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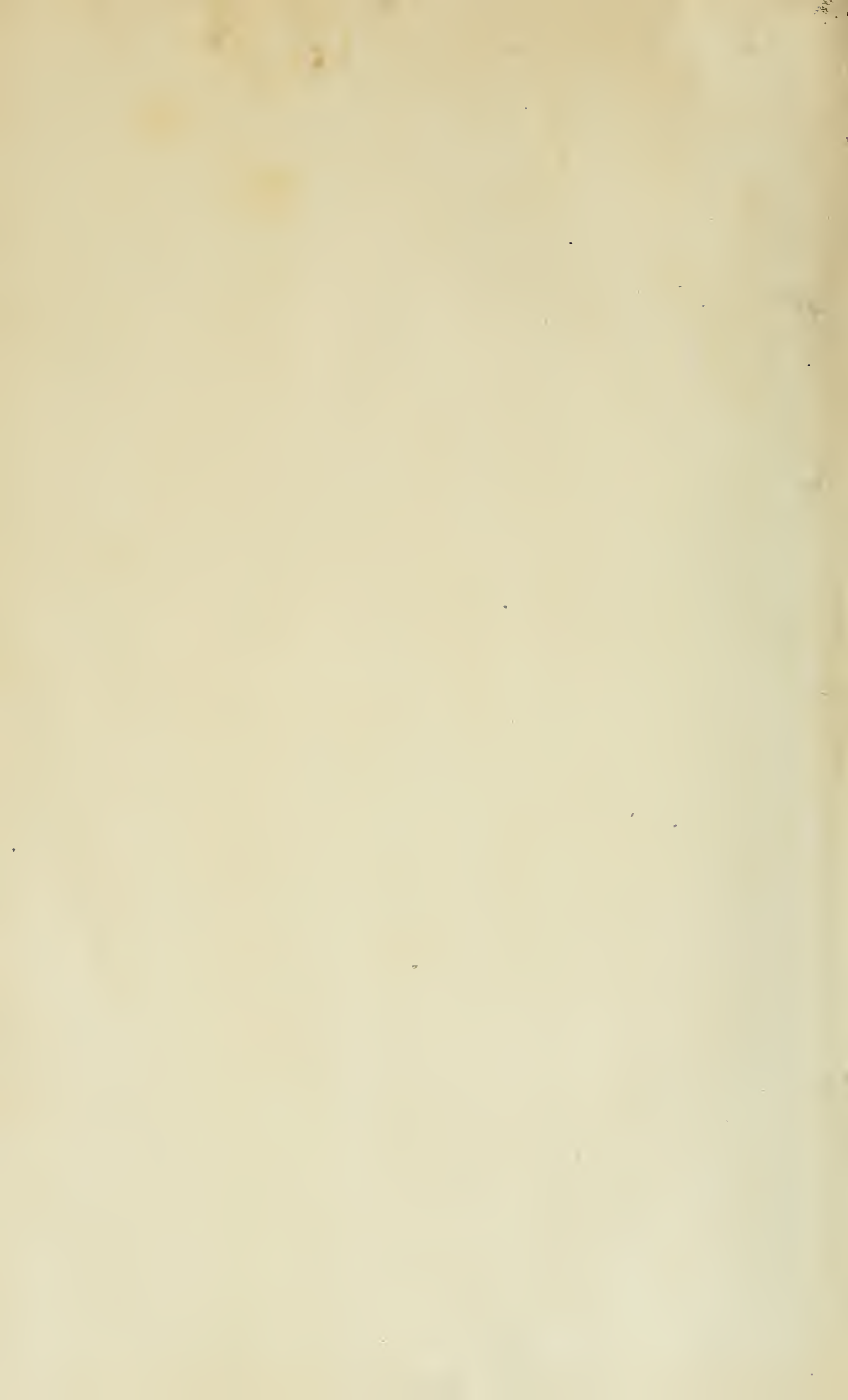

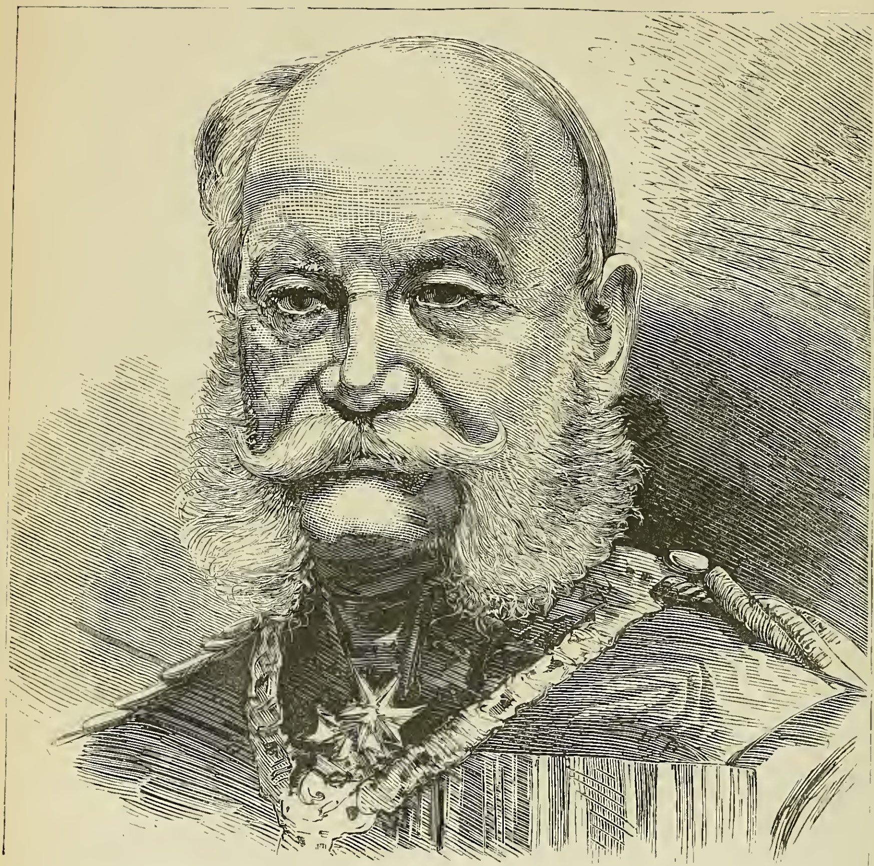

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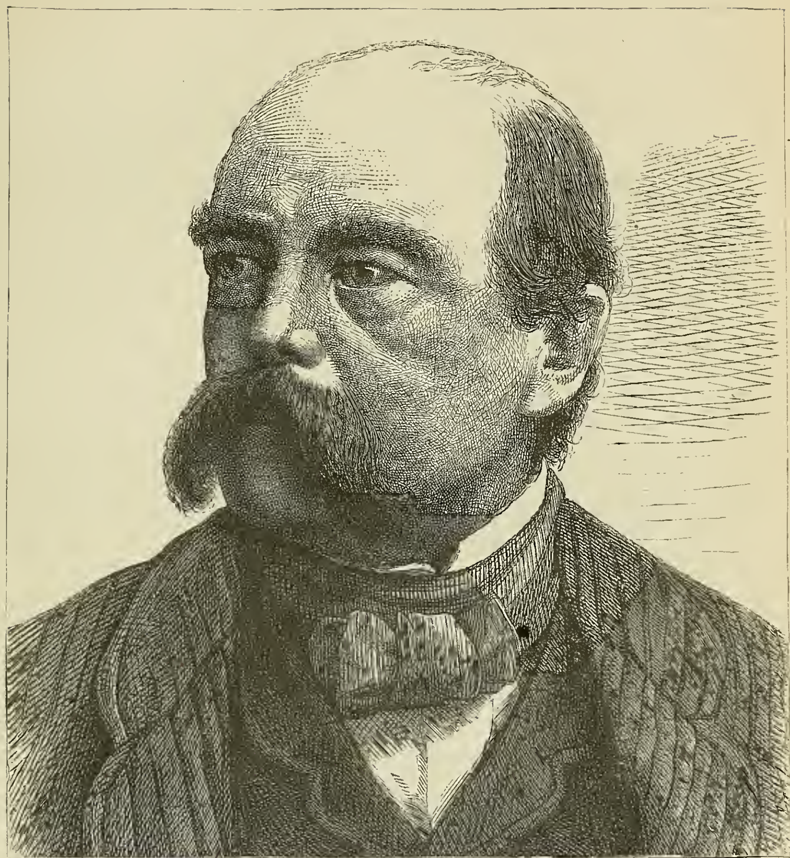

BISMARCK.

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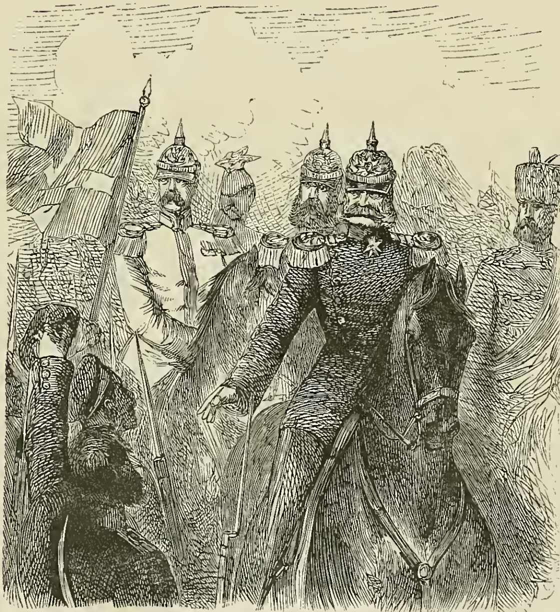
ON

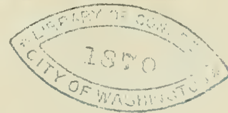
THE TRAIL OF THE WAR.

BY ALEXANDER INNES SHAND,

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF "THE LONDON TIMES."

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.





NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
FRANKLIN SQUARE.
1871.

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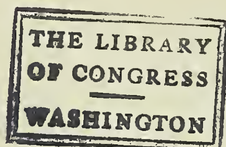

PREFACE.

These pages are nothing more than they profess to be—the story of ordinary incidents in an extraordinary state of things; recollections of the Trail of the War, not of the front. Hasty work is generally the weakest plea that can be urged for lenient criticism; but perhaps in this case the circumstances are somewhat exceptional. At least, if the thing were to be done at all, "'twere well 'twere done quickly." This narrative being original from first to last, the writer, in justice to himself and his readers, volunteers the assurance that any incident or occasional expression of opinion they may fancy they recognize has been borrowed only from communications of his own that have appeared in "The Times" or elsewhere.

VON MOLTKE.

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ON THE TRAIL OF THE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

THE START.

The other evening a group was gathered in a village *Wirthshaus* on the Upper Rhine. The faces loomed benignantly through heavy wreaths of tobacco-smoke fitfully illuminated by the flash of an occasional lucifer-match. No bad type, by-the-way, of the state of matters by the neighboring Strasbourg, wrapped in dense powder-clouds, lighted at intervals by blazing shells, where the resolute Germans, who manned the batteries and the trenches, cannonaded their victims with the stoical pity one feels for the sufferings of one's neighbors. The worthy Badeners of the *Wirthshaus*, each of them behind his beer-glass and china pipe, were voluble of words and sympathy as they listened comfortably to the steady roar of the guns outside. That their sympathy was real there could be no question; they told touching little traits of the miseries of the miserable refugees, and rehearsed their heart-broken lamentations with a rude eloquence that showed they were genuinely touched. And they puffed their tobacco and gulped down their beer with an air of ineffable satisfaction.

There was an exception. A man, in blue blouse and French casquette, much like a well-to-do workman of the Parisian *Faubourgs*, was seated at a side-table. He, too, had his beer and his pipe, but the pipe had gone out and the beer stood untasted. His haggard face looked as if it had been fresh grooved by wearing anxiety, and it might be starvation that had given the sharper touches to the lines by his down-drawn mouth and the wrinkles under his blood-shot eyes. He swayed himself uneasily in his seat to the terrible music of the cannonade: as it swelled he clutched desperately at his close-clipped hair with his trembling hands: as it seemed to lull, he would bury his face in them, planting his elbows on the table as if he would see out the siege in that very attitude. The second after he would be on his legs, striding away towards the door, to return the following one to his seat. At last, after pressing his fevered forehead on the dingy panes of the little window, he fairly rushed from the room to see what might be seen. The night was as black as the prospects of the beleaguered city: the rain beat in his face as thickly as the German rifle-balls had been pelting its ramparts that afternoon; but his excitement was not to be denied—perhaps not unnaturally. Within the double line of French and German batteries were his home, his family, his property, his old associations, and his heart; and it was difficult to sit still and listen quietly while they were being bombarded and shattered.

Although, thank God, one had no such terrible concern in the European war as this unhappy Alsacian, you could surmise something of his ungovernable and irrational excitement by your own sensations as you read Mr. Reuter's sensational telegrams seated in a snug English arm-chair. You heard the bellow of the field-guns, the rattle of the Chassepot and Zündnadel-Gewehr; the remorseless grind of the mitrailleuse. You saw the long trains of wounded coming in from the front to the ghastly symphony of shrieks and groans; you pictured the profound enthusiasm of an earnest nation arming for a national war. Very likely, you might appreciate more philosophically the rights of the struggle were you to stay contentedly at home. You were certain to be kept much more thoroughly *au fait* of its contemporary history, to be favored with far more rapid and comprehensive bird's-eye views of the successive phases of the campaign. No matter. It seemed difficult to amuse one's self with the dropping fire of breech-loaders among the heather when there was a roar of battle all round the north-eastern frontier of France, or to take an interest in bags of grouse when human beings were dropping by tens of thousands. So curiosity, or perhaps something of a more worthy feeling, had its way, and, spite of misgivings that you might be rushing in search of light into outer darkness,

one's mind was made up to a start for the Rhine.

It was the middle of August; and although the days of Spicheren, Wissemburg, and Woerth had torn rents in the veil that had enveloped the German plans; although the series of impromptu surprises Von Moltke had prepared for the Emperor were rapidly developing themselves, still German officials in London would give little encouragement to English travelling gentlemen. Honestly, they said, the successes of the Germans had hitherto been greatly owing to the secrecy they had observed, and, as they courteously insinuated, observers could do no good, might do harm, and would infallibly be much in the way. The Crown Prince had already been overdone with princes and princelets; his staff was swelled far beyond the proportions of an average state army under the old Bund: provisions would become more hard to come by as the lines of communication lengthened out, and the commissariat had more than enough to do without catering for idle mouths. Complimentary to your intelligence, perhaps, but otherwise unsatisfactory. One cause for thankfulness you had, however. When time was valuable, it defined the situation, and told you that you could count on no help in England. You must rely on yourself, or find friends abroad, and, instead of making a dash to the front, decide for pursuing your modest investigations on the trail of the war.

It was the work of a day to mobilize yourself, your baggage, and a portion of your property. It was clear, when communications were hopelessly disorganized and traffic worse than precarious, the lightest marching order should be the order of the day, and accordingly the travelling kit was restricted to the most simple necessaries. Even in the solitary knapsack, maps and field-glass, flask and tobacco, elbowed wardrobe and toilet necessaries into nooks and corners. The only luxury indulged in was a wealth of *visés* to the passports—sheer extravagance, as it turned out, for on no single occasion, from the leaving Charing Cross to the returning thither, was that passport asked for. There were circumstantial rumors, semi-officially confirmed by one's banker, of English notes, bank and circular, being only negotiable in the war country at some such depreciation as assignats of the first French Republic. Inquiries after a money-belt were responded to by the production of many-pocketed girdles, where you might have secreted the fruits of an average lifetime's labor at the diggings. That difficulty was disposed of, however, by arranging a single pocket, running on a simple strap, and thus, with a modest purse at the girdle, a knapsack not much heavier, some circular notes, and a few introductions in case of need, one's arrangements were complete.

Already at Charing Cross Station you stood in the shadow of the war. It had fallen unmistakably on the faces of the stream of Germans who were still on the flow from England out to the Fatherland. There you first caught the expression you came afterwards to know so well; a seated melancholy at seeing family ties loosened, and cherished hopes blighted, at having to leave the hearth for the bivouac, and exchange the umbrella for the rifle; but at the same time a determined resolution that the tranquil life should not be broken in upon for nothing, and that through triumphs or defeats this unholy war should be fought to the bitter end. The younger men on their way to the ranks brightened up quickly as they were whirled beyond the unmanning influence of the tearful groups who had dismissed them with the last Lebewohls. By the time they found themselves on the Ostend packet, they were laughing merrily at the latest French bulletins and chattering sanguinely over the advance on Paris. It was the elderly gentlemen whose faces kept their settled gloom. These were on their way to knit up the threads of broken commercial enterprises on the Rhine and the Elbe; or possibly to look for a wounded son missing somewhere among the field-hospitals of Woerth or Spicheren. However, old and young alike found something to cheer them on disembarking at Ostend—something more invigorating in the chill small hours than even the steaming cups of *café au lait.* News of a battle by Metz, and of course another German victory; and the invariable postscript, the inevitable bitter following the sweet—"Our losses are heavy." The Germans first looked happy, and then grave, and then happy again. The expression on the faces of the Belgian gentlemen was more complicated, and their subsequent talk in the train suggestive—it was so evident their sympathies enlisted them on the side of France, and their jealous fears on that of Germany. Could they only have material and unimpeachable guaranties against annexation, how profoundly they would feel with this *chère France.* But the misfortune is, France reciprocates so cordially, and loves them so intensely, that they dare not approach her. If they only came near enough, she would clasp them in her fond embrace, and never consent to let them go again. So with their eyes bent wistfully on the beautiful France, they are constrained to approach themselves politically to rough brusque Germany. It is hard on a people whose social aspirations are so absolutely

French, whose organs parody so meritoriously the intonations of Parisian speech: whose capital mimics so successfully Parisian architecture, parks, costumes, cafés, restaurants, shops, and sign-boards. The more credit to the Belgians for subjugating their hearts to their principles, and submitting themselves to sacrifices so heavy, to insure the independence that lies so near their hearts.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

When two parties are preparing for a fight, the first idea of the curious but cautious neutral is to seek out a quiet corner, whence he can see it in comparative safety and comfort. When the French and German armies were massing themselves in mystery behind the lines of the Moselle and the Saar, when no one could prophesy when the war-clouds would come in collision, but every one could guess where—then a glance at the map suggested to war correspondents that their provisional billets must be in Luxembourg. Circumstances and treaties have obtruded the neutralized and guaranteed Grand Duchy between the hostile territories, and the capital, with its tolerable hotels, stands within easy reach of the most objective angle. Accordingly, on the first outbreak of the war, there was a strong English occupation of the province. The metropolitan and provincial press were strongly represented. Military men, playing hide-and-seek with the Horse Guards, posted themselves there in observation. The Luxembourgois were delighted to see them all. They had been long accustomed to Federal occupation; and when the Federal garrison was withdrawn, would have been only too happy to welcome a French one. Notwithstanding the prevalence of German speech, in sympathies and instincts they were far more French than the Belgians, and, unlike them, most of them would have hailed French annexation as the political millennium. But, practical before all, they showed themselves cordial to every guest who brought a purse with money in it. Moreover, what those inquisitive arrivals craved before all was news and excitement; and excitement and authentic intelligence the citizens of the Grand Duchy were prepared to purvey to any extent. They were always hearing and telling some new thing. Their country is a chosen haunt of the *canard*, if not their pet breeding-ground; and flushed in crowds, professedly by Metz and Thionville, those pseudo birds of passage dropped in flights in the Luxembourg streets and cafés. One stipulation the citizens made, and a not unreasonable one. They were prepared to provide their visitors with rumors to any extent, hot and hot, but they protested against their catering for themselves. Their bugbear was the being compromised. A correspondent had only to leave his hotel, and stroll down to the neighboring café, to pick and choose among sensational and dramatic episodes, guaranteed by the personal honor of the informant, if not by his personal observation. But if he went to the country to look out for his own game, that was another matter altogether. A highly-drilled corps of suspicion, morbidly rigid in the discharge of their duties, the police of the Grand Duchy were ever on the alert. Railway officials and *cantonniers* of the line volunteered their services towards what became a labor of love, and devoted the ample time left on their hands by the temporary lightening of their duties to amateur inquisition. "Our own correspondents" and their military friends were always being marched off and moved on. If they were pounced on near the capital, they were straightway dragged before the local areopagites, to be dismissed with emphatic warnings not to do it again. If stopped near the frontiers, their officious guardians gravitated dangerously in the direction of the French outposts. Sensible men began to find out that the safest thing they could do was to stay quietly in the city, and amuse themselves in winnowing the grains of wheat from the bushels of chaff. Shrewd men with easy consciences saw that Luxembourg was the place to manufacture the most sensational of letters with the slightest of strain on the invention. Long after the French camp at Sierk had been broken up, and the tide of war had rolled back upon the Upper Moselle, Englishmen still mustered strong in the Hôtel de Cologne and the Hôtel de Luxembourg, and Luxembourg was a natural point of departure for any Englishman starting on the track of the war, especially as it stands on the shortest road to Treves.

As you leave the Luxembourg railway-station, again you are conscious of the shadow of the war. The suburban cafés and garden beer-houses, with the shutters up on their sightless windows, stare at you vacantly. A dull approach between blank walls prepares you to be charmed and startled by the view it leads to. As you drive on to the magnificent bridge flung over the chasm that yawns to the north of the town, you see art assisting wild nature in a luxury of colossal fortification: perpendicular scarps and counterscarps, and curtains that, except for the size of the individual stones that

face them, remind you more of the works of ancient Egypt than any thing modern; gigantic bastions, frowning down on the massive demilunes, powder-magazines, and store-houses, that shelter in the depths of the valley below, by the banks of the little stream that trickles among the carrot-beds and cabbage-gardens. You see vast casemates given over to solitude, and countless snarling embrasures, from which the teeth have dropped out. You look backward on a wealth of outworks that exhaust every technical term in the glossary of scientific defense. Ravines of the kind run round three sides of the rocky table-land crowned by the upper town; and on the fourth, where it would be easily accessible, ingenuity had exhausted itself to solve the problem of impregnability. Of course, beyond all is the chain of detached forts, that elaborate modern development of the mediæval barbican—each in itself a fortress of the third or fourth rank. And all this picturesque mass of unproductive labor is doomed, although very probably not irrevocably. It is true, since the outbreak of the war, the inmates have begun to realize the risks of inhabiting the strongest fortress in North Europe. The work of demolition most deliberately pursued for three or four years past has lately received a stimulus, and the little Duchy is putting its frightened shoulder in earnest to the ponderous wheel. With their modest means it is hard for the natives' best exertions to make it revolve quickly enough to keep pace with events. There were some two hundred men busily at work, and they looked like gangs of industrious fleas hopping about these mountains of earth and stone. "It is hard for us poor people to have to pay to remove the burden they have charged on our shoulders," remarked a respectable workman, smoking his evening pipe, and watching the cascades of brown earth and avalanches of stones tumbling into the abyss below. So it is, and the more so, that, if the cession of Luxembourg should chance to be made a condition of the peace, the place will unquestionably be replaced in its rank as the first fortress of Germany. As yet the demolitions have done more harm to the promenades than the fortifications, and it would cost but a comparative bagatelle to take up the broken loops in their armor of proof.

The proprietor is an absentee, and resides in his capital of the Hague, and, to the casual observer at least, his vicegerents appear to administer the Duchy in most patriarchal simplicity. They ought to understand thoroughly the sentiments of the people, for they give themselves every opportunity of hearing their candid expression. Every evening the ministry and the military commandant come to unbend at the café in the bosom of the people. In piping times of peace, the café looks as if it might be drowsy enough; with war on the neighboring frontier, almost within the sound of the guns of Thionville, and with an uneasy suspicion that they and their country were among the stakes of the game that is being played there, the blood of the people bubbles up to fever heat, and as evening goes on, its voice rises to a shriek and a bellow. As telegrams come in *via* Paris or Berlin — for official intelligence travels the few miles from Luxembourg to the seat of war by a considerable detour—the excitement deepens. But it grows to insanity as gentlemen pant in, dishevelled and dusty, who have passed the day in amateur reconnaissances. One of them gasps out that he has spent the afternoon on an eminence before Thionville, and seen with his own eyes a regiment of Prussian cuirassiers crumpled up like the sheet of newspaper he crushes emphatically in his hand. Another has penetrated into Thionville itself: strange to say, he has seen or heard nothing of this tragic episode, but he brings the news of a general action on the side of Metz imminent for the following morning. So it goes on; every man who presumes to discuss the situation is bound to contribute his own item of war news, and the more startling it is, the more chance he has of edging in a couple of sentences. There is an honorable understanding that no one is to be brought to book for the exploded fiction he may have propagated yesterday. Sometimes these quidnuncs lie with a diabolical circumstance which produces most unhappy results. The Hôtel de Cologne is filled with French ladies, refugees from Metz or Thionville, who, in colors or in black, fête or mourn the fluctuations of the war. One fine forenoon the report of a French success had brought out at the dinner-table a whole bevy of brilliant toilets, and the faces of the wearers for once were comparatively cheerful. As the soup is removed, a French station-master in retreat bustles in, evidently bubbling over with the excitement of being the bearer of evil tidings. His face alone was enough to give a shock to the party, and it did. Having preluded artistically, so as to hang them all up on the sharpest tenter-hooks of expectation, he opened his budget, and the contents came with a rush. "Surprise. Overwhelming numbers of the enemy! Two French regiments surrounded by three German divisions—prodigies of valor—heaps of dead—150th Hussars cut to pieces to a man!" One elderly lady turns pale

as death, clutches at the table, stares wildly at the messenger of evil, rises and totters from the room. Her daughter follows, dramatically applying her handkerchief to her eyes, heaving up an admirable imitation of a sob, stealing a glance at the mirror as she passes. The unhappy lady has her only son in the ill-fated regiment, and hurries off towards Thionville to pay the last sad tribute to his loved remains. She returns late next day, having learned that the regiment in question is at that moment in Alsace, and that her son, for all any one knows to the contrary, carries himself to a marvel. And the following day, at dinner, she sees the veracious station-master in his accustomed place, opening his diurnal budget without the slightest shade of embarrassment.

In these days, as the Germans had put a girdle between the French armies and their sympathizers in the Duchy, the vigilance exercised on the movements of neutrals had slackened. Accordingly, we could plan a little demonstration on our own account, and improvised an excursion to a Pisgah christened the Johannisberg. We were assured it stood out bastion-like on the frontier, and commanded an uninterrupted view to the gates of Thionville, and far beyond. My companions were a distinguished novelist and journalist, and a gallant officer in the Indian service.

Arrived at the frontier station, Esch, we found ourselves on the right flank of the eminence in question, and something like a mile from its base. Very promising it looked, and our hopes rose the higher that, having dispatched the train and their work for some hours to come, all the *personnel* of the station joined our party. The muscular station-master strode off gallantly at our head, assisting his steps with the stem of a youthful tree, like a modern Hercules on his way to draw the wood on the hill for lions and hydras. Thanks to the weight of his club, Hercules soon fell into the rear, and a passing shower drove the rest of the native contingent to refuge in some neighboring farm-buildings. Meantime, the three impetuous Englishmen had breasted the hill-side through thick-wove hedges and dripping copse-wood up to the chapel that stood on the summit. So far so good: but the little chapel was imbosomed in wood, and so were we; and when our perseverance was finally rewarded by finding a peep-hole through the foliage, our curiosity had to limit itself to the sight of a quiet Luxembourg village in the valley below, and some poplars, a mile and a half off, on the top of an opposite hill. What the Luxembourgois, who knew the place well, had hoped to see when they got up there, it would have been hard to say. Perhaps they stimulated their imaginations, or salved their consciences by concocting bulletins of the war in a place where they might possibly have seen something of it, had the topography of the country been totally different. Even when we had operated our advance on the second ridge, all we had before us was a notch in a third one, through which we could distinguish something like a road and a double line of poplars. A distant cloud of dust suggested, of course, a cavalry engagement, and a cloud of smoke a cannon-fire, which ought to have been audible if it had not been blowing something very like a gale. Of course we ought to have laid our joint fancy under contribution for the details of the campaign, and carried the story of the action back to the café in Luxembourg, and then transmitted it in sensational letters to the English journals. Unfortunately, our friend the Captain carried a field-glass, popularly known in English circles at Luxembourg as "la Mitrailleuse," and regarded with extreme suspicion by the authorities as some new and truculent weapon of offense. "La Mitrailleuse" disengaged a flock of sheep and their attendant shepherds from the haze of dust—strong presumptive evidence that there was no hungry army in the immediate vicinity of the mutton, while the smoke detached itself from smouldering brush-wood. Candor compels the confession that our expedition, in point of military interest, was a comparative failure; although, I have every reason to believe, it contrasted favorably in incident with many on which able correspondents have founded the entertaining and instructive letters which have given us so vivid an idea of the progress of the campaign.

CHAPTER III.

TREVES.

LEAVING Luxembourg, with its safe excitement, its ample supplies of daily rumor, its war correspondents sitting in the snug seclusion of their chambers cooking up *réchauffés* of *canards*, and spicing them to suit the palates of the public, was like taking a plunge in the dark unknown. Beyond the Prussian frontier all was myth and mystery; the only thing absolutely certain was that there our sorrows would begin. We braced ourselves to stern inquisition by frontier officials, and perpetual arrests by the subordinate minions of power. No conveyances, public or private; hotels turned to barracks, and

railway-stations to hospitals; roads blocked with supplies, and reserves pressing forward to the front. In short, as every one agreed, what we had to look forward to was sustained suffering without the dignity of danger. Unless we could bribe one of the rare peasants left to till the deserted fields—my Indian friend was to accompany me as far as Saarbruck—we should have to make our way to Treves as we best could, carrying our own baggage. Light as it was, plodding along the level highway, knapsack-laden, by no means entered into our arrangements, if substitutes were by any means to be provided.

Accordingly, the revulsion of our wrought-up feelings was ineffable when we descended from the railway-carriage at Wasserbillig into the arms of a jolly Luxembourgois, the proprietor of a comfortable little public omnibus, who received us as if it were us in particular he had been waiting for. A few minutes more and we were rattling over the bridge on the Sauer, and past the black and white barrier posts of Prussia. The only signs of an exceptional state of things were the girders of the small iron railway-bridge lifted off and laid by the side of the line: not even a picket of observation, in the shape of a pair of policemen; not a solitary myrmidon of the Zollverein. The only result of the war had been the suspension of such frivolous checks on free circulation. It was humiliating; but the German Confederation actually seemed to ignore our advent, or regard it with supreme indifference. And this is, perhaps, the place to say that, in the course of the tour, that first impression deepened gradually to conviction. You might have forgotten your passport at the passport-agent's for any service it was. Whenever you were asked for papers, it was a military pass, and not the autographs of consuls in London, that satisfied the scruples that arrested you.

It was a pleasant drive down the Moselle valley, between the half-reaped crops and under the rich fruit-trees. Our only fellow-passengers were a respectable woman in the deepest of mourning, and her little girl, decked out like a stage peasant, in the gayest of white and crimson and silver. It was for national, and not domestic bereavements, the mother dressed in black. Our complacent coachman pulled up at Dorf Igel, to let us renew our acquaintance with the venerable Roman monument. The eagle that had perched placidly on the top for the last seventeen hundred years, until he was winged by a French shot in the beginning of the century, had perhaps a narrow escape the other day. It was easy to conceive a sanguinary battle of Igel fought on the line of the Moselle, with French and German guns in position on the lofty natural earth-works on either bank, while shot and shell made ducks and drakes on the blood-stained bosom of the river.

Past the handsome railway-station at Treves, where, for the first time, we saw the flag of the hospitals and ambulances, the red cross on the white ground, flying from a side-building; a crush of sheep and a cloud of dust choking the bridge and us, and out of the cloud a husky voice demanding what we had to declare. The zealous official ought to have learned to recognize them by this time, but he had assumed the two enormous cases of lint and bandages on the roof to be our private luggage. Perhaps the palpable darkness that shrouded them made his error excusable.

In the streets of Treves, among the decently-to-do women, at any rate, black was the only wear. In strange contrast were the gay flags, the North and South German colors, that waved from the housetops or the windows. At its time of life, the second oldest city in Europe may be excused for being drowsy, and lagging a little in arrear of modern progress; and Treves is never lively. But now all trade seemed well-nigh at a standstill, and men seemed as scarce on the pavements as in the fields through which we had driven. The fact is, these first impressions at Treves were corrected by subsequent ones, and gave a very unfair impression of the drain upon the manhood of Germany. Lying immediately behind the line of advance and the scenes of butchery, it had become a dépôt on which the armies and the hospitals drew for all manner of labor.

The war had placed the staff of the Trierischer Hof, on something more than a peace establishment. There was but a head-waiter and an aid-de-camp, and these not overworked. Yet every thing was as comfortable as it used to be, with the difference that you were made at once the spoiled children of the establishment and embarrassed with attentions. When the hotel had a stranger to welcome within its gates, it clearly made the most of him. Yet not so long ago, as the waiter assured us, there had been bustle enough, and too much. His Royal Highness, Prince Friedrich Karl, in this room; his Excellency General So-and-So in that; three or four officers in each of the others, and 140,000 men of all arms billeted in the town. That was when the Paris press was playing hide-and-seek with the German army, when Von Goebel had stuck up a scarecrow in the woods by Saarbruck, and through the district *perdu* of the Eifel 50,000 German horse were silently picking their way to the front.

When the path of our adventurous advance bristled—to plagiarize on the Emperor's proclamation—with obstacles, a military safe-conduct was our earliest care. At the commandant's head-quarters in the market-place, every thing wore the quasi-military air of a country in deliberate course of mobilization. It was hard to tell who was a soldier or civilian, to guess at grades or ranks. In a little room on the ground-floor opening directly from the *Place*, a middle-aged man, surrounded by bloused peasants, sat at a table. With his worn look and awkwardly sitting uniform, he reminded one of a midnight masquerader caught and mobbed in midday's sunshine. Beyond him, at another, was a young major, looking the soldier all over, busying himself with a knot of regulars. He at last found a moment to listen to our wishes. He was courteous, but profoundly easy as to our safety, and supremely indifferent as to our danger. Certainly we might go to Saarbruck: unpleasant journey as times went, and frightfully tedious. If we wanted a military pass, doubtless the commandant there would supply it; and again he was busied with his books and notes. The result of the interview, unsatisfactory as it was in one sense, was instantaneous relief in another. The imaginary bonds which, as we had been persuaded, fettered us in our movements, snapped and dropped from our limbs. We were free agents, and for the future might rely upon ourselves as we had been wont to do, without counting with authorities. So we dismissed from our mind all idea of interviews with the commandant of Saarbruck or any one else, and fell back, until further notice, upon the customary rôle of British tourists.

However, as neither *Bradshaw* nor the *Telegraph* were of much use in these times, we sought a personal interview with the railway-clerk. There would be a train to Saarbruck next morning at 5 30, and tickets would be issued as usual. The only shadow that lingered over our brightening prospects was a vague apprehension of short commons and irregular rations, on the way we were going—an urgent reason for making the most of the flesh-pots of Treves and the excellent German dinner provided at the one o'clock *table d'hôte*. The party, consisting of citizens, was select in number and earnestly patriotic in feeling. The gentleman next me apologized very unnecessarily for the strength of the sentiments he expressed, by explaining he had a couple of sons and three nephews in the field, to say nothing of a favorite pair of carriage-horses. Next the waiter struck in to inform us that the hotel omnibus horses had gone the same way, and had exchanged the familiar streets of Treves for the interminable *chaussées* of France. Where they were then he knew nothing, he added, and a tear dimmed his eye. Doubtless he pictured his sleek old friends, tethered to the wheel of a baggage-wagon, picking mouldy rushes under the dripping poplars of a strange land. The young waiter, his assistant, an exceedingly nice-looking lad, wore deep black, which was evidently no costume of ceremony, and went through his duties with a courage as creditable in its way as that which carried the heights of Spicheren. It was obviously terribly repugnant to him for the moment; and he was so greedy to pick up any rumors from the seat of war, or any speculation on the progress of the armies, that it was torture to drag himself out of earshot of the conversation. Then, as the others went out, our friend, the major of brigade, dropped in, and we improved our acquaintance. As we sipped our coffee and he swallowed down his dinner, he found time to deplore, with a comic resignation, the multifarious engagements of that eternal round of duties of his, and to theorize on the chances of the campaign. There were many wounded lying in Treves, he said, but few of them dangerously hurt. They did not send back the graver injuries to a town that, so far as railways went, was in a *cul de sac*. Then, almost in the middle of a sentence, and with the last mouthful of his meal, he rose, saluted, and with a curt and courteous apology disappeared, carrying away the latest *Graphic*, with its views of Saarbruck and the bridge.

No English tourist by the Black Gate, not a soul in the ample *enceinte* of the amphitheatre; and as for the Roman Baths, the guardian had left his little house and taken the keys with him. It was all as unnatural as if you had found an empty Park on a fine June afternoon, or no vehicles in Sutton on a Derby-day. But, on the other hand, there were signs of the times that had an interest of their own to us, who had not yet supped deep of sensations and horrors. In the first place were the frequent Lazzarette—Lazzarette is the rather repulsive name by which the Germans choose to christen their military hospitals. The red cross floated from all manner of buildings—from coquettish suburban houses, standing in green lawns in a blaze of flower-beds, to massive convents grimly turning their backs on the narrow streets, and shutting out life and liveliness with grated windows, blank walls, and ponderous swing-gates. Round the doors of the former lightly wounded men stood sunning themselves, with bandaged arms in slings, or hopping about on

crutches among the sparrows. There were *Krankenpfleger* by plenty, in ones, twos, and threes; those brethren of the rosy cross carrying the badge conspicuously on their arms. Here a sister of charity, with her book of devotion and her chaplet of beads, went gliding in round the scarcely-opened hospital doors; there, the door was flung wide back to admit a portly matron, who bustled in, followed by her daughters, bearing a basketful of comforts for the body. There had been few deaths, where serious wounds were the exception; yet in a corner of a church-yard we came upon a fresh cluster of new-made graves, and friendly hands had strewed flowers and laurels on the martyrs to the national cause.

