten locomotives, and sixty railway carriages were welcome spoil.

The French rear-guard had lost in small skirmishes and retreats alone 1800 prisoners; but it had covered the retreat of the main body of the Army of the South for a whole day against superior forces, with praiseworthy determination. In an open field, where the skilful wielding of compact masses is indispensable, it would soon have been defeated; but in street fighting, under shelter of the houses, unflinching personal courage is all that is needed, and even the recruits of the newly created French army did not lack that.

On the following day the 1st Bavarian Division took possession of the suburb of St. Marceau, on the further side of the Loire, and advanced to the Loiret. The 2nd Cavalry Division scoured the district of Sologne, the 4th on the right bank kept a lookout to the westward. The Fifteenth Corps (French) had continued to retire to Salbris and Pierrefitte, beyond the Sauldre.

It might certainly have been wished that they could have been followed up to Vierzon and Tours, to destroy the vast stores of arms at the first-named town and disturb the Provisional Government in the other. But it must not be forgotten that, though the French forces had been discomfited at Artenay, favored by the nature of the locality, they had escaped total rout by retreat. A new French corps d'armée, the Sixteenth, had come into existence at Blois, below Orleans, and at Gien, above that city; it had come into collision with the German cavalry by the wood of Marchénoir and before Châteaudun, and the inhabitants and

volunteers appeared so full of confidence that it was to be supposed they counted on fresh support.

So the invaders were compelled to confine their operations to the occupation of Orleans and the line of the Loire; and for this purpose the Bavarian Corps, with the 2nd Cavalry Division, seemed a sufficient force. The 22nd Infantry and the 4th Cavalry Division were recalled to the Third Army, but on their return march they were to disperse the volunteers who had made their appearance at Châteaudun and Chartres.

General von der Tann had the bridges over the Loiret and the Loire prepared for the march, stages were established to Longjumeau, and the Bavarian Railway Corps set to work to restore the line to Ville-neuve.

#### THE TAKING OF SOISSONS.

(October 15th.)

Soissons still hindered the free use of the railway from Rheims, which had been re-opened by the fall of Toul. This fortress had been battered by artillery without success when the Army of the Meuse marched past it on the way to Paris, and since then it had only been kept under observation till October 6th, when eight Landwehr battalions, four squadrons, two batteries, two companies of pioneers, and four of fortress artillery completed the blockade.

Soissons, with its walls eight metres high, was quite impregnable, and damming up the waters of the Crise would preserve it from attack on the south. The south-west front, on the other hand, had only a dry moat, with no counterscrap of masonry; here, too, the town was commanded by Mont-Marion, rising to a height of ninety metres at a distance of less than a

quarter of a mile. On this side, therefore, the artillery was preparing to attack at close quarters, when, on the 11th of October, 26 Prussian siege-guns arrived from Toul, with 170 rounds of ammunition and 10 French mortars; the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg took over the command.

In a clear moonlight night the artillery was got up, with the help of the infantry, on to the heights at St. G enevi e and Belleu; and the batteries on Mont-Marion were constructed and armed. They opened fire simultaneously at six in the morning of the 12th of October.

The besieged answered with great spirit but small results, and the accurate fire of the Prussian artillery soon reduced the French front to silence.

A small breach was visible by next day, and the fire from the fortress was evidently much enfeebled; but the Commandant decidedly rejected the demand that he should capitulate. On the 14th he increased the number of guns on his south front, so that the batteries on St. G enevi e had a hard struggle. The French also labored hard to restore the damaged fortifications, brought more guns up to the ramparts, and filled up the breach with abatis.

But on the 15th these repairs were soon demolished again by the Prussian artillery, and a breach forty paces wide was made. As the fortress still kept up a brisk fire, it was determined to bring the field-batteries within 900 paces of the walls; but at eight in the evening, when this was just begun, the Commandant opened negotiations and surrendered the place on the same terms as Sedan. The garrison marched out next morning, for the most part drunk. A thousand of Gardes Mobiles were dismissed on parole, 3800 soldiers were made prisoners.

The attack had cost 120 men; 128 guns and 8000 small arms were seized as plunder, besides vast stores of provisions.

#### THE STORMING OF CHATEAUDUN.

(October 18th.)

In obedience to instructions, General von Wittich marched on Châteaudun in the afternoon of the 18th, with the 22nd Division. The French troops of the line had already been ordered to retire on Blois, but about 1800 National Guards and volunteers remained, under cover of barricades and walls, to receive the enemy. The infantry attack was also made more difficult by the nature of the ground, and four batteries had to keep up a hot fire for some little time.

It was not till dusk that a general attack was attempted. The defence inside the town made a desperate resistance. House by house had to be seized, the fighting went on late into the night, and a large part of the place was set in flames. The volunteers finally retired, leaving 150 prisoners and abandoning the inhabitants to their fate; and these, though having taken part in the struggle, were let off with a fine.

At noon on the 21st, the division marched on Chartres, where 20,000 French were said to have assembled. The Gardes Mobiles and Marine Infantry advanced to attack, but were repulsed by the fire of seven batteries. The General in command deployed both brigades to the south of the city, and with the assistance of the cavalry, who had been joined by the 6th Division, completely surrounded it. The fate of Châteaudun had been a warning to the municipal authorities, and at three o'clock an agreement was come to, by which

the troops were to be withdrawn, the National Guards to lay down their arms, and the gates to be thrown open.

General Wittich's orders were to remain at Chartres for the present, while the 6th Cavalry Division was to occupy Maintenon, and so cover the investing army to the west of Paris.

Operations had been no less active in the north. The Saxon Cavalry Division, supported by a part of the Army of the Meuse, had in the early part of October driven the *franc-tireurs* and *Gardes Mobiles* beyond the Oise and the Epte on Amiens, taking some hundreds of prisoners. But fresh swarms were constantly coming on, and had to be attacked at Breteuil, Montdidier, and Etrépagny, so that no less than eleven battalions, twenty-four squadrons, and four batteries (German) were by degrees employed in protecting the besieging force on this side of the capital. But by the end of the month the French forces were so regularly disciplined and in such numbers, that for a time the Germans could only hold and defend the line of the Epte.

To the south-east also, in the forest-land of Fontainebleau, the volunteers were hostile, particularly to requisition parties of cavalry; and at Nangis they threatened to obstruct the transport of siege-guns. A small force of *Württembergers* seized Montereau, which, though barricaded, was not defended; the inhabitants gave up their arms, and the victors marched on Nogent. This town was held by a large body of *Gardes Mobiles*. After breaching the walls of the churchyard, the *Württembergers*, in the face of a hot fire, made their way into the place. The French still offered a stout resistance, but finally retired on Troyes, leaving 600 dead and wounded.

The small flying column rejoined its division, having traversed twenty-seven miles (German) of country in six days.

SORTIE TOWARDS MALMAISON.

(October 21st.)

The French capital had now been invested for more than a month, and it seemed not impossible that after such long inactivity it would be reduced to surrender by famine. All the sorties hitherto attempted had only driven the enemy out of the closest vicinity; a new effort was to have a grander object in view. It was to cross the Seine below Paris at Bezons and Carrière, and to effect a simultaneous attack on the position of the Fourth Prussian Corps on the heights of Argenteuil from the south, and from St. Denis on the east. The advance on Rouen was to pass by Pontoise through a district not yet altogether exhausted of supplies; the Army of the Loire was also to proceed by railway to Rouen by Le Mans, thus forming a combined army of 250,000 men.

The Prussian Fifth Corps, it was true, commanded the crossing of the Seine immediately in flank; outposts had several times been seen at Rueil. As a preliminary step, General Ducrot undertook to repulse this force with 10,000 men and 120 field-guns. Thus an intrenched line from Valérien and Carrières would close the peninsula on the south.

Perhaps, in the face of much-dreaded public opinion and the growing restlessness of political parties in Paris, it was more a craving to be doing something than any serious hope which gave rise to such far-reaching schemes. Considerable difficulties had to be met in attacking the enemy's lines, and greater must

inevitably arise if their attack should succeed. It was vain to think of getting through with miles of baggage-trains, which were indispensable to victual an army. Serious embarrassment would ensue when the troops had consumed the three days' rations they could carry with them. To live on the produce of the soil the army must be dispersed; but with the enemy at its heels a close order of march was indispensable. And, in any case, it is hard to see what would have been gained by withdrawing from Paris the forces which had been assembled for its defence. Success could only have been hoped for if an army from without had been so close at hand as to be within immediate touch of the troops marching out.

However, on the 21st of October, after Mont Valérien had all the morning kept up an ineffectual fire, General Ducrot advanced at about one o'clock to attack the position of the Prussian 19th Brigade occupying the line of Bougival—Jonchère—Fohlenkoppel. Fourteen French field-batteries deployed on either side of the Rueil and at the southern foot of Valérien; the infantry advanced in five columns in the rear of this artillery front.

On the German side only two batteries could at first engage in the unequal duel, and one of these, at Villa Metternich, had very soon to retire. The French guns advanced to within 1400 paces of Bougival, and at three o'clock four companies of Zouaves rushed out of Rueil. Being received with a hot fire, they inclined to the left, throwing themselves into the park of Malmaison, and without opposition seized the Château of Buzanval and the eastern slope of the deep ravine of Cucufa. And here one of their batteries was brought into the fighting line to support them.

While the main body of the 9th Division (German)

advanced from Versailles on Vaucresson, the 10th deployed by the ravine and at Villa Metternich. The infantry fire lasted for above an hour, and did much havoc among the French. When at about four o'clock they seemed sufficiently shaken, and a reinforcement of the Landwehr Guard had come up from St. Germain on the left, the German left wing advanced from Bougival over the hill of Jonchère, forced a way into Malmaison in spite of violent opposition, and followed the retreating Zouaves as far as Rueil. The right wing at the same time turning the head of the Cucufa ravine, advanced behind the eastern ridge and drove out the enemy, seized the battery of two guns, and occupied the Château of Buzanval.

The French now retired on all sides, firing ceased by six o'clock, and the 10th Division, which had kept the enemy's advance in check single-handed, returned to their old position.

The struggle had cost the Germans 400 men. The French, on the other hand, had in this luckless enterprise left 500 dead and wounded, and 120 prisoners.

Soon after this the French began to throw up earthworks within 800 paces of the line of the Guards Corps; and on the morning of the 28th, General Bellemare, under cover of the darkness, advanced on Le-Bourget with a force of several battalions.

The companies in occupation, taken completely by surprise, could only retire before such overwhelming numbers, on Pont-Iblon and Blanc-Mesnil. The French barricaded themselves into the place and prepared it for an obstinate defence. A German battalion made a vain attempt that evening to drive them out; it was repulsed with heavy loss. They were equally unsuccessful next day with the fire of thirty field-guns which went up by Pont-Iblon. Now, however, the Crown



Prince of Saxony issued imperative orders to the Guards to recapture Le-Bourget without delay.

## STORMING OF LE-BOURGET.

(October 30th.)

Nine battalions of the 2nd Division of Guards and five batteries were therefore assembled under the command of Lieutenant-General von Budritzki at Dugny, Pont-Iblon and Blanc-Mesnil for a general attack on the place. After the artillery had opened the attack, at about eight in the morning, from the banks of the Morée, the infantry advanced. The country lay perfectly open, and they were under fire, not merely from Le-Bourget, but from the heavy guns of the fort. Queen Elizabeth's Grenadiers, at the head of the centre column, nevertheless made a successful assault at about nine o'clock, surmounting the barricade at the northern entrance, and getting into the village through a breach promptly made by the sappers. The Emperor Francis's Grenadier Regiment advanced on the west and took possession of the park. A hot street-fight ensued, the French firing from the houses, and the colonels of both regiments—Colonel von Zaluskowski and Count Waldersee—both fell. The farms on the left of the road, which had been walled in, were stormed one after another, in spite of a determined defence; the windows of the church, though walled up to a considerable height, were scaled, and a hand-to-hand fight continued inside it. The guns of the Guards forced a way into the glass-works.

At half-past nine the French tried to bring up reinforcements from Aubervilliers and Drancy; but the left German column had meanwhile seized the railway embankment, placed a detachment of the Emperor

Alexander's Regiment to hold it, and forced a way into the village from the south. Two batteries had taken up a position on the Mollette and their fire drove back the French, and even compelled them to evacuate Drancy.

At ten o'clock the French still held the buildings on the north of the Mollette. They were now attacked from the south. The 4th Company of the Alexander Regiment crossed the stream and found their way through one of the breaches made by the sappers into the yard where the French had collected their forces. The bayonet and clubbed arms had to be used against them, and here their colonel—Colonel de Baroche—was killed.

Although by this time—eleven o'clock—the three attacking columns had met in the heart of Le-Bourget, the enemy continued the struggle in houses and gardens with embittered desperation till the afternoon, while all the forts on the north front of Paris shelled the place. It was not till half-past one that the attacking forces could retire in companies to their respective quarters. Two battalions remained to occupy Le-Bourget.

The desperate resistance of the French showed how important they considered this post. The victory had cost the 2nd (German) Division of Guards 500 men. The enemy's loss is not known, but 1200 prisoners were taken.

This new disaster added to the dissatisfaction of the inhabitants of Paris. The revolutionary factions, which at all times lurk in the French capital, came threatening to the front.

Highly-colored reports could no longer conceal repeated failures; respect for the Government was fast dying out. The authorities were accused of incapacity,

nay, of treason. Noisy crowds demanded to be supplied with arms, and a part of the National Guard even joined in the tumult. The Hotel de Ville was surrounded by a mob shouting *Vive la Commune*, and though other troops dispersed these gatherings, the ringleaders, though well known, went unpunished.

On the 31st of October uproarious masses again paraded the streets. As General Trochu had forbidden the sentries at the Hotel de Ville to use their arms, the rebels forced their way in. The Ministers were their prisoners till the evening, when a few battalions who had remained staunch liberated them.

Monsieur Thiers, who had returned from his fruitless journey to the European Sovereigns, thought it was time to re-open negotiations with Versailles. The King was still perfectly willing to grant an armistice, but it was impossible to accede to the conditions demanded by the French, namely, that the city should receive a supply of food, so hostilities had to take their course.

At this time, towards the end of October, the situation on the Moselle had assumed an aspect which essentially modified that of the whole war.

By the exchange of German prisoners for those French who had fought at Sedan, the news of the surrender of Metz, which had immediately followed, was generally known. But Marshal Bazaine had declared that the Army of the Rhine was ready to defend the country against the invaders, and public order against evil passions—a clause which certainly could be interpreted in more ways than one.

It could only have been a satisfaction to the Germans, politically speaking, if there had been in France a supreme authority, besides the pretentious and feeble Government in Paris, with whom to agree as to the

termination of the war. Permission was therefore given for the admission to Metz of a representative of the exiled Imperial family. As the Marshal was unable to show any credentials as holding such an office, General Bourbaki was allowed to pass through the German lines on an embassy to London, where, however, the Empress Eugénie declined to intervene in the already disastrous affairs of France. The General then placed his services at the disposal of the National Defence Government at Tours.

Meanwhile, the army which had been imprisoned in Metz since the battle of Noisseville remained in an attitude of expectation. The necessary provisions for 70,000 inhabitants, including the country-folk who had taken refuge in the city, had originally been enough to last three months and a half; those for the regular garrison were calculated for five months, but for the whole Army of the Rhine they had supplies for only forty-one days, and there were oats for twenty-five days only.

The supplies for the troops could, indeed, be recruited by purchase from the abundant stores of the citizens; but ere long smaller rations of bread were served out, and horses had to be slaughtered for meat, so that most of the cavalry regiments were reduced to two squadrons.

On the German side, victualling 197,326 men and 33,136 horses was a matter of great difficulty. The outbreak of cattle-plague in Germany restricted the importation of live beasts to those procurable from Holland or Belgium. The meat supply had to be supplemented by tinned provisions; and increased rations of oats had to take the place of hay and straw.

The losses of the army had hitherto been made good from the reserves, but the transport of the prisoners

from Sedan alone required the services of fourteen battalions of the blockading force. Thus it had not yet been possible to provide sufficient accommodation behind the trenches. The raw, rainy weather had come on early in the season, and a quarter of the men were still roofless; so that, by degrees, the sick in hospital reached the alarming number of 40,000.

Although fifty heavy guns had been brought up from Germany, they were ineffectual against such a fortress as Metz, since, in consequence of the superior calibre of the fort guns, they could only be fired at night, with frequent change of position. There was nothing for it but to hope for the best, and have patience.

For four weeks already had the besieged been consuming their stores. To replace them in some degree, and, at the same time, to revive the spirit of the troops by some sort of action, the supreme commander decided on fetching in all the provisions to be found in the villages within the line of blockade, under cover of the guns.

At noon on September 22nd, Fort St. Julien opened a heavy fire on the outposts of the First Corps (German). Strong detachments of infantry next advanced on the villages to the east, drove in the pickets, and returned to Metz with the stores they had seized. But a similar attempt on the villages to the north was less successful. Most of the wagons had to return empty, under the fire of the Prussian batteries, quickly brought into position to receive them. At last, on the 27th, a sortie for the same purpose was made to the southward, which led to a series of small conflicts, and the capture of a company, who were surrounded in Pelore by a much stronger force. A simultaneous sally on the left bank of the Moselle was baffled by the fire of the artillery of the besieging force which was hurried to the spot.

Diedenhofen, on the north of Metz, had hitherto only been kept under observation by a small force, which could not hinder the garrison from scouring the country as far as the neighboring frontier, taking many prisoners, seizing several wagon-loads of supplies, and even diverting a whole train of provision trucks into the fortress by the railway from Luxembourg, which they had restored.

In point of fact, the Army of the Rhine, now distant only a day's march, would have found an important base in Metz, if the blockade could only have been broken through. Prince Frederick Charles therefore took good care to strengthen the investing lines to the north, on the right bank of the Moselle. On October 1st the Tenth Corps took up the position hitherto held by Kummer's Reserve Division, which was transferred to the left bank of the river. The First, Seventh, and Eighth closed up to the right, and the Second occupied the space between the Seille and the Moselle; the troops in front of Diedenhofen were also reinforced.

The Marshal had, in fact, once more determined to fight his way to the northward, and on both sides of the river. New bridges were constructed behind St. Julien and from the Island of Chambièrè, the nearest German outposts were driven off to the west and north by a series of daily skirmishes. Under cover of the fort guns the French established themselves firmly in Lessy and Ladonchamps. The troops who were to be left in Metz were expressly selected; the others tested as to their marching powers. Light-signals were arranged with Diedenhofen, and all measures taken for a sortie on the 7th.

Then the French commander suddenly changed his mind, and the proposed enterprise collapsed into a foraging party.

For this, indeed, large forces were set in motion; the Garde Voltigeur Division, the Sixth Corps, and the Fourth in the woods of Woippy. The movement was also to be supported by the Third Corps on the right bank of the river.

Four hundred wagons were in readiness to carry off the stores from the large farms lying north of Ladonchamps.

#### SORTIE FROM METZ ON BELLEVUE.

(October 7th.)

Although the start from Woippy, planned for eleven o'clock, was not effected till one, the Landwehr companies on outpost were driven in by superior numbers, and as they defended their positions till their ammunition was exhausted, they also lost a considerable number of prisoners. But the artillery of the Landwehr Division prevented the removal of the stores; the 5th Division attacked the French in flank and drove them back on Bellevue, where a hot fire ensued on both sides.

The French Third Corps had advanced by the right bank of the Moselle on Malroy and Noisseville. Here, too, the outpost line retired; but in their rear stood the Tenth and the First Corps, ready for action. The two commanders at once perceived that this attack was only a feint. Although threatened himself, General von Voigts-Rhetz moved his brigade, the 38th, across the Moselle at Argancy by half-past two to support the Landwehr Division, and as General von Mantuffel sent him supports to Charly, the 37th Brigade followed.

No sooner had the first reinforcements arrived than General von Kummer assumed the offensive, seized

the farm from the French after a sharp struggle, just as they were about to retire, and then, supported on the right by a detachment of the 5th Division, got into Bellevue by about six in the evening. Ladonchamps, however, was still in the hands of the French. The 19th Division and the Reserve advanced on this place late in the evening. The Castle-yard, surrounded by a moat, was carefully intrenched, and strongly defended by infantry and guns. The darkness precluded effective artillery action, and the attack failed; but all the other points previously held by the Germans had been re-occupied.

The day had cost the Prussians 1700 killed and wounded, besides 500 reported missing. The French loss was given out to be no more than 1193.

This attempt on the part of the French might be regarded as tentative, and preliminary only to a real struggle to break through; perhaps it was so intended. The German troops therefore remained in the positions they had occupied at the end of the day, in expectation of renewed fighting on the morrow.

The forts did in fact re-open fire on the farm buildings early on the 8th, while the German batteries directed theirs on Ladonchamps. Strong columns also advanced along the right bank of the Moselle, but nowhere attempted a serious attack. The Prussian troops therefore presently retired to their quarters.

The artillery duel was carried on for the next few days, but with diminished energy. Constant rain made all field operations very difficult and increased the sufferings of the men on both sides. In Metz the lack of victuals was becoming very painfully felt. Even on the 8th the Commandant had announced that his stores would not last more than twelve days. A council of war, held on the 10th, was, however, of opinion that



the greatest service the Army of the Rhine could do to the country was to hold out as long as possible, since they thus kept a large part of the enemy's forces employed outside Metz.

The Marshal now sent General Boyer to negotiate at Versailles, but he was to demand a free exit for the army and emphatically refuse the terms granted to Sedan.

The state of affairs in Metz was perfectly well known to the Germans. The number of men who were taken willing prisoners while digging potatoes increased every day. They reported that riots had broken out in the city, in which even the soldiers had taken part, and that the officers in command had been compelled to proclaim the Republic. And when the Empress had declared that she would never give her consent to any cession of French territory, no further political negotiations were possible with the Generals of the Army of the Rhine.

On the 20th the distribution of stores came to an end within the fortress, and the troops for the most part subsisted on horse-flesh. The original stock of 20,000 horses was reduced by a thousand a day. The want of bread and salt was severely felt, and the soaked, clayey ground made living in camp almost unendurable.

After the failure of the deputation to Versailles, the imperative necessity of negotiating with the Commander-in-chief of the besieging army was recognized by a council of war held on the 24th.

The first interview came to nothing, as the Marshal still stipulated for free egress, withdrawing if required to Algiers, or else for an armistice and the admission of stores. The Germans insisted on the surrender of the fortress and the march out of the garrison as

prisoners of war, and on these conditions the capitulation was signed on the evening of the 27th of October.

#### THE CAPITULATION OF METZ.

On the morning of the 29th the Prussian flags were hoisted on the great outworks of Metz. At one o'clock the French troops marched out by six roads in perfect silence and good marching order. At each gate a Prussian army corps stood to take the prisoners, who were immediately placed in bivouacs that had been prepared for them, and supplied with food. The officers were allowed to keep their swords and to return to Metz for the time; provisions were immediately sent in.

Marshal Bazaine set out for Cassel.

In the course of the day the 26th Brigade (German) took up quarters in Metz. No injury had been done in the city, but the state of the camp showed what the troops had suffered during a siege of seventy-two days.

The Germans during that time had lost 240 officers and 5500 men in killed and wounded.

Six thousand French officers and 167,000 men were taken prisoners, besides 20,000 sick who could not be at once removed—about 200,000 in all. Fifty-six Imperial eagles, 622 field, and 2876 fortress-guns, 72 mitrailleuses, and 260,000 small arms fell into the hands of the Germans.

The prisoners were transferred by way of Trèves and Saarbrücken under the escort of Landwehr battalions, and as these would have also to guard them when on foreign soil, their return was not to be reckoned on.

### III.

#### OPERATIONS IN THE EAST AND ON THE LOIRE.

##### NEW DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARMY.

THE capitulation of Metz, which Prince Frederick Charles had brought about under such serious difficulties, had materially improved the prospects of the war for Germany.

At head-quarters at Versailles, even before the catastrophe, but in confident anticipation of it, decisions had been arrived at as to the destination of the forces it would release for service, and communicated to the Commander-in-chief.

The First, Seventh, and Eighth Corps, with the 3rd Cavalry Division, were henceforth to constitute the First Army, under the command of General von Mansteuffel. Their orders were to advance on Compiegne and secure the blockade of Paris on the north. But they had other duties to fulfil; they were to occupy Metz and lay siege to Diedenhofen and Montmédy.

The Second, Third, Ninth, and Tenth Corps, with the 1st Cavalry Division, were to constitute the Second Army under Prince Frederick Charles, and were ordered to advance on the Middle Loire.

##### OPERATIONS OF THE FOURTEENTH CORPS IN THE SOUTH-EAST.

(October.)

Since the fall of Strasburg the newly-formed Fourteenth Corps had been employed in keeping up com-

munications between the armies before Metz and the forces detained in blockading Paris.

General von Werder had no great battle to look forward to, but a succession of small engagements. To prepare each of his four brigades for independent action under such circumstances, he detailed cavalry and artillery to each.

In this formation the corps crossed the Vosges Mountains, by the two roads past Schirmeck and Barr, driving swarms of French franc-tireurs out of the narrow passes without great loss of time. But on emerging from the highlands they at once met with serious opposition.

General Cambriels had been at Epinal with about 30,000 men ever since the beginning of October, and under cover of this force several battalions of National Guards and Gardes Mobiles had been formed in the south of France.

On the 6th, General von Degenfeld, with the advanced guard of the Baden contingent, marched up to St. Dié by both banks of the Meurthe. The column was a weak one and beset on all sides by far superior forces, yet after repeated attacks it succeeded in taking the villages held by the French.

The struggle, which lasted seven hours, ended with the eccentric retreat of the enemy on Rambervillers and Bruyères. It had cost the Germans 400 and the French 1400 men. The Baden Division bivouacked on the field, and then found that the French had abandoned St. Dié.

General Cambriels had, in fact, collected all the forces at his disposal in intrenched positions at Bruyères. The Baden Brigade advanced on these on the 11th, drove the Guards Mobiles and volunteers out of the villages in front of it, climbed the hills on each side of

the town, and forced their way into the town with inconsiderable loss. The French retired to the southward, on Rémiremont.

From the small resistance made by the enemy, though so far superior in numbers, General von Werder supposed that they would hardly make a stand before reaching Besançon, so he immediately ordered a cessation of pursuit, though somewhat early in the day, and concentrated his forces on Epinal, which was taken by the Germans after a short fight. From thence depôts were established, and telegraph lines opened to Lunéville and Nancy, magazines were formed, and the baggage trains, which had followed the corps from Zabern by Blamont to Baccarat, were brought up. The railway by the bank of the Moselle remained useless for a long time, in consequence of its demolition by the French.

General von Werder was now anxious to obey the instructions he had received on September 30th to march by Neufchâteau, on the Upper Seine, but a telegram from head-quarters instructed him first to rout the enemy near him under General Cambriels.

The corps accordingly marched forthwith on Vesoul, *viâ* Conflans and Luxeuil, and learnt that the French had halted at the Ognon, taken up quarters there, and received reinforcements.

General von Werder determined to attack at once. He ordered that the passages over the river should be secured on the 22nd of October; further decisions were postponed till the reports should be brought in.

The 1st Baden Brigade came up on the right by nine o'clock, reaching Marnay and Pin without having encountered the French; they secured the bridges, and then halted according to orders.

On the left wing, the franc-tireurs were driven out

of the wood by the 3rd Brigade, which also stormed Perrouse, and at about half-past two seized the bridge over the Ognon at Voray.

In the centre the van-guard of the 2nd Brigade entered Etuz after a slight skirmish, but had to retire at eleven o'clock to the northern bank, before the enemy's flank attack from out of the woods. Afterwards, when the main force came up and the artillery opened fire, the place was taken for the second time. But a prolonged firing ensued, the French making an obstinate stand in front of the passage over the river at Cussey.

Before this, indeed, orders had been dispatched to the 1st Brigade to move up on the southern bank from Pin in the enemy's flank and rear. But they only reached the ground at six o'clock, when the battle was over. When two batteries had swept the bridge over the Ognon with a heavy fire, the French hastily retired, pursued by the Baden men; they were again driven out of their positions to the rear, but when night fell still remained in possession of several posts in front of Besançon.

The Germans had lost 120 men, the French 150 and 200 prisoners. In opposition to Gambetta, who was himself at Besançon, General Cambriets positively refused to renew the advance, and would only consent to maintain his strong position under the walls of the fortress.

Parties sent out to reconnoitre on the right reported the presence of French forces at Dôle and Auxonne, the van-guard probably of an Army of the Vosges under Garibaldi, which was assembling on the Doubs. General von Werder disregarded it, and on the 26th moved his corps to Dampierre and Gray.

Beyond the Saône all the roads were broken up, the

woods choked with abatis, and the whole population in arms. But the franc-tireurs and Gardes Mobiles were dispersed without difficulty, and a column marching without any precautions was driven back on the Vingeanne, where 15 officers and 430 men laid down their arms.

From further reports and the information of the prisoners it was known that Dijon was strongly garrisoned. In expectation, therefore, of an attack from that side, the Fourteenth Corps (German) assembled behind the Vingeanne, whence, early on October 30th, General von Beyer marched on Dijon with the 1st and 3rd Brigades.

Filled with apprehension by recent events, the National Guard in Dijon had already laid down their arms, the Gardes Mobiles and troops of the line had retreated to the southwards; still the inhabitants were assured that the forces would be brought back to defend them. About 8000 men were on the spot, but they insisted on their General pledging himself to fight only outside the walls.

The advanced posts on the Tille were driven in by the advanced guard of the Baden contingent; the village of St. Apollinaire and the neighboring heights were taken with a rush at noon, in spite of a hot fire. Meanwhile the main body (German) had come up, and by three o'clock six batteries had opened fire. The vineyards and various enclosures in the neighborhood of Dijon, and especially the park to the south, which was strongly barricaded, gave the defence a great advantage. Nevertheless, the Baden infantry moved steadily forward and closed in on the northern and eastern suburbs by a wide encircling movement.

On this side a fierce combat ensued, in which the populace took part. House after house had to be

stormed, but the attack came to a standstill at the deep river-bed of the Suzon, which borders the city itself on the east. It was four o'clock, and the struggle could not be ended before dark. General von Beyer therefore broke it off; the battalions were withdrawn, and retired to quarters in the adjacent hamlets; only the artillery kept up its fire.

The Germans had lost about 150 and the French 100 men; but 200 French were taken prisoners.

In the course of the night a deputation came out to beg that the town might be spared; they undertook to furnish supplies for 20,000 men, and to guarantee the neutrality of the inhabitants.

The Baden brigades took possession of Dijon on the 31st.

Meanwhile fresh instructions had reached General von Werder. He was to cover the left flank of the Second Army advancing to the Loire to protect both Alsace and the troops besieging Belfort, where two reserve divisions had now arrived. The Fourteenth Corps, while occupying Dijon, was to retire to Vesoul and check the gathering of French troops round Besançon and at Langres. Some offensive movement on Châlons and Dôle was also insisted on. The difficulty of General von Werder's position was not fully appreciated at Versailles. At Besançon alone there were 45,000 French, under the command of a new leader, General Crouzat. Garibaldi had collected 12,000 between Dôle and Auxonne; lower down the Saône valley a fresh corps was forming of 18,000 men, and 12,000 National Guards and Gardes Mobiles threatened the flank of the isolated German Corps from Langres.

But the French, instead of attacking this division with overwhelming numbers—spread out as it was over a distance of twelve miles (German) from Lure to



Dijon and Gray—were haunted by a fear that the Germans, reinforced from Metz, might be planning an attack on Lyons. General Crouzat, leaving a strong garrison in Besançon, consequently marched on Chagny, where, on November 12th, he was reinforced by 50,000 men from the south. Garibaldi's volunteers moved up to Autun to protect Bourges.

General von Werder meanwhile had occupied Vesoul, and the town was fortified on the southern side.

The only event of importance which remains to be mentioned, in October, was the attack on the French forts in the rear of the German army.

At the beginning of this month the newly constituted 4th Reserve Division, of fifteen battalions, eight squadrons, thirty guns, and a company of sappers and miners, had assembled at Baden, and crossed the Rhine at Neuenburg.

The neighborhood was first cleared of franc-tireurs, Mulhouse was occupied, and, by the desire of the municipal authorities, the excited inhabitants, all factory hands, were disarmed.

General von Schmeling was instructed to besiege Neu-Breisach and Schlettstadt, and at once sent one of his brigades to invest each of these places. On October 7th the East Prussian Landwehr invested Breisach, and the field batteries shelled the town, but without effect. The other brigade, after dropping some necessary detachments, reached Schlettstadt with a small force, but was supported by troops from the dépôts along the road, so that 8 battalions, 2 squadrons, and 2 batteries invested the place. At the same time 12 companies of fortress-artillery and 4 companies of pioneers arrived from Strasburg with the necessary siege *matériel*, and a park of fifty-six heavy guns was established at St. Pilt; the Engineers' park was located at Kinzheim.

## TAKING OF SCHLETTSTADT.

(October 24th.)

At the beginning of the blockade, inundations and marsh land rendered Schlettstadt unapproachable on the east and south, and partly on the north. The place itself was impregnable, with high walls and a wet ditch, armed with 120 guns and garrisoned with only 2000 men, for the most part Gardes Mobiles. They lacked casemates, and on the west front the vineyards and hedgerows favored a close attack, while the railway embankment was a ready-made parapet for the first parallel.

To divert the attention of the besieged from this front, a battery was constructed on the 20th at the Kappel Mills on the south-east, from which fire was opened on the barracks and magazines, and on the sluice which prevented the inundations.

When, by the evening of the 21st, the infantry posts had advanced to within 400 paces of the glacis, the construction of the first parallel was proceeded with that night, behind the railway, and six batteries were placed at only 1000 metres from the ramparts.

The garrison fired in the dark on the entire zone of attack, but almost without effect. By the morning the trenches were two feet wide and three and a half feet deep, and 20 heavy guns and 8 mortars were ready to open fire.

A hot artillery duel now began with the fortress, which replied very steadily. The battery at the Mills did very perceptible execution by its reverse fire against the west front, and several guns and embrasures were severely damaged. The town was fired at several points, and the defenders' fire gradually ceased.

During the night, which was very stormy, the

attacking batteries kept up their fire, the parallel was widened, and two new batteries were begun.

But at daybreak on the 24th the white flag was seen flying, and a capitulation forthwith signed, by which the town surrendered with its garrison and all its stores. The Commandant begged the Germans to take possession at once, as the greatest disorder reigned within the town. The public buildings were being plundered by the mob and drunken soldiery, and a powder magazine was on the point of being blown up. The German battalions promptly restored order, extinguished the flames, and led away the prisoners.

Seven thousand stand of arms fell into their hands, besides the fort artillery and a large quantity of stores. The siege had only cost the Germans twenty men.

Schlettstadt was occupied by the *depôt* troops, and the battalions released from that duty retired into South Alsace, three of them strengthening and completing the blockade of Breisach.

#### TAKING OF BREISACH.

(November 10th.)

This fortress, lying in the plain and of very symmetrical construction, was surrounded by dry ditches of solid masonry, and not to be taken by a surprise. The garrison of about 5000 men had well-protected quarters in the bomb-proof casemates of the ravelins. Fort Mortier, standing near the Rhine, and constructed for an independent defence, effectually commanded the ground whence the intended attack must be made on the north-west front of the fortress. To this end 12 heavy guns were brought up from Rastatt to Alt-Breisach, where the right bank of the Rhine commands the fort at effective vicinity.

It was not till the end of October that the siege-guns arrived at Alt-Breisach from Schlettstadt, and as soon as the infantry had advanced closer to the place, and all preparations were complete, fire was opened on the fortress on November 2nd from Wolfganzen, Biesheim, and Alt-Breisach, in all 24 heavy guns.

By three o'clock a large part of the town was in flames, and detachments of infantry were engaged hand-to-hand with the French posts at the foot of the glacis. Fort Mortier had suffered severely; still, an attempt to storm it was repulsed, but at six o'clock it capitulated, lying almost in ruins. Only one gun remained in serviceable condition.

Two mortar batteries were erected to shell the main work, the defence was now more feeble, and on November 10th Breisach surrendered on the same terms as Schlettstadt, but the garrison was allowed to march out with all the honors of war.

The fortress was almost uninjured, but the town was for the most part burnt down or badly damaged. The Germans had lost only 70 men; 108 guns, 6000 small arms, and large quantities of stores fell into their hands.

While these strongholds in Alsace-Lorraine were thus reduced by the Germans, Verdun still intercepted the line of railway which formed the shortest line of communication with Germany.

#### TAKING OF VERDUN.

(November 9th.)

This place too was made impregnable by high walls and deep moats; but, on the other hand, it was surrounded by hills which commanded and defiladed it, and at the foot of these hills villages and vineyards favored an approach to within a short distance of the outworks.

It was armed with 140 guns and abundantly victualled, and the garrison, which had been supplemented by escaped prisoners, was 6000 strong. A bombardment by field-artillery had already proved perfectly ineffectual. For a long time Verdun was only under observation, at first by cavalry, and afterwards by a small mixed force. At the end of September the 65th Regiment and 12 companies of the Landwehr were collected under General von Gayl before the east front. It was not till October 7th that 2 companies of fortress-artillery came up, with some French guns of position from Toul and Sedan. The infantry now advanced to within a few hundred paces of the west and north fronts and there took up a position. Under this cover the construction of the batteries was begun on the evening of October 12th.

The sappy state of the ground after heavy rain, and the rocky subsoil, very thinly covered, made the work uncommonly difficult, yet by next morning fifty-two guns could open fire. But the fortress replied with such effect that before noon two German batteries were silenced on the Côte-de-Hayvaux to the west.

In the course of this three days' artillery duel, 15 German guns were placed out of action, the artillery lost 60 men, and the infantry 40. The disabled guns on the walls were constantly replaced by fresh ones.

The garrison, who were far stronger than the besiegers, now assumed the offensive. During the stormy night of the 19th-20th, the pickets on the hill of Hayvaux were overpowered, and all the guns spiked. On the 28th a stronger sortie was made. The French swarmed up Mont-St.-Michel to the north, destroyed the breast-works and casemates of the batteries, from which, however, the guns had been run back. Another party stormed Hayvaux, and as the soaked state of

the ground prevented the guns from being withdrawn, they were all totally disabled. The villages in the neighborhood were also occupied by the French.

It was now self-evident that the means hitherto brought to bear on the reduction of Verdun were quite inadequate. But on the surrender of Metz the First Army was able to send up reinforcements. At the end of the month 5 battalions and 2 companies of pioneers and several of artillery arrived, bringing with them German matériel.

The siege-park now had 102 guns and abundant ammunition, so preparations were at once made for a regular attack.

But for this the garrison did not wait. After an armistice had been granted, the place capitulated on November 8th, and the garrison, with exception of the local National Guards, were taken prisoners. The officers were dismissed with their swords on parole, and it was agreed that the matériel in store should be restored on peace being concluded.

#### THE ADVANCE OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ARMIES IN NOVEMBER.

When the First Army had been ordered to reinforce the siege of Mézières the 1st Infantry Division advanced on that place, the 3rd Brigade was sent forward by railway to Soissons, and on November 15th invested the small fortress of La-Fère. The rest of the First Corps reached Rethel on the same day. The Eighth arrived at Rheims, and the 3rd Cavalry Division at Tagnon, between the two. The Seventh Corps was still fully engaged in guarding the prisoners and in investing Diedenhofen and Montmédy.

Of the Second Army, the Ninth Corps and 1st Cavalry Division had reached Troyes by the 10th, the

Third had got to Vendevre, the Tenth to Neufchâteau and Chaumont. The important railway junctions there and at Bologne were occupied, and the demolition of the line to Blesme was repaired, so as to open new communications. The health of the German forces had improved conspicuously during a series of short marches along good roads with abundant supplies; but a telegram from Versailles now ordered a hasty advance.

The Government in Paris being helpless, the Delegates at Tours were displaying increased activity. Gambetta, as Minister both of War and of the Interior, was exercising the power almost of a Dictator, and the warlike energy of this remarkable man had achieved the feat of placing 600,000 soldiers and 1400 guns in the field in the course of a few weeks.

In the Arrondissements the National Guards were formed into companies and battalions; then in each Department formed into brigades; and finally they were amalgamated with the troops of the line and Gardes Mobiles into still larger bodies.

Thus, in the course of October, a new Seventeenth Corps took up a position at Blois, another, the Eighteenth, at Gien, and a third, under Admiral Jaures, at Nogent-le-Rotrou; their movements being protected by General d'Aurelle de Paladines, whose troops had recrossed the Loire. A large force was in Picardy under General Bourbaki, another at Rouen under Briand, and a third on the left bank of the Seine under Fiéreck.

The detachments of the German investing army, which were pushed forward to the south, west, and north, met on all sides strong forces of the enemy, which they had indeed repulsed in many small encounters, but could not follow up to the bases. For

this the arrival of the army released from the siege of Metz was needed, and this was not to be looked for before some time in November, while a general advance on Paris of all the French forces in the month of October looked imminent.

In consideration of the inferior strength of General von der Tann's division, now holding Orleans, at the council of war held at Tours it was decided to seize that important place. The attack was to be chiefly delivered from the west. The French Fifteenth Corps—two divisions and one cavalry division—therefore assembled at Mer, on the northern bank of the Lower Loire, and the main body of the Sixteenth behind the forest of Marchénoir. The remainder of the two corps were to support the attack by Gien on the Upper Loire. Any further advance was not projected, at any rate for the present; on the contrary, General d'Aurelle's instructions were to form an intrenched camp at Orleans for 200,000 men.

General von der Tann's reconnoitring parties to the westward everywhere met detachments of the French, which were indeed driven back in various skirmishes on the woods of Marchénoir, and without much difficulty, but which betrayed the vicinity of large forces. On the whole, an attack on the investing army on the south-west of Paris seemed the likeliest event, since this would imperil both the German head-quarters in Versailles and the siege-park at Villacoublay; and the German reinforcements from the east would be longest in reaching the scene of the struggle.

The French forces to the west of Orleans were already extended over a wide stretch of country from Beaugency to Châteaudun. The volunteers grew bolder every day, and the people more hostile.

At last, to get some more accurate information, Count



Stolberg, on November 7th, made a reconnoissance in force. Three regiments of the 2nd Cavalry Division, two batteries, and a few companies of Bavarian infantry marched by Ouzouer and drove the enemy out of Marolles, but they found the skirt of the forest strongly defended.

General Chanzy had his immediately available troops sent to St. Laurent-des-Bois. A sharp fire ensued, lasting about half an hour, which proved very fatal to the Bavarian infantry; and then, as the great superiority of the French was evident, the Germans retired.

As a matter of fact, both the French corps were already in full retreat on Orleans. On the 8th they held the wood, with their right wing occupying Messas and Meung, their left Ouzouer. The Fifteenth Corps was then to proceed to the Mauve and the Sixteenth to Coulmiers. Their van-guards were at Bardou and Charsonville respectively. Both the French cavalry divisions were marching northward on Prénouvellon to outflank the Bavarian right wing, with a force of ten regiments, six batteries, and several hundred volunteers, thus cutting off its retreat on Paris.

To meet this the Bavarian Cuirassiers started for St. Péruvy, the 2nd Cavalry Division for Baccon, and, further south, the 2nd Bavarian Infantry Division advanced from Orleans on Huisseau and St. Ay.

But an attack was threatening the German rear from the considerable force at Gien. It was the last moment in which they could hope to extricate themselves from so critical a position; General von der Tann issued the necessary orders that same evening. However desirable it might be to keep possession of Orleans, he could not accept battle in such thickly wooded country, which would so seriously impede the efficiency of his relatively strong artillery and cavalry, and where he

might easily be hemmed in. The General, however, determined to meet the most immediately threatening hostile force in the open ground by Coulmiers, by which he would be nearer to the 22nd Division at Chartres, and could call on it for support.

Even before this General von Wittich had asked and obtained permission to retire on Orleans, but on the 9th he had only reached Voves, with his cavalry at Orgères; thus he could not take any direct part in that day's fighting.

The Second Army was still on the march from Metz, and on this day its van had but just arrived at Troyes.

#### ENGAGEMENT AT COULMIERS.

(November 9th.)

Left thus to its own resources, the First Bavarian Corps struck camp in the night, and on the morning of the 9th had formed on a narrow front on the skirt of the wood between Château Montpipeau and Rosières, with the village of Coulmiers in front. The Bavarian Cuirassiers on the right wing protected the retreat at St. Sigismond, the 2nd Cavalry Division was posted in brigades along the front, with detachments well in advance and infantry posts ready in support. Only a small detachment remained in Orleans after the bridge over the Loiret had been destroyed, to protect the numerous sick and wounded in the field hospitals, and occupy the city, at any rate, till the fight was decided.

The first reports brought in that morning were of the advance of a strong column of French from Cravant, on Fontaines and Le-Bardou. This was Rébillard's brigade, which, as it seemed, meant to turn the Bavarian flank and march on Orleans. To oppose it on the bank of the Mauve, General von der Tann, at

about nine o'clock, sent the 3rd Brigade in a southerly direction to Préfort, about half a mile distant, and as at the same time a sharp contest had begun at the outposts near Baccon, the 1st Brigade marched to La Renardière. The remainder of the corps were left in and behind Coulmiers. The General's intention was to assume the offensive at this point, by attacking the French left flank if, as seemed probable, the enemy should direct his chief attack on the passage of the Mauve. To this end, also, the cavalry of the right German wing was ordered to retire on Coulmiers.

But the superior strength of the French allowed of their reconnoitring much further to the left. While General d'Aurelle with the Fifteenth Corps detained the Bavarians to the south of the road from Ouzouer to Orleans, General Chanzy advanced with Barry's division against their centre and caused Jauréguiberry's to attack their right; and the strong force of cavalry under General Reyan took the road to Patay, thus threatening the communications with Paris.

This movement of the French Sixteenth Corps compelled General von der Tann, at the very beginning of the engagement, to dispatch the 2nd Brigade, which had been his reserve, to prolong his right wing to the northwards towards Champs, thus obtaining touch with the 4th Cavalry Brigade. The Bavarian Cuirassiers, retiring according to orders from St. Pérvay to the southward, by eleven o'clock came up with Reyan's cavalry, which, however, was content with a mere cannonade.

Meanwhile the advanced posts of the Bavarians had been driven in by the enemy's superior numbers. The 1st Jäger Battalion in Baccon retreated on La-Rivière, after hampering the advance of the French horse batteries past Champdry for some little time. It was here

joined by the 2nd Battalion; but these were presently in difficulties. Peytavin's division had closely pursued them past Baccon, brought five batteries up on La-Rivière, and then attacked the burning village from three sides at once. After a stout resistance, the Jägers retired in good order on Renardière to join the 1st Brigade, where General Diett had taken up a position for defence.

When, after abandoning Baccon, Barry's division had continued its march past Champdry, its batteries deployed opposite Coulmiers and in front of Saintry, preparing for the attack by strong ranks of tirailleurs.

The 4th Bavarian Brigade occupied the park, extending to the west; the stone bridge further in front was held by two battalions, two others were sent to the right, to the farmsteads of Ormeteau and Vaurichard, so as to keep up some sort of communication with the 2nd Brigade. One battery to the south and four to the north of Coulmiers were protected by the 5th Cavalry Brigade.

Thus, at noon, the Bavarian Corps was spread out over a mile of ground, from Renardière to the front of Gémigny, with only three brigades. But as the French right wing remained inactive, the brigade dispatched to Préfort was ordered back to Renardière.

When the French Corps had taken up a position opposite the thin Bavarian line, they attacked in earnest, at about one o'clock.

The Jägers had indeed repulsed the enemy's first rush on Renardière, but this position was no longer tenable with only four battalions against the whole of Peytavin's division. At about one o'clock General von Diett retired unmolested, under cover of an intermediate position between two detachments, on the wood of Montpipeau and occupied its border. Here he was

joined by the 3rd Brigade, which had advanced from Préfort, and found Renardière already evacuated. The French had pursued, but timidly, and now found themselves under fire from six batteries between the end of the wood at La-Planche and Coulmiers, so their right wing advanced no further.

In the centre Barry's division, at about this time, had driven the Bavarian Jägers out of the stone quarries in front of Coulmiers. Not till three o'clock did it advance to a renewed general attack on the 4th Brigade, which, however, was repulsed by the fire of the German guns and the repeated charges of the 5th Cavalry Brigade.