Across the river, and you forget the cares lavished on invalids sent to the rear, in interesting yourself in the arrangements for provisioning the soldiers to the front. From the railway-station, for a long mile down the walnut avenue by the river bank, the road is cumbered with carts charged alternately with the means of sustaining life and inflicting death. With Luxembourg neutral, there is no railway communication between Treves and Germany east of Bingen. Had the railway from Cologne through the Eifel been completed instead of merely in course of construction, it might have accelerated by days the rapid advance of the Germans. Here are long lines of country wagons, driven for the most part by elderly peasants or hobbledehoys, all crowding up to the term of their tedious journey at the adjacent station. Some of them are piled full of long loaves, but slightly protected from the flying showers; but the loaves look as if they were as little likely to be damaged by the weather as the sandstone blocks from the neighboring quarries. There are bags of wheat, and sacks of potatoes, and casks of cartridges; but these last are protected with a care not wasted on the bread. Passing on and mounting the steep hill behind, to where the colossal red statue of the Virgin blushes to the evening sun like the rosy monuments of Petra, you can look tranquilly back on all the bustle you have extricated yourself from. Treves is as quiet as its suburb is noisily animated; the boat-building is suspended on the banks of the Moselle; few sailing-craft, and not one solitary raft, are floating on the river's bosom: no steamer blows off her steam by the bridge. Down the valley from Conz, a train of railway-wagons of interminable length drags itself along in the wake of the solitary engine, like a broken-back snake; here and there alone the parallel road, slowly moving pillars of dust indicate the herds of cattle that are trudging footsore towards the field-shambles. Taking the descent very easily, you reach the railway station full half an hour before the train, and, pending its tardy arrival, refresh yourself with beer in the *restauration*. In one corner of the hall is a pile of litters—mattresses in wicker-work frames with oil-skin hoods, carried on a couple of poles passed through hasps in the sides; in another a heap of canvas stretchers, some of them crimsoned with unpleasantly suggestive stains. The train comes in at last, empty, except for a dozen or so of lightly wounded men, who walk off with slight assistance. It was the first arrival of wounded we had seen; and, had you seen nothing more of the war, it must have sent you back to England with some faint conception of its horrors. As it was, looking back upon it afterwards was like recalling the cut finger of yesterday among the mortal scenes of a grand railway smash.

CHAPTER IV.

SAARBRUCK.

At 5 30 A.M. there was considerable confusion, but no great crowd, at the station. Tickets were duly issued; but for the moment there was no appearance of a train, although an engine was fussing about among the crowds of carriages shunted on the numberless lines of rails, most of them third-class, goods-vans, horse-boxes fitted up roughly with benches, or littered down with straw: these last were for transport of the wounded. It was an agglomeration of rolling-stock from every German line—Cologne, Minden, Munich, Stettin, Stuttgart; how the names on the carriages would have taxed the geographical attainments of a French field-marshal! And how he would have been scandalized by the numerous vehicles, German by right of conquest, bearing the familiar legend "Est de France," and with their capacity of transport indicated in kilogrammes on the corner! On every one of them was painted conspicuously the amount of animated war material they were warranted to carry—"forty men, or six horses;" "sixty men, or eight horses," etc. It was all of a piece with the carefully detailed Prussian organization. A train of carriages moves up: a rapid sum in simple addition, and the officer superintending tells off the precise number of men to fill it.

While thus exercising our powers of observation, our train had been formed; its numerous passenger-carriages absolutely insignificant in their proportion to the interminable goods-

trucks. *A la guerre comme à la guerre.* The conductor grinned at our putting out a feeler towards somewhat less Spartan accommodation by exhibiting the high-class tickets we had extravagantly purchased, and assured us we had but a Hobson's choice—a third-class carriage, or none at all. We felt ashamed of having attempted even that tacit remonstrance. It showed how human nature demoralizes under unlooked-for prosperity, and how easily the humble camp-follower resumed the airs of the full-blown tourist. Only the day before, and we should have gladly compounded for jolting to Saarbruck on the knife-board of an ammunition-cart.

It was a strange mixture in the train. Soldiers and peasants; *Krankenpfleger* of all ranks and many races, most of them Germans, a good many Belgians, and some Dutch. The occupants of our compartment were, for the most part, small peasant proprietors bound to stations on the line, but there were one or two superior *employés* in the great industrial establishments of the Saar valley. Then, for the first time, I fairly experienced that extreme courtesy and thoughtful good-nature which made the whole tour as pleasant as a war-tour could be made. Proud of their successes, and the patriotism and organization that had won them, exulting in the fair horizon opening to them beyond the sea of blood and the smoke of battle, the Germans seemed to take your visiting them, in the circumstances, as a personal compliment, if not something more. Turning out of the valley of the Moselle by the banks of the Saar, the railway carries you through scenery of extraordinary beauty. We chanced to have taken our seats on the side of the carriage where we saw more of the profitable than the ornamental. We looked out on vineyard terraces, instead of hills wooded to their crests; up at trim stone walls, instead of down over precipices upon the river. Moreover, the sun was beating into one's eyes, and there were no curtains. The natives at the opposite window absolutely insisted upon our taking their seats; while the peasants on either side emulously moved along to make way for us. We thanked them as best we could with what they seemed most to appreciate—our honest admiration of their country.

Any one who knows much of the Rhineland must have found out that its softest beauties modestly nestle away by the banks of its tributary streams. After the "bit" by Nonnenwerth and the Siebengebirge, the reach by St. Goar and the Lurlei, there is nothing on the great river to compare with scenes on the Moselle, the Aar, and the Nahe. But perhaps the valley of the Saar surpasses them all; and had not the coal-fields of the basin put a practical stamp on their aspirations, their ambition to annex it might have upset our preconceptions as to the love of the French for the beautiful. Not that a *corps d'armée* advancing by that road on the Rhine would have made a pleasant summer tour of it, although they might have counted upon excitement in abundance. The fortress of Saarlouis is the key of the lock; but, even had that been taken or masked, it would have been hard work forcing or turning the successive wards. The river flows by a series of natural positions, and German tenacity would have made the ground the march lay over horribly holding. From picturesque Saarburg, with its mediæval fortress of the prince-bishop of Tours, up to Saarlouis, the modern fortress of the kings of Prussia, the river runs out and in by the feet of hills wooded to their summits with beech and oak, scarred here and there with red precipices. A veritable red land, although not in the Suabian circle: red rocks and red soil, and a red river in flood after a heavy rainfall; red brick manufactories, where the red clay is wrought to porcelain, and workmen—for the establishments were at work, although on half strength—smeared with red from the caps to the boots. Between these industrial centres the river was lovely and peaceful enough, with kingfishers and water-weeds flitting about red stones patched with orange lichens. "*Sehr fischreich*," remarked one of our local acquaintances; and so it seemed to be; for wherever it narrowed to a pond, a fisher was pretty sure to be at work with his primitive tub and sink-net, and every now and then, where it spread to a shallow, there was a solemn heron, with his eye riveted eagerly on the muddy waters.

The valley widens to a plain where Saarlouis shelters among its earth-works and ditches. In the swampy fields great herds of cattle plashed disconsolately about. In scenery, climate, accessories, and every thing else, the place was a study for a Dutch landscape-painter. The prominent points, staring coats, and fevered eyes of the animals penned by the side of the line, showed that broken weather and long marches were telling on their constitutions as on those of the troops. The best you could wish for them and those destined to eat them was that they might have a prompt dispatch, and be speedily converted into rations.

The platform swarmed with soldiers, wearing all manner of regimental numbers on their shoulder-straps. Many of them seemed there as simple amateurs, although it may be assumed they were only suffered to cumber the place on

some legitimate pretext. Many others were destined to be fellow-passengers of ours, for they had their full field equipment with them—the cowskin knapsack, with the bright tin dishes strapped outside, and a pair of spare boots secured on the top; the overcoat, compressed into the tightest of rolls, secured together at the ends, and worn across the body as a belt; the ample gourd, and the inevitable tobacco-pouch; and last, not least, the needle-gun, with its sword-bayonet and the roomy cartridge-box. One or two of them—men of the locality, doubtless—were the centre of little groups of weeping women and sobbing children. A good many more clasped in theirs the hand of a *chère amie.* These were the ruptures of a garrison flirtation more or less serious; and the heroes seemed much more animated at the prospect of glory to the front than depressed by thoughts of the girls they left behind them.

In process of time, these martial travellers were ushered to their seats by martial masters of the ceremonies. "Room for the military!" exclaimed a commanding voice at the door of our compartment; and while we civilians heaped ourselves and our packages away at one side, three soldiers were added to our party. Notwithstanding the relentless rains, there had, as yet, been little sickness in the fields; but some there had been. These three men had been invalided and sent back to Saarlouis, and now they were under orders for Bingen. Very good types of three classes of the ordinary German rank and file they were. One looked the born soldier all over, with "a lurking devil in his eye," as if he would just as soon as not walk up to a battery; and an occasional good-humored twinkle in the corner of it, as if he could take things tolerably contentedly in the roughest bivouac, although, *en revanche*, unless sharply looked after, he would attend to his little comforts and luxuries in the first occupied town. Another, a good-looking, broad-shouldered man, of some five-and-thirty, had a profoundly pensive expression, and you could see plainly his mind was far away in some distant homestead, and just as plainly that the thought of all he was fighting for would make him, perhaps, the more formidable enemy of the two in the hour of battle.

> "More dreadful far his ire,
> Than theirs who, scorning danger's name,
> In eager mood to battle came,
> Their valor like light straw on flame,
> A fierce but fading fire."

The third was what many German soldiers look when regarded as individual specimens—a lout. Mass these men, and leaven them through others, and you can trace no flaw—if flaws there be—in the formidable machine they are welded into. You may smile at him as he slouches about the platform, but see him with his fellows, and, as *Figaro* said of the corps of sapeurs-pompiers, whose units all Paris welcomed and made fun of, "*Je vous jure que personne ne songe en rire.*" The professional soldier gave us an animated account of the storming of the Spicherenberg, and not the worst one of the very many I have heard since. A tender of the cognac-flask, thankfully accepted, bound them heart and soul to us for the rest of the journey; and it was curious to remark the native politeness with which even the lout sought to repay the slight attention by insisting on relieving us of our knapsacks and umbrellas, and handing them out after us at Saarbruck station.

"Saarbruck's reputation has been made by the war, like that of far more insignificant places. Yet it was not only a thriving but a handsome little town, and deserved much more than a mere local reputation. With its suburb of St. Johann, it sweeps round the Saar in a couple of crescents, and town and suburbs are linked by a couple of handsome bridges. So far as the historical "bombardment" went, Saarbruck has received a good deal of undeserved compassion, and the French a great deal of unmerited obloquy. The free use of the railway-station, set as it is at the junction of three lines of railway, was a point of great strategical consequence to the Germans, whose trains could be seen from the opposite heights plying with soldiers and stores. Accordingly, the French got their guns in position, and very naturally shelled it. But their practice was good, though the range was long; and only one or two houses facing the heights, in the street leading up from the suburb to the station, seemed to have suffered materially from their fire; only the Gasthof zum Pflug was abandoned; a shot or two had gone clean through the upper stories, and some others had knocked the cornice about and damaged the roof. The façade of the handsome railway-station and one of the twin towers bore marks of the shells; tumbling *débris* had broken a good many of the panes in the glass roof; but as for the heaps of smouldering ruins that appeared in the graphic pictures of some of "our correspondents," these must have been photographed by an angry fancy or under the influence of a nightmare. There was some little firing on the town afterwards, while the Prussians still hung upon that bank of the river and made a defensible post of it; but certain it is there were little or no traces visible of any damage done. On the whole, Saarbruck has got

off exceedingly well, considering by what a marvellous chance it escaped hostile occupation. Frossard was in overwhelming force just in front, kept at bay by the mirage of an imaginary German army. A single battalion of the 40th, one or at most two squadrons of cavalry, multiplied themselves so adroitly, that the French general had no conception of the real state of things. When it was decided to smear the unfortunate young Prince with that baptism of blood which it is almost ungenerous to refer to now, the Germans had nothing for it but to make a demonstration on the strength of the force attributed to them, and then withdraw. But reverse the situation, and conceive a German commander hoodwinked so successfully for days as to the real numbers of his enemy, and that with light-cavalry in plenty, and in a district where the natives on either side of the border-line talk a common language! The fighting in the town was not very serious, and those of the inhabitants who were in the streets managed to shelter themselves in doorways while it was going forward. After it was over, men from either army came in under flags of truce to reclaim the dead and wounded. It must have been a strange scene, as eye-witnesses described it, that of the enemies meeting in the streets fresh from the affair. It was then the Prussians picked up the correspondent of the "Temps." It may be questioned whether that gentleman was not entitled to the privilege of the white flag, and so it seems to have struck his captors on second thoughts, for they speedily dismissed him, although his information might have been of no small importance to his friends. They had little reason for anxiety on that score. The French general would learn nothing of the German strength, even on such excellent authority. By-the-way, the dignity of the grand nation and of the Parisian press did not suffer in the person of their captive representative. Brought before the general, the prisoner drew himself up, twisted his mustache, presented himself as a military man *en retraite*; reminded the enemy that the prisoners taken at Niederbronn had been received with distinguished hospitality at the table of the French marshal, and intimated that he must insist upon identically similar treatment.

The real ground for compassionating the people of Saarbruck is not the wanton destruction of their pretty town, but its sudden conversion into a hospital. It is worse than sad to be swamped in a flood of wounded men, with little hope of its slacking while the war shall last. There seemed a chance of famine, and almost a certainty of pestilence following in the train of the ambulances. It is horrible to be crowded out of your homes by the dying; to have to listen, in the quiet of evening, to a horrible concert of moans and groans; to have your streets in the day-time filled with constant funeral trains, passing the overcrowded church-yards on their way to the dead-pits in the neighboring country. Yet what is to the reflecting, perhaps, more melancholy still, is the inevitable demoralization of the lower classes by the vicinity of battle-fields, and the familiarizing them with appalling scenes of blood, and death, and pillage.

For ourselves, if we had apprehended famine, we experienced nothing of it. If scarcity had threatened once, now supplies had come pouring in, and there was no lack of food, or, so far as we could see, of luxuries. There was no getting accommodation in the snug-looking hotels, of which there are several; they were filled from cellar to attic with military men, and friends and attendants of the wounded. But Herr Guepratte—civility itself amidst all his bustle—spared a man to hunt us up billets, and over the Café Venn we actually found a spacious double suite of rooms. The civil family there apologized for the bill of fare, very unnecessarily, on the ground that the house was nothing more than what it professed to be, and merely provisionally a hotel, and we made our pleasant early dinner with a party of military surgeons, who, strange to say in the circumstances, confined themselves during the meal entirely to general subjects.

CHAPTER V.

SPICHEREN AND FORBACH.

Our medical acquaintances had assured us that driving about the battle-field would be no economy of time, considering the state of the cross-roads, and our medical acquaintances proved to be quite right. So, as light was precious, we cut dinner short, and started in company of a German with whom we had cemented fast friendship in the course of the morning's travel. Saarbruck lies surrounded by heights on all sides, those to the south and west immediately dominating the town. The houses of the steep street thin gradually out into detached villas and straggling cottages, until finally it becomes a country road rising rapidly to the *col*, over which it is carried to Forbach. On the heights immediately to the right of this *col* stands the Bellevue, the little public-house made historical by frequent allusions in

the earliest letters from the seat of war. To the right of it, again, lies the square, "Exercirplatz," hedged in by trim lines of poplars. The Bellevue commands, indeed, a superb view of the battle-field. The road you came by dips sharp down from the ridge you stand on, and then, trending away to the right, runs for some six miles straight as an arrow-shot into Forbach. Looking diagonally across it towards the left, and over a bare plain of unfenced corn-fields, the eye is brought up by the sheer face of a broad square bluff, running boldly out from the range of wooded hills that follows the line of the Forbach road, till they blend with the high conical one that backs up the town. That spur you are looking across to is the Spicheren heights, the key of the French position on the day of Forbach. To the right of it, as I have said, the steep range of hills runs back to Forbach; to its left the ground dips gradually, until about half a mile off the hills lose themselves in the meadows. To right and left, from plain to sky-line, the hills in general are densely wooded: the Spicherenberg alone is bare of cover, except for a solitary orchard to its left; while over its brow you look across to a naked table-land, dotted only with a few fruit-trees and a group of poplars. So steep is it in places, that no soil will hold on the gravel-banks; wherever industry had a chance, it has contrived to cultivate patches of green. It was against this tremendous natural wall, over this exposed plain, through a storm of shot, shell, and rifle-balls, that the Germans launched their columns; and we followed as nearly as we could in the line of their advance. An experienced English officer, who had witnessed the whole fight from first to last, assured me later that, in his opinion, had the Germans made their approach on the right flank of the French position, attacking from the foot of the hill to the left of the Spicheren, the heights might have been carried at a great economy of life. Knowing little of tactics, I felt fully inclined to agree with him when I saw the ground. His idea is the more plausible, that it seems certain that the Germans were drawn into making a battle of it. It was only towards three o'clock that General Von Goebel came on the ground and assumed the direction of the attack. Be that as it may, it can be scarcely a question now that all the lives lost on the Spicheren were well expended. Taken in conjunction with the twin engagement of the Geisberg, the shock it gave the *morale* of the French had an incalculable influence on the result of the war. Intrenched on the Spicheren, they laughed at the insanity, the "*outrecuidance*" of those Prussians who came to deliver themselves into their hands. Afterwards, in their headlong flight through the woods of St. Avold, they would have called it insanity to re-form among the rifle-pits with which these tremendous positions were everywhere honey-combed.

Crossing the plain in question, perhaps the most sensational souvenir we came upon was the last of the horses which were still in course of burial. But there was an abundance of other relics of one sort or another: knapsacks torn open, beaten into the mud by rain and footsteps; German helmets and French shakoes, the eagles on the latter generally torn away, and not a few of the one and the other drilled with the fatal round hole; cooking-utensils and soup-tins trodden under foot; gourds by the score, cartridge-boxes by the hundred, shreds of uniform, broken straps, and, above all, scraps of weather-beaten paper by the ream. At the foot of the heights, we picked up a convalescent soldier of the 40th who had been through all the earlier part of the engagement, and been wounded on the plateau, and whose evidence, tested by cross-examination, bore all the stamp of veracity; still weak, he found it hard work dragging himself up the heights, for the rain was falling thick, and the ground was heavy. Fresh as we were, we did not find it particularly easy ourselves, and yet we could take our time and stop to breathe ourselves among the graves of the men whose comrades had carried it. It was only rain-drops, not French bullets, that were beating down upon us. On the first mound we came to, the wooden cross bore the legend: "*Hier ruhen in Friede Hauptman Olaff*,' etc. Another pull, and we were in the orchard of cherry-trees, their twigs cut across, and their limbs maimed and mangled, while the balls had stripped the bark from the trunks in rings, until, with the yellow stripes on the brown background, they looked like so many frontier barrier-posts. Then, in a lap of the ground on the face of the hill, we came on a light earth-work. Then upon more graves—twenty-eight, sixty-nine, eighty men lying in them. Earth breast-works ran all round the crest of the hill, now and again in double lines. In fact, the French had brought art and science to the aid of nature, and done nearly all that men could do to make a most formidable position impregnable. No wonder that so many of the assailants were shot in the head, feet, and hands. Firing down over these intrenchments, bullets could hardly fail of finding bloody billets; the head "protected" the body, while the climbing feet and hands were out of the line of cover. If the French fired a little wild, their shots only missed the stormers to tell on the

supports. Doubtless the German shells had done something towards clearing out the intrenchments and sweeping the plateau, or no mortal man could have lived to reach them. But one can only offer this dilemma to the French: either their fire was fairly dominated by that of the Germans in the artillery duel—which they deny—or the Germans drove their enemy from an intrenched position, nearly perpendicular, strongly protected by batteries in full activity. Not the least wonderful feat of that marvellous day was the dragging up a couple of German field-pieces, and getting them into position on the plateau. When the French guns withdrew through Spicheren village, on the line of Forbach, their shot, sweeping over the heights, went pitching on the plain below. The result was that the Prussian wounded suffered heavily. The best that could be done for them was to drag them forward under the shelter of the heights, for there was only greater danger towards the rear. A friend had a wounded soldier killed in his arms as he was raising him from the ground, and volunteers assisted at the work of mercy at no little personal peril. Yet there were women there as active as the men; and one in especial made herself conspicuous as she moved about with her water-bottle through shell and rifle-balls, as if she were really a ministering spirit invulnerable to mortal missiles.

On the table-land above were the traces of the deserted camp—the withered boughs stuck into the ground, the cooking trenches, the charred ashes of the fires. The battle had raged fiercely in the skirts of the wood to the left, as you could tell from the bullet-marks on the trees and the cartridge-cases that strewed the ground so thickly. Here lay a pile of French shakos; then you came on a ditch choked with heaps of *débris* of the battle-field, knapsacks and clothes, with boots and brushes. Farther on towards the village was another huge square grave-mound; and a little apart a smaller one. A French colonel and his son slept together on the spot where they had fallen. The retreating troops had been followed up through Spicheren village. Judging by appearances, slight stand had been made there, although the church-walls and windows had suffered. In the gardens that came up to the houses, French beans some weeks old clung to their poles in wild luxuriance; and the potato-patches had neither been trampled nor, strange to say, robbed. The rapid chase had probably followed close on the retreat, one and the other keeping to the road.

The church stands close to the corner of the village you enter by. Become successively, by the chances of war, a surgery and a dead-house, it had again recovered its sacred character. It was Sunday afternoon, and the melancholy jingle of the bells was not out of keeping with the ghastly trench half-filled in over one hundred and nine of the fallen, which yawned by the east end, waiting for the doomed men in the village. One of them, a Frenchman, had already come for his turn, and lay under a blanket in the adjoining shed, sharing it with a pile of blood-stained stretchers. Within the building seats and benches had been replaced, and all signs of its recent use cleared away, as far as possible, although on some of the boards there were stains there was no washing out. Men, for the most part in black blouses, and women each wearing a black ribbon or some such sign of mourning, were flocking in and ranging themselves on opposite sides. The officiating priests seemed oppressed by the solemnity of the scenes they ministered among: the women were grave and devout; as for the men, use and coarser organization had naturally bred indifference; like their vegetables, they raised their heads after the passage of the storm as if nothing had happened; they whispered and laughed and nudged each other as they pointed to the strangers and their Prussian guide. With all these grotesque incongruities, you felt you were never likely to assist again at a more impressive service. The tone of the organ must have been really as wretched as the execution of the performer; yet the notes seemed to chime in with the solemn memories attaching to the building, until they rolled round the whitewashed walls in a wail of intense melancholy.

The village streets are broad and steep; a narrow paved causeway in the middle, sloping to a deep gutter at the sides, and flanked by a wide space, strewed with primitive ploughs and harrows, broken cart-wheels and piles of firewood, and patrolled by gaunt grunting swine. The houses were more German than French, with their steep red roofs and broad eaves, and whitewashed gables checkered with inlaid beams. Barns, their end formed of a pair of huge swinging doors opening upon the road, alternated with the dwelling-houses. Over each of these was displayed the flag of the lazzarette; the doors stood wide open, to give free admission to the air; while before each a Prussian sentinel leaned his chin wearily on the muzzle of his needle-gun, or sauntered carelessly along, kicking pebbles into the swollen drains. We crossed to the nearest one, directly opposite the church-yard door, and looked in upon a double row of beds, about a dozen of them on either hand, and each with its occupant. Naturally all these men,

left in the very heart of the battle-field, were among the desperately wounded. Had you not known you were in Spicheren you could have told as much as that at a glance. With a solitary exception—a man with his head swathed in bandages, straining his eyes over a book in the dim light at the back of the barn—not a face among them showed consciousness of our presence as our figures darkened the doorway. If their glance met yours, it never rested there; it went wandering vacantly about on an objectless errand, or gazed wildly beyond you, far away into some other world. Surest test of their hopeless state, there was not a cigar among the whole of them; and tobacco is the sovereign anodyne that all these mangled men are constantly craving. But how can you smoke with a shot through the lungs, or when the volition is so enfeebled that you have neither thought nor energy to keep the cigar alight?

On the bed to the left, and full in the doorway, a single ray of light struggling to his face through the branches of the elm by the churchyard gate, lay a young Frenchman, Jules Raubin—so said the card by the bed-head. He was far past annoyance from the sun, had the light been stronger; for his eyes were closed, probably for the last time, and in his face was no sign whatever of pain. His features, sharpened by pain and wasting, were classic in almost faultless regularity; and if there was any symptom of consciousness, it was in the reflection of the faint sweet smile that flickered about his lips as if he were dreaming pleasantly. All the while he waved mechanically the green branch they had placed in his hand; but even as you looked the movement slackened, and you could see a ghastly change slowly draw itself, like a veil, over the pallor of his complexion—Poor Jules Raubin! It was a melancholy death-bed for one who looked as if he had been born for a happy life; and yet, as far as material comforts went, he was probably infinitely better off than thousands of his fellow-sufferers. Picked up and sheltered on the field he fell on, his sufferings had been comparatively softened to him, and in no hospital ward could he have hoped for a much more comfortable bed, although his mattress was stretched on an earthen floor. The stolid peasant nurse bent with some tenderness over his pillow, and passed her coarse hand gently enough across his forehead. As for Jules Raubin, had it been his mother or his betrothed who tended him, it would have been all the same to him.

In the next barn we came to, the cases were more mortal still. The shadow of death was heavy on every face that lay on the double row of pillows, broken in two places by ominous blanks. Selfishly speaking, the wretchedness of scenes like those of Spicheren was that you could offer no help—no more than empty sympathy. It was impossible to outrage a dying man with a commonplace remark. The Sister of Charity busying herself with one of the strongest of them found in him a distracted auditor. Pain was too strong for him: the cold sweat trickled profusely from his forehead, and I question much if he were conscious any one was reading to him or trying to clasp him by the hand.

It was eloquent of the gravity of the cases here, that three watchers were detached for attendance on about a score of wounded. It was a strange picture—it might have been a bit from Boccaccio—these three men busy with their cards at a table by the door, while the Angel of Death was fluttering his wings among the beds they were set to watch. They played on, duly calling the cards, as they slapped them softly down on the table, in a voice of suppressed excitement; and, meantime, one of the wounded had raised himself on hands and knees, and was shrieking horribly. It was clear he was delirious, and so the attendants said when we interrupted their game to call their attention to him, and his neighbors were very far past being disturbed by his cries. Yet the scene was horrible to nerves that were not case-hardened; and these piercing cries rang in one's ears long after we had left the village. After all, the callousness of the attendants, although revolting to new-comers, was only one of the subsidiary horrors inseparable from war. If a nurse were cursed with a stock of sensibility sufficient to survive all that these men must have witnessed since the evening of the battle, he would be utterly unfitted for his task. The beds were beautifully clean, and the bedding carefully smoothed. The men evidently discharged their duties conscientiously, although they sacrificed nothing to sentiment, and little to sensibility. Boors and peasants must learn to think lightly of human lives, when they see with what indifference their rulers sacrifice them by thousands.

We dropped our German friend at the outskirts of the village; and as our wounded Prussian had had more than enough of exercise, he took leave of us too, vaguely indicating to us the direction of Forbach. For some time we followed in the ruts of the French artillery wheels: some had kept to the lanes; others had held parallel lines across country. Here an earth-bank was tumbled down to bridge the ditch; there a low stone wall was breached. It was war-time, a conquered district, and a Sunday afternoon, and the country

was deserted: even with a flock of sheep we came on there was nothing but a dog on duty. From each ridge before us we expected to command a view of Forbach; from each we saw nothing but another one, limiting our prospect to a few hundred yards. At last a sharp dip landed us in a French village, nestled in walnut-trees and girdled with orchards. The women were standing in groups about their doors, chattering like jackdaws; the men—not very many of these—seated croaking like rooks in a row on the church-yard wall. The men were distant in their looks and manners, but not more so than the natives of a back-of-the-world village often are. The ladies volunteered a hearty *guten Abend*, and clamored against each other in directing us on our road. There was not a German uniform within many a kilometre. They probably took us for Germans walking in the rear of the invading host, and there seemed no reason why they should not have been eloquent of their patriotic animosity, if nothing worse; yet there and elsewhere in our walk we met nothing but civility, and we had repeatedly occasion to ask our way. We traversed more than one village; we took picturesque short cuts through the beech-woods. At length we struck the Sarguemines road, full eight kilometres on the wrong side of Forbach, and set ourselves, somewhat sulkily, to plod them out between the inevitable poplars. Nearly every second tree had the trunk grazed by the wheels of German wagons. French and Germans always, where practicable, drive them two abreast, and consequently the carriages are habitually jolting up against the trees. No wonder they carry a spare wheel in case of accident. That they hold together at all through a long campaign says every thing for the excellence of the workmanship.

Forbach, like Saarbruck, lies below wooded hills, that almost close upon it to the south. There is the long street, with some short side ones that are brought sharp up by the high ground before they have well started on their own account; a conspicuous church-tower or so, and some rather imposing houses in the outskirts. We came down from the table-land we had been wandering round, descending a steep pitch that turned the flanks of the woods clothing the western slopes and stretching back to Spicheren. We crossed at its southern end the valley traversed by the Saarbruck road, passed a couple of wooden field hospitals that had been hastily run up, met a couple of funerals on their way to the suburban cemetery, and found ourselves in the town. The street was sadly decked with flags, for each flag marked a lazaret. It swarmed with German soldiers, who blocked the pavements, and lolled out of the first-floor windows, and crowded the steps before the mairie, where the proclamations of King Frederick William were affixed in French and German. The number of eccentric offenses made capital under the new military code must have been exciting reading for the inhabitants.

It must be confessed, however, they were either accomplished hypocrites to a child, or else Lotharingia has no profound objection to German reannexation. The men circulated through their own streets with perfect freedom of action and manner, exchanging friendly words and nods with their new masters. The women, gathered in the open air, stood gossiping with their hands under their aprons and their heads in the air, watching their children crawling about with impunity among the German boots. There was little flirtation. Flirtation is rather at a discount among an army something smacking of the Puritan, profoundly impressed with the gravity of the struggle it has undertaken, and largely leavened, moreover, with family men. But, on the other hand, pretty young girls coquettishly attired, sauntered arm-in-arm along the pavements. If things had turned out the other way, and had the French been masters of Saarbruck, I question much if the Prussian maidens could have safely sunned their innocence and attractions in the eyes of Zouaves and Turcos.

Perhaps the trait of the occupation that was most borne home to a pair of muddy and thirsty pedestrians was that every café and beer-shop in the place was closed, or, at least, diverted to alien purposes. There were one or two inns, to be sure, but the passages were blocked with such dense masses of military that it seemed hopeless to try to force them. We stopped to recruit at a garden beer-house without the town, upon the Saarbruck road, and found it crowded to the door with civilians like ourselves. Of course the war was the theme of their talk; but had the French been across the Main, instead of the Germans over the frontier and in the middle of them, they could not, apparently, have discussed it in more entire enjoyment. Remarking our muddy boots, the host asked casually if we had come from Metz, just as if the road was open still, and no hostile division interposed between us and the maiden fortress. The man next us knew something more of the situation, for he remarked that he only wished the gentlemen had: he had a couple of brothers in the garrison, and would willingly give a hundred francs to have the last news from the town.

The battle had raged all along the seven kilometres of valley along which we walked back

to the "Bellevue." To right and left the fields were dotted with graves and crosses; here and there the dead had been buried actually on the border of the *Route Impériale*—a better guaranty, perhaps, for the inviolability of their resting-places. Then we came on farm-buildings that had been held and stormed, the doors and window-frames shivered into splinters, the tiles shattered, the walls set with bullet-marks as thick as the spots in a lady's muslin. Then a little inn, gutted and half-roofless; one or two seltzer-water bottles in a doorless cupboard, the only relics of its furniture. The French barrier-posts lay broken down, and the *octroi station* was the abomination of desolation. To the left, the vast furnaces in the works of Steyring had long gone out, and the streets of workmen's cottages stood well-nigh tenantless. Every here and there you crossed the track of the German guns, where they had emerged from the fields on to the high-road; and where the woods approached, you could see their edges fringed everywhere with the white cartridge-papers, marking the line where the French tide of war stood so long on the turn before it ebbed back upon Forbach and St. Avold. Last, and most repulsive of the sights of the day, was the great dead-pit below the Exercirplatz. Some head-stones and crosses guessed at the spot where individual bodies might repose among the nameless crowd. Twilight was settling down, and two or three belated laborers were throwing back the soil on the latest arrivals for that day, while a half-dozen of tearful mourners stood wistfully following the movement of the shovels. One of the grave-diggers struck us. He was revoltingly hideous, with bloodshot eyes, and swollen, discolored features—just such a figure as Mr. Harrison Ainsworth would delight to elaborate, and the very man for the work and the hour. Who could help feeling for the sorrow reduced to mourn over such a grave in such company? We felt the curiosity and comparative indifference of the traveller were out of place; and it was a relief to ourselves when we could mix ourselves up in the long line of empty munition-wagons and captured guns that chanced to be passing just then on their way to Saarbruck.

CHAPTER VI.

TRAVELLING WITH THE WOUNDED.

At Saarbruck junction the three lines converge which connected Germany with the corps of Prince Frederick Charles and General Steinmetz. It is in direct railway communication with Treves, Bingen, and Ludwigshafen on the one side; with Metz and the department of the Upper Moselle on the other. In the way of war bustle, accordingly, we may take it as a representative station. Sentries were stationed outside, to warn the curious that there was no admission except on business. The spacious refreshment-rooms were converted into a surgery and dispensary; the luggage department was choked with dust, and dressings for the wounded. Wherever there was a spare corner, there slumbered a wearied soldier snatching a few minutes' rest in transit. All day long there were snoring bundles of uniform crowded on the tables and under them. The space to the left of the station was a fair, cumbered with benches, casks, and baskets, where old women and girls vended bread and sausages and hard-boiled eggs, wine and *Schnapps*, and *Kirschwasser*. The platform was a moving mass of soldiers, who had spent days in their clothes, in patient expectation of trains that might ultimately carry them to join their regiments; of *Krankenpfleger* of all ages and castes, either on duty at Saarbruck or pressing forward to the front; of Knights of St. John in shooting-coats, with the badge of the Order of Mercy pendent conspicuously on their shirt-fronts; of Sisters of Charity, professional and amateur, in costume and out of it; of laborers, with pick and spade, bound to the new military railway-works by Metz; of organized corps of grave-diggers, with shovel and pick; a pushing, consequential, corpulent English parson, in black wide-awake and shooting-coat, of the church militant, seemingly just the man to carry the confidence of a charitable association on his own earnest recommendation, and then ruffle every susceptibility and nerve of the people and wounded he was sent to care for; a mendicant monk or two of the order of St. Francis, taking things easily, from force of habit, and looking as if they ought to be able to rough it for a good many lean days on the ample store of flesh their providence had accumulated through years of peace and plenty; a band of captive French officers, victualled for a journey towards the unknown with long bran-loaves and strings of sausages. Finally, a number of peasants with blouses and bundles, travelling on private affairs, and a strong force of overworked railway officials.

"Place for the wounded!" The crowd opens, and somehow finds room to fall back: the Bingen train has moved up to the platform; its approaching departure has been announced at the hospitals, and the procession of crippled and mangled passengers it is to carry with it

is setting across the platform. Men borne on stretchers striving successfully to command their groans, but utterly unable to control their writhing features, and clutching with cramped fingers at the stretcher-poles. Others, with heads bound up, and, except for the whites of their eyes, with every drop of blood drained out of their faces. Others limping past leaning on crutches of wood or kindly props of flesh and blood; here and there a form pitifully wasted carried past in the arms of a stalwart compatriot. It was pleasant to witness the gentleness with which the soldiers, detailed for the duty, applied their strength to the supporting their suffering comrades; but it made one shudder to see shattered forms consigned to the dark purgatory of the horse-boxes, and packed away thick as they could lie on thin trusses of straw. Sometimes it almost seemed gratuitous cruelty this moving the men from the stretchers; but the supply of stretchers was limited, and hands educated, unfortunately, by ample recent experience, managed it somehow. The victim was raised shoulder-high to a level with the floor of the horse-box, and disappeared in its recesses. One I could see shot clean through the middle of the body: as he had managed to live, he might possibly travel; but fancy being jolted for twelve or twenty hours in that condition to his next halting-place. Meantime, lady-nurses were hurrying about, lifting basins of *bouillon* to the lips of the patients, handing in rolls and ham for their refreshment on the journey—wholesome as the food was, scarcely the thing, we would have said, to tempt a fevered patient. As the train made ready to move off, a *Krankenpfleger*, told off for the duty, took his place in each of the vans that carried the gravest cases.

Thanks to the courtesy of two wounded officers, who turned out their servant to make room for me, I found a seat in the only first-class carriage on the train. One of my companions had been shot through the leg at Spicheren; the other had been wounded in the arm at Gravelotte. Both were able and willing to converse. I heard the story of the battles and the thousand little incidents of the war from active eye-witnesses. With no idea of being reported, or having their confidence abused for the entertainment of the British public, they gave animated rehearsals of the glorious tragedy of the Spicheren—vivid sketches of the formidable positions that were forced at Metz. They both appreciated the formidable qualities of the mitrailleuse, and gave what I should fancy were fairly creditable imitations of the mortal rattle that never seems to have done. It is fortunate, perhaps, for the morale of the German rank and file, that the French tacticians handled these new-fangled murder-mills so awkwardly in the early battles. Not that we have a right to say that any certainty of death would have daunted the men who carried the French positions. An English acquaintance, who saw the Spicheren affair and the fight by Metz, assured me that any thing like the German "obstinacy" he had never witnessed; and he has seen some hard fighting in his time. You might destroy them on the ground they gained, but nothing short of their own bugles sounding the recall could persuade them to relinquish it. Slightly unsteady the young troops might sometimes be, but they generally kept their heads in the wildest of the battle, and their officers had them admirably in hand. As for the French, their nervous excitement seemed too much for them and for discipline. One of my acquaintances had once come very near being cut off with a party of the 40th. They heard a shout in the rear, and, looking over their shoulders, saw a party of Zouaves advancing at the double. "Could the Zouaves," he said, "have resisted the temptation to that shout, they must have infallibly had us to a man."

At every one of the numerous stations on the road to Bingen, the long train was beset by crowds of the citizens and country people. They came laden with every sort of refreshment. The wine from the vineyards on the slopes above streamed down in floods on the rail. There were caldrons of steaming soup and pailfuls of coffee; basketfuls of ham, bread, sausages, and fruit; trays of cigars. It was a country through which, for a month past, masses of men had been steadily on the move; yet the poorest villagers found some wine still in their little cellars, and were too eager to proffer it. Surely, if ever people believed in a holy war, for which no sacrifice could be too heavy, this is the one. In other circumstances, the eagerness with which they clustered on the carriage-steps and pressed their faces against the carriage-panes, would have been an insupportable nuisance. In circumstances like these no one could help feeling they had paid many times over for a good long stare at their wounded heroes. More than once behind the struggling crowd I saw a woman in deep black, keeping herself apart, weeping silently. She could not resist the attraction of the melancholy pageant, and yet the sight only reminded her of some recent bereavement which had robbed her of all personal interest in the sadly-freighted trains. But there was scarcely a station where some one did not come to pray the officers for news of some missing relative, who, as they

fondly hoped, was only desperately wounded. Naturally, in no case could they be sent away with better-defined comfort than the assurance that such-and-such a regiment had not been engaged in such-and-such an affair, or fortunately had been but little cut up in it. One venerable enthusiast who had been out in the '13 forced his way to the front to volunteer his hazy reminiscences of that campaign, and to express his readiness to assist in person at another Leipsic. —Now that the *Wacht am Rhein* had been changed to an advance on Paris, the population of this border country had begun to breathe again. Relieved from the apprehension of being desolated, beggared, and outraged by hostile occupation, they were too glad to impoverish themselves for the relief of their saviours. They had a very narrow escape of it. Had the French Emperor been a shade more ready, the administrative system of the Second Empire a shade less rotten, the French eagles would have infallibly had their claws on that fair country, preying on its vitals till they should wing their crippled flight back to their frontiers. At first Von Moltke sent no troops by rail farther than Bingen. Leaving it to be imagined that they had marched forward abandoning the single line of rail to the transport of stores, he veiled his operations in absolute mystery. In reality, he was fully prepared to accept a French advance; quite determined to sacrifice no men in detail, but to mass his troops behind the Rhine, and leave the invaders to break their teeth on the Rhine fortresses. When the Emperor left him the nine days necessary for mobilizing, the situation changed, and, bar accident, Germany was safe. Von Moltke knew himself and the strength of his forces, and it became clear the French must be wanting either in resources or generalship. Now the vines of the Rhineland, revived by rains following on the long droughts, were ripening peacefully, and promising a splendid year. It was on the vineyards and cellars of Champagne the effects of the wanton challenge were to recoil.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOSPITALS.