Meanwhile, d'Aries' brigade of the Fifteenth Corps (French), after leaving Renardière, arrived to the south of Coulmiers, and its batteries also opened fire on that place. The Bavarian guns were compelled, before the rush of the French tirailleurs, to come into action further in the rear, while the infantry drove the French out of the park at the point of the bayonet.

But after four hours' fighting this single brigade could scarcely hold out against three French brigades. Of the whole corps only two battalions remained intact as a reserve at Bonneville, no reinforcement was to be looked for from outside, and on the right wing the French threatened to cut the communications with Chartres as well as with Paris. At four in the afternoon, General von der Tann gave order to cease firing and retire by brigades on Artenay from the left wing.

Fresh troops at this moment forced their way into the park of Coulmiers. Colonel Count von Ysenburg held the eastern outlets from the village, and led his troops in reciprocal support back to Gémigny in good order.

It now proved of the greatest importance that the

2nd Brigade had been able to maintain its position in front of this village, thus covering their further retreat.

At noon, General von Orff, on reaching Champs and Cheminiers, had found them occupied by Deplanque's brigade (French). First he silenced their artillery with his own, then he deployed his four battalions for action, with the 4th Cavalry Brigade on the right wing.

Reyan's cavalry ere long came up between these two villages, after they had given up their two hours' cannonade on the Bavarian Cuirassiers and had been driven out of St. Sigismond by dismounted hussars. But this body of horse soon got away from the fire of Bavarian guns and moved off to the westward, it was said because they mistook Lipowski's volunteers, skirmishing at some distance to the north, for German supports. And when the Bavarian horse batteries opened fire on Champs, from the north-east, the French abandoned the place, at about two o'clock, in great disorder.

General von Orff now brought the artillery up to within 500 paces of Cheminiers, and marched the infantry up between the guns.

Admiral Jauréguiberry, however, by arriving in person, succeeded in rallying the wavering troops, and this attack failed. The French batteries soon compelled the Bavarian horse batteries to retire.

When, at about three o'clock, Bourdillon's brigade and the reserve artillery of the Sixteenth Corps (French) also arrived at Champs, and news was brought of the state of affairs at Coulmiers, General von Orff refrained from all further attack, and directed all his efforts to maintaining his position as stoutly as possible in front of Gémigny. Unshaken by the fire of the numerous French batteries, the little brigade repulsed their repeated attacks.

Thus the 4th Brigade was enabled to retire from Coulmiers on Gémigny and St. Péravy, and the 1st, to the eastward, on Coinces unmolested by the enemy. The 2nd Brigade followed to Coinces, while the 3rd formed the rear-guard as far as St. Sigismond, where it halted and bivouacked. The cavalry covered the retreat on all sides.

After a short rest the retreat of the main body was continued during the night, by very bad roads. Artenay was reached by the morning. Orleans was evacuated, and the detachment left there rejoined its corps. The stores were conveyed by railway back to Toury; but one ammunition column, 150 prisoners, and the sick who could not be moved, fell into the hands of the French.

Out of 20,000 men, against 70,000 French, the Germans had lost 800 in killed and wounded; the enemy's loss was nearly twice as great.

From Artenay, on November 10th, the 2nd Brigade was entrusted with the security of the further march on Toury, where limited quarters might be occupied. Thither too came the 22nd Division from Chartres, and took up a position at Janville, alongside of the Bavarian Corps. General von der Tann had extricated himself from a difficult position with much skill and good fortune. There was no pursuit. General d'Aurelle restricted himself to awaiting further reinforcements in a strong position before Orleans.

The French were in more active preparation, however, on the Upper Loir and the Eure.

The Second Army Corps (German) had arrived before Paris on the 5th; its 3rd Division was included in the investing line between the Seine and Marne; the 4th moved on to Longjumeau.

As soon as the Landwehr Guard occupied the penin-

sula of Argenteuil, a brigade of the Fourth Corps was available for service on the north side of the capital. On the south, the 17th Division at Rambouillet, the 22nd at Chartres, and the Bavarian Corps, which had retired on Ablis, with the 4th and 6th Cavalry Divisions, were formed into distinct corps of the Third Army and placed under the command of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, with orders to advance first on Dreux.

#### THE GRAND DUKE'S MOVEMENTS.

On the 17th of November the 17th Division marched by Maintenon. On the left, a French detachment was driven back across the Blaise; and when a few companies of marines, who attempted to block the high-road, had been disposed of, General von Tresckow marched into Dreux that evening. The struggle had cost the Germans 50 men, the French 150 and 50 prisoners.

Prince Frederick Charles, whose forces had now been assembled to face the enemy outside Orleans, expressed a wish that the Grand Duke's army should advance on Tours *via* Le Maus. The Grand Duke, therefore, marched on Nogent-le-Rotrou, which, being the central rendezvous of the French divisions, would probably be the scene of an obstinate resistance.

After several skirmishes the Grand Duke's force reached this town, but when, on the 22nd, he prepared to storm it from three sides, it was found that the French had already evacuated it. At the same time orders arrived from head-quarters, instructing him to retire at once on Beaugency to join the right wing of the Second Army, which must immediately be reinforced in view of the superior strength of the French. "The forces already concentrating before Orleans are to postpone all hostilities till this support arrives.



The small opposition offered by the French on the Eure and Huisne shows that no serious danger threatens on that side; the enemy in that quarter need only be kept under observation by cavalry." Even a day's rest was prohibited, and the march was to be conducted with the utmost speed.

On the 23rd, the divisions had closed up on their leading troops, when the Grand Duke, on the 24th, moved on Châteaudun and Vendôme; but the Bavarian Corps only got as far as Vibraye, while the two Prussian divisions withdrew from the country about La-Perche, and the cavalry found the whole line of the Loire already occupied.

In fact, the French had sent up a brigade of the troops massed behind the woods of Marchénoir by railway to Vendôme, expressly to protect the Government at Tours, while General de Sonis had advanced with the rest of the Seventeenth Corps on Brou. Here, on the 25th, his van met an ammunition column and pontoon train of the Bavarian Corps. At first only the 10th Cavalry Brigade could attack the French, but when, soon after, 2 companies and 8 guns had occupied the bridge over the Loir at Yèvres, the wagons were got through Brou in safety, and the enemy could not continue its march till the cavalry had filed off.

The Bavarian Corps had meanwhile advanced on Mondoubleau and St. Calais, not, to be sure, the shortest route to Beaugency, but still straight on Tours. The two divisions had only reached Vibraye and Authon.

The appearance of a hostile force at Brou was deemed of sufficient importance to justify a détour by that place, postponing for the present the advance on the Loire. But when the 22nd arrived at Brou, on the 26th, they found that the enemy had already retired

during the night. The Government at Tours had ordered the whole of the Seventeenth Corps to march on Vendôme for their protection. However, when the German cavalry had made their appearance at Cloyes and Fréteval, General Sonis had supposed he could not advance any further along the Loir and made a détour by Marchénoir. But two night marches so upset the newly-recruited troops, that swarms of stragglers wandered about the neighborhood all day, and could only with difficulty be re-assembled at Beaugency.

To obtain some unity of plan and action, the Grand Duke was now, by command from head-quarters, placed under Prince Frederick Charles's orders, and General von Stosch was dispatched to undertake the duties of Chief of the Staff to the army-section. This, by the Prince's orders, was to march on Janville with all speed, whither some troops of the Ninth Corps would be sent to meet it, by way of Orgères.

The Grand Duke therefore marched, on the 27th, with both divisions, on Bonneval, where he found a squadron of the 2nd Cavalry Division. The Bavarian Corps which, after finding Brou abandoned, had marched on Courtalain, proceeded to Châteaudun. Having thus accomplished a junction with the Second Army, the exhausted troops were allowed a day's rest on the 28th, in quarters on the Loir.

#### THE POSITION OF THE SECOND ARMY IN THE LATTER PART OF NOVEMBER.

Prince Frederick Charles had hastened the advance of his forces as much as possible, but they had met with several obstacles. The roads were broken up, National Guards and franc-tireurs were on the watch, and even the country-people had taken up arms; however, by November 14th, the Ninth Corps with the

Cavalry Division had reached Fontainebleau and gone on to Angerville. The Third Corps was following on Pithiviers. Of the Tenth, the 40th Brigade was left at Chaumont, to maintain communications with the Fourteenth Corps; the 36th reached Montargis and Beaunela-Rolande on the 21st; the two brigades following in rear had a sharp encounter on the 24th at Ladon and Maizières. In this, 170 French were taken prisoners, who belonged to a corps which, as General von Werder had already reported, was proceeding under General Crouzat's command, from Chagny to Gien by railway. The order of battle was found on an officer who was taken prisoner.

That while the Grand Duke's forces were marching up, the Second Army, but now fully concentrated, had been very near considerable forces of the enemy, was sufficiently ascertained by several reconnoissances.

On the 24th some troops of the Ninth Corps were sent forward along the highroad. A few shells prompted the French to evacuate Artenay, pursued by the cavalry as far as Croix-Briquet. Early in the same day a detachment of all arms from the Third Corps had advanced on Neuville-aux-Bois. Two detachments of the 38th Brigade had marched on Bois-Commun and Bellegarde, but all such attempts were met by very superior numbers of the enemy.

It was ascertained that the French position before Orleans extended for eight miles (German), from the Conie to the Loing; and the massing of troops, especially on their flank, made it highly probable that they purposed advancing by Fontainebleau on the rear of the besieging army. Still, this was not so evident as to justify Prince Frederick Charles in leaving the great highways from Orleans to Paris unguarded. However, to enable him to lend his left wing timely support

in case of need, he drafted off the 5th Infantry and 1st Cavalry Divisions to Boynes, to be near the Tenth Corps, which was weak, and the 6th Division occupied Pithiviers in their stead. Their quarters at Bazoches were assigned to the Ninth Corps. Finally, the Grand Duke was commanded to reach Toury by the 29th, with the head of his column, at least. These arrangements were all carried out in due course.

Immediately after the success at Coulmiers the Army of the Loire seems only to have thought of defending itself against a counter-blow. It retired on Orleans, threw up extensive earthworks, for which marine artillery was even brought up from Cherbourg, and awaited the arrival of further reinforcements. The Twentieth Corps, already spoken of, 40,000 strong, joined the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth at Gien, with one division of the Eighteenth newly assembled at Nevers, and the volunteers under Cathelineau and Lipowski.

Thus the French Army round Orleans numbered 200,000; the Germans opposed to them at the time only 45,000 infantry.

Gambetta ere long was urgent for renewed offensive operations. As General d'Aurelle raised objections to an advance by Pithiviers and Malesherbes, the Dictator himself took matters in hand. On the night of the 23rd he telegraphed orders from Tours that the Fifteenth Corps were at once to assemble at Chilleurs-aux-Bois and reach Pithiviers in the course of the 24th. The Twentieth were to march on Beaune-la-Rolande, and then both were to advance *viâ* Fontainebleau on Paris. The General pointed out that, according to his estimate, 80,000 Germans must be encountered in an open country, and that it would be wiser to await their attack in an intrenched position. No help, indeed,

would thus be afforded to the besieged capital, and even the strengthening of the right wing must be postponed; while it was the advance of the Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps on the 24th which led to the fight already mentioned at Ladon and Maizières.

In consequence of information received from Tours on the 26th, General Crouzat ordered the advance, on the 28th, of the two corps he commanded—the Eighteenth on Juranville direct, the Twentieth to the left by Bois-Commun—for a general attack on Beaune-la-Rolande. The Fifteenth Corps was moved up for support to Chambon, and Cathelineau's volunteers to Courcelles.

As we have seen, on that very day the Grand Duke's forces had come up on the extreme right of the Second German Army. On the left, the 38th Brigade of the Tenth Corps was at Beaune, the 39th at Les-Côtelles; the 37th, with the corps artillery, had advanced to Marcilly.

## BATTLE OF BEAUNE-LA-ROLANDE.

(November 28th.)

The French attack on November 28th failed in its dual delivery, and the two actions had little influence on each other. On the right, the head of the Eighteenth Corps met the outposts of the 39th Brigade at an early hour, close to Juranville and Lorcy. After a stout resistance, they were driven in by about nine o'clock on Les-Côtelles and beyond the railway embankment at Corbeilles, where they took possession of the park.

The French could now deploy on the open country before Juranville, and following up the Germans with strong lines of tirailleurs marching straight before them, they got into Corbeilles and drove the invaders

out to the north and west. In front, meanwhile, a reinforcement from the reserve at Marcilly had reached Les-Côtelles, and Colonel von Valentini had on his side attacked Juranville with the 56th Regiment. The artillery could give no assistance. The French made an obstinate resistance, and not till noon did they begin to retreat, though the fighting still continued round some solitary houses. But when strong columns came up from Maizières and Corbeilles, the Germans were compelled to abandon the conquered village, but they carried off 300 prisoners.

By two o'clock the greater portion of the French Corps deployed by Juranville to attack the position held by the 39th Brigade, who had retired on Long-Cour. But not having prepared their attack by artillery fire, it came to nothing under that of five Prussian batteries.

The first attack on Les-Côtelles was also repulsed, but being repeated an hour later, the Germans had to abandon the position, and fifty men were taken prisoners. A gun, which had lost seven of its gunners, had sunk so deep in the muddy ground that the few men left could not drag it out.

Still, the Eighteenth French Corps made no further way, but as dusk came on, was satisfied with an ineffective cannonade, and finally the 39th Brigade was able to maintain its position abreast of Beaune.

On the left wing of the French line of battle the attack had also from the first been of a general character, the 2nd Division of the Twentieth Corps having advanced on Beaune, and the First on Batilly. But it was near noon before the arrival of another portion of the 3rd Division in reserve enabled them to drive in the German advanced posts from Bois-de-la-Leu to the cross-roads north-west of Beaune. The 38th Brigade,

too, soon found itself under fire from the enemy's guns, now following it up from Pierre-Percée on the north.

The retreat had to be continued along the Roman road, by which a gun, of which the men and horses had for the most part perished, fell into the enemy's hands. About the same time the 2nd French Division ascended the heights to the east of Beaune, and further back Colonel von Cranach was enabled, first to get in hand the 57th Regiment near La-Rue-Boussier, their retreat being covered by the batteries that were hurrying up from Marcilly, and then to prevent the enemy from returning to the charge. These entirely ceased to advance any further, for they were suddenly threatened on their own flank by the 1st Division of the Prussian cavalry retiring from Boynes, and were under fire of the horse batteries.

Meanwhile the 16th Regiment found itself completely isolated in Beaune and shut in on three sides by the enemy.

The town, which was surrounded by the remains of a high wall, and the churchyard were, as far as possible, prepared for defence. The French, after being driven back by the first attack of heavy fire, began bombarding the town. Their shells burst through the walls of the churchyard and set a few buildings on fire, but even then every attempt at storming was steadfastly repulsed.

In the meantime, General von Woyna had supplied his batteries with fresh ammunition, and while occupying Romainville on the right, he took up a position opposite the copse of Pierre-Percée, so that by three o'clock he was able to lead these companies up to the east of Beaune.

About this time assistance came with the arrival of the Third Army Corps. While the 6th Division were

still pressing on towards Pithiviers, the 5th had already that morning rallied beyond that place. The first news from Beaune had sounded so far from alarming, that the corps artillery retired to their quarters. Nevertheless, in consequence of the increasing booming of guns and a later announcement of a serious encounter, General von Alvensleben gave the word for the corps to advance; General von Stülpnagel had already spontaneously set out with the 5th Division. The 6th followed, and dispatched a battalion to observe towards Courcelles; but Cathelineau's body of volunteers remained inactive.

Part of the 52nd Regiment, which was marching at the head of the column, turned off to the right, and, supported by artillery, opened fire about 4.30 on Arconville and Batilly. Another part penetrated into Bois-de-la-Leu and the copse near La Pierre-Percée, where they recaptured the gun they had lost there before. Four batteries took up their position on the road from Pithiviers, behind Fosse-des-Prés, and fired on the French, who still stood firm on the west side of Beaune; but they were by this means entirely dispersed and pursued by the 12th Regiment as far as Mont.-Barrois.

After dark the Tenth Corps encamped near Long-Cour, Beaune, and Batilly, and the 5th Division in their rear; the 6th had remained at Boynes, where the 1st Division of cavalry also found accommodation.

General von Voigts-Rhetz had held his ground against the enemy in the battle of Beaune-la-Rolande, with 11,000 men against 60,000, and with three brigades against six divisions, until help reached him towards evening. This action cost the Germans 900 and the French 1300 men in killed and wounded; but



1800 unwounded prisoners fell into the hands of the Germans.

By the evening the French Twentieth Corps had retreated as far as Bois-Commun and Bellegarde; the Eighteenth, on the contrary, had taken up their position near Vernouille and Juranville, in fact, directly in front of the Tenth German Corps, on the ground they had gained from them. They were justified in expecting that the fighting would recommence on the morrow.

Prince Frederick Charles, therefore, directed the Tenth and Third Corps to assemble fully prepared on the 29th. The Ninth received orders to advance with two brigades towards Boynes and Bazoches, and the remaining troops were to follow as soon as the Grand Duke's contingent should have reached the road to Paris.

In the course of the day his advanced guard, the 4th Division of cavalry, reached Toury, his infantry arrived at Allaines and Orgères. The 6th Division of cavalry, who were marching on the right flank, met with their first opposition at Tournois.

Meanwhile General Crouzat had been warned from Tours, by a report which reached him on the evening of the 28th, to prepare to meet another attack, and he thereupon recalled his right wing. On the 30th both corps made a move to the left, in order to be in the proximity of the Fifteenth. For the purpose of dissembling this lateral movement, some companies went in a northerly direction and met reconnoitring parties of the German Tenth and Third Corps, with whom skirmishes took place at Maizières, St. Loup, and Mont Barrois; however, soon after, an advance of the left wing of the French Army was observed.

The French Government at Tours had received news

from Paris that General Ducrot would attempt, on the 29th, to break through the German investing lines with 100,000 men and 400 guns, and endeavor to connect with the Army of the Loire in a southerly direction. The balloon that had carried this dispatch had descended in Norway, from whence the communication had been forwarded. It was concluded from this that the General was already vigorously engaged, and that help must be no longer delayed. By Gambetta's desire, M. Freycinet submitted to the council of war, called by General d'Aurelle, a plan for the advance of the whole army on Pithiviers. In the event of a refusal, he had with him a decree to supplant the Commander-in-chief.

It was decided in the first place to execute a wheel to the right with the left wing, Chilleurs-aux-Bois forming the pivot of the movement. Having by this means taken up a position facing Pithiviers, the corps on the right wing, which was now on the same line, had to await orders to advance. The Twenty-first Corps were to be led towards Vendôme as a protection to the left flank.

#### THE ADVANCE OF THE ARMY OF THE LOIRE TO THE RELIEF OF PARIS.

Consequently, on the 1st of December the Sixteenth Corps moved forward in the direction of the railway at Orgères; the Seventeenth followed as far as Patay and St. Péravy.

Opposite to these, on the right wing of the Second German Army, the 17th Division of the Grand Duke's Corps had arrived at Bazoches, the 22nd at Toury, and the Bavarian Corps in the neighborhood of Orgères. Thus the French first met the Bavarians. Attacked in front by a far superior force, and threatened by

Michel's division of cavalry in the flank, the 1st Bavarian Brigade were forced to retreat at three o'clock towards Villepion. The 2nd Brigade, which approached from Orgères, halted to the west of Nonneville, and the 4th marched up between Villepion and Faverolles, where the Bavarians, in spite of heavy losses, succeeded in holding their own for a long time. On the right wing, Prince Leopold of Bavaria, with four guns of his battery which could still do good service, brought the enemy's advance to a standstill, but under the personal leadership of Admiral Jauréguiberry the French fought their way into Villepion. As night drew on, and the want of ammunition was becoming serious, the 1st Bavarian Brigade went to Loigny; the 2nd, however, got back to Orgères by five o'clock, where the third arrived in the evening, whilst the 4th joined company at Loigny.

The engagement cost both sides about 1000 men, and only the foremost of the Bavarian divisions had been forced back for a short distance.

This result, and the news from Paris, aroused in Tours fresh hopes of victory. As will be seen further on, a sortie had been successfully effected out of Paris through the investing lines, and the village of Epinay had been held for a short time. Thereupon it was concluded that this was the village of the same name which lay to the south near Longjumeau, and that as soon as the Army of Orleans should effect a junction with that from Paris there would be scarcely any further obstacle. Cathelineau's Volunteer Corps was directed at once to guard the forest of Fontainebleau, and the ensuing annihilation of the Germans was announced to the country.

The army from Orleans, however, had barely gained half a day's march in the direction of Paris, and the

right wheel of the left wing had to be continued. The Sixteenth Corps was to try and reach the line between Allaines and Toury by the 2nd of December; the Seventeenth were to follow, and the Fifteenth, marching from Chilleurs past Artenay, were to join the right. The Grand Duke, on hearing the report of the great force with which the enemy was approaching, determined to march to meet them with the whole contingent. The requisite orders were issued at eight o'clock to the forces, who were already standing prepared in camp. The Bavarian Corps was directed to take up a position near Loigny, with its left wing at Château-Goury; the 17th Division to march directly from Sautilly to Lumeau, and the 22nd from Tivernon to Baigneaux. The cavalry had to undertake the protection of both wings.

#### THE BATTLE AT LOIGNY—POUPRY.

(December 2nd.)

The Bavarian Corps was still engaged in advancing from Maladerie when the French ascended the heights to the west of Loigny. The 1st Division therefore advanced *via* Villeprévost, and the 2nd occupied the line between Beauvilliers and Goury.

General Chanzy had set out from Terminiers at eight o'clock, with the 2nd and 3rd Divisions, for Loigny and Lumeau. The first followed in reserve, and Michel's division of cavalry covered the left flank. In spite of the hot fire of the defenders, the 2nd Division had by nine o'clock advanced close upon Beauvilliers, but then they had to fall back before the onset of the Bavarians, who now, on their side, attacked Loigny. When, however, at 10.30 the whole French Corps advanced deployed on a large front from Nonneville to Neuvil-

liers, they had to retreat with great losses. They met, nevertheless, with a warm reception at Beauvilliers, where the firing of the artillery of the German corps put a stop to the enemy's movements.

The battle surged backwards and forwards until, at 11.30, the 2nd Bavarian Brigade joined in the fray. The 4th Division of cavalry charged the left wing of the French, and Michel's division fell back on the Seventeenth Corps. This caused numerous prisoners to be taken by the German troopers. In the meantime the Bavarian infantry had marched to Ferme-Morâle, but found themselves under such destructive fire that they were forced to turn back. Thereupon the horse batteries on the flank enfiladed the enemy's wing with such effect, even firing the farm, that General von Orff found himself able to take possession of it.

At Beauvilliers, meanwhile, the 2nd Division had only with great difficulty resisted the vigorous onslaughts of the French, whose riflemen had already approached so close that the batteries were compelled to retire. But the success of the right wing soon spread to the left. Charging from Beauvilliers, as well as from Château-Goury, the Bavarians drove Jauréguiberry's division back to Loigny.

Shortly after noon the firing of the French became again remarkably energetic, especially against Château-Goury. The battalions on the left wing of the Bavarians were forced back upon the park.

During these events the two Prussian divisions had continued their advance. The artillery of the 17th pressed on in order to engage the enemy, while the infantry reached Lumeau in time to prevent its occupation by the opposing forces. Dense masses of French infantry fought their way up quite close to the place, but they were finally driven back by a well-directed

fire of musketry and shell; whereupon the division attacked the right flank of the French.

The 22nd Division also marched past Baigneaux towards Anneux, and joined in the pursuit of the retreating enemy. A number of prisoners and a battery were taken from the French, who, after a vain attempt to make another firm stand near Neuwilliers, at last fled towards Terminiers in utter disorder.

After this conclusion of the fighting at Lumeau, General von Tresckow was able to go to the assistance of the left wing of the Bavarians, which was hard pressed. Under cover of the fire of eight batteries, the 33rd Brigade moved against the flank of the French forces, which were now making a fierce attack on Château-Goury. Being thus taken by surprise, they retired upon Loigny. Here, too, the Mecklenburg battalions, together with the Bavarians, cut their way through, and it was only in the churchyard, which was situated on a hill at the west end of the village, that an obstinate resistance was made for some time longer. The French, as they retired on Villepion, suffered from a destructive fire from eighty guns posted close together at Loigny.

At 2.30 General von der Tann caused the whole of his 1st Division, after they had been provided with fresh ammunition, to advance once more; this movement, however, was brought to a standstill by the fire of the enemy.

Michel's division also moved up to oppose the advance of the cavalry on the right wing, but turned back as soon as it came within range of the horse batteries.

Where his right wing was exposed, General Chanzy had sent a few battalions to take up a forward position near Terre-noire. Behind them a brigade of the Seven-

teenth Corps had arrived at Faverolles, and to the right of Villepion the Papal Zouaves advanced against Villours.

General von Tresckow now sent forward his last reserves. Two battalions of the 75th Regiment broke through the position at the first charge, and in conjunction with all the troops engaged, drove back the French column to Villepion.

The approach of darkness brought the fighting here to a close.

While the French Sixteenth Corps had been fighting alone with great persistence all day, the Fifteenth, according to orders, had advanced past Artenay, on the high-road to Paris. There, they were only opposed by the 3rd Brigade of German cavalry. This was attacked by midday, near Dambron, by the French 3rd Division, which formed the left flanking column, while the other two divisions kept much further to the right.

As soon, therefore, as this information from the cavalry reached General von Wittich, he moved off with the whole of the 22nd Division from Anneux, in the direction of Poupry. The head of the column succeeded in reaching the place at the double, and in driving back the enemy, who had already broken in there and in the belts of forest to the north. Six batteries then came into position, resting to the south on Morâle. The French deployed between Dambron and Autroches, and carried on a persistent fire while the remaining divisions came up. After an encounter with the troops from Poupry, they attacked with their right wing the small copses which lay near, in front of the forest-land to the north, placed the artillery in the gaps, and began at three o'clock an attack from thence. This, however, came to grief under the fire of grape-shot of the defenders, and of a threatened charge by

the 3rd Brigade of cavalry, which General von Colomb had set in motion in the open country to the west of Dambron. In the same way an attack on Morâle, by the left wing from Autroches, miscarried. But, at four o'clock, the French advanced along the whole line, preceded by a swarm of tirailleurs. They were repulsed at Poupry, and likewise at Morâle, at which latter place two companies of sappers joined in the fight; on the other hand, their right wing broke through into the forest, and compelled the Germans to retreat. But the Prussian battalions, who were in reserve, advanced from Poupry, and drove the enemy back into the scrub, where they still had to defend themselves against an attack by the cavalry.

The fighting was now stopped by the approach of night. The 22nd Division remained under arms till eleven o'clock in the position which they had seized, and then went back to Anneux. The 3rd Division of cavalry went for the night to Baigneaux. The 17th Division remained in position near Lumeau, having Loigny to their front, which they occupied in concert with the Bavarians, who extended further to the right as far as Orgères.

The day had cost the French 4000 killed and wounded, and the Germans fully as many; but 2500 unwounded prisoners, eight guns, one mitrailleuse, and a standard belonging to the enemy were left in their possession.

On the French side, the Fifteenth Corps returned to Artenay, and there received orders to occupy the position previously taken up on the skirt of the wood, with a division to be stationed there for its defence.

Thus the intended advance of the left wing of the Army of Orleans failed. The Sixteenth Corps, lacking the support of the Seventeenth, had indeed lost ground,



but kept its place in the foremost line at Villepion, Faverolles, and Terminiers. It was therefore left to General Chanzy to make one more attack on the right wing of the Germans on the following day.

This consisted of five corps, and stood close in front of the enemy; further reinforcements could not for the present be given, but the Commander-in-chief thought that the moment had now come to put an end to the incessant danger to the investing lines from the south.

On the 2nd, at midday, the order came from headquarters for all the forces to attack Orleans, and in the course of that day Prince Frederick Charles gave the requisite instructions to this end.

It is here necessary to go back a little in order to see how circumstances developed events during November at various other points.

## IV.

### FIGHTING ROUND PARIS.

#### PARIS IN NOVEMBER.

THE report, which became known on the 14th November, of the happy result of the action at Coulmiers on the 9th, had raised new hopes in Paris. No one any longer doubted that the enemy would find it necessary to send large forces in that direction, which would considerably weaken the investing lines, particularly in the south.

In order to assist the hoped-for relief by independent action when the time came, three armies were formed out of the garrison of Paris.

The first, under General Clément Thomas, consisted of 226 battalions of the National Guard, in round numbers 130,000 men. They were to defend the city walls and maintain peace in the city. The second, under General Ducrot, included the most trusty elements, particularly the troops which had hitherto constituted the Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Corps. This army was divided into three corps and one division of cavalry, consisting of fully 100,000 men and more than 300 guns. They were intended for active service in the field, and for making sorties on the investing forces. The third army, under General Vinoy, 70,000 strong, consisted of six regiments of the Garde Mobile, and one division of cavalry; and Maud'huy's infantry division was also distributed among them. They were to support the more important sorties by making feints against the foremost besieging lines.

Besides these, 80,000 of the Garde Mobile were in the forts, and 35,000 men at St. Denis under Admiral de la Ronciere.

The available fighting power consequently amounted to above 400,000 men.

The garrison exhibited a remarkable activity in small night engagements. The heavy guns in the place would carry as far as Choisy-le-Roi, and even to Beauregard, near Versailles. They worked hard in the trenches on the peninsula of Gennevilliers and constructed a military bridge. Several things showed that the French intended to make an attempt on the west. But since, as long as the Second Army was still incomplete, the greatest danger threatened the Germans from the south, their Commander-in-chief, as already mentioned, kept the Second Corps behind the Yvette from Villeneuve to Saclay. On the north of Paris the corps of Guards spread themselves out to the left towards Aulnay, the Twelfth crossed to the south bank of the Marne, and the Württemberg Division moved to the position left vacant by the Second Corps between the Marne and the Seine.

On November 18th the summons came to Paris from Tours to effect a prompt connection with the Army of the Loire, somewhat prematurely, as we know, since that army was still deliberating about merely defensive measures.

In Paris, arrangements were, indeed, being made for a great sortie. But as the earlier attacks on the centre of the Sixth Corps had shown that this had been considerably strengthened by fortifications at Thiais and Chevilly, it was decided to reach the uplands east of Joinville and from thence to turn off to the south. The attention of the Germans was to be diverted by means of attacks in the opposite direction.

On the 18th, the day on which the Army of Orleans had vainly endeavored to press on towards Beaune-la-Rolande, General Ducrot assembled the Second Paris Army in the neighborhood of Vincennes, and the Third, with Hugues's division, occupied Mont-Avron on the following day. As, however, the construction of bridges at Champigny and Bry was not yet completed, battle was postponed till the 30th; but it was left to the leaders of the minor engagements to carry them into effect simultaneously or separately. Accordingly, Maud'huy's division collected during the night of the 29th behind the redoubt at Hautes-Bruyères, and marched towards L'Hay before daybreak.

Warned by the heavy firing from the southern forts, General von Tümpling had ordered the 12th Division to get under arms early in their positions, and the 11th to assemble at Fresnes.

The French, favored by the darkness, made their way through the vineyards into L'Hay; yet they were successfully driven back by the Germans with the bayonet and clubbed arms.

After continuing the firing for some time, the French renewed their onslaught at 8.30, but without success; and then the defenders, reinforced from the reserve, replied with a vigorous charge. At ten o'clock the enemy retreated to Villejuif.

Admiral Pothuau had at the same time advanced up the Seine with the Marine Infantry and the National Guard. A vedette at Gare-aux-Bœufs was surprised and taken prisoner, Choisy-le-Roi was fired upon by field-guns, artillery, and some gun-boats, which appeared on the Seine. Meanwhile, as the Grenadiers of the 10th Regiment (German) were on the point of making an attack on their side, General Vinoy stopped the fighting.

This demonstration cost the French 1000 men and 300 uninjured prisoners; the Prussians, who were under cover, lost only 140 men. Still, the forts kept up fire till midday, and then the enemy were allowed a short truce, in order to carry away their numerous wounded.

Against the centre of the Fifth Corps also a strong force of infantry had advanced at eight o'clock, upon Garches and Malmaison, and had driven in part of the outposts. But they soon met with opposition from the battalions, and at noon retreated into Valérien.

#### THE ATTEMPT TO RELEASE THE ARMY OF PARIS.

(30th November and 2nd December.)

On the 30th November the Second Paris Army opened the battle which was to decide the fate of the capital.

To prevent the concentration of the Germans towards the real attack, the investing lines were engaged against sorties at almost every point.

General Ducrot ordered Susbille's division of his Second Corps to march to the south. These had already reached Rosny by three o'clock in the morning, crossed over the Marne at Créteil by a flying bridge, and from thence, briskly supported by the neighboring forts, opened fire on the Würtemberg Division, whose outposts had been pushed forward as far as Bonneuil and Mesly.

General von Obernitz had to maintain an extended position, his 1st Division, being near Villiers, on the peninsula of Joinville, his 2nd at Sucy-en-Brie, and his 3rd at Brévannes. The division had been placed under the General in command of the Army of the Meuse, who had received orders from Versailles to increase

his strength considerably by the addition of the Twelfth Corps, or even of some troops of the Corps of Guards.

In consequence of the enemy's enormous numbers on Mont-Avron, the Saxon Corps believed themselves immediately threatened on the right bank of the Marne, and requested to be immediately transferred to the left; but the Crown Prince of Saxony gave orders that the whole of the 24th Division should assemble there on the following day.

Thus, for the present, no help could be rendered to the Würtembergers but by means of the wing of the Second Corps, which was posted at Villeneuve, instead of the 7th Brigade of infantry, who were sent near Brévannes to Valenton.

The fire of three German batteries, on their way to that town, first brought the advance of the French Division to a stand. The attempt of the Würtembergers to take Mont-Mesly completely failed at the outset; but after the artillery was brought into play they succeeded in taking the hill by twelve o'clock, and the Prussian battalions made their way into Mesly. The Würtemberg troopers attacked the enemy's retreating guns with great success. At 1.30 the re-opening of the fire from the forts announced the end of this sortie. It cost the Germans 350 men, and the French 1200.

During this time the centre of the Sixth Corps had not even been disturbed. General Vinoy, who had not been informed of the advance of Susbille's division, as soon as its retreat was noticed, opened a rapid fire on Ivry and the adjoining works, which was augmented by gun-boats on the Seine, and armor-plated batteries on the railway. Then Admiral Pothuau advanced against Choisy-le-Roi and Thiais. He once more set his marines to drive out the Prussian outposts from

Gare-aux-Bœufs. But the further advance failed, and General Vinoy recalled his troops, after which the fighting at Mesly ceased, and only the thunder of artillery continued till five o'clock.

After a preliminary cannonade from Valérien the Garde Mobile advanced against the centre of the Fifth Corps as early as seven o'clock. They were, however, repulsed by the outposts, and supports who were in readiness, and retired at eleven o'clock.

Further towards the north of Paris a sharp skirmish took place. At midday the Fort de la Briche, supported by field-guns and a floating battery, opened a heavy fire on the low-lying village of Epinay, on the right bank of the Seine. At two o'clock Haurion's brigade advanced, two companies of marines pressed into this place along the bank of the river, and drove out the garrison, which consisted of only one company. A second also retired from the base of the fortifications in a northerly direction towards Ormesson. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the village, with a few obstinately defended farms on the further side of the mill-race, fell into the hands of the French.

Meanwhile the troops of the Fourth Army Corps had assembled, and established seven batteries on the heights above. The infantry rushed into the village from all sides with loud cheers, and after a fierce street-fight recovered possession of the lost posts; and it was this transitory victory that was to raise such great hopes in Tours. The losses on both sides amounted to 300 men.

These were all mere feints to facilitate the chief action; and whilst the investing troops were thus engaged and attracted to various points, two corps of the French Second Army at 6.30 in the morning crossed the bridges at Joinville and Nogent which had

been completed during the night. After repulsing the German outposts they both deployed, and completely covered the peninsula between Champigny and Bry. The Third Corps had taken the road along the north bank of the Marne, towards Neuilly, to cross the river there, thus at the same time threatening the position of the Saxon Corps, who therefore detained the 47th Brigade on the right bank, though it had been sent to the assistance of the Würtembergers. Consequently only two German brigades, spread over three-quarters of a mile, were left to face the two French corps on the left bank, with the Saxon 48th at Noisy, and the Würtemberg 1st between Villiers and Chennevières.

At ten o'clock Maussion's division advanced towards the Park of Villiers. Supported by the Saxon divisions from Noisy, the Würtembergers repulsed a first attack, but in following it up met with heavy losses. The French batteries of two divisions and those of the Artillery Reserve formed line in front of the park. On their right wing Faron's division, which had met with no slight losses, occupied Champigny, and was drawn up for defence in front of this position.

General Ducrot's original idea had been to prolong the engagement on the peninsula until he could be joined at Noisy by his Third Corps. But as news arrived that at eleven o'clock they were still beyond the Marne, he ordered a general attack by the two other corps to commence at once.

On the left their advance was checked for a considerable time by the German batteries between Noisy and Villiers, and when Colonel von Abendroth advanced with six companies of the 48th Brigade from both those places to attack in force, the French retired to the vineyards on the western slope of the plateau,



even leaving two guns, which, however, the Saxons could not take away for want of horses.

In the centre Berthaut's division tried to pass south of Villiers, but, under a fire from five batteries stationed there and at Cornilly, their ranks were so much thinned that they fell back before the advance of a Saxon battalion.

On the right wing, the guns which had been brought up for the defence of Champigny had at last been compelled by the German artillery to withdraw, and had again sought cover further north, near the limekilns. A division of infantry had advanced along the river to Maison-Blanche, but in the meantime the 2nd Würtemberg Brigade, although itself attacked at Sucey, had dispatched two companies and a battery to Chennevières as reinforcements. Moving forward from the Hunting-lodge, the Würtembergers took 200 French prisoners at Maison-Blanche; though, on the other hand, the attempt to scale the heights before Champigny with the companies assembled at Cornilly failed with heavy losses. However, on the renewal of the flank attack from the Hunting-lodge, Faron's division, which had already been seriously shaken, was obliged to retreat to Champigny.

General Ducrot decided to be content, for that day, with having established a firm footing on the left bank of the Marne, and he brought up sixteen batteries to a position in his front, to secure the ground he had gained. On the following day the attack was to be renewed by all three corps.

The Germans, on their part, had to congratulate themselves on having held firm against superior numbers. And so in the afternoon the fighting gradually died away, until it broke out again in the north.

The French Third Corps, marching up the right

bank of the Marne, had left a strong force in Neuilly, and had driven back the outpost of the Saxon 23rd Brigade. Under cover of six batteries the construction of two military bridges below Neuilly was begun at ten o'clock, and finished by noon. Just at this time it happened, as we have seen, that the French on the plateau were retiring, so the passage did not take place until two o'clock in the afternoon. Bellemare's division marched along the valley to Bry, where they joined the left wing of the Third Corps. A regiment of Zouaves, trying to ascend the heights from that side, lost half its men and all its officers. Notwithstanding this, General Ducrot decided to bring his increased reinforcements to the renewal of the attack on Villiers.

Reinforced by four battalions, the divisions advanced in this direction, although the artillery had not succeeded in battering down the park wall; repeated onslaughts of infantry were repulsed, and finally the French retreated into the valley. Simultaneously with this, Berthaut's division failed in an attack on the railway and Faron's in one on the Hunting-lodge. Not till darkness had set in did the firing cease on both sides.

In the direction in which the French Third Corps had been fighting in the morning, the Crown Prince of Saxony had collected the 23rd Division near Chelles; but as soon as the enemy's true plans could be known, he sent off a detachment of the 47th Brigade and part of the artillery corps to the threatened position held by the Würtembergers. In the same way General von Obernitz, as soon as the fighting at Mesly was over, dispatched three battalions to the Hunting-lodge. At night orders came from head-quarters for the Second and Sixth Corps to send reinforcements to the position where the investing lines were in danger

and the 7th and 21st Brigades arrived at Sucy on the following day, the 1st of December.

The attempt on the part of the French to break through without help from outside was already considered as fairly hopeless, and it was only the fear of popular indignation which caused the Third Army to remain any longer on the left bank of the Marne. Instead of attacking, the French began to intrench themselves, and in order to clear the battle-field a truce was arranged. The thundering of the artillery of Mont-Avron must serve for the present to keep the Parisians in a good humor. The Germans also worked at strengthening their positions, but suffering from the sudden and extreme cold, they withdrew at least part of their troops to quarters further to the rear.

The command of the whole of the German Army between the Marne and the Seine was handed over to General von Fransecky. The Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Meuse had already arranged that Prince George, with all the available troops of the Twelfth Corps, should take Bry and Champigny by surprise in the early morning.

With this object, on the morning of the 2nd of December, the 24th Division assembled at Noisy, the 1st Würtemberg Brigade at Villiers, and the 7th Prussian at the Hunting-lodge.

The foremost battalion of the Saxon Division drove back the enemy's outposts by an unexpected rush, took 100 prisoners, and after carrying a barricade, entered Bry. Here the fighting took the form of fierce action round the houses, in which the 2nd Battalion of the 107th Regiment lost nearly all its officers. Nevertheless, they held their ground, in spite of the heavy fire from the forts in the northern parts of the village.

The Würtembergers also seized Champigny, but

soon met with fierce resistance from the enemy, who were sheltered in the buildings. Bois-de-la-Lande, previously occupied, had to be abandoned, and General Ducrot himself determined to attack. The strong lines of artillery on his front came into action at about nine o'clock, and two divisions deployed behind them.

Meanwhile, the battalion of fusiliers of Colberg's Regiment marched once more from the Hunting-lodge on Bois-de-la-Lande, and took possession of it at the first onslaught. The French, who were firing steadily from the railway embankments, drove back the Pomeranians with clubbed rifles and at the point of the bayonet. A brisk fight was carried on at the same time near the lime-pits, where at noon 160 French laid down their arms. Whilst the 6th Würtemberger and the 9th Prussian batteries were by degrees brought into action against Champigny, General Hartmann succeeded in getting as far as the Bry road. As, however, the batteries were prevented by their own troops from firing, and were suffering, too, from the projectiles from the forts, they were withdrawn behind the slope of the valley near the Hunting-lodge. At two o'clock the 1st Württemberg and the 7th Prussian Brigades had established themselves in the line from the churchyard of Champigny to Bois-de-la-Lande.

Meanwhile, the French divisions, under Bellemare and Susbille, had reached the battle-field from the right bank of the Marne. The two (German) battalions at Bry, having already lost thirty-six officers and 638 men, were compelled on the approach of the enemy in very superior force to evacuate the village and retire on Noisy, but not without taking 300 prisoners with them. The remainder of the Saxon forces held Villiers, where the batteries still available also took up a position.

When, at two o'clock, the French were leading a strong body of artillery to this point, four batteries of the Second Corps rushed out of the hollow near the Hunting-lodge at full gallop, and opened fire at 2000 paces on their flank. In scarcely ten minutes the French batteries retired and the Prussians went back to their sheltered position. Several of the enemy's battalions which, at about three o'clock, attempted a renewed assault on Villiers, were repulsed with less difficulty, and at five o'clock the fighting ceased. Only the French kept up a fire of field and fortress artillery until after dark.

General Ducrot had received information, in the course of the day, that the Army of the Loire was marching on Fontainebleau, and he therefore determined to maintain, if possible, his position outside Paris.

During the night of the 3rd December, provisions had been procured, also additional teams and ammunition for the batteries; but the advance of support from without was by no means confirmed.

The troops were completely exhausted by the disastrous fighting they had gone through, and the Commander-in-chief was justified in dreading a repulse on the Marne from the enemy's invigorated forces. He therefore ordered a retreat, the troops being informed that the attack should be renewed as soon as they were once more in a condition to fight.

Soon after midnight the divisions were already drawn up behind the outposts, and the baggage trains were sent back first. At noon the troops were able to follow over the bridges at Neuilly, Bry, and Joinville. Only one brigade remained to protect the passage.

The retreat was very skilfully covered by a series of small attacks on the German outposts. The French

batteries had opened fire at Le-Plant and Bry by day-break, and the withdrawal of the enemy's army was completely hidden by the thick mist.

General Fransecky assembled the Saxon and the Württemberg Divisions in fighting order at Villiers and Cœuilly, the 7th Brigade with the artillery of the Second Corps and two regiments of the Sixth at Chennevières, intending to wait for the expected reinforcement of the 4th, which was to come from the Sixth Corps. The 23rd Division received orders from the Crown Prince of Saxony to cross to the left bank of the Marne, whilst the corps of Guards had in the meantime extended their outposts to Chelles.

Matters remained so on the 3rd, with the exception of petty frays, and at four o'clock in the afternoon the troops returned to quarters. But early on the 4th, as the patrols rode out towards Bry and Champigny, they found these places vacated, and the peninsula of Joinville deserted by the enemy.

The French Second Army, which had been severely reduced and its discipline much shaken, turned back to Paris; by their own statement they had lost 12,000 men. The Germans had lost 6200 men, but took up the position again that they had previously held in the investing lines.

This determined attempt on the part of General Ducrot is the most serious effort that was made to break out of Paris. It was directed towards what was at the moment the weakest point of the investment, but only met with good results at the commencement.\*

\* A legend was subsequently circulated that the voice of one General at one of the German councils of war had, in opposition to all the others, prevented the removal of the chief head-quarters from Versailles. Apart from the fact that during the whole course of the invasion no council of war was ever held, it never occurred to any member of the King's military suite to set so bad an example to the army.

## THE ADVANCE OF THE FIRST ARMY IN NOVEMBER.

The newly-formed army in the north of France had not remained inactive. Rouen and Lille were their chief centres. In front of Lille, the Somme with its fortified passages at Ham, Péronne, Amiens, and Abbeville afforded a field equally advantageous for attacks in front or for a secure retreat. The advance of the French in independent columns had, indeed, on various occasions, been checked by detachments of the Army of the Meuse, and they were not strong enough to rid themselves permanently of that incubus.

We have already seen how, after the fall of Metz, the Second Army retired towards the Loire, and the First into the northern departments of France.

A large portion of the First Army was detained as far back as the Moselle by the transport of the numerous prisoners and by the watch kept at the fortresses which interrupted the communications with Germany. The whole of the Seventh Corps were either in Metz or before Diedenhof and Montmédy. Of the First Corps, the 1st Division had been withdrawn to Rethel, the 4th Brigade had been carried forward by railway beyond Soissons to the investment of La-Fère, and the 3rd Division of cavalry had been sent on towards the Forest of Argennes. The remaining five brigades followed with the artillery on the 7th November.

Marching on a wide front, they had already reached the Oise, between Compiègne and Chauny, on the 20th. In front of the right wing the cavalry, supported by a battalion of Jägers, came across the Garde Mobile at Ham and Guiscard, but the French forces retired to Amiens on the advance of the infantry columns. It was understood that 15,000 men were there, and reinforcements continually joining them.

On the 25th the 3rd Brigade reached Le-Quesnel. Of the Seventh Corps, the 15th Division succeeded in getting beyond Montdidier, and the 16th as far as Breteuil, whence they established communication with the Saxon forces at Clermont.

On the 26th the right wing started for Le-Quesnel, the left for Moreuil and Essertaux. The cavalry made incursions across the Somme, the right bank of which they found occupied by the French. The enemy's attitude showed that they restricted themselves to the defence of that position. General von Manteuffel thereupon determined to attack, without waiting for the arrival of the 1st Division, which had been inexplicably delayed on the way by railway from Rethel. But he wanted first, on the 27th, to concentrate his available forces on a smaller front, as they were spread out over an extent of four miles. But the battle was unexpectedly fought on that same day.

#### THE BATTLE OF AMIENS.

(November 17th.)

General Farre, with his 17,500 men divided into three brigades, stood on one side of Amiens, on the south bank of the Somme, at Villers-Bretonneux, and at Longueau, on the road to Péronne, keeping possession of the villages and the copses on his front. Besides these there were 8000 Gardes Mobiles half a mile in front of the town in intrenched positions.

In accordance with the instructions from head-quarters, General von Goeben had arranged that the 15th Division should take up their quarters at Fouencamps and Sains on the 27th; the 16th at Rumigny and Plachy, and in the villages further back; the Artillery Corps at Grattepanche. The Eighth Corps had to as-



semble before Amiens between the Celle and the Noye, standing at least half a mile from the First Corps, and divided from them by the Noye and the Avre. General von Bentheim, on the other side, had directed his advanced guard, the 3rd Brigade, to find quarters north of the Luce.

At an early hour the Germans seized the fords of the stream at Démuin, Hangard, and Domart. At ten o'clock they moved forward in order to occupy the quarters intended for them, and as the enemy were already in possession, a fight began which gradually increased in magnitude.

The wooded heights on the north bank of the Luce were taken without any particular resistance, and maintained in spite of several assaults by the French. The artillery advanced in the intervals. On the left the 4th Regiment seized the village of Gentelles, on the right the 44th Regiment rushed up to within 300 paces of the left wing of the French position, and by a vigorous onslaught carried by storm the earthworks at the railway cutting east of Villers Bretonneux. Soon after midday a strong force of the enemy drew up at Bretonneux and in Cachy, directly opposite the 3rd Brigade, which was extended nearly a mile.

On the left wing of the Germans the 16th Division had by eleven o'clock already reached the quarters assigned to them, and had driven the enemy out of Hébecourt, as well as out of the woods north of this place towards Dury. When the Eighth Corps was called out on the left bank of the Noye, the 15th Division was moved from Moreuil along the left bank of the Noye by way of Ailly to Dommartin, and the advanced guard from Hailles marched on Fouencamps.

Thus it happened that before noon, between the two corps, the roads from Noye and Montdidier were left

completely exposed on the German side, while a French brigade was standing at the fork of the road at Longueau, though, in fact, it remained absolutely inactive.

This interval was at first screened only by the numerous retinue and the staff of the Commander-in-chief; and then it was to some extent filled up by the battalions constituting the escort of the head-quarters. As, however, at ten o'clock the French on their side commenced an attack on the 3rd Brigade, General von Manteuffel ordered the 15th Division to join in the fight as far as possible on the right wing.

After a steady defence, the companies of the 4th Regiment were driven back out of the Wood of Hangard towards the slope of the hill in front of Démuin, and subsequently, after having fired away all their ammunition, the defenders of Gentelles were driven back to Domart.

General von Strubberg, instructed from the camp beyond the Luce, had sent four batteries in this direction, which crossed the Avre, but came under such a heavy fire from the Wood of Gentelles that their further advance was prevented, and they had to change front on the copse. Behind them, however, the other detachments of the 30th Brigade pressed forward to St. Nicolas on the right bank, and to Boves on the left, and with the help of the 29th Brigade drove out the French from the heap of ruins.

Meanwhile a part of the 1st German Division, who were retiring, had come up behind the 3rd Brigade. The position of the artillery was considerably strengthened, the guns were directed against the earthworks south of Bretonnoux. As further support the Crown Prince's Regiment marched out and the French were again soon driven out of the Bois-de-Hangard. The East Prussians, who were following, crouched behind

the earthworks, several detachments of the 4th and 44th Regiments gradually collected there from the neighboring woods, and drove the enemy from this position. Thirteen batteries now silenced the French artillery, and, after they had fired for some time on Bretonneux, the place was, at four o'clock, seized by the Prussians, who came in from all sides with drums beating. The French in the town only opposed them at a few places; for the most part they hurried over the Somme at Corbie under cover of the darkness, and with the loss of 180 unwounded prisoners.

When, somewhat later, General Lecointe advanced with the reserve brigade on Domart, he found the place already in possession of the 1st Division, so turned back. The French only succeeded in holding Cachy till late in the evening.

The troops of the First Corps were accommodated for the night in the hamlets to the south of the Luce, the outposts remained on duty on the north bank, and Bretonneux also was occupied.

On the left wing of the battle-field the 16th Division had advanced on Dury, had driven the French out of the neighboring churchyard, but had been forced to retire from an attack on the enemy's lines of intrenchment, which were extensive and strongly defended. They bivouacked behind Dury.

It was night before General von Manteuffel received news of the enemy's complete defeat. Early in the morning of the 28th the patrols of the First Army Corps found the ground clear of the enemy as far as the Somme, and all the bridges across the river demolished. By noon General von Goeben returned to Amiens, and the citadel capitulated two days later with 400 men and 30 cannon.

One peculiarity of the battle of the 27th November

is the small extent of the battle-field in proportion to the number of the troops engaged. General Farre, with 25,000 men in round numbers, covered a front of three miles from Pont-de-Metz south of Amiens to the east of Villers Bretonneux, with the Somme close on his rear. As the Germans attacked on about the same length of front, there was a break in their centre. The danger caused by this gap was not taken advantage of during the morning through the inactivity of the enemy, and it was then nullified by the occupation of St. Nicolas.

The superiority of numbers was on the side of the Germans, for, although of the 1st Division in their rear, only the Crown Prince's Regiment could take part in the fighting, they were 30,000 strong.

The 3rd Brigade had borne the brunt of the battle, losing 630 men and 34 officers, out of a total of 1300. The French also lost 1300 killed, besides 1000 reported missing. Part of the National Guard threw down their arms and fled for their homes. The main body of the French Corps retired on Amiens.

Immediately after the battle the First Army was reinforced by the 4th Brigade, which had been brought from La-Fère.

#### THE TAKING OF LA-FÈRE.

(November 27th.)

This little fortress had become quite important, since it closed the line of railway passing through Rheims, whether to Paris or to Amiens. Lying in low open ground, well watered by the Somme and its tributaries, it is difficult of access; otherwise, the fortifications were restricted to a wall standing apart, with small earthworks lying close in front of it, and it was entirely

exposed to view from the heights situated on the east at a distance of not more than 1500 metres.

The brigade had temporarily invested La-Fère on the 15th November, and when the siege-train arrived from Soissons with thirty-two heavy guns, seven batteries were constructed and armed during the night of the 25th on the heights already mentioned. On the following morning these opened fire, and on the 27th the place capitulated; 2300 Gardes Mobiles were taken prisoners, and the most serviceable of the 113 guns were carried to Amiens to arm the citadel. The Seventh Corps, which was to have supported the First Army, meanwhile never appeared in sight, because they still had further work to do on the Moselle; on the 13th November the greater part of the 14th Division had only reached Diedenhof.

#### THE TAKING OF DIEDENHOF.

(November 24th.)

This fortress, being shut in on all sides by hills, was entirely without bomb-proof space; the direct approach from the south was, on the other hand, rendered more difficult by inundations, and on the west and north by marsh lands. General von Kameke therefore decided to await the results of a heavy bombardment before making a regular attack. Batteries were erected on both banks of the Moselle, and on the morning of the 22nd eighty-five guns opened fire. At first the fortress answered briskly. In the following night, to lay the first parallel, the infantry advanced to within 600 paces on the west front, but, in consequence of pouring rain and the condition of the ground, the work made but small progress. However, on the 24th at midday the Commandant sent in negotiations for the surrender of

the place. The garrison, 4000 men strong, with the exception of the National Guard stationed in the place, was captured and sent to Germany. One hundred and ninety-nine guns, besides a considerable amount of provisions, arms, and ammunition, fell into the hands of the victorious troops.

The 14th Division was now required to lay siege to the forts on the northern frontier, which would occupy it for some time. The 13th Division was, by orders from head-quarters, directed to commence operations in the south of France.

#### THE INVESTMENT OF BELFORT IN NOVEMBER.

On the south-east of the seat of war Belfort had become the centre of continuous small engagements between French scouts and the rear of the Fourteenth Corps, who, under General von Werder, stood near Vesoul.

However, when the divisions which up till then had been standing before Strasburg, had been relieved by a new contingent from Germany, the troops that were at Neu-Breisach were available, and these forces marched in the direction of Upper Alsace, while the 1st Reserve Division had reached Belfort by the 3rd November, and by the 8th had effected the preliminary investment of that place. The larger half of the 4th Reserve Division had marched to combine with the Fourteenth Corps at Vesoul, a detachment under General von Debschitz occupied Montbéliard, and the 67th Regiment held Mulhouse and Delle.

If we glance back at the German successes during November and the general military position towards the end of the month, we see the grand sortie from Paris repulsed in the north, the danger of being hemmed in done away with by General von Man-

teuffel's victory at Amiens; in the east, Diedenhof, Breisach, Verdun, and La-Fère taken, Montmédy and Belfort surrounded; and in the south Prince Frederick Charles preparing to attack the French army at Orleans.

## BATTLE OF ORLEANS.

(December 3rd and 4th.)

When the telegraphic order was received by the Second Army, soon after noon on the 2nd of December, the Prince on the same day assembled the Tenth Corps at Beaune-la-Rolande and Boynes, the Third at Pithiviers, and the Ninth at Bazoches-les-Gallerandes. By evening the collected forces had their marching orders.

The attack was expected to take place two days later. The Third Corps was first to advance on Loury by way of Chilleurs-aux-Bois; the Tenth only on Chilleurs; the Ninth, however, were to attack Artenay at half-past nine. The 1st Division of cavalry, supported by the infantry on the left wing, was to keep a lookout over the Yonne, the 6th was to follow the right wing. The Grand Duke, to whom it had been left to plan his own march on the west of the road to Paris, ordered the 22nd Division to assist in the attack on Artenay, the Bavarian Corps to advance on Lumeau, the 17th Division to remain at Anneux. The 4th Division of cavalry was to scour the country on the left flank.

Already by nine o'clock in the morning on the 3rd of December the Third Corps met eight battalions and six batteries of the French at Santeau. The 12th Brigade and the artillery of the 6th Division, who had been marched up in the rear of the foremost battalions in the column of route, therefore formed line at La-Brosse. After a few rounds, one of the batteries of the left wing had to be withdrawn from the battle,

which had now commenced; on the right, on the contrary, the Artillery Corps came up by degrees, and by noon seventy-eight Prussian guns were in full action.

The French, yielding to such superior strength, retired on Chilleurs; but, after the German batteries had advanced within 2000 paces of that place and their right flank had been threatened by an assault from the Jäger battalions, they commenced a retreat towards the forest, and at three o'clock part of the 5th Division followed them up by the path which led to the south, and the 6th by the high-roads. As these had been obstructed in several places, it was six o'clock in the evening before the clearing by Loury was reached.

On the right brisk musketry-fire was heard in the direction of Neuville, and an announcement also arrived that on the left the French were occupying Naneray.

In consequence of this, some of the reserve forces that had remained at Chilleurs were brought up as a support, one regiment was fronted towards the west, a second towards the east, and, under cover of the outposts on the south, the remainder of the troops bivouacked and went into quarters at Loury.

The Ninth Corps had at first assembled at Château-Gaillard, on the road to Paris, and then advanced along the high-road and against Villereau by way of Dambron.

At Assas they met the French, who were soon driven back by the guns, and vanished towards Artenay. At about ten o'clock an obstinate duel was opened with the batteries of the 2nd Division (French) in position at this place, in which part of the corps' artillery bore a part, seconded presently by the batteries of the 22nd Division, which had come up to Poupry. General Martineau slowly retreated in échelon before the overwhelming fire of 90 guns, the artillery leading the way,



on La-Croix-Briquet and Ferme-d'Arblay. By twelve o'clock the Germans were in possession of Artenay, and after half an hour's rest they renewed the attack. It was a long and obstinate duel of artillery and infantry alike, while the 22nd Division pushed hard on the French left flank. At two o'clock their guns were silenced, the left wing column of the Ninth German Corps took the farm of Arblay, and the centre drove the enemy down the high-road, fighting persistently, past La-Croix-Briquet to Andeglou, where, under cover of the Marine ordnance, resistance was kept up till dark.

General Puttkamer had brought up five batteries to within 800 paces of Chevilly, and the 22nd Division was advancing on the burning village, when the general in command gave the order to halt, the Grand Duke doubting the wisdom of a night attack on an intrenched position. But when, soon after, a patrol of hussars announced that it was already evacuated, General von Wittich ordered his men to take possession.

The troops bivouacked, under a heavy snow-storm, in and to the rear of La-Croix-Briquet.

At the first advance the Ninth Corps had sent a detachment of four battalions of Hessians against St. Lyé on the left. They had met the enemy at La-Tour, and had driven him back on St. Germain, but could not drive him out again.

When the Tenth Corps, marching round by Pithiviers, reached Chilleurs at about three o'clock, in the rear of the Third Corps, part of the 20th Division went on in the direction of the battle at Neuville, which, in the evening, became audible at Loury. Darkness had already come on and precluded the use of artillery, but the infantry broke into the village at several points.

However, they found the streets barricaded, and met with obstinate resistance, so the attack had to be postponed till the following day.

The Fifteenth French Corps had alone received the onslaught of three Prussian corps. Strong contingents of the Army of the Loire, posted to the right and left of the Fifteenth Corps, made but feeble efforts throughout the day to support it. General Chanzy alone, at about two o'clock, ordered the 2nd Division of the Sixteenth Corps to advance when he heard firing from Artenay, though he had that morning begun his retreat on St. Pérary and Boulay. But this reinforcement met the Prussian 17th Division, which, coming up from Anneux, was on the point of joining in the fight at Andeglou, and with it the Bavarian Corps advancing from Luneau. Their strong artillery, in position at Chameul and Sougy, soon forced the French to retire. First Douzy and then Huêtre were taken, and the château of Chevilly occupied by the 17th Division. Here, too, darkness put an end to the fighting. The troops of the right wing encamped at Provenchères, Chameul, and other places to the rear.

Thus the German Army had made its way without much fighting to within two miles of Orleans. The French, indeed, had maintained their ground till evening in the neighborhood of Neuville, but the detachments stationed there were ordered to retire in the course of the night. They were to get into the Pithiviers road by Rebréchien, and make a circuit by Orleans to Chevilly. But they thus came under the fire of the Third German Corps, encamped at Loury, and fled in disorder back into the wood, whence they attempted to reach their destination in detachments.

It was only to be expected that the French would stoutly defend their intrenchments at Gidy and Cer-

cottes, on the following day, if only to keep open their retreat on Orleans. On the 4th, therefore, Prince Frederick Charles ordered the Grand Duke's forces and the Ninth Corps to attack both points from all sides. The Third Corps was to advance from Loury on Orleans, and the Tenth, again forming the reserve, was to follow on Chevilly.

General d'Aurelle had returned in the evening to Saran. Here he saw the 2nd Division of the Fifteenth flying past in complete rout, and heard that the 1st, too, had failed to make a stand at Chilleurs. The corps of the right wing were altogether shattered by the battle of Beaune, and those of the left no less by the fight at Loigny. The French General saw the danger of being driven on the Loire, with undisciplined hordes, and thus blocking the only passage across the river at Orleans. He decided therefore on a divergent retreat. Only the Fifteenth Corps was to retire by Orleans; General Crouzat was to cross the Loire at Gien, General Chanzy at Beaugency. Then their reunion must be attempted beyond the Sauldre. The necessary dispositions were made during the night, and communicated to the Government. From the Green Table at Tours, indeed, counter-orders came next morning, to maintain the position at Orleans, which was, in fact, already given up; but the General adhered to his own determination.

On December 4th the Third Army Corps (German) marched out of Loury in two columns, one by the high-road and one by Vennecey. Both reached Boigny by noon, having met none but deserters.

A detachment was sent on to Neuville on the right, and captured seven deserted guns and stands of arms. To the left, another detachment occupied Chézy, on the Loire. After a short rest the main columns ad-

vanced, and by two o'clock the 6th Division reached Vaumainbert, which was occupied by part of the French Fifteenth Corps. Although the country was not open enough to allow of the employment of artillery, the place was taken by the Brandenburgers, in spite of the stout resistance of the French Marine Infantry, and the fire of the batteries on the heights to the north of St. Loup could now be directed on that suburb of Orleans.

The 5th Division had meanwhile come up behind the 6th and taken part in the fight.

The Twentieth French Corps, which was still at Chambon, in the eastern part of the forest opposite Beaune-la-Rolande, had received orders at four in the morning, from Tours direct, to march on Orleans. Contradictory orders had previously arrived from General d'Aurelle, but nothing further had been heard. General Crouzat had, as a precaution, sent his train across the Loire at Jargeau, and then marched in the direction he was ordered to take. When, at half-past two, at Pont-aux-Moines, he met the detachment marching on Chézy, he determined to fight his way across; but as General von Stülpnagel reinforced his two battalions by bringing up the rest of his division, the French gave up the attempt and withdrew to the other side of the river, crossing again at Jargeau.

On the German side the attack on St. Loup was unsuccessful; and since from the site of the battle he got no news of the other corps, and darkness was coming on, General von Alvensleben postponed any further attack on the city till the following day.

To the north of Orleans the Ninth Army Corps (German) had advanced from La-Croix-Briquet on the intrenched position at Cercottes. At about one o'clock the foremost detachments of infantry entered the place.

The 2nd Division of the French Fifteenth Corps was driven by the fire of the artillery into the vineyards outside the town. Here the infantry alone could continue the struggle. The French defended every tenable spot, and in the railway station just outside Orleans especially held their own with great persistency. The station and the deep cutting through which the road ran were fortified with barricades and rifle-pits, and armed with naval guns. It was not till nightfall, at about half-past five, that they abandoned this position, but renewed the contest a little further back. To avoid street-fighting in the dark, General von Manstein put a stop to the battle at about seven o'clock, till next day.

The advanced guard of the 17th Division of the Grand Duke's forces had found Gidy intrenched and strongly occupied. But at the approach of the Ninth Corps the French abandoned the position at about 11 o'clock, leaving 8 guns behind them. The German Division, to avoid the wood, now marched to the west, on Boulay, whither the 22nd and the 2nd Cavalry Division followed as a reserve.

They here found the Bavarian Corps and the 4th Cavalry Division engaged in a fight, having already driven the French out of Bricy and Janvry. When the artillery had for some time been engaged, General von der Tann stormed the position, at about twelve o'clock. But the French did not wait for this; they beat a hasty retreat, leaving some of their guns in the trenches. The 2nd Cavalry Division followed in pursuit.

The 4th Hussars, of the 5th Brigade, galloping past Montaignu, charged a French unlimbered battery and seized all the guns; another at Ormes was brought out of action by a horse battery. From thence a strong

body of French horse suddenly appeared on the left flank of the 4th Brigade, as these were crossing the road to Châteaudun. But Blucher's hussars, with a sharp swerve, drove the enemy through the village and back on Ingré.

The 4th Cavalry Division was placed to watch on the Grand Duke's right flank; and the hussars here charged 250 men of the 2nd Life Guards, forming the escort of a baggage-train on the road to Châteaudun, and took them all prisoners.

While the Germans were thus converging on Orleans from the north and east, the French Seventeenth Corps and the 1st Division of the Sixteenth were still in the field at Patay and St. Pérvy. General Chanzy had assembled the latter at Coinces, and, to protect himself against their threatened attack in flank, General von der Tann drew up his 3rd Infantry Brigade, with the cuirassiers and artillery reserve, on a front towards Briey. The 4th Cavalry Division marched on Coinces, where General von Bernhardt, leaping a wide ditch, with four squadrons of Uhlans, drove a body of French horse back on St. Pérvy, without their stopping to do more than fire one volley. Other squadrons of the 9th Brigade charged the French tirailleurs, and pursued the cavalry till they had fallen back on a strong body of infantry. The 8th Brigade was observing Patay, and after that place had come under the fire of a battery and been abandoned, General Chanzy gave up all further attack and retired behind the wood of Montpipeau.

The 2nd Cavalry Division now made for the Loire immediately below Orleans. Its artillery destroyed a bridge at Chapelle over which a baggage-train was passing, and compelled the troops which were marching on Cléry, along the further bank, to fly back to

Orleans. Two military railway-trains from thence were not to be stopped by the firing, but one from Tours, in which, as it happened, was Gambetta himself, returned thither with all speed.

The Bavarian Corps, meanwhile, had advanced on the high-road, and the 22nd Division, in touch with the Ninth Corps, on the old Châteaudun road; the 17th Division on La-Borde between the other two. This division was called upon at about 3.30 to take the village of Heurdy, which was stoutly defended; and when the Bavarians from Ormes had turned to the right on Indré, it proceeded by the high-road towards St.-Jean-de-la-Ruelle. Having overcome all opposition there, too, the head of the division reached the gates of Orleans at about six o'clock.

General von Tresckow there negotiated with the military authorities the formal occupation of the town. An agreement was arrived at by ten o'clock, and shortly after midnight the Grand Duke marched in with the 17th Division, followed by the 2nd Bavarian Brigade.

The bridge over the Loire was forthwith secured, the French not having had time to blow it up. The rest of the troops found quarters to the west and north of the city.

The peremptory orders from the Government to hold Orleans had shaken General d'Aurelle's original determination. When the greater part of the Fifteenth Corps (French) arrived there in the forenoon, he wanted to renew the attempt at resistance. But the necessary orders could not be transmitted to the corps on the right wing, nor carried out by those on the left; and by five o'clock the General in command was convinced of the futility of any further conflict. The artillery of the Fifteenth Corps was first transferred to La-Ferté-

St.-Aubin; the infantry followed. The Twentieth Corps, as we have seen, was at Jargeau; the Eighteenth had recrossed the Loire at Sully; the Sixteenth and Seventeenth moved off westward in the direction of Beaugency, but remained on the right bank of the river.

The battle, which had lasted two days, had cost the Germans 1700 men; the French lost 20,000, of whom 1800 were taken prisoners. Their large army, lately massed before Orleans, was now split up into three separate bodies.

#### THE GERMAN ADVANCE ON THE SOUTH, EAST, AND WEST.

The troops were too much exhausted for immediate pursuit in any direction.

It was decided that the 6th Cavalry Division, reinforced by an infantry detachment of the 18th Division, should follow up the enemy to the southward only, ascertain his whereabouts, and destroy the connection of the railways from Bourges, Orleans, and Tours at the Vierzon junction. These cavalry troops were in quarters to the north of the city; the French Fifteenth had a long start of them, and their main body had reached Salbris, when, two days after the battle, on December 6th, General von Schmidt arrived by a forced march at La-Ferté-St.-Aubin. Here he found a detachment of the 18th Division, which had already driven the French rear-guard back on La-Motte-Beuvron, and was now ordered to retire on the Loiret. Only two companies of the 36th Regiment and one of pioneers joined the advance, and followed the cavalry partly in baggage-wagons and on gun-limbers.

On the 7th, under orders from Tours, the French left the high-road and executed a flank movement of



four miles in an easterly direction to Aubigny-Ville. The cavalry, supported to the best of their power by their artillery and the small infantry force, had a smart fight with the French rear-guard at Nouan-le-Fuzelier, and again in the evening at Salbris, in which the French finally had the best of it. The neighborhood being very thinly populated, the division had to get back in the dark to Nouan, to find shelter from the bitter winter night.

Long before daybreak on the 8th, the French rear-guard had left Salbris to avoid a further encounter with the enemy, whose strength they greatly overestimated.

After some slight skirmishes the cavalry division reached Vierzon that evening. The telegraph wires were cut and the railway line torn up in several places, 70 goods' vans were armor-plated, the direction of the enemy's retreat reported, and any offensive movement on the part of the French from that side was regarded as most improbable.

The division had fulfilled its task; it was now ordered to leave one brigade as a corps of observation, and to advance on Blois with the rest. General von der Groeben maintained his positions at Vierzon and Salbris till the 14th.

The winter campaign of this 6th Cavalry Division was exceptionally fatiguing. It was almost impossible to move excepting along the high-roads, and they were frozen so hard that it was often necessary to dismount and lead the horses. The inhabitants of the Sologne district were extremely hostile, the advanced troopers were shot down in every village. The French forces, on the other hand, made but a feeble resistance. Numerous prisoners and large quantities of abandoned matériel bore witness to a hasty retreat, in many cases

to desperate flight. Nevertheless, in spite of much purposeless marching and counter-marching, the corps of the right wing had by December 13th succeeded in joining the Army of Orleans at Bourges.

The state in which they arrived may be gathered from the telegraphic *Correspondence Urgente* of the Government with General Bourbaki, who, when General d'Aurelle was deprived of the command in chief, took that of these three corps.

Monsieur Freycinet, who was no doubt kept well informed by the country people, assured General Bourbaki that only a weak force of cavalry stood in front of him, and repeatedly urged his advancing on Blois. The General replied that if he were to make the attempt, not a gun, not a man of his three corps would ever be seen again. His intention was to retreat at once from Bourges on St. Amand, and if necessary yet further to the rear; the only danger was that he might be attacked before he could accomplish this, and be involved in disaster.

The Minister of War himself went to Bourges, but he too renounced all idea of an offensive movement when he saw the disorder of the troops. "*C'est encore ce que j'ai vu de plus triste.*" It was with great difficulty that he persuaded the corps not to retreat at once, but to await the course of events, under cover of a detachment pushed forward on Vierzon.

On the day when General Schmidt entered Vierzon, the Fifteenth Corps was in the neighborhood of Henrichemont, at about an equal distance with himself from Bourges. The Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps were at Aubigny-Ville and Cernay, from two to three marches away.

It can scarcely be doubted that, if the 18th Division had followed the advance of the 6th Cavalry Division,

the Germans might have taken possession of Bourges and of the vast military stores there.

To the east of Orleans the Third Corps had marched up the river on Châteauneuf. They only met parties of stragglers till the 7th, when two divisions of the Eighteenth French Corps attempted to cross to the right bank of the Loire at Gien. This resulted in an engagement between the advanced guards at Nevoy, with the result that these divisions retreated across the bridge in the course of the night and continued their march on Bourges.

#### THE GRAND DUKE'S BATTLE.

(December 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th.)

The Grand Duke's forces were in a position close to the retreating left wing of the French. In contrast to the disorder of the right wing, General Chanzy, certainly the most capable of all the leaders whose duty it became to fight the invaders in the open field, had, in a great measure, restored the discipline and spirit of his troops. They were not only able to make a stand, but could even attack the enemy. They had, indeed, been considerably reinforced by the newly-formed Twenty-first Corps and by Camô's division. The latter formed the advanced guard at Meung; behind it were the Sixteenth Corps at Beaugency, the Seventeenth at Cravant, and the Twenty-first at St. Laurent, by the woods of Marchénoir.

On the day after the fight the Grand Duke gave the troops a day's rest; only the cavalry pursued the French. The 4th Cavalry Division reached Ouzouer; the 2nd, arriving at Meung, met a strong force of infantry.

On the 7th, the Grand Duke's forces advanced on a very wide front. The 17th Division, on the left wing, marched on Meung, where its artillery opened a duel with that of the enemy. Towards four o'clock, a Mecklenburg battalion carried Langlochère by storm, but found itself threatened on both sides by the approach of the enemy's columns. On the left Foinard was ere long taken and a gun seized, while on the right the 1st Bavarian Brigade advanced on La Bourie. Here, almost at the same moment, the 2nd Cavalry Division came up by by-roads from Renardière, having driven the enemy out of Le-Bardon by the fire of its guns. The Bavarians now marched out to meet the mass of French approaching from Grand-Chatre. They fought a hard battle till nightfall, supported by the horse batteries, ending in the retreat of the French on Beaumont.

During this conflict of the left wing, the Grand Duke's Army, the 1st Bavarian Division, had marched a considerable distance on Baccon, and the 22nd on Ouzouer; and then, finding the French offered a determined resistance, the Grand Duke decided on closing up his forces to the left.

(December 8th.) To this end the 22nd Division advanced to the south of Ouzouer on Villermain. After repulsing the swarms of tirailleurs which attacked their left flank under cover of a fog, General von Wittich directed his march on Cravant, to effect a junction with the right wing of Bavarians who were already engaged in a hot struggle. They had repulsed the enemy's advance from Villechaumont, and had advanced with the 2nd Division along the road from Cravant to Beaugency; when all three French divisions charged afresh, the Bavarians retreated on Beaumont. Here they found support from the former and 17 batteries,

which were gradually brought into the fighting line. Their fire and an impetuous attack from three Bavarian brigades at last forced the enemy to fall back, and the position in the high-road was recovered.

The French now, on their side, brought up a strong body of artillery, and the Seventeenth Corps prepared to advance on Cravant. But the 22nd German Division had already arrived there at about one o'clock, after taking Beauvert and Layes, with the 4th Cavalry Division on their right and the 2nd on their left. So when, at about three o'clock, the dense French columns advanced on Cravant, they were checked by an impetuous attack of the 44th Brigade, which had joined the Bavarians, and soon driven out of Layes, which they had taken on their way. The five batteries nearest to Cravant had suffered so severely meanwhile that they had to be withdrawn.

When at last, at about four o'clock, the Bavarian battalions advanced to storm the height in front of them, they were met by fresh troops of the enemy, and after losing the greater part of their officers were compelled to retreat on the artillery position at Beaumont. Finally, however, the French abandoned Villechaumont.

On the left wing of the Grand Duke's forces the 17th Division had pursued the retreating French beyond Vallées and Villeneuve, and then at about half-past twelve had attacked them at Messas. The defence was obstinate, and it was not till dusk that they succeeded in carrying the place. The artillery directed its fire on dense masses assembled by Vernon, the infantry stormed the hill of Beaugency, and finally forced their way into the town, where a French battery fell into their hands. Camó's division then retired on Tavers, and even after midnight General von

Tresckow attacked Vernon, whence the French, taken quite by surprise, fled to Bonvalet.

The Commander-in-chief of the Second Army (German) had intended to march the Third, Tenth, and Ninth Corps on Bourges, from Gien, Orleans, and lastly from Blois. But the Grand Duke's force in its advance on Blois by the right bank of the Loire had met with unexpected resistance and a two days' engagement. At the army head-quarters at Versailles it was regarded as indispensable that the Grand Duke should immediately be reinforced by at least one division. Telegraphic orders to that effect were dispatched at ten in the morning of December 9th. The Ninth Corps, which was already on the march along the left bank and had no enemy in front, could not give the required support, as all the bridges over the river had been blown up. The Third Corps was therefore ordered to leave only a detachment at Gien, as a corps of observation, and to march back on Orleans. The Tenth Corps was to call in the detachments it had posted to the east of the city and advance on Meung. Thus, on the 9th, the Grand Duke was still actually facing eleven French divisions with four divisions of infantry, quite unsupported. Early next morning General Chanzy proceeded to the attack.

(December 9th.) The two Prussian divisions at Beauvert and Messas stood firmly awaiting the French charge. The two Bavarian divisions, having sustained great loss, were left at Cravant as a reserve, but soon had to be absorbed in the fighting line, when at seven o'clock strong columns of the French were seen advancing on Le Mée.

Dense bodies of tirailleurs were repulsed both there and at Vernon, and came under the fire of the devoted German artillery, which silenced the French guns and

then opened fire on Villorceau. In spite of a stout defence, this village was taken by about half-past ten by the Bavarian infantry. The French advance on Villechaumont in greatly superior force was also repulsed, with the assistance of three battalions and two batteries of the 22nd Division. The Thuringians then stormed Cernay, where 200 French laid down their arms, and one of their batteries lost its team and carriages.

On the right wing, by a misunderstanding, the Germans evacuated Laves and Beauvert, and the French marched in. However, with the support of the 2nd Bavarian Brigade, the enemy was again driven out of both places. Further to the north, the 4th Cavalry Division was observing the movement of a French detachment marching on Villermain.

The French made renewed efforts by midday, advancing again on Cravant in strong columns; but this movement General Tresekow attacked in flank, from Messas. He left only a weak detachment in Beaugency and secured the villages on the left on the way to Tavers. The main body of the 17th Division advanced on Bonvalet, reinforced the hardly-pressed Bavarians in Villorceau, and occupied Villemarceau in front of that place. Here the division had to maintain a severe struggle, at about three o'clock, with the strong columns of the French Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps. The infantry rushing on the enemy with cheers succeeded, however, in repulsing him and holding their ground in spite of a hot fire. At the same time three Bavarian battalions, with cavalry and artillery, had marched up from Cravant and had driven the French out of Villejouan. Further to the right a battalion of the 32nd had taken possession of Ourcelle. A line from thence to Tavers marked the ground so laboriously wrung from the French.

The battle ended with the retreat of the enemy on Josnes and Dugny.

On this day the Third Corps were on the march to Orleans. The Ninth could take no part in the fighting but by the fire from their artillery on Meung and Beaugency, from its position on the left bank. It was not till near Blois that they met some French detachments. Fifty men of one of the Hessian battalions stormed the fortified castle of Chambord a little way from the river, and there took 200 prisoners and twelve ammunition wagons with their teams.

Of the Tenth Corps only the infantry at the head had reached Meung, but it had sent forward a regiment of hussars with eight batteries, which arrived at Grand Chatre by about three o'clock in the afternoon.

The Commander-in-chief of the Second Army now ordered the Bavarian Corps to retire on Orleans, to recruit after its heavy losses. But even when reinforced by the Tenth Corps, the Grand Duke still had to meet an enemy of double numerical strength, and instead of pursuing he had rather to think of defending his position.

(December 10th.) Before daybreak General Chanzy renewed his attack, which even the Bavarians were presently required to repel.

At seven in the morning the French Seventeenth Corps rushed in dense masses on Origny, took 150 prisoners, and forced their way into Villejouan. This advance was met by the 43rd Brigade at Cernay on the front, and by the 4th Bavarians with six batteries at Villechaumont; while on the right flank General von Trèsekow marched on Villorceau and Villemarceau. In this last village two of his battalions, supported by four batteries, resisted every onslaught of the French from Origny and Toupenay. At noon the main body



of the 17th Division advanced to repossess themselves of Villejouan. Here the French made an obstinate stand. The fighting, with great loss on both sides, was continued till four o'clock, and then fresh troops of French came up to recover the position the Germans still held in one single farmstead.

All the artillery of the Prussian Division had, however, deployed to the south of Villemarceau; they were joined by two horse batteries of the Tenth Corps, and the batteries of the 22nd Division also opened an effective fire. The concentric fire of all these guns put an end to any further attack of the Seventeenth French Corps.

Beaugency was now occupied by part of the Tenth Corps. During the past few days the German left wing had had a firm position on the Loire to depend upon, but on the right such a point had been wholly lacking. The French had nevertheless made no attempt to take advantage of their superiority by extending their front. Not till this day did they march on the unprotected German flank. The greater part of the Twenty-first Corps was deployed opposite to it, between Poisly and Mézières, and at half-past ten the strong columns advanced on Villermain. The Bavarians were compelled to form in a bow-line, with the 2nd Brigade, from Jouy to Coudray. Seven batteries were brought into that line, and on its right wing the 4th Cavalry Division stood in readiness. Before two o'clock 2 more horse batteries and 4 batteries of the Tenth Corps arrived from Cravant, and joined them there with three brigades as a reserve. The fire of over a hundred German guns made the French take their artillery out of action at about three o'clock, and separate weak attacks by their infantry were repulsed without difficulty by the Germans, who awaited them in resolute defence.

The French losses in this four days' battle are unknown. The Grand Duke's force lost 3400 men, of which the larger half belonged to the two Bavarian divisions.

The Grand Duke had held his own against three corps of the enemy, till the first supports could come up, and this he owed to the bravery of his troops, more especially of the artillery. This alone lost 255 men and 356 horses. The guns were brought into such requisition that at last almost all the steel guns of the light batteries of the 22nd Division, and most of the Bavarian, were rendered useless by the burning out of their breech blocks.

The Third Corps had on this day just arrived at St. Denis, and the Ninth at Vienne, opposite Blois; but here too the bridge over the Loire was blown up.

On the French side, General Chanzy had learnt from the telegraphic correspondence of General Bourbaki with the Government at Tours, that nothing had come of Bourbaki's attempt to divert part of the German forces against himself. The long delay led him to fear an attack from their whole force; he had therefore decided on a retreat, which resulted in the removal of the Assembly from Tours to Bordeaux.

At the Grand Duke's head-quarters a fresh attack was decided on for December 11th. The villages in front had been left strongly occupied, and it was only at noon that the enemy's retreat became known. They were at once pursued on the left by the Tenth Corps, and on the right, south of the woods of Marchénoir, by the Grand Duke's force. On the north, the 4th Cavalry Division was engaged in scouting.

A thaw had followed the hard frost, making the march equally difficult for both armies. The Germans found the roads blocked with abandoned wagons and

cast-away arms; the bodies of men and horses lay unburied in the fields, and in the villages were hundreds of wounded quite uncared for. Several thousands of stragglers were captured.

The orders from the army head-quarters at Versailles were for a pursuit, which should render the enemy incapable of further action for some time to come; but not beyond Tours. The Second Army was then to muster at Orleans and the Grand Duke's forces at Chartres, and the troops were to have the rest they needed. From the first point constant and strict watch could be kept on General Bourbaki's army, and to this end a connection was to be made with General von Zastrow, who was to go to Châtillon-sur-Seine on the 13th, with the Seventh Corps. Still, no operations were to extend beyond Bourges and Nevers.

The Second Army was accordingly next marched on the Loir, and by the 13th held the line of Oucques—Conan—Blois, that town having been found evacuated.

On the 14th, the 17th Division marched on Morée, and on the Loir past Fréteval. A fight ensued at both these points. Though the French had advanced so far, they seemed to intend making a firm stand on the Loir, where they had occupied Cloyes and Vendôme in great strength.

To attack with success, Prince Frederick Charles began by collecting all his forces. The Third Corps, hurrying after the army by forced marches, was in the first instance to fill the interval between the Grand Duke's forces and the Tenth Corps, which was withdrawn from Blois and Herbault on Vendôme.

But when, on the 15th, the Tenth Corps marched in that direction, the main body met with such a determined resistance close in front of Vendôme that it could not be overcome before dark. The troops

therefore retired to quarters in the rear of Ste. Anne. A left flanking detachment had found St. Amand occupied by a strong force, and had halted at Gombergean. The Third Corps had advanced in the course of the day on Coulommiers, near Vendôme, had fought the French at Bel-Essert, and driven them back across the Loir and established communications. The Grand Duke, in obedience to orders, acted at first on the defensive. The Ninth Corps, after the restoration of the bridge at Blois, was at last able to follow the army, leaving a brigade in occupation.

A greatly superior force was now assembled opposite the enemy's position, and a general attack was decided on; but to give the troops a much-needed rest it was postponed till the 17th, and meanwhile, on the 16th, General Chanzy withdrew.

It had certainly been his intention to hold the Loir Valley still longer; but his generals assured him that the condition of the troops would not allow him to prolong the struggle. He accordingly gave the order for the retreat of the army at daybreak on Le-Mans, by Montoire, St. Calais, and Vibraye.

Thus, in the early morning, the Tenth Corps found the French position in front of Vendôme abandoned, and entered the city without opposition. On the French left wing only, where marching orders had not yet arrived, General Jaurés made an attack on Fréteval, but in the evening he followed the other corps.

#### THE INTERRUPTION OF SERIOUS OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN DECEMBER.

On the 17th of December general orders had been issued from Versailles to the Armies both to the north and south of Paris.

Now that General von Manteuffel had crossed the

Somme, and Prince Frederick Charles the Loir, the Germans held possession of almost a third of France. The French were driven back on every side; and in order not to split up their forces, it was thought advisable that the Germans should concentrate into three principal divisions. The First Army was therefore to assemble at Beauvais, the Grand Duke's forces at Chartres, the Second Army near Orleans; the troops were to have some needful rest, and their efficiency to be restored by the arrival from Germany of fresh reliefs and equipment. If the French made any new move, they were to be allowed to approach as close as possible, and then be driven back by a strong attack.

The Second Army had but little prospect at present of overtaking the enemy beyond the Loir; and the reports from the Upper Loire now necessitated a sharper lookout in that direction. News came from Gien that the posts established at Ouzouer on the Loire had been driven in; and it seemed not unlikely that General Bourbaki would take the opportunity of advancing by Montargis on Paris, or at least on Orleans, which at this moment was occupied by only a part of the First Bavarian Corps.

Prince Frederick Charles had got rid of his enemy, probably for some little time, and he decided, in obedience to orders from Versailles, to remain with his forces in an expectant attitude at Orleans. Only the Tenth Corps was to be left to keep watch on the Loir. To secure support at once, for the Bavarian Corps in any case, the Ninth Corps, on its arrival from Blois at La-Chapelle-Vendôme, on the 16th, was ordered to march on Beaugency that day, and on Orleans on the morrow. It covered eleven German miles in twenty-four hours, in very bad weather. The Third Corps followed it up.

However, it was soon known that the enemy's detachment which had been at Gien did not form part of a large body of troops, and was intrenching itself at Briare for its own safety. So the Germans retired into comfortable quarters, the First Bavarian Corps at Orleans, the Third there and at Beaugency, the Ninth in the plain of the Loire and up as far as Châteauneuf, with a strong post at Montargis.

The Bavarian Corps was then transferred to Etampes, to recover at their leisure, to recruit their numbers, and make good their clothing and equipment. Nor were the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's forces in a condition to pursue General Chanzy beyond the Loir. Six weeks of daily marching and fighting had tried them to the utmost. The dreadful weather and the state of the roads had reduced their clothing and boots to a miserable state. A reconnoissance beyond the Loir showed that the French could only be overtaken by long and rapid marches. So the Grand Duke allowed his troops a long rest, from the 18th, in the villages on the left bank of the river.

Of the Third Army, General von Rheinbaben, on the contrary, had the three brigades of the 5th Cavalry Division at Courtalin, Brou, and Chartres reinforced by 5 battalions of Guard Landwehr and 4 batteries. A letter from the Chief of the General Staff at Versailles had pointed out that this cavalry might probably be employed with great success in attacking the flank and rear of the enemy's retreating columns, and the Crown Prince had already given orders that they should advance on Brou in full strength on the 15th. In contradiction to these, the division obeyed an order which reached them on the 16th from the Grand Duke, under whose command they had not been placed, to take up a position on the Yères.

On this day the patrols had found the roads open to Montmirail and Mondoubleau, but there was a body of French infantry in front of Cloyes, which retired after a short fray. On the left, communications were established with the 4th Cavalry Division. On the 17th, the 12th Cavalry Brigade entered Cloyes, already evacuated by the French; on the 13th they advanced on Arrou, and only General von Bartz marched on Droue with a force of all arms, where he surprised the French at their cooking, and carried off much plunder.

On the 18th, the 12th Brigade still found a few stragglers there, but the other two brigades marched a little way to the westward on La-Bazoche-Gouet and Arville, whence the enemy had quite disappeared. To the south of Arville a battalion of the Guard Landwehr drove the French infantry out of St. Agil.

With this the pursuit ended on the 19th. The division retired on Nogent-le-Rotrou by the Grand Duke's desire, and subsequently undertook the observation of the left bank of the Seine at Vernon and Dreux.

The Grand Duke's forces left their quarters on the Loir on the 21st. The 22nd Division occupied Nogent-le-Roi, and the 17th Chartres, till the 24th of the month. The 4th Bavarian Brigade rejoined its own corps at Orleans.

During the remainder of December only the Tenth Corps had any fighting, having been detailed to keep watch beyond the Loir from Blois and Vendôme.

Two brigades were marched on Tours on the 20th. On the further side of Monnaie they met the newly-formed troops of General Ferri-Pisani, 10,000 to 15,000 strong, and which were advancing from Angers on Tours.

The soaked ground made it most difficult to deploy

the artillery and cavalry. The cavalry, indeed, could do no more than pursue the retreating French in deep columns along the high-roads, thereby suffering severely from the enemy's fire, delivered at very short range.

On the following day General von Woyna advanced unopposed, with six battalions, on the bridge at Tours. A light battery was driven up on the bank of the river and dispersed the masses firing from the opposite shore, but it would have cost too many lives to storm the city, which, since the removal of the seat of Government, had ceased to be of any great importance. The detachment was recalled to Monnaie, and the 19th Division went into quarters at Blois, the 20th at Herbault and Vendôme.

From thence, on the 27th, a detachment of two battalions, one squadron, and two guns marched past Montoire on Sougé on the Braye, and there met a greatly superior force. General Chanzy had, in fact, marched a division of the Seventeenth Corps on Vendôme to draw the Prussians away from Tours. Behind St. Quentin the weak Prussian detachment found itself hemmed in between the river and the cliff, enclosed on every side, and under heavy fire. Lieutenant-Colonel von Boltenstern succeeded, however, in cutting his way through. Without firing a shot the two Hanoverian battalions rushed on the dense body of tirailleurs who cut off their retreat, and fought their way out hand-to-hand. Through the gap thus made the guns followed, after firing a round of grape-shot, and notwithstanding losses to the teams they were got back to Montoire. The squadron also charged through two lines of riflemen and rejoined the infantry.

As a result of this incident General von Kraatz, after collecting the remainder of the 20th Division



from Herbault, determined to enlighten the situation by a fresh reconnoissance. Four battalions were to advance from Vendôme, and the 1st Cavalry Brigade from Fréteval was to scout towards Epuisay. On this day, however, General de Jouffroy was marching on Vendôme to attack it with two divisions.

When, at about ten o'clock, the reconnoitring force from Vendôme reached the Azay, they came under a hot fire from the opposite slope of the valley. Soon after this six French battalions attacked them in flank from the south, and repeated notice was brought in that considerable forces of the enemy were marching on Vendôme direct, from the north of Azay by Epséreuse. General von Kraatz perceived that he would have to face a planned attack from very superior numbers, and determined to restrict himself to the local defence of Vendôme. Under cover of a battalion, left to maintain its position at Huchepie, he achieved the retreat of the detachment in perfect order, and it then took up a position on the railway embankment to the west of the city.

Further to the north the French columns, advancing past Espéreuse, had already reached Bel-Air. A battalion hastening up from Vendôme occupied the château, but being outflanked on the right by a superior force was obliged to retire, and likewise took up a position behind the railway. At about two o'clock the French attacked this position in dense masses of sharpshooters, but came under the fire of six batteries posted on the heights behind Vendôme, which drove back their right wing. A column advanced, along the left bank of the Loir from Varennes, to attack this line of guns, but hastily retreated out of range of their fire.

The attacks on the railway from Bel-Air and Tuileries were a more serious affair; eight companies placed

there, however, repelled them. At four o'clock the French once more advanced in strength; fortune wavered for some time, and at last, as darkness fell, they retired.

The 1st Cavalry Brigade, with two companies and a horse battery, had marched on Danzé. Captain Spitz, with a small number of his Westphalian Fusiliers, fell on two batteries which had been drawn up there, and captured two guns and three limbers. With these and fifty prisoners General von Lüderitz returned to Fréteval by about one o'clock, after pursuing the enemy as far as Epuisay.

The French attempt on Vendôme had utterly failed, and they now retreated to a greater distance. General von Kraatz, however, was ordered, with an eye to a greater enterprise to be described later, to remain in a state of preparation on the Loir.

#### THE FOURTEENTH CORPS IN DECEMBER.

In the south-eastern scene of war the French had at last decided on some definite action.

Garibaldi's Corps, assembled at Autun, advanced on the 24th; the detachments marched by Sombornon and St. Seine, with various skirmishes and night attacks, close up to the front. Crémer's division advanced on Gevrey from the south. But as soon as reinforcements had reached Dijon from Gray and Is-sur-Tille, the enemy was driven back, and now General von Werder, on his part, ordered the 1st Brigade to march on Autun. General Keller arrived in front of the town on December 1st, driving the French before him. Preparations had been made to attack on the following day, when orders came for a rapid retreat. Fresh detachments were needed at Châtillon, where those posted to protect the railway had been surprised, at Gray, against

sorties by the garrison of Besançon, and also to observe Langres.

The Prussian Brigade marched on Langres with two cavalry regiments and three batteries, and on the 16th they met the French not far from Longeau, in number about 2000. The French were repulsed, losing 200 wounded, fifty prisoners, two guns, and two ammunition wagons. General von der Goltz had, in a day or two, surrounded Langres, driven the Gardes Mobiles posted outside into the fortress, and occupied a position on the north for the protection of the railways.

In the country south of Dijon fresh massing of the French troops had now been observed. To disperse these General von Werder advanced on the 18th with two Baden brigades on Nuits. In Boncourt, close to the town on the east, the advanced guard met with lively opposition, but carried the place by noon. The French, assisted by their batteries drawn up on the hills west of Nuits, offered an obstinate defence in the deep railway cutting and by the Meuzin. When the main body of the brigade came up at two o'clock General von Glümer ordered a general attack. The infantry now rushed across the open plain, with great loss, especially in superior officers, against the enemy, who was well under cover and who, firing at short range, was not driven back on Nuits till four o'clock, after a hand-to-hand struggle. At five o'clock they abandoned the place to the German battalions.