The French say Germany is absolutely disorganized by the war; and the French are right. Reason the more, retort the Germans, that we exact material guaranties against the recurrence of such a drain on our dearest life-blood, of so fatal a check to our progress. How the national pulse may beat in the zones between the sea-ports blockaded by the enemy's fleet and the provinces hourly travelled by troops, prisoners, and wounded, I have had no personal opportunity of judging. But in towns like Mayence the men who are left at home have neither heart nor time for their every-day avocations. If trade stagnates, they care comparatively little, so long only as they can exist themselves and help their wounded brethren. How sit down calmly to your business, if you chance to have business to do, when the corps your sons are serving in is dwindling in a series of desperate engagements, and when you are expecting every moment dispatches steeped in blood? Your natural impulse is to consecrate your time to the cause; to give your sympathies practical shape, and vent your excitement by superintending in person the expenditure of the money you are so free with. Citizens of every class seem to constitute themselves a committee of public safety in the best sense; busying themselves with preserving valuable lives to the Fatherland, and alleviating the inevitable sufferings of its champions. Mayence is a central point of the German railway system; and the strain on the local resources, first by division on division of the advancing troops, later by the crowds of retiring wounded and prisoners, has been excessive. Yet there have been no signs of breaking down, no stint of municipal liberality.

At all hours of the day and night the arrivals of trains of wounded are telegraphed on short notice to the authorities. The train is brought up alongside of a special platform, itself the hospital. A goods-shed of interminable length, left open on the side of the rail, has been closed in at the back by tarpaulin curtains that may be lifted or drawn aside. Side by side, and with ample intervals between for the surgeons, dressers, and attendants, are ranged a thousand beds. Is the weather sultry, you raise the tarpaulin and admit the air. Is it cold and windy, you can ventilate the place between the arrival of the trains. In the middle is a kitchen and a dispensary, in charge of leading ladies of the town: in the kitchen they keep in eternal fires, ready to heat perpetual soup and bouillon for all comers. There is a regular service of responsible individuals, who keep watch and watch about, and superintend the issuing the supplies. Every thing, down to the smallest detail, goes by clock-work in an organized routine, and both sexes and all ranks are enrolled in the hospital corps. The leading citizens take it by turns to supervise, and have their allotted hours of duty on alternate days. The sick-nurses, male and female; the fatigue-parties of robust *Kranken-*

träger have their fixed times of service. The surgeons alone seem to have no settled season, but hold themselves night and day at the disposition of the arrivals. All the local medical men who have not left for the front have volunteered, and they find assistants among strangers of every nation. Every one about the immense platform knows his place and his work, and keeps himself to the one and the other. The orders of the sentries at the doors are to deny admittance to all who are not passed by the badge of the help-societies.

It is past midnight, and a train that had been telegraphed to arrive two hours before is moving slowly in. The assistants have been kicking their heels for these two unnecessary hours, but they have got used to waiting on others, and lost the habit of thinking about themselves. The thousand beds are turned down in readiness; a light is burning on a table by each; the gas is flaming along the rafters overhead. The cooks are busy baling *bouillon* out into basins: the inevitable rolls and ham, and the eternal cigars, stand waiting in piles. The horse-boxes begin slowly to disgorge themselves. Men blinking like bats step out of the dark on to the blazing platform. The first-comers are the soundest, suffering from nothing more than such bagatelles as a ball through the foot or a shivered arm-bone. They limp up to the nearest bed, take a seat on it, and in a second are deep in *Schinken* or *Bouillon*, pending medical inspection. The hospitable citizens exchange a friendly nod or jest with the convalescents as they busy themselves with those who can do nothing to help themselves. Then unfolds itself the long chapter of horrors, written in shockingly sensational characters. Men with desperate body-wounds visibly sinking under agony, fever, or exhaustion, are transferred from the straw to the bed; some of them are literally riddled; others with missing limbs or jaws shot clear away, or swathed in hideous bandages that fortunately leave much to the imagination. It is no use dwelling on ghastly details; it is enough to say that men seem to share the intense tenacity of life which is popularly supposed to limit itself to inferior organizations, and that, after a turn through the hospitals, you are inclined to believe no wound need necessarily be fatal. The Chassepot balls, in particular, have a fiendish habit of skipping round the bone they strike, tearing and shattering as they go; finally, perhaps, glancing off to the body, burying themselves and travelling at large through the person.

One man we remarked being operated upon for a shot right through the stomach. He had his right hand smashed into the bargain. We met him swaggering along the platform, later, with a true nautical roll, and we saw he had a genuine English face. He hailed us cheerfully in perfect English. A French subject, he explained, born of a French father and English mother; went into the army because he couldn't help it, and a rough time he had had of it lately. The shot in his stomach hadn't gone very deep, luckily, or he shouldn't have been here, and he thought and hoped his hand would mend. He was a thorough Mark Tapley, who would have been jolly under any circumstances. We English—there were one or two English surgeons interviewing him—bestowed our mites upon our philosophical friend, and sent him on his way even more cheerful than before.

It was a strange sight—more picturesque than ghastly, for in the uncertain light the details merged themselves in the general effect—to look down that long gallery. Although there was a blaze of gas above and a multitude of candles stationary or flitting about below, much of the light escaped into the darkness, and yet the nearer groups of patients and dressers were thrown into Rembrandt-like brightness against the surrounding gloom. Prostrate forms writhing under the friendly hands; naked *torsos* crimson-patched, fragments chipped out, and holes drilled through the shoulders; riddled hands and feet; careful doctors, wrapped up to the throat against the night air; Protestant pastors and Catholic priests; mature matrons and pretty young girls—rather out of place these last, you could not help feeling. Delicacy has its claims even in presence of suffering, and occasionally, if pity is akin to love, their eyes were eloquent of danger to their hearts. There were knots of sturdy *Krankenträger* in their blue woollen blouses, ready to carry off the wounded as they were got ready for their further journey. There was marvellously little groaning, and no shrieking. The men seemed to make it a point of manhood to suppress the audible signs of pain, although their bodies and the muscles of the face were often shockingly outspoken. Where all bore themselves so manfully, it would have been impossible for a visitor to award the palm of endurance. But I have heard the Germans themselves repeatedly avow that the French patients supported their sufferings with greater resolution; and if it be so, it must be remembered, to their credit, they had defeat and the prospect of an indefinite captivity to mix in the bitters of their cup. It was suggestive of the comparative enlightenment of the two armies, that many of the French carried holy amulets on their persons. When they

stripped, you saw little crosses carefully hung round their necks, and those images of saints that are retailed at the French shrines of local sanctity.

Unquestionably the treatment of the French wounded has been beyond praise. No distinction made between friend and enemy, unless, indeed, it were something more of *empressement* in interpreting the wishes of the poor latter; and charity had its reward in the gratitude with which the poor fellows received the attentions lavished on them, and the pleasant smiles with which they acknowledged them. The coals of fire didn't seem to burn, for it was in deference to the virtue of military obedience that these units of the grand army had fanned the flames of the war. If the troops shared the illusions of the classes they were largely recruited from, and really dreamed the Germans to be savages of the same type as the Turcos, how strangely pleasant must have been their wakening, when they found themselves in the demons' clutches! One felt inclined to hope that these men must go home, after the war, to preach peace and good-will between the races through the length and breadth of France.

The Rhine flows at the back of the railway-station, and Government had chartered sixteen of the river steamers, at one hundred and fifty thalers a day, for the transport of the wounded. One or two of them lay with steam up, awaiting the arrival of each of the trains. There was an officer on duty to superintend the embarkation, and a delegate from the *Hülfsverein* accompanied each vessel on its voyage. Along the decks, below the awnings, on the floors of the cabins, were laid a double row of comfortable beds, in which the sufferers were carefully deposited. I went on board of one boat entirely filled with French, some of them scarcely touched, and a few unwounded. These last were requested to step down the ladder into the hold, which they did with many jokes and grimaces. The first-comers monopolized all the straw they found, coiling themselves in it like field-mice in their nests. Those who came after made a *razzia* in search of supplies, and a free fight followed in perfect good-humor, to the high delight of the German lookers-on grinning over the hatchway. It must be owned the tone of the French merriment did more credit to their good-humor than their military pride. It was odd enough to see the soldiers of France visiting the coveted Rhine as captives in the hold of a peaceful steamer; but it sounded stranger still to hear them "chaffing" each other on the circumstance. There was one grizzled sergeant of the Imperial Guard, his breast *chamarré* with medals and ribbons, a blazing chronicle of all the campaigns of the Second Empire, who felt this as strongly as I did. He had been taken before Metz, he briefly said; but he evidently felt so strongly that we were glad to change the subject. "Attendez," he burst out, looking fiercely round him; "Bazaine prendra sa revanche, je vous l'assure. Mais moi, je n'y serai pas," he added mournfully.

Before the steamer started, Good Samaritans made the tour of the beds as volunteer amanuenses; and there seemed a very general run on their services. Many of the men could not write at all; many, naturally, did not care to exert themselves in the circumstances. The tenor of the notes was generally the same—sad enough in their severe simplicity. The mastering the names and addresses was generally the great difficulty.

The warnings against smoking still hung on the cabin doors, and—irony of destiny—every cabin passenger had a huge cigar, drawing away cheerily like a small blast-furnace. I suspect the benevolent promoters of the anti-tobacco league must accept their share of the calamitous results of the war. The progress of the good cause is arrested for a generation at least. Poison in theory, a cloud of impartial witnesses will proclaim that in practice the coarsest preparations of the weed have been an inestimable blessing. After water, the first cry of the mangled has always been for the blessed anodyne that soothes their pangs.

A necessary sequel to a visit to the railway hospital is one to the theatre. More strictly speaking, indeed, it ought to have claimed precedence. So far as ordinary performances are concerned, there is *relâche* on the Mayence boards pending the conclusion of the bloody drama in which all Germany plays her part. Yet I venture to say the Mayence theatre was never better worth a visit. It is a large and handsome pile of red sandstone, with a semicircular front, where corridors lighted with deep bay-windows run round the amphitheatre, and with ample accommodation to the back of the stage. Round the sides and in the centre of the spacious rooms are piled every manner of necessary for the cure of the wounds or the solace of the wounded. Blankets, cushions, sheets, pillows, shirts, stockings, bundles of bandages, air-cushions and water-pillows, splints, sticking-plaster, sand-bags for absorbing blood, wooden cases for shattered limbs, slings and crutches. More bulky matters, such as mattresses or chests of lint and medicines, are stored away elsewhere. These supplies were partly passed in from the country, chiefly manufactured on the spot. In

each of the deep windows round the long corridors was a table; round each of the tables sat a trio or quartette of young ladies, their fingers and tongues and sewing-machines all busily at work. Some of them were excessively pretty girls; and even the plain ones were animated into an expression something like beauty by earnestness and emulation. Of all the towns at a distance from the war, Mayence has seen the most of its miseries, and done the most to alleviate them. Already, in the third week of August, 18,000 wounded had passed through, and yet the tide from the fields by Metz had barely set in. Had the balance of the war declined by a trifle to the other side, the fate of Metz might have been that of Mayence; and in their gratitude for the education they had been spared at the hands of the civilizing army, the citizens seemed to count all their trouble and their sacrifices as nothing.

But, generous as it is, Mayence enjoys no monopoly of charity. To see hospital arrangements as nearly perfect as may be, you may go on to Darmstadt. Darmstadt alone can boast of six or eight establishments, one or two of them specially superintended by members of the Grand Ducal family, others by private committees, and one by the Catholic Sisters of Charity. There are 2000 Catholics among the 35,000 inhabitants. The principal hospital her Royal Highness, the Princess Louisa, takes under her especial wing. An orangery has been converted into the main ward, and stands charmingly situated in gardens laid out with flowers and shrubberies and fountains. Around it are scattered a number of *succursales*, wooden pavilions, where the rows of beds stand at ample intervals, with canvas doors at the ends, to be looped back at will, with openings in the roof, protected from the wet, but open to the wind. The French, I was given to understand, regard this ventilation as a decided disadvantage, and intrench themselves carefully behind their blankets against every breath of air. The Germans, on the contrary, have learned to welcome it as the most invaluable of specifics.

Darmstadt suffered heavily in the war, and the Darmstadt division, 10,000 strong, had lost 1200 in dead and wounded. Naturally, wounded Hessians are sent to Hesse for choice, and it was pleasant to see many old peasant-women sitting by the sick-pillows of their own children who had been returned on their hands. But the greater part of the patients were Prussians and North Germans; and if you doubted as to the nationality, you had but to look at the head-dress hung by the pillow. Many caps showed the tarnished silver of the Prussian Guard, so terribly cut up at Gravelotte and Rezonville. There were many French shakos, and a sprinkling of turbans. Although regarded *en masse* with the bitterest hatred and loathing, the Turcos in hospital were treated with the utmost gentleness. Their swarthy faces and wiry forms would have kept the secrets of their suffering, had not their eyes betrayed them: you saw either the unnatural glare of fever or the vacant look of profound prostration. Men said at Berlin that these wild beasts snapped at the very fingers that tended them. Here they lay tame enough; perhaps their terrible wounds had chastened their savage nature.

Fresh from the scenes at Spicheren and Saarbruck, a walk through the Darmstadt hospital was almost exhilarating. There seemed good hope for the worst of the sufferers, and many of them had clearly turned the corner, and were steadily on their way up-hill. They smoked with placid satisfaction, they read with absorbed attention, and journals and novels were especially in demand. It is to be regretted we in England can do so little to supply that particular want, for it would be hard to overestimate the pleasure that might be conveyed in a box of light literature. But the pleasantest sight of all was the way the saddest faces would brighten up as the Princess Alice stopped to say a few kind words and ask a question or two—not mere questions of course. Indefatigable in her attendance, she keeps herself personally informed of each serious case, and from day to day anxiously watches the progress of her patients. Indeed, they owe her far more than the kindness and generosity which is nearly universal in Germany. Long before this war broke out, her care had organized a corps of educated nurses; and when the sanguinary battles created an exceptional demand for their services, she had a *cadre* of skilled attendants, which expanded immediately into an efficient force. The Alice-Frauenverein has been rendering invaluable services; and it is no wonder that, in spite of great local liberality, its funds should be well-nigh drained. The charitable who desire to make sure that their contributions will be promptly expended to the best advantage, and impartially distributed between the wounded of the two nations, can scarcely do better than intrust them to the committee of the Alice-Frauenverein. They will have the satisfaction of knowing every thing is done under the personal superintendence of an Englishwoman, for her Royal Highness has given up to the work a suite of her own apartments in the Palace, and lets no day pass without a long visit to the hospital.

CHAPTER VIII.

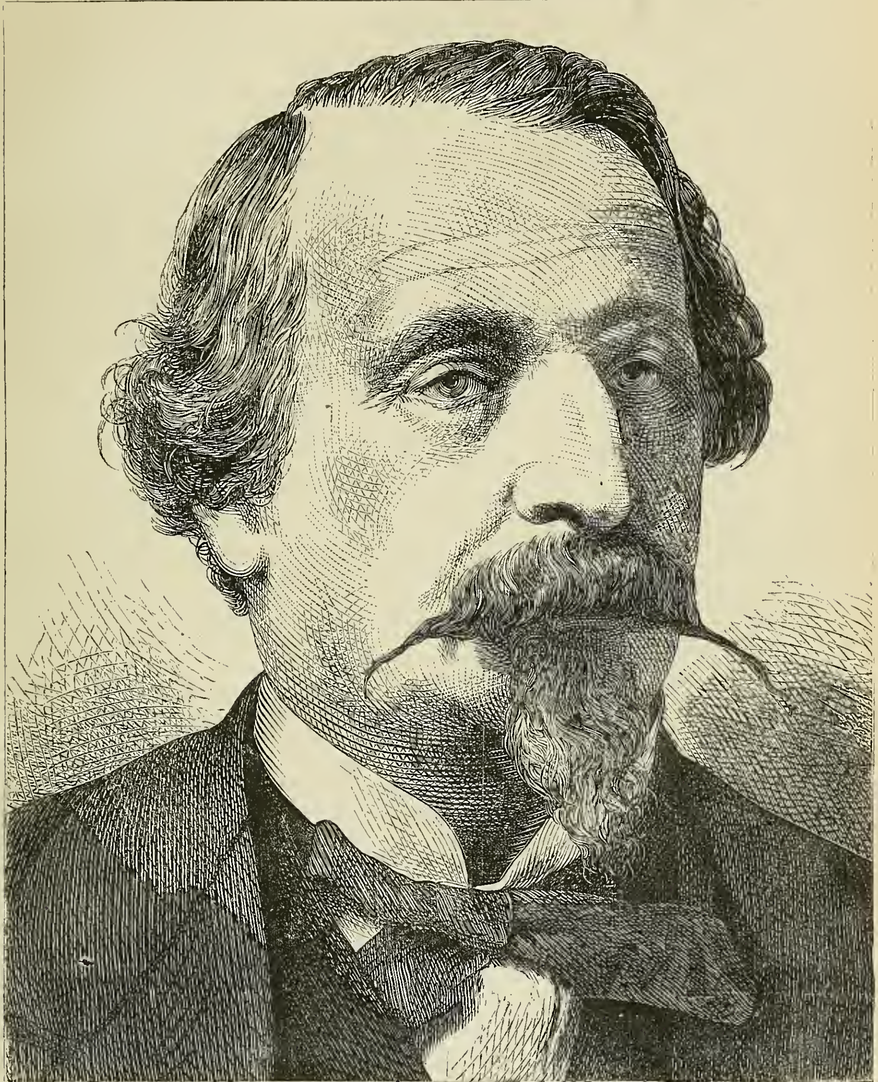
GERMANY AND THE WAR.

HAD you gone home after interviewing the first intelligent German you met on crossing the frontier, the chances are you would have carried back as fair an idea of the national sentiment as could have been gained by any amount of travel. The feeling of the country seemed to be organized like its military force; to move as harmoniously in obedience to fixed general laws, modified by passing events. The outburst of patriotism evoked by wanton aggression had levelled internal barriers, swallowed difference of political opinion. North Germans and South Germans, Liberals and Reactionists, spoke in the same sense and on the one all-engrossing subject. If they wasted a word on state or party politics, it was only to say their day had gone by; and for the moment every one appeared honestly to believe it. It would have been something like treason to talk of party in the presence of passing events; faction collapsed before the majesty of German unity. Prussia had been conquered with France, and absorbed in new-born Germany; and the only trace of lingering jealousy among the Confederates was a national susceptibility as to the use of the word "German" and the abuse of the word "Prussian." It was a German quarrel, and German victories won by German troops under German leaders. The nation had awakened to the full consciousness of its strength, to a profound conviction of where its strength lay. The Germans knew that it was their union made that strength—that it was the organization they owed to Prussia that assured their triumph. Brought face to face with the horrid realities of war, Prussian Liberals were sincerely, if silently, grateful for those high-handed war measures of the King and his minister they had opposed so long and denounced so bitterly. Hanover and Hesse more than forgave the violence done their independence, when they recognized they had become powers, instead of phantoms and anachronisms. Hamburg, in her new character of a Prussian town, had the best guaranty for a speedy termination of her blockade; and Frankfort, in her gratitude for being saved a French occupation, became more demonstratively national than Berlin itself. The most marked feelings of people to the south of the Main were an almost morbid anxiety to bear their full share in this German struggle, and a strong impression that more intimate union with their Northern brethren would be the best reward they could ask for their services. Possibly, that latter feeling may some day create embarrassments between the Emperor of Germany and his loyal allies of the Southern Courts. You met men from all these states and towns, and you had opportunities of hearing the opinions of every rank. One day you were seated in third-class carriages with peasants, or in open horse-boxes with privates; another, you were travelling first and second class with officers and men of cultivation. You listened to the talk of vociferous groups in the village inns where you occasionally slept; in the hotels of the town; in the cafés and beer-houses. Your introductions helped you to the acquaintance of influential civilians and officers in high command, who were all ready to speak out. And from all of them you heard practically the same thing—expressed with various degrees of force and intelligence—that Germany had become a nation at last, and you grew more persuaded of it at every turn. When you went into the hospitals, and witnessed the home-like cares lavished on her maimed and crippled children, you confessed there was a family as well. After the events of 1866, impartial lookers-on were persuaded that the consummation was merely a question of time, only to be retarded by French inaction and acquiescence. It is a mystery we may never solve, how the Emperor of the French should have been so fatally misinformed as to the feelings of the people who were to decide his destiny. Yet we may be sure that the Germans themselves had hardly fathomed the profound national enthusiasm his declaration of war would evoke.

If few Germans doubted of the final issue of the war, fewer still had any conception of the course it would run. The French had a professional army, presumably in the highest state of efficiency, and practically on a perpetual war footing. The Germans had only the *cadres* of an army of resistance, to be swelled by the embodiment of citizens into a force capable of assuming the offensive. The French admittedly had long been mapping out the campaign they were resolved upon, and, with the advantage of the initiative, could follow the plans they must have traced in every detail. The German military chiefs were, no doubt, equally persuaded the struggle was inevitable; but the French having that superiority of the initiative, they were necessarily constrained to follow suite instead of leading off the game. No sensible German—Moltke and Von Roon least of all, as I have said before—expected any thing better than a French advance on the Rhine. The immense success of *Die Wacht am Rhein* explained the national idea on the outbreak of

hostilities. They had to deal with a terribly formidable power, which had been husbanding its resources while they had been expending theirs in intestine war, which had exhausted the resources of science in the perfecting of its arms and the invention of strangely destructive engines. No man—no ordinary man at least—ventured to dream of any more happy result than that Germany should come out of the war with territory intact.

When war was declared, the war-clouds still hung lowering on the frontier, and the Emperor lingered on at St. Cloud. Little was known of the movements of the French, and less of those of the Germans. Men heard of French marchings and counter-marchings—all that was certain was that of their mysterious movements none took the shape of the expected advance. Meanwhile, Germany was mobilizing with a celerity absolutely astounding to any but the initiated; that ought to have been appalling to her enemies. Von Moltke lay smoking a cigar on the sofa in his cabinet when his aid-de-camp brought him the news of the declaration of war. "So soon," the general remarked, quietly. "I had hardly looked for it for a day or two.



NAPOLEON III., EMPEROR OF FRANCE.

Just have the goodness to open that drawer." Within an hour the necessary orders were flying to the military authorities in all parts of Germany. Had the Emperor only known, and how could he have helped knowing, how each day that slipped through his fingers was lessening his chances, he must surely have waived every consideration, and struck while Germany was still getting into her harness. One is driven to the dilemma that either his faculties or his military arrangements were hopelessly paralyzed for the time. He either lost head and heart after the terrible leap he made up his mind to, or he took that leap in sheer desperation, and staked the fortunes of the dynasty and of France on a game practically decided in advance. When he did determine to strike, Germany was on guard and anticipated him, and the Germans were agreeably startled by the victories of Forbach and Weissenburg, and the simultaneous advance of their armies.

As the real state of matters dawned on them, a marked change came over their minds. They began to entertain a hope of not only tiding over the peril, but of securing themselves effectually against its recurrence. United Germany would not only treat with France over drawn battle-fields as equal to equal, but might impose her own terms, and exact material guaranties against future outrage. It was after Weissenburg and Forbach that the German mind first evolved the idea of the appropriation of French territory for the better security of the Fatherland. That rectification of frontier which had been so much in favor at the Tuilleries gradually grew into a rooted German idea. There was no expression of the *væ victis* in it. There was no wish to humiliate France, much as they resented an attack they had only provoked by arranging their domestic affairs after their own fashion. The nation was not intoxicated by the flush of its startling successes, greatly as it gloried in them. But it talked of the suggested rectification of frontier as simple matter of duty—duty to itself and to its children. "We have been forced into a most unholy duel, and, though we are likely to come off the victors, we must twine the cypress with the laurel. We are bleeding at every pore, for our blood has flowed as freely as our treasure, and our commercial life is at a standstill. Not a household but mourns a member, a relation, or a friend. From quiet streets, from busy workshops, from peaceful homesteads, they have drawn our best bone and sinew to make targets for their Chassepots and mitrailleuses. Contrary to all expectation, the battle has not been to the swift, and, to our surprise, we learn that we are the strong. Would it not be wanton folly, would it not be positive crime, to content ourselves with the barren glory of our triumph—to accept a mere payment in gold for our blood and material losses; to trust the future of our country, and the lives and property of coming generations, to the gratitude of the sensitive people we have humbled? Doing so, we should make ourselves accomplices in the future excesses of French military madness. It is very well that neutrals should interpose with high-sounding phrases, and talk of generosity to the vanquished. What did neutrals to prevent the war, and how can neutrals sound the depths of our suffering? In the interests of France, as in those of Germany, we are bound to put pressure on the French to keep the peace, and assure the inviolability of our frontiers by demonstrating the insanity of attempting them. For years to come, France will never forgive us her defeat, nor resign herself to abdicating the position she believes her own by right of prescription. We greatly prefer to make the permanence of peace not a question of sentiment but matter of necessity."

It was the language of a practical nation become unexpectedly the masters of a critical situation, thanks to their own energy and sacrifices; and it was all so logical, there was little to urge in answer. They had just welded themselves into a great people in blood and fire, and who could blame them if they were resolved the work should be lasting? After all, if you measured it by the avowed designs of their enemy, theirs was the language of moderation. France had gone to war for the Rhine, and assuredly, had her successes been as crushing as those of Germany, she would not have contented herself with making it the boundary. All Germany asked for was a defensive frontier. She did not care to annex Alsace and Lorraine as provinces. On the contrary, she wanted no more subjects than she could help of French speech or with French sympathies. What she inclined to have was the Vosges, and that other formidable line of positions in the department of the Moselle her armies had just forced, the wooded heights that command, like so many bastions, the plains that stretch to Chalons and Paris. Metz she would include, of course, and Thionville; and Strasbourg would be carried miles back into Germany. As for the appropriation being a standing provocation to France, the universal feeling seemed to be that French animosity could not possibly be imbittered. Moreover, they talked of taking a hint from the proceedings of the great Napoleon, and setting a limit to French standing armies. In fact, if the popular feeling continues to set as strong

and unanimously as it did then, concurring as it did so strongly with arguments of policy, it is hard to believe the most powerful minister could stem it. Bismarck is strong as embodying the sentiment of the country; but the Germans do not skip to their conclusions; they reason them out. That a position has once been deliberately taken up, is in itself a strong reason for continuing to occupy it, even should circumstances alter slightly; and it is possible that the tenacity of purpose which has done such good service in war may become a serious embarrassment in arranging a peace. The determination of Paris, or the approach of winter, may weigh with the German leaders in abating something of their demands, even at the cost of the increased probability of a future war. If they can carry the Germans with them, and induce them to reconsider their unanimous determination, it will be the most marvellous instance on record of national sagacity and self-control, and France and every other power in Europe may resign themselves with a good grace to subordinate places for the future.

One thing I believe to be certain enough. If the nation does hold to its resolution to annex, it will be Von Moltke, and not Von Bismarck, who will decide. The line of the new frontier will be governed by purely strategical considerations, tempered in places, perhaps, by the origin and speech of the inhabitants. Nothing has done more to contribute to the success of the war than the excellent understanding between the premier, the strategist, and the minister-at-war. Bismarck is continually in the habit of throwing down half-read semi-political dispatches he opens: "That is the business of General Moltke—not mine." Should the day come when it will be a question of boundaries, Bismarck will hand the map over to Moltke, and tell him to trace them.

With regard to the feelings of the inhabitants of this "debatable land," there is room for some divergence of opinion. From what I saw myself in the department of the Upper Moselle, I can not believe there would be any great difficulty there, at least in the country and smaller towns. At Thionville and Metz, undoubtedly, the inhabitants are thoroughly French. So they are in Strasbourg; but, after all, of what political consequence are the sentiments of the handful of people who live among the guns of a first-class fortress? With regard to Alsace generally there can be as little question, I suppose. At least, the Germans themselves admit that at present it is thoroughly French at heart. But then, they say, the lower and middle classes are as German in their habits and ways of thought as they are in speech. German affinities would prove irresistible with a new generation. At present it is the Catholic clergy, the Jesuits especially, who control the situation there. They excite the fanaticism of a pious, or, rather, a superstitious, population against Protestant Germany; they nourish the popular prejudice by a system of the most unscrupulous deceit, when ignorance interests itself so far as to ask questions. Educate and enlighten these people, say the Germans, and they will be as good Germans as any of us. Moreover, in Alsace, as elsewhere, French falsehoods have played the German game. Everywhere the French represented the invaders as savages, compared to whom the Zouaves were philanthropists and the Turcos saints. Everywhere the occupation undeceived the people, and the reaction following the dissipation of the delusion disposed them, to a certain extent, in favor of the enemy. Occupied territory must help to support the war, and doubtless the contributions have fallen heavily on the impoverished inhabitants. But any thing like license is sternly repressed, not only by order of the authorities, but by the sentiment in the ranks. The stories of houses pillaged by the Germans of any thing but food or wine, of outraged women, and of kindred atrocities, read simply incredible to any one who has lived with the German troops. Even the average French peasant, it may be assumed, will be much inclined to visit on the late Government any thing he suffers at the hands of his present guests.

The more one heard and saw, the more, I repeat, one marvelled at the infatuation which drove the Emperor to stake the questionable triumph of the plebiscitum on a game so desperate as a German war. His envoys seem to have been chosen as men likely to speak smooth things and prophesy deceit. They discussed German matters with Franco-Germans, who boasted a smattering of French, who did their very best to make things pleasant, and stretch their scanty language to express their interested ideas; or they listened to feather-brained adventurers who had a personal purpose to serve. One is astonished, I repeat, at the infatuation of the Empire—the Empire that professed itself the champion of nationalities everywhere—in allying itself to effete courts, and staking success on exploded hereditary traditions. Even in South Germany, its court allies were much more than doubtful. The King of Bavaria is German, as it proved; so is the Grand Duke of Baden. The King of Würtemberg had French leanings he was at little pains to hide. But in Würtemberg the popular feeling was so unmistakable,

that it was clear to any one who could read the signs of the times, it must carry all before it. The same might be said of Hesse Darmstadt; although there the Protestant premier, Dalvick, was French enough. Then there were some Southern journals of very limited circulation to which the Emperor's wishes may possibly have attributed an influence they never exercised. But the only allies whose sympathy the French could count upon confidently were a small minority of the nobility, and the bulk of the Catholic clergy; and these found themselves muzzled and fettered as soon as the war broke out, and Germany was roused in earnest. The bishop of Mayence is credited with still laboring hard against the national cause: men say he bribes high, and in high places. But what can a single man do, however able?

It is a national war; and, in time of war and danger, aristocratic Germany is a pure democracy, without democratic weaknesses and vices. Princes and long-descended nobles, heirs of great merchants, and wealthy bankers, shopkeepers, mechanics, peasants, are side by side in the ranks. The ministers have sent eleven sons to the field: Bismarck two, Von Moltke two, Von Roon four; several have been wounded, and already more than one of them have fallen. The recollection of common sacrifices will survive the common success, and local politicians have already forgotten their paltry squabbles in anticipating a political millennium. It is to be hoped that doubtful blessing may be spared them; but in any case Germany has attained constitutional development, while her French enemies have been playing at it. Germany knows her mind at last, and the day of Bunds and Diets, petty Princelets, and state jealousies is gone forever. Whatever his place in French history, Napoleon III. has won himself an immortal title to her gratitude.

CHAPTER IX.

WITH TROOPS TOWARDS THE FRONT.

Even in the way of novelty, it is no pleasant sensation for the ordinary tourist to find himself waiting marching orders—to surrender his individuality, and resign himself to be the unit of a mass whose movements he is helpless to influence. The present moment may be your own, but you don't dare to dispose of the next one. The route may come at any moment; and if you have given yourself the briefest leave of absence, you may find the chance you counted on has slipped through your fingers. At last an orderly turned up late one evening at the hotel to intimate an early start, and next morning I awakened with the dawn to the tread of martial feet and the crash of military music. In vain I strove to ignore the one and the other as I turned with the affectation of resolution on my pillow. But it was no use; and one had only to make a merit of necessity, and get up to witness an enthusiasm you felt to be most unseasonable. A column of Hessians, the dark gray background of military great-coats picked out by the flash of bayonets and the reflection of tin pans, was crossing the grand place; discipline had relaxed for the time being, and the ranks had opened to receive relatives—fathers and mothers, brothers, and even sweethearts. It was the Darmstadt reserves on their way to the front. Who could say how many or how few might return?

Four hours later the railway-station was a busy scene. Two thousand warriors had packed themselves away in the wagons, and a mixed multitude of at least twice as many men, women, and children had gathered to see them off. Those who could not find access to the platform were crowding round the rails outside, venting their excitement by cheering vehemently at intervals. Of course the sublime and pathetic rubbed shoulders with the trivial and ludicrous at every turn. There were many bitter leave-takings, and doubtless a good deal of silent heart-breaking; every now and then you caught a passing cloud of ineffable wretchedness on a face that the moment before and after pretended to be wreathed in smiles. On the side of the civilians at least, much of the hilarity was as forced as with most of the soldiers it was genuine. These last were young men for the most part, many of them volunteers. Even with those who reflected that their merry start might land them on a Gravelotte or a Rezonville, in a graveyard or a hospital, the enthusiasm of the moment was contagious. The *Wacht am Rhein* and kindred patriotic chants alternated with wild bursts of cheering; the doors of the horse-boxes were blocked with waving arms and laughing faces. Amidst the martial excitement and the fond farewells, individuals, like well-trained soldiers as they were, looked carefully after the commissariat arrangements when they got a chance. Next to hugs and kisses, among the most popular souvenirs were sausages and cigars. Some lucky campaigners, whose circle of acquaintance was extensive, stuffed not only their own pockets but those of their comrades.

At last the train glided slowly out of the station, not very much after time—some sixty car-

riages. Our quarters were luxurious—a double second-class compartment; and our party a very pleasant one. It consisted of the officers in charge of the troops, and two or three noblemen and gentlemen going forward to attach themselves to the Darmstadt *Sanitätscorps.* Slowly we descended the course of the Rhine to Mayence, where we halted just long enough for a hurried chat with some Mayence friends on the platform, and to lay in French and English journals. It was always a godsend happening upon a "Figaro," and that pleasant journal had an immense circulation and an astounding success in Germany. What a libel it is to say the Germans have no sense of humor, or are incapable of entering into the spirit of a joke! How they used to welcome the latest bulletins from Paris; how they used to chuckle over the French articles on the military situation. The letters of "Our own Correspondent" from before Metz read inimitably to men who had assisted in person at the battles and witnessed the results! Perhaps M. Villemessant occasionally went a shade too far, and in his appreciation of the attitude and probable action of the neutral powers comedy not unfrequently degenerated into farce. To be sure, in those days his paper was scarcely all that events have made it since: then he was still the obsequious trumpeter of the Empire to which he owed his existence; since that he has been dancing over its ruins, and branding its excesses and vices, most queerly travestied *en Cato.*

We saw the very last of the day as we waited at Neustadt, the picturesque capital of the Haardt. The station was crowded, and the previous arrivals had made a clear sweep of the refreshment counters. Fancy prices, however, tempted to the light some flasks of capital Niersteiner, which helped to lend wings to the heavy hours. Military law kept the soldiers penned in their hutches, and our sympathies found pleasant vent in paying trays of beer and packets of cigars for the lucky ones in the carriages nearest our own. You had to exercise a certain discretion in distributing your largesse, for you were just as likely as not to find a gentleman volunteer under the coarse uniform of the private—a man whose social position and means might very likely be superior to those of his commanding officer. One individual I was presented to had just given up a lucrative situation in Liverpool, to hasten over to beg for a place in the ranks. Of course he discussed the probable current of events, Moltke's strategy and Bismarck's schemes, with extreme intelligence, and a thorough appreciation of contemporary politics. Next morning I greeted him as he sat in his horse-box by the horse he had just groomed, disposing of a more than frugal breakfast, in company of a couple of comrades of the most ordinary type. An hour or two afterwards his captain brought me a "Times" I had lent him, with a courteous message. Off duty, such men tacitly claim absolute equality with their officers, and the claim is admitted. Falling back into the ranks, they relapse at the word of command into the submissive soldier.

It was well-nigh midnight when we dragged up to the station of Kaiserslautern. The soldiers by that time must have been rather cramped and exceedingly sharp-set, for all day long they had scarcely got out of the carriages, and had very much depended for their meals on their personal supplies. At Kaiserslautern there was a general sortie, and, thanks to the hour, we had the platform pretty much to ourselves. Those of us who were free agents happened upon a tolerable supper in the Railway Inn hard by: capital soup, *rehbraten*—the forests of the Haardt swarm with roe—and beer. When we had disposed of our meal, we found the soldiers getting through theirs by squads and companies. The platform was blazing with torches, a goods-shed had been fitted up as a refreshment-room, and vast caldrons were bubbling over fires in a field-kitchen behind. The shed was fitted with benches and tables, that might accommodate a party of a hundred and fifty at a time. The men, of course, brought their own dishes; the soup and beef were ladled out to them, and, with bread and beer, they were far from badly off.

We woke up in the early morning to find ourselves in the station of Neunkirchen. So far, for a military train, our progress had been satisfactory; we had only spent some twenty hours on the road. But at Neunkirchen we began to be fairly broken to the military virtue of patience. There the lines converge, and we had got well into the ruck of the advance. There was one trainful of Landwehr from Minden; there was another of a regiment of cuirassiers from Stettin, and some squadrons of lancers; there was a promiscuous mob of military travellers unattached. The refreshment-rooms, where, a week before, I had made a comfortable meal, were subjected to all the horrors of military occupation. Sausages were at famine prices; the negotiating a slice of bread was matter of diplomacy and favor; and when you fought your way to a cup of coffee you found the sugar had been left out, while the supply had evidently been watered to meet the demand. The cognac had been drained dry, and so had the Kirschwasser. The only stimulant available

was arrack; and if the virtues of a tonic are in the inverse ratio to its flavor, the merit of that arrack as a stimulant ought to have been undeniable. There were inns in the town, but you dare not stray to them; for, although we actually lingered in Neunkirchen for hours, no man could tell when the bugles might sound the departure. The commanding officer was no more in the secret than the rest of us: he was at the orders of the railway officials.

To be sure, objects of interest were not wanting to kill the time. We could pass the cuirassiers under inspection, with their white padded jackets, their jack-boots, carbines, and sabres; and the lancers—those terrible Uhlans—their long lances resting in the stirrups, and fitted with a pleasantly-devised nail, apparently intended to give a good hold in the flesh of the victim skewered. We could criticise their horses, which, serviceable as they looked, with plenty of bone and some blood, were decidedly unembarrassed by any superfluity of flesh. In a meadow between the woods and the rail was a drove of cattle trained even finer. Apparently they had been there for some time, for the herdsmen had made themselves at home in temporary huts. The *morale* of the herd was utterly gone: recumbent in the sloppy pasture, or plashing listlessly about, they seemed scarcely to care to chew the washy cud; they had lost all spirit, and were fast losing flesh. Yet, although they had thinned pitiably, some of them, by sheer weight of bone, were settling down into the damp ground; and if the toughest of them did survive to reach the front, it looked as if any beef they might deliver there would hardly repay the cost of its carriage. At length, after more than one false alarm, the exhilarating *einsteigen* resounded along the line, the bugles confirmed the word of order, and again we were off. This wearisome waiting at Neunkirchen was but a faint foretaste of what awaited us farther on.

At Duttweller, a station short of Saarbruck, we stop again; this time in a drenching rain that forbids our leaving the carriages, otherwise we might have gone on to Saarbruck afoot, trusting to an indefinitely prolonged delay at that crowded junction. Had we done so, our calculations would have been deceived. At Saarbruck we had barely time to dive under the wheels of the successive rows of carriages that cut our train off from the platform, force the habitual crowd of soldiers and civilian loungers to "accept our files," and bore our way in to the refreshment-counter. Thence we carried off what bread, wine, and cigars we could secure, for present refreshment and future use.

There was great excitement among the Darmstadt officers to see the Spicherenberg. Although the house-roof the 40th Prussians had scrambled up was hid by intervening woods and ridges, I could point them out the little clump of poplars on the plateau where the battle had raged so hot. We wound our way round the wooded hills along which the Germans had pushed their columns of attack, and found ourselves at last moving parallel to the Forbach road in the valley by which I had walked back from the battle-field on my previous visit. The train passed close by the works of Steyring, among houses pelted with rifle-balls. "Frankreich? nicht wahr?" queried one of the party, as we moved quietly up the valley towards Forbach. "Früher Frankreich," was the reply, greeted with a burst of approbation; and naturally the appearance of the *Douane Française* in the station was the signal for a perfect shower of sparkling humor and epigram. One might have fancied the sight of the ominous fresh-heaped mounds of clay that dotted the fields would have been unpleasantly suggestive to soldiers moving steadily, if slowly, towards Metz. There are crosses and crosses to be won in war, and more men come by those rude wayside memorials than by the miniature decorations of honor. Our military companions remarked the fresh graves with an interest that very quickly began to pall. As they passed the last of them, they kept their seats and smoked with their backs to the windows in placid indifference. After all, we are all of us travelling the same way as they, although possibly by longer roads, and yet we do not sadden ourselves with the appropriate "meditations among the tombs" each time we pass a church-yard.

We spent but a few hours at Forbach, and then moved on to Cocheren, where we passed a very great many. The word "*Niemand aussteigen*" was passed at first. Perhaps the commanding officer was really sanguine enough to fancy we might be promptly *en route* again. Gradually, however, as dullness brooded heavier, discipline relaxed. The sentries stationed to keep their eyes on the carriage-doors turned their eyes in the opposite direction. The men began slipping out, unreproved, and when they once assured themselves that the officers were winking at the proceeding, there was a general stampede into the fields. These were studded with willows and fringed with poplars. The waving branches suggested to the idlers that it would be the correct thing elaborately to decorate the train. The few boughs we had brought from Darmstadt showed more signs of the journey than any of the men did. In a couple of

minutes, willow and poplar-trees were escaladed, knives and sword-bayonets at work, branches rending and cracking, and tumbling all over the meadows. A few minutes more, and the horse-boxes had well-nigh disappeared in the masses of cool foliage—a modern version of Birnam forest coming to Dunsinane. Amidst all the shouts and vociferous merriment, there was a pathetic little side-scene. Two peasant girls were standing by the line looking on—one of them thoroughly enjoying the distraction, laughing and exchanging jests with the men. So was the other, to all appearance : she felt bound to laugh when her companion turned to her, and to force a grin when the conquering heroes deigned her some good-humored "chaff." And yet if you looked closer you could see the tears starting to her eyes as she gazed wistfully after the familiar boughs torn off to deck the enemies' triumph.

It is to be hoped the unwonted excitement allayed the appetites the exercise must have raised, for there seemed little food of any sort going among the men that day, and no regular rations. At head-quarters, in our carriage, we made a light lunch and a frugal supper of bread and sausage, but the staple of our meals was tobacco. Towards night there were rows of camp-fires blazing merrily along the line ; and a great comfort they must have been for those who slept in the open air. Being relatively in as light marching order as the Germans, with a thin mackintosh for my sole wrapper, it was only a strong natural turn for sleeping under difficulties that saved me a wakeful night. From time to time one did rouse up to consciousness in the intense darkness, for there were no lights in the carriage, and the night was black as pitch. No lights, at least, except a fiery point or two, intimating that some of my less fortunate friends, notwithstanding all the seductions of their warm military cloaks, had failed to woo Nature's soft restorer to their embraces, and were soothing their disappointment with the popular narcotic. But every one seemed to make it a point of honor to preserve absolute stillness, and respect the slumbers of his luckier neighbors ; although the chorus of snores in a variety of keys might well have absolved him from overstrained scruples.

The consideration of the authorities moved us at earliest dawn round a turn of the line into a change of scene, and we found ourselves before Bèning-Merlebach station. The air was chill and damp, but the clouds were breaking with the promise of a glorious day—a promise which was not belied. We were all rather dull and drowsy towards morning ; and when we did shake ourselves and turn out of our sleeping-chamber, the men were already up and afoot. They had certainly little temptation to linger in theirs. Already they had kindled the morning fires, for which most providently they had brought the supplies of fuel ; for although there was wood in abundance in the neighborhood, all was dripping wet. Small as the fires were, with the knots that clustered round them solemnly making believe at warming themselves, they conveyed an infinitely greater idea of the picturesque than the comfortable.

Side by side, and half a stone's throw from the station-buildings, were a couple of little auberges. Both were fairly swamped in the influx of wolf-eyed campaigners, who had scented hot coffee boiling on the kitchen fires. There was no respect of persons, and the only title to precedence was the possession of the necessary amount of coin. Every thing was paid for honorably ; and there, as always, the exchange of Prussian base metal for French food seemed to turn out very much to the disadvantage of the invaders. Worse coffee I should imagine I had never drunk : even at the rare *cafés* on the Boulevards where it is still to be had in perfection, I question if I had ever enjoyed coffee more. Ambition grew with what it fed on. Half an hour before we had never dreamed of a hot beverage ; now we turned our thoughts towards cold water and ablutions. It was two long days since we had seen the one or indulged in the other. It turned out, on inquiry, there was a pump in the back kitchen, and no particular run upon it. So we converted the front parlor into a dressing-room, and before a not very silent assistance, made a toilet which only broke down in the matter of towels. However, the soldiers took the hint, and speedily the back-kitchen, where the pump was located, showed like a retiring-room in "Baths for the working-classes." The water proved salubrious enough both for external and internal application. But the landlady assured an old German gentleman, one of our party who was travelling to the front in search of a dangerously wounded son, that the French troops had poisoned it, with the other wells in the place, before abandoning the country. It may have been the case, although I should have imagined myself they were in too great haste to leave Bèning-Merlebach to leave such deadly souvenirs. Neatly dressed herself, with her nice-looking children neatly dressed too, and with an exceedingly prepossessing appearance, the little landlady moved an animated oasis in the midst of all the dirty bustle and confusion, and seemed much more likely to speak the truth

than to go out of her way to tell a hideous falsehood. She told me, whatever their neighbors had suffered, personally they had no great reason to complain. They had submitted to heavy requisitions, indeed; but, on the other hand, as I had opportunity of judging, they did a fair business with what was spared them, and it was a ready-money trade over the counter. Her husband had been continued in his post of station-master. He might not be an exalted patriot of the Brutus type, but when I saw him again later, on my return alone, I was only confirmed in my first impression, that he was an exceedingly attentive, intelligent host.

CHAPTER X.

WAR SUPPORTING ITSELF.

Even when the sun had shown himself over the woods on the sky-line, every thing, air included, continued damp and chilly in the hollow. As his rays began to fall bright, if not warm, the men began to brighten up too; to move their limbs as if they were aids to locomotion instead of dead-weights, and to wriggle out of their overcoats like insects casting their slough. The rolling these coats was characteristic. In each instance three men told themselves off for the task, folding them lengthways, and compressing them into the tightest possible bulk; then the ends were strapped together, and they were slung over the shoulders, as I have described before. That was, in fact, the simple toilet of all who were not lucky or luxurious enough to make their way to the auberge pump. But what was worse, so far as appearances or preparations went, breakfast was likely to be quite as much a matter of form. I came upon a single pot, indeed, simmering on one of the numerous little fires, and the proprietor proudly raised the lid, to exhibit a highly appetizing soup of beef and carrots. But the solitary exception only proved the rule; and, although it was the centre of universal attraction, it was clearly impossible some two thousand troops of all arms could sustain their stamina on the savor of that solitary *plat*. Our own larder—the nettings of the railway-carriage—was still tolerably furnished out with bread and sausage and wine; and although we husbanded our stores, and were rigidly temperate in satisfying our appetites, when we ate we felt something like Sybarites banqueting ostentatiously in a famine-stricken town, or Louis XIV. dining on the terrace of Versailles before his starving subjects. Later, we more than reconciled ourselves with our consciences, and shame gave place to envy when we chanced to light upon a wagon appropriated to some gentlemen of a Sanitätscorps. It was a full quarter of a mile ahead, and immediately behind the engine. Sleeping, sitting, and dining-room, it was arranged admirably for its treble purpose. A passage in the shape of a Greek cross was opened among the furniture, which consisted of chests and cases filled with stores for the sound and the wounded—medicines, dressings, delicacies, and wines. The corners were mattressed and blanketed as beds; some of the boxes were cushioned with wrappers as chairs; others were cupboards, where a varied and luxurious commissariat was compressed with due regard to economy of space; others cellarets, filled with the choice growths of the Main and the Rheingau. A cold turkey and pair of partridges were in course of dissection, and a delicate pink ham was blushing modestly in the back-ground, as if it felt itself slightly out of place. There was the whitest of bread, and, absolutely, butter and preserve. Fragrant coffee was boiling over a spirit-lamp, and something savory cooking itself in the mysterious recesses of a portable kitchen. It must be confessed these Rhenish gentlemen, like Dickens's nurse in the Marshalsea, understood the value of supporting themselves for the sake of their patients; and if they could rely on their commissariat arrangements to the end of their sanitary campaign, it was a proof the more of the German capacity for organization. It said much, too, for the discipline of the hungry soldiers who went lounging by, that they confined themselves to longing and looking. Although we had been guilty ourselves of similar injuries to humanity in a lesser degree, we felt it would have been more truly in accordance with the charity they professed had these excellent Samaritans closed the doors of their kitchen and breakfast-room before setting about their culinary preparations. Doubtless, they had abundance of wax-lights in their stores—very likely portable gas. We felt and spoke bitterly, because we had ample time to inspect their arrangements and appreciate the bouquet of the seductive odors from their table. I was presented to the chiefs of the party by name, and while inquiring, with extreme interest, after their views and destination, kept rapidly revolving in my mind with what decent amount of hesitation I might make myself sure of the inevitable invitation when it came. Alas! my newly-made acquaintances, while only too happy to satisfy curiosity as to the working of their *Hülfsverein* in the minutest details, absolutely ignored all my more sensual cravings—a proof the more of the *savoir vivre*

which impressed so offensively your eyes and nose. For my life, I could not help expressing a hope to my military companion, as we continued our walk, feeling much like hungry wolves scared from the mutton in a sheep-fold, that, if the French should so far forget themselves as to fire on the German ambulances, a retributive Providence might land a shell among the excellent arrangements we had admired.

The station of Bèning-Merlebach is very prettily situated. North and south from it you look on amphitheatres of green meadows, rising rapidly to steep semicircular heights, densely crowded with feathering woods. Here, as everywhere else, it was of course impossible to say when the train might start, but experience told us that its next halting-place could not be very far off; and, moreover, the pretty forest scenery was irresistible. So, having failed to persuade any of the civilians of our party to run the risk, I determined to chance myself, and started for a solitary stroll. The character of the country was the same as that we had walked through beyond Forbach, only with more wood-land and less cultivation; high rolling beech-covers, with here and there a little clearing, with its solitary farm-house or cottage. From the ridges the views were fine, although not extensive; and the rare peasants we met were as civil as I always found them. But it was the same weary story when you stopped to talk—every thing stripped away to feed the war. Doubtless a story but too true in the spirit, although you could scarcely accept it as literal fact; for most of them had their faces set towards the invading column, and carried bread, fruit, and potatoes in the basket on their heads. It was quite evident they had no sort of doubt as to receiving fair value for their produce.

When, after something more than an hour, I looked down again upon that invading host, it was in the same very open order as I had left it. The blue uniforms were dotted all about the fields, although the woods were forbidden them; and the spots where they clustered thickest, the field-glass showed to be potato-patches. When I got down among them, I found breakfast was still a dream of the future, although foraging-parties of cavalry were out catering for it. At that moment, two or three lancers of Ziethen's, on their gray horses, in their crimson jackets, were emerging from a neighboring glade into the full sunshine—a genuine bit from Cuyp. Moreover, a detachment of the infantry had been told off on a visit to the neighboring village—it bears the same name as the station—and were already at the work. The chance of seeing how the Germans levied contributions on the occupied country was not to be missed, so, picking up a friend, we hastened off. The only question was whether they would care to have strangers as eye-witnesses of what at best must be a somewhat revolting process. Inquisitors and sworn tormentors, even when they applied the question in due form of law, did not court the presence of public opinion at the inquiry; and, moreover, we saw a couple of sentries ostentatiously posted on the Bèning-Merlebach road. However, the sentries, made no observation whatever beyond an amicable "Morgen;" so we had neither to tamper with their military virtue nor attempt to turn their flank. Bèning-Merlebach is as pleasant a village as any of its neighbors, and looks as if it ought to be prosperous. One long steep street runs from the little brook in the valley to the church on the hill. At the lower end, the street starts from a demi-*place*, with an auberge to its right, and another to its left. Herr Braun is host at the one, Herr Gans at the other. Three Uhlans, cocked carbine in hand, canter up to Braun's door, and shout a request for beer in at his open windows. As there is no immediate response, and, except for those open windows, the house gives no sign whatever of life, one of the troopers swings himself out of the saddle on to the stones with a clash and a rattle. He has barely time to toss his bridle to a comrade before Braun appears at his window, as by enchantment, in a blue blouse, and a pale harassed face that engages our sympathy at once. It must be owned that warm feeling rather chilled, when Braun, accompanying his speech with much pantomimic energy of negation, assured his visitors that he had not a drop of beer himself, but they would doubtless find it in plenty with neighbor Gans over the way. Gans, who clearly knew by experience which direction the dialogue would take, was at his window by this time, shouting out vehement contradiction; taking the Blessed Virgin to witness that the—something—Prussians—he caught himself up rather awkwardly there—had drunk the very last drop of his two days before, which was of the less consequence, that the gentlemen would find all they could possibly want with Braun. The Uhlans did not condescend to discuss the matter, but proceeded deliberately to business, and entered Braun's, whence they emerged, a minute or two later, wiping their mustaches and carrying an earthenware jar. The subsequent perquisition at Gans's was less satisfactory, and they drew his premises blank. If he had hid his cellar-key successfully, assuredly his neighbor Braun could not have been in the se-

cret. Braun's unneighborly conduct, when his heart should have been softened and sanctified by a community of suffering, came at first with a painful shock on the susceptibilities. Second thoughts brought more lenient judgment. Till you come to experience it yourself, perhaps you can hardly realize the demoralizing effect of being flayed by shreds and ruined by inches.

Having assisted at this first act of the tragedy, which was being repeated here and hundreds of places elsewhere, until further notice, we walked up the hill to look out for the next one. While three or four of us had been listening to Braun's expostulation with the Uhlans, I had been rather taken aback by a voice at my elbow, chiming off a rude couplet with more felicity of application than delicacy of feeling, "Herr Braun won't dubb down." I had no conception there was an Englishman nearer than Saarbruck, and the improvisatore looked as un-English as he well could. His was the frequent story. He had been settled for years past in Berlin; had come thence with his father-in-law in search of a wounded brother-in-law, supposed to be lying somewhere near Metz. They had got permission at Saarbruck to accompany the military train. He seemed by no means hopeful of success, and far from sanguine of finding the wounded man in life, if they succeeded in tracing him out. But the Anglo-German's wife desired him to accompany her father to look for her brother, and—shrugging his shoulders—balancing disagreeables, he preferred to risk the journey with all the roughing it involved. The worst of these vague expeditions to the field-hospitals in quest of friends was the utter uncertainty of the result. If the wound were grave, there was too much chance the sufferer might have succumbed before you reached him. If less serious than had been telegraphed, he would probably have been sent off to the rear, and if you cared to follow you might go off upon a wild-goose-chase, playing hide-and-seek with him all over Germany.

As we got well into the village, we found the whole population had turned out to stand at their doors, or were thronging towards some centre of excitement higher up. Women and children there were in abundance, but of men in the vigor of life few or none. Here and there, groups of boys and children went dashing after small parties of the Darmstadt men, like small birds mobbing a hawk. Of course these little demonstrations took nothing of an offensive form; and, in fact, with the *insouciance* of youth, the juveniles seemed to eke out the discomfort of reduced rations with the pleasant excitement of these domiciliary visitations. The people looked sour, when they were not stolid, naturally enough, but there were no hostile demonstrations even of gesture or speech; any thing else, of course, would have been absurd. The only creatures that threatened fight, or vented their indignation at the intrusion audibly, were the village curs, and these, cowed by the mien and weapons of the military, harassed the heels of us, the civilian followers of the column. Then we met the crier, who seems an institution in all these Lotharingian villages, hobbling down the middle of the road, swinging his bell and calling on his fellow-villagers to bring out their bread. The main body of the foragers were drawn up in front of the church, and a little pile of loaves was gradually growing on the pavement before them. "You have seen, I hope, that my men go to work as considerately as is consistent with their duty," whispered my acquaintance, the captain in charge, as I passed him. I could say honestly that I had, and yet the sight was so sad, that you were forced, in self-defense, to treat it jestingly. Poor women coming along with their ragged aprons to their eyes, under their arm the half-yard of bread that ought to have been for the children who clung, crying with fright, and perhaps hunger, to their skirts; old men bringing apologies for their share—apologies which were doubtless false so far as the special ground they were rested on went, and which must be sternly rejected. It required something like an insane faith in miracles to look forward to the future without despair, and the evil for the day was so bitterly sufficient, that it was beyond the strength of man not to take dismal thought for the morrow. The only marvel was, how the constant exactions—as we were assured they recurred on an average every second day—could possibly be responded to in any shape. Amidst sighs and many tears, the bread-heap on the paving-stones kept swelling, until it was clear enough, at least, that if famine was prowling in the outskirts, it could not yet have actually stalked into the village.

I strolled up through the church-yard, and came upon a Sister of Charity. She was standing with one pretty little girl in her hand, another in her arms, gazing from a distance on the picture of the woe I have tried to sketch. She shook her head to an address in German, but her face cheered a little at the French. She had been the village school-mistress in days when the children came to school; but "Blessed Saviour! that was an eternity ago now." The school-house behind her had its shutters up, except for a little room to one side of the door. How the village had suffered since then!

how she herself had suffered! though that was little. But would monsieur give himself the pain to enter and see the interior of her school? I followed her in, and she took down some of the shutters of the gutted rooms, where one or two broken benches or desks remained to show how they had been furnished; the rest had clearly gone for fire-wood; so had most of the skirting-boards, and many of the laths in the walls; not a pane of glass was left unsmashed; and the very frame-work of the windows was knocked into splinters. I confess I was doubly grieved. It was a pitiful sight at best, and then it disenchanted me of my preconceptions as to the conduct of the Germans. Hitherto I had been happy to believe that they exercised the harsh rights of war as leniently as consisted with orders, and all I had witnessed that morning had confirmed me in my impressions. "Not the Germans, but the Turcos, monsieur," she hastened to explain. "The first Prussians who came here were something rough, it is true, but since that we have not had much cause to complain of them. But these Turcos! Oh, my God! to dream of launching such savages on a Christian land!"

The men of the village, she told me, had almost all of them left it with the French retreating forces, taking their horses with them. They feared the one and the other would be impressed, and forced to take involuntary service. As she was talking, a respectable woman in deep black came slowly up from the little crowd before the church, a picture of hopeless dejection. She had just deposited her loaf there, and came to reclaim her children—the children the Sister had in charge. She was ready enough with her woes, and no wonder. Where her husband was she did not know, nor her son by a former marriage. The one had followed the troops. What could he do, poor man?—better go with the French than the Prussians. The other had been drawn for a soldier, and was probably in the garrison at Metz. When she should see them she knew not, or whether she should be able to restore her husband his children. If the good God did not interfere, she thought, for her part, they must starve. And then she broke down in an uncontrollable fit of sobbing, and the Sister put down the child to take the mother in her arms. Really the dilettante tourist on the trail of the war ought to leave his feelings at home, or carry the purse of Fortunatus. For, after all, starvation is the palpable horror, and coarse plaster as they may be, your thalers and florins bring speedier relief, and are more eloquent of sympathy than any thing.

The detachment had done its work, and was evacuating the village. The crier had made a second promenade, announcing that those who wished to be paid must present themselves promptly; and paid they duly were—in some form or other. The little column moved down the High Street, about every fifth man bearing his loaf, until it looked like a martial procession who had been celebrating a feast of Ceres. Bacchus had nothing to say to it, unless a jar or two of beer might be taken for Bacchanalian emblems; and besides these were a couple of pails of milk, while one man carried in triumph a handful of slices of bacon. The sight we had witnessed was pitiable in every way—the meanness instead of the glory of war. If all the peasants had not suffered acutely, it was only because use had begun to dull their senses; they had habituated themselves to the cries of their famished children, and learned to look on a blank future as an accepted fact. Yet they had been squeezed with exceptional tenderness, and if the proceedings of these good-natured Darmstadters may be taken as representative ones, never were the inevitable horrors of war more softened to the helpless. I saw one soldier clap a peasant on the back, not in irony, but honest sympathy, as he took his loaf from him; and the peasant looked at him, and then cordially shook the hand that had robbed him of his bread. I saw nothing approaching violence, either of action or speech, not even when Braun the aubergist flatly denied the existence of the beer which was drawn forthwith. I saw a pleasant-looking young volunteer, who was standing sentry at the entrance of the village, giving away cigars that were priceless to him, when knapsack space was so valuable. And I thought how different things would have been had the Turcos been slipped on a peaceful hamlet in the Bavarian Palatinate or the Schwartzwald, with unprotected cottages and helpless women given over to their tender mercies.

On the way back, we passed a commodious farm-steading, standing by the side of the road. It had all the outward signs of ease and affluence suddenly blighted. Vines clambered on the house-front, clustered round the windows, and looped and trellised themselves about the porch. The little flower-garden was gay with dahlias, the kitchen-garden with scarlet-runners, and the swallows were skimming the duckless duck-pond. There was square upon square of snugly thatched outbuildings; interminable cow-houses and stables, vast barns and spacious wagon-sheds. The wagons were there still, but the horses were gone, and the cows too, so far as we could see. Not a soul visible about the place except haggard women. There was a

venerable he-goat, and a half-starved cat, and a lean dog sniffing suspiciously at the ample boots of the sentry, who remained outside on duty while his superior officer passed into the house. The officer emerged again immediately, empty-handed, and shaking his head. "I shall send the men round the place for form's sake, he said, but—" and an expressive pantomime with his fingers finished the sentence. The farm looked too comfortable, and was far too conspicuous from the railway-station, not to have contributed more than its share in support of the occupation. Meantime, and in eccentric contrast with this pressure exercised upon householders, itinerant fruit-sellers were revenging the country people on the pockets of the troops. It was odd to see the column halted for the sake of ransacking the farm and appropriating what scanty stores it might contain on arbitrary terms, while solitary peasants were busy swindling its individual members in the most confident and barefaced manner; selling their sour fruit at fancy prices, and regulating the conversion of groschen and kreutzers into sous, entirely to their own advantage.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE ROAD TO THE REAR.

At our rate of progress, yards were lengthening out to kilometres and hours to days. In point of distance we were not very far from Remilly, to which we had the route in the first place; but it was altogether another thing calculating the time that divided us from it. And once at Remilly, it was still more problematical how soon or how late we might reach the head-quarters of Prince Louis's division; for all we knew or heard to the contrary, it might be in full march on Paris. We might find ourselves condemned to the proverbial tedium of a stern chase, and a stern chase in war-time was something grave. If I cut myself loose from my pleasant military friends, and cast in my lot with some of the gentlemen on their way to the field-hospital before Metz, or if I laid myself out for a tour of the recent battle-fields on my own account, I must make up my mind to a sacrifice of time I sorely grudged. Gravelotte and Rezonville, Mars-la-Tour, and Jaumont look near enough to each other on the map; but sad and slow experience had taught me how little superficial considerations like these were to be trusted. It would have been interesting, doubtless, to visit these historical scenes; terribly interesting to inspect the shambles in their hospitals; but, after all, it would be but a more sensational repetition of what I had already done. The actual war, by all accounts, had drifted away to the west, and Bazaine was reposing sullenly among his guns on his doubtful laurels. So after long reflections, for which I found ample time, I very reluctantly decided to fall back on my original ideas, and make out a visit to Alsace. I may remark, in passing, that letters since received from the companions I left gave me every cause to congratulate myself, on the whole, on the resolution.

So, early one morning, I took an affectionate farewell of my friends. They were to march on from St. Avold; I was to march back. I can answer for the sincerity of my own regrets. To say nothing of turning one's back on much you had counted confidently on seeing for days past, it was a grievous change for the worse to your own company and the companionship of your own thoughts. One made friendship so fast, penned up together by day and night, in a constant chat through the long waking hours; in a perpetual picnic when you played at the same privations, and laughed them over together. I slung my baggage accordingly, and found myself in what I called decidedly heavy marching order. As I said, my knapsack had been packed with no idea of carrying it personally, unless in case of necessity, and, since then, it had gathered books, and maps, and other weighty articles. But now the necessity had arisen, and there was nothing to be said. A knapsack-bearer is always an insufferable nuisance when he is your sole companion. At the best of times, he is a drag on your pace, a check on your free-will, and a tax on your powers of conversation; and, moreover, you would have been forced to keep a very close eye on the movements of any one you were likely to pick up on the trail of the war.

The day was young and beautiful, and, allowing for all likely detours and delays, the distance to Saarbruck easily within compass of fair exertion. So, tempted by the scenery, I left the rail and struck up among the woods that overhung it. Except that it was an agreeable walk among woods and fields, delightfully fresh to the sight and smell after the heavy rains, there was not much to repay one for the increased labor. From the appearance of their gardens and orchards, it seemed clear some of the cottages and farms must have escaped military visits; others, it was equally evident, had entertained exacting and mischievous guests—fortune of the war. One old lady I stumbled on by accident, after forcing a short cut through some thick undergrowth. Her cottage was none

the less picturesque that it had been dilapidated by time, not by violence, and it had withdrawn itself coyly from sight among the magnificent clump of walnut-trees that inclosed a luxuriant patch of vegetable garden, a bit of turf, and a quaint old draw-well. What attracted my attention first was a pear-tree on the gable of the cottage, loaded with magnificent fruit, which, after a hot walk up and down hill, was irresistibly tempting. At first the old lady seemed much put out at being found at all, was extremely curt in her speech, and evidently only anxious to get rid of her unlooked-for and suspicious visitor. On exhibiting credentials, however, in the shape of some silver, she reassured herself rapidly, and her manner softened. She brought out a couple of chairs, set them by the side of the well, and proceeded to be at all the *frais* of the conversation, for she chattered on incessantly in the most execrable of patois. It was with difficulty I prevailed on her to interrupt her talk so far as to go and fetch me some of the coveted fruit, but that once done, her ideas took a hospitable turn. She made an expedition into the cottage, to emerge with a lump of very tolerable bread, and a second one produced a bottle of not undrinkable wine. Finally, with the help of some chocolate of my own, which the old lady highly approved, I had brought my unhoped-for meal to a close just as the master of the house made his appearance. I only waited to be presented in form, and exchange the customary compliments of the campaign, to take to flight; for he was to the full as voluble as his wife, and being even more indifferently provided with teeth, was, if possible, more unintelligible. We separated, however, the best of friends, I carrying away many courteous wishes on the part of the elderly couple that we might speedily meet again.

In a military point of view there was not much to repay one on those high grounds, except that you could assure yourself of the extreme strength of the positions Frossard fell back through when knocked out of time by the terrible blow Von Goebel struck him at Forbach. On one salient bastion—very much of a second Spicherenberg, except for its thicker cover—and commanding the rail and the approaches by the valley, I came on a row of rifle-pits, protected, moreover, by the fire of a breast-work above them. Clearly they had never been held, although a good deal of labor and some thought had been expended on engineering them. Back again upon the rail, and dull work it would have been trudging alone along the road one had travelled so lately in such pleasant company. But now I moved by electricity compared to the rate at which I had come, and the relative velocity of my march was irresistibly exhilarating. Except a stray peasant or two, there was not a soul to be met between stations, but the stations were lively enough, and swarmed with Prussian reserves. There was a rush of troops coming up behind my Darmstadt comrades. A good many of the officers and men stopped me, not officially, but with many apologies, to ask whence I came, and what news I brought. The presence of a man with a civilian knapsack marching the wrong way, evidently made a grand sensation, and it was humiliating to have to confess you had started from anywhere short of the beleaguering force. At Cocheren, I think, one friendly officer, in exchange for the contents of my very meagre budget, intimated I should find some hot boiled beef and carrots going in the neighboring hostelry. Although far from hungry after my recent breakfast, the idea of hot meat after several days of cold rations, had a fascination of its own, and I turned aside, accordingly, in quest of the flesh-pots. If I had reason to be grateful to this good-natured stranger, it was only because he put me in the way of acquiring a new war experience. The meat looked quite tempting enough to overcome any distaste one might have felt to burning your fingers through a thin sheet of dingy newspaper, and then hacking it with your pocket-knife. But ah, the toughness of the tissues! The closeness of the texture, with its interwoven sinew and gristle, was enough to turn the edge of the most exquisitely tempered blade. I passed it on to a sharp-set Prussian, who was eying it hungrily; and never, I believe, had I felt half such genuine sympathy for the hardships of the invading forces as at that moment. It is easy to conceive turning out after a good night and comfortable breakfast to go into action in tolerable spirits. It is not quite so easy to imagine it in the case of men detaching their numbed persons from the ground they have frozen to, or dragging them out of the beds of mud they have settled down in. But fancy keeping up health and spirits for months on fare like that, even if you once got over the initial difficulty of eating it all. I began, too, to realize the practical absurdity of calling the ban and arrière-ban of a population into the field. Picture the serving-men whose teeth were sapped by time with new-killed rations hard as that!

Outside Forbach, on a high dry plateau between the road and the trail, a Prussian regiment had bivouacked; at least, one or two of its battalions. No chance of catching these fellows napping, or surprising them eating their

soup. Even now, with no armed enemy nearer than Metz, you come on the sentries and the outposts all duly placed, and all on the alert. It was a picturesque scene, with the soldiers scattered about laughing, singing, and smoking; the camp-fires smoking, and the kettles trying to boil; the arms piled, the officers' horses picketed, the baggage-wagons drawn up in a circle in the centre of all.

Forbach was just as I had left it; if possible, rather more crowded; but on the bare battlefield on the Saarbruck side were an immense park of artillery, interminable lines of guns, and a wilderness of ammunition-carts waiting to be forwarded by road or rail. I had had quite enough of walking in the way of exercise, and looked forward with very moderate pleasure to retracing the dusty road I had already gone over so carefully. But the inn-keeper in Forbach had assured me there was not a conveyance of any kind in the neighborhood that had not been "required;" and the provisional station-master said there was no chance whatever of an immediate train. However, just as I was settling down into my stride, and beginning to swing away at it mechanically, a merry hail came over my shoulder, and a rattle, that I had heard approaching from behind, came to a sudden stop. It was one of those long, narrow country wagons, the sides and ends constructed of bars widely apart—wagons tolerably light in their way, notwithstanding the solid wheels and pole. This one was chartered by the military authorities, and at present occupied by a trio of gunners, who insisted on the weighted pedestrian taking place with them. Handsome, good-humored fellows they looked; and although apparently very slightly concerned in liquor, I did not wait for further pressing. One of them insisted on evacuating the snug corner to the front where the straw lay thickest. Already they had picked up a German cattle-dealer; immediately afterwards a comely peasant-woman was added to our party, who became forthwith the object of marked attention, and, nothing loath, commenced a three-barrelled flirtation. The last addition was a very juvenile Prussian officer, in brand-new uniform, whose gloss had been barely rubbed, very handsome, not only gentlemanly, but distinguished-looking, and evidently desperately ashamed of the queer company in which he found himself. But he had outstripped, or in some way missed, his battalion, which was then on the march from Saarbruck, and was in mortal apprehension of finding himself in a scrape. He shouted earnest inquiries on the subject to every passenger he met, and had to content himself with most unsatisfactory replies. At last the leading files did appear on the ridge before us between the poplars, and our young friend hopped out, and advanced to meet his corps in more dignified fashion. It was a regiment of Landwehr, the old colonel in his spectacles looking much as some of our own militia commanders might have done—as if he thought the whole thing an immense nuisance, and involving a great deal of trouble he had never seriously bargained for. The men were smart, soldier-like fellows, with plenty of substance, of course, and a great glitter of Danish and Bohemian medals on their broad chests. Dusty and hilly as it was, they were swinging along at a good three-and-a-half miles an hour, although inquiries as to their distance from Forbach were not unfrequent as we rattled past them. "Direkt aus Paris" was the standing chaff of our gunners; and given with a wave of the hand and the appropriate expression of face of the express who shouts great news as he gallops past, it scarcely lost by repetition. Each time we laughed just as heartily, and it had the invariable effect of eliciting a hearty cheer from the military pedestrians. Behind the battalions came the baggage-carts, the sutlers' wagons, and a couple of exceedingly ugly *vivandières* in excessively showy bloomer costume. And then we passed a dozen or so of wagons and wagonettes, and carriages in various styles, going to the front. On some were painted the numbers of different army corps; others were blazoned with the arms of royal or princely houses; and on the banquet boxes of one or two were haughty menials in livery, looking woefully out of place.

The worst of my friends was, that their patriotism would never permit them to pass a beer-house without descending to drink to the success of their armies, and they invariably insisted on treating any loungers they might find there. It was in vain, for my own part, I attempted first to decline, and secondly to pay. As to the first, their hospitality would not be denied, and for the second, the invariable reply was, "Nein, nein, wir haben sie eingeladen." There was nothing but to resign myself with a good grace, distribute the few cigars I fortunately had left, and pass them the cognac flask I had filled at Forbach. Although under the combined influences of beer, brandy, and rapid motion, their spirits were speedily becoming incontrollable; yet through it all, and with the familiarity of "bons camarades" growing fast to demonstrative affection, there was nothing whatever of vulgarity about them. They were gentlemen slightly overtaken under circumstances that made inebriety venial, and I question

whether any three non-commissioned gunners picked at random from Woolwich would have come out of the ordeal half so well.

The old Lotharingian who drove us did not appreciate them so much. On starting from the second auberge, I had taken my seat beside him, in front; and, while our military friends behind were loud in a patriotic chorus, we got into conversation in an under-key. The French had robbed him of one of his two horses while camping out on the Spicheren, before the affair of Saarbruck, giving him in exchange a lame one of their own, one of the pair he was now driving. Out of condition it was, and a little galled in the back, but otherwise his lost horse must have been a good one, if he had much reason to complain of the exchange. He assisted at the battle from the neighboring heights until he came down to help the wounded, and he dashed off a dramatic and perhaps slightly imaginative picture of it. He gave telling imitations of the roar of the various engines of war down from the field-guns and mitrailleuses, distinguishing carefully between the whiz of the Chassepot ball and that from the Nadelgewehr when he got among the small arms. After the action the Germans had pressed him and his team. At first he had been hard at work hauling and burying dead horses; now he was generally kept plying on the road between Forbach and Saarbruck with freights like his present one. They paid him now and then in specie, generally in paper—alluding to which last, he shrugged his shoulders expressively. Thus we got gradually on so confidential a footing that our heads were continually jolting together when the wheels caught in the ruts; and finally he volunteered that bit of paternal advice about not getting too intimate with my new-made friends, "*Böse Leute*," he whispered, with a wink pregnant of meaning and warning; and the next moment he had turned obsequiously to laugh at some jest they deigned to address him. It was all very natural. Of course hypocrisy is the refuge of the helpless, and both the peasants of Lorraine and the German gunners, although admirable people in their several ways, had been brought by the times into radically false relations. When Germany appropriates a strip of the province, they will learn to understand each other better. For myself, I parted from both with very pleasant recollections; when thanking my gunners for their "lift," I resisted their importunities to accompany them through a course of the beer-houses of Saarbruck.