The Germans had met Crémer's division, 10,000 strong, which had lost 1700 men, among them 650 unwounded prisoners. The Baden divisions, too, had lost 900 men. They encamped for the night on the market-place of the town and in the villages to the eastward.

Next morning the French were found to have retreated still further, but the Germans were not strong enough for pursuit. The Fourteenth Corps had already been obliged to spare seven battalions for the investment of Belfort. General von Werder therefore returned to Dijon, where he assembled all the forces still left to him with those of General von der Goltz from Langres, waiting to see whether the French would renew the attack. But the month of December ended without any further disturbance.

#### THE FIRST ARMY IN DECEMBER.

While the Second Army was fighting on the Loire, General von Manteuffel, after the siege of Amiens, had marched on Rouen.

General Farre was indeed at Arras, in the rear of this movement, but the disorder in which his troops had retired after that battle made it probable that he would do nothing, at any rate for the present. The 3rd Brigade, too, was left in Amiens with two cavalry regiments and three batteries, to occupy the place and protect the important line of railway to Laon.

The outlook on the west was more serious than on the north, for there, at this juncture, French forces threatened to interfere with the investment of Paris. General Briand was at Rouen with 20,000 men, and had advanced his leading troops as far forward as the Epte, where, at Beauvais and Gisors, he met the Dragoon Guards sent in from the Army of the Meuse and the Saxon Cavalry Division. The detachment of infantry which had escorted the cavalry had lost 150 men and a gun, in a night attack.

When the First Army reached the Epte, on December 3rd, the two cavalry divisions joined the march, and the French retired behind the Andelles. The

Eighth Corps arrived near Rouen, after skirmishes on the road, and found an intrenched position abandoned at Isneauville; and on December 5th General von Goeben entered the chief city of Normandy. The 29th Brigade advanced on Pont-Audemer, the First Corps crossed the Seine higher up, at Les-Andelys and Pont-de-l'Arche. Vernon and Evreux were occupied, numbers of Gardes Mobiles having retreated by railway to Liseux. On the northern bank the Dragoon Guards reconnoitred as far as Bolbec, and the Uhlans found no French even in Dieppe.

The French had retired to Le-Havre, and a considerable force had been conveyed, in ships that were in readiness, to Honfleur, on the other bank of the Seine. The 16th Division continued its march, reaching Bolbec and Lillebonne on the 11th.

The orders from head-quarters at Versailles had been transmitted by the Chief of the General Staff, and, in obedience to these, General Manteuffel now decided on leaving only the First Corps on the Lower Seine, and returning with the Eighth on the Somme, where the French in Arras were now becoming active.

Besides making this evident by various small encounters, on December 9th they had attacked a company detailed to protect the reconstruction of the railway at Ham, surprising it at night, and taking most of the men prisoners; and on the 11th several French battalions advanced as far as La-Fère.

To check their further progress, the Army of the Meuse sent detachments to Soissons and Compiègne. General Count von der Groeben took up a position at Roye with part of the garrison from Amiens, and on the 16th encountered the 15th Division at Montdidier, which immediately retired on the Somme.

Only the citadel of Amiens was now held by the

Germans; General von Manteuffel, who had not approved of the evacuation of the town, ordered its immediate re-occupation. The inhabitants had, however, remained peaceable, and on the 20th the 16th Division, which had given up the attack on Le-Havre, arrived *viâ* Dieppe.

A reconnoissance action by Querrieux made it certain that great numbers of French were drawn up on the bank of the Hallue, and General von Manteuffel now concentrated the whole corps at Amiens. Reinforcements might shortly be expected, for the 3rd Reserve Division was on the march, and had already reached St. Quentin. The First Corps was also ordered to send another brigade from Rouen to Amiens by railway, and the General in command determined to attack at once with 22,600 men, his only available force.

General Faidherbe had assembled two corps, the Twenty-second and Twenty-third. His advance on Ham and La-Fère, intended to divert the Prussians from attacking Le-Havre, had succeeded. He next turned on Amiens, and had advanced to within two miles (German). He now stood, with 43,000 men and eighty-two guns, fronting to the west behind the Hallue. Two divisions held the left bank of this stream, for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from its confluence at Daours up to Contay, and two beyond, at Corbie and Franvillers. The Somme secured their left flank.

On December 23rd General von Manteuffel, with the Eighth Corps, advanced on the road to Albert. The 3rd Brigade of the First Corps formed his reserve. He intended to keep the French busy with the 15th Division on their front and left wing, and outflank their right with the 16th Division. The unexpected extension of the French right wing prevented this, and it

became a front-to-front battle along the whole line. The commanding height of the eastern bank gave the French a superior artillery position, and the villages lying at the foot had in every instance to be stormed.

The French had withdrawn their outposts to this line when, at eleven o'clock, the head of the 15th Division reached the copse at Querrieux, and brought up a battery. Two battalions of the 29th Brigade took the place at midday at the first onslaught, crossed the stream, drove the French on the further bank out of Noyelles; but they now found themselves under an artillery and infantry fire from all sides. The East Prussians stormed up the slope at about four o'clock, and took two guns which were being served, but were forced to retire to the village before the advancing masses of the French.

Soon after midday, too, Féchencourt was carried on the left, and Bussy on the right; and the enemy, after a feeble resistance, was driven back across the stream. Here, on the other hand, the German artillery could at first do nothing against the strong and well-posted batteries of the French. Vecquemont, however, was stormed, though stoutly defended, and street-fighting lasted till the afternoon.

The 15th Division, against the intentions of their leader, had become involved in the fight before the 16th, operating more to the left, could afford them any assistance.

It was not till four o'clock that the 31st Brigade arrived at Béhencourt, and, crossing the river by flying bridges, drove the French back into the village, where they still offered a firm resistance, but finally had to give way. The 32nd Brigade, on the extreme left, got across the Hallue and into Bavelincourt.

Thus all the hamlets on the river were in the hands

of the Germans; but the short December day was closing in, and further progress must be postponed till the morrow. Even in the dark the French made several attempts to regain the positions they had lost, particularly about Contay, where they overlapped the German position. But their attacks were repulsed both there and at Noyelles. They succeeded indeed in getting into Vecquemont, but were driven out again, and then the Prussians, pursuing them across the stream, also carried Daours, so that finally the Germans held every passage of the Hallue.

The battle was over by six o'clock. The troops retired into quarters in the captured villages, placing outposts near every egress.

The attack had cost the Germans 900 men; the defence had cost the French about 1000, besides 1000 unwounded prisoners taken into Amiens.

At daybreak on the 24th the French opened fire on the Hallue cutting.

Having ascertained that their numbers were almost double those of the Germans, it was decided this day to act only on the defensive, awaiting the arrival of reinforcements and intrenching themselves in the positions gained. The army reserve was pushed forward on Corbie to threaten the French left flank.

But at two o'clock in the afternoon General Faidherbe was already retiring. His insufficiently-clothed troops had suffered fearfully through the bitter winter's night, and were much shaken by the unfavorable issue of the fight. He therefore led them back under shelter of the fortresses. When, on the 25th, the two Prussian divisions and the cavalry pursued them beyond Albert, and then almost as far as Arras and up to Cambrai, they found no compact force at all, and only captured some hundreds of stragglers.



When General Manteuffel had disposed of the enemy, he sent General von Mirus to invest Péronne, while he himself returned to Rouen.

By drafting off six battalions as a reinforcement to Amiens, the First Army Corps was left with only two brigades. The French had 10,000 men on the right bank, and 12,000 on the left bank of the Lower Seine. And these forces had come very close to Rouen; on the south side within two miles. Meanwhile, however, the 2nd Brigade had again been sent up from Amiens, and on its arrival the hostile force was once more driven back.

#### THE TAKING OF MÉZIERES.

On the northern field of war, before the end of the year, the siege of Mézières was brought to an end. After the battle of Sedan the Commandant had to send out provisions from the stores of the besieged town for the maintenance of the large number of prisoners, and it was, therefore, for the present exempted from attack. After that the fortress precluded the use of the railroad; still it was only kept under observation till the 19th of December, when, after the disaster of Montmédy, the 14th Division fell back on Mézières.

The garrison numbered only 2000 men, but it was effectually seconded without by volunteers, who were extremely active in this broken and wooded country. The town was not completely invested till the 25th.

Mézières stands on a spur of the mountains, surrounded on three sides by the Moselle, and shut in by high ground. The construction of the fortress, which was strengthened by Vauban, was not calculated to resist modern artillery. There was an outer rampart at a distance of from 2000 to 3000 metres from the inner wall, and although the long delay had been

utilized to make good the weak points by throwing up earthworks, a bombardment could not fail to be fatal to the defence.

When Verdun had surrendered, heavy artillery had to be brought by rail from Clermont to a position close under the southern front of the fortress. The only hindrance to the erection of the batteries was the state of the soil, which was frozen to a depth of twenty inches; but at a quarter past eight on the morning of the 31st of December eight field-guns opened fire.

At first the fort replied vigorously, but by the afternoon its artillery was silenced, and the white flag was hoisted next morning.

The garrison were taken prisoners; large stores and 132 guns fell into the hands of the Germans. But the chief advantage gained was the opening of another line of railway to Paris.

#### PARIS IN DECEMBER.

In Paris General Ducrot had been busily employed in making good the losses sustained at Villiers. A part of the greatly reduced First Corps must be kept in reserve, the Second Army was redistributed. A sortie by the peninsula of Gennevillers and the heights of Franconville had not been approved by the Government. They expected confidently to see the Army of Orleans appear ere long under the walls of the capital, and steps were being taken on the 6th of December to facilitate a junction, when a letter from General von Moltke announced the defeat of General d'Aurelle and the occupation of Orleans. A sortie to the south would thenceforth be aimless, and after long discussion it was at last decided to break through the enemy's lines on the north by a great collective effort.

The little stream of the Morée offered some protec-

tion on that side, but only so long as the ice would not bear. And there were but three German corps, amounting to 81,200, over an extent of forty-five kilomètres (twenty-seven miles English).

Earthworks were constructed in preparation between Bondy and Courneuve, the forts to the north were armed with heavier guns, and a battery was mounted on Mont-Avron. Ninety rounds of ammunition were served out to each man, with six days' rations; and four days' fodder for the horses. They were forbidden to carry their kit, but the camp bedding was to be taken. The day at first fixed was December 19th, but it was postponed till the 21st.

Thus, during great part of the month, the investing army remained almost undisturbed by the defenders. Regular food, warm winter clothing, and abundant supplies through the unfailing punctuality of the mails, had kept the troops in a thoroughly satisfactory condition.

The preparations of the garrison for a new offensive did not escape the notice of the besieging forces. Deserters brought reports of an imminent sortie. On the 20th information came from the posts of observation that a large force was assembling at Merlan and Noisy-le-Sec, and early on the 21st the 2nd Division of foot-guards were, by order of the Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Meuse, in readiness to cross the Morée. Part of the 1st Division remained in reserve at Gonesse; the rest were to be relieved by the 7th, and brought into action. On the right wing the Landwehr Division of Guards occupied the country between Chatou and Carrières-St.-Denis; on the left a brigade of the Saxon Corps held Séran. The 4th Infantry Division of the Second Corps were drawn back on Malnoue to support the Württembergers in case of need, as they

were to make a stand against the French at Joinville.

To divert the attention of the Germans from the true point of attack, a brisk fire was to be opened early in the day from St. Valérien; a considerable force was to engage the right wing of the Guards, General Vinoy was to lead the Third Army against the Saxons, and Admiral de la Roucière was to fall upon Le-Bourget. This place, which was a standing threat, must at any rate be seized, and not till then was General Duerot to cross the Morée, near Blancmesnil and Aulnay, with the Second Paris Army.

#### THE FIGHT AT LE-BOURGET.

(December 21st.)

Le-Bourget was held by only four companies of Queen Elizabeth's Regiment (German) and one battalion of foot guards. When the mist rose at about a quarter to eight, the little force found itself under fire from the forts and several batteries, as well as from the armor-clad railway carriages. Within half an hour strong columns of the French were marching up from east and west. To the east the village was defended for some time against seven French battalions, and on the other side, five were brought to a standstill close to the church by the rapid fire of the Germans; but some of the marine fusiliers made their way into the place from the north. Pressed on all sides by superior numbers, the defence was concentrated at the southern end of the village. The party holding the churchyard tried to force their way through to this point, but some of them were taken prisoners in the attempt. The French advanced step by step under great loss, and did not succeed in obtaining possession of the glass-

works. Five fresh battalions of the French reserve marched up from St. Denis to the gas-works, and battered down the garden-wall, but still could not break the steady resistance of the Germans.

At nine o'clock they were reinforced by one company, and at ten o'clock by seven more, who, in a bloody hand-to-hand struggle, fought their way to the churchyard and gas-works. By eleven the last of the assailants were routed, and Le-Bourget, in the expectation of a fresh attack, was occupied by fifteen companies. Two batteries of field artillery, which had been busy by the brook, were brought up to defend the village.

Meanwhile General Ducrot had waited in vain for the signal which should have announced success at Le-Bourget. He had pushed the advanced guard of his army past Bondy and Drancy, when he was warned by the disastrous issue of the struggle on his left to give up the attack on the line by the Morée.

The triumphant exploit became a mere cannonade, to which the German field-guns replied as far as possible. By noon the French had retired.

They had lost, by their own account, about 600 men. The German Guards had sacrificed 400, but they carried off 360 prisoners. In the evening the outposts resumed their old positions.

The various feints of the Parisian garrison had had no result, and produced no alteration in the plan pursued by the German Commander-in-chief. Their advance from St. Denis to Etains had been repulsed, and two gun-boats on the Seine were driven back by the fire of four field batteries on Orgemont. The trifling sortie on Chatou was scarcely heeded. General Vinoy had indeed led a larger force along the right bank of the Marne, but that was not till the afternoon when the fight at Le-Bourget was over. The Saxon

outposts retired to the intrenched position near Le Chenay. One of the German battalions in quarters there drove the enemy out of Maison-Blanche that same evening, another attacked Ville-Evrart, where fighting went on till midnight; they lost seventy men, but brought in 600 prisoners. Next morning the French abandoned Ville-Evrart, under the fire of the German artillery posted on the heights on the opposite side of the river.

Paris had now been invested for three months. A bombardment—never a satisfactory mode of action—could have no decisive effect against so large a place; and the Germans were, in fact, well aware that nothing could reduce it but a regular siege. But the engineering siege-works must wait till the artillery were in a position to second them.

It has already been shown that the fortress artillery had been first employed against those forts which interrupted the communications in the rear of the army. There were indeed 235 heavy pieces standing ready for action at Villacoublay; but it had proved impossible as yet to bring up the necessary ammunition for an attack which, when once begun, must on no account be allowed to flag.

By the end of November, railway communication had been opened with Chelles, but the greater part of the ammunition had meanwhile been deposited at Lagny, and would now have to be forwarded by the cross-road. The ordinary country carts with two wheels proved totally unfit for the transport of shell, and only 2000 four-wheeled carts could be requisitioned for many miles round. Hence 960 more were brought from Metz with horses sent from Germany, and even the teams of the Third Army were called into requisition, though they were almost indispensable just then

as remounts towards the efficiency of the army on the Loire. Finally, all the horses of the pontoon trains, of the field bridging troops, and the columns of intrenching tools were taken for the transport service.

A new difficulty arose when the breaking-up of the ice necessitated the removal of the pontoon-bridges over the Seine.

The roads were so bad that it took the wagons nine days to get from Nanteuil to Villacoublay and back. Many broke down under their loads, and the drivers constantly took to flight. And at this juncture the Chief of the Staff gave the artillery another task to be carried out forthwith.

Though the besieged had not hitherto succeeded in fighting their way through the enemy's lines, they now proposed to extend their operations so as to repel the besiegers till the circle became so thin that it could be broken. On the south side the German lines already extended beyond Vitry and Villejuif to the Seine; and on the north, between Drancy and the Fort-de-l'Est, there was an extensive system of trenches and batteries reaching to Le-Bourget over a distance of 1000 metres, which in part might be dignified as regular siege-works. The hard frost had indeed arrested their construction, but they were armed with artillery and occupied by the Second Army. Hence the most favorable *point-d'appui* for a sortie to the east, as well as to the north, was the commanding eminence of Mont-Avron, which, with its seventy heavy guns, stood out in the Marne valley like the point of a wedge between the northern and southern German lines.

## THE REDUCTION OF MONT-AVRON.

(December 27th.)

To drive the French from this position fifty heavy guns from Germany, and twenty-six from La-Fère were brought up under the command of Colonel Bartsch. By the exertions of a whole battalion as a working party, two groups of batteries were erected, in spite of the severe frost, on the western slopes of the hills behind Raincy and Gagny, and on the left ridge of the Marne Valley near Noisy-le-Grand, thus threatening Mont-Avron on each side at a distance of from 2000 to 3000 metres.

At half-past eight on the 27th of December these guns opened fire. A heavy snow-storm interfered with accurate aim, and prevented any observation of the execution done. Mont-Avron with the forts of Nogent and Rosny replied promptly and rapidly.

The German batteries had lost two officers and twenty-five gunners, several gun-carriages had broken down under their own fire, and everything pointed to the conclusion that no result would be obtained on that day. But the firing had been more effectual than the men supposed. The fine weather on the 28th allowed of greater precision; the Prussian fire proved most telling, making fearful havoc of the strong but exposed French infantry garrison. Mont-Avron was silenced and the forts only kept up a feeble fire. General Trochu, who had commanded in person, ordered the troops to abandon Mont-Avron, and it was so effectually disarmed in the course of the night by the energy of Colonel Stoffel that only one disabled gun was left on its flank.

On the 29th the French guns were silenced, and the



hill was deserted, as the Germans had no intention of occupying the position. Their batteries were now turned on the forts, which suffered severely, and on the earthworks near Bondy.

Before the year was out the besiegers succeeded in storing the most indispensable ammunition in Villacoublay. The siege operations were entrusted to General Kameky, the artillery was under the command of General Prince Hohenlohe. The batteries had long been finished, and by the dawn of the new year 100 guns of the heaviest calibre were ready to open fire on the southern fortifications.

## V.

### ACTIVE OPERATIONS IN THE PROVINCES.

#### THE ARMY OF THE EAST UNDER GENERAL BOURBAKI.

WHILE the French forces were engaged in constant fighting, in the north, on the Seine and the Somme, in the south, on the Loire and Saône, General Bourbaki's army had kept out of sight. Since the 8th of December, when the 6th Division of cavalry had reported its presence at Vierzon, all trace of it had been lost. It was, of course, of the greatest importance to the German Commander-in-chief to know the whereabouts of so large an army; only the Second German Army could learn this, and on the 22nd received instructions to reconnoitre.

To this end General von Rantzau set out from Montargis towards Briare, where he found that the French had abandoned their position; in the course of the next few days he met them, and was defeated.

The Hessians were reinforced to a strength of three battalions, four squadrons, and six field-pieces, but were nevertheless withdrawn to Gien on the 1st of January. The French had displayed a force of several thousand Gardes Mobiles, twelve guns, and a body of marine infantry. A noticeable fact was that some of the prisoners taken belonged to the Eighteenth French Corps, which formed part of the First Army of the Loire.

A regiment of the 6th Division of cavalry, sent out to reconnoitre on the road to Sologne, returned with

the report that a strong force of the French were marching in column on Aubigny-Ville. On the other hand, two drivers, who had been taken prisoners, declared that the troops from Bourges were already being moved by railway, and the newspapers pointed to the same conclusion; still, too much weight could not be attached to mere rumor as against a circumstantial report. At Versailles it must be assumed that the First Army of the Loire had not moved from Bourges, and that General Bourbaki, after recuperating his forces, would act in concert with General Chanzy.

These two armies might attack the Germans at Orleans on both sides, or one might engage and detain them there, while the other marched to relieve the capital.

This, in fact, was what General Chanzy proposed. Since the 21st of December he had been resting in quarters in and about Le-Mans, where railways from four directions facilitated the arrival of new detachments. His troops had no doubt great difficulties to contend with. For lack of billets for so large a force some had to camp out under tents in the snow, and suffered severely from the intense cold. The hospitals were full of wounded, and small-pox broke out. On the other hand, these narrow quarters were favorable to the redistribution of the companies and the restoration of discipline. The news from Paris, too, urged the General to prompt action.

General Trochu had sent word that Paris could not, unaided, repel the enemy. Even if a sortie should prove successful, the necessary provisions could not be carried through, and nothing but the simultaneous arrival of an army from without could secure supplies. Now General Chanzy was quite ready to march on Paris, but it was indispensable that he should first

know exactly what Generals Bourbaki and Faidherbe were doing.

Of course, the concerted action of the three great Army Corps could only be planned and ordered from head-quarters. The General therefore sent an officer of his Staff on the 23rd December to Gambetta at Lyons, to express his opinion that only a prompt and combined advance could prevent the surrender of Paris. But the Minister believed that he knew better. The first news of a quite different employment of Bourbaki's army only reached Chanzy on the 29th, when Bourbaki was already on the march. Nor did Gambetta's reply convey either distinct orders or sufficient information. "Vous avez décimé les Mecklembourgeois, les Bavares n'existent plus, le reste de l'armée est déjà envahi par l'inquiétude et la lassitude. Persistons et nous renverrons ces hordes hors du sol, les mains vides."\* The plan of the Provisional Government was to be that "which would most demoralize the German army."†

Under such obscure instructions from head-quarters, General Chanzy, trusting to his own forces, determined to make his way to Paris unaided; but he soon found himself in serious difficulties.

The Germans had no time to lose if they wished to profit by their position between the two hostile armies, advantageous so long as those armies were not too close upon them. The simultaneous attacks, on the 31st of December, at Vendôme on the Loir, and at Briare on the Loire, seemed to indicate that they were already acting on a concerted plan.

\* "You have decimated the Mecklenburgers, the Bavarians are wiped out, the rest of the army is a prey to uneasiness and exhaustion. Let us persevere, and we shall drive these hordes off the land, empty-handed."

† Qui démoralisera le plus l'armée Allemande.

On New Year's Day orders were telegraphed to Prince Frederick Charles to recross the Loir and march against General Chanzy without delay, as being the nearest and most imminently dangerous enemy. To effect this the Second Army was strengthened by the addition of the Thirteenth Corps of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg (17th and 22nd Divisions) and the 2nd and 4th Divisions of cavalry. The 5th Cavalry Division was dispatched to protect the advance on the left flank.

Only the 25th (Hessian) Division was to be left in Orleans to receive General Bourbaki, and to keep a lookout on Gien. To provide against a possible advance of the Army of the Loire, General von Zastrow was posted at Armançon with the Seventh Corps; the Second Corps was detached from the besieging force and sent forward towards Montargis.

Prince Frederick Charles expected to get three of his corps on the Vendôme-Morée line by the 6th of January, and to move the Thirteenth from Chartres on Brou.

#### THE ADVANCE ON LE-MANS.

The Germans had hoped to find the enemy in winter quarters; but General Chanzy had provided against surprise by strong outposts. Nogent-le-Rotrou on his left was held by General Rousseau's division, and a large force of volunteers; strong detachments were posted from Vibraye and St. Calais, as far as the Braye stream, where General Jouffroy had come to a stand after the last action at Vendôme; on his right he had General Barry at La-Chartre, and de Curten's division at Château-Renault.

The wings of the German army came into collision with these forces on the 5th of January.

General Baumgarth, on the German left, had brought

three battalions, two regiments of cavalry, and two batteries, as far as St. Amand. The 57th had stormed Villeporcher, on the road to Château-Renault, had retired before four battalions of the French, and then had recaptured and held it. This much, at any rate, was now clear: a not inconsiderable force of French was assembled in front of the left wing of the German army, now marching westward. In following up this movement General Baumgarth was now deputed to insure its safety, and with this object was reinforced by the addition of the 6th Cavalry Division, and the 1st Cavalry Brigade.

The 44th Brigade on the right, in its advance on Nogent-le-Rotrou, had had a sharp encounter. They stormed the enemy's position at La-Fourche, and seized three guns, with a large number of prisoners. The main body of the corps reached Beaumont-les-Autels and Brou, but the cavalry failed to penetrate the woods to the north of Nogent.

(January 6th.) By six in the morning the advanced guard of General Baumgarth's detachment was on the march to Prunay, but the main body could not follow, having to face a strong attack at about half-past nine. With a view to observing the enemy, the German infantry were opened out to great intervals between Villeporcher and Ambloy, and only a small reserve remained at La Noue. The engagement soon assumed wider proportions, and the Germans with difficulty maintained the Les-Haies—Pias line, being seriously threatened by the envelopment of their left wing, which the 6th Cavalry Division were now able to join, but could only come into action with one horse battery. The reserve, however, moved up along the high-road to Château-Renault and repulsed the French, who had already made their way into Les-Haies. But when

they renewed the attack in close columns and brought up four batteries against the place, the Germans were obliged to retire behind the Brenne.

Meanwhile the 16th Regiment, which had already got as far as Ambloy on the march to Vendôme, had turned back to St. Amand to support General Baumgarth, and the 38th Brigade of infantry deployed between Neuve St. Amand and St. Amand with a strong force of cavalry on each wing. But as by some mistake the town was evacuated, the General of the 6th Division of cavalry, Duke William of Mecklenburg, ordered a retreat. The infantry had already come to a stand at Huisseau and there found quarters. The advanced guard fell back on Ambloy; the cavalry partly on Ambloy and partly on Villeromain.

During the engagement at St. Amand the Tenth Corps had advanced on Montoire, in two columns, along the left bank of the Loire, leaving a battalion before Vendôme on the right, to secure the egress of the Third Corps at this spot.

When the 20th Division reached St. Rima, at about one o'clock, they found the hills on the opposite side of the Loir occupied by General Barry's troops. All the German batteries were brought up to the southern ridge of the valley and soon drove the French off the broad slopes; but the defile of Les-Roches in the front remained quite unassailable. The ruined bridge at Lavardin, lower down the stream, was therefore made practicable with pontoons. The 19th Division had meanwhile reached that place, several battalions crossed from the south to attack Les-Roches, and easily dislodged the French. As darkness came on, preventing any further advance, the corps found quarters in and about Montoire.

The General in command of the Third Corps had

intended this day to make a halt before Vendôme, and only push forward his advanced guard as far as the Azay; but this detachment met ere long with such stout opposition, that the main force was compelled to advance to their assistance. General de Jouffroy, with the idea of helping General de Curten, had started to renew the attack on Vendôme, so the advanced guard of the 5th Division, on reaching Villiers at about half-past one, found the 10th Battalion of Jägers, which had been marching at the same time along the right bank of the Loir, engaged at Villiers in a sharp fight which had already lasted four hours. They brought their two batteries up to the plateau to the north of the village, and the 48th Regiment made its way to the ridge of the lower Azay valley, though its broad meadow slopes were swept by the French long-range rifles and the artillery which fired down the valley. And here the French sent over swarms of sharpshooters to continue the attack.

The 8th Regiment (German) was presently brought up, and after a short fight on the right took possession of Le-Gué-du-Loir; then further reinforcement arrived in the 10th Infantry Brigade, and by degrees the Prussian guns numbered thirty-six. The French artillery could not face their fire, and within half an hour it was turned on the infantry. At about half-past four the German battalions got across the valley, seized the vineyards and farms on the opposite hills, and stormed Mazange. Under cover of the darkness the French retired to Lunay.

Further to the right (German) the 6th Division, on leaving Vendôme at eleven o'clock, found the battalion left by the Tenth Corps at Courtiras fighting hard against a very superior force of the French. The 11th Brigade advanced upon the Azay intrenchment, though



not without heavy loss, and when, at about half-past three, the 12th also came up, the artillery was brought to bear upon the place; Azay was stormed, the river was crossed, and they established themselves on the heights beyond. The French repeatedly returned to the charge, but were successfully repulsed, and by five o'clock fighting was over and the French driven back.

The Third Army Corps took up quarters between the Azay stream and the Loir. A detachment was told off to occupy Danzé, higher up the river. They had lost thirty-nine officers and above 400 men, but had also taken 400 prisoners.

In the course of the day the Ninth Corps crossed the Upper Loir at Fréteval and St. Hilaire, without opposition, and proceeded along the high-road to St. Calais, as far as Busloup. The Thirteenth remained at Unverre, Beaumont, and La Fourche.

Prince Frederick Charles had not been led into any change of purpose by the attack on St. Amand and the obstinate fight at the Azay. The Thirteenth Corps were expected to reach Montmirail, and the Eleventh to be at Epuisay, both by the 11th of January; the Third were to continue the attack on the French at Braye. But after the reverse experienced at St. Amand, the presence of a strong French force on the left flank could not be suffered to pass unnoticed. Duke William was given verbal orders, at the headquarters at Vendôme, to return forthwith to St. Amand with the 6th Division of cavalry, and General von Voigts-Rhetz was ordered to support General Baumgarth, if necessary, with his whole corps.

The country between the Loir and the Sarthe, through which the Germans must march, offers peculiar difficulties to an invading force and great advantages for its defence.

The roads leading to Le-Mans are all intersected at right angles by numerous streams flowing through broad and somewhat deep meadow valleys. Groves, villages, and country-houses with walled parks cover the cultivated high ground; vineyards, orchards, and gardens are enclosed by hedges, ditches, or fences. Hence almost the whole burthen of the struggle in view had to be borne by the infantry; there was no space for deploying cavalry, and the use of artillery must be extremely limited, since in a country so closely overgrown only one gun could be brought to bear at a time. The enemy's centre could only be approached by four high-roads, and the communications between the columns, starting at least six miles apart, were confined to the cross-roads, which were almost impassable from the severity of the season and the hostility of the inhabitants. Anything like mutual support was, at first, quite out of the question.

Under these conditions their movements could only be guided by general instructions, and the officers must be left free to act on their own responsibility. Special orders for each day, though they were indeed issued, might, in many cases, be impossible to execute. The Commander-in-chief could not foresee in what relation the various corps might stand to each other after a day's fight. Reports could only come in at a late hour of the night, and the orders previously drawn up often came to hand when the troops, to utilize the short day, had already set out on the march.

(January 7th.) In obedience to orders from headquarters, General Voigts-Rhetz sent that part of the 19th Division which had already reached Vendôme back to the support of St. Amand. The 38th Brigade had reached this place early in the day, and General von Hartmann, who had taken the command of it,

marched out, the cavalry forming a right and left wing, by the high-road to Château-Renault.

The advancing column found the enemy at Villechauve, at about midday. A thick fog prevented the employment of the artillery, and it was at the cost of many killed that Villechauve, Pias, and some other farms were seized from the French. Villeporcher and the adjacent hamlets were in their possession, and at about two o'clock they came out and attacked on the high-road with a force of several battalions. The weather had cleared, and it was soon evident that this move was only intended to screen the beginning of a retreat of the French to the westward.

The Germans were quartered on the spot, and the reinforcements sent to their aid remained at St. Amand.

The Tenth Corps, waiting for their return, did not quit their quarters at La-Chartre; only the 14th Brigade of cavalry went on to La-Richardière to maintain communication with the Third. But they did not succeed in taking the village with only dismounted troopers.

General von Alvensleben hoped to come upon the French on that side of the Braye, and to get round their left wing so as to join the Tenth Corps, who had promised him assistance. The Third Corps made their way towards Epuisay, leaving one brigade at Mazange, and as soon as news reached them on the march, that the French had abandoned Lunay and Fortan, that brigade also proceeded to Fortan.

Epuisay was found to be strongly occupied, for the advanced guard of the Ninth Corps, retreating from Busloup, had just arrived there. It was not till half-past one that the French were expelled from the little town, having barricaded the streets; and even after crossing the Braye they fought hard, under shelter of various villages and farmsteads.

A long fusillade on both sides was kept up through the thick fog; but at last, at about four o'clock, the 12th German Brigade got forward to the ridge of the valley. The 9th Brigade took possession of Savigny without meeting any serious opposition, and Sougé was stormed in the dusk.

The corps had lost forty-five men and taken 200 prisoners. It found quarters behind the Braye, but placed outposts on the western bank.

The Ninth Corps retired for the night to Epuisay, though two corps lost their way in one of the few roads in the neighborhood. On the right, the 2nd Division of cavalry went off to Mondoubleau, to join the Thirteenth Corps. The French retreated to St. Calais.

The order from head-quarters, that the Thirteenth Corps were to march on Montmirail, had been issued on the hypothesis that it would have reached Nogent-le-Rotrou by the 6th, whereas it had in fact, as has been shown, remained at La-Fourche, Beaumont, and Unverre. The Grand Duke, who had expected a stout resistance, did not set out to attack Nogent till the 7th. When the 22nd Division reached the spot, they found all the villages deserted in the valley of the Upper Huisne, and entered the town without any fighting, at about two o'clock. They took up quarters there; the 4th Cavalry Division went to Thirion-Gardais, and only the advanced guard went to search for the enemy. They found the wood by Le-Gibet strongly occupied by the French, and did not succeed in getting there till night-fall. The French retired to La-Ferté-Bernard.

The 17th Division had at first gone with the reserve; but at one o'clock, in consequence of the reports brought in, the Grand Duke diverted it to Authon on the south; and in order to follow instructions from head-quarters as closely as possible he pushed at least

a detachment of two battalions, two cavalry regiments, and one battery on towards Montmirail, under the command of General von Rauch.

(January 8th.) Finding, on the morning of the 8th, that the French had made no further attempt on St. Amand, General von Hartmann, at nine o'clock, sent back the troops told off for his support. At ten o'clock he received instructions to join the Eighteenth Corps also; but the French still held Villeporcher and the wood lying behind it, and were also drawn up across the road to Château-Renault in a very advantageous position behind the river Brenne. The General perceived the necessity of making a stand at this spot, and took the best means to that end by acting himself on the offensive. Supported by the fire of his battery, and with the cavalry on either flank, six companies of the 6th Regiment marched on Villeporcher, drove the defence into the wood of Château-Renault, and took 100 prisoners. On the left, the 9th Uhlans rode down the Chasseurs d'Afrique. Not till darkness had set in did General von Hartmann retire in the direction of Montoire.

General von Voigts-Rhetz had already set out from thence very early in the day. The night's frost had covered the roads with ice, which greatly impeded any movement. The road on the right bank of the Loir was in many places broken up. It leads up and down a series of abrupt hollows, and on emerging from these the advanced guard found themselves face to face with a force of about 1000 Gardes Mobiles, who had taken up a position in front of La-Chartre. Their mitrailleuses were soon forced to a hasty retreat by the fire of two field-pieces, but it was only after a prolonged struggle that the German infantry, moving with difficulty, succeeded in entering the town, where they took

up their quarters. Two battalions, which were sent further on the road, had to fight for their night's lodging; all through the night shots were being exchanged with the French in the neighborhood, and 230 prisoners were taken.

The 39th Brigade, which left Ambloy in the morning to follow the corps, only got as far as Sougé.

General von Schmidt was sent to the right, to establish communications with the Third Corps. He was met at Vancé by a brisk fire. The squadron which led the van made way for the horse battery, and a volley of grape-shot drove the dismounted cuirassiers behind the hedges for shelter. When two more guns could be got into position, a few rounds of canister dispersed a long column of French cavalry in every direction.

Colonel von Alvensleben pursued the French cavalry with the 15th Regiment of Uhlans till they came upon a body of infantry guarding the stream of Etang-fort. The brigade stayed at Vancé, after putting about 100 French out of action.

Of the Third Corps, the 6th Division had gone forward by St. Calais. The French tried to line the trenches on greatly cut-up roads; but they did not await a serious attack, and made off, for the most part in carts which were in waiting. The 5th Division, proceeding in a parallel line on the left, met with no opposition; but the state of the roads made the march very difficult. The corps halted at Bouloire. The 9th, coming up behind them, entered St. Calais.

The Grand Duke had moved both divisions of the Thirteenth Corps on La-Ferté-Bernard. On their way they came across none but stragglers, but they found the roads in such a state that not till four in the afternoon did they reach the town and settle into quarters. The French had retired to Connerré. The 4th Cavalry

Division was to secure the right flank on the further advance, but could not get as far as Bellême; on the other hand, General von Rauch's detachment, dispatched to Montmirail, surprised the French in Vibraye, and took possession of the bridge there over the Braye.

By the evening of that day the forces forming the German right and left wings were at an equal distance from Le-Mans, on the single high-road which leads across from La-Ferté-Bernard by St. Calais and La-Chartre; the Third Corps was further in advance, with an interval of a long march. A closer combination of the forces could only be assured by a further advance along the converging highways. Prince Frederick Charles therefore issued an order, at ten o'clock that evening, for the Tenth Corps to march next day to Parigné-l'Évêque, the Third to Ardenay, and the Thirteenth as far ahead as Montfort, each sending an advanced guard beyond those points. The Ninth was to follow in the centre, while General von Hartmann was to protect Vendôme with the 38th Brigade and the 1st Division of cavalry.

But the mere distance was too great to allow of the wings being brought so rapidly to the points designated; and on the 9th of January snow-storms, ice-bound roads, and a thick fog still further impeded their progress.

(January 9th.) General von Hartmann marched his infantry brigade on Château Renault, and entered the town by one o'clock. Curten's division (French) had started early in the day for St. Laurent.

The Tenth Corps, though incomplete, retreated this day, in two columns; General von Woyna's detachment was to march from Pont-de-Braye by Vancé, the remainder of the corps from La Chartre *viâ* Brives, to meet at Grand-Lucé.

The 20th Division had scarcely set out, by this route, from L'Homme, when they came under a sharp fire of shell and bullets. In this place there happened, for once, to be room for three batteries to advance, but in the heavy snow-fall aim was out of the question. The German infantry, however, by degrees drove the French out of various hamlets and farmsteads, and back across the Brives. To pursue them beyond that stream a bridge must have been thrown across, with some loss of time, and then Chahaignes would have had to be seized.

But in the narrow valley which lay before them they expected some rather hot work. The nature of the road was such that the artillerymen and cavalry had to dismount and lead the horses. The General in command rode on a gun-carriage; his staff went on foot. Some horses which had fallen in front stopped the way for the column; the artillery were then sent back to try next day to come on by the Vancé road.

To facilitate the march of the 20th Division, General von Woyna had been instructed to deviate from his direct road and attack the enemy's left. When he approached the hollow, there was no sound of fighting there, and the detachment was turned back at Vancé; but at Brives, at about half-past three, the main column met with fresh resistance, being received with a brisk fire from the heights north-east of the village. Not even the infantry could move beyond the high-road, so there was no alternative; they must march straight on. Meanwhile, however, the 30th Brigade came up and drove off the enemy.

It was half-past six in the evening, and quite dark, when Colonel von Valentini set out for St. Pierre with four battalions, and there took 100 French prisoners and a loaded baggage-train of 100 wagons.



The Tenth Corps spent the night with its van as far forward as Brives and Vancé, but its rear straggled as far back as the valley of the Loir. Nor had the 14th Brigade of cavalry been able to make any headway.

Of the Third Corps, the 6th Division had proceeded by the high-road, beyond Bouloire, with the artillery corps; the 5th had moved on, on the left, by cross-roads.

The advanced guard of the Third Corps, after a smart brush, had expelled the French from a position in front of Ardenay, but at two o'clock had to repel a determined attack there. After General de Jouffroy had withdrawn to the south of St. Calais, General Chanzy had pushed the division under Paris forward from thence towards Le-Mans. He had taken up a position near Ardenay, occupying the château on the right, and placing four guns and two mitrailleuses on the left close to La-Butte. To oppose these there was only room on the road for two German field-pieces, which, however, in the course of half an hour had silenced the mitrailleuses, and then carried on the unequal contest with the greatest obstinacy. At about four o'clock five companies of the 12th Brigade stormed the château, while others, crossing the meadow-land to the right, forced their way through a clump of trees to La-Butte. As night came on the French tried to effect a general attack along the high-road; but this was repulsed, and the Brandenburgers, defying the steady firing of the defenders, took La-Butte and Ardenay with a rush and loud cheers, without firing a shot. The French were driven back into the valley of the Narais, losing many prisoners.

On the right a detachment, consisting of one battalion, two squadrons, and two guns, had advanced with the 6th Division. They drove before them numbers

of franc-tireurs, but at La-Belle-Inutile they met with more serious resistance. The post had already been carried by the 24th, who possessed themselves of a large ammunition and provision train, and took above 100 unwounded prisoners. Count zu Lynar then prepared the village for defence.

The 5th Division had met with no opposition, but the state of the roads had seriously delayed its progress. It was not till the afternoon that the head reached the Narais at Gué de l'Aune and took up quarters, there and to the rear as far as St. Mars de Locquenay. The advanced guard went on, however, to La Buzardière, thus forming the van of the whole army; Parigné-l'Évêque, on their left flank, was in the hands of the French.

The Ninth Corps had followed the Third to Bouloire.

No orders from head-quarters had as yet reached La-Ferté when, at nine in the morning, the Grand Duke marched on Connerré with the Thirteenth Corps. Soon after midday the 17th Division came upon the French near Seeaux, and after an obstinate struggle, advancing all the time, drove them first out of the villages and then off the road. The French, who had retreated to Connerré by forced night marches, lost above 500 prisoners in this small affair. But the short day was closing in and the advanced guard halted at dusk at Duneau. A detachment, on going further, found Connerré occupied by the French, and many watch-fires were blazing in the valley of the Due. The main force of the German infantry found quarters in and around Seeaux.

Ranel's detachment, being ordered to rejoin the corps, took possession of Le-Croset, and of the bridge over the Due near that village, and then expelled the French from Thorigné.

The French stayed in Connerré only till the evening; then, leaving a company in occupation, they continued their retreat. This inevitably led them from the left bank of the Huisne through the quarters taken up by the Third German Corps, who were disturbed all night by wandering detachments of French soldiers, even at Nuillé, where the head-quarters of the division were established.

On the extreme German right the 4th Division of cavalry had occupied Bellême, after driving out the French battalion, which had likewise been ordered thither.

By this day the centre of the Second Army Corps had also got within two miles of Le-Mans, fighting all the way; while the two wings were still at some distance behind. As it was probable that the French would give battle in some strong position beyond the Huisne, it seemed advisable to await the arrival of the Tenth and Thirteenth Corps; on the other hand, this was giving the French time to collect their forces also. By attacking at once, two of their divisions, now at Château Renault and Le-Chartre, could scarcely be brought up quickly enough, and the rest of their army, now concentrating on Le-Mans, were involved in fighting at a disadvantage on all sides. Prince Frederick Charles therefore sent the Third Corps to scour the country beyond Ardenay; the Tenth was to advance on Parigné, and the Thirteenth on St.-Mars-la-Bruyère, though that place could scarcely be reached from the positions actually occupied by the corps that night.

As we have seen, the army assembled near Le-Mans was still acting on the offensive on January 6th; General Jouffroy advancing on Vendôme, and Curten on St. Amand. But on the 7th the French found their whole front, ten miles in length, reduced to the

defensive. General Rousseau, on the left wing, had evacuated Nogent-le-Rotrou, and, without being hardly pressed, began his retreat by a night march to Connerré. In the centre, the crossing of the Braye was wrested from General Jouffroy; he retired from St. Calais, not on Le-Mans, but to join General Barry to the south. On the right, General de Curten abandoned Château-Renault, and set out, unpursued, on the road past Château-du-Loir. To bring about some concerted movement of the three divisions of his right wing, General Chanzy placed them under the superior orders of Admiral Jauréguiberry; he sent the Paris Division on to Ardenay by the road General Jouffroy had abandoned, and reinforced General Rousseau on the left, by ordering three divisions to support him on either side of his line of retreat. General Jouffroy was to return to Parigné-l'Évêque, and a division was sent to meet him there and at Changé.

General de Curten succeeded on the 9th in checking the progress of the left German wing for some time close to Chahaignes; but Paris's division was driven back on Ardenay, and General Rousseau, thus surrounded, abandoned Connerré the same evening. The two divisions of the right wing withdrew to Jupilles and Nuillé-Pont-Pierre.

Under these circumstances General Chanzy's commands were that on the 10th Jouffroy's divisions should fall back on Parigné-l'Évêque, and the Paris Division march once more towards Ardenay. He sent the remaining three divisions of the Twenty-first Corps to meet General Rousseau, with instructions to retake Connerré and Thorigné.

These intended attacks on both sides gave rise to the fierce battle which, on the German side, was fought by the Third Corps single-handed.

## BATTLE OF LE-MANS.

(10th, 11th, and 12th of January.)

(January 10th). *The fight at Parigné and Changé.*—As, owing to the nature of the country, deep columns could not deploy without great loss of time, General von Alvensleben advanced on a wider front of small subdivisions, moving with intervals in front of and between Gué-de-l'Aune and Ardenay, with the 9th and 11th Infantry Brigades next to Changé. On his right the 12th marched along the high-road to Le-Mans; on his left the 10th was to start from Volnay if Parigné were found abandoned by the French, and leaving that place on their left, were also to make for Changé.

Parigné had, in fact, been deserted by the French, but had been re-occupied before daybreak by Deplanque's division; and before the German troops had started, the far-advanced posts, towards the wood of Loudon, were smartly attacked by the French. The greater part of the 9th Brigade had to be brought up by degrees between Blinières and the edge of the wood, but only seven guns could be brought into play against the strong French artillery. General von Stülpnagel decided to reserve his strength for the struggle at Changé, and not to carry on a sustained contest here, which must be decided as soon as the 10th Brigade on the left should make its appearance.

This brigade, delayed by the difficulties of the march, did not reach Challes till noon; but it brought two batteries to strengthen the German artillery, which now cleared the way for the infantry attack on Parigné, which stood on high ground. In half an hour the battalions rushed on the place with shouts of "Hurrah for Brandenburg," taking a gun which the enemy had

abandoned, and two mitrailleuses still being served. When the French returned to try to recover them they were repulsed, and lost another field-piece, two colors, and several wagons. After losing 2150 prisoners they fled to the shelter of the forest of Ruaudin. To keep a watch here, General von Stülpnagel left two battalions at Parigné, and proceeded at once to Changé in two columns. In front of this village, at about three o'clock, the 11th Brigade had met with a violent resistance by the Gué-Perray from the other brigades of Deplanque's division. The 35th Regiment of the 2nd Battalion lost nine officers and above 100 men in a severe struggle at Les-Gars. The General in command, who was on the spot, dislodged both flanks of the enemy from strong positions, and on the left two companies succeeded in crossing the stream at La Goudrière.

These at four o'clock came into contact with the advanced guard of the 9th Brigade, which Colonel Count von der Groeben had brought on from Parigné, taking possession of the Château of Girardrie on the way. As the two companies of the 11th Brigade sent up to the right reached Auvigné at the same time, the "General Advance" was sounded. Auvigné was stormed, the bridge north of Gué-la-Hart was crossed, and that village taken after a hard fight. About 1000 prisoners were again taken from the flying French.

It was already dark, and Changé, the goal of the struggle, was not yet won. But when a barricade outside the village had been demolished, it was found that the 10th Brigade were already in possession. This brigade, on its way along the high-road from Parigné, had met with resistance both at Chef-Raison and Paillerie. Having only two guns, they failed to silence the French artillery, but General von Stülpnagel

left a battalion here too, to watch the enemy, and hurried forward with part of the brigade to support the Germans at Gué-la-Hart; the rest were to attack Changé.

Here the French had already been for the most part dismissed to quarters, but they soon formed and offered a determined resistance. There was a long and fierce street-fight, which ended in about an hour's time, by the whole garrison of 800 men, who had crowded into the market-place, surrendering as prisoners.

The 12th Brigade had at last got off from Ardenay, but not till eleven o'clock; they proceeded unchecked along the high-road as far as St. Hubert, where they seized an abandoned commissariat train. Having aligned themselves with the rest of their corps, they halted for a while, but soon after they were attacked by French artillery; and the enemy again advancing along the high-way, General von Buddenbrock likewise advanced to the attack, and drove the French out of Champagné, some across the Huisne, and some back on the hills behind the village. Two guns then successfully defied the fire of the French artillery near Lune-d'Auvours, and the infantry expelled them from that shelter also.