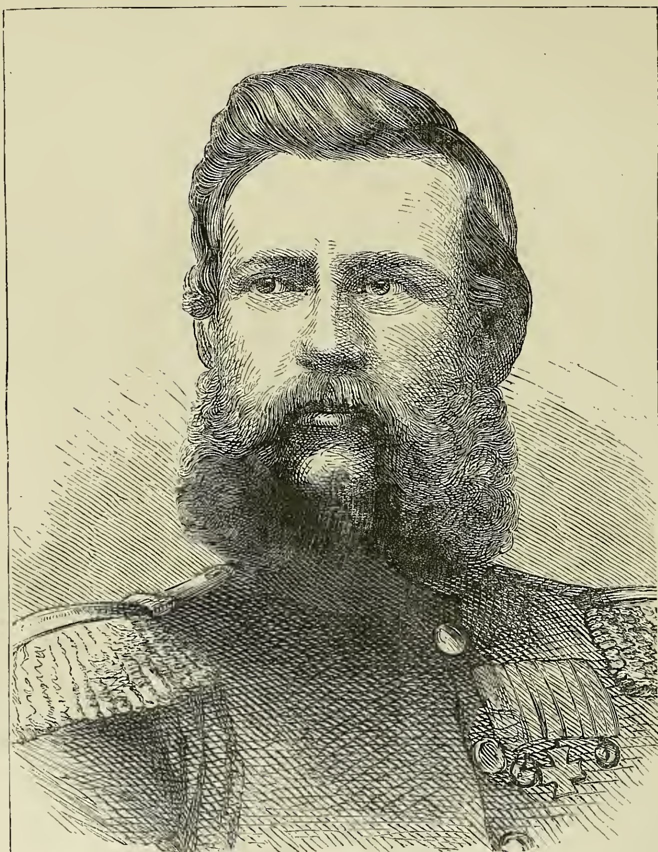
CHAPTER XII.

WEISSENBURG AND WOERTH.

No quarters to be had in Saarbruck, and no time for dinner, for a train was just starting for Neunkirchen and somewhere beyond. I had established myself in the corner of an open truck—the train was composed of nothing but trucks and close horse-boxes—when a friendly official, with whom I had renewed an acquaintance commenced on a previous visit, came to offer me a place in a carriage that was going to be hooked on. I found the carriage occupied by three officers, all fresh from Metz. One of them was a major of the Baden army, unwounded, and on his way to Mannheim on military business. The others were wounded, both of them; and one, who had been shot in the jaw, was suffering terribly to boot from violent rheumatism in the head, caught from bivouacking in the open. He had had no sort of cover, and for days in succession, he said, had woke to find himself swamped in a pool and chilled to the marrow. The others found all his dismal experiences perfectly natural, although they had been somewhat more fortunate themselves. The Baden major had not got out of his clothes for a fortnight, and during all that time had seen next to nothing of water, except in the shape of rain: in that form he had had more than enough; but he seemed cast in iron, and all the better for the exposure, which was a good deal more than you could say for his clothes. We were all of us hungry, and we clubbed our scanty means for a dinner. The major produced a bottle of capital sherry, shoved into his hands on the platform by some German Samaritan, an utter stranger. For my share I could contribute a corkscrew and a cake of patent chocolate—chocolate fortified with meat extract, and warranted remarkably nourishing. One of the invalids had a loaf of bread, and the other a basket of green-gages. Our journey was the old story; a snail's pace and perpetual stoppages, and it was past midnight before we arrived at Neunkirchen. The train went on to Bingen, and the Badener and I, who were to change for the southern lines, were not altogether sorry to find there was no means of getting forward till morning. We knocked up the house at the small Hôtel de Poste, and were too thankful to find sleeping-quarters in a couple of little attics opening into each other: he and I appropriated the beds—his suite, consisting of a couple of soldiers and a *Krankenpfleger*, coiling themselves up upon the floor. At 4 30 I was afoot again, and left the party snoring in chorus. They had heard of a Mannheim de-

parture to suit them at a Christian hour. As I looked forward to reaching Weissenburg sometime in the course of the morrow, and had learned much of the vicissitudes of travel, I thought it prudent to take advantage of the early train that started at five.

It was a pretty drive to Neustadt through the Bavarian Palatinate—farm-land like gardens, and gardens almost tropical in their luxuriance, with their long rows of bee-hives among the wilderness of flowers; fat cows wadtile plains; each bolder eminence crowned for the most part with its shattered keep or crumbling castle. Now and then the fir-woods closed in upon the rail, scenting the fresh morning with resin, their clean red stems glowing in the golden sunbeams that struggled through the canopy of boughs. Here you looked up a sheer precipice—a red sandstone quarry, wrought by pickaxe and blasting-powder into outlines as savagely picturesque as if the cliffs had been the work of nature. There you gazed down into a

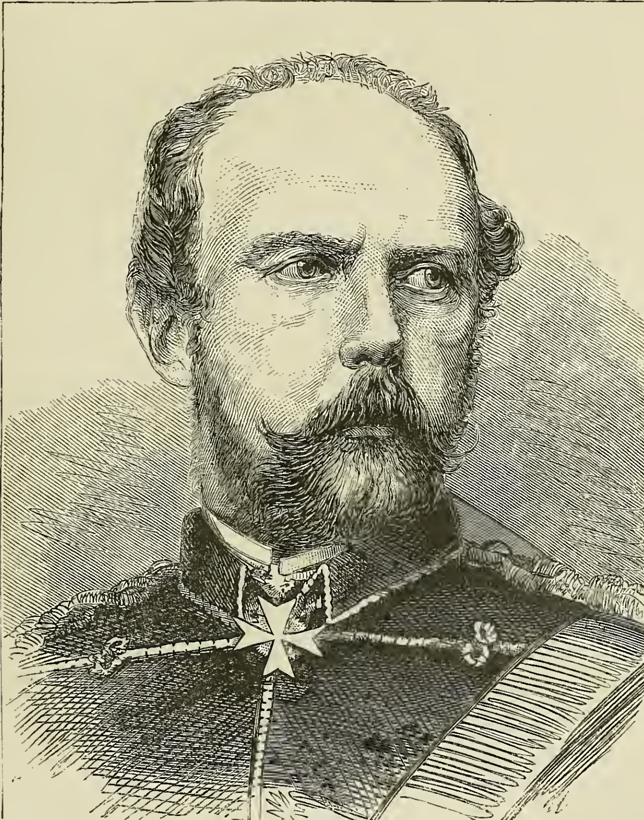


THE CROWN PRINCE, FREDERICK WILLIAM.

dling knee-deep in the grass of rich meadows—literally, a land flowing with milk and honey. What a country to support the war; and what a desert it would have been by this time had the French army been as ready for the campaign as the French Ministry, and if the Marshals of Napoleon had followed the steps and game of those of the Grand Monarch. Not that the utilitarian element ruled supreme or even predominant in the Palatinate landscape. There was a wooded *Bergstrasse* backing up these fer-

gorge, where the green transparent stream came brawling over the boulders of its broken bed, sweeping round the quaint-gabled saw-mill, with its ponderous wheel, and past the gigantic piles of fresh-sawn timber. Leaving Neustadt, we wound round the corner of the hills, to mount the broad, level plains of the Rhine valley to Winden. Strange to say, the trains had kept time, or nearly so, and had already demoralized me for delay. Starting very early, in apprehension of the worst, I should have

been delighted to have compounded for reaching Weissenburg by nightfall. Now I found myself at Winden junction considerably before noon, and infinitely disgusted at hearing, in answer to my inquiry as to the train for Weissenburg, the stereotyped response I had become so used to on the Saarbruck side, "*Nichts ist bestimmt.*" Thanks to the pleasant travelling of the morning, I had half forgotten that Winden lay on the second of the converging lines of the German advance. Although since the day of Woerth the Crown Prince had marched forward "into the bowels of France" many a long league "without impediment," and although, consequently, there were now but few of those dismal caravans of wounded, yet troops and supplies must go forward somehow, and the gown still give place to arms, and civil traffic to military trains.



PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES OF PRUSSIA.

The getting into a fresh rush of troops, stumbling over heaps of cowskin knapsacks, and in a hot forenoon having to fight your way to a glass of beer through the disbanded ranks of a lawless soldiery—all the excitement of the scramble, in fact, had lost its charm. Besides, after recent experiences in the way of pseudo-campaigning, I felt the natural contempt of a veteran for those unblooded recruits who had never been nearer to Metz than Winden. So I decided, in my haste, should the station-master assure me there was no immediate prospect of a departure, to sling my knapsack, and set forward on foot for Weissenburg. The station-master did say, hesitatingly, he thought he might venture to pledge himself to a train in a couple of hours, although unforeseen contingencies might very possibly defer the start. I thought I knew pretty nearly what that meant, and having gathered from my maps that the rail cut off a huge bend of the road, expressed my intention of walking, and begged his permission to stick by the line. After some benevolent expostulation, arguing from my weighty knapsack to the meridian sun, the courteous station-master ushered me into his sanctum, seated himself at his desk, and then requesting, as matter of ceremony, an inspec-

tion of my papers, wrote me in due form the required permission.

Had I had any one to join me in the joke, I should have been much inclined to laugh at the airs of the amiable dignitary. As events showed, he understood his subordinates and their austere discharge of their duties better than I did. There were cottages stationed along the line at each few hundred yards, and at each of them the *cantonnier* was either lolling listlessly on the bench before his door, or deliberately digging potatoes in his little garden, or else relaxing himself with affecting to repair the line. Everywhere he challenged you — commanded you to stand, and demanded a formal production of documents from head-quarters. I do not say that a liberal largess of florins might not have proved as efficient a talisman to pass you through the chain of posts. But assuredly it was a happy and economical presentiment that prompted the humble request to the chief, that flattered his vanity and saved my pocket. Had I only practised the lessons of patience I ought to have been learning during the last ten days, I might have spared myself a hot, dusty walk. Just as I entered Weissenburg, excessively parched and slightly footsore, the train panted past me into the station, beating me cleverly by a couple of hundred yards.

Weissenburg is a quaint German-French old-fashioned little town lying just within the French border — "Weissenburg," I presume, the primitive German form of the French corruption, Wissenbourg. When I call it German-French, I do not mean to assert the present existence of German' sympathies in the inhabitants. Far from that, they gave their Bavarian neighbors a reception that reflected much more credit on their "pluck" and patriotism than their prudence. But it and its inhabitants have a thoroughly German air; and although the citizens have been aspiring to learn French for a couple of centuries or so, as yet they have only succeeded in hopelessly corrupting their German. French takes precedence of German on the sign-boards, although you sorely stagger the shop-keeper when you address him in the tongue of his ambitious predilection. With its venerable brown tiles and its picturesque white gables, its vine-covered windows often looking upon streams instead of streets, it reminds one greatly of a miniature Nuremberg. It is true, the mountain brooks that flow through Weissenburg are beautifully limpid, while the sluggish arms of the Pegnitz are a solution of greasy brown meadow-land. The Angel Inn, lately the head-quarters of so much martial authority, the haunt of so many special correspondents, is quite in keeping with the place. Standing a little back from the narrow street, it lolls dreamily over a venerable bridge, pensively contemplating the stream that ripples past its moss-grown basement stones. A gallery, with a series of bedroom doors opening out upon it, runs round a spacious courtyard, embracing piles of fire-wood, mediæval carriages, and primitive carts, and vocal with pigeons and poultry. Under the archway you enter by, you turn aside into a double guest-chamber—the outer one appropriated to the democracy of the place, the inner to the aristocracy and stranger guests. You have a choice of ascents to the bedrooms. There is a wooden staircase in the open air, and a well-worn stone one corkscrewing round a massive turret. And up stairs, if your curiosity tempts you to a study of the architectural arrangements, you find yourself hopelessly bewildered. Viewed from without, the inn seems small and compact enough; seen from within, the upper floors would seem to go struggling all over the little town, such is the length of disproportioned side-passages and great halls vaulted over with rafters and prolonged to deformity. The most modern things about it were a couple of smart, bustling waiters, one of whom had been trained in London, and was fluent of English with a faint cockney accent.

Weissenburg, commanded on all sides by hills, some of which threaten to topple over into it, is a fortified town. In time of peace its fortifications provide the inhabitants with an agreeable lounge the whole length of its *enceinte;* while, in the event of war, they ought to have caused them no manner of inconvenience. It is said the attack which carried it on the 4th of August was a happy inspiration; that the order was merely to drive the French back into the streets, and leave them undisturbed there until the rest of the field-guns should come up. Doubtless, the menace of batteries in position would have been quite sufficient to make the French abandon a place they could have no hope of holding, and, had they waited, the Germans might have spared some bloodshed and a good deal of unnecessary ill-feeling. There was no artillery mounted on the antiquated little ramparts; the dry moats are beds of nettles and heaps of rubbish, and happily the elms and poplars had been left to wave in peace over the very edge of the glacis. But the impetus and *élan* of the Germans naturally carried them forward; they entered the place pell-mell in a hand-to-hand fight with the enemy, and made good their footing in it, while the French fell back on their supports on the Geisberg. The

gate by which they entered, with the adjacent houses, showed all the signs of serious work, although already, when I saw them, glazier and mason had been hard at work. And, while the fighting was going forward, those of the German pieces that were up protected the attack of their troops with a heavy fire directed on the town. It caused some damage, although no great destruction, and, fortunately, a wonderfully trifling loss of civilian life. Although the inhabitants opened fire here and there from their windows, to the extreme irritation of their Bavarian neighbors and visitors, I could only hear of five well-authenticated deaths from shot, shell, ball, or bayonet.

On the side of the Geisberg, you leave the town by a low-browed archway, under a moderately venerable tower. The bill-sticker has been abroad before the occupation and since. On one side are advertisements of American steam-packets of the Havre line, of Parisian Assurance-companies against fire and hail; on the other, various proclamations by the Provisional Military Government for the guidance and warning of Alsatians who wish to preserve their personal liberty or lay their heads on bloodless pillows. Light-blue Bavarians keep watch and ward all over the place: here at the gate; outside of it, by the railings of the railway-station; farther on by the wooden lazaret and on the skirts of the tents, where a battalion is camping in the open; by a park of guns and wagons, some of them captured, others brought up from the rear. Under the broad avenues of fine old trees that circle that side of the town, there ruminated great herds of long-horned cattle, better off for provender and for flesh than any I had seen as yet.

So far you follow the Strasbourg road. It rises rapidly for a long mile, to surmount the lofty ridge to the right of the main French positions on the Geisberg. As it threatens to carry you wide of the ground where the battle raged the hottest, you leave it, to set your face south-eastward across the fields. These dip in an easy slope down to a ditch that divides them obliquely to the line you are following, and which runs nearly parallel to the heights you are advancing on. Beyond the ditch, the fields rapidly become the heights, rising stiffly until in places they are well-nigh as steep as the Spicheren. Whatever the faults of the French, when they did elect to make a stand, they can not be said to have neglected the natural advantages of the ground. The ridge of the Geisberg, properly so called, extends, on the left, from a pair of isolated poplars, conspicuous objects from everywhere on the plains to the east, so soon as the eye can detach them from the sky-line, to a mass of building on the right, half lost in a cluster of venerable trees. These poplars mark the spot where General Felix Douai fell; the buildings are part of the farm-steading, and of the northern gable of the Château of the Geisberg. Immediately under the château gardens, the Geisberg drops sheer into the flats, and then turns back to run sharply southward, roughly parallel to the opposite Bergstrasse of Baden.

A lovely afternoon was drawing to evening as I struck across the fields. Here and there I came on the traces of camping and fighting—boughs stuck in the ground, the cooking trenches, the brushes and crushed kettles, the shreds of cloth, the scraps of weather-beaten paper. In the ditch at the bottom such objects had gathered thicker, and there were the remains of boots and knapsacks and helmets. But the dominant sensation was surprise that the signs of a battle-day little more than three weeks old should be so nearly effaced. Where the land that had been reaped prematurely had remained untouched, it naturally bore marks of the tread of feet. But much of it had been turned by the plough, and one field of mangel-wurzel must have been forced by the warm rain drenching the heated ground, already it was so luxuriant. A great gang of peasant-girls were hoeing the drills, and in the surrounding stillness you might have heard their songs and their shrill laughter miles away. Neither the reality of foreign occupation, nor the thought of the shambles they were working in, seemed to dash their spirits. Farther on, I stumbled upon a line or two of hastily cast-up earth-works, half hidden among the mangels. Then I crossed a country road, grooved in the face of the Geisberg, a few yards under the brow, and then, with a sharp pull of half a minute, I stood by the poplars. One or the other might have served for head-stones to the pair of graves beneath—for there was nothing more than a little wooden cross upon the one, a couple of crossed branches upon the other. Who slept there—French, German, or Kabyle—there was not even a line of pencil-writing to tell. Between these poplars and the farm-house that stood some few hundred yards behind, the Turcos were said to have suffered heavily, having for once at least fought most desperately. A Frenchman, who chanced to come sauntering by with a couple of pointers, told me that General Douai dropped while vainly attempting to persuade his barbarians to fall back before inevitable annihilation. Neither friend nor enemy, so far as I know, questions the chivalrous courage of this gallant officer, who was fortunate in a soldier's death, and possibly

lay buried under the very mound I was seated on. But I should have given more implicit credence to that especial version of his fate, had I not read something much resembling it in one of the French journals—I believe the "Figaro."

The view from the Geisberg is superb. To the north, south, and west, in the direction of Bergzabern, Soultz, and Woerth, you look over range on range of densely timbered chains of hills, the shades of the most distant woods melting away into the blue-gray of the skies. It was the very country for outnumbered troops to wage a war of mountain barricades. The mountains to the north are the Haardt; those to the west and south, the Vosges. To the east the broad plain of the Rhine is bounded by the distant hills of Baden. Weissenburg, in the valley below, looks, as they say of Stuttgart, as if, in a good year, it ought to be drowned in its wines. Thence the eye travels, by a street of villages, along ten miles of orchards to the church towers of Winden. The French field-glasses, if the French *intendance* thought of providing such things, ought to have disengaged every movement of the enemy from the straggling cover.

From the poplars towards the farm of the château my path lay over new-ploughed land. One or two of the great square grave-mounds had been respected, although trenched on to the very edge; but the team had not thought it worth while to turn the smaller ones, and the furrows lay straight and level across resting-places only marked by the fragile cross. The replacing the cross was a certain tribute to piety, when it might have seemed the farmer would have acted more prudently in effacing all traces of what would be popularly condemned as an outrage. The expression sacrilege, I presume, properly applies only to violating duly consecrated ground. For myself, I confess to some sympathy with him. If the house I had inhabited peacefully for years were suddenly made the scene and centre of horrors that sent a shudder through the civilized world; if I were condemned to live on in it, I fancy I should do my very best, morally and materially, to consign them to oblivion. Not that any efforts of the tenant are likely to be crowned with full success, for six or eight hundred men lie buried within stone's-throw of his windows. If a single murder makes a haunted house, what should be the effect of a thousand violent deaths in the precincts of a lonely farm and a somewhat ghostly-looking château. The natives may be superstitious, but fortunately they are not imaginative. The dead had been buried out of their sight, the rains had washed their blood-stained walls and cleansed their gory garden-paths. They had repaired their roofs, and replaced the broken window-panes and the shivered sashes. The new dairy-pails were standing in a sparkling row before the freshly-painted door. The women were going singing about their work, and the children, with light screams of laughter, were playing about the court-yard. The family looked all the merrier after its escape from the terrible anxieties it had labored through.

Yet the fight had left marks behind not so easily removed as the blood-stains or the broken glass. It must have found the château and farm-buildings a picture of rude luxury and primitive comfort. Each building in the court-yard, every antiquated appliance, was a study in its way. Through an orchard barked by ball, after the manner of the trees on the Spicheren, and past a new paling splintered to tooth-picks, you entered by a pair of folding-doors that had been held as desperately as the familiarly historical ones of Hougoumont. Immediately in the corner to your right stood the farm-house, its dented walls still bespattered with bullet-marks, its venerable tiles blotched all over with the gaudy new ones that patched the roof. The vine at the end had been nailed up again with shreds of German blue and French *garance*, ominously suggestive; but the double row of bee-hives stood tenantless, and more than one of them had tumbled over. Two sides of the quadrangle were inclosed by a lofty stone wall with broad projecting eaves, sheltering long ladders that hung below. Opposite was a row of stables and cow-houses. In the space between was the quaintest of mills, where the ponderous grindstone revolved in a massive granite trough by ox-power applied to the most clumsy wooden leverage. Yet more old-fashioned was the draw-well beyond, with its bucket and winch and rope, and its extravagance of solid ornament in the shape of a couple of useless stone pillars supporting a ponderous and purposeless arch.

You passed through a door in the farm-buildings, to find yourself in a second court, of which the side that faced you was formed by the rear of the château, the other two by the out-buildings, stables, and servants' apartments running back from it. Spacious as was the inclosure, it was more than half-shaded by a spreading chestnut, which threw off its gigantic boughs so high that a quantity of the brobdingnagian hop-poles of these districts were piled comfortably round the trunk. The old clock-turret, with its peal of gilded bells, showed that once on a time the château had prided itself on its feudal splendor, although the beds of weeds and the crumbling

plaster looked as if of late years it had been suffered to get somewhat out of elbows. But the slow decay of years counted for little in presence of the swift devastation of the 4th of August. Here, at the back, there were, of course, few signs of positive damage; but when you passed in-doors, what a scene! The bright blue sky smiled in mockery through half a dozen ragged holes in the roof and a great irregular embrasure above the hall-door. You went out upon the spacious landing of the wide stone staircase that led down right and left to the garden by flights of a score of easy steps. One half the massive balustrade was smashed clean away, and the fragments of the rest had been sent flying all about the gravel. The façade of the house had been riddled, especially under the cornice; the ridge of the roof had been shattered; the chimneys had suffered heavily; one of them, struck below, had been twisted half round where it stood. Strange to say, the trees had escaped miraculously, although one or two of the hop-poles that stood on either side had been cut across, and the withered bine drooped with the broken pole in contrast with the lush luxuriance of the plant below. The stone pavilion, at the corner of the balustraded terrace, had naturally come in for its full share of damage. Evidently for long it had been a favorite holiday-haunt of the neighboring Philistines, and its plastered walls were thickly scribbled with autographs of the hydra-headed. The view over the Bienerwald to the Schwartzwald in itself was worth the coming for. When I had had enough of the place, following an avenue that bore the marks of artillery fire, and crossing a field of French beans, through which you could trace the rush of the troops, I found my way into a road that led back to the town by what had been the left of the German advance.

After Forbach and Weissenburg, I own, I began to have enough of battle-fields; that is to say, although the study of the positions rather gained than lost in interest, morbid curiosity as to graves and relics, devastated country and desolated homes, was well-nigh satisfied, and such second-hand horrors began to pall. As it must be duller still, the listening to repetitions of the same ghastly histories, I shall be all the hastier in my visit to Woerth. In simple scenery the expedition was a lovely one as you need care to make, and those who may go later to visit the scenes of the war are likely to come back desperately enamored of the secluded beauties of the Vosges.

I had supper-dinner at the "Angel," at the end of a long table crowded with Bavarian officers. Overhearing a couple of them talking of an early start for the front next morning, I ventured to trouble them with some inquiries, and was informed that a military train would start next morning at five, and was likely to start punctually. Accepting the latter assurance with a certain reserve, and moreover not being over-particular as to how I found my way, I strolled down quietly at 6 30, just in time to present a military voucher and take my seat. An hour later I was deposited at Soulz, where I negotiated a more than tolerable breakfast, accompanied by an excellent flask of Durckheim Feuerberger; was served with coffee and chasse in due form, and started afterwards for Woerth.

As picturesque scenery translated into military language generally means formidable positions, it is not surprising that the fighting of the war has fallen among the fairest scenes of Alsace and Lorraine. Forbach, Saarbruck, Weissenburg, are all charming in their way; so I believe are the three battle-fields of Metz, but none of them can be lovelier than Woerth. The village lies, as usual, in a hollow between a couple of spurs trending out from the great western ridge. As usual, there are the heights and the woods, and in this case the desperate scramble of the stormers was up the face of stone-walls, and over vineyard terraces. There are the usual bullet-marks everywhere in somewhat more than the usual profusion, and far more than the usual number of graves. For the village itself, it had suffered terribly, having been assaulted again and again before being carried finally; and for some time, as a curé I met described it, it had been the centre of a perfect waterspout of shot and shell. And with no great exaggeration apparently, for the woe-begone houses and the roofless church were there to bear him corroborative testimony.

Picking up a young Prussian sergeant, who had been wounded in the shoulder and wrist by the same rifle-ball, very nearly on the identical spot where I found him smoking, we started on our walk. First we climbed to the ridge from which the French were driven, and then we turned off along the crest towards Froschweiler. It was the centre of their position, and there their artillery had been stationed. Froschweiler had suffered relatively even more seriously than Woerth: its church was destroyed, with a score or so of its houses, while scarcely one of the rest but could count its casualties. Beyond Froschweiler lies the château of the Count of Durckheim, where McMahon had his head-quarters when, to his intense surprise, he found himself commanding in a general engagement. It sounds incredible that the Marshal should not

have benefited by the very strong hint given him at Weissenburg, nor placed himself on guard in face of enemies so enterprising. He ought to have known, besides, what he seems never to have suspected, that he was so far outnumbered as in some degree to neutralize the immense superiority of his ground. He had extended his line to weakness; when the Germans attacked him in force from Soulz, it was literally rolled up upon its centre at Woerth and Froschweiler. Then the village of Woerth was taken, the heights above were stormed; the desperate stand made at Froschweiler was overcome at last by the German weight and the German courage, and the French fell back in full retreat. I tell the story as my Prussian guide told it me. At Woerth the French seem, in the first place, at least, to have owed their defeat to scandalous generalship and indifferent leading. By all accounts the rank and file showed both courage and constancy in the battle. But, the battle lost, the demoralization was instantaneous; the retreat became a rout, and the rout a flight. They left their dead and dropped their wounded, and whole regiments threw away every thing, abandoning their arms, and stripping off their very accoutrements. The general's baggage-wagons and the carriages of his suite became prize of the war. That night the Uhlans masqueraded merrily round their camp-fires in the robes and chapeaux and crinolines found in the Marshal's military chest.

MARSHAL M'MAHON.

The road back to Weissenburg wound about among the valleys of Vosges, through woods and vineyards and villages, fields of maize and tobacco, and forest-locked meadows, watered by rippling streams and bubbling with sparkling fountains. Certainly, the Alsatians' lines had fallen in pleasant places; and for the enjoyment of such a country it seemed almost worth paying the penalty of a frontier position and occasional hostile occupation. But, except that men were scarce, there were few signs of the trail of the war. Every one was passively, if not demonstratively, friendly; the women, recognizing a stranger in the pedestrian, often volunteered a smiling good-evening; the men working by the road, or driving their wagons, turned to nod you a salutation. Assuredly they were no connoisseurs in race or dress, and did

not set me down for an Englishman. It is natural implicitly to accept the reluctant testimony of Germans when they talk of the strong anti-German feelings of Alsace. Yet of three Alsatians I held political converse with, in the course of that evening walk, one only expressed himself virulently in regard to a transfer of allegiance, and he was a Catholic *curé*. Of course, North German Protestantism is the *bête noire* of a clergy—deluding guides of the blind—who have systematically swayed their humbler parishioners by their superstition and credulity. Of the two laymen, one was a village host, and the other a well-to-do farmer. Perhaps the former's profession had made him somewhat latitudinarian in the matter of patriotism; but so long as things settled back to a state of peace and plenty, he implied it was matter of utter indifference to him whether he was taxed from the banks of the Seine or the Spree. As for the farmer, he was infinitely more violent against the Empire than its invaders. He abused the former for the sufferings of which the latter had been the instruments, and declared if he had not believed in its peaceful professions, he would never have voted, as he did, for the plebiscitum. I suspect that, like many others, he accepted the *mot d'ordre* of *L'empire c'est la paix*, in the sense of peace at home and unlimited right of victorious war abroad. At least, he denounced, with concentrated vigor of abuse, the forces who had failed to make good the frontier, from the commander-in-chief down to the drummer-boys, and railed at a standing army that, when it attempted to move at all, could only move in retreat.

CHAPTER XIII.

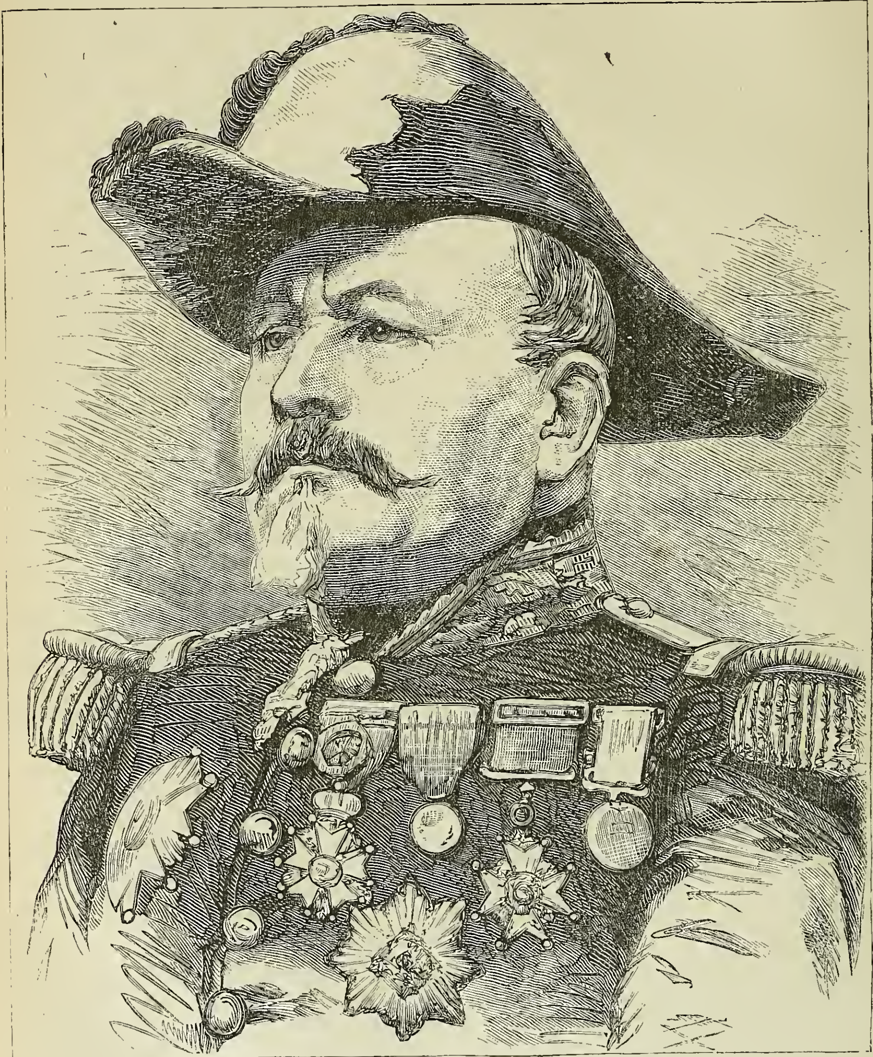
ROUND STRASBOURG.

It was hard work reposing one's self at Baden-Baden. The bombardment of Strasbourg would not suffer one to rest. A *façon de parler*, of course—for, as Johnson said once, when recommending Boswell to clear his mind of cant, men sleep none the worse and eat none the less for public misfortunes, however deeply they feel them: I quote the idea, and not the precise language. At Baden, in the absence of graver excitement—balls, concerts, flirtations, breakings of the bank, and suicides—every one interested themselves in the siege. The few French and Russian gentlemen who formed the little dinner-party at the *table-d'hôte* speculated on the persistence of the assault and the tenacity of the defense. There were refugees recently arrived from the beleaguered place, who became the centres of curiosity and compassion, mobbed by the idle and the charitable. The practice of charity was the more creditable to the Badeners that, in the circumstances, it might well have begun and ended at home, for their prosperity was dying by inches of an atrophy. Up by the *Jagdhaus* you might hear, they said, faint intermittent murmurs in the south-west, the expiring waves of the sound of the bombardment, and parties each afternoon went up to drink beer and listen for them.

Although the works held good as yet, the sustained bombardment seemed to have fairly breached the heavens, and brought them down in a steady rain-pour. The course of the Rhine was generally wrapped in dense clouds of fog; and it was by no means favorable weather, for purposes either of travel or observation. Waiters and loungers were circumstantially minute as to the objections raised by the besieging forces to strangers caught prying about anywhere in the vicinity of their lines. So, although placing no implicit faith in these, it was with a very vague notion how far I should be able to push my reconnaissance, that I took my ticket for Appenweier. Moreover, as my time was running short, and the weather execrable, I did not start with much of that determination of purpose that goes so far to command success.

Appenweier, as most people know, is the junction for Kehl, Strasbourg, and Paris on the Baden railway. The station was much as it used to be, but of course the Kehl service was suspended. There was no descent of the motley Parisian contingent—badauds and boursiers and lorettes, with their dramatic travelling-costumes and their elaborate travelling appliances; no canvas-covered chests, that would have held the fair wearers bodily, robes bouffées, and all; no brass-knobbed portmanteaux and brass-handled *cartons de chapeaux*. There was a numerous staff of railway officials, but, strange to say, few soldiers, and not many peasants. There was a train pulled up by the siding with hermetically-sealed and carefully-tarpaulined wagons; and, judging by the strength of sentries patrolling the line on either side, the contents were inflammable and explosive. The sustained row of guns argued a steady demand for the ammunition needed to keep up a fire so warm. Having donned my water-proof and dropped my knapsack, I started on the Kehl road. Brought face to face with an infliction so appalling as a bombardment, for the first time, you found yourself half expecting to find every-day work paralyzed in its immediate neighborhood; and until you reflected how quickly familiarity with

horrors breeds indifference to them, you felt inclined to be scandalized at the man quietly breaking stones by the side of the road, and the boy vacantly whistling as he brought home his team from the field. A moment's thought, of course, convicted you of the absurdity of the notion. You might as well expect to see the signs or none of your being in close proximity to one of the centres of the war. It was altogether an affair between the Strasbourgeois and the troops, and luckily no especial business of the parishes. So you would have said, at least, looking on the surface of things, and probably you would have wronged the nation.



GENERAL UHRICH, COMMANDER OF THE FRENCH IN STRASBOURG.

horses grazing by a great railway line gallop madly round their pasture each time a train rushed by them. They did it the first time and the second; the third they merely raised their heads, and afterwards they learned to have neither eyes nor ears for it. Except for the din I was walking into, so far as Kork, there were few They were sympathetic, although stolid and far from sentimental; quite ready to show their sympathy in more practical shape than by wringing their hands or raising them in horror over their heads. The unlucky refugees from the other Rhine bank received everywhere, as I was given to understand, the most friendly wel-

come, and the poor people did the very best they could for their beggared guests.

On the Strasbourg side of Kehl, I came upon a Baden outpost, and was ordered to stand and explain. Having been succinctly candid as to my intentions, and having exhibited my papers, the non-commissioned officer rubbed his hands, and turned awkwardly on his heel, as if he washed them of the responsibility either of sending me back or formally authorizing me to go on. So I relieved his embarrassment by walking forward, to be stopped again a mile and a half farther. This time the outpost was sheltering in a shed at the entrance to a little hamlet, and looked hopelessly bored and rather out of humor. I was not surprised: their look-out was over a dismal swamp, into something wet and raw that might be fog, but felt like rain. Again I tendered the sergeant in charge my explanations and papers, which he received in silence and with evident distrust; and then my cognac flask, which he promptly approved and gratefully thanked me for. After that voucher for my character, he became friendly, and, calling one of his men, ordered him to conduct me to the lieutenant. The lieutenant was civility itself; looked slightly at my pass; observed that of course it was quite conclusive as to my identity and motives, but that, at the same time, as it was not a direct admission to the works before Strasbourg, he warned me I should be subjected to continual interruption in going forward. He could not venture to spare one of his men for the purpose, or he would have sent one with me to the commandant at Kehl, who would, doubtless, have passed me on to the proper quarter. I remarked to the friendly lieutenant that mine was only a flying visit, that I was, in fact, detached from my baggage, and that it seemed to me hardly worth while going through so many tedious preliminaries for the very little I could hope to do. He quite concurred. "Believe me, unless you mean to take up your quarters with us for some days, in this dog's weather you will see nothing to repay you by going forward. The fire is all on one side now; since yesterday morning there has been scarcely a shot from the fortress." I was willing enough to be persuaded, and to decide against submitting myself to a series of cross-examinations, to giving endless trouble, and inviting rebuffs in high quarters, for all the little I should have time to see. And just then a burly Krankenpfleger, who had been puffing his pipe in the *Wirthshaus* parlor, where our conversation had passed, suggested that, instead of forcing the chain of posts on the road to Kehl, I should turn them by striking the Rhine bank elsewhere. The lieutenant saw no objection, but, on the contrary, handed me his card with a pencilled recommendation on it, in case of its proving useful; and although my enthusiasm was somewhat chilled by the cold and the wet, I felt committed to act on the advice. As I turned out into the street, a long, narrow country cart with a powerful gray, some seventeen hands high, bearing stiffly away from one side of the pole, came rattling up. The young peasant who drove saw me eye it hesitatingly, and, jumping off, came up to place it at my disposal. Very brief bargaining ended in an amicable understanding. I secured him for the afternoon, contracting to be landed at Appenweier some time in course of the evening.

I can not say the expedition repaid me. The nearer you got to Strasbourg, the more you heard and the less you saw. Laps in the ground on the opposite bank seemed to hide most of the main batteries; while an occasional heavy swirl of gray smoke out of some innocent-looking nook or hollow, some patch of willow or poplar, or the flash of a time-shell bursting in the air above the city, made up but poorly for the absence of any comprehensive impression as to the siege operations. It was harder to feel sad or serious over the sufferings of the besieged than one had found it in England, for the sense of disappointment and failure turned your course of reflections into selfish and personal channels. The roar was terrific, it is true, and terribly sustained, thunder-clap on thunder-clap, bellow on bellow, when the reports got caught and entangled in the slight rising grounds; and the intervals between the intermittent bass of great guns going off singly, and sometimes by pairs, were filled up by a rattling treble of small-arms. But the ears only tantalized the eyes, and, having done so much, and satisfied myself how little worth doing, on the whole, it was, my first idea was to fall back on Offenburg or Achern, and hope for a bright day to give me a better idea of the general effect of the bombardment. And all this time, when I took time to reflect, I was painfully conscious of the growing heartlessness for which I had been inclined to blame the Baden peasants. I caught myself thinking of the siege as a spectacle, and yet honestly I believe that on occasions I could sympathize with the sufferings of the Strasbourgeois, at least as sincerely as most people.

I was very hungry, and it was raining heavier than ever; and the horse was eating his corn, and it was fast growing dark, and it was just possible there might be more to be seen in the darkness. So, for these various reasons, I arranged with my driver to defer our start from

Auenheim to eight o'clock. He was enjoying himself thoroughly, "hail fellow, well met," with the whole jovial village circle, and assented heartily. I can not say I was rewarded for the delay by any thing I witnessed of the bombardment. Nor had we an agreeable drive to Appenweier; for thick darkness was added to the dense rain, and the roads were frightfully heavy where they had not been newly metalled. At Appenweier, at last, I had a turn of luck. At the station a train of empty carriages were on the point of starting for the north; the railway people made no objection to my taking up my quarters in one of them, and the guard undertook to put me out at Achern. I knew nothing of Appenweier hostelries, and was glad to avoid experiences of them; but in the middle of the night I succeeded in knocking up the boots in the snug little *Krone* at Achern.

To the south of Achern rises a vine-clad knoll, covered with a summer-house and *al-fresco* tables and benches. Although not many hundred feet above the level of the Rhine, there is nothing higher between it and Strasbourg Minster spire. Thanks to the eminence on which it is built, the mass of the grand cathedral towers in solitary grandeur from a plain where you can distinguish no traces of a city, while the spire overtops the sky-line of the distant mountain-range behind. It formed the centre-point of a rude circle, that might, roughly speaking, be some four miles in diameter—a circle marked in the wreathing rings of white smoke, that lighted and thickened and broke and joined again, in time, to the horrible music of the cannonade. They might be directing the bombardment on the citadel and the face of the earth-works; but the fire was incessant, and apparently most impartial. Even the stray shots that must overfly their mark were enough to spread terror in every quarter of the city. One could dimly picture the feelings of quiet-going citizens, who found their homes the centre of a circle of targets, in the midst of a converging fire of heavy guns. No wonder they ran like rats to their sewers and cellars; no wonder the women and children, who had sought shelter behind the batteries, began to feel they had fled from the phantom of the war to face its reality—that they had leaped literally into the fire out of the frying-pan. Neither common-sense nor sad experience seems to have taught the French that civilians who run to cover in a fortress in war-time might as well clasp a lightning-conductor in a thunder-storm, or take refuge behind the plates of a floating-battery on the approach of the enemy's fleet. Fortunately, modern war does not stand upon the utmost jot and tittle of its stern rights. Even then the city gates were periodically thrown open, and the besiegers temporarily suspended their fire to suffer an exodus of the helpless. And, as I said, those who found their way out to the German side had no reason to complain of their welcome, and perhaps had the best of it. At least they found themselves in quiet waters at once, instead of being buffeted back in the ebb of retreat before the flood of the invasion, among people whose own case was desperate enough to exhaust their personal sympathies. Coming from Baden the day before, we had passed the monument erected to the great architect of Strasbourg among the vineyards at the back of his native village. It was enough to make Erwin of Steinbach "walk," if he were conscious of the frightful risks that, in these frightful times, threatened his master-piece he had designed for eternity. One felt for the moment that even the triumph of the right would be dearly bought, if it should find Strasbourg Minster a pile of ruins. Yet, what was the great Cathedral, with all its treasures, to the peaceful homes that were being wrecked around? I do not mean wrecked by actual bombardment—by all accounts, Strasbourg had suffered nothing in its stone and lime compared to Kehl—but by the irretrievable desolation and ruin that must be left behind.

That was the strain of moralizing one relapsed into, none the less painfully real that it was very commonplace and closely bordering on the maudlin. Only the exceedingly creditable sentiments one entertains generally as to the horrors of war, and the awful responsibilities of those who wage it, do gain something in shape and intensity even by so distant a view as I had from Achern. I could not help wondering whether events would have passed as they did could the Minister who fanned the flame with his fiery accents in the French Chambers, or that other who blew the bellows with a light heart—I say nothing of their fallen master—have been taken a tour in the spirit round the battle-fields, hospitals, and beleaguered cities for which France is indebted to their "policy."

In the absence of vultures, the only natives of France and Germany to whom the war seemed to bring health and peace and prosperity were the Alsatian and Baden geese. Chevet, Potel, and Chabot had shut up shop, so far as they were concerned, and *pâté de foie gras* was at a discount. Nor, account for it as we may, did their numbers seem thinned; nor could they have been cooked to any great extent in simpler fashion. It was absurd to talk of scarcity in Alsace, while Weissenburg and the

adjacent villages were vocal with them; while they still mobbed the passing stranger on the skirts of each hamlet from Appenweier to the Rhine. In the streams that water Weissenburg especially, you remarked them disporting themselves in a flush of exuberant spirits. "Fine season for the liver," you could imagine one hissing to the other. "Wonderful, wonderful; haven't heard of sickness anywhere." Then a duet: "God bless the Emperor and the second Empire;" and the interlocutors would take simultaneous headers, waving their tail feathers enthusiastically as they disappeared in the middle of the widening circles.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TOURIST-COUNTRY IN WAR-TIME.

Considering that the people who supply the tourists of Central and Southern Germany are neutral or native; that Frenchmen never move across their frontiers except to visit Spa, Ems, or Baden, it might have been imagined the banks and baths of the Rhine would have been nearly as crowded as usual. Not a leaf of their sylvan beauties had been disturbed; none of the menaced trees had fallen by Fort Constantine or Fort Alexander or on the rocky slopes of Ehrenbreitstein, and the orchards and gardens still came confidingly up to the armed works of Mayence. Railway-travelling might unfairly try the patience of those who had to scramble out their allotted holiday-time at express speed; but when the phantom of a foreign invasion had been dispelled, the German steamers resumed the service the Dutch ones had never suspended. Once upon the double line of rails at Mannheim, the communications with Heidelberg, Baden, and Basle were very reasonably regular, and north, east, and south, to the Hartz, the Elbe, Bohemia, and Tyrol, there were, I imagine, few difficulties or none. The season had been almost too lovely until the weather broke, towards the middle of August, and for invalids and valetudinarians assuredly the breezes of the Taunus and the Bergstrasse had lost none of their freshness, nor the *Brunnen* of Nassau and the Schwartzwald any of their virtue. But if the rails had been taken up from Cologne to Mayence; if the Rhine bed had been paved with torpedoes; if the springs of the baths had been poisoned, and the mountain air had come breathing off the tainted battle-fields by Metz, the fair country could hardly have been more generally shunned.

The Rhine had never seen so slack a season since the introduction of steam made Cologne Cathedral as familiar to Cockneys as St. Paul's, and, for the benefit of Wiesbaden, robbed Gravesend and Rosherville of their adorers. The steamers would have plied empty, but for a sprinkling of Germans travelling for business, not for pleasure. Where you did hear an English word, the chances were that it was correctly aspirated, and had its due number of letters. There were no corpulent matrons nor wire-drawn old maids in fungus hats and clinging jackets and looped-up robes. There were no Mænades in miniature pork-pies and monstrous chignons, tartan petticoats, and tasselled boots; no mountebanks in Tyrolese hats and eye-glasses, courier-bags and gorgeous jewelry, velveteen cutaways and knickerbockers advertising the missing calves that had slipped out of sight in the highlows. The stewards, albeit they had no need to bustle, looked harassed, as if from overwork, and, instead of treating you *de haut en bas*, stooped to inquire for orders. There was no brazen band of music; only some solitary minstrel with flute or harmonium. No bugle sounded nor cannon fired to wake the echoes of the Lurlei; no jingling of pianos came from open pension-windows at Königswinter. If you had ever been wronged by bill or otherwise at the great hotels, your sense of wrong might have melted away in gentle pity. The head-waiter had no heart to order you away up to the eighth floor, on the time-honored principle of packing his house from the attics downward; the idea of persuading you that such a happy consummation was possible would have been too absurdly audacious. The number of his subordinates was more in keeping with that of the *clientèle* than of the spacious *salons* they lounged through; few of them had emerged from jackets and early boyhood. In the towns, the landlord sat pensive in his *sanctum;* or, under the trellised boughs of his terrace in the country, he watched for guests who never came, and sipped his own coffee, in default of any one else to call for it. In cities like Cologne there might be a few passing men of business, and in the neighborhood of the great hospitals there were generally some tolerably well-to-do *Krankenpfleger*. But with their single dish and their temperate pint of white *ordinaire*, half of it left over to the next meal, how different from the reckless Britons, who used to feed freely in the vast bosoms of their families; from the luxurious *connaisseurs* who dined *en garçon*, and commanded in advance *soignés* little banquets and choice *crûs*. It was most pitiful, perhaps, from a landlord's point of view, in great rural establishments like the Victoria at Bingen, where you trod the

deserted banquet-halls and thought of the mobs you had seen there of summer evenings, actually crowded out from the long tables within doors, round the small ones in the garden without. The Englischer Hof at Mayence, one of the very best houses on the river, by-the-way—ask for Laubenheimer of their own growing, if you desire to unite economy of drinking with excellence; and the Europäischer Hof at Mannheim: try Förster Kirchenstücke, if you care for the powerfully bouqueted wine which sells for three times the money in England under the nickname of Johannisberg—were to a certain extent exceptions. The former, indeed, was scarcely as full as it deserves to be, but the latter showed a muster of guests, nearly all German, that in number might have challenged rivalry with more fortunate years. To be sure, Mannheim is a centre of railway travel, as well as the starting-point of the steam companies for the lower Rhine and Holland.

Even more desolate than the Rhine towns were the watering-places. You are so used to see them a perpetual swarm of life—still-life, perhaps, during the indolent *siesta* of the hot hours, but life always vigorous and always visible. Now, at Wiesbaden, the shutters were up along the whole dismal front of the Vier Jahreszeiten, and the Nassauer Hof was watching your movements drowsily out of a bare half dozen of open windows on one side of its door. The merchants in the arcades, male and female, after their sex, were smoking or flirting, or doing crochet or sleeping, or spelling out the newspapers. The arcades themselves were paced by a handful of maimed officers, probably ordered for health to the steaming fountains, and a few elderly citizens with their poodles and grandchildren. On the garden front of the Kursaal, although it was high afternoon, there was no band in the kiosk, and few *consommateurs* at the café tables. With the exception of a stray American or so, these were Germans almost to a man, indulging in vulgar beer instead of coffee, ices, or absinthe. It was almost a surprise to hear the familiar rattle of the coin, and see the liveried sentries on duty at the side doors of the grand hall, just as they used to be. Whom in the world could they tempt to play in this dead-alive place? or were the croupiers keeping their hand in and making a private game, as billiard-markers knock the balls about when the table stands unhired? Not at all. The rouge-et-noir, and I think the customary couple of roulette-tables, had the usual run on them, and the crowd clustered round them to the full as thickly as it used to do. But a glance at those who filled the seats of honor, right and left of the croupier, told of the changed times. You missed not only the old familiar faces, but the old familiar style. There were none of the aristocratic elderly *roués* from Paris, Vienna, or St. Petersburg, with their sad, solemn, fagged, high-bred expression, going through their fixed hours of professional excitement with conscientious determination. No beetle-browed Boyards from the Principalities. None of the demoralized old ladies in spectacles and mittens, who played so deep, until they seemed to have outlived passion and be superior to sensation; nor of the younger ones, the lackered sirens in primrose-colored small sixes, who flung away other people's money with stoical equanimity. Instead of them, you had shady-looking Hebrews with silver rings on their thumbs and diamond-paste brooches in their frilled shirt-fronts; cadaverous men who twirled a solitary two-florin piece in their fingers for a full quarter of an hour, before they decided to chance it for a two-days' dinner—or none at all. Females, jaded in face and garments, opened and shut strong-clasped portemonnaies between each small stake they risked desperately at long intervals, and who distrustfully denied their Gampish umbrellas to the affable menials who sought to relieve them of them. It was a "silver hell" instead of one of gold and notes; gambling stripped of all its graces, and brazening it out in its money-grubbing meanness. For, except the Hebrews, few there had superfluities to risk; and as the score or so of florins were raked into the bank after each of the deals, there was far more of baffled covetousness, disgust, and even despair, in the faces of the circle, than I have seen when the tables were having a grand field-night, and sweeping up the rouleaux and the bank-notes by the rakeful.

It was war-time, and the intelligence of the day not uninteresting, and yet the reading-room was well-nigh deserted. Of course the excitement of remote battle-fields has no chance with that of the neighboring gaming-tables; the distant roar of the guns by Metz was drowned in the chink of coin next door. Those who never ventured a florin in their lives make it a duty "to observe human nature," and go on unweariedly observing it day after day. Those who denounce gaming find horror deepen with the sense of danger, as they find themselves irresistibly fascinated towards the skirts of the fatal vortex. So the reading-room was nearly empty, and yet the journals were well worth the perusal. The French ones, in especial, were inimitable. It was not only their delightfully audacious mendacity, their supreme contempt for all consistency; although the play of fancy

in the columns devoted to official announcement and "authentic" war intelligence utterly blanked the interest of the sensational romance in the *feuilletons*. It was the brilliant bouquet of patriotic epigram and dramatic episode that brightened their pages and dazzled their readers; the Spartan utterances of *gamins* of the stamp of Gavroche reported verbatim, and of veteran warriors in retreat, of maids, wives, mothers, and children, and all bearing the brand-new stamp of the same mint always hard at work turning out the daily supply. They were all so thoroughly Parisian in their spirit, even when they came from the most remote departments, and each so *ben trovato*. The "Debats" and the "Siècle" might preserve some genuine dignity of deportment in face of tremendous national disaster. But the others attended scrupulously to the stage proprieties while the terrible tragedy was culminating. They reminded you of Pope's lady rouging on her death-bed, or an elderly coquette arranging her night-cap before risking herself on the fire-escape, except that while they cheered others on to the breach, they made themselves snug in the casemates. Certainly French journalism has come even worse out of the war ordeal than French generalship.

At Hombourg, although I did not go there, M. Blanc, or his representative, was, as I understood, still offering the gaming world the advantages of their *trente et quarante* with the *demi-refait* and the *roulette* with the single zero, as per advertisement. At Baden-Baden the tables had been cleared away into lumber-rooms, in the absence of the French contingent that usually filled their owners' strong boxes. The Tyrolese or Swiss in the booths of the Vanity Fair before the Kursaal found even less to do than their brothers and sisters at Wiesbaden; chamois horns, Bohemian glass, and model châlets hung heavily on hand. Among other necessary economies, the administration had retrenched freely upon the English papers, and had limited its subscription to the "Pall Mall Gazette," "Galignani," and the "Daily Telegraph." The hotels were all open, it is true, but how their glory had departed! There were three or four storm-stayed *habitués* at the L'Europe, piping melancholy notes to be chorused forthwith by the rest, and wandering ghost-like round the scene of departed gayeties. There was no eating in the garden restaurant of the Oos; slight clinking of beer-glasses by the Alte Schloss and Schloss Eberstein. The gorgeous striped sunblinds had been put away against better times, and even the lustre of the garish flower-beds seemed dimmed. It was very hard upon a place, doomed at best so speedily to lose its surest lure, and yet the Badeners bore it like men. As I said, they managed to interest themselves in the fate of Strasbourg, and to relieve the wretchedness of its refugees. With rare exceptions, all that seemed left the hotel-keepers to prey upon, was an occasional wandering horde of Americans, each made up of several separate fathers and mothers, of numerous sons, and endless daughters of assorted sizes. In the midst of the prevailing solitude and dullness they seemed to have rolled up together for mutual protection against moping; and landlord, porter, and waiter, standing in their respective archways, hungrily eyed the long train of luggage-laden flies roll past their webs. But even those fortunate ones the transatlantic strangers favored had scarcely time to rejoice in their prize before it escaped them again. The Americans, finding nothing but the simple beauties of the Schwartzwald to tempt them to linger, travelled on even more hastily than their wont. How enjoy moderately rapid travel through Europe, when there was no Paris waiting for them, open-armed, to repay them for having gone creditably through their course of *Murray*, and bored themselves conscientiously to death with dull Nature? Better a thousand times Saratoga and Newport. But it was melancholy to reflect how much we English could have done to lighten the burdens of the war and our own, had we only gone our annual way. How much flaying we should have been spared in English watering-places, how much scrambling and huddling in Highland inns.

CHAPTER XV.

GERMANY AND HER NEIGHBORS.

One leaves the scenes of the war with a deep conviction of the strength of new-born Germany. Possibly the tacit sense of it displayed by Germans of every class may be contagious, and the imagination may be dazzled by the splendor of the German victories. But the more searchingly you scrutinize the grounds of your conviction, the stronger it becomes. You watch the progress of a stupendous Power only in course of development, and you are lost in speculation as to when it may culminate, or where it shall find its limits. We are all familiarized by this time with the details of the system that can practically mobilize the intelligence as well as the full force of the country —with the different classes of army proper, reserve troops, Landwehr, and Landsturm. We

all understand something of that extraordinary organization that has become a by-word; an organization that forgets nothing and provides for every thing. We know how each corps works in entire independence of the others, although in absolute harmony with them. We know how things are ordered so that a single over-cumbrous machine shall not break down with its own weight in the working, while the central depôt that feeds the war shall be easy of access and practically inexhaustible. We begin to learn something of a system the very reverse of our own, by which a people who know the value of money as well as most, go near assuring success, in the event of war, by what seems lavish expenditure on war material in time of peace. We see Science travelling in the rear of the armies, all ready to be called into consultation, and civil engineering prepared to play its part; telegraphic and postal communications opened up to the positions that were stormed yesterday, and drilled corps of navvies laying railways round Metz, before the army in occupation there has made up its mind it is surrounded.

Yet formidable as is the German power for offense in numbers, equipments, and resources, all these would relatively be the skeleton of strength, without the intelligence that pervades and the spirit that animates it. To begin with the humbler elements: look at its rank and file, at their military training, their civil education, and their enthusiasm. Those who have spared themselves the three years' careful training in the strictest military school in the world, have only done so by giving satisfactory evidence that they have learned in twelve months sufficient to satisfy the requirements of exacting authority. Most of them men of a certain position and cultivation, they are almost too precious stuff to be sacrificed on ordinary service in the ranks, and the sending them to shoot and to be shot at by French peasants, to charge Russian emancipated serfs with the bayonet, is like cutting grindstones with razors. But precious as the material is, it pays the country to utilize it in the ranks. In the first place, as these men enjoy no special privileges in war-time, except the solitary one of carrying revolvers if they care to buy them, their presence inspires their comrades with the feeling of fraternity and equality in the best sense. In case of need, that feeling will be found a sovereign specific for those dangers from extreme democracy with which foreign republicans threaten aristocratic Germany. Then these young men are in readiness to fill up blanks among the subaltern officers just as casualties occur; an advantage hardly to be overrated when good leading is every thing, and in days when officers often suffer out of all proportion to their men.

About the training of the officers there can be no question. It may be too exclusively military to turn out masters in the *belles-lettres.* These gentlemen may have devoted themselves to military authors to the neglect of Erckmann-Chatrian, and contemporary French fiction. But that is, at least, no fault in estimating their value in a military point of view. Their attainments in military geography, and in French geography in particular, are unmistakable. Nor could they have any excuse had they neglected the study, for every captain when he marched over the frontier was supplied with a map of France that would take a dumb pedestrian through the length and breadth of the land in entire independence of guides. But they not only profit by the thought and works of other people; they learn to think independently for themselves.

Perhaps nothing gives a better idea of the qualities of the German troops than the doings of those terrible Uhlans. How audaciously have they pushed their reconnoitring! how rarely have they been trapped! That first reconnaissance that ended so tragically at Niederbrönn was only a foretaste of all that was to follow. Nor was it a mere barren bravado. The dashing little party spied out all the scenes since made historical—Soultz, Woerth, Reichenhoffen. Since then the same sort of thing has been done over and over again; done hundreds or thousands of times with equal courage, and perhaps less over-confidence. Men have been found by the hundred quite capable of taking the command of an expedition which, although only composed of half a dozen or a score of men, needed all the higher qualities of generalship—dash, sagacity, promptitude of decision, and the capacity of changing rapidly matured plans in obedience to the spur of the moment. What must the leaders be who inspire blind confidence in men so thoroughly able to think and act for themselves?

In such an army, no wonder the discipline is as nearly perfect as discipline well can be. Apart from that system of requisitions which is governed by purely military considerations, and in no degree affects my argument, what invasion ever left behind it fainter traces of its progress, or contributed fewer well-authenticated scandals to the history of its march? Without reading evidence or listening to it, common sense is sufficient to dispose of the main accusations brought against it. For it must be conceded that the first idea of the authorities is the absolute efficiency of the armies: the generals who cut

down their own modest kits to a minimum, must be the last men to foster effeminacy, or tolerate excesses which every child knows to be the ruin of a force. Granting, for the sake of argument, that they may wink at liberties with larders, cellars, and cigar-boxes after a long fast and a hard march, is it conceivable they should countenance an organized system of pillage? Picture a German regiment who, at the risk of mortal sickness, are not suffered to burden themselves even with light *tentes d'abri*, staggering along under the hangings and carpets and mirrors we are assured they have carried off by wholesale! We are told the officers set the example to their men. Imagine the captain of a company passing under the eyes of the Staff on his way to the siege of Paris with a Claude Lorraine or a marble statuette tucked away under his arm! Possibly the consideration of the authorities permitted the suspension of the transport of wounded, while the looters sent trains of spoil to the rear; or perhaps they gave them leave of absence, that they might deposit their plunder in their homes, as the Highlanders used to do in the wars of Montrose and the Chevalier. It is not a pleasant subject, yet one would be curious to know when the gentleman who detected, by the smell, the presence of burning women and children in the smouldering ruins of Bazeille, became connoisseur in the odor of masculine, feminine, and infantine flesh. A cannibal connoisseur of the Sandwich Isles must have been puzzled. As for tales of insulted women, these have been flatly contradicted everywhere by impartial evidence, and they sound utterly incredible to those acquainted with the stuff and tone of the German armies. There are indifferent characters everywhere; and there may have been occasional crimes perpetrated on the trail of the war, as there are every day in Belgravia and Tyburnia. But nowhere would injured innocence find readier champions than among the educated and married men who leaven so largely the German ranks; and to suppose that commanding officers would tolerate the crimes we are told are perpetrated habitually, is to believe they are ready to sacrifice their own military reputation and the future of their country to the vices of a handful of scoundrels. We need scarcely feel surprised at the monstrous averments of Frenchmen smarting from defeat, when we see honest neutrals listening so credulously to extravagant calumny.

The German army is strong, not only in intellect and discipline, but in spirit. People are slow to realize that the former weakness of Germany is now in reality one of the chief sources of her force. The jealousies and rivalries of the States of the old Bund may still survive. But the jealousy is of the military fame of the Prussians, and of their reputation for superior discipline; the rivalry who shall show the most steadiness under murderous fire—who shall exhibit most *élan* in a desperate advance. The French journals fabled of Bavarians and Hanoverians hemmed in and guarded by corresponding forces of Prussians in the line of battle. "Thus half the enemy are spies on the other half," wrote the pleasant "Figaro." As matter of fact, it is well-nigh inconceivable that a Hanoverian or Bavarian corps should give way before the enemy with Prussians looking on, or *vice versâ*. More than that, as each man fights in the circle of his immediate neighbors, he must stand his ground, or be damned to local infamy as a coward. There are obvious objections to the plan, inasmuch as a single disastrous day may weed a district of its manhood; but there can be no doubt it is a guaranty for a desperate resistance and a bloody butchery. Then, while the disposition of the allied forces gives full scope to the spirit of chivalrous emulation, all are moved by one iron hand, in obedience to one far-seeing brain. Von Moltke plays the great game as he goes, as you might work out the problem of a checkmate on a chess-board. He has his war map, with the flags and pins and the silken threads, and never yet has he made a false move on it. Chance may have served him, or incapacity played into his hands, but his soldiers attribute it all to skill; and by consent the great German strategist is credited with the infallibility the Roman Pontiff sighed after in vain. Von Moltke does not seem much in the way of making mistakes, but he has such a fund of confidence to his credit that he has a wide margin to blunder on. Nor is there any reason to believe that the issues of the war hang on his single life. His mantle would probably fall on shoulders worthy to wear it, and he would bequeath a legacy of experience for admiring pupils to profit by. The Crown Prince, Prince Frederick Charles, General Von Blumenthal, and many others, are generals, not puppets, and their souls are in the profession they devote themselves to, in season and out of season. It is no secret that when Prince Frederick Charles entertained a few soldier friends in Berlin, the amusement of the evening was the indication of a plan of campaign by one of the party, to be discussed and criticised by the others. The result is—it can not be repeated too often—that the army thoroughly believes in its leaders, while the leaders do all that men can do to deserve the confidence of their men.

The German organization has answered well, and yet, political development apart, the Ger-

man army will probably enter on its next campaign on yet more advantageous terms. In the first place, I fancy there can be no question now as to the superiority of the Chassepot to the needle-gun, at least in the hands of the cool, imperturbable Teuton. It has greater lightness, and far superior precision at long ranges. Then all Germans confess now that the Mitrailleuse comes much nearer to the terrible weapon the French paraded in anticipation of the war than to the exploded bugbear which was sneered at after Forbach and Woerth. At Gravelotte and Rezonville it tore terrible gaps in the German ranks, and the consciousness of its being a monopoly of the enemy might easily have demoralized inferior troops. Moreover, whether we look forward to a comprehensive German empire or to an expansion of the North German Confederation in any future war, South Germany must necessarily contribute a stronger and more highly-disciplined contingent.

One would be almost tempted to blind admiration of the German organization as it stands, were it not for one obvious weakness. Every thing seems calculated on the assumption of certain and rapid success. It is all very well sending troops into the field in summer with no protection but their cloaks; but what if you have a drenching season, and if defeats and checks prolong the campaign into winter? What if cholera, and typhus, and dysentery fairly get the upper hand? What of a Russian campaign, for instance—if Russia chose to provoke the war in late autumn? It is true, all precautions in the way of ample supplies, and all specifics in the shape of medicines and dispensary stores, are taken against these diseases. But that very luxury of heavy wagons would be a serious embarrassment in the event of a retreat; while a tremendous disaster seems actually courted by dispensing with *tentes d'abri*, and attaching importance so excessive to extremely light marching order. Yet, whatever be the advantages or disadvantages of the present system, it is unquestionable that, before another war, experience will have made up its mind and finally struck the balance between them.

Germany is almost dangerously strong, and she will be stronger. One comfort is, she is essentially a Conservative power, and bound over by the very conditions of her strength to exert it with moderation. She can use it when it is a question of self-preservation, or when the national mind is stirred to its depth; to abuse it would be suicidal, if not impracticable. She is not likely to paralyze her progress and convulse her whole social system, that she may go to war for an idea. No amount of withered laurel-leaves would repay her the blood and treasure she must expend in gathering them; and she has no wish to garrison hostile territory, and undertake the perilous task of taming strange and uncongenial races. And there is this feature in her strength, that the more she is threatened from without, the more she hardens. Any thing in the way of harmony and unity that the French war may leave incomplete, an aggressive coalition would assuredly perfect. If she were threatened by socialism or rapid republicanism, they would be hopelessly crippled for mischief by the tender of foreign aid, if they were not stifled by the national common sense. The other day, when her armies were marshalling for this national war, the high-handed Bismarck, the darling of the Junkers, met round a quiet family dinner-table the men condemned in '48 to death and dungeons, and reactionist and revolutionist cordially touched their glasses as they pledged the health of their common country. So it would happen again at the first note of defiance to the Fatherland they are all devoted to.

The danger of Germany, the danger to her neighbors, so far as she is concerned, is that paramount passion of nationality, that makes sage Germans lose their heads wherever Germans are concerned. "Das Deutsche Vaterland" is the German "Marseillaise." I would trust her with Belgium or Poland, if all Europe were disarmed, and she had only to step over the frontier to annex them. I should be sorry to answer for her, even after the drain of this bloody struggle, if it were a question of championing Teutons in the Baltic Provinces of Russia, or repelling advances from the hereditary states of Austria. Hardly a German but is honestly persuaded that the Danish war was a holy one; and if there were big battalions on the side of the fancied oppressors, I can conceive a state of exaltation where the danger would be an additional inducement to the crusade. The house of Hapsburg has lost much lately, and I have no pretension to cast its horoscope. But I can not conceive myself that, sooner or later, its German subjects can help gravitating to the Fatherland—a destiny to be precipitated inevitably by any Austrian declaration of war. I can not imagine that a great German empire should be any thing but a menace to the tranquillity of the Czars, so long as they have German subjects they are laboring to Russianize. Even if they treated these subjects with all conceivable consideration, I should be sorry to answer for their not finding themselves in very hot water, with a choice between the frying-pan of propagandism and the fire of war.

And it is just possible that, by force or by treaty, Germany may be over-impulsive in appropriating mixed populations—in the Baltic, for example, or in Bohemia—and may thus stick thorns in her sides that may cause her trouble later.

There are shoals that German statesmanship and good sense may steer her clear of. I merely indicate them now, because they must inevitably influence the present attitude of neutrals. Say what they will, it is not possible that Russia or Austria can regard otherwise than with apprehension the marvellous aggrandizement of their neighbor and rival. So far as Russia is concerned, independently of that other consideration I have urged, she must know Germany will never suffer her to go to the mouth of the Danube. The truth is, of the great Powers there is but one veritable neutral just now, and that is England. It is hardly conceivable German interests or ambition can clash with ours. It is certain the interests of the two countries are often identical. If we were to name the causes likely to embroil us on the Continent, we should say, of course, a French occupation of Belgium and a Russian advance towards Constantinople. The former Germany will never tolerate, nor can Russia offer her any thing worth acceptance to buy her assent to the latter. Assuming Germany, in her expansion, should ever absorb Austria proper, it is probable European opinion would be inclined to let the Hapsburgs compensate themselves on the side of Turkey; the governing Ottomans would recross to Asia, and we should see a Christian Power that gave us no cause for umbrage garrisoning Constantinople, and holding the castles of the Bosphorus against the Russian fleets. Nay, although any thoroughly friendly understanding between ourselves and our American cousins may seem wildly chimerical, is it not just possible that a cordial understanding with Germany may bear fruit across the Atlantic, through the mediation of German-Americans? In any case and for every reason, our political sympathies ought to be with Germany now; and if they are so, is it not a solemn duty to let them speak aloud? If we think the German claims not unreasonable, only in fact what Germany may fairly ask, is it any reason why we should suppress our opinion, because her patriotism, her efforts, and her sacrifices have been crowned with startling success? Certainly we can not be suspected of wishing unnecessarily to weaken France; for, whatever we may hope of Germany, there is no answering for every contingency, and she is too strong already for prudence to care to see her stronger. But if we rely on German moderation, and distrust the natural resentment of humbled France; if we believe, by right of sacrifice and of conquest, she has established a fair title to the military frontier she would erect against a repetition of this wanton aggression—if we believe all that, in our character of really disinterested neutrals—are we not bound to say so?

At the same time—holding, as I do, that Germany's growth is England's safety, that her mighty resources are in a manner our own, that, where Germans are not in question, her feeling is essentially Conservative, and her strength purely defensive—it is impossible to look sanguinely to the future, or to hope the coming peace may mean the advent of the millennium. We can not expect that the neighbors who feel themselves overshadowed by her rise, and menaced indirectly by her greatness, will trust themselves to her moderation, or resign her the dictatorship of Europe. And if not, and if they contemplate possible war in a future more or less remote, what is to limit their armaments? If Russia, for example, or France under its next master, in the teeth of difficulties, were to adopt the German system, it would be an irresistible temptation to absolute power to abuse it for personal ambition. If they expand their standing armies, where is expansion, with its train of expenses, to stop? Those mighty armaments of the Second Empire that clogged so heavily the progress of France, collapsed at once in contact with half-organized Germany, and in their numerical strength proved utterly inadequate. What, we may ask, might have been the *chiffres* that would have made success matter of certainty, or even of possibility? We may be sure, Germany will never consent to lay aside the harness she wears so lightly in peace-time; and, in presence of that silent provocation, what, we ask, must be the attitude of her neighbors?

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER.

I.

WEISSENBURG, WOERTH, SEDAN.

From the first—after the too precipitate declaration of war—hesitation was the evil genius of the French Emperor and his marshals. Taken by surprise by an act of state, Prussia was allowed time to mobilize her vast forces and seize the initiative, before Napoleon was ready to strike a blow. The French army was to be ready for the march to the Rhine by the 20th of July at the latest; but the 20th of July came, and nothing had been done. Nine days afterwards—nine days spent in preparations that

should have been made before the declaration of war—the Emperor took tardy command at Metz, and the world looked for an immediate advance. There was still time, as appeared later, for the march to the Rhine; yet the army did not move. Hesitation appears to have gone so far that the Emperor could not determine whether to attack at all, or to take up a position for defense. The heads of the German columns were already converging from all directions towards the Palatinate, and every day they might be expected to attack. Yet the French remained in their positions on the frontier—positions designed for an attack which was never made, and altogether unfit for the defense which was so soon to be their only choice.

This fatal hesitation was accompanied by tactical blunders of the most extraordinary character. The French army, placed close to the frontier, was without advanced guards at the proper distance in front of the main body; but there were two ways in which a bold commander might have remedied this defect. The advanced guards might have been pushed forward into German territory, or the main body of the French army might have been withdrawn a day's march into the interior, leaving the guards on the frontier. But neither Napoleon nor his marshals were ready to run the risk of actual collisions with the enemy involved in the first plan, nor bold enough to face the political consequences of an apparent retreat before the first battle was fought, and they seem to have thought that the Germans would imitate their inactivity. So hesitation was still the order of the day, and priceless time, priceless to both sides alike, was wasted by the French, and employed by the German commanders in preparing for that series of masterly movements that has crushed the military power of France and laid her, humiliated, at the feet of her adversary. On the 4th of August, before the whole of their forces had reached the frontier, the German commanders resolved to take advantage of the faulty disposition of the French. The sharp battle of Weissenburg forced the whole of M'Mahon's and Failly's corps to a still greater distance from the centre of the position; and on the 6th, being now fully prepared, the Third German Army defeated M'Mahon's six divisions at Woerth, and drove him, along with Failly's remaining two divisions, by Saverne towards Lunéville, while the advanced bodies of their First and Second Armies beat Frossard's and part of Bazaine's troops at Spicheren, and drove the whole centre and left of the French back upon Metz. Thus all Lorraine lay between the two retreating French armies, and into this wide gap poured the German cavalry and, behind it, the infantry, in order to make the most of the advantage gained. As soon as the defeated troops were driven so far south that they could regain the main army under Bazaine only by a long and circuitous route, the victorious pursuers, marching straight on Nancy, kept continually between the two, and prevented their union.

The Emperor now resigned his command into the hands of Marshal Bazaine, who might certainly have known that his adversary would not let the grass grow under his feet. Yet the same hesitation that proved the ruin of M'Mahon was exhibited in Bazaine's movements. The main body of his army was at and around Forbach. The distance from this place to Metz is not quite fifty miles. Most of the corps had less than thirty miles to march. Three days would have brought all of them safely under shelter beneath the walls of the strong fortress; and on the fourth the retreat towards Verdun and Châlons might have been begun. For there could no longer be any doubt as to the necessity of that retreat. Marshal M'Mahon's eight divisions and General Douay's remaining two divisions—more than one-third of the army—could not possibly rejoin Bazaine at any nearer point than Châlons. Bazaine had twelve divisions, including the Imperial Guard; so that even after he had been joined by three of Canrobert's divisions, he can not have had, with cavalry and artillery, above 180,000 men—a force quite insufficient to meet his opponents in the field. Unless, therefore, he intended to abandon the whole of France to the invaders, and to allow himself to be shut up in a place where famine, as the event has shown, would soon compel him to surrender or to fight on terms dictated by the enemy, it seems as though he could not have had a moment's doubt about retreating from Metz at once. Yet he did not stir. On the 11th, the German cavalry was at Lunéville; still he gave no sign of moving. On the 12th they were across the Moselle; they made requisitions in Nancy, they tore up the railway between Metz and Frouard, they showed themselves in Pont-à-Mousson. On the 13th their infantry occupied Pont-à-Mousson, and were thenceforth masters of both banks of the Moselle. At last, on Sunday, the 14th, Bazaine began moving his men to the left bank of the river; an engagement at Pange was drawn on, by which the retreat was again retarded. On Monday, the 15th, the actual retreat towards Châlons was commenced by sending off the heavy trains and artillery; but on that Monday the German cavalry were across the Meuse at Commercy, and within ten miles of the French line of retreat

at Vigneulles. The sequel of this unparalleled series of blunders was the capitulation of Metz.

The mismanagement which cost the French so dear at Woerth and Weissenburg was even surpassed by that which attended the ill-fated movement of M'Mahon's army from Châlons towards Sedan, to relieve Bazaine, who had allowed himself to be cooped up in Metz. To effect this hazardous flank march with safety, watched by so vigilant a foe as Prussia, M'Mahon should have had a thoroughly disciplined and well-appointed army, capable of meeting the enemy upon something like equal terms. Instead of this, he led a mob composed of demoralized fugitives from half a dozen defeats, and raw levies, most of whom had never handled a rifle. The camp at Châlons was abundantly supplied with provisions; but he departed in such haste that only a few biscuits were served out to each soldier, with the expectation that an army of over a hundred thousand men could be subsisted on the country through which they were to march. The consequences were such as might have been foreseen. A day or two sufficed to exhaust the supply of biscuits, and the soldiers were left to shift for themselves. Discipline was relaxed. The country was filled with stragglers. According to the diary of a French officer, from which these particulars are taken, the troops received no regular rations for six days, but foraged on an already exhausted country. Meanwhile the pursuit was pressed with vigor; and in all their encounters with the enemy, the French fought under circumstances the most disheartening to soldiers.

Nor was this all. Added to the pangs of hunger and other discomforts, there was a fatal neglect of discipline. The march was like the retreat of a defeated and disorganized army. We are told that corps and divisions marched by themselves, and that there was no concert of action among the superior officers, who indeed were generally not on hand when their presence was most wanted. The diary gives an instance when, after a long and severe engagement, on the 29th of August, the Fifth Corps marched the whole of the night without food or rest. The passage is as follows:

"August 30.—We arrived at Beaumont, a hilly and woody country, at 4 A.M. The men are utterly exhausted by the march, by hunger, and above all by want of sleep. There is no possibility of bringing order into the ranks. The presence of the generals was indispensable, but none of them was to be seen on the spot, and the soldiers fell down asleep, without guards, without a single sentry. The sight was most lamentable."

From this disorderly and unguarded bivouac, they were roused a few hours later by the thunder of Prussian cannon. The scene that followed is thus described in the diary:

"The whole camp seizes its arms in disorderly fashion; the officers do their best to give some kind of organization to the first movements; the artillery is soon at work, and the battle begins. But a tremendous panic arises in the village, crowded with unarmed soldiers, who were gone from the camp in search of provisions. A frantic rush begins in the direction of Mouzon; and the flying mass would naturally have drawn with it a part of the troops already in line on this side of the village, if the officers had not intervened, pistols in hand. The generals, just as much surprised as the troops, presently come to their senses. They take the command. The retreat is gradually organized, and on reaching rather elevated ground we come out from under the intolerable fire."