Further to the right a German battalion had taken St.-Mars-la-Bruyère after a slight skirmish, and was subsequently joined there by General Count zu Lynar.

Thus the Third Corps had by this time taken more than 5000 prisoners and many valuable trophies, by equal skill and good fortune; it had indeed left 450 men for dead.

The Tenth Corps had started that same day from Vancé and Brives, and had reached Grand-Lucé; but not till two o'clock, unobstructed by the French, but along very heavy roads. Here they took up their quarters. The Ninth Corps remained at Nuillé.

Of the Thirteenth Corps the 17th Division had continued its advance along the left bank of the Huisne, and had found Connerré already deserted by the French. But on the further side of the river, the heights of Cohernières, the railway station and the wood on the north, were occupied by the 2nd Division of the French Twenty-first Corps. General von Rauch led two battalions to attack them from the south, while from the east the 22nd Division was brought up, having crossed the Huisne at Sceaux and gone on to Beillé along the right bank. The French made a stout resistance, and the fight lasted with varying fortunes till darkness came on. The Château of Couléon and several villages at the foot of the wooded hills were taken by the Germans, but the French maintained their hold on the heights and their position at Cohernières.

The 17th Division had meanwhile continued their advance, along roads frozen till they were as smooth as glass, and reached La-Belle-Inutile; the 22nd passed the night at Beillé.

This division had that morning sent a detachment to Bonnétable, whither the 4th Cavalry Division had already proceeded. The 12th Cavalry Brigade followed as far as Bellême. Colonel von Beckedorff then marched forward to Chanteloup, whence he drove out the French in spite of an obstinate defence.

General Chanzy had resolved on a decisive engagement before Le-Mans. Curten's division had not yet arrived, and only a part of Barry's had come up, still the army from the camp at Coulie amounted to 10,000 men. The right wing of the French position rested on the Sarthe; the centre extended above a mile along the Chemin-aux-Bœufs, and the left, making a slight bend, rested on the Huisne. Barry's division, already weakened by reverses, and General Lalande's National



Guards—an ill-disciplined and ill-armed troop—were placed on the right, where the danger was least. Deplanque's and Roquebrune's divisions, with Desmairson's brigade and Jouffroy's division, held the centre and the left, Jouffroy facing General von Alvensleben. Behind this line Bouëdec's division and Colonel Marty's troops were placed in reserve. These 50,000 to 60,000 men, under Admiral Jauréguiberry, very sufficiently defended the position between the two rivers, which was well protected by earthworks at the most important points. Five other divisions, under the command of General de Colomb, stood on the other side of the river, about two miles distant, the Paris Division at Yvré; Gougéard's still occupying the heights of Auvours to the north of Champagné, Rousseau's at Montfort and Pont-de-Gesnes, Collin's in a bow-shaped position at Lombron, while Villeneuve's, quite on the flank, faced Chanteloup.

(January 11th.) On this day the Third German Army Corps was standing exactly opposite the main body of the French forces. It could not for the present hope for any support from the corps on its wing, and had a hard struggle before it.

On the left, the Tenth Corps was still at Grand Lucé that morning, and on the right the Thirteenth Corps had been detained on the previous day by the obstinate resistance of the French, who had held their own between Les Cohernières and La Chapelle, and occupied Le Chêne in their front.

The 22nd Division had been thrown into great confusion in the course of the struggle in the wood, and it was not till they had been reformed and the enemy's position had been reconnoitred by both the Generals of Division that the fighting could be renewed, at about eleven o'clock.

Two battalions of the 17th Division and one battery had been left in a post of observation in front of Pont-de-Gesnes, on the southern bank of the Huisne; on the northern side, the Mecklenburg battalions stormed Cohernières in the afternoon, and after a sharp contest, in conjunction with the Hessians forced their way to the westward as far as the Gué and on towards Lombron at about four o'clock.

Further to the right, two companies of the 90th Regiment of the 22nd Division had meanwhile taken Le Chêne, in spite of a stout defence; the 83rd Regiment, after a sharp fire from the guns, had taken the farms of Flouret and La Grande Métairie. Colonel von Beckedorff, on being relieved at Chanteloup by the 4th Division of cavalry, had driven the French out of St. Célerin and advanced to La-Chapelle-St.-Rémy, to the right of the division, which occupied a large extent of ground behind the points it had seized.

The Mecklenburg Grenadiers had held their own for a long time at Le-Gué and La-Brosse against superior numbers attacking from Pont-de-Gesnes; and the main body of the 17th Division retired that evening on Comerré.

But the more completely General von Alvensleben was thrown on his own resources, the more important it seemed to keep the troops in close connection. A strong force of the enemy was on his flank, nay, almost in his rear, on the hills of Auvours, and only kept at bay by the 12th Brigade, which, being thus engaged, could not at present advance to his assistance.

And it was there that the battle began. The French had repossessed themselves of Champagné, and their artillery formed line under cover of the ridge. When their fire had been somewhat checked by four of the German guns, two battalions advanced to the attack.

It was not till eleven o'clock, after an obstinate contest, that the French were driven back to the heights, and the bridge over the Huisne was taken. General von Buddenbrock now placed two battalions in a post of observation, sent a third to Lune-d'Auvours, and by noon returned with the rest of the brigade to rejoin the corps.

Meanwhile the conflict had been raging with such fury all along the front that, at twelve o'clock, Prince Frederick Charles sent orders from St. Hubert to General Voigts-Rhetz, to proceed with all speed to the field with the Tenth Corps; and at the same time General von Manstein was instructed to seize the heights of Auvours with the Ninth.

It was one o'clock before the advanced guard of the Ninth marched up the hollow way through deep snowdrifts. They were followed by two battalions of the 12th Brigade, bringing up two batteries with the greatest difficulty. The German infantry plunged into the wood, which was full of French soldiers, in the direction of Villiers; the 11th Regiment of Fusiliers seized three mitrailleuses that were being served, and as soon as the French had abandoned the position, turned them on the wood.

Further to the left, at about three o'clock, two battalions of the 85th Regiment were detached from the main body of the 18th Division, to proceed to the western end of the ridge, supported by the Jägers and two batteries which were posted at Les-Hêtres. To protect them two companies moved on to La-Lune, hindering the French from crowding down on the high-road. But in opposition to this movement the French opened a severe fire from their elevated batteries behind Yvré; notwithstanding this, the Holsteiners on the left rushed on a French battery and seized three of

its guns. On the right they took possession of a neighboring farmstead; and soon after five the French had vanished from the high ground to the western ridge.

Here, however, a strong counter-attack had to be met that same evening, for part of Gougeard's division marched up the slope from Yvré. Their further advance was effectually stopped; but they could not be prevented from remaining there for the evening and night. Still, by this struggle the 18th Division had kept open the rear and flank of the Third Corps. It was again required that evening to secure the crossing of the Huisne during the night for use next day; so three battalions and one battery went down to the northern bank and repulsed the French troops in possession of the bridge. The division had lost 275 men.

General von Alvensleben had postponed the advance of the Third Corps till eleven o'clock, hoping for the arrival of the 12th Brigade.

During the night the French completed the works on the skirts of the wood and took up a position there; they also occupied the high bank on the opposite side of the river, where they had brought up several batteries. Thus a direct attack would involve heavy loss, and it was impossible to outflank such extensive lines. General von Alvensleben therefore decided on advancing, at first only against the enemy's left wing, and sent forward the 11th Brigade. The 10th and 9th remained in reserve for the present, at Changé and Gué-la-Hart. The 12th, released at Mont-Auvours, were also advancing, but by a circuitous route, because the high-road was everywhere commanded by the batteries above.

The 11th Brigade, scarcely 3000 strong, followed the course of the Gué-Perray streamlet, round the northern

end of the wood. To protect it against the French columns which threatened it from the heights, the 35th Regiment formed line on the brook and occupied the Château of Les-Arches. The 20th tried to get forward by the cattle-path, and while holding the Château of Les-Noyers and the bridge there over the Huisne, drove off the French by sheer hard fighting, as far as Les-Granges. But they presently returned with so strong a force that the whole brigade was gradually brought up into the firing line. Les-Granges was lost and retaken several times with heavy loss, particularly of officers; but the Brandenburgers fought steadily on.

On their left the 10th Brigade now made its appearance, having come up from Changé at one o'clock. By two, the 52nd Regiment had possession of the farm of Le-Pavillon, of the wooded slope in front and the farm of Grand-Anneau, but their loss was severe. Strong columns of the French coming up from Pontlieue were driven back, two batteries were got forward under heavy fire from the Chassepots to within 800 paces of Le Tertre, and yet the 12th Regiment did not succeed in getting into the farmstead till two battalions of the 9th Brigade had come to their assistance from Changé. The position was taken by storm at about five o'clock, with the help of the 8th Regiment of the Grenadier Life Guards. The 52nd Regiment, having spent all its ammunition, had to be taken out of action, but the battalion of Grenadiers rushed down on the cattle-path, taking two French guns which were firing on them, after a desperate conflict; but the enemy's repeated attempts to recover them were steadily frustrated. A battery which the French were bringing up on the western side of the wood was driven back by rapid volleys.

When it was found that the 35th Regiment must be brought back from the Gué-Perray to support the 20th, the French recovered possession of Les-Arches. Here the 12th Brigade had arrived from Auvours at two o'clock, only three battalions strong; the 64th, however, recaptured the château after a short fight. The overwhelming storm of fire from the artillery and musketry on the opposite side of the river hindered the Germans from getting up their guns, and it was only with great difficulty and the loss of many gunners that the pieces were brought away again; but every attack on the position by the French from Yvré was steadily repulsed.

It was now quite dark, but the firing had not ceased. The Third Corps had taken 600 prisoners, but had lost 500 killed. It had fought its way into the heart of the French position, and its outposts were in close proximity to the enemy's front. And now, though late, strong reinforcements arrived.

The Tenth Corps had moved from Grand-Lucé to the westward early in the day, to block the high-road from Tours to Le-Mans, but the frozen state of the ground again delayed them on the way, so that they only reached Teloche in the afternoon.

The sound of firing to the northward left them in no doubt that General von Alvensleben was fighting a great battle. The orders sent from head-quarters at St. Hubert reached General Voigts-Rhetz at noon; but he then judged, and very rightly, that his assistance would now be more effective on the enemy's flank than on the field where the Third Corps were engaged. So in spite of the exhausted state of his men, who had had no hot meal on the way, he at once pushed forward.

To protect himself against Curten's division, probably at Château-du-Loir, he dispatched one battalion

to Ecommoy. It was received with firing from the houses, surrounded in the darkness, and compelled to withdraw from the place; but it kept the road clear in the rear of the corps.

The head of the 20th Division found Mulsanne feebly defended, and drove the detachment back beyond the cutting of La Monnerie.

The nature of the country here afforded great advantages to the French. Ditches and fences were good cover for firing from, farmsteads and copses excellent positions for defence. Only eight guns could be brought to bear against the enemy's artillery; but nevertheless four battalions (Westphalians and Brunswickers) persistently repelled the French, and by night-fall had got as far as Point-du-Jour. The conflict only ceased at the cattle-path by Les-Mortes-Aures. Here the French held the whole plain before them, by the continuous running fire, kept up from behind lines of shelter-trenches rising one above the other.

The battle wavered for a long time, but the German left presently gained ground. The 1st Battalion of the 17th Regiment rushed on the enemy, who returned their fire at the shortest possible range, and then made for the wood; and when the drums of the 1st Battalion of the 56th Regiment were heard at Point-du-Jour, beating the charge, the French carried away their mitrailleuses and evacuated Les-Mortes-Aures.

This battalion had received orders to end the struggle at the point of the bayonet. Captain von Monbart led the attack at the double in close order; all the companies at hand joined in it, and in spite of a steady fire from the cover of the wood, La-Tuilerie was carried by half-past eight; and here the brigade reformed, while the 37th stood ready to support it at a spot beyond at Mulsanne. The French vanished in the darkness.

The constant roll of wheels, the noise of departing railway trains, and a confusion of cries announced their flight. Still the prisoners, who were brought in in numbers, all agreed that a strong force was encamped in the woods. Watch-fires blazed there through the night, and instead of resting, the troops must have been preparing to meet a fresh attack. By about half-past ten the outposts reported the approach of a strong force of the French from Pontlieue.

Hitherto the Germans had only had to deal with National Guards under General Lalande at this point, a force not much to be relied on; but the Admiral now sent Bouëdec's division against La-Tuilerie, with General Roquebrune's to support their advance.

The battalions in the first lines were under fire for above an hour in a perfect storm of projectiles, but no serious attack was attempted.

According to French reports, their officers strove in vain to induce their troops to advance; they constantly gave way. And a subsequent effort with the Garde Mobile was equally fruitless.

Still, there was to be no rest. At two in the morning the din of fighting again made itself heard on the right. Deplanque's division had been disturbed by a flanking force of the 40th Brigade, who had been marching along the road from Ruaudin to Pontlieue, to be at hand in case of need; without returning the enemy's fire, they had attacked the detachment holding Epinettes and took possession of it, close to the cattle-path.

(January 12th.) Only the Third and Tenth Corps could be reckoned on for the inevitable battle next day. The other two could only afford indirect assistance by keeping part of the French forces otherwise engaged.

Of the Thirteenth Corps the 17th Division was to



proceed *viâ* Lombron to St. Corneille, without allowing themselves to be drawn into a fray with the enemy still occupying the banks of the Huisne; the 22nd was ordered from La-Chapelle to Savigné. The little river Gué could easily be held, and part of the artillery was left at Connerré with the 7th Brigade of cavalry.

In their advance the Germans found that the enemy had already abandoned Lombron, Pont-de-Gesnes, and Montfort. Scattered arms and equipment betrayed how hastily they had fled.

Several stragglers were brought in, and it was not till reaching the Merdereau, at about noon, that the 17th Brigade met with any opposition. An attack from all sides dislodged the French from the Château of Hyre and from St. Corneille at about four o'clock, and 500 French were taken prisoners. They were then driven back behind the Parance, where the advanced guard halted at dusk.

Colonel von Beckedorff's detachment of the 22nd Division had marched on Chanteloup from Sillé, repulsing the French on La-Croix, where a large body of their troops made a stand. But when, after a long delay, the main body of the division arrived, the Germans attacked at once. Whole regiments of French here laid down their arms, and 3000 men surrendered, with several officers.

An attempt of the German cavalry to get across the Sarthe to break up the railway communication was, however, unsuccessful.

The force occupying the ridge of Auvours had surrendered in a body. The 35th Brigade marched up to Villiers, but patrols sent ahead brought news that the French had retired behind the Huisne.

When the noise of fighting at St. Corneille was heard at midday, the brigade was ordered to proceed north-

ward to support the 17th Division engaged there. The 84th Regiment, passing by La-Commune, lent valuable assistance in the attack on Château-Hyre. Outposts were left by the Parance for the night, but the main body of the brigade returned to Fatines, and the 36th took up quarters between Villiers and St.-Mars-la-Bruyère.

By the battle of the previous day the French position before Le-Mans had been forced; but they still stood firm behind the Huisne, and as their left wing had been driven back on their centre, that point had been considerably strengthened. Still, the stream must be crossed, the steep slope must be climbed, where every hedge of the terraced vineyards was held by strong firing lines, and where the heights were crowned with batteries. The ford by Yvré, on the left, was very strongly protected, and the ground in front of the wood of Pontlieue had been made impassable in many places by abatis. Against such a position the artillery could do little, and the cavalry nothing, while deep snow hampered every movement of the infantry. General von Alvensleben therefore decided for the present on acting only on the defensive with his right wing, while with his left he prepared to support General von Voigts-Rhetz in his advance.

The troops were roused from their short rest at six in the morning. Two companies of French were making their way towards the bridge at Château-les-Noyers with powder-bags, but they were compelled to retreat, leaving the explosives behind them. At about eight o'clock the French made a determined attack on the outposts of the 12th Regiment, quartered in the wood, and drove them in as far back as Le-Tertre. Again the fight raged furiously round this farmstead, which was almost demolished by shell. One by one the last

battalions of the 10th Brigade were drawn into the struggle, while detachments whose ammunition was exhausted were ordered out of it. Only four guns could fire with any effect, but by eleven o'clock the French volleys gradually died away, and they were seen to retire on Pontlieue. The battalions of the left wing pursued, and came out on the Parigné road in immediate touch with the Tenth Corps.

General von Voigts-Rhetz had left two battalions at Mulsanne, for protection from Ecommoy; the whole corps, after many unavoidable detachments had been detailed from it, was assembled by about half-past seven to march forward on Pontlieue. The main body of the 20th Division was to diverge along the Mulsanne road to go to La-Tuilerie. Three battalions of the 19th Division were to meet at Ruaudin to strengthen the detachment occupying Epinettes, while two battalions and the 14th Cavalry Brigade took the road to Parigné, with the corps' artillery, which could be of no service in the plain further to the left.

Reinforcements had meanwhile arrived at Ruaudin, and General von Woyna made his way without hindrance through the woods to La-Source, where he halted at one o'clock, having formed line on the 20th Division. These had already brought a heavy battery into action, driving back the French mitrailleuses beyond Pontlieue. On the right, a light battery of the 19th Division was brought up to La-Source, and ten horse-artillery guns as far as the Parigné road. The atmosphere was, however, so thick that their fire could only be directed by the map.

At two o'clock General von Kraatz advanced in close column on Pontlieue, whither General von Woyna was now also marching. The southern side of the village was taken after a short struggle; but on the further

side of the Huisne the French held the houses along the river-bank, and just as the Germans had reached the bridge it was blown up. The demolition, however, was not complete, and the foremost battalions got across over the débris to get at the enemy. Two made their way down the high street, one turned to the left, to the railway station, whence came the sound of signals for departing trains. There was nothing to hinder the iron railway-bridge from being blown up, and by this means many prisoners were taken, besides 150 provision wagons and 1000 hundred-weight of flour.

The artillery were next directed to fire on the town of Le-Mans.

Meanwhile the detachments which had become mixed up in the fight in the wood had reformed, and joined the Third Corps. After a ration of meat, the first for three days, had been served out to all the troops, the 10th Brigade resumed its march. The battalion of Brandenburg Jägers crossed the river by the paper-mill of L'Epan, and two batteries at Château-Funay contributed to the firing on Le-Mans.

When, soon after, the infantry entered the town, a fierce struggle began in the streets, blocked as they were by the baggage-trains of the French. Access to the houses had to be cleared by artillery; a large number of French were taken prisoners, and a vast quantity of supplies seized. The fighting went on till night-fall, and then the Tenth Corps and half of the Third took up alarm quarters in the town. The 6th Division took possession of Yvré, which the enemy had abandoned, and placed outposts at Les-Noyers and Les-Arches on the further side of the Huisne.

The actions fought by the French on this day had been arranged for the sole purpose of giving the army time to set out.

On learning from Admiral Jauréguiberry that every effort to get the troops to advance had failed, and that the last reserves were shattered, General Chanzy had, at eight that morning, issued orders for a general retreat on Alençon. Here the Minister of War had arranged for the simultaneous arrival of two divisions of the Nineteenth Corps from Carentan.

The march of the Second Army on Le-Mans had been a series of seven days' incessant fighting. It had fallen at a season when the winter was most severe. Smooth ice and snow-drifts had hampered every movement. Bivouacking was out of the question; the troops had to seek their night quarters often at a distance of some miles in their rear; their re-assembling in the morning wasted precious hours, and then the shortness of the day prevented their taking full advantage of their successes. Whole battalions were employed merely in guarding the prisoners. The roads were in such a state that baggage could not be brought up; officers and men alike marched in insufficient clothing and on reduced rations. But spirit, endurance, and discipline had conquered every difficulty.

The Germans had sacrificed in this prolonged struggle 3200 men and 200 officers, the larger half belonging to the Third Corps alone. Several companies fought under the command of non-commissioned officers.

The French estimated their losses at 6200 men, and 20,000 taken prisoners; seventeen guns, two colors, and an abundant supply of matériel remained as trophies in the hands of the victors.

After such severe efforts the troops imperatively needed some rest. The orders from head-quarters were that the operations were not to be extended beyond a certain area of country; and the Second Army might almost immediately be required on the Seine

and the Loire. Prince Frederick Charles therefore determined to follow up the retreating enemy with only a small force.

On the French side, if each corps was to have an independent road for escape to Alençon, two corps must necessarily start to the westward. And on the evening of the last day's fight the Sixteenth Corps had reached Chauffour on the Laval road, and the Seventeenth was at Mayenne on the way to Conlie, each protected by its rear-guard. The Twenty-first was assembled at Ballon, to the east of the Sarthe. From these points all were to march northwards. General Chanzy still deluded himself with the hope of getting on by Evreux to the assistance of the besieged capital. He would have, indeed, to make a wide circuit—a bow to which the Germans could easily have formed the string in a much shorter time; and in the condition in which his troops now were, across a country where all arms could be brought into action, they must have been annihilated. In short, the conquered army was already driven to the west of the Sarthe.

After distributing rations to men and horses, General von Schmidt set forth at midday on the 13th with four battalions, eleven squadrons, and ten guns, and reached Chauffour after some skirmishing. The Thirteenth Corps (German) advanced to the Sarthe, the 17th Division sending their outposts across the river at Neuville, and the 22nd driving the French out of Ballon, whence they retired completely routed to Beaumont. The Twenty-first Corps (French) had taken up quarters this day at Sillé. The National Guards from Brittany fled wildly to Coron, and thence back into their own province. They were joined by the troops left in camp at Conlie, after they had plundered the camp. The Seventeenth Corps also went off, without

halting by the Vègre, as they had been ordered to do, but marching straight on to Ste. Suzanne. The Sixteenth withdrew on Laval, leaving Barry's division at Chassillé to protect their rear. Numbers of abandoned baggage-wagons, and cast-away arms, testified to the condition of the defeated army.

On the 14th the French were driven out of Chassillé. The Sixteenth Corps were by this time in dire confusion; they retired during the night to St.-Jean-sur-Erve. In the camp at Conlie 8000 rifles had been abandoned, with 5,000,000 cartridges, and various other warlike stores.

The Grand Duke had marched on Alençon along the right bank of the Sarthe. The French advanced guard of the 22nd Division made a slight stand at Beaumont and lost 1400 prisoners.

On the following day General von Schmidt made further progress on the road to Laval, but he found that the French had concentrated at St. Jean and had posted a strong force of artillery on the heights beyond the Erve. The Oldenburg Regiment forced its way as far as the church of the little town, and the Brunswickers drove the enemy back on Ste. Suzanne, higher up the river, but there the pursuit ended.

Although Barry's and Deplanque's divisions had now no more than 6000 fighting men, by the French estimate, and Curten's division had not yet come up, the German force at hand was very considerably inferior. The rest of the Tenth Corps was moving up to their support, but had as yet only reached Chassillé. A battalion proceeding from Conlie came into conflict at Sillé with the Twenty-first Corps (French) assembled there, and sustained heavy loss. The 22nd Division of the Thirteenth Corps also met with serious opposition before reaching Alençon, from the National

Guards and Volunteers under Lipowski; so the attack on the town was postponed till next day.

But on the following morning the French position in Alençon was evacuated, as well as Sillé and St. Jean. The places were at once occupied by the Germans, and General von Schmidt marched on, close to Laval. Numerous stragglers from the retreating army were taken prisoners.

Curten's division had now reached the western bank of the Mayenne, and there the remnants of the Army of the Loire re-assembled. Reduced to half its original strength, and very greatly demoralized, it would be *hors de combat* for some time to come, and the object of the German march on Le-Mans was fully attained.

To the north of Paris, however, the French were again preparing to attack. It was needful to withdraw those divisions of the First which were still on the Lower Seine, in the direction of the Somme; and orders came from head-quarters that the Thirteenth Corps of the Second Army should march on Rouen. On the Upper Loire two French detachments had been sent to attack the Hessians holding positions about Briare, and had driven them back, on the 14th, to Ouzouer; while from Sologne came a report of the advance of a newly-constituted French Army Corps—the Twenty-fifth.

The German Ninth Corps, after evacuating and razing the camp at Conlie, was therefore sent to reinforce Orleans. The remainder of the Second Army, the Third and Tenth Corps, with the three cavalry divisions—about 27,000 foot, 9000 horse, and 186 guns—were assembled under Prince Frederick Charles round Le-Mans. The cavalry, placed as a corps of observation in the front and on the flanks, had several small



skirmishes, but no further serious hostilities were attempted.

The 4th Cavalry Division held Alençon on the right, and on the left General von Hartmann entered Tours without any opposition.

#### OPERATIONS ON THE NORTH OF PARIS DURING JANUARY.

At the beginning of the New Year a considerable part of the First Army (German) was engaged in investing Péronne, which would have afforded a safe passage for the debouching of the French over to the southern bank of the Somme. General Barnekow had laid siege to the little town with the 3rd Reserve Division and the 31st Brigade of infantry. Hitherto it had only been kept under observation by cavalry, but recent circumstances had raised it to importance. So much of the Eighth Corps as was available on the Somme formed, for the protection of the besiegers on the north, a wide curve from Amiens as far as Bapaume.

The First Corps, posted at Rouen, at first consisted only of three brigades; but the Fourth was on the march from Péronne, where it had now been relieved. No reinforcement of the First Army had been effected; the 14th Division, after reducing Mézières and taking Rocroy, had received fresh orders from Versailles which transferred it to another field of action.

General Faidherbe had concentrated his troops from the rest-camp south of Arras, behind the Scarpe, and had begun his forward march on 2nd January. He advanced with the Twenty-second Corps to the relief of Péronne through Bucquoy. The Twenty-third followed by the high-road to Bapaume. As early as half-past ten the Derroja Division of the former corps obliged the 3rd Cavalry Division, as well as those

battalions of the 32nd Brigade which had been attached to it, to retire on Miraumont, pursuing it, however, only as far as Achiet-le-Petit.

The other division, under General Bessol, had only advanced towards Achiet-le-Grand in the afternoon. There he was opposed for several hours to two companies of the 68th, a detachment of hussars, and two guns, who retired towards evening on Avesnes. The French did not pursue, but established outposts at Bihucourt.

Payen's division had deployed at Béhagnies, on the high-road, and its batteries opened fire on Sapignies, where, however, General von Strubberg had posted five battalions. These met the attack, and at two o'clock entered Béhagnies with a rush, took 240 prisoners, and prepared the village for defence. The enemy withdrew to Ervillers, and there once again showed front, but attempted no further attack.

The other division of his Twenty-third Army Corps, consisting of mobilized National Guards, under General Robin, had pressed forward on the left on Mory. There was only one battalion and a squadron of hussars to oppose them. By extending their line on the heights of Beugnâtre, they succeeded in deceiving the enemy as to their numerical strength. The latter marched and counter-marched, and also brought up artillery, but did not attempt an attack, and remained at Mory.

The 30th Brigade and the 3rd Cavalry Division took up their position for the night in and about Bapaume. The 29th Brigade occupied the neighboring villages on the right and the left of the Arras road.

## BATTLE OF BAPAUME.

(January 3rd.)

General Faidherbe had brought his forces close up to a position covered by the siege of Péronne. His four divisions consisted of fifty-seven battalions, opposed by only seventeen German battalions. He decided on the 3rd to push on in four columns to Grévillers, Biefvillers, on the high-road, and to Favreuil on the east.

But General von Goeben was not inclined to give up his position at Bapaume. During the occupation of Favreuil, General von Kummer brought up the 30th Brigade in front of the town, and behind it the 29th, of which, however, three battalions were left in the villages to left and to the right. A reserve was established further to the rear, at Transloy, whither the 8th Rifle Battalion, with two batteries, was detached; and General von Barnekow received orders to hold three battalions and the 26th Division of foot in readiness at Saily-Saillisel, without raising the blockade. Then the division under Prince Albrecht, Jun.—three battalions, eight squadrons, and three batteries—advanced on Bertincourt, near to the battle-field. In this order, in severe cold and gloomy weather, they were to await the attack of the French.

General Count von der Groeben had already sent the 7th Cavalry Brigade against the enemy's right flank, but it did not succeed in forcing its way through those villages that were occupied by the enemy's infantry.

At Beugnâtre, the right wing of the Robin Division was met by so sharp a fire from two battalions of the 65th, and two horse artillery batteries that had joined them from Transloy, that it withdrew again on Mory, and the garrison of Favreuil was reinforced by two

battalions and two batteries against the approach of the Payen Division, which was marching down the high-road to the east of that place. The first French gun that came out of Sapignies was immediately destroyed, but several batteries soon became engaged on both sides, and the French entered Favreuil and St. Aubin.

The 40th Regiment advanced to these places at noon from Bertincourt, and, after a lively action, occupied them; yet had to evacuate Favreuil again, and a battery of horse artillery took up a position alongside of the 2nd Regiment of Uhlans of the Guard close to Frémicourt, which secured the right of the division.

On the left, Bessol's division had driven the weak garrison out of Biefvillers. The 1st Battalion of the 33rd Regiment, which had set out to retake that place, became hotly engaged; it lost all but three of its officers, and had to retire upon Avesnes. The Derroja Division had also taken part in this fight. The French now brought a strong force of artillery to the front, and extended their firing-line to the south nearly as far as the road to Albert.

Therefore, at midday, General von Kummer decided to confine himself to the local defence of Bapaume. With some sacrifice, the artillery covered the move of the infantry thither. The 1st Heavy Battery, which was the last to withdraw, lost 2 officers, 97 men, and 36 horses; their guns could only be got away with the help of the infantry.

The 29th Brigade now prepared for an obstinate defence of the old city wall. The 30th was posted behind the place, and the French advanced leisurely as far as the suburb. Then there was a cessation of hostilities. General Faidherbe hoped to take the town by further investing it, without exposing it to the horrors

of a bombardment such as precedes the taking of a place by storm. A brigade of the Derroja Division endeavored to advance through Tilloy, but met there with stubborn resistance from the Rifle battalion and two batteries which had arrived from Péronne. At the same time, twenty-four guns of the batteries that were posted behind Bapaume opened fire on the advancing columns, which then withdrew, at half-past three, by the road to Albert. They soon resumed the attack, and succeeded in entering Tilloy. All the neighboring batteries now opened fire upon this place. General von Mirus, who, when the 3rd Cavalry Division had passed through Miraumont, had been left behind there, seeing no enemy in his front, but hearing the fighting at Bapaume, advanced from the west, and General von Strubberg from the town, to resume the attack. The French did not await their arrival, and were driven both out of the suburb and Avesnes. The French detachments encamped for the night at Grévil-lers, Bihucourt, Favreuil, and Beugnâtre, thus surrounding Bapaume on three sides. The day had cost the Germans 52 officers and 698 men, and the French 53 officers and 2066 men.

But only by drawing on every available resource of the Eighth Army Corps had it been possible to withstand the preponderating attack of the enemy. It had not yet been possible to provide fresh ammunition, and General von Goeben decided to immediately shift the battle-field to behind the Somme. This movement was being executed when the patrols brought information that the enemy was also evacuating its neighboring position.

The French troops, as yet unaccustomed to active service, had suffered extremely from the day's fighting and the severe cold of the ensuing night. General

Faidherbe could perceive that the forces before Péronne had been withdrawn to Bapaume, and that the Germans thus reinforced would assume the defensive. His first object, the raising of the siege, had been obtained, and the General thought it best not to endanger his success by a second encounter. He led his corps back in the direction of Arras.

Of the German cavalry, the 8th Cuirassiers succeeded in breaking through a French square. The 15th Division withdrew behind the Somme to close under Péronne, and the Saxon cavalry joined the right wing at St. Quentin.

#### ACTIONS ON THE LOWER SEINE.

Exactly at the same time the other corps of the First Army was engaged with the enemy on the Lower Seine. The French had not taken up any new position on the right bank of the river, but they held the wooded heights of Bois-de-la-Londe, which surround the southern defile of the little river-peninsula of Grand-Couronne. Here General von Bentheim, with a view of gaining ground in this direction, had posted half of the First Army Corps, and advanced on the 4th of January on Les Moulineaux. Before daybreak Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem surprised the enemy's outposts, stormed the fort of Château Robert-le-Diable, and took prisoners those who had sought refuge amid the ruins of the castle; and the heights of Maison Brulet were scaled under a heavy fire from the enemy, who lost two guns on this occasion. After renewed fighting at St. Ouen, the French withdrew on Bourgachard in the afternoon, pursued towards six in the evening by half a squadron of dragoons, two guns, and a company driven on wagons, who took from them two 12-pounders set up on the approach to Rougemontier,

disabling the gunners and capturing an ammunition wagon.

After a slight skirmish, the enemy had been driven out of Bourgtheroulde and thrown back in the direction of Brionne. However, the French right wing at Elbeuf had, during the night, hastily withdrawn from a position rendered precarious by the wavering of the remaining detachments. The affair had cost 5 officers and 160 men. The loss of the French must have been equal, besides which they lost 300 prisoners and 4 guns.

General Roye posted his troops behind the Rille on the Pont-Audemer—Brionne line, but the Germans now held Bourgachard, Bourgtheroulde, and Elbeuf strongly garrisoned, with three battalions in readiness at Grand-Couronne for further security. The other troops returned to Rouen. An attempted passage of the French from the northern bank of the Somme had already been averted at Fauville, whence they again withdrew to Harfleur.

Meanwhile it had not escaped the observation of the Eighth Army Corps that this time the French did not seek to intrench themselves in the northern forts, but that they halted south of Arras, thus betraying an intention to shortly renew the attack on the investing forces of Péronne.

General von Goeben therefore decided to pass over to the northern bank of the Somme, to their protection, and to take up a flank position whose front the enemy would have to cross in its advance.

On January 6th, after the troops had had one day's rest, and the ammunition had been replenished, the 30th Brigade advanced on Bray, the 29th on Albert. In close vicinity to the enemy was the 36th Cavalry Division at Bapaume, behind them the cavalry brigade of

the Guard. To secure the left flank Lieutenant-Colonel von Pestel occupied Acheux, and the 3rd Reserve Division of the investing corps advanced west of the position on Feuillères. The Corps Artillery remained meanwhile on the left bank of the Somme, for it almost seemed as if the enemy were preparing an attack on Amiens.

But during the next day the French did not undertake anything of importance, and on the 9th Péronne fell.

#### OCCUPATION OF PÉRONNE.

For fourteen days this little place had been invested by eleven battalions, sixteen squadrons, and ten batteries. Flooded meadows on one side, and on the other walls with medieval towers had secured it against surprise; yet it was commanded on all sides by overhanging heights.

Still the fire of fifty-eight German guns had not done much damage, and in any case must soon have been given up for want of ammunition; the fire with captured French matériel remained without result. The fort continued its fire, and its garrison of only 3500 men even attempted sorties. As before mentioned, on the day of the battle of Bapaume, a portion of the besieging troops had been obliged to withdraw to the support of the Eighth Army Corps, and in the uncertainty as to the result of this fight it had been necessary to take precautions for the parking of the siege matériel. The troops that remained behind were in marching order, and part of the heavy guns had been withdrawn. But the garrison of the place kept on its guard.

Two days later a siege-train of fifty-five heavy guns arrived at La-Fère. A second, of twenty-eight, laden with French ammunition, was on the way from Mé-



zières. The preliminaries of a regular siege were accomplished, and when at last, on the 8th of January, a large ammunition-transport arrived, the Commandant was summoned to give up a defence that had become hopeless.

On the 10th of January General von Barnekow entered the fortress so amply provided with arms, ammunition, and provisions. The garrison were made prisoners.

On the 7th of January, his Majesty the King had summoned General von Manteuffel to another part of the theatre of war, and had given the supreme command of the First Army Corps to General von Goeben.

Freed from all care as to Péronne, his only mission thenceforward was the protection of the siege of Paris. For this purpose the Somme, whose passages were all in the hands of the Germans, formed a natural bulwark, behind which even the attack of a superior enemy could be met. And some reinforcements now arrived for the Eighth Army Corps. The peaceful condition of the Lower Seine permitted of two infantry regiments and two batteries being sent from thence to Amiens. At head-quarters an infantry brigade of the Meuse Army Corps was held in readiness, which in case of need was to precede them by rail.

It was still a matter of uncertainty where the enemy would strike the first blow. General von Goeben, therefore, spread his forces behind the Somme on a ten-mile line, still holding the places he had acquired to the front of the river, so that if needful he could proceed to attack. In the middle of the month, the portions of the Ninth Army Corps under the command of General Count von der Groeben occupied Amiens, Corbie, and the Hallue line in a flank position. The 15th Division, holding Bray, took up its quarters south

of this place. Next to them, on the left of Péronne, were the 36th Reserves, to the right the 16th Division, and the 3rd Reserve Cavalry Brigade, holding Roisel and Vermand, in front. The 12th Cavalry Division was at St. Quentin.

The French Army had already begun to move on the Cambrai high-road, and its Twenty-second Corps had forced back the 3rd Cavalry Division first out of Bapaume and Albert and then back on the Hallue. The Twenty-third followed the same road, and their goal really appears to have been Amiens. But a reconnoissance had enlightened them as to the difficulty of attacking in that direction, besides which a telegram from the War Minister announced that the Paris Army would make a last supreme effort to break the bonds of the blockade, and the Army of the Nord was enjoined to draw, as far as possible, the attention of the enemy's forces towards itself and away from the capital.

According to these orders, General Faidherbe decided to advance on St. Quentin without delay, whither the Isnard Brigade was already marching from Cambrai. The attack on the right wing of the Germans, consisting for the time being solely of cavalry, endangered their communications, while the vicinity of the northern forts offered the French Army shelter, and also greater liberty of action.

But General von Goeben had foreseen this withdrawal of the enemy on the left, and had concentrated all his forces to meet it.

The convalescents who were fit for service were attached. Only weak detachments were left at Amiens, and through the approach of the Thirteenth Corps, from the Sarthe to the Lower Seine, it was easy to transfer the 3rd Grenadier Regiment and a heavy battery to the Somme.

The withdrawal of the French from Albert and the march of their army corps on Combles and Sailly-Sailisel were soon reported by the reconnoitring of the cavalry. A newly-formed Pauly Brigade occupied Bapaume, and the Isnard Brigade entered St. Quentin, when General zur Lippe, according to orders received, retired on Ham. At this juncture, General von Goeben set out in an eastern direction, using the roads on both banks of the Somme so that he might the sooner come up with the enemy.

(January 17th.) On the 17th, the 12th Cavalry Brigade advanced on La-Fère, the 16th on Ham. The 3rd Reserve Division and the Cavalry Brigade of the Guard arrived at Nesle; the 15th Division and the Corps Artillery, at Villers-Carbonnel. An Army Reserve had been formed out of the troops last from Rouen, which followed to Harbonnières. On the northern bank, the detachment under Count von der Groeben advanced close to Péronne.

The four French divisions had so far advanced on Vermand that they were enabled to effect a junction next day at St. Quentin. The Twenty-third Army Corps was to retire straight upon the town, the Twenty-second to cross the Somme lower down, and take up a position south of St. Quentin.

(January 18th.) On the German side, the 16th and the 3rd<sup>d</sup> Reserve Division advanced on Jussy and Flavvy, on the southern bank of the Somme, the Army Reserves on Ham. The 12th Cavalry Division at Vendeuil found the country east of the Oise still free from the enemy.

On the other hand, the 15th Division was to cross the Somme at Brie, and advance, together with the troops of General Count von der Groeben, on Vermand and Etreillers, with a view of obtaining touch of the

approaching enemy. General von Kummer had been enjoined, in case he found that the French had taken up a position, merely to watch them and follow them should they retire north, but should they march towards the south, to attack them in force.

At half-past ten, the 29th Brigade came up on this side of Tertry with the rear-guard of the Twenty-second Corps and its train. The hussars broke through one of the screening battalions, drove the wagons in the greatest disorder back on Caulaincourt, but had to abandon prisoners and loot under the fire of the approaching infantry. The French brigade had changed front, and now advanced to the attack of Trescon. This was resisted by the 65th Regiment and three batteries until after two o'clock, when General du Bessol, who had just arrived on the scene of action, ordered the march on St. Quentin to be resumed.

The Twenty-third had also halted and detached a brigade against the left flank of the 15th Division. This, however, on reaching Cauvigny Farm, came upon the German battalions, which, after protracted firing, pursued the retreating enemy and entered Caulaincourt at half-past three, making 100 prisoners and capturing fourteen provision wagons.

Meanwhile Count von der Groeben had hastened forward at the sound of firing. The General realized that he could help most efficaciously by marching straight on Vermand. Four battalions marched on Pœuilly, which was occupied by the enemy, and when the 4th Grenadiers came up to the assault the French retreated, losing some prisoners. Many Gardes Mobiles were dispersed by the Uhlans. But at Vermand the whole of the Twenty-third Corps had begun its march.

Count von der Groeben therefore posted his troops

behind the PœUILLY ground, thereby occasioning the retiring troops to immediately front whenever pressed. The 15th Division had taken up quarters at Beauvois and Caulaincourt.

The sole aim which the French Generals appear to have had in view on that day was to reach St. Quentin. They neglected the opportunity of falling with their two corps upon the single 15th Division. The Twenty-third Corps passed the night in and westward of St. Quentin, and likewise the Twenty-second, after crossing the Somme at Sérancourt, south of that town. A further advance either on Paris or on the German line of communications depended, now that the Germans were so close upon them, on the issue of a battle; and this, General Faidherbe wished to await at St. Quentin.

It was important that he should make a stand there, in case the Paris Army succeeded in breaking through the blockade. The ground offered certain advantages—the heights in front of the town facilitated firing and offered covered shelter to the reserves. Although the Somme divided the army in two halves, the Bridge of St. Quentin secured to both mutual aid. The enemy also occupied two sides of the river, and including the now newly-joined Isnard and Pauly Brigades, they counted 40,000 men, against an enemy numerically weaker. The Germans, all counted, numbered 32,580 combatants, nearly 6000 being cavalry.

#### BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN.

(19th January.)

General von Goeben had ordered the general attack for the 19th.

General von Barnekow advanced along the southern

bank of the Somme (during the occupation of Sérancourt) with the 16th, and the 3rd Reserve Division from Jussy on Essigny; the 12th Cavalry Division advanced on the road which led to La Fère.

The French columns were still marching to take up their position so as to have the town on their rear; and they already occupied Grugies. While the 32nd Brigade marched north to Essigny—the Reserve Division halting behind the place—the 31st Brigade started at a quarter to ten for Grugies.

This attack was flanked by the French brigade under Gislain, which had meanwhile occupied the positions of Contescourt and Castres. Its front was met by the brigades under Foerster and Pittié.

The fire of the approaching German batteries was at once returned vigorously from Le-Moulin-de-Tout-Vent. At eleven o'clock the second battalion of the 69th Regiment formed into company columns, to cross the entirely open ground towards the heights between them and Grugies; but the attempt, which was renewed four times, was frustrated by the annihilating cross-fire of the enemy. The isolated battalion was nearly exhausted, and only on being joined by six fresh companies of the 29th Regiment did it succeed in forcing the French back, after a desperate hand-to-hand fight; but the latter made a stand before Grugies and its sugar factory.

On the right wing, the 12th Cavalry Division had preceded the others on the La-Fère road. The French brigade under Aynes, which had hitherto been held in reserve, pushed forward at the double to meet it, and as Count zur Lippe could dispose of but one battalion of infantry, the movement was arrested at Cornet-d'Or. But when, at noon, they were joined by reinforcements from Tergnier, the Saxon Rifles stormed

the park on the high-road, and the Schleswig-Holstein Fusiliers stormed La-Neuville. The French, after losing many prisoners, were vigorously pursued back to the outskirts of St. Quentin, the first place which afforded them shelter.

Meantime, the 31st Brigade was engaged in a hot fire on both sides of the railway line before Grugies; behind its right wing was posted the 32nd, in the valley near the high-road, where it suffered severely from the enemy's shrapnel. On the left, the advancing detachment had not succeeded in entering Contescourt; and now the French at Grugies made so determined and overwhelming an attack, that the 16th Division had to be withdrawn as far as Essigny.

When, after twelve o'clock, General Faidherbe joined the Twenty-third Corps, he had every reason to hope that the Twenty-second Corps would be able to maintain its position. But certainly the most important result was to be looked for on the northern portion of the battle-field.

Here Robin's division had taken up a position between Fayet and Francilly. The brigade under Isnard had joined it on the left, the brigade under Lagrange of Payen's division extended its line as far as the Somme. At Gricourt the Michelet brigade remained behind in reserve, and the brigade under Pauly secured the communications in rear.

As early as eight o'clock General Count von der Groeben (on the German left) set out on the Roman road from Pœuilly with eight battalions and twenty-eight guns; on the left the cavalry brigade accompanied the march.

The East-Prussians immediately drove the French out of Holnon and Séleney, and then advanced against Fayet and up the heights of Moulin-Coutte. A gun

that was being served, ammunition wagons, and many prisoners were then taken from the enemy.

By degrees the twenty-eight guns all reached the mill on the height and opened a duel with the artillery of Robin's division. But after half an hour the ammunition failed, for the wagons which had been sent on the previous day to the Eighth Corps had not yet come up to the relief. The batteries, which were, moreover, suffering from the fire of the infantry, had to retire on Holnon, and as Francilly was still occupied by the enemy in flank and rear, a further advance was temporarily postponed.

On the right, General von Kummer with the 15th Division had already begun the march from Beauvois, and had reached Etreillers at ten. The King's Hussars, after driving back the enemy's horse, drew up near to L'Epine-de-Dallon, and the 29th Brigade entered Savy. North of that place three batteries opened fire against the artillery of Payen's division, and then the 65th Regiment advanced to the attack of the surrounding woods. The smaller one to the south was taken, but here, as at Francilly, the Isnard Brigade established itself in the larger one to the north.

At noon the brigade under Lagrange advanced on the small wood and soon entered it, but was again driven back by the 65th.

The 33rd Regiment was posted in readiness to secure the threatened right flank of the 29th Brigade, and with those already under fire was joined by two heavy batteries which had just come with the Corps Artillery from Savy. At the same time the 30th Brigade advanced from Roupy on the right of the 29th.

Meanwhile, Colonel von Massow had, at one o'clock, again assumed the offensive against the much more advanced enemy's left. Six companies of the 44th



Regiment advanced on Fayet, and opening fire at the shortest range, drove the French from the field. They were followed by two batteries, who resumed action against the great artillery position at Moulin-de-Cépy.

General Paulze D'Ivoy, who saw his communications with Cambrai in such imminent danger, had already summoned the brigade under Michelet from its reserve post, west of the town, and thus reinforced now advanced on Fayet. Those Prussian detachments that were in the place had to be withdrawn to Moulin-Coutte; but the further advance of the enemy towards this height was met by a flank attack on Selency, and at the same time the farm of Bois-des-Roses was carried. The French again withdrew on Fayet.

There, at Francilly, and in the northern stretch of wood, they held their own until half-past one, while at that time, on the German side, the three brigades had been brought up into the fighting line. The Army Reserve had, indeed, advanced from Ham on Roupy, but General von Goeben, who had from that spot observed the slow progress of the 16th Division, had already sent this Reserve through Sérancourt to its relief at eleven o'clock.

Colonel von Boecking, with his three battalions, three squadrons, and two batteries, advanced from there against Contescourt. Hastening forward with the cavalry, he brought his artillery into action; the 41st Regiment, upon its arrival, immediately moved forward to the attack. In communication with the battalion of the 19th Regiment which was already on the spot, the French were at one o'clock driven out of that place and out of Castres, with the loss of many prisoners, towards the heights of Grugies. Against these heights the fire of the artillery was now directed, having gradually been increased to thirty guns.

So as to yet further dispute the position, General Lecomte reinforced Gislain's brigade by several battalions withdrawn from the brigades of Pittié and Aynès.

The East-Prussian Regiment succeeded, nevertheless, by half-past two o'clock, although itself attacked on all sides, in hurling back the enemy into the hollow in front of Grugies.

Colonel von Boecking's vigorous attack was conspicuous along the whole line.

With a view to again undertaking a general advance, General von Barnekow now ordered up his last reserves from Essigny, when towards three o'clock Pittié's brigade unexpectedly pressed forward along the line of railway. With his right under the fire of the artillery posted at Castres, he allowed his left to be surprised by the charge of five squadrons of the reserve cavalry at Urvilliers. Simultaneously Colonel von Hartzberg now advanced with the 32nd Brigade, and drove the enemy back to Moulin-de-Tout-Vent.