A striking contrast to this picture of imbecility and demoralization is presented by the Prussian army in pursuit. While M'Mahon was gathering his forces at Châlons, those Prussian corps not required before Metz had continued to advance in a western direction, and the Third Army, under the command of the Crown Prince of Prussia, which had been steadily pushing on, now proceeded with greater rapidity. Says the German official report of the operations that resulted in the battle of Sedan:

"In its onward march it was accompanied by a new army, formed of a portion of the forces under Prince Frederick Charles, and placed under the Crown Prince of Saxony. Both these armies, the latter of which consisted of the Guards and Fourth and Twelfth Corps d'Armée, marched in the direction of Paris. It would have been decidedly desirable if they had found their way blocked up by the French, and if a battle could have been fought on the road to the capital. Marshal M'Mahon might have awaited us in a strong position or under the very ramparts of Paris. Another course open to him was to assume the offensive, with a view to rescue General Bazaine. As much depended upon our ascertaining the intentions of the enemy as soon as possible, our cavalry were sent far in advance of the army to watch his movements. Up to the 24th of August the Marshal held the Camp of Châlons. The two Prussian armies, not allowing their advance to be delayed by the fortifications of Verdun, marched straight on, and had already reached the line Clermont-Vitry, when, just as they were concentrating preparatory to the attack upon Châlons, news arrived on the 25th which rendered it probable that M'Mahon had evacuated his camp. He was reported to have taken the road to Rheims. One of the inferences to be deduced from this was that, picking his way along the narrow strip of land between the Belgian frontier and the right wing of the Crown Prince of Saxony, the Marshal might possibly attempt to relieve Metz. It was evident that if the proper measures were taken instanta-

neously by us, the Marshal would find it very difficult to succeed in his enterprise. Accordingly, our advance upon Paris was suspended on the night of the 25th. On the 26th, the 8½th Corps d'Armée, which had been marching west, effected a change of front, and, turning north, prepared to intercept the enemy on his march along our flank. The difficulties of this movement were increased by our march lying partly through the Argonne forest. Care was, moreover, taken to prevent the enemy from falling back upon Paris, in case he should find it impossible to penetrate to Metz. Supposing our being able to surround M'Mahon he would be obliged to fight under the most unfavorable conditions, or to find safety for his army in Belgium.

"The Corps Vinoy not having as yet arrived, we had a great numerical superiority over the French, then estimated at about 120,000; but it was not so easy for us to bring up our forces in time to use them. While our troops were approaching from a considerable distance it became certain that M'Mahon had really a flank-march in view. On the 29th his four corps were stationed on the two roads from Le Chêne to Stenay, two being *échelonnés* on each. On that day our troops extended from Grand Pré to Stenay, our van being in front of the enemy. The Twelfth Corps d'Armée, by the engagement at Nouart, prevented the most easterly division of the French from continuing its march. Under these circumstances, Marshal M'Mahon had only to choose between fighting on the left or the right bank of the Meuse, in which latter case he would be able to profit by the vicinity of Sedan. He chose the latter alternative, and on the 30th of August began to cross the Meuse. Before his retreat could be effected, his left wing was attacked by the Crown Prince of Saxony at Beaumont, and his rear surprised at Mouzon. The French Corps sent to the rescue of the latter force suffered much in crossing the river in presence of our troops. What followed is known. We may add that, from what has recently come to light, M'Mahon's army was not 120,000 strong, as had been supposed, but very nearly 150,000."

The story of the great battle that followed, known as the battle of Sedan, which decided the fate of the Empire, is thus described by the German official account, dated at Donchery, September 2d:

"After the engagement of August 30, it became probable that the French Armée du Nord was fast approaching a final catastrophe. On the evening of the 30th, the enemy, after a sharp cannonade against the 4th Prussian Corps d'Armée and portions of the Bavarian corps, had been obliged to retreat from Mousson. The greater part of the German army on that day remained on the left bank of the Meuse; but the forces under the Crown Prince of Saxony, having partly crossed the river, advanced beyond Mouzon in the direction of Carignan and Sedan. Our Third Army executed the following movements on the 31st: The First Bavarian Corps marched by Raucourt to Remilly. The Eleventh Prussians proceeded from Stonne to Chemery and Cheveuse, with orders to stop on the left bank of the Meuse, and encamp opposite Donchery, a little town on the other side of the river. The Fifth Prussian Corps followed the Eleventh, and the Second Bavarian the First. The Würtembergers likewise moved on to the Meuse by way of Vendresse and Boutencourt. The routes prescribed to the different portions of the Third Army thus converged on Sedan, where the French Northern Army was concentrated. The task given us was to surround the enemy and compel him either to surrender or to retreat beyond the Belgian frontier. The latter contingency being considered very possible, the order of the day of the 30th contained a passage to the effect that in the event of the French not being immediately disarmed on the other side of the border, our troops were to follow them into Belgium without delay.

"The 31st passed without any remarkable encounter. Only at Remilly the First Bavarian Corps fell in with the enemy, and, driving him back after a prolonged cannonade, in the course of the forenoon approached the Meuse. This operation, the most important of the 31st, was watched by the Crown Prince with his staff from a height close by the church of the village of Stonne. His Royal Highness, who had arrived from the camp at Pierremont at 9 A.M., from this point saw a portion of the valley of Remilly before him. The engagement having come to an end, the Crown Prince repaired to Chemery, there to take up his quarters for the night. The Second Bavarian Corps and the Würtembergers had no difficulty in carrying out their orders. The Fifth Prussian Corps, which went by Chemery, and there defiled past the Commander-in-Chief, did not reach its allotted position before a late hour in the evening. Before the morning of the 1st of September dawned every thing was complete. The troops on the left bank of the Meuse, and especially the Guards, stood ready to cross; those on the right, under the Crown Prince of Saxony, were only waiting for orders to assume the offensive, and from one end of our position to the other we were able to close in on Sedan at the shortest notice.

"It was originally intended to put off the decisive blow to September 2d. It seemed desirable to give a day's rest to the Saxon army, which had undergone considerable fatigue in their forced marches on the 30th and 31st. But when the King, between 5 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the 31st, passed Chemery on his way to Vendresse, he held a consultation with the Crown Prince and Generals Moltke and Blumenthal, in consequence of which he determined that the attack of Sedan, and the French lines between the Meuse and the Ardennes, should be undertaken on the ensuing day. Towards 1 A.M., of September 1, the Crown Prince of Saxony received orders to advance. Fire was to be opened at 5 A.M.

"Our line of battle was formed in this wise: On our right we had the army of the Crown Prince of Saxony. His van consisted of the Twelfth Corps d'Armée; next came the Fourth and the Guards, the rear being brought up by the Fourth Division of Cavalry, with their back to Remilly. Those troops of the Crown Prince of Saxony still on the left bank of the Meuse crossed at Douzy. To the left of his army was stationed the First Bavarian Corps, and behind this the Second. The Bavarians threw their bridge opposite the village of Bazeilles. The Eleventh Prussian Corps had placed its pontoons during

the night about 1000 paces below Donchery. A little to the left crossed the Fifth Corps on another bridge, and still farther in the same direction, near the village of Dom-le-Mesnil, the Würtembergers. The Sixth Corps, as a reserve, was stationed between Attigny and Le Chêne. To these troops were opposed the corps of M'Mahon, Failly, Canrobert, the remnants of Douay's army, and the newly-formed Twelfth Corps under General Lebrun. The centre of the French position was the fortress of Sedan, their flanks extending from Givonne on the left to Méziéres on the right. In the rear of the French position were seen the spurs of the Ardennes.

"The Crown Prince left Chemery in his carriage at 4 A.M. Having mounted his horse near Cheveuse, on the road to Donchery, he took up his position on a hill projecting over the valley of the Meuse, near the town of Donchery, not far from a small mansion called Chateau Donchery.. From this point the whole array of the German army could be surveyed, and the progress of the battle watched in all directions.

"Sedan is situate at one of the finest points of the valley of the Meuse. Hills crowned with forests rise in terraces on either side of the river. On the right bank there is a narrow strip of meadow-land by the water-side: on the left, a little to the left of Sedan, is an open plain, with the town of Donchery pleasantly situated in its centre. The plain is traversed by a slight elevation. To the right the river Meuse makes a double curve, inclosing a strip of land on which lies the village of Iges, with Villette to the left, and Glaize to the right. Between Iges and Sedan there is Floing, and farther to the right Givonne on the right bank. The main road between Doncherry and Sedan proceeds from a bridge at the former city, and half-way touches the village of Frenoy. Bazeilles, which was opposite to the Bavarians, is south-west of Sedan; Douzy, where the Guards crossed, on the extreme right.

"A dense fog covered the valley and the hills. Only at 7½ A.M. the sun broke through the clouds, when the day became hot and sultry. The army of the Crown Prince of Saxony began operations a little after 5 o'clock. At 6½ a continuous cannonade was heard on our right, somewhat in the rear of Sedan, indicating the left flank of the enemy to have been attacked by our troops. But the French were in excellent position on the hills, and could not be so easily dislodged. While the fight was going on in this locality, our left wing prepared to turn the other flank of the enemy. The Eleventh Corps proceeded along the slight elevation in the midst of the plain; the Fifth marched straight on to get to the enemy's rear. According to the plan of the battle, these corps were eventually to effect a junction with our right wing, and, entirely surrounding the enemy, to cut off his retreat towards the Ardennes. The Würtembergers and the 4th Cavalry Division, subsequently sent to their support, were to protect the plain in case the enemy should push forward in this direction, which, however, was not very probable, as he would have found it difficult to cross the Meuse, and indeed had himself destroyed the railway bridge between Donchery and Sedan. At 9¼ the Eleventh Corps d'Armée had so far turned the enemy's flank as to come close upon his position. An increased fire of the batteries marked this moment. The Saxons, who had designedly reserved their strength for this contingency, now attacked with an overpowering shock. Shortly after the right wing of the French began to fall back, but only to find themselves in the iron embrace of the two Prussian corps in their rear. At the point where the Eleventh Corps descended from the hills upon the surprised enemy the resistance of the French sensibly diminished since 10½. In some places, especially at Iges and on the fields leading down to Sedan, the fight assumed a desperate character. Being chiefly attacked by artillery, the French sent their horse to charge our guns in flank. The French cavalry made two brilliant onslaughts, some regiments, and, above all, the Chasseurs d'Afrique, behaving with the utmost gallantry. The infantry gave way earlier, the number of those battalions which surrendered without further resistance being considerable even before 12 o'clock. In the mean time the Fifth Corps had performed the long distance to the extreme heights, and after a sharp encounter succeeded in driving back the detachments making for the Ardennes.

"Things now assumed a favorable aspect. At 12½ it was announced that the French reserve artillery, which the Emperor had opposed to our Fifth Corps, was repulsed, and that only a few scattered bodies of infantry had effected their retreat across the frontier. Flight being thus rendered impossible, we had to deal only with the central portion of the battle-field—the slight elevation crossing the plain, the hills stretching from it to Sedan, and the fortress itself, which formed the last refuge for the troops driven from the heights. Since 12¾, the fire of the Prussian batteries on the right and left wings so rapidly approached one another that it was evident the enemy would soon be completely surrounded. It was a grand sight to watch the sure and irresistible advance of the Guards, marching on, on the left wing, partly behind and partly by the side of the Twelfth Corps d'Armée. Since 10¼ the Guards, preceded by their artillery, had been pushing towards the wood to the left of Sedan. By the advancing smoke of their fire we noticed how fast they were gaining ground.

"They were effectively assisted by the Bavarians. After a smart resistance by the French, the Bavarians had stormed Bazeilles, which was burned. They then took Balan, south-west of Sedan, where a narrow gorge gave them much trouble. Towards noon they posted two batteries in a meadow to the left of the road to Sedan. From this point they fired on Villette, the spire of which was soon enveloped in flames. The French artillery having been compelled to yield at this point likewise, there was nothing to stop the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps from pressing forward in the direction of Sedan. The enemy was now hastening to make good his retreat to the fortress walls. While the fight was still going on, large numbers of prisoners were seen being led down the hills to the plain.

"In the mean time the Guards, a little before 2 o'clock, had effected a junction with the Fifth Corps, on the slopes in the distance. This closed the circle around the French. Encompassed by a living wall, they found themselves thrust back within the ramparts of their small stronghold.

"Here and there villages and hamlets were still burning. Small detachments were continuing the fight in isolated localities, and the roar of cannon had not yet entirely ceased. A little later there was a pause, when we waited for the French commanders to resolve on what they had better do in their embarrassed position. If they determined on prolonged resistance, the fate of Sedan was sealed.

"Towards 4 o'clock the Crown Prince sent the message 'Complete victory' to head-quarters. Immediately after, His Royal Highness, with the Duke of Coburg, the other Princes, and the orderly officers, proceeded to the King, who had halted during the day on a hill to the right of the heights of Donchery. As there was no white flag to be seen on the tower of Sedan, we resumed firing at 4½. The Bavarian batteries sent the first shots into the fortress. Within a quarter of an hour one of our igniting grenades set the place on fire. A straw shed having caught light, dense black smoke rose immediately to the sky. Upon this the enemy opened negotiations. The Crown Prince was still with the King, when news arrived that the Emperor Napoleon was in Sedan. We now became aware that we had not only crushed the principal army of the French, but also, in a twelve hours' fight, secured a guaranty for the victorious issue of the war.

"That same evening the Prussian Lieutenant-colonel Von Brousart, the officer intrusted with the negotiations on our part, brought the King an autograph letter from the Emperor of the French, now a prisoner of war. It contained these few words: '*Comme je n'ai pas pu mourir au milieu de mon armée, je rends mon epée à votre Majesté.*' It is a fact that Napoleon, when he became aware of the probable result of the battle, for four hours stood the fire of our grenades near the village of Iges. The Emperor remained the night at Sedan. The capitulation will be concluded to-day.

"Not till 9 o'clock did the Crown Prince return to his head-quarters. The company of the 58th, which had been acting since yesterday as convoy, the staff-guard, and all attached to his head-quarters, vied with each other in giving the Commander of the Third Army a festal reception. The main street of the village was illuminated, and the soldiers who lined the way, in default of better materials, held small ends of tallow candles in their hands. Loud hurrahs welcomed the arrival of His Royal Highness. The bands struck up the German national anthem, and then played the Dead March in honor of the fallen.

"When the troops returned from the battle-field they evinced the greatest eagerness to ascertain the details of the action. It was obvious they had realized the importance of the day, and were proud of having contributed to a victory which will react on the history of the world, and has few to equal it in the annals of our country."

A French version of the circumstances leading to the surrender of M'Mahon's army is given in the following statement made immediately after the battle to the correspondent of a New York journal by a member of the Emperor's staff, who was present with him at the battle, and whose official position afforded the best opportunity for acquaintance with the facts:

"At 5 A. M. on the morning of the battle of Sedan, my informant, who slept at a hotel in the town, was suddenly roused by a loud noise in the street beneath his window. On looking out he found the Emperor and his suite passing along. He dressed in great haste, and was soon with the staff, from whom he learned that the battle of the two previous days had begun afresh at 6½ A.M. Marshal M'Mahon was brought in severely wounded, but perfectly self-possessed. He at once gave orders, in presence of the Emperor, to General Ducrot that the troops should be immediately massed, and retreat upon Mézières, and expressly directed that they should not accept a battle. He further ordered that General Ducrot with a certain force should immediately occupy the heights which overlook Sedan. Measures were taken at once to carry out his instructions, when General De Wimpffen appeared on the scene. He promptly addressed General Ducrot, saying, 'I have undertaken the command of the army. Besides, I am an older general than you, and I hold the position you are about to take to be entirely wrong. On the contrary, the troops must be commanded to advance directly.' The order was given, and the advance was made, with what fatal results a few hours showed. It is but justice to Marshal M'Mahon to make known the accurate foresight he showed. The battle soon began at all points, and with intense vigor, especially on the side of the Prussians. Towards 11 o'clock General De Wimpffen communicated to the Emperor that the French troops had the advantage in every direction. At this time shells were falling fast near and round the position occupied by the Emperor and his staff, but all escaped, so far, unhurt. Suddenly the Emperor perceived a French brigade suffering fearfully from the fire of the enemy. The men fell like wheat battered by a storm. The Emperor asked an officer of artillery, '*D'où viennent ces projectiles?*' No one knew. Shortly after another artillery officer answered, 'Sire, the balls which fall on them and us come from a new Prussian battery erected at a distance from here of 4900 metres.' The Emperor was incredulous; he could not believe in their murderous effects at such a remote range. He, however, immediately ordered cannon to play upon this newly-discovered battery, but to no purpose. The balls chiefly fell into the river Meuse, at a distance of only 1500 metres. The Emperor then joined the division and marched steadily forward. Balls continued to fall near and around him, but he still remained untouched. There seems no doubt at present that he did expose himself at the moment with considerable courage. Again assured that the French troops were gaining advantages at all points, he said to his staff that he should return to Sedan to breakfast, and would remount his horse and take the field again in an hour. He had scarcely entered Sedan when he found soldiers flying in all directions utterly panic-stricken. They rapidly filled the town. At the same time a terrific cannonade resounded from the very heights which Marshal M'Mahon, with admirable prescience, had ordered to be occupied by the French troops, but which were now in possession of the Crown

Prince and a portion of his corps d'armée. This advantage was fatal. Then and there the battle was virtually lost. The Crown Prince continued to rain fire upon the town, without intermission, and the streets were strewn with dead. Fresh crowds of soldiers arrived in fright without arms, adding to the general confusion and wild terror. About 10 o'clock the Emperor, appalled by the enormous slaughter around him, and the bombardment at the same time increasing in force, summoned the generals, etc., of his staff, and asked in simple language, 'What was to be done?' All immediately decided in favor of capitulation, and the Emperor at once ordered Captain Lauriston to mount the ramparts and hoist the white flag. Previously, owing to the exterminating fire directed by the Crown Prince, especially on the troops surrounding the town, a general rout had taken place. All the efforts of the officers to rally the men were fruitless, and the belief was general and proclaimed throughout the ranks that they were betrayed. It is quite certain that the Crown Prince had resolved upon the complete reduction of the town at all costs had not the surrender ensued. The superiority of his artillery had been terribly proved. His guns were loaded at the breech, and could be fired five times against those of the French once. Further, in nearly all these battles the proportion of Prussian troops to the French has been four to one, and taking into account the greater artillery power of the Prussians, it has been estimated that their total advantage was as twenty to one against the French."

The surrender of M'Mahon's army accomplished, the Emperor was assigned a residence at the Château of Wilhelmshöhe, whither he immediately set out. He appears to have employed his leisure in writing a pamphlet on the campaign and the causes which led to the capitulation at Sedan. According to a telegraphic summary of this pamphlet, the fallen Emperor recalls to mind his manifesto issued just after the declaration of war, and the misgivings with which he listened to the cry, "On to Berlin!" He says his plan was to mass 150,000 men at Metz, 100,000 at Strasbourg, and 50,000 at Châlons, and to cross the Rhine near Haguenau with a large force in order to separate Southern Germany from the Northern Confederation. He hoped to win the first great battle, and secure the alliance of Austria and Italy with France in imposing neutrality on Bavaria, Baden, and Würtemberg. The defects in the French military system, and the delay in bringing up men and material, defeated this plan. He enumerates the difficulties encountered, but acquits the War Office of blame.

The Germans having had ample time to bring their forces into the field, the French were outnumbered and put on the defensive. A new plan was necessary, involving a retreat on Châlons. This the Regency disapproved as discouraging to the public, and the Emperor was urged to resume the offensive. Yielding his convictions, M'Mahon's advice and plan were adopted. He alludes to his situation after he had given up the command of the army, and when his name and authority were ignored at Paris, as exceedingly painful.

He acquiesced in the march for the relief of Metz, though conscious of the danger of that enterprise. He describes the operations, and analyzes the battles which preceded the surrender at Sedan, and gives an account of his interviews with Count Bismarck and the King of Prussia.

The pamphlet closes with the declaration that the German successes are due to superiority of numbers, improved artillery, rigorous discipline, respect for authority, and the military and patriotic spirit of the people, which absorbs all other interests and opinions. It censures the loose habits introduced by the African wars in which the French regular troops have been engaged, which it enumerates as want of discipline, lack of cohesion, absence of order, carelessness of bearing, and the excess of luggage carried by the infantry. The efficiency of the army was weakened, too, by the excesses of the opposition in the Corps Legislatif and the Republican press, introducing into it a spirit of criticism and insubordination.

II.

SAARBRUCK, GRAVELOTTE, METZ.

After the severe defeat sustained by General Frossard at Saarbruck, on the 6th of August, and the complete dissolution of the right wing under Marshal M'Mahon, the main body of the French army retreated on the line of the Moselle, to which the fortress of Thionville and Metz with its intrenched camp gave extraordinary strength. A direct attack upon this line, so admirably situated for defense, would have involved so much risk, and so great a sacrifice of life, that the German commanders moved their armies towards a point on the Moselle to the south of Metz, in order to pass the river above the fortress and attack the French where the advantage of position would be less in their favor. The German forces comprised the First Army, under command of General Steinmetz, and the Second Army, under command of Prince Frederick Charles. The movement of immense masses of men, which had to be made in a broad and open space of country, had to be secured against interruptions by special precautions; and the First Army undertook to cover their march.

As the French for a time appeared disposed

to await an attack on the right bank of the Moselle, where they occupied a strong position, the nearest divisions of the Second Army were so placed as to afford support to the First, should it require assistance. Meantime the other corps of the Second Army had already crossed the Moselle above Metz, threatening Bazaine's communications with Paris, and forcing him to evacuate the right bank of the river, as he could not venture upon an offensive movement. The advanced guard of the First Army discovered his retreat on the 14th of August, and, promptly attacking his rear guard, forced it forward upon the main body of the French army. On the German side, the first and second corps of the First Army, and several detachments of the ninth corps of the Second Army, joined in the engagement. After very severe fighting, in which both armies displayed indomitable courage, the French were forced back with great slaughter, and pursued till under shelter of the cannon of the Metz forts, on the right bank of the Moselle. The great advantage of this victory, besides the very considerable losses inflicted on the French in men and material, was that it delayed their retreat, and enabled the German commanders to perfect their plans for the isolation of Metz.

Two roads lead from Metz to Verdun, the direction which the French army had to take in case of a retreat upon Paris. Those corps of the Second Army which had already passed the Moselle were immediately directed against the southern road, the one most easily reached, in order, if possible, to arrest the enemy's flank march on that side. This important task was brilliantly accomplished through a bloody and victorious battle. The 5th Division, under command of General Stüpnagel, on the 16th threw itself on the Frossard corps, which covered the flank of the French army, the whole of which was gradually engaged. On the Prussian side, Prince Frederick Charles assumed command; and after a bloody struggle of twelve hours, the south road from Metz to Verdun was gained and held, and the French retreat on Paris by this road cut off. The conduct of both armies, in this severe battle, was truly heroic. On both sides the losses were heavy.

Only two lines of retreat were now open to Bazaine—the flank march by the north road, or by a wide *detour* still farther north. Although such a retreat would be hazardous in the extreme, it seemed probable that Bazaine would undertake it, as the only mode of escape from a highly unfavorable situation, since otherwise he would be cut off from Paris and all means of succor. On the German side, the whole of the next day, the 17th, was occupied in bringing forward for the final struggle every available man. That part of the army still on the right bank of the Moselle threw several bridges across the river above Metz. In directing the movements of the German troops, two things had to be considered — the possibility that Bazaine might attempt to escape by the north road, or that, perceiving the hazard and difficulty of this, he might prefer to accept battle immediately before Metz, with his back turned towards Germany. His position, after the previous operations of the German armies, left him no other course but these.

The conflict in which the fate of Bazaine's army was decided, was fought on the 18th of August. The First Army occupied a position, in the morning, south of Gravelotte, and was first directed to cover, in the wood of Vaux and at Gravelotte, the movement of the Second Army against any sortie from Metz. The story of the great battle is thus told in the Prussian official report:

"The Second Army advanced in the morning by echelons of the left wing towards the north road, maintaining communication on the right with the First Army. The Twelfth Corps took the direction by Mars-la-Tour and Jarny, while the Guards Corps advanced between Mars-la-Tour and Vionville on Doncourt, and the Ninth Corps crossed the highway to the west of Rezonville, towards Caulre farm, north of St. Marcel. These three corps composed the first line, and if the assigned points were reached, the north main road was gained. Saxon and Prussian cavalry preceded the column as skirmishers.

"As soon as it was found that the enemy did not contemplate a retreat, and could therefore only remain before Metz, it was necessary to move these three corps considerably to the right, and to bring up both armies against the enemy. The Tenth and Third Corps followed in a second line, and then as the last reserve the Second Army Corps, which since 2 A.M. had been marching from Pont-à-Mousson towards Buxières. About 10 30 it was evident that the enemy had abandoned his retreat, and had taken up a position on the last ridges before Metz. The Second Army was thereupon ordered to carry out its sweep to the right, and, keeping up communication with the first, to direct its centre and left wing on Verneville and Amanvillers. The general attack was not to begin till the movement was entirely executed, and till the front of the strong position could be simultaneously attacked on the right flank. The Ninth Corps first threw itself on advanced detachments of the enemy. Towards noon artillery fire from the neighborhood of Verneville announced that the corps at that spot was engaged. The First Army was consequently ordered to occupy the attention of the enemy on the heights by artillery fire from its front. About 12 45 they opened a slow and well-directed cannonade upon the eminences of the Point-du-Jour, to which the enemy replied from numerous batteries. The

thunder of the cannon was drowned by the strange noise of the mitrailleuses.

"The position was an exceedingly strong one, and its security was increased through fortifications and by ranges of rifle-pits; at certain points it had quite the appearance of a fortress. The attack could not succeed until our commanders had achieved the difficult task of so directing their measures that the whole of the troops were ready as well for the battle on the north as on the east, and the latter attack could only commence when it was apparent that the enemy had given up a retreat. It was not practicable, moreover, to completely carry out the movement which was to envelop the enemy's right wing; and nothing remained but to attack the front of this formidable point. The struggle was long and difficult at various points. On the left wing the Saxons fought, and the Guards near St. Marie-aux-Chênes, afterwards near the precipitous slopes of St. Privat-la-Montagne, then in that village and in Roncourt. On the right, at St. Ail, and beyond at Habonville, the wood of La Cusse and Verneville, as far as the northerly road from Metz to Verdun, the Guards and the Ninth Army Corps sustained the struggle; at Gravelotte and in the Vaux wood up to the Moselle, the Eighth and Seventh Corps; and from the farther side of the river bank a brigade of the First Corps took part in the fight, likewise some single Divisions of the Third and Tenth Corps, especially artillery. On the enemy's side the whole of the main French army was engaged, even the troops originally destined for the Baltic expedition, with the exception of M'Mahon's Divisions not stationed at Metz, and the larger part of Failly's corps.

"The unsurpassable bravery of our troops succeeded at the approach of dusk in storming the heights and driving the enemy from his whole line, the Second Corps, which had been marching since 2 A.M., taking a decisive part in this on the right wing. The battle terminated about 8 30, when it was quite dark. During the night the enemy drew back into his intrenched camp at Metz. Numberless wounded and stray detachments still wandered in the neighborhood of the battle-field. His majesty, who had directed the battle ultimately from the hill of Gravelotte, made Rezonville his head-quarters.

The slaughter was terrible on both sides. "I shrink from inquiring after the casualties," wrote King William to the Queen of Prussia, the day after the battle. A correspondent who was an eye-witness of the struggle, and rode over the field after the fighting had ceased, describes the slope on the Verdun road, immediately in front of the French position, as a "frightful spectacle." Hundreds of Prussian corpses were heaped together on the fatal declivity. In one place, where a Prussian battery had been stationed, there were thirty horses lying almost touching one another, many with the drivers beside them, still grasping their whips. Most of the corpses were on their backs, with their hands clenched. This position was explained by the fact that most of the men had been shot grasping their muskets, and their hands clenched as they dropped their weapons and fell. Many corpses of Prussian officers lay by those of their men, with their white glove on their left hands, the right ones being bare, in order better to grasp the sword. In the hollow road itself the bodies of men and horses also lay thick, the corpses all along the sides of the road, for nearly 1000 yards, made one continually unbroken row. A little lower down were found the tirailleur corpses. Many of these men had still their muskets in their hands, many forefingers being stiff on the trigger. On the left of the French position were two small cottages which had been a mark for the Prussian cannon, and their shells had made a complete ruin of the buildings. One roof was completely gone, and the whole front wall of the upper story of the other had been blown in. On the plateau behind the French earth-works all the ground was ploughed and torn by the Prussian shells, which, when they got the range, were admirably aimed. One-third of its horses lay dead beside it. A shell had burst beneath one of the horses, and had blown him, the limber, and one of the gunners all to pieces.

The famous mitrailleuses, of which so much was expected, did terrible execution at close quarters, but at long range their fire was less effective than that of the Chassepots. It is generally admitted that this rifle is really superior to the needle-gun, but it is equally true that the French soldiers have not done justice to their weapon. The Germans, as a rule, never dream of drawing trigger until sure of their aim, and their fire, though less rapid than that of the French, is far more deadly.

The following graphic and enthusiastic letter by a soldier gives a French view of the fighting of the 18th:

"You have heard of our battle on the 18th; what slaughter again from 10 o'clock till nightfall! The Prussians occupied the woods, from the heights which command Briey to the railroad which skirts the Moselle. The marshal had returned at full speed by the Woippy road; they said in camp that we should have a new army to crush—a fresh army, which came from Treves and meant to throw us back on Prince Frederick Charles. The enemy suffers more than we do; he may hold the inhabitants to ransom, but there is no bread for so many, no more wine, no more help for the wounded, nothing for the sick, whose number increases every day. They have no tents, and these poor devils of the Landwehr already shake with fever, or run to the brooks to wash their red eyes. Alas! what a hurry they are in to have it over! At 11 o'clock they overflowed us. We thought for a moment that they were cutting off our left by the Etain road. Their artillery, under cover of wood, was sending grape among us point-blank; my poor, good G——, who was behind me, to the left of the sec-

ond rank, received three balls full in the chest. That day their projectiles carried well. They fired from above in the thicket, and we had but one resource—to find a road by which we could take them in flank and dislodge them. My commandant, the good old man whom you know, had lead in his thigh. He grew visibly paler. I embraced him that night at St. Privat with the joy of a child. It was not possible to send him to the ambulance. A large blue handkerchief, well twisted round the wounded thigh, was the only dressing it had. This old grumbler dragged himself about thus till night. At 1 o'clock we lost our footing; one would have thought that fresh troops arrived every moment for the enemy. But on the left, under the little village of Amanvilliers, the chasseurs sounded to charge. Our men recovered courage on hearing the clarion sound. The cannon roared among the pines which crowned the first quarry; Canrobert was coming with his reserves; Bourbaki was going to support the movement. We had once before repulsed the enemy; our sharp-shooters were keeping up the devil's own fire through the smoking gaps in the wood which we had at our backs when we arrived. The regiment went up the only street of the village at full speed—a rocky road, which turns abruptly towards the second quarries, to the right of the church and cemetery. This movement was so rapid that we lost but few men in it. Three or four wounded dragged themselves to the oak-clumps between Champenon and Lorry. From our new position above the first quarries we could see in the valley the grenadiers driving the enemy out of the copse which was burning to the left of the hollow road, and, almost under our feet, two batteries sheltered behind the heaps of rough stones. In front, between St. Privat and Roncourt, the enemy was re-forming almost in the open on the plateau which bounds the wood of Jaumont to the right. Two little farms were burning on the edge of these woods; the peasants had abandoned every thing to tumble down the steep slopes and get to the other side of the Moselle. That evening we had to break the doors in to put some of our wounded out of reach of the damp. The battle recommenced more furiously than at 11 and 12 o'clock. But we had no more to fear from the side of Sainte Marie aux Chênes, nothing to fear on the side of Briey. We held the famous semicircle under cover in our town, only we held it from south to west, and the road to Metz was fully occupied. The marshal had gone to the left; he wished to direct the movement; one more effort and we went to form in masses on the edge of the ravine. The white lancers came to find themselves thrust on the bayonets at the opening to Amanvilliers; our grenadiers ascended with drums beating towards the plateau, without burning a single cartridge. It was magnificent. I had my sabre under my left arm, like a man who is there to look on, not to fight. The fire was spreading to the north, and came in one's face like puffs of hot wind. It was then the great movement from left to right was made, by the ravine and the quarries. I did not see what happened there, but two comrades of the brave 10th said this morning that no one could imagine such a slaughter. . . . . Never mind, it was rough work, and the ranks had to close in very often. . . . . And we know what awaits us on the other side of the river. When I have time I will send you a necrological list, which will suggest singular reflections to amateurs. Keep up your heart."

The immediate result of this great victory was the complete isolation of the fortress of Metz. This was accomplished on the 19th of August. The Prussians, knowing that the surrender of the forces there cooped up was merely a question of time, and willing to avoid a repetition of the terrible slaughter of the 18th, withdrew to strong positions on the line of retreat, cutting off the fortress from supplies and preventing the escape of the French army.

The force thus isolated, and in effect neutralized, originally formed the left wing and centre of the grand army of invasion with which Napoleon intended to cross the Rhine and march upon Berlin. It consisted of the Second, Third, Fourth, and Eighth Corps, commanded respectively by Frossard, Bazaine, Ladmirault, and Bourbaki, comprising in all about a hundred and seventy thousand men. In co-operation with M'Mahon's movement for his relief, Bazaine soon after the investment made a desperate effort to escape, and attacked the Landwehr on the north-east of Metz. They stood their ground with the bravery and steadiness of old troops, and, after a bloody but fruitless struggle, the French withdrew under cover of their works. The attempt was several times renewed, with similar results. Nowhere could the French marshal find a weak point in the Prussian line, nor did he ever succeed in taking his wary adversary at disadvantage. The Prussians meantime made no effort to capture the fortress, content to hold their own and let famine and sickness do the work of reduction.

During the progress of the siege—if such an investment may be called a siege—the most contradictory rumors were circulated concerning the fidelity of Bazaine to his country, and the condition of the troops confined within the town and fortress. At one time it was asserted that provisions were abundant, and that Metz could hold out for six months; at another, that soldiers and citizens were starving, and that a fortress which a regular garrison of 10,000 men might have held for months would be reduced, in a few weeks, by famine. This seems to have been the true state of the case; for Bazaine, after several fruitless attempts to cut his way through the Prussian lines, made proposals for the capitulation of his army. The negotiations were brought to a close on the 27th of October, and the next day the surrender was made. Thionville and other forts about Metz refused to acknowledge the capitulation, and continued to

hold out. By this surrender, three Marshals of France, sixty-six generals, 6000 officers, and 173,000 troops fell into the hands of the Prussian commanders.

At the time of the surrender the conduct of Marshal Bazaine was freely and severely criticised. He was accused of treachery, and charged with having sold out to the Prussians. It is impossible, at this time, to decide as to the correctness of these charges. The fallen marshal has himself indignantly denied them in an address to his soldiers, in which he says they surrendered only to famine.

III.

THE SIEGE OF STRASBOURG.

The heroic defense of Strasbourg by General Uhrich will form a memorable chapter in the history of sieges. Cut off from communication with the rest of France by the defeat of M'Mahon's army and the occupation of the railroads leading to Paris by the German forces, the fall of the city was merely a question of time, and its early surrender was confidently predicted. But General Uhrich, a man of action and determination, resolved to make a brave fight for the possession of the city. The time between M'Mahon's defeat and the final investment was spent in energetic preparations for defense. The surrounding country was scoured for provisions, in addition to the stores already on hand. The batteries were put in perfect order. In all his operations General Uhrich had the warm support of the inhabitants. Soon after the siege commenced in earnest, he received a deputation from the council formed for the defense of the city, and opinions were freely interchanged between them. The general admitted the difficulty of making a successful defense; the council enlarged on the dangers of prolonging a hopeless resistance. The result was an understanding that the council should strain every nerve to prevent the city from falling into the hands of the besiegers, while General Uhrich, on his part, pledged himself to avert the exposure of the city to the horrors of an assault. As a soldier who had resolved to do his duty, he reserved to himself the sole right to determine when the critical moment had arrived, and would not listen to any proposition to surrender until it became impossible to continue the defense.

Strasbourg was considered second to Metz only of the frontier fortresses of France. The defenses consisted of a bastioned enceinte of irregular outline, admirably designed for defense. The numerous re-entering angles in the *enceinte* were well secured by towers and demi-bastions, while the salients were protected by a powerful cross-fire from the supporting works. The main ditch or moat was filled with water for nearly the whole distance around the city. Between the city proper and the Rhine, connected with the *enceinte* and occupying a commanding position, was the citadel, constructed by Vauban, and generally considered one of his most important works.

The investment of this powerful fortress was at first languidly pushed forward, and meantime provisions and reinforcements continued to flow into the city; but by the 10th of September the works were completed and siege commenced in good earnest, and was kept up with increasing severity until the capitulation. A correspondent who witnessed the bombardment from the opposite bank of the Rhine, describes the scene as very striking, especially by night. The effect from a distance was like the play of what is called heat-lightning. Sometimes a particularly bright flash would light up the horizon and show the long lines of poplars stretching away right and left, and the old Cathedral spire rising above them, and then all was black again, and the dull boom of the shot came rolling back through the night. Sometimes, too, the shells of the garrison burst high over the batteries with a bright blue flash like diabolical fireworks; but the Strasbourg fire was for the most part slow and intermittent.

From inside the walls came a different story. A refugee, who escaped during the siege, asserted that while he was in the city shells sometimes fell at the rate of twenty-five a minute. The destruction of property was enormous, and the loss of life not inconsiderable. In spite of several determined sorties by the garrison, the German works were daily pushed nearer the walls, and their fire became more effective with the shorter range. The walls were breached in several places, an attempt to divert the course of the river Ill, and shut off the water supply of the beleaguered city, was not successful; but at length it became evident that an assault was imminent, and General Uhrich reluctantly determined to surrender. On the 27th of September a white flag was displayed on the great Cathedral tower. The bombardment ceased immediately, and shortly afterwards the terms of a capitulation were agreed upon between General Uhrich and General Werder, commander of the besieging army.

At 8 o'clock the next morning the French guards were relieved by German soldiers, who took possession of the gates and all other important posts, and at noon a body of troops,

numbering about 3000, marched in with flying colors and band playing. Previous to this the formal ceremony of surrender had taken place. The German army was paraded on an enormous piece of open ground abutting on the glacis between the Portes Nationale and De Saverne, General Werder at its head, surrounded by a brilliant staff in full uniform. As the clock struck 11, General Uhrich emerged from the former gate, followed by his staff, and advanced towards the German commander, who alighted from his horse, and stepped forward to meet him, holding out his hand. Next came Admiral Excelmano, Brigadier-general De Barral, and the rest of the superior officers; then the regulars, marines, douaniers, and moblots, with flags flying and arms shouldered. Eye-witnesses of the surrender say that, with few exceptions, the troops behaved disgracefully, and contravened the terms of the capitulation in a manner that but too plainly betrayed the state of utter insubordination into which they had fallen. At least two-thirds of the men were drunk—violently and offensively drunk; hundreds, as they stumbled through the ruined gateway, dashed their rifles to pieces against the walls or the paving-stones, and hurled their sword-bayonets into the moat; from one battalion alone emanated cheers of "Vive la République!" "Vive la Prusse!" and "Vive l'Empereur!" The officers, it is said, made no attempt whatever to keep the men in order, or prevent them from destroying the arms which the signers of the capitulation had engaged themselves to deliver up to the German victors. Many of the men even danced to the music of the Prussian and Baden bands; some rolled about on the grass, uttering inarticulate cries; others made ludicrous attempts to embrace the grave German legionaries, who repulsed them in utter astonishment at their unworthy bearing. The whole scene, say the authorities above quoted, was "exceedingly painful, disgusting, and, above all, undignified; calculated to bring the French army into contempt, and considerably to modify the small remnants of respect for *les militaires Français* that still survived in the breasts of a few of the foreign by-standers—the terrible *désillusionements* of this miserable war."