But Foerster's brigade, south of Grugies, had held out stubbornly, although now seriously threatened on the left from Giffécourt, as well as by the 12th Cavalry Division. With the retreat of Pittié's brigade now completely exposing their left flank, and their last troops exhausted by a long struggle, the French found themselves finally forced to vacate their hard-contested position.

The 31st Brigade advanced along the railway line as far as the sugar factory, and Colonel von Boecking drove the last French detachments out of Grugies. He then opened his attack upon Moulin-de-Tout-Vent with his artillery. Up these heights the 41st Battalion, ordered up from Essigny, and the 32nd Brigade advanced in a combined attack. The French did not hold

out much longer, and were soon in retreat. The entire German front, with the 12th Cavalry Division on its right, moved forward on to the town, which now also suffered from the fire of the artillery posted at Gauchy. The cavalry repeatedly broke through the retreating portions of the enemy's force; and the railway station and suburb, in which was found the rear-guard only of the Twentieth French Corps, fell after a short struggle.

Whilst on the southern portion of the field of battle the action took this turn, the attack on the northern side had also been renewed.

Already by two o'clock the 28th Regiment from Roupy had carried the farm-house of l'Epine-de-Dallon, on the Ham road; and almost simultaneously Count von der Groeben's infantry came up to resume the offensive.

Whilst on the right some companies of the 4th and 44th Regiments opposed the debouching of the French out of the extensive woods, Major von Elpons, with six companies of the Crown Prince Grenadiers, advanced from Holnon and Selency upon Francilly, and, notwithstanding the hot fire of the defenders, forced an entrance into this most straggling village, in which many prisoners were made. As, however, the East-Prussian Regiment advanced yet further south of the Roman road, it had in its turn to sustain a formidable attack.

To cover their threatened line of retreat, Michelet's brigade from Foyet once more advanced, and Pauly's brigade also marched upon Moulin-Coutte. This position, which had in the meantime been strengthened by artillery, was, however, obstinately contested by the 44th Regiment, and when the Grenadier companies poured in from the left of the Roman road, the enemy's attack was here again repulsed.

Meanwhile the 29th Brigade, followed by the 30th, had begun to move on St. Quentin, having the 33rd Regiment on its right and the 65th Regiment on the left. The latter regiment now took complete possession of the more extensive of the woods, and forty-eight guns were driven up on both sides of the road from Savy. The further advance of the infantry was effected in company column and in extended order, for the troops were suffering severely from the heavy grenade fire brought to bear upon them by the French. However, the Lagrange and Isnard brigades did not await the assault, and at four o'clock retired on St. Quentin with the loss of one gun.

The French artillery once more came into action at Rocourt, but at five o'clock had quickly to abandon the position, and the French now confined themselves to the defence of the barricaded entrances into the suburbs of St. Martin.

Six Prussian batteries were brought up against these, and the 29th Brigade was for some time engaged under a hot fire of the strongly manned buildings and gardens; whereupon several companies from Rocourt established themselves in the suburb, in which street-fighting was still continued, even when Lieutenant-Colonel von Hüllessem had succeeded in crossing the bridge over the canal, and entered the town itself.

By four o'clock, General Faidherbe had already concluded that the Twenty-third Corps would in all probability be unable to hold its position. Under these circumstances, his choice was limited between a night retreat, or throwing himself into St. Quentin. He had not yet come to any decision, when he met in the town General Lecointe, who reported that he had abandoned the defence of the left bank of the Somme. Thanks to the resistance still offered by the Twenty-third Corps

on the north, the Twenty-second was enabled to retire unmolested on Le-Cateau.

The officer in supreme command now ordered General Paulze d'Ivoy to retire on that place, but the latter only received the order at six in the evening, when the brigades on the right wing—Pauly's and Michelet's—had already been routed in the direction of Cambrai. The more obstinately the two remaining brigades now defended the suburb of St. Martin, the more critical for them must prove the result of the action. Attacked in rear by the battalion under Colonel von Boecking, the greater portion were made prisoners. The 41st Regiment alone took 54 officers and 2260 men prisoners, besides capturing 4 guns. General Faidherbe only escaped a similar fate through the instrumentality of the inhabitants.

The action only ceased at half-past six that evening, and the troops passed the night in the town and in the captured villages.

The hard-won victory had cost the Germans 96 officers and 2304 men; 3000 wounded Frenchmen were found on the scene of action, and the number of unwounded prisoners exceeded 9000.

According to theory, pursuit should invariably follow on a victory—a law recognized by all, and particularly acquiesced in by novices; and yet, in practice it is seldom observed. Military history points to few examples, such as the well-known one of La-Belle-Alliance. It requires a very strong and pitiless will to impose fresh exertions and dangers upon a body of troops who have marched, fought, and fasted for ten or twelve hours, instead of the longed-for rest and food. But given the existence of this supposed will, pursuit will yet depend on the circumstances under which the victory has been obtained. It will be diffi-

cult of execution when all the units on the field of battle, as at Königgratz, have become so intermixed that it requires hours to again reform them into tactical bodies; or when, as at St. Quentin, all, even the troops last committed to action, have become so entangled that not one single tactically complete infantry force is available. Without the support of such a body, cavalry at night will be delayed by every obstacle and every small post of the enemy, and by itself can seldom fulfil the task.

General von Goeben did not pursue the enemy till the following day. His advanced cavalry fought up to the suburbs of Cambrai and the glaciis of Landrecies, without meeting with any resistance, and they brought in merely some hundred stragglers. The infantry divisions pursued within one mile (three English) of Cambrai. Against this fortress nothing could be undertaken through want of siege material, and there was no military advantage to be derived in extending further north. Among the news to hand, it transpired that a considerable portion of the French Northern Army had retired upon Lille, Douai, and Valenciennes. As fresh enterprises were consequently not to be expected, General von Goeben brought his force back to the Somme, where towards the end of the month they entered upon their winter quarters, between Amiens and St. Quentin.

On the Lower Seine, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had entered Rouen with the Thirteenth Corps on the 25th, after having encountered on the march only a few franc-tireurs. Although General Loysel had increased his force to nearly 30,000 through the reinforcements from Cherbourg, he had remained entirely inactive.

General von Goeben had in view the transfer to the

Army of the Somme of that portion of the First Corps still before Rouen; but this was disapproved of by telegram from head-quarters, who, on political grounds, ordered its further retention there.

OPERATIONS AT THE SOUTH-EASTERN SEAT OF WAR UP TO  
17TH OF JANUARY.

*Investment of Belfort.*—At the south-eastern seat of war, the forces detailed to operate against Belfort had only been gradually brought together under cover of the Fourteenth Army Corps.

The town is surrounded by a bastioned enceinte. The citadel, standing upon high rocks, has the advantage of a great command, and for more effective fire its surrounding works are terraced. On the left bank of the Savoureuse newly erected lines of works protected the suburb and railway station. On the adjacent heights to the north-east the forts of La-Miotte and La-Justice, connected to the main work by continuous lines, enclosed a spacious intrenched camp. The two forts of Les-Perches might certainly have threatened the safety of the site, approaching the citadel as they do on the south, to within only 1000 metres, from whence the works on the left bank of the river come under the direct fire of its guns. But here two walled forts had been erected before the advent of the enemy, and besides these the adjoining woods and positions, as for instance Pérouse and Danjoutin, had been intrenched; nor was the fortress deficient in bomb-proof places. It was armed with 341 heavy guns, and provisioned for five months. As immediately after the opening of the campaign the Seventh French Corps had vacated Alsace, only about 5000 Gardes Mobiles remained behind in Belfort, whose garrison, however, increased by the National Guard, now exceeded 17,000.

The far-seeing Commandant, Colonel Denfert, exerted all his resources mainly in the occupation in force of the zone in his immediate front. The advanced detachments were every day assigned fresh operations, which the artillery of the fortress had to support at extreme ranges.

Opposed to him, General von Tresckow could, in the first place, only dispose of twenty weak Landwehr battalions, five squadrons, and six field batteries, making an aggregate of barely 15,000. At first, he had to confine himself to a mere investment. The troops intrenched themselves in the distantly radiating villages, and were called upon to repel many sorties.

Orders had been received from army head-quarters to undertake the regular investment of the fortress. To General von Mertens was entrusted the direction of the engineer duties, and to Lieutenant-Colonel Scheliha, the command of the artillery.

The difficulties of the undertaking were apparent. The rocky nature of the soil could not but increase the labor of throwing up earthworks, and the cold season was approaching. The assault could only be delivered successfully on the south of the main work—the formidable citadel. At this period only fifty heavy guns were available, and the infantry was not even strong enough to efficiently invest the place on all sides.

Under these circumstances, it was left to the discretion of General von Tresckow to attempt the possibility of reducing Belfort by mere bombardment. Towards this purpose the attack was chiefly directed on the western side, in which quarter, after the enemy's garrison had been driven out of Valdoye, the infantry occupied Essert and Bavilliers, as well as the adjacent wooded heights.

On December 2nd, seven batteries were constructed



on the plateau between these two villages, by 3000 men, under cover of two battalions. The hard-frozen ground added to the difficulties of the task; yet, notwithstanding the moonlight night, these operations would appear to have escaped the attention of the besieged. When on the following morning the sun had dispersed the fog and lit up the fortress, fire was opened upon it.

The fortress replied at first but feebly, but afterwards with increasing vigor, from the entire line of works, up to within 4000 metres of the forts of La-Miotte and La-Justice, and the losses in the trenches were considerable.

Nevertheless, four fresh batteries were constructed in advance of Bavilliers, and on the fall of La-Tuilierie the infantry pressed on until within 150 metres of the enemy's most advanced trenches.

They succeeded also in causing a conflagration within the town; but the ammunition was soon exhausted, whilst from the high citadel an effective fire was unceasingly kept up, and there were constantly renewed sorties on the part of the garrison to be repelled. It was now clear, after all previous attempts had failed, that no assault could prove successful unless systematically carried out.

Colonel von Ostrowski, to the south, had, on December 13th, carried the French positions of Adelnans and the wooded heights of Le-Bosmont and La-Brosse. To the east of the latter place two batteries, and on the northern skirt four additional batteries had been thrown up, not without great difficulty arising from thaw having bogged the soil. On January 7th fifty guns opened fire.

The superiority of the artillery of the attack was soon manifest. Fort Bellevue suffered severely, and the fire from Basses-Perches was entirely silenced.

But more important than all, the village of Danjoutin, strongly garrisoned and intrenched by the enemy, opposed all further advance. During the night of the 8th January, seven companies attacked this position on the northern side, at the same time occupying the railway embankment. With empty rifles, the Landwehr posted themselves against the hot fire of the French, and broke into the streets up to the church itself. The supports hastening from the fort were driven back at the railway embankment, but the fight went on around the buildings in the southern quarter of the village till towards noon. Of the defenders, twenty officers and 700 men were taken prisoners.

Typhus and small-pox had broken out in Belfort; but with the besieging force also the number of the sick reached a considerable figure, caused by arduous work undertaken in inclement weather.

As a rule, the battalions could only muster 500 strong, and this led General von Tresckow to devote half the number to securing the investment from without, principally on the south.

Trustworthy intelligence estimated the French strength at Besançon at 62,000. Although hitherto entirely inactive, they now evinced a strong desire to press on to the relief of the hard-pressed fortress, by the line of the Doubs.

The fortified castle of Montbéliard was held by one battalion, and armed with heavy guns. Between the Doubs and the Swiss frontier, at Delle, General Debschitz had taken up a position with eight battalions, two squadrons, and two batteries, and General von Werder concentrated the Fourteenth Corps at Noroy, Aillevans, and Athésans, to oppose in strength any movement on the part of the garrison.

From January 5th onwards there were fought before

Vesoul a series of engagements, in which the besiegers advanced from the south and west up to within a distance of one mile of that town. There could be no doubt that very considerable forces were engaged in these operations. East of the Ognon, the enemy's posts were advanced as far as Rougemont, although in lesser force. In these actions 500 were taken prisoners; and it was at once evident that besides the Eighteenth, also the Twenty-fourth and Twentieth Corps formed part of Bourbaki's army; and this circumstance suddenly threw a new light upon a totally changed phase of the war.

TRANSFER OF THE FRENCH EASTERN ARMY TO THE SOUTHEASTERN SEAT OF WAR, TOWARDS THE END OF DECEMBER.

As had been foreseen at army head-quarters at Versailles, an attempt had been made to bring about a combined action between the forces of Chanzy and Bourbaki. As we have already seen, the advance of the former (Chanzy) was met by Prince Frederick Charles, already on the Loir, and Bourbaki had prepared his advance by Montargis to the relief of Paris. But he delayed its execution until the 19th December, when the Second German Army had already returned to Orleans, from its expedition to Le-Mans. General Bourbaki then perceived the fact that the Second Army would, upon his further advance, fall on his flank, and he the more readily fell in with another plan, devised by Monsieur de Freycinet, and favored by the Dictator Gambetta.

This was for the Fifteenth Corps to remain at Bourges and to secure that place by intrenched positions at Vierzon and Nevers; the Eighteenth and Twentieth were to proceed to Beaune by railway, and,

in conjunction with Garibaldi and Crémer, 70,000 strong, to occupy Dijon. The newly-formed Twenty-fourth Corps was also to be moved by railway from Lyons to Besançon, where, in combination with the forces already there, it would attain a strength of 50,000. Co-operating then with the "victorieux de Dijon," it would be easy to raise the siege of Belfort, "même sans coup férir." It was considered that the mere presence in that place of this large force, greatly exceeding, as it did, 100,000, would preclude any attacks upon the Northern forts; in any case, there was the certainty of cutting through the enemy's various lines of communication, and later on, the prospect of a combined action with Faidherbe.

The movements by rail from the Loire to the Saône had already commenced by December 23rd. In the absence of all preparations, many interruptions in the traffic naturally occurred, and the troops suffered severely from the intense cold and from want of necessary comforts. After Chagny and Chalons-sur-Seine had been reached, and it was ascertained that the Germans had already evacuated Dijon, it was decided to again embark the troops so as to bring them nearer to Besançon, whence arose a fresh delay; and it was only in the beginning of the new year that the Eastern Army was in readiness, between Dijon and Besançon. The Fifteenth Corps was also ordered up, but it took fourteen days to get so far.

The comprehensive plan of Freycinet, and his sanguine expectations, had been favored by the circumstance that the transfer of a large contingent of the army to a distant place in the seat of war had been kept from the knowledge of the Second Army, as well as from that of the Fourteenth Corps and army headquarters, for a fortnight. Rumors and newspaper

articles had no doubt somewhat before this given intimations, but General von Werder's telegram of the 5th January was the first really authentic announcement, by which it was known beyond doubt that the Germans now stood face to face with a changed aspect of the situation. In Versailles, arrangements were at once made and steps taken for the formation of a new Southern Army.

There was available for this purpose the Second Corps at Auxerre, under General von Zastrow, which during this period of uncertainty had constantly operated between the Saône and Yonne, according as the one or the other appeared to be threatened. The supreme command of these two corps, to which was afterwards added the Fourteenth, was entrusted to General von Manteuffel. General von Werder could not be immediately reinforced, and for a time the Fourteenth Corps was thrown upon its own resources.

Notwithstanding their advantage, the French did more manœuvring than fighting. General Bourbaki aimed at surrounding the left wing of the Fourteenth Corps, and thus entirely cutting it off from Belfort.

On 5th January the Eighteenth Corps had advanced by Grandvelle, and the Twentieth by Echenoz-le-Sec, on Vesoul; but, as we have seen, they had there met with opposition, and as the corps diverging to the right to Esprels heard that Villersexel was occupied by the Germans, the Commander determined upon a still more easterly and circuitous route. On the 8th the two corps of the left wing marched off to the right, the Eighteenth to Montbozon, the Twentieth to Rougemont; the Twenty-fourth went back on Cuse. At the same time General Crémer received orders to move from Dijon on Vesoul. On the 9th, therefore, the Twenty-fourth and Twentieth Corps lay near Ville-

chevreux and Villargent on the Arcey-Villersexel road, whilst the head of the Eighteenth Corps reached that latter place and Esprels.

General von Werder had no alternative but to follow this flank movement in all haste. He ordered the Baden Division to Athésans, the 4th Reserve Division to Aillevans, and von der Goltz's brigade to Noroy-le-Bourg. The trains were marched on Lure.

#### ACTION OF VILLERSEXEL.

(January 9th.)

On January 9th, at seven in the morning, the Reserve Division was sent from Noroy on to Aillevans, and commenced bridging the Ognon, to admit of the continuation of the march. A flanking part of the 25th Regiment, sent to operate on the right, was fired on at Villersexel, and the attempt to carry the stone bridge at that place failed shortly after. The French had occupied, with two and a half battalions, the town, situated on a height, on the further bank of the river. Shortly afterwards reinforcements came up on the German side. Two batteries opened fire upon the place and upon the still advancing enemy. The 25th Regiment crossed the river and broke into the walled-in park and into the castle. At one o'clock the French were driven out of the town, with the loss of many prisoners, and a cessation of hostilities ensued.

The Prussian contingent had been seriously threatened in flank by the advance from Esprels of the 1st Division and the reserve artillery of the French Eighteenth Corps. General von der Goltz, however, opposed them by occupying the village of Moimay.

He also sent to Villersexel nine companies of the 30th Regiment, to the relief of the 25th Regiment, so

as to allow the latter to rejoin its own division in the forward march. His combined brigade was eventually to form the rear-guard to the entire column.

General von Werder, who observed the considerable force in which the French moved on Villersexel from the south, had concluded that there was less to be gained by forcing his own passage across the Ognon than by opposing that of the French, who saw in it facilities for a nearer approach to Belfort. He therefore recalled the infantry already issuing from the southern quarter of the town, and sent it with the batteries to the northern side of the river. Here the main body of the 4th Reserve Division took up a defensive position, and the Baden Division was stopped in its march at Arpenans and Lure, to come to the reinforcement it now stood greatly in need of.

It was already evening when large columns of the French advanced on Villersexel and shelled the town with their artillery.

Favored by the darkness, the French found their way into the park and castle, from which the German garrison had already been withdrawn; and as the general condition of things did not seem to necessitate the occupation of Villersexel, the commanding officer ordered the evacuation of the place. Though hard pressed by the enemy, this move had been nearly completed, when orders arrived from General von Werder to hold the town.

At once four battalions from the Reserve Division advanced to the renewed attack. The 25th Regiment turned about at the bridge over the Ognon and joined them. The Landwehr rushed into the lower floor of the large castle, but the French defended the upper floors and the cellar. On the stairs and in the passages of the already burning buildings there ensued a hot

and changeful combat, and the fight was maintained in the streets. Not till the General in command was left to his own free will, and ordered a cessation, were dispositions made at one o'clock in the morning for gradual retirement, which was completed by three. The Reserve Division then recrossed the bridge at Aillevans, and occupied St. Sulpice on its right.

General von der Goltz had contested Moimay until evening.

Of the Fourteenth Corps only 15,000 had been engaged, of whom 26 officers and 553 men were killed. The French losses included 27 officers and 627 men; but they left behind in the hands of the Germans 700 unwounded prisoners. Those who chiefly took part in these operations were the Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps; the Twenty-fourth Corps, on account of the fighting behind it, had discontinued its march from Arcey to Sevenans. Detachments of the gradually incoming Fifteenth Corps moved from the south in the direction of Belfort.

On the morning of 10th January, General von Werder massed his corps in the vicinity of Aillevans, ready to engage the enemy should the latter attempt an advance on Villersexel. But an attack was not made, and thus the march was resumed that same morning. As a matter of fact, the French in three corps were as near to Belfort as the Germans were with three divisions. To cover the retreat, the Reserve Division took up a position at Athésans, and on the following day all the commands had reached and occupied the Lisaine line. On the right, by Frahier and Chalonvillars, stood the Baden Division; in the centre, the Reserve Brigade, between Chagey and Couthenans; on the left, the Reserve Division, at Héricourt and Tavey. On the south, General von Debschitz watched from Delle, and Colonel



von Bredow from Arcey; and to the west, at Lure, was Colonel von Willisen, with the detachment from Vesoul of eight companies, thirteen squadrons, two batteries.

It would, in fact, have been possible to pass between the enemy and Belfort.

The French leader had, under the intoxicating impression of a victory, resigned himself to inactivity. "Le Général Billot," he reported to the Government at Bordeaux, "a occupé Esprels et s'y est maintenu." We know that he was never attacked there at all, and that he did not succeed in driving away General von der Goltz from the vicinity of Moimay. "Le Général Clinchant a enlevé avec un entrain remarquable Villersexel;" but the fight of the 9th was, as regards the Germans, maintained with only a portion of the Fourteenth Corps, to secure the right flank in the march of the main body. Whilst, then, these moves were zealously continued, the French army remained stationary for two days, ready for action and with the confident expectation that the enemy, described as beaten, would return to the attack.

Only on the 13th did the Twenty-fourth Corps advance on Arcey, the Twentieth on Saulnot, and the Eighteenth follow up to Sevenans. The Fifteenth was to support an attack on Arcey by Ste. Marie.

General von Werder had utilized this interval, and preceded the troops to test the possibility of taking up a position on the Lisaine, and to take counsel with General von Tresekow.

An inspection showed that at Frahier the Lisaine becomes an unimportant streamlet, flowing through a broad grassy hollow, and thence to Chagey through steep wooded slopes. At Héricourt the valley opens out into a wide plain, which is, however, commanded

by the rocky heights of Mont-Vaudois. Lower down the wooded heights follow the river as far as Montbéliard, which forms a strong base where the line closes by the Allaine.

The wooded nature of the plain, west of the Lisaine, would necessarily increase the assailant's difficulties in deploying large masses, and with a long artillery column. It is true that during the prevailing severe cold the river was everywhere frozen over; but only two high-roads ran in the direction by which the French army in the valley were marching down the stream on Montbéliard and on Héricourt. The other ways down were narrow, hollow roads, rendered difficult by frost.

General von Tresekow had already occupied the most important position with siege-guns, the Castle of Montbéliard with six, and the neighboring height of La-Grange-Dame with five heavy guns. Seven of them were placed on Mont-Vaudois and near Héricourt; besides these, twenty-one others commanded the valley of the Allaine as far as Delle, on the south.

All the troops that could be spared from the investing force were withdrawn from before Belfort. Still there remained the important consideration that the available forces might not suffice to entirely cover the whole of the Lisaine line. The right wing was the locally weakest portion of the whole position, but here there was the least danger of the enemy's main attack, for the many needs of the numerous but inadequately equipped French army made the nearest possible vicinity of one of the railroads a necessity. The Vesoul line, over Lure, was broken in many places, and the Besançon line led to the strong left wing. The country north of Chagey might therefore be held by weaker forces, and a reserve was formed out of the largest part

of the Baden Division, which was distributed in rear of centre and left between Mandrevillars, Brévilliers, and Charmont.

The respite accorded by the enemy was turned to account with the utmost eagerness for the digging of rifle-pits, the building of batteries, the restoring of telegraph and relay lines, the improvement of roads, and the providing of victuals and ammunition.

(January 13th.) On the morning of the 13th the posting of the 3rd Reserve Division was begun at Areey, Ste. Marie, and Gonvillars. They were instructed to withdraw before a superior force, but to hold their own long enough to entail the deployment of the French columns. The duel with the widely dispersed French artillery was therefore prolonged for some time; then, after a three hours' obstinate resistance, a new position was taken up behind the stream of the Rupt, and the retreat on Tavey delayed until four in the afternoon. The advanced guard of General von der Goltz, after a whole brigade had deployed against it, also took up a position on the same level, at Couthenans.

Along the Allaine line the French had not succeeded in driving General von Debschitz's detachment south of Dasle and Croix.

(January 14th.) On the 14th, General von Willisen, with fifty dismounted dragoons, drove back the enemy who were advancing on Lure, and then retired with his detachment on Ronchamp.

The French army did not, even on that day, undertake a serious attack. It lay massed with the Fifteenth, Twenty-fourth, and Twentieth Corps, and hardly a mile (German) from the German left and centre. The right was supposed by General Bourbaki to rest upon Mont-Vaudois. His plan was to cross the Lisaine

above this place in force, and to facilitate the front attack by surrounding the enemy. The Eighteenth Army Corps and the division under Crémer were told off for this purpose. The drawback to this judicious arrangement was that the two above-mentioned detachments, destined by the officer in supreme command to open the fight on the 14th, had to advance by the longest line of march. On this day the leading troops of the Eighteenth Army Corps barely succeeded in reaching Lomont, by difficult hill and woodland passes, and the Crémer brigade had only then begun to advance from Vesoul. A postponement to the 15th was thereupon determined.

On the German side, a general attack of the superior enemy was hourly expected, and General von Werder felt himself bound to telegraph the extreme seriousness of his position to Versailles. The rivers, being frozen, were passable, and the duty of covering Belfort curtailed the liberty of his movements and endangered the existence of his corps. He earnestly prayed that a decision might be arrived at as to whether Belfort was still to be held.

At the army head-quarters it was considered that any further withdrawal of the Fifteenth Army Corps would have the immediate effect of raising the siege and causing the loss of the considerable matériel which had been provided for it; that it was impossible to foresee where such a line of action would end; and that it could but delay the co-operation of the army advancing by forced marches under General von Manteuffel. At three o'clock P.M. on the 15th of January a positive order was conveyed to General von Werder to accept battle in front of Belfort. He was, as was only fair, relieved of the moral responsibility of the consequences of a possibly disastrous issue.

But before this order could reach him, the General had already decided on its execution.

## BATTLE OF THE LISAINE.

(January 15th to 17th.)

(January 15th.) On the morning of the 15th of January, the French Fifteenth Army Corps, with two divisions augmented by artillery, advanced on Montbéliard, a third followed in reserve. The East-Prussian Landwehr battalions, which had pushed forward as far as the farm of Mont-Chevis and Ste. Suzanne, held their position for a long time, advanced to the attack of their own accord, and drove the heads of the enemy's columns back upon the stream of the Rupt. But when the latter, during the afternoon, posted themselves in force along the edge of the wood, they were at two o'clock ordered back to the left bank of the Lisaine. The neighboring town of Montbéliard, entirely commanded by the surrounding heights, was voluntarily evacuated, and the fortified castle alone held. But east of Montbéliard General von Glümer with the 1st Baden Brigade took up a position, and had four field-batteries besides siege-guns brought up to the plateau of La-Grange-Dame.

Towards the close of the day the French, after continuous but ineffectual bombardments from eight batteries, took possession of the town, but did not make any further advance.

Neither had they succeeded in crossing the Lisaine at Béthoncourt. An officer and sixty men, who sought cover within a walled cemetery from the sharp fire of the defenders, were taken prisoners.

Further to the north the French Twenty-fourth Corps continued to advance, but it was two o'clock be-

fore their columns succeeded in deploying out of the wood. Four battalions did, indeed, succeed in entering and occupying the village of Bussurel, situated on the western bank of the Lisaine, but their further advance was frustrated by the fire of the defenders posted behind the railway embankment and by that of the Baden battalions and batteries drawn from the main reserve.

Héricourt, but one mile from Belfort, on the great high-road of Besançon, became a place of importance in the German line. Here the enemy on the hither side of the Lisaine was met by the right wing of the 4th Reserve Division.

The little wooded height of Mougnot, which forms a sort of bridge-head at the narrow gorge through which the road passes, had been fortified by abatis, batteries, and rifle-pits, the town in the rear prepared for defence, and the base of the heights on either side studded with artillery. Four East-Prussian Landwehr battalions were joined on the right by the Reserve Brigade, which held the slopes of Mont-Vaudois as far as Luze.

At about ten o'clock the French artillery deployed on the open heights close to the line of approach in the neighborhood of Trémoins. Upon their infantry advancing on the left over Byans, the detachment which till then had been left at Tavey went back to Héricourt in reserve, and the enemy's first attack on Mougnot was repulsed by the garrison and by the fire of sixty-one guns on the further bank of the river. The attempt was not repeated on that day, and the French confined themselves to a sharp but ineffectual cannonade.

According to the instructions left behind by General Bourbaki, the French were to await the result of the

great encircling movement which was to be carried out by General Billot with the Eighteenth and by the Crémer divisions. As, however, these latter had not yet put in an appearance, the main reserve had to be brought forward left of Coisevaux to secure General Clinchant's flank.

The orders from head-quarters had only reached the Eighteenth Corps at midnight. The latter had, moreover, to effect a heavy march over deeply snowed-up woodland paths. This entailed intercommunications, not only between the wing-columns of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, but even with the division under Crémer at Lyoffans. This division had, by dint of the greatest exertion, reached Lure during the night, and could not get beyond Béverne until nine in the morning. A fresh delay was occasioned by the order to bring up in front of the infantry the artillery (even the reserve artillery, which brought up the rear), and thus it happened that the Eighteenth Corps did not succeed in deploying two of its divisions against Luze and Chagey till between 12 and 2 P.M.

The 1st Division occupied Couthenans with one battalion, and brought up five batteries on the decline behind the heights to the north of that place.

But the fire from the bank on the other side of the river prevented their further ascent, and after the lapse of a short time several of these detachments had but two guns left fit for action, although the Germans, with regard to the difficulty of procuring fresh ammunition, had used it as sparingly as possible. At three o'clock there was a pause in the firing, which was resumed on the arrival of reinforcements, when the artillery of the Twenty-fourth Corps took part in it. An infantry attack on a larger scale was not yet attempted.

There was scarcely more purpose in the movement of the 3rd Division against Chagey, which was only occupied by a Baden battalion; yet it was here that the enveloping movement of the German right wing by way of Mont-Vaudois was to take place. The wood adjoining the first houses of the village and its steepness was the only difficulty attached to the descent of the hill. Two French battalions suddenly appeared from the gorge that lay south of it and drove in the Baden outposts; the further attack was to be supported from Couthenans on the south, but the infantry advancing from thence found itself forced to turn back by the fire from the opposite bank. Only after a renewed effort did the Zouaves succeed in entering Chagey, where a hard fight began amid the houses. Meanwhile two Baden battalions arrived, who, at five o'clock, drove the enemy out of the villages back into the wood. Fresh reinforcements hastened to their support from the reserve near at hand, the short winter's day was over, and during the night the French attempted nothing further. The 2nd Division of the French corps had only arrived as far as Béverne, the cavalry had not moved from Lyoffans.

The Crémer division had, despite its late arrival at Lure, continued the march in the early morning. After the above-mentioned halts and intercommunications the 9th Brigade advanced on Etobon, and there at noon an engagement took place with a detachment of General von Degenfeld. When the 2nd Brigade came up, the first moved forward through the Wood of Thure, to cross the Lisaine above Chagey. The roads had first of all to be partly made practicable by pioneers, which occasioned considerable delay. The 2nd Brigade then followed in the dark, leaving a reconnoitring party behind at Etobon. A fresh collision



with some Baden contingents determined General Crémer to extinguish all the watch-fires. His troops remained under arms throughout the hard winter night.

On the German side, all who were not told off for guard found shelter in the neighboring villages, only the pioneers were kept at work with their pickaxes. The actions had cost both sides about 600 men, without bringing about any decisive result; but every day was a gain to the defenders.

General von Werder, on the heights north of Héricourt, had received constant reports as to the issue from the head-quarter Staff officers, who had been posted in various places, by which the reinforcements from the reserves could be regulated. Still the reserve ammunition was a cause of anxiety, as a transport announced from Baden had not yet arrived.

General Bourbaki informed his Government that he had taken Montbéliard (of course without the castle), occupied the villages on the west bank of the Lisaine, and that he would attack on the 16th. He had learned from General Billot that the German right wing extended far across Mont-Vaudois, whence he gathered that they had been considerably reinforced; he estimated the enemy at 80,000 to 100,000 men. Meanwhile he looked forward to obtaining good results by extending the encircling movement further to the west.

(January 16th.) At half-past six on the morning of the 16th the Germans once more got under arms in the same positions as the previous day.

The French began the attack with their right wing again. From the loop-holed houses they fired on the Landwehr company stationed at the castle of Montbéliard, causing some loss among the latter as well as among the working gunners. The summons to surrender was disregarded, and the fire of the fort artillery

used to such good purpose against two batteries that had just appeared on the neighboring height, that these were obliged to retire, leaving behind them two guns. Neither could they advance from a new position they had taken up at the farm of Mont-Chevis, where they were reinforced by three batteries, for the fire from La-Grange-Dame, although they continued the cannonade until dark. No attempt was made from Mont-béliard to break the German line.

Further to the left the reinforced 1st Division of the French Fifteenth Corps advanced on Béthoncourt. At one o'clock the fire of their artillery from Mont-Chevis and Byans obliged a Baden battery to limber up, and it was then brought to bear on the village. Meanwhile large bodies had been massed in the neighboring forest, and at three o'clock advanced out of it. General Glümer had already sent reinforcements to the threatened spot. Two determined attempts to carry the place by rushes close up to the position were frustrated by the annihilating artillery and rifle fire of the defenders. A third attack with a whole brigade, at four o'clock, was not even permitted to approach. The losses on the French side were considerable, the snowy field was strewn with the slain. Some unwounded prisoners were also taken.

One division of the Twenty-fourth French Army Corps had taken up a covered position in the woods behind Byans, and as they had already occupied Bus-surel on the previous day, the German line of defence in the rear of the railway embankment appeared to be threatened from the immediate vicinity. The General in command therefore sent General Keller, with two Baden fusilier battalions and one heavy battery, from Brévilliers in this direction. The latter joined the two battalions who had been engaged on the slope of the

hill since morning. The fire from five of the enemy's batteries was soon silenced by the unerring grenades of the German guns. At noon the French artillery retired from Byans, leaving here also two guns, which could only be brought away later. The infantry, one division strong, had only threatened to break the line, without proceeding to carry it out.

The Twentieth Corps brought up two divisions against the Héricourt—Luze line. A thick fog covered the valley, and the early cannonade was at first scarcely answered by the Germans. To obtain some insight into the plans of the enemy, two companies of the former had advanced on the height west of St. Valbert, surprising the opponents who were advancing from Byans with so rapid a fire that they turned back. But soon after, at half-past nine, several battalions from Tavey attempted to carry the Mougnot. Two attacks were frustrated by the steady resistance of the Landwehr battalions, and a third attempt directed against the southern defile of Héricourt had no result. About four o'clock the infantry again massed against the Mougnot, but renouncing further attacks under the fire from Mont Salamou confined themselves till evening to an ineffectual cannonade.

At Chagey two divisions of the Eighteenth Corps found themselves face to face with the Germans. They did not attempt anything.

The slackness with which, on the 16th January, the action against the whole front from Montbéliard to Chagey was conducted, points to the conclusion that the French were everywhere awaiting the issue of the plan of encircling the German right wing.

This task now devolved on General Crémer. The 2nd Division of the Eighteenth Corps joined him at Etobon.

Two divisions advanced thence on Chenebier, where General von Degenfeld was with two battalions, two batteries, and one squadron. There could be no doubt as to the result. At eleven o'clock the Penhoat division of the Eighteenth Corps advanced from the west to encircle northwards, and Cr mer's division, for the purpose of barring the defenders' retreat on Belfort, advanced from the south, the wood of La-Thure covering his approach. The batteries of both divisions were brought up on its northern edge, where they opened fire. After firing had continued for two hours, the masses of infantry advanced from three sides. Under General Cr mer's personal guidance the Baden fusiliers were driven from the south to the north of the village, and as here the surrounding movement through the wood of Montedin had become practicable, General von Degenfeld was, after an obstinate resistance, obliged to begin the retreat in a northerly direction through Frahier. Thence he again turned south-east and took up a position in front of Chal nvillars, on the high-standing mill of Rougeot, where, at six o'clock, he was joined by Colonel Bayer with strong reinforcements. The French did not pursue; the Cr mer division, which had lost 1000 men, retired, on the contrary, on the wood of La-Thure, while the Penhoat division confined itself to the occupation of Chenebier.

Accordingly the German line of defence was not broken on this day; still, its extreme right wing had been driven back to within three-quarters of a mile of Belfort.

The fortress celebrated the victory of French arms by a *feu-de-joie*, but made no serious attack on the investing forces, already weakened by the dispatch of reinforcements, who, however, on their side, quietly continued the construction of batteries.

General von Werder, desirous above all of setting the scene of action back to his right wing, could only hold in reserve four battalions, four squadrons, and two batteries, bringing up these from the least exposed places, and even from Belfort, to Brévilliers and Mandrevillars. At eight o'clock in the evening General Keller was ordered to retake Chenebier. To this end he left Mandrevillars with two Baden battalions, reached Moulin-Rougeot at midnight, and found Frahier already occupied by Colonel Bayer.

(January 17th.) On the morning of the 17th, eight battalions, two squadrons, and four batteries had assembled there. Three of these detachments advanced on the northern, three on the southern part of Chenebier; the others remained in reserve at the mill, where also three 15-pounders had been set up.

At half-past 4 A.M. the first column, advancing in breathless silence, surprised an outpost of the enemy at Echevanne, but it was unavoidable that the rifle fire at Chenebier should draw the attention of the French to the danger by which they were menaced. Even north of the place, in the wood, the Germans met with serious resistance; and the danger that in the darkness and the dense undergrowth their troops might fall on each other obliged them to withdraw them to the outer edge of the wood.

The other column, advancing through the valley of the Lisaine, had advanced at the double as soon as the first shots were heard. The 2nd Battalion of the 4th Baden Regiment rushed with cheers into the southern part of Chenebier, where a wild fight ensued. But daybreak showed that the heights on the west of the village were strongly occupied, and that columns of all arms were approaching from Etobon. At 8.30 Colonel Payen was compelled to retire from the half-

conquered village, and take up a position at the wood of Féry, to cover the road to Belfort through Chalonvillars; he took with him 400 prisoners.

At the same time the right column, strengthened by a battalion of the reserve, had renewed the attack on the wood, and in a battle which lasted for two hours, with heavy losses on both sides, at last took possession of it. But the attempt to get into the barricaded and strongly-defended village was vain.

A destructive fire met every attack; one single round of mitrailleuse, for instance, killed twenty-one of the assailants. At three o'clock in the afternoon General Keller therefore collected his troops at Frahier, where they were supported by four batteries.

With such inferior strength, and after failing in this attempt, it was useless to think of driving the enemy beyond Chenebier; the only thing to do was to hinder his further advance on Belfort. The end was fully achieved; the French did not pursue. Instead of outflanking the German right, they seemed chiefly concerned for their own left. They defended Chenebier stoutly, but gave up all further offensive movements.

In the expectation of such an attack succeeding, General Bourbaki's plan seems to have been to engage the enemy in front only, and so detain him. Even during that night the Germans were alarmed at Béthoncourt and before Héricourt, while they, on their part, disturbed the French at Bussurel and in the wood of La-Thure. The infantry fire went on for hours, and numerous detachments had to spend the cold winter's night under arms. In the morning two divisions of the Eighteenth Corps (French) advanced on Chagey and Luze, supported by the Army Reserve artillery, but they could not come up with the Germans, so several repeated attacks on those places were

without result. Firing went on incessantly from one o'clock. In front of Héricourt there was a mutual shelling, and Bussurel, held by the French, was in flames.

To drive the French out of Montbéliard, the town was fired on from La-Grange-Dame and from the château till the inhabitants begged that it might be spared, declaring that the position was abandoned, which subsequently proved to be false. Ten battalions of the French Fifteenth Corps advanced from the woods in the forenoon, and tried to push on past Montbéliard, but suffered severely from the flanking fire of the heavy guns at La-Grange-Dame; only a few got into the valley of the Lisaine. The western road from Montbéliard, and the hills immediately in front of it, remained in the hands of the French, but the attack ceased at about two in the afternoon.

Further to the south, General von Debschitz's posts in front of Allaine had easily checked the advance of the French detachments.

The Germans were now convinced that no further attack would be attempted.

The condition of the French troops, not yet inured to war, was, in fact, serious. They had been obliged to bivouac in bitter weather, sometimes under arms, and for the most part without food. Their losses were enormous, and the superior officers who were invited to meet the Generals at three in the afternoon, in the neighborhood of Chagey, expressed their objections to a yet more extensive movement to the left, since supplies would be impossible, and there would be danger of the Germans cutting off the communications from the side of Montbéliard. On this came the news that the heads of General von Manteuffel's corps had already reached Fontaine-Française, and was near to Gray.

Under these circumstances General Bourbaki thought he must decide on a retreat. He telegraphed to the Government that by the advice of his Generals, and to his deep regret, he had been compelled to take up a position further in the rear, and only hoped that the enemy might follow him. Hence this experienced General can have felt no doubt that his army, after failing in the attack on the Lisaine, could only escape a very critical position by a steady retreat.

(January 18th.) On the morning of the 18th the Germans were in the positions they had secured the day before, and under arms, the French in full force along the whole front. It was a significant fact that they were busily employed on the construction of earthworks. They had evacuated Montbéliard the evening before, and now held the country to the west of the town strongly manned and fortified.

During this day nothing occurred but a shelling and small skirmishes. General Keller had come up on the right German wing with reinforcements, and as the enemy retired to Etobon in the afternoon he was able to re-occupy Chenebier. Further north, Colonel von Willisen again marched on Ronchamp. Coutenans was taken possession of in the centre, and the enemy driven out of Byans by artillery fire; but, on the other hand, the Germans could not yet penetrate the woods. On the southern bank of the Allaine General von Debschitz's detachment drove the enemy back beyond the line of Exincourt—Croix.

In the three days' fighting on the Lisaine the Germans had lost 1200, the French from 4000 to 5000 men.

In spite of many detachments having to be drafted off, and of the threatening attitude of the enemy, the siege-works were uninterruptedly carried on outside



Belfort, and as soon as the investing forces were again reinforced General von Werder followed the retiring French to Etobon, Saulnot, and Arcey.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS.

(January, 1871.)

In the place of the Second Corps, now engaged with the Army of the South, the First Bavarian Corps had come up, of which Gambetta had said, "Les Bavaoisis n'existent plus." It had made such good use of its time of rest south of Longjumeau that by the beginning of the New Year it was already 17,500 strong, with 108 guns. It was drawn up between the Sixth Prussian Corps and the Würtemberg Division on both banks of the Seine. The Würtembergers extended from Ormesson to the Marne, and between that river and the Sausset were the Saxons, so as to diminish the front of the Guards' Corps now that the Morée was frozen over and afforded no protection.

The observation of such a huge stronghold made great demands on the endurance of the troops.

By extending their works more and more outside Villejuif and Bruyères, the French threatened to outflank the Second Bavarian Corps. To avert such an attack the Sixth was obliged to keep a strong detachment constantly in readiness at L'Hay.

The supports on the south could not in any way be protected against the fire of the heavy fortress guns, nor the outposts against that of the Chassepôts. They consequently could often not be relieved for several days, and the relief was usually effected at night. The less the success of the French arms in the open field, the more lavish were they in the expenditure of ammunition from their works.

Mont-Valérien hurled its giant shells to a distance of from seven to eight kilometres (from four to five miles English), but this perpetual cannonade, to whose din the ear was soon accustomed, did little damage.

*The Artillery Attack on the Southern Front.*—Till Mont-Avron was carried, the Germans had only been able to bring field-guns to bear against the French fortress artillery. But early in January their preparations had at last got so far forward that seventeen batteries, which had long been completed, could be armed with heavy guns against the southern front. A battery stood apart on the left wing in the park of St. Cloud, to the north of Sèvres; four more, close together, on the steep slope of the hill to the west of Meudon; five crowned the plateau of Moulin-de-la-Tour, where the mill, serving to guide the aim of the French, had been blown up. Four more batteries were constructed in a lower position between Fontenay and Bagneux. Two, between Chevilly and La-Rue, protected the German troops against a flank movement from Villejuif, with the field artillery of the Second Bavarian and Sixth Corps. Covered ways were prepared, and intermediate depôts were supplied with ammunition from the great magazines at Villacoublay.

Colonels von Rieff and von Rammè conducted the artillery attack under General von Kameke and General Prince Hohenlohe; General Schulz directed the engineering works. The men served twenty-four hours in the batteries, and then took two days' rest. The officers had but one day's rest.

The heavy guns were brought into position behind masked batteries on January 3rd by daylight, without any interference; in all the others by night, after the outposts had been driven in. Thus, on the morning of the 4th, 98 guns were ready to open fire: 28 on Issy,

28 on Vanves, and 18 on Montrouge; 10 against the emplacements between the first two forts. But a thick fog hid every object, and it was not till January 5th, at 8.30 in the morning, that the signal was given for opening fire.

The enemy replied at once. There were in Fort Valérien 106 guns, in Issy 90, in Vanves 84, and in Montrouge 52; there were about 70 in the sectors of the ramparts which came under fire and at Villejuif, 16-cm. guns for the most part; so the attack at first was under great difficulties. But when, at about noon, all the batteries had opened fire, the situation gradually improved, and the greater accuracy of the German aim began to tell. Issy was almost silenced by two o'clock, nine guns were destroyed in Vanves and had lost thirty gunners; only Montrouge still replied with any vigor. The artillery from the ramparts now opened fire, but the forts never again got the best of it. Some gunboats coming up by Point-du-Jour very soon had to retire.

The field-guns of the Second Bavarian and Sixth Corps were also so effective that no attack was attempted from the works at Villejuif, nor was a shot fired on the batteries at Bagneux. A number of parapet guns and the long-range Chassepôts looted from the French did such good service that the enemy were driven further and further in. The German outposts took possession of the trenches of Clamart, and in the course of the night turned their front towards the forts.

Only a few 15-cm. shells were thrown into the city as a serious announcement; the first thing to be done was to batter down the outworks, and for some few days all the firing was directed on them. The most serious counter-attack was from Montrouge and from

a mortar-battery in a very advantageous position behind the high railway embankment to the east of Issy; next, from the south front of the ramparts, almost a mile (German) long in a straight line. Foggy weather on some days necessitated a suspension or entire cessation of firing. But meanwhile the German advanced lines were from 750 to 450 metres nearer to the fortifications. New batteries were constructed further forward, and armed with thirty-six guns out of those left in the rear.

(January 10th.) The French garrison were all this time very active. On January 10th they succeeded in the dark hours in carrying the weakly-occupied position at Clamart. They placed three battalions in the place, and dug a shelter-trench of 1200 metres towards Châtillon.

(January 13th.) The Second Army of Paris was still encamped outside the town to the east and north, from Nogent to Aubervilliers. After some small alarms, on the evening of the 13th some strong detachments advanced, under cover of a hot fire from the forts from Courneuve and Drancy on Le-Bourget. But the troops in occupation were on the alert, and being reinforced at once by several companies, repulsed the repeated attempts of the French to storm it till two o'clock in the morning.

(January 14th.) On this day the French renewed the attempt on Clamart with 500 marine infantry and several battalions of the National Guard. When these last had assembled at the railway station near, with a great deal of noise, their advance was reported soon after midnight. The fight lasted about an hour, and ended with the retreat, or flight, of the attacking party. Patrols pursued them close up to the trenches of Issy.

The distance was so great that the fire from the ramparts had not yet perceptibly moderated. Battery No. 1, isolated in the park of St. Cloud, suffered most, being shelled by two batteries, from Point-du-Jour and from Mont-Valérien. The steep slope behind the battery made it easy for the enemy to take aim. The breastwork was repeatedly breached, and it was only the most zealous devotion which enabled the struggle to be continued at this point. The French also poured a heavy fire into batteries Nos. 19 and 21, pushed forward into a particularly dangerous position under Fort Vanves. The fire from the ramparts, coming from a long range to the breastwork, was plunging and breaking through the platforms, and a great many gunners were wounded or killed. The powder magazine blew up in two of the batteries, wounding both the officers in command, besides several other superior officers.

To the east of Paris, the fifty-eight German guns placed there after the reduction of Mont-Avron were opposed to 151 of the French. The Germans, nevertheless, soon proved their superiority; the forts only occasionally opened fire; the French withdrew their outposts to the works, and altogether vacated the peninsula of St. Maur. By degrees the heavy siege-guns could be removed from hence to the banks of the Morée.

The forts to the south had meanwhile suffered severely. The ruin at Issy was visible to the naked eye; fire broke out repeatedly, and the powder magazine had to be cleared out at great risk in the night of January 16th. Fort Vanves had lost seventy men; it opened fire usually every morning, but soon became silent. Montrouge, on the contrary, on some days fired as many as 500 rounds from eighteen guns. But

here, too, the casemates no longer afforded any shelter, and one of the bastions was a heap of ruins.