By this surrender, 17,000 men, including National Guards, and 451 officers, fell into the hands of the Prussians.

Inside the gates the work of destruction was painful to behold, and testified to the heroism of the defenders. "As we passed through the streets," writes a correspondent who entered the city the day after the surrender, "we walked between whole rows of houses unroofed, battered to pieces, and in many places completely gutted by fire. Of the fine old Library, only some portions of the bare walls remain. The adjoining Temple Neuf is equally gutted. On the stone floor of the Library, among masses of broken stone and rubbish, lie remains of the carved enrichments of the pillars, which will no doubt be greedily carried away in a few days by relic-hunters. I was contented with some charred fragments of manuscripts, of which masses are blown by the wind into all corners. Not a book or manuscript seems to have escaped the flames. The Cathedral itself, close at hand, has not escaped quite unhurt, but, although so prominent a mark, it has been remarkably spared. The upper wooden roof seems to be quite burned away. A shell falling through the roof has smashed the organ. Some of the upper tier of windows are a good deal damaged, but the lower windows have been taken out, and are carefully stowed away, I believe, intact; so also the window at the east end, and the greater part of the church furniture and the 'trésor.' Here and there the stone-work of the outer galleries is slightly injured, but the clock is uninjured, and on the whole the edifice has suffered no irreparable damage. The Cathedral swarmed with German soldiers, who had hastened to assure themselves of its safety, and were loud in their exclamations of delight at finding it so little injured. In the lady-chapel were living some families of women and children. Their houses had been burned by shells, and, being poor and homeless, they had been permitted to stretch their mattresses on the floor there during the siege, and they did not yet know what other shelter to seek. The shops were slowly beginning to take down the mattresses and soaked bags piled up in front of their shutters to save their contents from the exploding shells. The gratings giving access of light and air to the underground rooms and cellars were being freed from the embankments of earth which had been heaped over them to give safety to the inmates; for these were the dwelling and sleeping places of most of those who could afford to consult their security during the siege. Strasbourg was shaking off its nightmare, and the people, amidst all their distress, wore an aspect of gladness. The most frightful scene of destruction is in the suburb known as Schiltigheim, or the Quartier St. Pierre. This has been utterly burned and torn to pieces, chiefly by the guns of the citadel, lest the Germans should find shelter in it. I can compare it to nothing but Bazeilles, and that will only convey an idea to those few who have yet visited the battle-field of Sedan. The

streets are strewed with débris; of the houses there remain here some blackened walls, there a heap of stones and brick-work. The sign-boards, the police announcements, in many places bear testimony to the recent active life which pervaded this mass of ruins; but they rather add to than detract from the bitterness of its desolation."

Among the curiosities found in Strasbourg, after the surrender, were back numbers of the "Courrier du Bas Rhin," published in the city throughout the continuance of the siege, and by means of which, aided by the less trustworthy souvenirs of the inhabitants, one may live again through the horrors of the bombardment. In the earlier numbers one traces the conflicting feelings with which the people of Strasbourg watched the beleaguering soldiers close around them. The battles of Weissenburg and Woerth brought the fight nearly home to them. Already on the ramparts they were beginning to feel the near approach of the enemy. Communications by letter and telegraph were cut off, and the surrounding villages were occupied by German troops. Then the siege begins. At first the greatest amount of harm is done by the defenders. The French destroy the roads, cut down the trees, and fire the buildings outside their lines, that the enemy may find no shelter. The Garde Mobile are "familiarized with handling cannon" by cannonading and destroying the establishment of the Bon Pasteur. In the interests of that part of the city near the Quartier St. Pierre, its rich suburb of Schiltigheim is given to the flames, and the plantations of the cemetery of St. Helen's are cut down; then follows the destruction of breweries and workshops—"millions destroyed and great and lucrative industries annihilated." Then come the stern realities of bombardment. "Never will Strasbourg forget the emotions of the first two weeks of August," says the writer of the local chronicle; "but last night—the night of the 18th and the morning of the 19th —has been the most terrible of all." It was the night of the first effective bombardment; the fall of the bombs, the fires they caused, the destruction, and the deaths, are described in painful detail. An "eloquent lawyer" writes to the paper a letter descriptive of his terrible fright, and how he took refuge in a cellar, and did not come out till the firing was over. These become every-day incidents very soon, and no one writes about them; every body lives in the cellar who can afford to be idle and take no part in the fight. Of people who move about the street, men, women, and children are daily killed. The civil registers of births, deaths, and marriages, were kept up for some time after the beginning of the siege. The last marriage recorded is that of Marc-Emile Sauvanel, peintre-doreur, veuf, et Marie-Madeleine Nicola. This was on the 19th of September, eight days before the capitulation, the wedding-music must have been martial and hoarse. On the same day were killed by shells Charles Klotz, ten years old, Marie Espinasse, aged sixty-nine years, Emile Ray, aged ten years, with eight or nine other adult citizens. Burials could not be made in the ordinary cemeteries outside the city; the Botanical Gardens were temporarily assigned for the purpose. The inhabitants were beginning to get pinched for food. On the 20th of August middle-men were prohibited from buying up meal and raising its price, and all sales were ordered to be made in open market. Nevertheless, beef rose to four francs a pound, and finally could not be had. Horse-flesh was good and plentiful at half the price. Potatoes seventy francs a sack. The price of bread was fixed by authority on the 9th of September—white bread at 4½*d.* and black bread at 3½*d.* the two-pound loaf. Rice was plentiful and beer and wine. Patés de foie gras do not seem to have failed, for a gentleman brought away a pile of them to give away as "souvenirs of the siege." On the last day of the siege the "Courrier" appeared on a smaller sheet, and was full of horrors. As usual, the day's list of the victims of bombardment includes the names of several women and children. "The bombardment has been terrific. It seemed as if the danger could be no longer increased, and most terrible engines of war had already been used; but last night they hurled incendiary bombs of a weight previously unknown to incredible distances; they burst through even into the cellars; in one house six people were killed and twelve wounded almost simultaneously." This was the last night of these horrors. Thirty hours afterwards the troubles of Strasbourg were at an end—for the present, at least. The shops were being opened, the German-speaking soldiers who had bombarded the town were drinking beer with the German-speaking inhabitants who had suffered from the bombardment, and all Germany was afoot to seek to repair the harm it had unwillingly done.

IV.

THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

M'Mahon's army surrendered on Friday, September 2d. Up to Saturday night the news was not generally known in Paris, but statements had been made in the Chambers with

the view of preparing the public mind for the worst. In the Senate Baron Jerome David admitted that Marshal Bazaine had failed in his attempt to escape from the hostile armies that had hemmed him in at Metz, and that M'Mahon's attempt to relieve him had "terminated in a manner unfortunate for our armies." In the Corps Legislatif the Count of Palikao said that grave events had occurred, which for the time would prevent the junction of M'Mahon and Bazaine. He added: "The position is serious. We must no longer dissimulate. We are determined to make an appeal to the vigorous forces of the nation. We are organizing 200,000 of the National Guard Mobile, who will be called to Paris, and will form an army which will insure the safety of the capital. We shall act with the greatest energy, and shall only arrest our efforts when we have expelled every Prussian from French territory."

The instant the tenor of the Ministerial statements became known, the popular agitation was intense, though very few were aware that the Emperor had been made a prisoner. At 8 o'clock the same evening a crowd of about 6000 people demanded of General Trochu, commanding the French forces in Paris, that he should proclaim the *déchéance* of the imperial dynasty; but the General replied that he was a soldier, and could not break his oath. It was for the Chamber to comply with this demand. He would, however, defend Paris until death. The crowd received this reply with shouts of "Abdication! Abdication!" Another crowd of about 10,000 people also sent to General Trochu with the same object as the first, and received the same reply with shouts of "Abdication!" "France forever!" "Trochu forever!" Meanwhile the streets and boulevards were densely crowded, but the people were reserved and silent. The approaches to the Chambers were guarded by a strong force of cavalry and infantry, though there appears to have been no reason to apprehend a disturbance.

It was not until Sunday morning that the whole extent of the disaster that had befallen M'Mahon was disclosed to the Parisians by the "Journal Official," which published the following proclamation, issued by the Council of Ministers:

"Frenchmen! a great misfortune has befallen the country. After the three days of heroic struggles kept up by the army of Marshal M'Mahon against 300,000 enemies, 40,000 men have been made prisoners. General Wimpffen, who had taken the command of the army, replacing Marshal M'Mahon, who was grievously wounded, has signed a capitulation. This cruel reverse does not daunt our courage. Paris is now in a state of defense. The military forces of the country are being organized. Within a few days a new army will be under the walls of Paris, and another is in formation on the banks of the Loire. Your patriotism, your concord, your energy will save France. The Emperor has been made prisoner in this contest. The Government co-operates with the public authorities, and is taking all measures required by the gravity of these events."

The Corps Legislatif had, however, been told the news some hours earlier. At half-past nine Saturday night, summonses were issued by M. Schneider for a sitting at midnight; but it was after one on Sunday morning when business actually commenced. The Count of Palikao then made the Chamber acquainted with the news, without reservation, and proposed that the Chamber should adjourn further deliberation till the following day. M. Jules Favre then rose and said that if the Chamber wished to postpone discussion, he would offer no opposition to the proposal, but he wished to submit in his own name, and for a certain number of his colleagues, the following propositions:

"1. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte and his dynasty are declared to be divested of the powers conferred upon them by the Constitution.

"2. A governing Commission consisting of — members shall be appointed by the Corps Legislatif, which Commission shall be invested with all the powers of Government, and which shall have for its special mission to offer every resistance to invasion, and to expel the enemy from the territory.

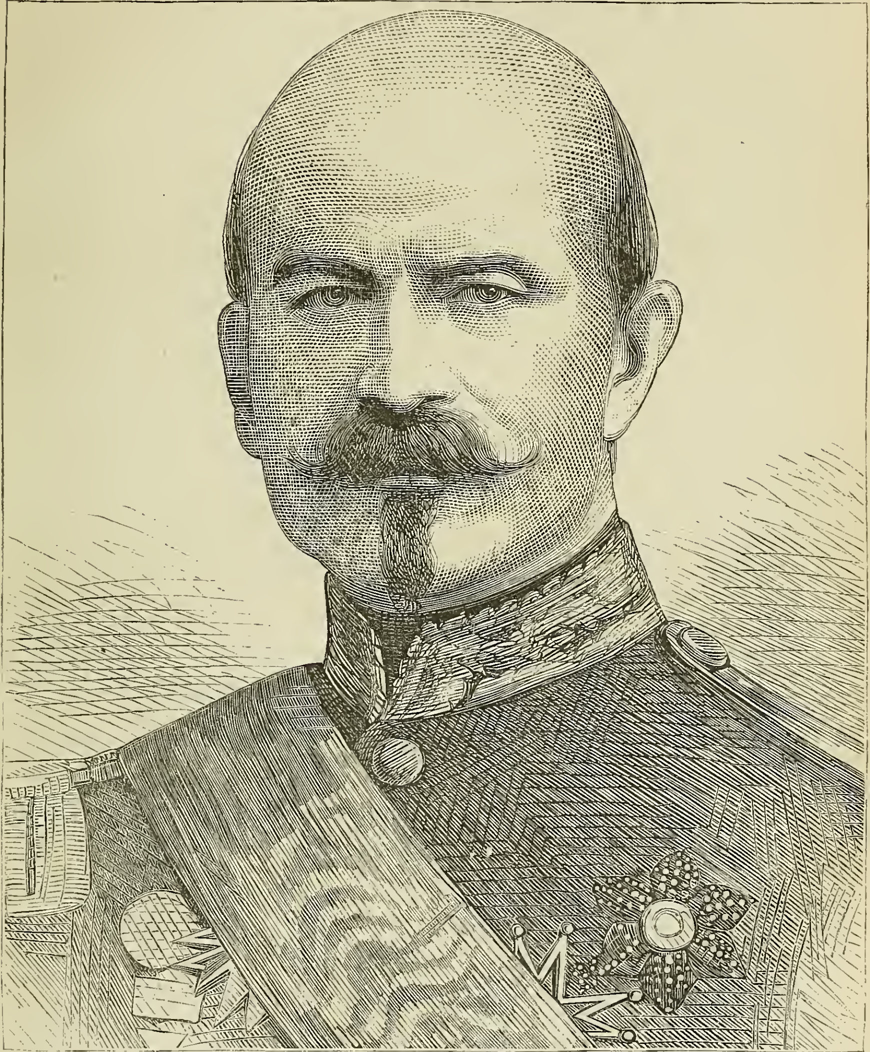
"3. General Trochu is continued in his functions as Governor-general of the city of Paris."

The only remark made upon this proposition was made by M. Pinard, who said the Chamber had not the power to decree a forfeiture of authority, and it was then resolved to adjourn till noon.

As soon as the sitting was over, the Ministers went to the Empress and told her that they felt themselves in honor bound to stand by the dynasty, but that they were convinced that for her and her family all hope was over. The Empress, however, desired that an effort should be made. General Trochu was consulted, but he stated that he was responsible for the defense of Paris only, and he could do nothing for the dynasty. It was then decided that Count Palikao should propose a Provisional Government, with himself at its head, which was to assume power by a decree of the Empress.

But in the mean time the Deputies of the Left Centre had held a meeting, in which they agreed to support a proposal of M. Thiers, which, without saying as much in words, partially suspended the Empire, and gave power to

a Committee of National Defense, in which all parties would be represented. General Trochu promised to recommend the Garde Nationale to go down to the Chamber, and to support this combination. The Left, too, held their meeting, and agreed to insist upon the *déchéance*, and the nomination of a Provisional Government of nine, five of whom should be deputies of Paris. Thus matters stood when, at 9 o'clock, President Schneider announced that the sitting of the Chamber had commenced. General Palikao had surrounded the Palace of the Corps Legislatif with troops, a body of Gardes de Paris were guarding all the approaches across the bridges, about 3000 troops were in the court-yard of the Tuileries, some few regiments had been consigned to their barracks ready to act, and the rest of the soldiers in Paris were left to their own inspirations. When the sitting commenced, it soon, however, became evident that the "Right," composed of official candidates, were awed, and could not be depended on. The troops, too, were so thoroughly disgusted with the surrender of the Emperor that they would not act against the National Guard, and gradually fell back, and were replaced by the latter. The three propositions of Count Palikao, M. Thiers, and M. Jules Fa-



GENERAL TROCHU.

vre were then submitted to the Chamber, and collectively referred to a committee. The sitting was then suspended.

On the resumption of the sitting, the galleries and floor of the Chambers were invaded by crowds of people, demanding the deposition of the Emperor, and the proclamation of the Republic. An announcement, by M. Gambetta, that the Chamber was deliberating on the *déchéance*, was received with vociferous applause, cries of "Vive la France," and national songs. Cries of "Down with the Bonapartes!" and "Vive la France!" prevented the transaction of business by the Chambers. M. Gambetta ascended the tribune and addressed the people in the galleries, and groups of citizens and National Guards invaded the floor of the Chamber. Silence having been at length obtained, President Schneider took the chair, and addressed a few words to the Corps Legislatif, represented by the Left and a few members of the Right who had slipped timidly into their seats. The Count of Palikao made a short appearance, but M. Brame was the only minister who faced the storm. M. Schneider protested against the invasion of the Chamber, and declared that the House could not deliberate under intimidation. There were fierce cries for the Republic, and again the Chamber was invaded, the benches taken by storm, and the President driven from his chair. M. Jules Favre then managed to gain possession of the tribune, and proclaimed the downfall of the Bonaparte family. M. Gambetta confirmed his words; and, in fact, the *déchéance* had been decreed in committee, by a vote of 195 deputies against 18.

After these stirring events, the deputies of Paris, attended by an immense crowd of people, proceeded to the Hotel de Ville, which they were allowed to enter without opposition, and there M. Gambetta proclaimed the Republic. Then the crowd, intoxicated with frantic joy, rushed about the streets, singing national songs and shouting "Vive la République!" The soldiers and the National Guard fraternized with the people, and for several hours the streets presented scenes of almost ludicrous manifestations of enthusiasm.

Perceiving that the cause of the Empire was for the present lost, without a resort to arms, and willing to avoid bloodshed, the Empress, who had borne herself with admirable dignity through all the trying events of the preceding fortnight, left the Tuileries in a private carriage and took train for Belgium, and thus the Second Empire came to an end, without bloodshed or violence. The only mischief done by the mob was the destruction of a picture of the Emperor at the Hotel de Ville, and the pulling down and destruction of busts and portraits of the Imperial family, and all emblems of Imperialism, wherever they were seen.

In the course of the day (Sunday) a new government, calling itself "The Government of National Defense," was formed, consisting almost exclusively of members of the Left. The one signal exception was General Trochu, who was named President, "with full military power for the national defense," and who installed himself at the Tuileries. M. Jules Favre was made Minister of Foreign Affairs; M. Gambetta Minister of the Interior; M. Picard, of Finance; General Leflo, who owed his generalship to the government of 1848, when he was a deputy, War; M. Fourichon, who has been since 1864 President of the Council of Naval Works, Marine; M. Crémieux, Justice, the same office which he filled in the Provisional Government of 1848; M. Jules Simon, Public Instruction and Religion; M. Magnin, an iron-master and landed proprietor, Agriculture; and M. Dorian, also an iron-master, Public Works. A Committee of National Defense was also formed, consisting of all the Paris deputies, including M. Rochefort; General Trochu was made President, and M. Jules Favre, Vice-president. M. Etienne Arago was appointed Mayor of Paris.

One of the first acts of the new Ministry was to proclaim an amnesty for all political offenses, and many persons who had been condemned for such offenses were set at liberty. The Government also decreed the dissolution of the Legislative Chamber and the suppression of the Senate and the Presidency of the Council of State. Seals were placed on the doors of the Chamber. The manufacture and sale of arms was declared absolutely free.

On the following day, September 5th, the "Journal of the French Republic" published the subjoined proclamation:

"Frenchmen! The people have disavowed a Chamber which hesitated to save the country when in danger. It has demanded a Republic. The friends of its representatives are not in power, but in peril.

"The Republic vanquished the invasion of 1792. The Republic is proclaimed.

"The Revolution is accomplished in the name of right and public safety.

"Citizens! Watch over the city confided to you. To-morrow you will be with the army, avengers of the country."

On Tuesday, September 5th, M. Jules Favre, as Foreign Minister, issued a circular to French diplomatic agents abroad, in which he vindicated the position of the Provisional Government, and stated, in broad outline, the princi-

ples on which it was prepared to treat for peace. He stated that he had always been in favor of peace, and of leaving Germany to manage her own affairs. The King of Prussia having declared, says Mr. Favre, that "he made war, not upon France but upon the dynasty," and the dynasty having fallen, he would be responsible to the world should he continue the war. M. Favre declared further that "France will not yield an inch of her territory or a stone of her fortresses. A dishonorable peace would be a war of extermination at an early date. The Government will only treat for a durable peace. The interest of France is that of all Europe; but were she alone she would not be enfeebled. Paris has a resolute army well provided for; a well-established enceinte, and, above all, the breasts of 300,000 combatants determined to hold out till the last. After the forts," M. Favre says, "we have the ramparts, after the ramparts we have the barricades. Paris can hold out for three months, and conquer. If she succumbs, France will start up at her appeal, and avenge her." France would continue the struggle, and her aggressor would perish. "We have not," he adds, "accepted power with any other object. We will not keep it a moment if we do not find the population of Paris and the whole of France decided to share our resolutions. We wish only for peace, but if this disastrous war which we have condemned is continued against us, we shall endeavor to do our duty to the last, and I have the firm confidence that our cause, which is that of right and of justice, will triumph in the end."

The Republic was immediately proclaimed in Havre, Marseilles, Nantes, and other cities, with great enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, preparations for the defense of the capital were pushed forward with unabated activity. General Trochu issued a proclamation, giving notice of the approach of the enemy, declaring the defense of the city assured, and appealing to the patriotism of the people. As the isolation of the city from the rest of France was but a question of time, the seat of government was transferred to Tours, whither most of the ministers immediately proceeded.

A more difficult or more embarrassing task than the defense of Paris was never laid upon a soldier. A powerful enemy flushed with victory was before the walls; within, were a soldiery demoralized by defeat, raw levies, and a populace split up into a hundred factions. The strength of the outlying girdle of forts assured him time to organize his forces and drill his recruits into a serviceable condition, if he could only control the impatience of the populace, who, having just declared the overthrow of the Empire, were clamorous to direct the defense of the city. They demanded immediate action. For a time they were amused with unimportant sallies and reconnoitring parties, which also had the effect of accustoming the young and raw levies to military movements. The apparent inactivity of the Prussians inflamed their spirit of impatience. Their lines closed about Paris about the 18th of September, and the immediate bombardment of the city was expected. But when day after day went by, and the bombardment was still deferred, the sanguine Parisians attributed the delay to weakness, and began to clamor for more serious offensive movements. This doubtless led to the formidable sortie of October 21. Former sorties and reconnaissances had been directed from the south front of the fortifications, either in expectation of assistance from the army of the Loire, or because this was thought to be the weakest part of the investing line; the attack of the 21st was made in nearly the same direction, but with larger bodies of men, supported by a numerous field of artillery, under protection of the guns of Mont Valérien. The French fought well, but were ultimately compelled to withdraw, leaving one hundred prisoners and two guns in the hands of the Prussians.

A letter in the "London Times," written from Paris October 6th and sent out of the city by "balloon post," will give the reader some idea of the condition of the capital, and the nature of the difficulties with which General Trochu had to contend in the earlier part of the siege.

"There has been between the Government and an extreme section of the Democrats a collision which I fear threatens mischief. M. Gustave Flourens, at the head of five battalions of the National Guard, four of which he himself commands, marched yesterday afternoon to the Hôtel de Ville, and in somewhat peremptory fashion requested the Government to arm the National Guard with Chassepots, in order to qualify them for sorties; to change the present defensive for an offensive system of tactics by perpetual sorties; to dispatch Special Commissioners to the provinces in order to raise a levy in mass; to hold at once the municipal elections, and to commence an official distribution of food to the population of Paris. According to some accounts M. Flourens went farther, and wanted the Government to undertake a policy of Republican propagandism in foreign countries. However, the five points I have mentioned constituted the essence of his programme. The reply of the Government, represented by General Trochu and M. Gambetta, was in the main unfavorable, and M. Flourens has, in consequence, it is said, resigned the command of his battalions. As his undoubted personal courage and his reputation for political integrity have made him very popular with a perhaps small, but by no means uninfluential, section of the Re-

publican party, this split in the camp, if it is not speedily mended, may produce very serious consequences. General Trochu disposed very easily of the first demand by declaring he would gladly give the National Guard better weapons, only he did not happen to have enough of them.

"On the question of perpetual sorties, the General found himself compelled to differ from M. Flourens. Indeed, there is more difference of opinion on this question than on any other, and it may perhaps be considered, next to the supply of food, the principal question of the day. A large party chafe ceaselessly at what they consider the indecorous and impolitic attitude of the Army of Paris. Despite the repeated asseverations of their journals, they can not feel sure that it is altogether 'heroic.' Victor Hugo, indeed, in a recent manifesto, quite turns the tables upon the Prussians by declaring that they are cowards for not trying to storm Paris. 'Here we are,' he cries, 'waiting, all ready for you; longing to fight you: why don't you come on? It is because you can no longer hide yourselves in woods, and kill us without our having the honor of even making your acquaintance; you are afraid of us.' And naturally struck by the contrast between the cowardice of the Prussians and the bravery of his own countrymen, he concludes with the eloquent prophecy that, 'as Paris has crowned the statue of Strasbourg with flowers, so history will crown Paris with stars.' Unluckily, however, many of the Parisians are of a less poetical way of thinking, and consider that, so far as it is a mere question of courage or cowardice, it is their business to go out and meet the Prussians, instead of shouting defiance from behind batteries and loopholed walls. They hold it disgraceful that 500,000 men should be unable to look 300,000 in the face, even though they can always select their own point of attack, and, massing rapidly near the centre, traverse the diameter of the circle while their enemy are compelled to move round the circumference. Why not hurl every night 100,000, or, if you like, 200,000 men, since we shall still have enough left to guard Paris from any surprise in another quarter, sometimes upon one weak point, sometimes upon another of the hostile camp, which can not bring at first more than one man against your six, and then retreat into Paris, having done as much mischief as you can before the enemy can muster in strength? The Prussians ought not to be allowed a moment's breathing-time. The present delay which the Government has the conscience to declare in our favor is allowing them quietly to form intrenchments, in which they will be as strong as we are in Paris, and from which we shall find it difficult, if not impossible, to dislodge them. We, on the other hand, are eating up our provisions, and are by every day's delay brought twenty-four hours nearer to a state of famine, in which no amount of courage or endurance can save us. Every day, too, the Prussian cancer eats farther into France, wasting her substance, breaking her spirit, and disgracing her in the eyes of all Europe. Such are the views of the party which M. Flourens represents, and they are, at any rate, in keeping with his personal courage. It is possible also that he and his friends are stung by certain sayings attributed to distinguished foreigners, both here and in the Prussian camp, that if there were only half as many Americans, or even English, in Paris as there are Frenchmen, the Prussians would have to raise the siege in a week, finding the environs of Paris much too hot for them. But there is a good deal to be said on the other—General Trochu—side of the question. It is much easier to talk of hurling 100,000 men at once upon this or that point than to hurl them—to say nothing of the still greater difficulty of hurling them back; and when they happen to be, most of them, raw troops, who a few weeks ago were beginning the A B C of drill, while their opponents are the best soldiers in Europe, it is as well to remember that discipline has, before now, proved more than a match for overwhelming numbers, and that one regiment can keep the largest mob at bay. This hurling in masses of raw but brave recruits was all very well in 1792, but modern artillery has now made it dangerous. The Prussians at this moment far excel us in artillery, as they do in drill; but we are casting cannon rapidly. We may soon be provided as well as they are, and meantime our troops, incessantly exercised, are getting into better shape every day. The provinces, too, have time to organize levies, and may be able to take the Prussians in rear while we take them in front. These are the views of the Government and, I fancy, the great majority of the Parisians. The only flaw that strikes me in them is that, according to all accounts we can get—though it must be admitted these accounts are not worth much, most of them being, I believe, fabricated in Paris—the Provinces, instead of rising *en masse*, are showing a most strange and discouraging apathy. If so, the case of Paris is hopeless."

As soon as it became apparent that France was unable to resist the invasion she had drawn upon herself, an attempt was made by the new government to enlist the sympathy and active co-operation of other governments. The United States had acknowledged the republic, in an informal manner, and this example was followed by several of the European states; but France wanted more than a recognition of a change of government. Material aid, an alliance with a power willing to take part in the war and compel Prussia to abate some of her pretensions, were necessary to her preservation. The new government hoped to effect such an alliance by working upon the jealousy excited by the sudden growth of Prussia, and the vision of an immense German Empire that now began to loom up before Russia and Austria. The veteran statesman M. Thiers was selected to carry out, if possible, this design, and with this end in view he visited, in turn, London, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Florence. It probably surprised no one that he returned disappointed. He himself could hardly have looked upon his mission in any other light than that of a forlorn hope. He deserved credit for his patriotism; and it must also be admitted that, if there was no chance for him, no other could have looked for better for-

tune. The affair was already prejudged and closed. For years the French emperor had been looking for allies. He regarded his encounter with Prussia as an inevitable contingency, and, to do him justice, he never undervalued his adversary. For a long time he reckoned on Austria's burning desire to revenge Sadowa. He was no stranger to the petty jealousies and anxious apprehensions of the South German Courts. He felt confident that he held in Rome a pledge for the subserviency of Italy. He fancied he could hold out a bait by which he could tempt Russian cupidity. Finally, he made sure of England's acquiescence, grounding his confidence partly on this country's estrangement from Continental politics, partly on that "cordial understanding" of which he thought we had greater need than himself. The end was that he took the field single-handed. He may, even while crossing the frontier, have cherished sanguine anticipations that success might develop new political combinations; and no one even now can say what results a splendid victory on the Saar or a rapid march across the Rhine upon Stuttgart or Munich might have had on the unquiet Hohestauffen and Wittelsbach Councils. But it was otherwise decreed. The first encounters on the frontier were irreparable reverses for France, and every waverer thanked his stars that he had not embarked in the sinking ship.

At the last moment, when the waves were almost closing over the sinking ship, M. Thiers was charged to bear aloft the signal of distress. That he would fail was evident from the beginning. What could he propose? What could he say to Russia or Austria that was not already known to those powers? The astounding present and the threatening future were manifest to all men. The vision of Prussia, a gigantic military nation, ambitious and unscrupulous in the use of her power, at the head of a vast consolidated empire; Holland, Switzerland, above all, Austria, menaced with absorption, or with subordination to the leading state, as satellites round the guiding luminary; the balance of power hopelessly disturbed; a Teutonic preponderance, with the eventual annihilation of the Latin and Slavonic races—the very sun of Europe gone down with France's fall, and the stagnation of all national development; all this, and much more, M. Thiers might urge as the evil to be dreaded, and to be averted only by saving France through a military coalition against Prussia. But, as we have already remarked, this had been tried by the Emperor when France held the position of the first military power in the world; and if it failed then, how could it be expected to succeed when France was stricken down and helpless? When M. Thiers begged the neutral Powers to "save France," the very natural reply was, in substance: "Most willingly, if you would only tell us how she is to be saved." No doubt he had considerations to urge which would bring them to the aid of France. For Russia, there was the prospect of a revision of the Treaty of Paris, with a distant glimpse of Danubian lands and Hellespontic waters; for Austria, a recovery of German ascendency, a compensation in Silesia for Lombardy and Venice; for Italy, Rome—or, at least, France's good-will to Italy's occupation of Rome. For England alone, says the "London Times" with some irony, there could be no tempting offer; but in that country M. Thiers probably thought "virtue is its own reward," and, undoubtedly, adds the "Times," peace is in itself at all times the greatest boon that England can receive at the hands of her Continental sisters.

M. Thiers returned from his mission with nothing but the good-will of every body and his own disappointment. It was now evident that France had nothing to hope for from other powers, and that she must depend upon her own endeavors to win the most favorable terms from Prussia. For a time the heroic defense of Strasbourg, and other fortified places, the stubborn attitude of Bazaine at Metz, and the awakening through tardy patriotism of the provinces, gave rise to the hope that peace might be made without humiliating concessions. The fall of Strasbourg and Metz dispelled this hope.

But in the mean time the English Cabinet, either taking alarm at the threatened annihilation of her only ally, or from notions of humanity, sought an opportunity for peaceful intervention. About the middle of October, Earl Granville, supported by the cabinets of all the neutral powers, proposed a meeting between M. Thiers and Count Bismarck, to which both assented, for the purpose of arranging the terms of an armistice, to allow the convocation of the French Assembly, and the formation of a stable government with which a treaty of peace could be concluded.

On the 1st of November, in accordance with the arrangements perfected by Earl Granville, M. Thiers was admitted to an audience with King William at Versailles. The conference called there lasted three hours, and the conditions of the proposed armistice were fully discussed. The next morning a military council was held, in which Count Bismarck participated, and in the afternoon M. Thiers and the

Count were closeted together for a long time. Nothing was concluded at these interviews. On the 3d and 4th of November, the interviews were renewed. At the first, according to the telegraphic account, M. Thiers showed Count Bismarck his authorization from the Paris Government to arrange an armistice on the basis proposed by Lord Granville. The Count replied that it was all very well as far as it went, but an authorization from the Tours Government was also necessary. M. Thiers said M. Gambetta and his colleagues would not disavow an agreement made by the Paris Government and supported by General Trochu and the army of Paris. But he would undertake at once to communicate with Tours, and obtain a formal authorization in addition to the informal powers already received. Count Bismarck insisted on the necessity of convoking an Assembly to speak with authority in the name of the country. He said he was willing to suspend active hostilities for this purpose, but until all had been arranged the siege operations would have full course.

At the second interview, Count Bismarck waived the point of the Tours Government's authorization, and discussed the conditions of the armistice. He proposed that Paris should receive daily one day's food on the scale of present rations, and both belligerents proceed on their material preparations ; the Germans to continue to occupy the whole territory now held by them, to cease to make forced requisitions, and to be allowed to bring forward all their stores and war material without interruption. M. Thiers agreed to these points, and asked, "Will Alsace and Lorraine be permitted to send deputies to the Assembly?" Count Bismarck replied in the negative ; but at length intimated that he might consent.

Thus far appearances were all in favor of the armistice. M. Thiers was positive that the Provisional Government would accept the conditions that had been agreed upon, even though they looked to the cession of the Rhine provinces and the payment of an indemnity. But, at the last moment, the Provisional Government rejected the protocol, and ordered M. Thiers to inform Count Bismarck that the conditions could not be accepted. The rupture was understood to be partly owing to the persistence of Count Bismarck in insisting on guaranties for the cession of territory, and partly to the disordered condition of Paris.

Previous to the attempt of M. Thiers to treat with Count Bismarck, General Burnside, who was at the Prussian head-quarters, proffered his services as the bearer of proposals for an armistice. He arrived in Paris on the 3d of October, bearing a letter from Count Bismarck to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. This letter, however, exclusively concerned the complaint made by the members of the Diplomatic Body residing in Paris, and who had demanded that they should be allowed to send dispatches to their respective governments once a week. General Burnside had no official capacity, and it was his own idea, and yielding to a generous impulse, that he endeavored without any commission to effect some conciliatory arrangement between the hostile parties. He was unable, however, to effect this object. A second visit took place a day or two afterwards, at which both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and General Trochu were present. He was not this time the bearer of a letter from Count Bismarck, nor had he been intrusted with a verbal message ; but it was evident to the Paris authorities, from his conversation, that the views of the Chancellor of the North German Confederation had undergone no change, and that if he considered an armistice as practicable for the convocation of an Assembly he would grant it for the actual space of forty-four hours only ; that he would refuse to include Metz in it; that he would prohibit all re-victualling ; and that he would exclude from the elections the citizens of Alsace and Lorraine. The friendly interposition of General Burnside was therefore without result.

THE END.

MAP SHOWING THE SEAT OF WAR IN FRANCE.

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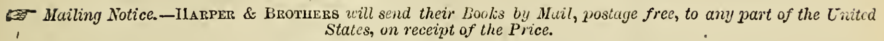

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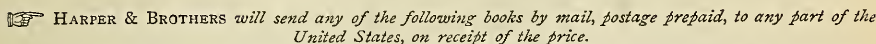

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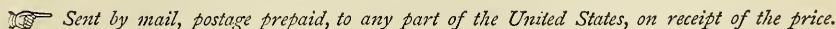

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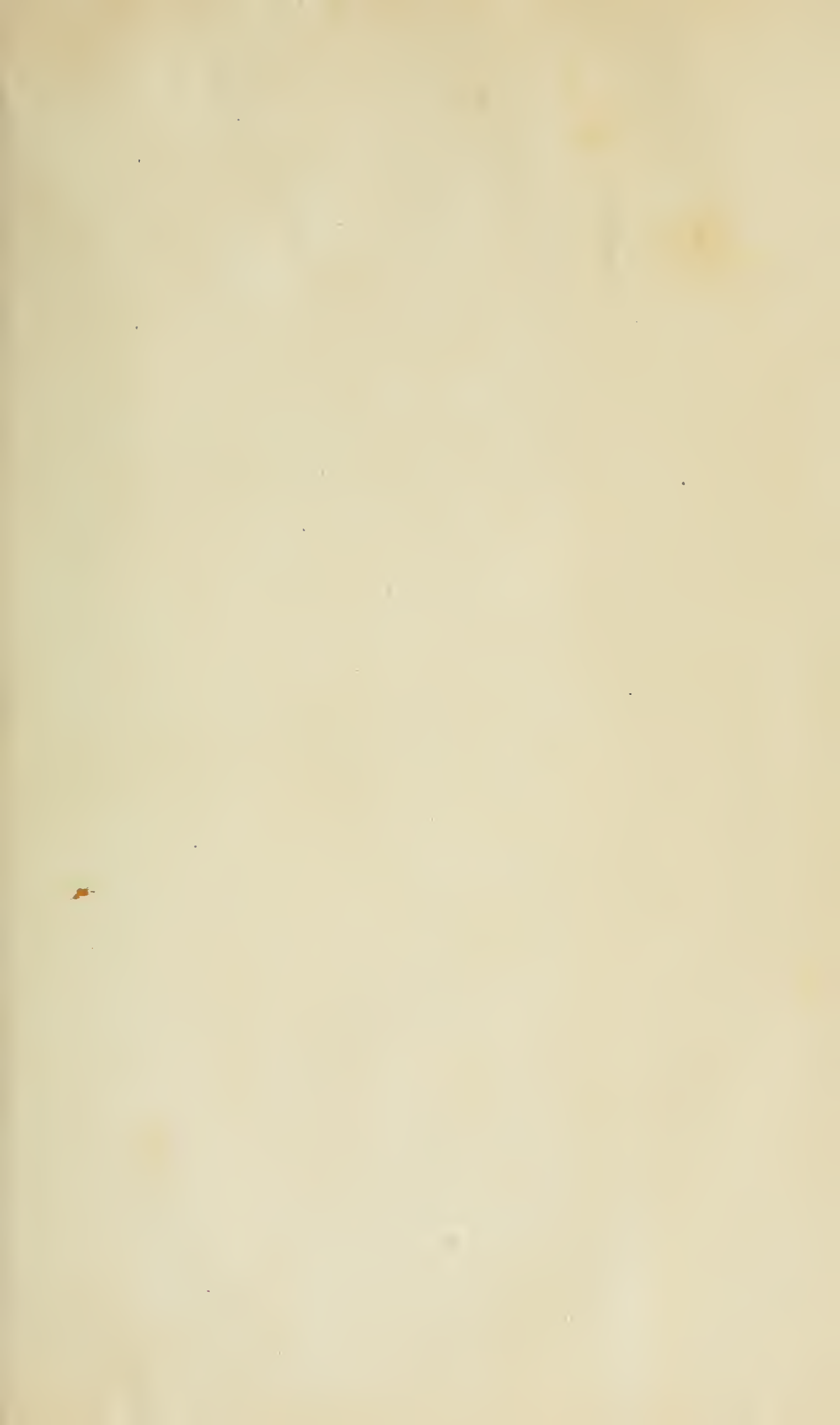

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