In spite of the steady fire from the ramparts, part even of Paris was distressed by the 15-cm. shells. An elevation of 30 degrees, through a peculiar contrivance, sent the shot into the heart of the city. From 300 to 400 shells were fired daily.

Under the pressure of public opinion the Government, after repeated deliberations, decided on another great enterprise, to be directed this time against the German batteries at Châtillon. The assembled Generals agreed, indeed, that such sorties could promise no results without the co-operation of an army outside; but, on the 8th, Gambetta had announced the "victory" of the Army of the North at Bapaume, and had promised that both the Armies of the Loire should advance. Hereupon General Trochu advised that they should at least await the moment when the investing army should be weakened by detailing further detachments; but he was opposed by the other members of the Government, especially by Monsieur Jules Favre. He explained that the Maires of Paris were indignant at the bombardment, that the representatives of the city must be allowed some insight into the military situation, and, above all, that negotiations ought long since to have been entered into.

Finally, on January 15th, it was determined that the German lines should be broken through at Montretout, Garches, and Buzanval.

While confusion and dissensions thus prevailed in Paris, the unity of the German nation was proclaimed at Versailles under the Emperor William.

## BATTLE OF MONT-VALÉRIEN.

(January 19th.)

The sortie was to be effected on January 19th. On that day, as we have seen, General Faidherbe marched on St. Quentin, on the way to Paris, and the army which was to make the sortie was standing on the eastern and northern fronts of the capital. The attempt to break through was, however, made on the opposite side. In fact, the peninsula of Gennevilliers was the only ground on which large masses of troops could be deployed without being exposed for hours, while they were being assembled, to the fire of the German artillery.

Two days previously the mobilized National Guard had relieved the divisions told off for the sortie, from the positions they held; 90,000 men in three columns were to attack at the same time. General Vinoy on the left, supported by the fire from the rampart, was to carry the height of Montretout; General Bellemare in the centre was to advance on Garches; General Ducrot on the right, on the Château of Buzanval.

The attack was to begin at six in the morning, but blocks occurred at the bridges of Asnières and Neuilly, as no explicit orders had been issued for crossing them. When, at seven o'clock, the signal to advance was made by gun-fire from Mont-Valérien, only the head of General Vinoy's force was formed up, the other columns had not yet deployed, and the last detachments tailed back as far as Courbevoix. Before they had reached the rendezvous the left wing was already marching fifteen battalions on St. Cloud.

These at first met only isolated posts and patrols, eighty-nine men in all, who rushed into the gorge of

the work of Montretout, and there made a stand for some time; they then fought their way out with great bravery, but some of them were taken prisoners. There, and on the north of St. Cloud, the French at once prepared for defence.

The centre column, under General Bellemare, also took possession without difficulty of the hill of Maison-du-Curé.

Not till now, nearly nine o'clock, did the first supports of the German outposts appear on the scene. Till within a short time the patrols had been able to report nothing but thick fog; but reports from the right and left wings announced that a serious attack was threatened on the whole front from St. Cloud to Bougival. The Fourth Corps were called out, and General von Kirchbach joined the 9th Division. To the German right, in the park of St. Cloud, stood the 17th Brigade, to the left, behind the Porte-de-Longboyau, the 20th; the other troops of the corps advanced from their quarters at Versailles and the villages to the north of it on Jardy and Beauregard. The Crown Prince ordered six battalions of the Landwehr Guard and a Bavarian brigade on Versailles, and himself rode to the Hospice of Brezin; the King went to Marly.

The French meanwhile had seized the foremost houses at Garches, and made their way here and there through the breaches in the east wall into the park of the Château of Buzanval. The 5th Jäger Battalion, supported by single companies of the 58th and 59th Regiments, drove the enemy back on Garches, occupied the cemetery on the north, and still reached the advanced posts at La-Bergerie in good time. The other divisions under General von Bothmer carried on a persistent fight, by order from head-quarters, on the skirts of the park of St. Cloud, merely to gain time.



By half-past nine they had repulsed an attack by Belle-mare's column, stopped the advance of the French up the Rue-Impériale of St. Cloud, and even returned the attack from the Grille-d'Orléans and the Porte-Jaune. It was in vain that five French battalions tried to storm La-Bergerie. A squad of engineers had tried with great self-sacrifice to demolish the wall which surrounded the enclosure, but the dynamite was frozen and would not explode, and the Jägers held the position steadfastly throughout the day.

The attacks of the French had hitherto been attempted with no help from their artillery. That of General Vinoy had been seriously delayed by running into the centre column, and now lingered in the rear to meet a possible attack at Briqueterie. General Belle-mare's batteries tried to get up the slope of the hill of Garches, but the exhausted condition of the horses compelled them to take up a position at Fouilleuse. Meanwhile the batteries of the 9th Division (German) came up one by one, and by noon thirty-six guns had opened fire. In St. Cloud a hot street-fight was going on. General Ducrot alone, on the French right wing, had opened the battle with his strong force of artillery, which he got into position on both sides of Rueil. The tirailleurs then advanced, and made their way through the park of Buzanval to the western wall, but were then driven back by the 50th Regiment of Fusiliers.

At half-past ten the chief attack was made at this point, and supported by part of the central column. Only a non-commissioned officer's detachment met the attack at Malmaison, but at the eastern road from Bougival, at La-Jouchère and Porte-de-Longboyau, it found the 20th Infantry Brigade, which had already been reinforced. General von Schmidt still kept the reserve of the 10th Division in the rear at Beauregard.

A murderous fire from the well-protected German infantry checked the rush of the French, and converted it by midday into a steady fire action, the German artillery joining in with great effect. Two batteries of the 10th Division at St. Michel were strengthened by two of the Guards' brought up from St. Germain to Louvenciennes; a third advanced on Chatou and drove an armor-plated train on the station north of Rueil to retire rapidly on Nanterre. Four batteries of the Fourth Corps finally opened fire from Carrières, without heeding the guns of Valérien, shelling the compact masses of French infantry, who still held Rueil in the rear.

At two o'clock the French decided on renewing the attack. When two of their batteries had bombarded Porte-de-Longboyau a brigade marched on this place, and a second on the western wall of the park of Buzanval; a third followed to give support. Equally bold, but equally unsuccessful, was the attempt of a party of engineers, one officer and ten men, to blow up part of the wall; they were all killed. The attacking columns had advanced to within 200 paces, but now thirteen companies met them from the German side, and, firing on them at the most effective range, stopped their advance, and presently routed the French in spite of a valiant effort on the part of their officers.

They found, however, a good support in the park-wall, which had been prepared for defence with great skill and with the utmost rapidity. The attack of some companies from Brezin and La-Bergerie on this wall was repulsed with heavy loss.

But the strength of the French attack was already broken. Even by three o'clock a retreat was observable in the left wing, and as dusk fell they began gradually, in the centre, to withdraw from the heights of

Maison-du-Curé. When Colonel von Köthen pursued, with a small force, several battalions indeed fronted, and even attempted a counter-attack; but timely support arrived from La-Bergerie, Garches, and Porte-Jaune, and, seconded by the fire of the batteries, the Germans continued the pursuit. The King's Grenadiers drove the enemy almost as far back as Fouilleuse.

Still, the Germans had not succeeded in repossessing themselves of the works at Montretout. The chief difficulty arose from their having been unable to advance through the town of St. Cloud. As, however, these positions were indispensable for the protection of the right wing, General von Kirchbach gave orders that they were to be carried either that evening or early next morning.

General von Sandrart decided on immediate action, and at eight that evening five batteries advanced to the attack. Only a few French were found in the earthworks, and these were taken prisoners; but in the town the struggle was severe. Finally the Germans had to restrict themselves to blockading the houses occupied by the enemy. The French also held the wall of the park of Buzanval all through the night. The Landwehr Guard and the Bavarian Brigade were therefore assigned quarters in Versailles, to form a strong reserve close at hand in case of need on the following day. The remainder of the troops withdrew into their former quarters.

At half-past five General Trochu had ordered a retreat. He perceived that a prolonged struggle could not succeed, especially as the National Guard were mutinous. The brave defenders of St. Cloud were forgotten in these orders; they did not surrender till the day after, when artillery opened fire on the houses they

had occupied. Even the park-wall was held till the following morning.

The French attack of January 19th had failed before reaching the enemy's main position. The reserves in readiness on the German side had not been brought into action. The Fifth Corps alone had driven in an enemy of four times its own strength. It lost 40 officers and 570 men; the French loss in killed and wounded was 145 officers and 3423 men, besides 44 officers and 458 men taken prisoners.

When the fog lifted, at about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 20th, they were seen retreating on Paris, in long columns, across the peninsula of Gennevilliers.

#### THE BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS TILL THE ARMISTICE.

After the repulse of this last struggle for release on the part of the garrison, the bombardment was renewed on the north as well as the south and west.

The siege-guns no longer needed against the smaller fortresses and on the Marne were parked to this end at Villiers-le-Bel. The Army of the Meuse had prepared abundant material for constructing batteries, and requisitioned above 600 wagons. Already twelve batteries were placed in lines between Le-Bourget and Lac-d'Enghien, and the guns were mostly brought up at night. By January 21st eighty-one heavy guns were ready for action, and Colonel Bartsch opened fire at nine that morning on La-Briche, Double-Couronne, and Fort-de-l'Est.

The forts, now exposed to the fire of 143 heavy guns, replied briskly, and on the following day the thick weather prevented the Germans from opening fire again till the afternoon. But the ground in front was clear of the French, and the outposts of the German Guards

and Fourth Corps took possession of Villetaneuse and Temps-Perdu.

In the course of the night fire was opened on St. Denis, with every endeavor to spare the Cathedral, and many places were set in flames.

By the 23rd the steady fire of the Germans had perceptibly reduced the vigor of the French artillery. La-Briche was silenced, and the other forts only fired an occasional salvo.

During the night of the 25th four batteries were advanced to within from 1800 to 1200 metres of the enemy's outworks. Engineering works could now be begun, and a row of new batteries was constructed, for which, however, there was never any need.

The effect of this six days' bombardment was decisive.

The forts had suffered greatly. On this side—unlike the south front—they lacked the support of the ramparts behind them, and they had, too, no bomb-proof space. The temporary galleries were shattered by shell, the powder-magazines were in the greatest danger, and the garrisons were devoid of shelter. The inhabitants of St. Denis fled to Paris in crowds, and the insufficient security of the battered works were no longer a protection against assault if the city held out any longer.

The attack on the north front had cost the Germans one officer and twenty-five men; the French stated their loss at 180.

The fire of the forts on the east front was kept under, and the Würtemberg Field Artillery was enough to prevent the French from again getting a foothold on the peninsula of St. Maur.

The south front meanwhile suffered more and more from the steady bombardment. The ramparts and the

mortar-pits behind the railway were still active, but in the forts the barracks were in ruins, partly battered in and partly burnt down, and the men had to take shelter in the empty powder-magazines. The ramparts were too much choked for free circulation, the parapets afforded no protection. In Vanves the gaps were filled up with sand-bags; in Issy, on the southern curtain, five blocks of casemates in the outer wall were demolished. Even the isolated ravelin-walls of Vanves and Montrouge were destroyed, forty guns dismounted, and seventy gun-carriages wrecked.

The whole situation of France, political and military, and above all that of Paris, was such as to cause the Government the gravest anxiety.

Since the return of Monsieur Thiers from his diplomatic tour it was certain that no mediatory influence would be exerted by any foreign power. The sufferings of the capital were now very great. Scarcity and high prices had for some time been a burthen to the inhabitants; their provisions were exhausted, and even the army stores of the garrison had been encroached on. Fuel was lacking in the bitter cold, and petroleum was an inefficient substitute for gas. When the long-deferred bombardment began on the south side of Paris, the people took refuge in the cellars or fled to the remoter quarters of the town; and when the northern side was also shelled the inhabitants of St. Denis crowded into the capital.

The great sortie of the 19th had proved a total failure, and no relief was to be hoped for from outside since Gambetta had sent news of the defeat at Le Mans. The Paris Army, of whose inactivity he complained, was reduced to a third of its original strength by cold, sickness, and desertion. The horses had to be killed to provide meat for the inhabitants, and General

Trochu declared any further offensive movements to be quite hopeless; the means even of passive resistance were exhausted.

Hitherto the Government had been able to keep the populace in a good humor by highly-colored reports, but now the disastrous state of affairs could no longer be concealed. Everything they could do was wrong.

There was a large body of people in Paris who were but little affected by the general distress. Those members of the civilian class who had been equipped for the defence of their country were fed and well paid by the authorities, without having too much to do for it. They were joined by all the dubious social elements, whose interest it was to foment disorder; these had been quite content with the state of affairs as they had been on September 4th, and these formed the mob which was presently to assume the hideous aspect of the Commune. Already some popular gatherings had been only dispersed by force of arms, and even a part of the National Guard had given signs of some mutinous outbreak.

The revolutionary clubs, too, supported by the press, demanded further active measures, even a sortie *en masse* of all the inhabitants of Paris. Thus the feeble Government, dependent as it was on popular favor alone, was under pressure from the impossible demands of an ignorant mob on the one hand, and, on the other, the inexorable coercion of facts.

There was absolutely no escape but by capitulation; every delay increased the necessity, and left them at the mercy of harder terms. Unless all the railways were at once thrown open for the delivery of supplies from a considerable distance, the horrors of famine were imminent for more than two million souls; and later it might not be possible to meet it. Yet no one

dared utter the fatal word surrender, no one would take the responsibility of the inevitable.

A great council of war was held on the 21st. As all the elder Generals pronounced any further offensive measures to be quite impossible, it was proposed that the younger military authorities should be consulted, but no decision was arrived at. As, however, some one must be made answerable for every misfortune, General Trochu, hitherto the most popular member of the Government, was degraded from his position as Governor, and the chief command was entrusted to General Vinoy. General Ducrot resigned his command.

All this did nothing to improve the situation, so on the 23rd Monsieur Jules Favre made his appearance at Versailles to negotiate at any rate for an armistice.

The German Emperor was ready to meet this request; but of course some guarantee must be given that the capital, after obtaining supplies, would not renew its resistance. All the forts were to be given up, including Mont-Valérien and the city of St. Denis, and the disarmament of the ramparts was demanded and acceded to.

All hostilities were to be suspended on the evening of the 26th, so far as Paris was concerned, and all ways of ingress to be thrown open. A general armistice of twenty-one days was to begin from the 31st of January, exclusive, however, of the departments of Doubs, Jura, and Côte-d'Or, and of the fortress of Belfort, where, at the time, operations were being carried on, in which both sides were equally hopeful of success.

This armistice gave the Committee of National Defence time enough to call a freely-elected National Assembly together at Bordeaux, whose business it



would be to decide whether the war should be continued, or on what conditions peace could be concluded. The election of the deputies was unimpeded and uninfluenced even in the parts of the country occupied by German troops.

The regular forces of the Paris garrison, troops of the line, marines, and Gardes Mobiles were to lay down their arms at once; only 12,000 men and the National Guard were to retain them for the preservation of order. The garrison were interned for the time of the armistice; afterwards they were to be regarded as prisoners. As to their transfer to Germany, where every possible place was already overflowing with prisoners, that question was postponed in expectation of a probable peace.

The forts were occupied on the 29th without opposition.

The French Army gave up 602 guns, 1,770,000 stand of arms, and above 1000 ammunition wagons; the fortress surrendered 1362 heavy guns, 1680 gun-carriages, 860 limbers, 3,500,000 cartridges, 4000 hundred-weight of powder, 200,000 shells, and 100,000 round-shot.

The blockade of Paris, which had lasted 132 days, was over, and the greater part of the German forces detained outside the walls were released to end the war in the open field.

## VI.

### THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR IN THE SOUTH AND WEST.

#### THE ARMY OF THE SOUTH UNDER GENERAL VON MANTEUFFEL.

THE two army corps under General von Manteuffel consisted altogether of fifty-six battalions, twenty squadrons, and 168 guns. When he arrived at Châtillon-sur-Seine on January 12th, the Second Corps was on the right, and the Seventh on the left of Noyers, extending to Montigny over ten miles (German). One brigade, under General von Dannenberg, which had already had several frays with portions of the French Army of the Vosges, had advanced on Vilaines to cover the right flank.

Several good roads led from these quarters converging on Dijon; to Vesoul, on the contrary, the roads were bad, and deep in snow down the southern slopes of the wild plateau of Langres. The Commander-in-chief, nevertheless, took this line of march, to afford General von Werder indirect assistance at least, as soon as possible, by coming up in the rear of the enemy who threatened him.

The advance was between the two towns of Dijon and Langres, both strongly occupied by the French. Wooded heights and deep ravines separated the columns and prevented any mutual support; each had to provide for its own safety on every side. The troops had severe fatigues to encounter, and badly as they needed rest none could be granted, nor could the evil

plight of their boots and the horses' shoes be in any way remedied.

On January 14th the march began in a thick fog and bitter cold, along roads frozen as smooth as glass.

To keep up the supplies was absolutely essential, and the 8th Brigade had from the first to be left in the rear to secure the all-important railway line from Tonnerre by Nuits and Châtillon, until communications could be established *viâ* Epinal.

On the very first day the advanced guard of the Seventh had a fight before Langres. A detachment of the garrison of 15,000 men was repulsed on the fortress with the loss of a standard, and a detachment was therefore left behind to observe the place. Under its protection the corps marched past the fortress next day, while the Second advanced as far as the Ognon.

The weather changed during the night of the 15th. Fourteen degrees of frost (Centigrade) gave way to storm and rain. The water lay on the frozen roads, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the Seventh Corps reached Prauthoy and the Second Moloy, closing up to the left.

On the 18th, the left wing advanced on Frettes and Champlitte, to the south-east, the right assembled at Is-sur-Tille, and its advanced guard, after marching fifty kilometres (thirty-one English miles), reached the bridges at Gray. On the flank and rear of the corps there had been some fighting, but the heavy march across the mountains was over, and they were in the cultivated valley of the Saône.

General von Manteuffel had already received news of the happy issue of the first day's fighting on the Lisaine. Later telegrams from General von Werder reported that the French Army of the East would probably be obliged to retire under difficulties, and the

German General at once determined to cut off its retreat on the Doubs below Besançon.

The defeated French Army was still greatly superior in number to the German force, and the troops must again be called upon for severe exertions. They must again cross a thinly-populated and mountainous country, where it would be a matter of great difficulty to procure food and the shelter needful during the bitter winter nights. They must also leave hostile forces in the rear, under very insufficient observation at Langres, Dijon, and Auxonne. However, in spite of every obstacle, the advance in this new direction was begun on the 19th.

The first difficulty might be the crossing of the Saône, here very deep and sixty metres wide, and full of drifting ice; but the advanced guard of the Second Corps had found Gray abandoned by the French and both the bridgés uninjured, and had taken possession of the place. The head of the Seventh Corps crossed the river by the railway bridge at Savoyeux, which was found intact, and by a pontoon bridge thrown across higher up.

On the following day both corps advanced in a southerly direction, the Seventh on Gy, the Second on Pesmes. Here they crossed the Ognon after driving off by artillery fire a French detachment, which tried to oppose the construction of the bridge.

On the 21st, the advanced guard found Dôle occupied by the enemy. General von Koblinki attacked at once; in spite of a violent street-fight, in which the townspeople took part, the grenadiers of the Second Regiment made their way through the town and seized a train on the other side, of 230 wagons of provisions and necessaries, intended for Besançon, and left standing in the railway station. As the Doubs was thus

crossed at this point, so the Seventh Corps forced a passage across the Ognon at Marmay and Pin.

General von Werder had been told off to follow close on the heels of the French retreat, and while he held his own in front of the Fourteenth Corps, the 2nd Baden Brigade had advanced on the right wing on Etobon, while Colonel von Willisen and his twelve squadrons had marched on by Lure. On the left, Colonel von Zimmermann with the East-Prussian Landwehr had driven the French out of Ste. Marie. These detachments everywhere found cast-away arms and portions of equipment, and hundreds willingly gave themselves up as prisoners.

During the next few days General von Werder effected a general change of front to the left and south. The right wing held Villersexel, and it was the left wing only that met the enemy at Isle-sur-Doubs, and afterwards in greater numbers, at Clerval and Baumeles-Dames.

General Bourbaki had quitted the Lisaine on the 18th. The Twenty-fourth Corps (French) alone were left on the Doubs with orders to defend the defiles in the steep mountain-path of Lomont on the east of Clerval, towards the north; all the other troops withdrew between the Doubs and the Ognon, with Crémer's division as a rear-guard. The Ognon might have formed a natural cover for the right flank of the French Army, and orders had been given for the destruction of all the bridges; but we have seen how little they had been obeyed.

On the 21st the Fifteenth and Twentieth Corps had arrived in the neighborhood of Baumeles-Dames, the Eighteenth at Marchaux; and here, having Besançon close in his rear, General Bourbaki was anxious to await the next step of the enemy. In order to con-

concentrate his forces more completely, the Commandant of the place was desired to send up all the battalions he could spare of the Gardes Mobiles, on Blamont, so as to release the Twenty-fourth Corps. Nine battalions of the mobilized National Guard had before this reached Besançon, and might have relieved the corps, but they were armed with Enfield rifles, for which there was no ammunition in store. Thus they would only have added to the mouths to fill, and General Rolland had simply sent them back again. The Commissary-General declared that it was impossible for him to continue any longer to bring up the supplies ordered for the maintenance of the army, and what proved decisive was the news received this day that not only was the line of the Ognon lost, but that the Germans had crossed the Doubs. Under these circumstances the French Commander-in-chief determined to continue his retreat on Besançon and there cross to the southern bank of the Doubs so as not to be compelled to give battle with the river in his rear. The train was sent off during the night, but above all things the Fifteenth Corps was ordered at once to take possession of Quingey, and hold that position to the last man, to keep open the communications of the corps with the interior. All the other corps were to concentrate round Besançon, even the Twenty-fourth, which consequently gave up the Lomont passes.

General Bourbaki reported his situation to the Minister of War, who held out hopes of support from that portion of the Fifteenth Corps now remaining on the Loire. Assistance could have been more easily and effectually given from Dijon.

The Government had concentrated a very considerable force on that town to replace Crémier's division, which had joined the Army of the East, and to defend

the ancient capital of Burgundy as a point-d'appui for the operations of General Bourbaki. A corps of 20,000 men was to hold the place; a very inappropriately-named Army of the Vosges, more than 40,000 strong, was to manœuvre in the field. But all this did little to hinder the toilsome advance of the Germans over the mountains. The detachments forming a corps of observation allowed themselves to be driven in by General von Kettler, who followed the movements of the corps on the right flank, and they retired on Dijon.

Colonel Bombonnel, at Gray, urgently but vainly begged for assistance to enable him to defend the passages of the Saône; his applications were refused because Dijon was in too great peril, and it was not till the Prussians had already crossed the river that Garibaldi began to move.

He advanced on the 19th in three columns on Is-sur-Tille, where only a part of the 4th Infantry Division were now left. But he moved forward only a mile (German). Garibaldi did no more than observe a reconnoissance party which advanced to meet him, from the hill at Messigny, and he then retired on Dijon with his troops, to the sound of the Marseillaise.

However, at General von Manteuffel's head-quarters the enemy was held in too small estimation, when General von Kettler was simply ordered to go and "take Dijon."

The city had been fortified with the greatest care. Strong earthworks and other works of defence protected it to the northward; more especially had Talant and Fontaine-les-Dijon been converted into two independent forts and armed with heavy guns which commanded every approach on that side. The whole constituted a position which could be held against a much larger force than the five and a half battalions

of the 8th Brigade with which General Kettler advanced to the attack.

*Fighting at Dijon, January 21st and 22nd.*—They had reached Turcey and St. Seine, and on the 21st advanced in two columns from the west on Dijon, still three miles away; from Is-sur-Tille on the north, Major von Conta was approaching with a small reinforcement. Some companies of volunteers, indeed, the “Franc-tireurs de la Mort,” the “Compagnie de la Revanche,” and others, had been driven out of the villages on the way without any great difficulty, and beyond the deep ravine of the Suzon; the village of Plombières on the right had been defended with spirit and stormed, and Daix carried on the left; but in front of the fortified position of the French, and under fire of their heavy batteries, the bold advance was forced to come to a standstill. Major von Conta had also marched on, through continuous fighting, but failed to come up with the brigade before dark. General von Kettler, recognizing the enormous superiority of the French, finally restricted himself to repulsing their sorties.

The French had lost seven officers and 430 men in prisoners alone; but the battle had also cost the brigade nineteen officers and 322 men. The troops had performed a severe march in bad weather, along heavy roads, and had no hot food either before or after the fight; and ammunition too could only be supplied by a column which was expected to come up next day. Nevertheless General von Kettler did not hesitate to remain for the night in the position he had gained, immediately in front of the enemy, and then to seek quarters in the nearest villages.

The French allowed him to do so without any serious opposition. Such complete inactivity made General von Kettler suspect that the main body of the French



had perhaps retired by Auxonne to the support of the Army of the East, and he determined to bring them back on Dijon by a renewed attack.

On the 23rd, at eleven o'clock, by a flank march along the enemy's front, after his advanced guard had routed a detachment of Gardes Mobiles, he reached the farm of Valmy on the Langres road, and advanced on that place with his two batteries against the village of Pouilly, which was walled and strongly occupied. Here, as was almost always the case when they had buildings to defend, the French made a stout resistance. The 61st Regiment had to storm each house in turn, and it was not till the château was in flames that the strong party of defenders, who had taken refuge in the top story, surrendered to the Germans.

Beyond this place the enemy were found to have intrenched themselves between Talant, which had been regularly fortified, and a large factory-building on the high-road. Here the German advance was checked till the remainder of the regiment came up from Valmy, and the defenders were driven in at various points, and back on the suburb.

It was evident that the French were still at Dijon in full force; but now unfortunately a tragic episode took place, for the storming of the factory was insisted on—a huge building, almost impregnable for infantry unaided. When all the senior officers had been killed, a first-lieutenant, whose horse had been shot and he himself wounded, took the command of the 2nd Battalion. No sooner had the 5th Company, only forty strong, appeared from the neighboring quarry, than they came under a hot fire from all sides. Their leader was at once wounded, and the sergeant who carried the colors fell dead after a few steps; so did the second-lieutenant and the battalion adjutant, who again raised

the standard. It was passed from hand to hand, first to the officers, then to the men; every bearer fell. The brave Pomeranians nevertheless rushed on the building, but there was no entrance on that side, and at last the under-officer retreated on the quarries with the remnant of the little band. Here, for the first time, the colors were missed. Of their own accord they went out again in the darkness to seek them, but only one man returned unwounded. It was not till afterwards that they were found by the French, shot to ribbons, in a pool of blood, under the dead.

These were the only German colors lost throughout the war, and only thus were these lost.

Of the French, eight officers and 150 men were taken prisoners, and the brigade had again lost sixteen officers and 362 men. It mustered at Pouilly, and remained under arms till eight o'clock to be prepared for possible pursuit; then quarters were found in the neighboring villages.

*The Movements of the Army of the South.*—The order to take Dijon could not be executed; but the bold advance of this small brigade had reduced the hostile army to inactivity, so that General von Manteuffel could advance unopposed.

His intention was to reach the enemy's line of retreat to the south of Besançon.

There were but few roads to the south of France available for troops, through the ravined and terraced hills of the western Jura. The most direct connection was by the road and railway to Lons-le-Saulnier, on which Quingey and Byans were important points to guard. Further to the east, by a wide détour, a road runs by Ornans, Salins, and Champagnole to St. Laurent and Morez.

On the other hand, several ways centre in Pontarlier,

traversing the rocky passes, peculiar to that formation, known locally as Cluses; they are breaches in the long ridge, connecting the lateral valleys. From Pontarlier one road only runs past Mouthe and in suspicious proximity to the Swiss frontier.

(January 22nd.) On this day the advanced guard of the 13th Division marched from Audeux to St. Vit, and, after breaking up the railway and plundering several loaded wagons, down the river on Dampierre. On their way four bridges over the Doubs were found uninjured and were occupied. The advanced guard of the 14th Division advanced from Emagny to observe Besançon. The Second Corps, diverging on Dôle, sent reconnoitring parties out beyond the river.

(January 23rd.) The concentric movement of all the contingents of the German Army was continued.

General Debschitz, approaching from the north, in passing Roches found only the abandoned camping-place of the Twenty-fourth French Corps. The 4th Reserve Division occupied L'Isle without opposition, and met no resistance till it reached Clerval and Baume.

On the Ognon the Baden Division drove the French out of Montbazou.

In the centre of the army the Seventh Corps pushed the advanced guard of the 14th Division forward on Dannemarie, near Besançon. A fight ensued which resulted only in a cannonade, lasting till night. The 13th Division, on the contrary, which had crossed the Doubs at Dampierre, advanced on Quingey.

Only one French brigade had been able to come up by railway, for want of rolling stock, and the last trains were received at the Byans station with Prussian shell. These troops were in such evil plight that they were unable even to place outposts. They abandoned

Quingey almost without a struggle, and their retreat, almost a flight, on Besançon and beyond the Loue, stopped the advance of reinforcements already on the way. Thus 800 prisoners and a train of 400 convalescents fell into the hands of the Prussian advanced guard, who at once broke up the railway at Abbans-dessous.

On the right wing, the head of the Second Corps had advanced in the valley of the Loue on the southern bank. Various cuttings on this road had been prepared for defence, but were undefended. It was not till it reached Villers-Farlay that it met a strong detachment of the enemy.

On the evening of this day, of the French forces the Twentieth Corps was on the north of Besançon and the Eighteenth on the west, at the distance of about a German mile. Cavalry, artillery, and the train were passing through the town or encamped on the glacis of the fortress. The Twenty-fourth Corps was on the march hither, and the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the Fifteenth were in possession of the southern bank of the Doubs at Baume and Larnod; but the 1st Division had not succeeded in holding Quingey. Thus the most direct and important line of communications of the army was cut, and its position, by this fresh disaster, seriously aggravated. Projects and counsels from Bordeaux, on which it was impossible to act, abounded, but did not mend matters; and on the 24th General Bourbaki summoned the superior officers to a council of war.

(January 24th.) The Generals declared that they had scarcely half their number of men under arms, and these were more inclined to fly than to fight. General Pallu alone thought he might answer for the men of the army reserve. The Commissary-General

reported that, unless they could seize the stores in the place, the supplies in hand would last for four days at most. General Billot was in favor of attempting to fight a way through to Auxonne, but he declined to take the command-in-chief, which was offered him. The exhaustion of the troops and their insubordination, which was evidently increasing, gave little hope of the success of offensive operations. So there was no alternative but to retire on Pontarlier, as the Commander-in-chief had proposed.

This, even, was seriously threatened. To clear the country to the northward General Bourbaki ordered the Twenty-fourth Corps to advance once more and hold the passes of the Lomont. On the south the Fifteenth was to defend the deep mountain ravine of the Loue, and General Crémer was more especially to cover the retreat of the army on the right flank which was most threatened. For this difficult task a division of the Twentieth Corps was placed under his command, as well as his own force, and the army reserve, as the most trustworthy of the troops. The Eighteenth and the remainder of the Twentieth were to await marching orders at Besançon.

At the German head-quarters, where of course the plans of the French could not be known, various contingencies had to be reckoned on.

If the French remained at Besançon there would be no need to attack them there; the place was not adapted for a large army, and its supplies could not hold out long. That they would again attempt to advance northwards was scarcely likely; they would be leaving all their resources in their rear, and must encounter the larger part of the Fifteenth Corps (German) on the banks of the Ognon.

An attempt to cut a way past Dijon seemed, on the

whole, more probable. But this would be opposed at St. Vit by the 13th Division, at Pesmes by Colonel von Willisen's detachment, and finally by General von Kettler.

Thus the retreat on Pontarlier seemed the most likely course; and to hinder their advance on that side must be the duty of the Second Corps, so long as the Seventh was employed in observing the main body of the French collected at Besançon, and in checking their sorties on both sides of the river.

The Commander-in-chief therefore confined himself to giving general instructions to the superior officers, expressly authorizing them to act on their own judgment under such circumstances as could not be foreseen.

General von Werder was ordered to advance by Marnay and obtain touch with the Baden Division and von der Goltz's brigade, and distribute them in the first instance along the right bank of the Doubs. The 4th Reserve Division was to restore the bridges at L'Isle and Baume, and cross over to the left bank. Colonel von Willisen joined the Seventh Corps to supply the lack of cavalry. The Second Corps was assembled behind Villers-Farlay.

(January 25th.) Extensive reconnoissances were arranged for next day. That of the Seventh Corps resulted in a sharp skirmish at Vorges. The head of the Second Corps met the French at Salins and at Arbois, but found that they had not yet reached Poligny.

(January 26th.) The advanced guard of the Second Corps marched on Salins. The forts of St. André and Belin, on high ground near that town, fronted on Switzerland, but they also commanded the plain to the south and west in the enemy's line of march. Salins

is a strong key commanding the road to St. Laurent, and as long as it could be held would at the same time secure the retreat of the columns marching from Besançon on Pontarlier.

The two field batteries of the advanced guard could, of course, do little against the heavy guns of the forts; but the fusiliers of the 2nd Regiment advanced in rushes of small detachments up the narrow ravine, scaled the steep walls on that side, and, supported by the two battalions of grenadiers, forced their way, by about half-past two, into the railway station and suburb of St. Pierre. They lost 3 officers and 109 men.

Soon after this General von Koblinki arrived, *vis-à-vis* St. Thiébaud, with the 42nd Regiment. As, in consequence of the representations of the *Maire*, the Commandant had abandoned the idea of bombarding the town, the advanced guard could take up its quarters there; the main body of the 3rd Division retreated from under the fire of the forts on Monchard, and the defile was closed against all comers. It would have to be turned on the south.

On that side the 4th Division already occupied Arbois, its head marching on Pont-d'Héry; it found Poligny and Champagnole on the right still unoccupied.

The Seventh Corps had reconnoitred both banks of the Doubs, and had found the enemy in strong positions at Busy and at Vorges.

The 4th Reserve Division advanced along the southern bank as far as St.-Juan-d'Adam, near Besançon; the remainder of the Fourteenth Corps marched on Etuz and Marnay.

General von Kettler's report of the fighting on the 21st and 23rd determined General von Manteuffel to make a renewed attempt on Dijon. He detailed General Hann von Weyhern to this duty, placing him in

command of the 8th Brigade, with Colonel von Willisen's troops and Degenfeld's Baden brigade.

On the French side, General Bressolles had started on the 24th, in obedience to orders, to take possession of the passages of the Doubs and the defiles of Lomont. At first, with d'Aries' division, he had marched on Baume; but as d'Aries could not succeed even in driving in the German outposts from Pont-les-Moulins, he retired on Vercel. In consequence of this, on the morning of the 26th, Carré's division, which had found the defiles of the Lomont unoccupied, also retired on Pierre-Fontaine. Comagny's division had already retreated on Morteau, and was quietly making its way on Pontarlier.

General Bourbaki was greatly disturbed by this failure of his right wing; more than was needful, perhaps, since, in fact, only one German division stood to the north of him, which at most could drive his rear-guard back on Pontarlier, while the main force of the enemy threatened him far more seriously on the west. He nevertheless ordered a renewed advance, on the 26th, of the Twenty-fourth Corps, which was now to be supported by the Eighteenth. But the march through Besançon of the Eighteenth Corps alone, over streets covered with ice, took up the whole of the day which should have been devoted to the attack, so that nothing came of the scheme.

The Army Reserve had reached Ornans, and had formed up. The two other divisions advanced on the road to Salins, but heard, while on the march, that the Germans had just carried that place. They therefore occupied Déservillers and Villeneuve-d'Amont, to keep open the roads from thence to Pontarliens.

The War Minister, meanwhile, had emphatically refused his consent to the general retreat of the army,



without any regard to the imperative necessities of the case.

The military dilettanteism which fancied it could control the army from Bordeaux is characteristically expressed in a telegram of the afternoon of the 25th. Monsieur de Freycinet gives it as his "firm conviction"\* that if General Bourbaki would collect his troops, and, if necessary, come to an understanding with Garibaldi, he would be strong enough to fight his way out, either by Dôle, or by Monchard, or by Gray, or by Pontarlier (north of Auxonne). The choice was left to him.

Still more amazing was the suggestion that if, indeed, the state of the troops prohibited a long march, they should take the railway from Chagey, under the eye, no doubt, of the pursuing enemy.

But such communications could only avail to shake the brave commander's self-confidence. The disastrous reports which poured in from all sides, and the state of the troops, which he had seen for himself as the Eighteenth Corps marched through the town, crushed his last hope and led him to attempt his own life.

The Commander-in-chief had of course to bear the blame of the total failure of a campaign planned by Freycinet; his dismissal from the command was already on its way. General Clinchant was appointed in his stead, and under these disastrous circumstances took the command of the army.

All the generals were, no doubt, most anxious to avoid bringing their weary and dispirited troops face to face with the enemy. Every line of retreat was closed, excepting only that on Pontarlier. The new Commander-in-chief had no choice but to carry out the plans of his predecessor. He at once ordered the

\* Conviction bien arrêtée.

further march. He himself proceeded to Pontarlier. In that strong position he hoped to be able at least to give the troops a short rest. No large body of the Germans had been met with so far, the ammunition columns had got safely through, and if they could but reach the defiles of Vaux, Les-Planches, and St. Laurent before the enemy, and hold them, there was still a possibility of escape to the southwards.

On the evening of the 27th Poullet's division was at Levier, nearest to the Germans, the two other divisions under General Crémer, with the Fifteenth and Twentieth Corps, were échelonné on the road between Ornans and Sombacourt; the Eighteenth Corps was alone on the eastern road by Nods. The Twenty-fourth, in a miserable condition, extended to Montbenoît, with its head at Pontarlier; two divisions were still in Besançon.

On this day General von Fransecky collected the main body of the Second Corps at Arbois, and reinforced General du Trossel's lines at Pont d'Héry.

The Fourteenth Corps relieved the 14th Division of the Seventh Corps at St. Vit; this advanced to the right of the 13th Division into the ravine of the Loue, which the French had already abandoned.

On the north, General von Debschitz held Blamont and Pont-du-Roide, while General von Schmeling kept watch on Besançon from St. Juan, and General von der Goltz marched on Arbois to form a reserve.

(January 28th.) Suspecting that the French were already on the march by Champagnole on St. Laurent, General Fransecky, to cut off that line of retreat, advanced on the following day in a southerly direction with the Second Corps.

General du Trossel reached Champagnole without opposition, and sent his cavalry down the road on Pontarlier. Lieutenant-Colonel von Guretzky arrived

at Nozeroy with a squadron of the 11th Dragoons, and found the place occupied; but he seized fifty-six commissariat-wagons, and stole the field treasure-chest, taking the escort prisoners.

The 5th and 6th Brigades advanced on Poligny and Pont-du-Navoy.

The 13th Division of the Seventh Corps, being relieved at Quingey by the Baden troops, assembled at La-Chapelle, while the 14th advanced on Déservillers. Its head, at Bolandoz, did not meet the enemy, but found his camp-fires still smouldering, so that the main body of the French was not overtaken that day.

General Clinchant had in fact moved his corps closer on Pontarlier. But it soon became evident that supplies could not be counted on for any long stay. General Crémer received orders that night to advance at once on Les-Planches and St. Laurent with three cavalry regiments, already on the road to Mouthe. The mountain roads were deep in snow, but he reached the points designated, by a forced march, by the next afternoon. The Twenty-fourth Corps and a brigade of Poulet's division followed next day, this last placing two battalions to occupy Bonnevaux at the entrance to the defile of Vaux. On the evening of the 28th the rest of the French army was distributed as follows: The Eighteenth Corps was behind the Drugeon at Houtaud close before Pontarlier; the 1st Division of the Fifteenth had advanced to Sombacourt, beyond the stream, the 3rd Division was in the town. On the left the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the Twentieth Corps held the villages from Chaffois to Frasné, and on the right the Army Reserve occupied Byans.

General von Manteuffel had ordered a general advance for the 29th on Pontarlier, where the French at last must certainly be found.

(January 29th.) General Koblinsky, of the Second Corps, had set out from Poligny before daylight. When he reached Champagnole and had assembled the whole of the 5th Brigade, he advanced at about seven o'clock. General du Trossel with the 7th Brigade reached Censeau without finding the enemy.

On the right Colonel von Wedell had marched from Pont-du-Navoy on Les-Planches with four battalions of the 6th Brigade. He found only dismounted troopers, posts probably left by General von Crémer, who were easily dispersed by the Jägers. Detachments were then sent out on all sides, and everywhere met with scattered troops; but at Foncine-le-Bas the head of the Twenty-fourth Corps was found, and Colonel von Wedell now cut off their line of retreat, the last that had been left open.

With the rest of the Second Corps General von Hartmann marched unopposed on Nozeroy.

The 14th Division of the Seventh Corps had not received the order to advance on Pontarlier till somewhat late; it did not start from Déservillers till the afternoon, and only reached Levier at three o'clock, where, at the same hour, the head of the 13th Division also arrived from Villeneuve-d'Amont, the state of the roads having greatly delayed them on the march.

The advanced guard of three battalions, half a squadron, and one battery, had met only stragglers on their way, and General von Zastrow commanded them to advance on the Drugeon. Through the woods on the left of the road compact detachments of the French were retiring on Sombacourt, and Major von Brederlow, with the 1st Battalion of the 77th Regiment, made a flank movement on that village. The 2nd Company, under Captain von Vietinghof, made its way in by

Sept-Fontaines with loud cheers, and was at first surrounded by a strong force of the enemy; however, the other companies soon came to its assistance. The 1st Division of the Fifteenth Corps (French) was completely routed without the reserve close at hand in Byans having come to its support. Fifty officers, including two generals, were taken prisoners, with 2700 men; ten guns, seven mitrailleuses, forty-eight wagons, 319 horses, and 3500 stand of arms fell into the hands of the Hanoverian battalion which was left in occupation of Sombacourt.

The remainder of the advanced guard had meanwhile advanced on Chaffois, where the road opens out from the mountain gorge into the broad valley of the Drugeon. The place was occupied, as we have seen, by the 2nd Division of the Twentieth Corps (French).

Colonel von Cosel attacked at once. Three companies of the 53rd Regiment surprised the French picket and seized the first houses in the village, but then the mass of the French Eighteenth Corps stopped their further advance. By degrees all the forces at hand became engaged, as well as the reinforcements brought up from the main body of the 14th Division. The fight had lasted with great obstinacy for an hour and a half, when suddenly the French ceased firing and laid down their arms. They appealed to the armistice already agreed on.

Monsieur Jules Favre had, in fact, telegraphed to Bordeaux at a quarter past eleven on the night of the 28th, that an armistice of twenty-one days had been concluded, without adding that, with his consent, the three eastern departments had been excepted from it. The information, in this imperfect form, was transmitted to the civil authorities by the Chambers at 12.15 at noon of the 29th; but Monsieur Freycinet did

not forward it to the military authorities, whom it principally concerned, till 3.30 in the afternoon.

Thus could General Clinchant, in all good faith, transmit to General Thornton, in command of the division at Chaffois, a message which, as regarded the Army of the East, was altogether incorrect. He at once sent a staff officer to the Prussian advanced guard, who were still firing, requiring them to cease on the strength of the official message.

General von Manteuffel, at Arbois, had received, at five in the morning, full particulars from headquarters of the terms of the armistice, by which the army in the south was to continue operations till further orders. General orders announcing this to all the troops were at once sent out, but did not reach the Seventh Corps till evening.

Nothing was known there of any armistice; however, the news might be on the way, and General von Zastrow granted the temporary cessation of hostilities, and even released his prisoners, but without their arms.

Chaffois, with the exception of a few farmsteads, remained in the hands of the 14th Division (German), who found such quarters there as they might; the 13th retired to the villages from Sept-Fontaines to Déservillers.

(January 30th.) In full confidence in the news from the seat of Government, General Clinchant, on the 30th, stopped the retreat of his army. The newly-appointed Commander of the Twenty-fourth Corps, General Comagny, also gave up his intended attempt to cut his way with 10,000 men through Colonel von Wedell's small brigade at Foncine. The other corps remained, after the unfortunate issue of the evening's fight, close pressed at Pontarlier; but detachments of

troopers were sent out one by one on the roads to Besançon and St. Laurent, to establish a line of demarcation, and also to keep up communications with the fortress and with the south.

After receiving the general orders at about eleven at night, General Zastrow informed the French in his front of the resumption of hostilities, but restricted his immediate demands to the complete evacuation of Chaffois, which was agreed to. Otherwise the corps remained where it was, and inactive.

General du Trossel, of the Second Corps, had set out very early from Censeau, but the appearance of a French flag of truce, and his fear of offending against the law of nations, here too occasioned considerable delay. The woods of Frasné were not clear of the French till evening. Lieutenant-Colonel von Guretzky made his way into the village with quite a small force, and took the twelve officers and 1500 men who held it prisoners, with two colors. The 5th Brigade then also arrived at Frasné; the rest of the corps occupied the same quarters as on the previous day.

A flag of truce had also been sent to Les-Planches, but Colonel von Wedell had simply dismissed the bearer. The outposts of the Fourteenth Corps did the same.

On the north of Pontarlier, General von Schmeling advanced on Pierre-Fontaine, General von Debschitz on Maiche.

(January 31st.) On the morning of this day the French Colonel Varaigne made his appearance at General von Manteuffel's head-quarters at Villeneuve to propose that a cessation of hostilities for thirty-six hours should be agreed upon, till all doubts could be removed; but this was refused, as the German General had no doubts whatever. Permission was granted for

a direct application to Versailles, but it was at the same time explained that the movements of the Army of the South would not be suspended till the arrival of the answer.

On this day, however, the Second Army Corps marched only on Dompierre on a line with the Seventh, its advanced guard pushing forward to the Drugeon on Ste. Colombe and La-Rivière. Thence, in the evening, a company of Colberg's Grenadiers crossed the steep mountain ridge and descended on La Planée, where it took 500 prisoners. On the right a flanking detachment of two battalions and one battery under Lieutenant-Colonel Liebe marched unopposed up the gorge from Bonnevaux to Vaux, taking 2 officers and 688 men prisoners. The French then abandoned the defile of Granges-Ste.-Marie and retired on St. Antoine in the mountains.

The corps had found every road strewn with cast-away arms and camp utensils and had captured 4000 men in all.

As soon as the enemy had been informed that hostilities were resumed, the 14th Division of the Seventh Corps extended on the left along the Drugeon as far as La-Vrine, whence a connection was effected with the 4th Reserve Division of the Fourteenth Corps at St. Gorgon. The 13th Division advanced on Sept-Fontaines. Pontarlier was now completely surrounded, and General von Manteuffel had fixed February 1st for the attack. The Second Corps was to advance from the south-west, the Seventh from the north-west; General von der Goltz was to remain at Levier with a reserve force.

Meanwhile the French Commander-in-chief had conceived doubts as to whether the communications from Government were perfectly correct. The passes over



the mountains to the south were now lost, and an escape in that direction was no longer to be hoped for. General Clinchant had already sent back the baggage and ammunition columns, the sick and the exhausted, through La-Cluse under shelter of the forts of Joux and Neuv. And when in the afternoon a message from Bordeaux announced that in fact the Army of the East had been excluded from the armistice, the Commander-in-chief called a council of war. Every General present declared that he could no longer answer for his troops. He himself therefore went out the same evening to Les-Verrières, to conclude negotiations he had already opened, by which on the following day, February 1st, the army was to cross the frontier into Switzerland by three separate roads.

To cover this retreat, the Army Reserve was to hold Pontarlier till all the baggage-trains had crossed the ridge at La-Cluse, and the Eighteenth Corps was to occupy a position between the two forts. Fortifications were at once begun. So much of the Fifteenth Corps as had failed to get beyond Morez with the cavalry was to try to cross into Switzerland at any available point.

(February 1st.) When the advanced guard of the Second Corps (German) marched on Pontarlier from Ste. Colombe it met with but slight resistance at the railway station. Colberg's Grenadiers took possession of the town without a struggle, took many prisoners, and then found the roads beyond entirely blocked by guns and wagons.

They were toiling along with great difficulty through deep snow. Just in front of La-Cluse the road winds up between high walls of rock to a large cirque formed by the Doubs, which is completely commanded by the fortified castle of Joux on an isolated knoll of rock.

On debouching into this valley the foremost companies were received by a hot fire. Four guns, dragged up with the greatest difficulty, could do nothing against the heavy guns of the fort, so the French themselves attacked.

Colberg's Fusiliers had meanwhile scaled the heights to the left, followed by the 2nd Battalion of the regiment and a battalion of the 49th, who drove the French out of the farmsteads and rifts on the plateau. The steep cliff on the right was also scaled, several files of the 49th Regiment clambered down the slopes above La-Cluse, and Colberg's Grenadiers advanced to the foot of Fort Neuv.

To take the castle by storm was obviously impossible, and the nature of the country is such as almost to prohibit the escape of a defeated enemy. Of the French twenty-three officers and 1600 men were taken, and 400 loaded wagons; of the Germans nineteen officers and 365 men were killed, mostly of Colberg's regiment. The troops spent the night on the field.

As no large force could be brought into action at La-Cluse, General von Fransecky had ordered the main body of the corps to march to the south on Ste. Marie. To avoid the necessity of crossing the chain of the Jura, General von Hartmann marched first on Pontarlier to avail himself of the better roads from thence, but there he was detained, the fight at La-Cluse having assumed unexpected proportions. The Seventh Corps and the 4th Reserve Division also, which had reached the Doubs at noon, were equally unable to get at the enemy.

During the whole day the French columns were crossing the Swiss frontier. The Army Reserve in Pontarlier was from the beginning carried away by the tide of baggage-wagons and drivers, and only joined

the Eighteenth Corps on reaching La-Cluse. During the night they both followed in the general line of retreat. Only the cavalry and a few hundred men of the First Division of the Twenty-fourth Corps reached the department of l'Ain, the next to the south; 80,000 French crossed on to Swiss soil.

General Manteuffel had transferred his head-quarters to Pontarlier. Only then, and not till night, did he hear from Berlin of the agreement between General Clinchant and the Swiss Colonel Herzog.

General von Manteuffel had achieved the important success of his three weeks' campaign through a succession of fights, but without a pitched battle since quitting the Lisaine, simply by marches; such marches, indeed, as none but well-seasoned troops could have accomplished under bold and skilful leadership, under every form of fatigue and hardship, in the worst season and through a difficult country.

Thus two French armies were now prisoners in Germany, a third interned in the capital, and the fourth disarmed on foreign soil.

#### GENERAL HANN VON WEYHERN'S MARCH ON DIJON.

It only remains to glance back on the advance on Dijon, which had been entrusted to the command of General Hann von Weyhern on January 26th.

On that same day Garibaldi was appealed to, to take some energetic measure against Dôle and Mouchard.

To support him, the Government, indefatigable in the evolution of new forces, were to send 15,000 Gardes Mobiles under General Crouzat from Lyons to Lons-le-Saulnier, and a Twenty-sixth Corps in course of formation at Châtellerault was to be detached to Beaune. As it was beyond doubt that General von Manteuffel had marched with a strong force, to cut off

the communications of the Army of the East, an order was transmitted on the 27th to the Commander of the forces in the Vosges, to leave only from 8000 to 10,000 men in Dijon and to advance at once with the main body beyond Dôle.

But the General was anxious for Dijon; he occupied the principal positions on the slopes of the Côte-d'Or and detached a small force to St.-Jean-de-Losne, behind the Canal-de-Bourgogne. Nothing had as yet been seen of 700 volunteers who had marched on Dôle.

Langres had shown a little more energy, several, and often successful, sorties of small outpost companies and dépôt troops had been led out from time to time.

General Hann von Weyhern's purpose of attacking Dijon from the south had to be abandoned, because the bridge over the Saône at St.-Jean-de-Losne had been destroyed. He, therefore, on the 29th crossed the river at Apremont, and on the 31st assembled his detachment at Arc-sur-Tille. Here again General Bordone, the Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Vosges, vainly appealed to the supposed armistice. On the 31st, General von Kettler marched as an advanced guard on Varois. To cut off the enemy's communications with Auxonne, a detachment on the left held the bridge over the Ouche at Fauverney. The first shells drove the French back on their intrenched position between St. Apollinaire and Mirande.

When the attempt to bring about an armistice had failed, General Bordone determined to evacuate Dijon in the course of the night and retire on to really neutral ground. Thus, on February 1st, the head of the advanced guard found the outworks abandoned, and General von Kettler marched in without any opposition, just as the last train of French troops moved out

of the railway-station. Sombornon and Nuits were also occupied on the 2nd.

OCCUPATION OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE DOUBS, JURA,  
AND COTE-D'OR.

Nothing now remained for General von Manteuffel but to effect a military occupation of the Departments he had invaded, and to protect them from without.

General Pelissier was still within their limits, having reached Lons-le-Saulnier from Lyons with the 15,000 Gardes Mobiles joined by the battalions sent back from Besançon by General Rolland, numerically a by no means insignificant force, but of no great practical use. The commanders were recommended to retire and avoid further bloodshed; and they did so, as soon as some detachments of the Second Corps (German) advanced on Lons-le-Saulnier and St. Laurent. Others occupied Mouthe and Les-Allemands, where twenty-eight guns had been abandoned by the French. The Swiss frontier was watched by eight battalions for security. The forts of Salins, the little fortress of Auxonne, and Besançon from the east side, were kept under observation.

Although the Department of Haute-Marne was included in the armistice, the commandant of Langres had refused to recognize the authority of the Government. So this place had to be invested, and perhaps besieged. General von der Goltz was first ordered to march on it, and General von Krenski was already advancing with seven battalions, two squadrons, and two batteries with a siege train from Longwy, which he had reduced to capitulation on January 25th, after a bombardment of six days' duration. But it was not called into requisition at Langres.

General von Manteuffel aimed at no further tactical

results; he was anxious to save his troops from further losses, and to afford them all possible respite after their unusual exertions. Not till now was the baggage brought up, even that of the staff officers having been necessarily left behind during the advance through the Jura. The troops were distributed for the sake of comfort in roomy quarters, but in readiness for action at any moment, the Second Corps in Jura, the Seventh in Côte-d'Or, the Fourteenth in Doubs. But the siege of Belfort was to be stringently carried on.

#### THE SIEGE OF BELFORT.

Immediately after the battle on the Lisaine the forces investing Belfort were increased to 27 battalions, 6 squadrons, 6 field batteries, 24 companies of garrison artillery, and 6 companies of sappers and miners; in all 17,602 infantry, 4699 artillery, and 1166 engineers = 23,467 men, with 707 horses and 34 field-guns.

While the town was invested on the north and west by only a few battalions, the main force was assembled to the south and east.

On January 20th, the batteries on the east opened a hot fire on Pérouse. Colonel Denfert inferred that an attack was imminent, and put four battalions of his most trusted troops into the village, which was fortified for an obstinate defence.

At about midnight, two battalions of the 67th Regiment advanced from Chèvremont without firing a shot on the Haut-Taillis wood. Only inside it there was a determined struggle, but the French were driven back on the village, and the sappers immediately intrenched the skirt of the wood towards Pérouse under a heavy fire from the fort.

Half an hour later two Landwehr battalions advanced from Bessoncourt to the copse on the north of the

village. They were received with a sharp fire, but made their way onward over abatis, pits, and wire-entanglements, driving the enemy back into the quarries.

A brisk fire was now opened on both sides, but the 67th presently renewed the attack, and without allowing themselves to be checked at the earthworks, forced their way into Pérouse. They took possession of the eastern end of the straggling village at about half-past two, and the party defending the quarries finding themselves threatened, retreated. At five o'clock, Colonel Denfert surrendered the western part of the position, which was now occupied by the Germans.

They had lost eight officers and 178 men; the French left five officers and ninety-three men prisoners.

(January 21st to 27th.) The next day the first parallel was thrown up along a front of 1800 metres from Donjoutin to Haut-Taillis. Five battalions and two companies of sappers were engaged in this work, and undisturbed by the French; but the rocky soil prohibited its being constructed of the usual width.

General von Tresckow already believed that he might proceed to storm the two forts of Perches. Two half-closed redoubts with perpendicular ditches cut three metres deep out of the rock, casemated traverses and bomb-proof block-houses in the gorge, insured protection for the defenders. They were armed with seven 12-cm. guns in each. The works were connected by trenches, behind which a reserve force was in readiness.

On the right flank this position was protected by a battalion and counter-batteries in Le-Fourneau; on the left the wood, which was not more than 600 paces distant, was cleared, and wire-entanglements between the stumps formed an almost impenetrable obstacle. In front the gentle slope of the hill was under the cross-fire of the two forts.

As soon as the construction of the parallel was sufficiently advanced, on the evening of the 26th, to allow of its being occupied by larger detachments, the storming was begun. Two columns of one battalion, one company of sappers, and two guns proceeded to the attack at daybreak on January 27th. Two companies of Schneidemühl's Landwehr Battalion advanced on the front of Basses-Perches and threw themselves on the ground within sixty to 100 metres in front of the works. A party of sharpshooters and a few sappers got to the ditch and unhesitatingly leaped in; the two other companies, going round the fort to the left, had reached the rear, and here too the men jumped into the ditch of the gorge. But the French, who had been driven out of their shelter-trenches, had now re-assembled, and the battalion advanced from Le-Fourneau. All the forts of the place opened fire on the clear and unprotected space in front of the parallel, and an attempt to cross it on the part of the reserve force failed. The 7th Company of the Landwehr Battalion were surrounded by superior numbers, and after a brave struggle were for the most part taken prisoners. Most of the men in the ditch were still able to escape.

The advance of the right column against Hautes-Perches also failed. It had to cross 1000 metres of open ground. An attempt to surround the fort did not succeed; it was impossible to get through the abatis and other obstacles under the fire of the French.

This disastrous attempt to storm the place cost 10 officers and 427 men; the slower engineering operations had to be resumed.

(January 28th and February 15th.) As the Germans got nearer to the forts the flying sap could be carried forward about 300 metres every night without any opposition from the enemy. In spite of all the diffi-



culties caused by the nature of the soil, by February 1st the second parallel had been advanced half-way to the forts of Les-Perches.

As the Fort-de-la-Justice was a particular hindrance to the works, two batteries had to be constructed to the east of Pérouse to bear upon it. Four mortar-batteries on the flank of the parallel could now fire on Haute and Basse-Perches at very short range. Three batteries were also placed in the Bois-des-Perches to attack the castle, and one on the skirt of the wood by Bavilliers against the main work. Henceforward 1500 shell a day were fired on the fortress and outworks.

But the progress of the attack became more and more difficult. General Debschitz, by retiring, had seriously reduced the working strength of the besieging force. The loss in sappers was particularly serious, and two new companies had to be brought up from Strasburg. The bright moonlight lighting up the sheets of snow far and wide made it impossible to proceed with the flying saps. Sap-rollers were called into requisition; the heads of the saps had to be protected by sand-bags and the sides by gabions, while the earth for filling had often to be brought from a long distance in the rear.

On the top of this, on February 3rd, a thaw set in, and the water from the slopes filled the trenches, so that all intercourse had to be across the open ground. Torrents of rain damaged the finished works; the parapet of the first parallel gave way in places and the banquettes was washed away. The arming of the batteries was most laborious with the ground in such a state, and the teams of the columns and field artillery had to be employed in bringing in ammunition.

Several guns had become useless by overheating, while the enemy, by rapidly running out their guns,

firing, and then running them back again, greatly disturbed the work. Not merely was it necessary to continue the shelling of Les-Perches during the night, but a brisk rifle fire had to be kept up. Only now and then did the batteries newly placed in the parallels succeed in silencing the guns of Hautes-Perches. Gun epaulments were erected to front Fort Bellevue, and the fortified railway station and Fort-des-Barres brought into action again. That under such toil and the unfavorable weather the health of the troops must have suffered severely need not be said; the battalions could often only muster 300 men for duty.

Meanwhile, however, the artillery of the attack had become very much stronger than that of the defenders, and, in spite of every obstacle, the saps were pushed on to the edge of the ditch of Les-Perches.

On February 8th, at one in the afternoon, Captain Roesse had the sap rollers flung into the ditch of Hautes-Perches, sprang into it with five sappers, and rapidly scaled the parapet by the steps hewn in the escarp. He was immediately followed by the trench-guard, but no French were surprised excepting a few in the casemated traverses.

The situation of the garrison of the fort had in fact become most critical. Ammunition could only be fetched under the enemy's fire, water only be had from the pond at Vernier, and only boiled inside the works. Colonel Denfert had already given orders to conceal the matériel. Unseen by the besiegers, those guns of which the carriages could still be moved had been withdrawn, and only one company left in each fort, who, in case of a surprise, were to fire and escape. Nothing was to be found in the abandoned works but wrecked gun-carriages and four damaged guns. This fort was at once so adapted that its front should face

the fortress, but at three o'clock the main work opened such a destructive fire on the lost positions that the men were forced to take shelter in the ditches.

The garrison in Basses-Perches attempted some resistance, but supported by a reserve they soon retired on Le-Fourneau, leaving five guns and much battered ordnance.

Here also the fire from the main work at first prevented the work of restoration, but four 15-cm. mortars were at last brought into the fort, and two 9-cm. guns placed on the spur of the hill to the westward, now directed their fire on Le-Fourneau and Bellevue. During the night of the 9th the works were connected by a shelter-trench 624 metres long, and thus a third parallel was established.

By this time they were in a position to direct the immediate attack on the castle, and on this the batteries in the Bois-des-Perches and those in the second parallel opened fire. Moitte, Justice, and Bellevue were shelled simultaneously. General von Debschitz had returned, and the investing corps was by this means again reinforced to its full numbers, and all the conditions were improved by the return of the frost. By the 13th ninety-seven guns were mounted ready in the third parallel.

The town had suffered terribly from the prolonged bombardment. Nearly all the buildings were damaged, fifteen completely burnt down; also in the adjoining villages 164 houses had been destroyed by the defenders themselves. The fortifications showed not less visible signs of destruction, particularly the castle. The stone facing of their walls had crumbled into the ditch. Half of the mantleted embrasures had been shattered, the expense powder magazines had been blown up, and a number of casemated traverses broken

through. The guns in the highest positions could only be reached by ladders. The original strength of the garrison had been 372 officers and 17,322 men, but they had lost 32 officers and 4713 men, besides 336 citizens. The place was no longer tenable; in addition to this came the news that the army by whom they expected to be relieved had laid down their arms.

Under these circumstances General von Tresckow summoned the Commandant after such a brave defence to surrender the fort, with a free retreat for the garrison, this stipulation having the sanction of his Majesty. The French Government themselves had given the Commandant permission to accept these terms; however, Colonel Denfert insisted that he must have a more direct order. To procure this an officer was sent to Basle, whilst there was a provisional armistice.

On the 15th a treaty was signed at Versailles, which extended the armistice to the three departments which till then had been excluded from it, and also to Belfort; but the 1st article demanded the surrender of that place.

After the conclusion of the definitive treaty, the garrison, in the course of the 17th and 18th, with its arms and trains, left the precincts of the fort, and passed to L'Isle-sur-Doubs and St. Hyppolyte on French territory. The march was effected in échelons of 1000 men at intervals of 5 km., the last accompanied by Colonel Denfert. The provisions which had been stored in the fort were carried after them in 150 Prussian baggage-wagons. At three o'clock in the afternoon on the 18th February, Lieutenant-General von Tresckow entered the place at the head of detachments of all the troops of the investing corps.

They found 341 guns, of which 56 were useless, 356 gun-carriages, of which 119 were shot to pieces, and

22,000 stand of arms, besides considerable supplies of ammunition and provisions.

The siege had cost the Germans 88 officers and 2049 men, 245 of whom were released from imprisonment by the capitulation. Immediately the work of restoring and arming the fort began, and the levelling of the siege-works.

## VII.

### SURRENDER AND PEACE.

#### THE ARMISTICE.

ON the basis of the agreement of the 28th January a line of demarcation was drawn, from which both parties were to withdraw their outposts to a distance of 10 km. The line ran south from the mouth of the Seine as far as the Sarthe, crossed the Loire at Saumur, following the Creuse, turned eastward past Vierzon, Clamécy and Chagny, and then met the Swiss frontier, after passing to the north of Châlons-sur-Saône and south of Lons-le-Saulnier and St. Laurent. The departments of Pas-de-Calais and du Nord, as well as the promontory of Havre, were particularly excluded.

The remainder of the forts held by French troops within the provinces of which the Germans had taken possession were allowed a radius in proportion to their importance.

In carrying out the details of the agreement a liberal interpretation was in several places allowed. The assent of those members of the National Defence Committee who were in Paris was obtained; but the delegates at Bordeaux, who had hitherto conducted the war, at first held aloof, and, indeed, as yet had not been informed of the stipulations. Gambetta, however, suspended operations, but could give the commanders no more precise instructions.

General Faidherbe was thus without orders with regard to the evacuation of Dieppe and Abbeville.

General von Goeben, however, deferred taking possession. On the west of the Seine, the Grand Duke was forced to announce that the non-recognition of the line of demarcation would result in an immediate recommencement of hostilities.

The Commandant of the garrison at Langres also raised difficulties, and only retreated within his rayon on the 7th February, as, later on, did General Rolland in Besançon. Auxonne refused to surrender the railway. Bitsch, which had not been worth the trouble of a serious attack, rejected the convention; the investment had therefore to be strengthened, and only in March, when threatened with a determined attack, did the garrison abandon its peak of rock.

Also the volunteers did not acquiesce at once, and there were skirmishes with them in various places. But after the conditions were finally settled, no more serious quarrels took place between the inhabitants and the German troops during the whole course of the armistice.

All the German corps outside Paris had occupied the forts lying in their front, more particularly the Fifth that of Mont-Valérien, and the Fourth the town of St. Denis. The ground between the forts and the walls remained neutral ground, which only civilians were allowed to cross, along particular roads placed under control of German examining troops.

In their anxiety as to the indignation of the people, the French Government had so long hesitated to pronounce the word capitulation that now, even with free ingress of supplies, Paris was threatened with an outbreak of real famine. The unnecessary stores in the German magazines were therefore placed at the disposal of the authorities. The Commander-in-chief, the Government authorities, and the military inspectors re-

ceived orders to place no difficulties in the way of the repairing of the railways and roads in their districts, and they were even allowed to make use of the railroads which the invaders used to supply their own army, under German direction. Nevertheless, the first provision train only arrived in Paris on February 3rd, and it was the middle of the month before the French had succeeded in remedying the prevalent distress in the capital.

The German prisoners were at once given up. The surrender of arms and military matériel followed by degrees, also the 200 million francs ransom imposed on the city.

But it was still doubtful if the party of war "à ou-  
rance" in Bordeaux would agree with the arrangement of the Paris Government, and if at last the National Assembly, which was about to be convened, would accept the conditions of peace made by the conquerors. Such measures as were necessary in case the war should break out again were therefore taken on the French as well as on the German side.

The distribution of the French army at the close of the armistice was not a favorable one.

By General Faidherbe's advice the whole Army of the North was disbanded, as being too weak to face the strength of the forces that stood opposite to them. After the Twenty-second Corps had been transported by sea to Cherbourg, the Army of Bretagne, under General de Colombo, was made up of this, with the Twenty-seventh and part of the Nineteenth Corps, and including Lipowski's volunteers, Cathelineau's and others, amounted to 150,000 men. General Loysel, with 30,000 ill-armed and inexperienced Gardes Mobiles, remained in the trenches before Havre.

General Chanzy, after his retreat on Mayenne, had



made a movement to the left, in order to assist in a new plan of action with the Second Army of the Loire, with its base at Caen, which, however, was never carried out. The Eighteenth, Twenty-first, Sixteenth, and Twenty-sixth Corps stood between the Lower Loire and the Cher from Angers to Châteauroux, about 100,000 men strong, the Twenty-fifth under General Pourcet at Bourges, and General de Pointe's corps at Nevers. The Army of the Vosges had withdrawn to the south of Châlon-sur-Saône, and the remainder of the Army of the East assembled under General Crémer at Chambéry as the Twenty-fourth Corps.

The total of all the field troops amounted to 534,452 men. The volunteers, even the most reliable, were dismissed, and the National Guard were for the present regarded as *incapables de rendre aucun service à la guerre*. In the barracks, the manœuvring camps, and in Algiers there were still 354,000 men, and 132,000 were on the muster-rolls as recruits in 1871, but had not yet been told off.

If the war should be persisted in, a plan for limiting it to defensive measures in the south-east of France had been suggested, for which, however, according to the report sent on February 8th by the Committee of Inquiry to the National Assembly, scarcely more than 252,000 men in fighting condition were available. The fleet, besides, had given up so considerable a number of its men and guns for service on land, that it was no longer able for any great undertaking at sea.

On the German side the first consideration was to restore the troops to their war-standing, and make good the stores of matériel.

The forts round Paris were at once armed on the fronts facing the city walls. In and between these stood 680 guns, 145 of which had been taken from the

French; they were more than enough to keep the restless population under control. A part of the forces which till then had been occupied with the siege, being no longer required, were removed, in order that all the troops might have better accommodation. Besides, it seemed desirable to strengthen the Second Army which faced the enemy's principal force; in consequence the Fourth Corps marched on Nogent-le-Rotrou, the Fifth on Orleans, and the Ninth, which was relieved there, on Vendôme; so that now the quarters of this army extended from Alençon to Tours, and up the Loire as far as Gien and Auxerre.

The First Army was in the north with the Eighth Corps on the Somme, and on both sides of the Lower Seine; in the south the Army of the South occupied the line of demarcation from Baume to Switzerland, and the country in the rear.

At the end of February the invading field-army standing on French ground consisted of:—

Infantry	. 464,221 men with 1674 guns.
Cavalry	. 55,562 horses.

Troops in garrison:—

Infantry	. 105,272 men with 68 guns:
Cavalry	. 5,681 horses. \

Total	. <u>630,736 men and 1742 guns.</u>
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Reserve forces left in Germany:—

3,288 officers.
204,684 men.
26,603 horses.

Arrangements were made, that in case of a recommencement of hostilities, the strongest resistance could be made at all points. The armistice had nearly reached its end, and the troops had already been more

closely collected to be ready to advance first of all on the offensive, towards the south, when the clerk of the Council announced that the armistice was extended to the 24th, and again prolonged to midnight on the 26th.

Considerable difficulties had arisen from the differences of opinion with regard to the election of the National Assembly, between the Government in Paris and the Delegation at Bordeaux. The Germans wished to see the choice, not of a party, but of the whole nation, expressed by a free suffrage. But Gambetta had ruled, contrary to the conditions of the armistice, that all those who, after December 2nd, 1851, had held any position in the Imperial Government should be regarded as ineligible. It was not till the Parisian Government had obtained a majority of votes by dispatching several of its members to Bordeaux, and till the dictator had resigned on the 6th February, that the voting went on quickly and unhindered.

The deputies were already assembled in Bordeaux by the 12th. M. Thiers was elected chief of the executive, and went to Paris on the 19th with Jules Favre, determined to end the aimless war at any cost.

Negotiations for peace were opened, and after five days' violent debating, when at last the Germans consented to restore Belfort to the French, the preliminaries were signed on the afternoon of the 26th.

France agreed to surrender to Germany a part of Lorraine and Alsace, with the exception of Belfort, and a war indemnity of five milliards of francs.

The evacuation of the places that the Germans had taken was to begin immediately on the ratification of the treaty, and be continued by degrees in proportion as the money was paid. As long as the German troops remained on French soil they were to be fed at the expense of France. On the other hand, no further

requisitions were to be made by the Germans. Immediately after the first evacuation the French forces were to retire behind the Loire, with the exception of 40,000 men in Paris and the necessary garrisons in the fortresses.

After the ratification of these preliminaries, further terms were to be discussed in Brussels, and the return of the French prisoners would begin. Thus the armistice was prolonged to the 12th of March; but it was in the option of either of the belligerent powers to end it after the 3rd March by giving three days' notice.

Finally, it was stipulated that the German Army should have the satisfaction of marching into Paris, and remaining there till the ratification of the treaty; but they would restrict themselves to the quarter of the town lying between Point-du-Jour and the Rue du Faubourg-St.-Honoré. This was occupied on the 1st March, after a parade in Longchamps before his Majesty of 30,000 men, consisting of 11,000 of the Sixth, 11,000 of the Second Bavarian, and 8000 of the Eleventh Army Corps. On the 3rd and 5th of March they were to have been relieved by other detachments of the same strength, but M. Thiers succeeded by the 1st March in getting the National Assembly at Bordeaux to accept the treaty, after the deposition of the Napoleonic dynasty had been voted. The exchange of ratifications took place in the afternoon of the 2nd, and on the 3rd the first detachment marched back into quarters.

#### THE RETURN MARCH OF THE GERMAN ARMY.

By the Third Article, the whole of the land between the Seine and the Loire, excepting Paris, was to be evacuated with as little delay as possible, by both armies; the right bank of the former river, on the

other hand, was only to be cleared after the conclusion of the definitive treaty of peace. Even then the six Eastern departments were still left in possession of the Germans as a pledge for the last three milliards; not, however, occupied by more than 50,000 men.

The order of march was drawn up at head-quarters, with a view no less to the comfort of the troops than to the reformation of the original order of battle, and the possibility of rapid assembly in case of need.

The forces told off for permanent occupation of the ceded provinces marched thither at once.

The reserve and Landwehr troops in Germany were disbanded, as well as the Baden contingent, which, however, for the present remained there as a mobilized force. The army head-quarters in Lorraine, Rheims, and Versailles were broken up, and their authority handed over to the generals in command, but in order to maintain order in the rear of the army, the Sixth and Twelfth Corps, as well as the Würtemberg Field Division, were placed under the immediate command of the army head-quarters.

By March 31st the army had taken possession of the newly-acquired territory, bounded on the west by the Seine from its source to its mouth.

The First Army was in the departments of Seine-Inférieure and Somme, the Second in front of Paris, in the departments of Oise and Seine-et-Marne, the Third in the departments of Aube and Haute-Marne, the Army of the South in the last hostile districts. The forts of Paris on the left bank were given up to the French authorities; the siege-park and the captured war matériel had been carried off. In consideration for the wishes of the French Government, in order that the National Assembly might be allowed as early as possible to sit at Versailles, the head-quarters were

broken up and transferred to Ferrières, even sooner than had been agreed. On the 15th March his Majesty left Nancy for Berlin.

All the troops that were left before Paris were placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, and General von Manteuffel was nominated Commander of the Army of Occupation.

At the moment when France had freed herself by a heavy sacrifice, an enemy of the most dangerous character appeared from within: the Commune in Paris.

The 40,000 men who had been left there proved themselves unequal to the task of keeping the rebellious movement under control; even during the siege it had on several occasions betrayed its presence, and now broke out in open civil war. Large masses of people, encouraged by the National Guard and the Garde Mobile, took possession of the guns and set themselves up in armed opposition to the Government. M. Thiers had already, by the 18th of March, summoned to Versailles such regiments as could still be trusted, to withdraw them from the dangers of party influence, and for the protection of the National Assembly there. The French capital remained destroyed, and plundered by the French troops.

The Germans could have easily and quickly put an end to the matter, but what Government would allow its rights to be established by foreign bayonets? The German Commanders-in-chief limited themselves to forbidding any rebellious disturbances within their own district, and to prevent any further marching into Paris from outside. The work of disarming, which had commenced, was interrupted; the troops of the Third Corps were drawn closer to the forts, and the outposts were replaced along the line of demarcation, where 200,000 men could be collected within two days.

The authorities in Paris, however, announced that any attempt to arm the fronts facing the Germans would result in an instantaneous bombardment of the city. The rebels, however, were fully occupied in destroying and burning, and in executing their superiors in the interior of Paris. They did not turn against their foreign enemy, but against the Government chosen by the nation, and prepared for an attack on Versailles.

The leaders of the State who were there, bound by the conditions of the treaty, were almost defenceless; meanwhile the Germans were prepared and willing to march up a reinforcement of 80,000 men, troops from Besançon, Auxerre, and Cambrai; and their transport would be furthered by the German troops in occupation of the districts through which they would have to pass.

The releasing of the prisoners had, on the contrary, been reduced. And these were, for the most part, the best disciplined of the forces; but they might not improbably join the hostile party, so at first only 20,000 troops of the line were set free.

General MacMahon marched on April 4th with the Government troops towards Paris, and entered the city on the 21st. As they then were engaged for eight days in barricade fighting, and troops of fugitives threatened to break through the German lines, the Third Army was ordered to form in closer order. The outposts advanced almost to the gates of the city, and barred all communication through them until, at the end of the month, Paris was again in the control of the Government.

In the meantime, the negotiations commenced in Brussels and continued in Frankfort were making rapid progress, and by the 10th of May the definite

treaty of peace, based on the preliminaries, was ready to be signed. The ratification on both sides followed within the appointed time of ten days.

Thus a war, carried on with such a vast expenditure of force on both sides, was brought to an end by incessant and restless energy in the short period of seven months.

Even in the first four weeks eight battles took place, under which the French Empire collapsed, and the French Army was swept from the field.

Fresh forces, massive but incompetent, equalized the original numerical superiority of the Germans, and it needed twelve more battles to secure the decisive siege of the enemy's capital.

Twenty fortified places were taken, and not a single day passed without a struggle, great or small.

The war had cost the Germans many victims; they lost: 6247 officers, 123,453 men, 1 flag, and 6 guns.

The total losses of the French were incalculable; in prisoners only they amounted to:—

In Germany . . .	11,860 officers,	371,981 men.
In Paris . . .	7,456 “	241,686 “
Disarmed in Switzer- land . . .	2,192 “	88,381 “
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	21,508 officers,	702,048 men.

107 flags and eagles, 1915 field-guns, and 5526 fort-guns were captured.

Strasburg and Metz, which had been alienated from Germany in a time of weakness, were reconquered, and the German Empire had risen anew.



APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

MEMORANDUM ON THE COUNCILS OF WAR SAID TO HAVE BEEN  
HELD DURING THE WARS UNDER KING WILLIAM.

IN the accounts of historical events, as they are handed down to posterity, mistakes assume the form of legends which it is not always easy subsequently to disprove.

Among others is the fable which very circumstantially ascribes the great decisions taken in the course of the German campaigns, before and in 1870-71, to the consultations of councils of war previously convened.

For instance, the battle of Königgrätz.

I can relate in a few lines the circumstances under which an event of such far-reaching importance had birth.

The Master of the Ordnance, Feldzeugmeister Benedek, had, in his advance to the northward, to secure himself against the Second Prussian Army marching on the east over the mountains of Schleswig. To this end four of his corps had one after another been pushed forward on his flank, and had all been beaten within three days. They now joined the main body of the Austrian Army, which had meanwhile reached Dubenetz.

Here, then, on June 30th, almost the whole of the Austrian forces were standing actually within the line of operations between the two Prussian armies; but the First was already fighting its way to Gitschin, designated from Berlin as the point on which they were to concentrate, and the Second had also advanced close on the Upper Elbe; thus they were both so near that the enemy could not attack the one without the other falling on his rear. His strategic advantages were nullified by the tactical disadvantage.

Under these circumstances, and having already lost 40,000 men in previous battles, General Benedek gave up the advance, and during the night of June 30th began his retreat on Königgrätz.

The movement of six army corps and four cavalry divisions, marching in only four columns, which were necessarily very deep, could not be accomplished in the course of a single day. They halted in close order between Trotina and Lipa; but when on July 2nd they were still there, it was owing to the extreme fatigue of the troops, and the difficulty, nay, impossibility, of withdrawing so large a body of men beyond the Elbe, under the eyes of an active enemy and by a limited number of passages. In fact, the Austrian general could no longer manoeuvre; he must fight.

It is a noteworthy fact that neither his advance on Dubenetz nor his retreat on Lipa was known to the Prussians. These movements were concealed from the Second Army by the Elbe, and the cavalry of the First at that time constituted a useless mass of 8000 horse remaining with the corps. The four squadrons attached to each infantry division were of course not able to effect the reconnoissance, as subsequently was done in 1870 by a more advantageous plan of formation.

Thus at head-quarters at Gitschin, where the King was, nothing certain was known. It was supposed that the main body of the hostile army was still advancing, and that it would draw up in a position with the Elbe in its front and the wings at the fortress of Josephstadt and Königgrätz. There were these two alternatives—either to outflank this strong position, or attack in front.

By the first the communications of the Austrian Army would be so seriously threatened at Pardubitz that it might be compelled to retreat. But to secure such a movement the Second Prussian Army must take the place of the First and cross over to the right bank of the Elbe. At the same time the flank movement of the First Army, close past the enemy's front, might easily be interfered with, if passages enough had been opened.

In the second case, success could only be hoped for if an

advance of the Second Army on the right wing of the enemy's position could be combined with the attack in front. For this it must be kept on the left bank.

The separation of the two armies, which was for the present intentionally maintained, allowed of either plan being followed; but mine was the serious responsibility of advising his Majesty which.

To keep both open for the present, General von Herwarth was ordered to occupy Pardubitz, and the Crown Prince to remain on the left bank of the Elbe, to reconnoitre along that river as well as the Aupa and the Metau, and remove all obstacles which might oppose a crossing in either direction. At last, on July 2nd, Prince Frederick Charles was ordered, in the event of his finding a large force in front of the Elbe, to attack at once. But, on the evening of that day, it was announced to the Prince that the whole Austrian Army had marched on the Bistritz; and, in obedience to instructions, he at once ordered the First Army and the Army of the Elbe to unite close in front of the enemy by daybreak next morning.

General von Voigt-Rhetz brought the news at eleven o'clock in the evening to the King at Gitschin, and he sent him over to me.

This news settled all doubts and lifted a weight from my mind. "Thank God!" I said, sprang out of bed, and hastened across to the King, who was lodged on the other side of the Market Place.

His Majesty also had gone to rest in his little camp-bed. After a brief explanation on my part, he said he fully understood the situation, decided on giving battle next day with all three armies at once, and desired me to transmit the necessary orders to the Crown Prince, who was at once to cross the Elbe.

The whole interview with his Majesty had lasted barely ten minutes. No one else was present.

This was the Council of War before Königgrätz.

General von Podbielski and Major Count Wartensleben shared my quarters. The orders to the Second Army were drawn up forthwith and dispatched in duplicate by two different routes before midnight. One, carried by General von

Voigt-Rhetz, informed Prince Frederiek Charles of the steps to be taken ; the other was sent direct to Koniginhof.

In the course of his night-ride of above six miles (German), Lieutenant-Colonel Count Finekenstein had to pass the outposts of the First Army Corps, which was most to the rear. He handed to the officer on duty a special letter to be forwarded immediately to the general in command, ordering an immediate muster of the troops and an independent advance, even before orders should reach him from the Crown Prince.

The position of the Austrians on July 3rd had a front of not more than a German mile. The Prussian armies advanced on it in a semicircle of about five miles in extent. But while in the centre the First and Second Corps of the First Army stood before daylight close in front of the enemy, on the right wing General von Herwarth had to advance on the Bistritz from Smidar, in the dark, by very bad roads, above two miles ; and on the left, orders from head-quarters could not even reach the Crown Prince before four in the morning. It was therefore decided that an engagement was to be fought with the centre to detain the Austrian Army for some hours.

Above all, any possible offensive move on the part of the enemy must here be met, and for this the whole Third Corps and cavalry stood at hand ; but the battle could only be decided by a flank movement by both the Prussian wings at once.

I had ridden out early to the heights above Sadowa with my officers, and at eight o'clock the King also arrived there.

It was a dull morning, and from time to time a shower fell. The horizon was dim, far on the right the white clouds of smoke showed that the head of the First Army was already fighting some way off, outside the villages on the Bistritz. On the left, in the woods of Swip, brisk rifle-firing was audible. Behind the King, besides his staff were his royal guests with their numerous suites of adjutants, equerries and led-horses, in number as many as two squadrons. An Austrian battery seemed to have selected them to aim at, and compelled him to move away with a smaller following.

Soon after, Count Wartensleben and I rode through Sadowa, which the enemy had already abandoned. The van-guard of

the 8th Division had drawn up the guns under cover of the tirailleurs who had been sent forward, but several shells fell there from a large battery at the skirt of the wood. As we rode down the road we admired the coolness of a huge ox which went on its way heedless of the shot, and seemed determined to charge the enemy's position.

The formidable array of the Third and Tenth Austrian Corps' artillery opposite the wood now prevented any attempt to break through it, and I was in time to countermand an order which had been given to do so.

Meanwhile, further to the left, General von Fransecky had already acted on the offensive. After a sharp struggle he had driven the enemy out of the Swip woods, and got through to the further side. Against him he had the Fourth Austrian Corps; but now the Second and part of the Third Corps turned on the 7th Division; fifty-one battalions against fourteen. In the thick brushwood all the detachments had got mixed, individual command was impossible, and, in spite of our obstinate resistance, whole troops were taken prisoners and others dispersed.

Such a rabble rushed out of the wood at the very moment when the King and his staff rode up; his Majesty looked on with some displeasure,\* but the wounded officer who was trying to keep his little troop together at once led them back into the fight. In spite of heavy losses, the division got possession of the northern side of the wood. It had drawn down on itself very large forces of the enemy, which were subsequently missing in the positions they ought to have defended.

It was now eleven o'clock. The head of the First Army had crossed the Bistritz and taken most of the villages along its banks; but these were only the enemy's outposts, which he had no serious intention of guarding. His main corps held a position in the rear from whence, with 250 guns, it commanded the open plains which the Prussians must cross in order to attack. On the right, General von Herwarth had reached the

\* I have a history of the war, published at Tokio, in the Japanese language, with very original illustrations. One of these has for its title, "The King scolding the Army."

Bistritz, but on the left nothing was yet to be seen of the Crown Prince.

The battle had come to a standstill. In the centre the First Army was still fighting round the villages on the Bistritz; the cavalry could not get forward, and the artillery found no good position to occupy. The troops had been for five hours under the enemy's hottest fire, without food, for there had not been time to prepare it.

Some doubt as to the issue of the battle existed probably in many minds; perhaps in that of Count Bismarck as he offered me a cigar. As I was subsequently informed, he took it for a good sign that of two cigars I coolly took the best.

The King asked me at about this time what I thought of the prospects of the battle. I replied, "Your Majesty to-day will not only win the battle, but decide the war."

It could not be otherwise.

We had the advantage in numbers,\* which in war is never to be despised; and our Second Army must come up in the flank and rear of the Austrians.

At about 1.30 a white cloud was seen on the height crowned with trees and visible from afar, on which our field-glasses had been centred. It was indeed not yet the Second Army, but the smoke of the fire opened on its advance. The joyful shout, "The Crown Prince is coming!" ran through the ranks. I

\* During a long peace the sphere of action of the War Minister's department and the General Staff were not distinctly defined. The providing for the troops in peace was the function of the former, and in war-time a number of official duties which could only be superintended by the central authorities at home. Thus the place of the Minister of War was not at head-quarters, but at Berlin. The Chief of the General Staff, on the other hand, from the moment when the mobilization is ordered, assumes the whole responsibility for the marching and transport already prepared for during peace, both for the first assembling of the forces and for their subsequent employment, for which he has only to ask the consent of the Commander-in-chief—always, with us, the King.

How necessary this severance of authority is, I learnt in June, 1866. Without my knowledge the order had been given for the Seventh Corps to remain on the Rhine. It was only by my representations that the 16th Division was also moved up into Bohemia, and our numerical superiority thus brought up to a decisive strength.



sent the desired news to General von Herwarth, who, meanwhile, had carried Probus from the Saxons in spite of a heroic defence.

The Second Army had started at 7.30 in the morning; only the First Corps had waited till about 9.15. The advance by bad roads, in part across the fields, had taken much time; the ridge of hills stretching from Horenowes to Trotina, in the march, if efficiently held must be a serious obstacle; but in their eager pursuit of Fransecky's division the enemy's right wing had wheeled to the left, so that it lay open to some extent to an attack in the rear.

The Crown Prince's progress was not visible to us, but at about half-past three the King ordered the advance of the First Army.

As we came out of the wood of Sadowa we found still a part of the great battery which had so long prevented us from debouching there, but the teams and gunners lay dead by the wrecked guns. There was nothing else to be seen of the enemy for a long way round.

The Austrian retreat from the position, stormed on both sides, had become inevitable, and had, in fact, been effected some time since. Their capital artillery, firing on to the last moment, had screened their retreat and given the infantry a long start. Crossing the Bistritz seriously delayed the progress, especially of the cavalry, so that only isolated detachments came up with the enemy.

We rode at a smart gallop across the wide field of battle, without looking much about us at the scene of horror. On the other side we joined our three armies, which had at last pushed through the narrow place from various directions, and got much mixed. It took twenty-four hours to remedy the confusion and reform the companies; pursuit was at that moment impossible, but the victory was complete.

The exhausted men at once sought a spot to rest on in the villages or the open country, where best they might. Anything that came to hand by way of food was of course taken; my wandering ox probably among the rest. The death-cries of pigs and geese were heard; but necessity knows no law, and the baggage-wagons were naturally not on the spot.

The King, too, remained at a hamlet on the field. Only I and my two officers had to ride five miles back to Gitschin, where the officers were.

We had set out at four in the morning, and had been fourteen hours in the saddle. In the sudden emergency no one had thought of providing himself with food. An Uhlan of the 2nd Regiment had given me part of a sausage; bread he had not got. On our way back we met the endless train of provision and ammunition wagons, often extending all across the road. We did not reach our quarters till midnight. There was nothing to eat even here at this hour, but I was so exhausted that I threw myself on my bed in my great-coat and scarf, and fell asleep instantly. Next morning new orders had to be drawn out and laid before his Majesty at Horitz.

The great King had struggled for seven years to reduce the might of Austria, and his more fortunate and more powerful grandson had achieved it in as many weeks. The campaign had proved decisive in the first eight days from June 27th to July 3rd.

The war of 1866 was entered on not because the existence of Prussia was threatened, nor in obedience to public opinion and the voice of the people: it was a struggle, long foreseen and calmly prepared for, recognized as a necessity by the Cabinet, not for territorial aggrandizement or material advantage, but for an ideal end—the establishment of power. Not a foot of land was exacted from conquered Austria, but it had to renounce all part in the hegemony of Germany.

The Imperial family alone were to blame if the old Empire had now for centuries allowed domestic politics to override German national politics. Austria had exhausted her strength in conquests south of the Alps, and left the western German provinces unprotected, instead of following the road pointed out by the course of the Danube. Its centre of gravity lay out of Germany; Prussia's lay within it. Prussia felt itself called upon and strong enough to assume the leadership of the German races. The regrettable but unavoidable exclusion of one of them from the new Empire could only be to a small extent remedied by a subsequent alliance. But Prussia has

become immeasurably greater without Austria, than it was before with Austria.

But all this has nothing to do with the legends of which I was speaking.

One has been sung in verse, and in fine verse too.

The scene is Versailles. The French are making a sortie from Paris, and the generals, instead of leading their troops, are assembled to consider whether head-quarters may safely remain any longer at Versailles. Opinions are divided, no one dares speak out. The Chief of the General Staff, who is above all called on to express his views, remains silent. The consternation seems to be great. Only the War Minister rises and protests with the greatest emphasis against a measure so injurious from a political and military point of view as a removal. He is warmly thanked by the King as being the only man who has the courage to speak the truth freely and fearlessly.

The truth is that, while the King and his whole escort had ridden out to the Fifth Army Corps, the Chamberlain in his over-anxiety had the horses put to the royal carriages, and this became known in the town; and this indeed may have excited all sorts of hopes in the sanguine inhabitants.

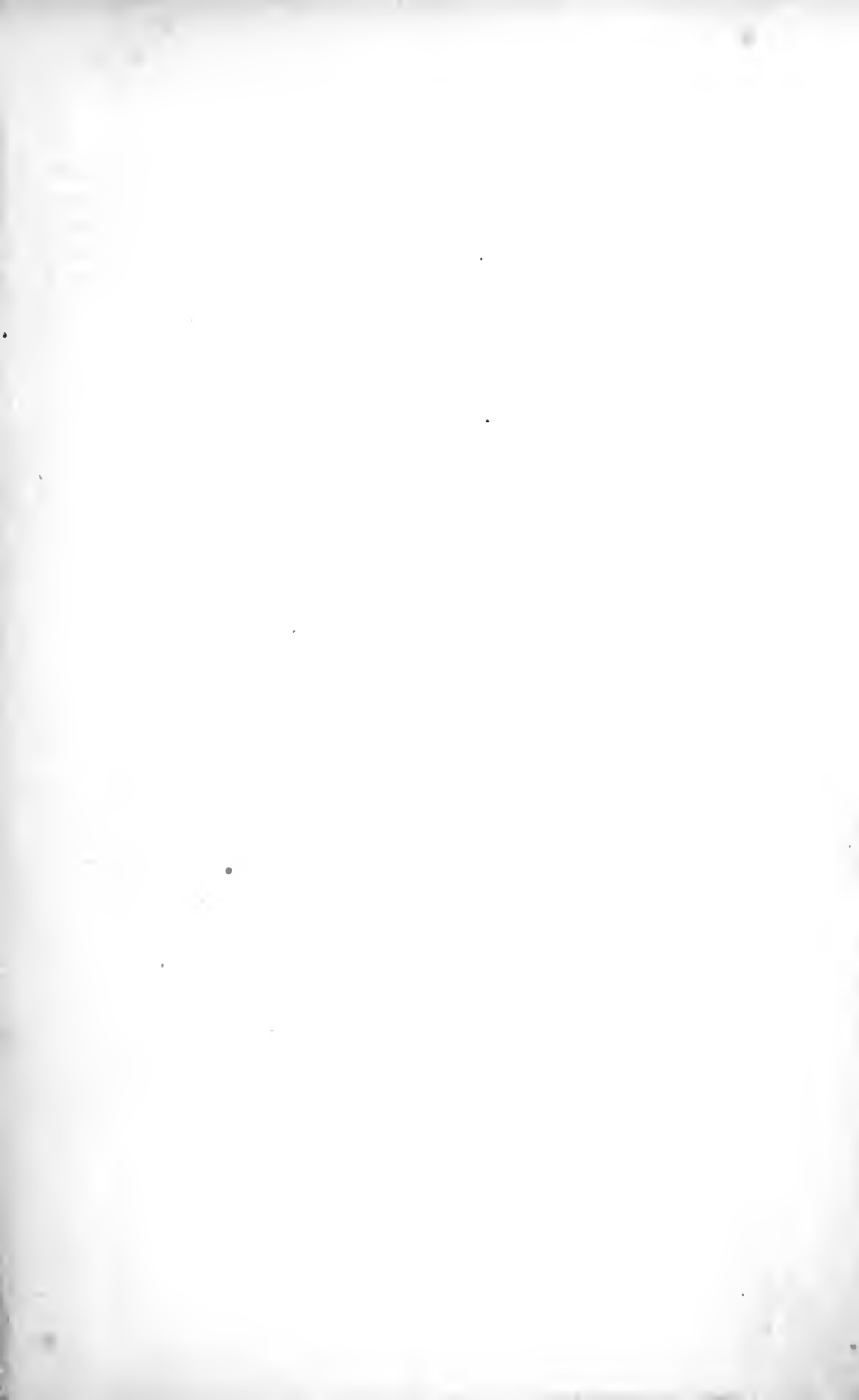
Versailles was protected by four army corps. It never entered anybody's head to think of leaving it. I can positively assert no Council of War was ever held either in 1866 or 1870-71.

Excepting on the march or on days of battle, an audience was regularly held by his Majesty at ten o'clock, at which I, accompanied by the Quartermaster-General, laid the latest reports and news before him, and made our suggestions on that basis. The Chief of the War Cabinet and the Minister of War were also present, and, so long as the head-quarters of the Third Army were at Versailles, the Crown Prince also, but all merely as listeners. The King occasionally required them to give him information on one point or another; but I do not remember that he ever asked for advice concerning the operations in the field or the suggestions I made.

These, which I always discussed beforehand with my staff

officers, were, on the contrary, generally maturely weighed by his Majesty. He always pointed out with a military eye and an invariably correct estimate of the position, all the objections that might be raised to their execution; but as in war every step is beset with danger, the plans laid before him were invariably adopted.

**THE END.**



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