

THE
GERMANS
IN
FRANCE



EDWARDS

THE
GERMANS IN FRANCE.

NOTES

ON THE METHOD AND CONDUCT OF THE INVASION;
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN INVADERS AND INVADED;
AND THE
MODERN USAGES OF WAR,

BY
H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

PARTLY REPRODUCED FROM THE "TIMES" (BY PERMISSION OF
THE PROPRIETORS).

LONDON:
E. STANFORD, 55 & 8, CHARING CROSS.

10,500

THE London correspondent of the *New York Times* says: A translation has just appeared of Hacklander's *Military Life in Prussia in Time of Peace*. It is, indeed, a delightful book, full of humor and poetry; full of amusing sketches of character, of capital stories of camp and barrack life; full, also, of information, given, as it were, from within, as to the everyday existence of Prussian officers, soldiers and volunteers. Of books about the late war there is still no end, or rather there is a beginning again. Their authors doubtless hope that, after a certain reaction, the interest in the subject is now reviving. In connection with the events of 1870-71, a work by Mr. Sutherland Edwards is announced under the title of "*Manners and Customs of Invading Armies, Notes on the German Occupation of France, the Relations between Invaders and Invaded, and the Modern Usages of War.*" It professes to give information in regard to requisitions, contributions, and forced labor, the levying of fines, the taking of hostages, the general repression of illegitimate warfare, and the bombardment of fortified towns. The appendix reproduces the "*Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field,*" drawn up by Prof. Lieber, submitted to and approved by a committee of officers, and mentioned by President Lincoln.

It was not public. A similar drill will be held on the evening of December 1.

— ONE of the heavy companies of the Fifth Infantry while at drill recently caused the ceiling of the main drill room of the armory to fall. This will doubtless necessitate a suspension of drills for the present in this regiment. The solid tramp of the Fifth, it seems, is too much for the Andy Garvey walls.

— THE Forty-seventh Board of Officers recently laid on the table the resolution to abolish the use of all spirituous liquors in the regimental armory. It will be revived at the next meeting, however, and urged to a passage. We trust all organizations of the National Guard will view this matter seriously, and act accordingly. The good results of the passage of a resolution of this nature, and its enforcement, cannot be over estimated.

— CAPTAIN WILLIAM J. HARDING, the capable commander of Company B, Twenty-second Infantry, on Tuesday last united his fortunes with those of Miss Anna Adelia Chamberlain, late of Brownsville, Texas. We presume this is one of the unions the gallant captain fought for in the late war, and we congratulate him.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. NATURE AND CHARACTER OF INVASIONS . . .	I
II. INVADERS OR INVADED?	16
III. COMPOSITION OF THE PRUSSIAN INVADING FORCES	22
IV. ENTRY INTO THE INVADED COUNTRY . . .	38
V. AN OCCUPIED TOWN	48
VI. JOURNEY THROUGH AN OCCUPIED DISTRICT .	67
VII. INVASION OF A DISTRICT HELD BY THE ENEMY	93
VIII. SEDAN	126
IX. AFTER THE BATTLE	134
X. FRANCS-TIREURS AND THE RIGHT OF SELF- DEFENCE	151
XI. THE SIEGE OF STRASBURGH AND THE BOM- BARDMENT OF FORTIFIED TOWNS . . .	162

CHAPTER	PAGE
XII. OCCUPATION OF STRASBURGH	188
XIII. AN OCCUPIED LINE OF RAILWAY	202
XIV. ARTILLERY TRAINS	224
XV. OCCUPATION OF DESERTED DISTRICTS	235
XVI. THEORETICALLY OCCUPIED DISTRICTS	252
XVII. OCCUPATION OF ROUEN AND NORMANDY	263
XVIII. PRINCIPLES OF WAR LEGISLATION	281
XIX. THE MODERN USAGES OF WAR	288

APPENDICES.

A. THE PRUSSIAN NEGOTIATORS AT SEDAN	299
B. THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORTIFIED TOWNS	304
C. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIELD	307



THE GERMANS IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE AND CHARACTER OF INVASIONS.

THE recent invasion of France by the Germans differed not only in magnitude but in character, from all other invasions which had taken place in Europe since 1815. It must not be compared, then, with the invasion of the Crimea by the French and English, nor with the invasion of Lombardy by the French, nor with the invasion of Schleswig-Holstein by the Prussians and Austrians, nor even with the invasion of Austria and various German countries by the Prussians. The French and English, at war with Russia, did not enter any truly Russian country, but only occupied a portion of an outlying Tartar province; the French, in invading the Austrian province of Lom-

bardy, did so as the friends and liberators of the inhabitants ; the invaders, too, of Schleswig-Holstein arrived there in the character of liberators. Finally, the war of Prussia against Austria was not a national but a political war.

In invading France, however, the Germans met, at every step, the men whose nation and government had challenged them to fight ; the men whose brothers and sons were actually in arms against them, not merely as conscripts but as national enemies. Such an invasion, with whatever degree of discipline it might be conducted, could not be otherwise than intolerable.

In private life invasion is bad enough even in its mildest form ; when, for instance, an unwished-for acquaintance calls and persists in staying. The case is worse when the visitor is a thoroughly undesirable person, who, notwithstanding hints to the contrary, still remains.

But the case is insufferable when the visitor or visitors are armed foes who come in a body ; march in without any of the usual forms of civility ; take possession by force ; eat the meal which has not been prepared for them, or, if no meal is ready, cause one to be cooked ; clear the larder of food ; empty the cellar of wine ; go to bed in the best bedrooms ; cause themselves, in the absence of servants, to be waited upon by the master of the

house ; and retire to rest, impressing upon him that he must have coffee ready for them next morning by five. That, however, is invasion in its mildest—its very mildest—form in time of war.

Nor is the position of the invaders an enviable one. They know that their entertainer wishes them every possible evil. His demeanour may be sulky, servile, affable, with an effort, studiously cold. His secret prayer is, in every case, that plague, pestilence and famine, battle, murder, and, above all, sudden death may carry off those whom he is compelled to house, feed, and serve, and for whose safety, in the meanwhile, he is held personally responsible. For to him these invaders, even if they behave with all possible consideration, are, none the less, intruders who have disturbed his peace, tax-gatherers who are unjustly levying tithes, bailiffs who are wrongfully devouring his substance, burglars who have broken into his house, brigands who only do not take his life because they are left free to deal as they please with his goods.

Nevertheless, even between invaders and invaded not wholly unfriendly relations will sometimes spring up ; when, for instance, the invaders possess good feeling and the invaded good sense. Such a combination is sure to be rare ; but in this last invasion instances of it were to be met with. For the most part, however, there was no combination at

all—the antagonistic elements would not combine. The forcible introduction of Germans among Frenchmen produced all sorts of strange, grotesque, painful, and occasionally tragic results. In the following pages some such results will be found noted—less in logical order than in the order of time in which they presented themselves to the writer's observation.

It will be seen, too, that the German commanders took great pains to conduct the invasion according to certain rules, which, for the most part, were published wherever and immediately their troops entered a fresh place. They carried with them a rough but regular system of government, and were followed by a large staff of officials, who established bureaus, and even started newspapers in the occupied towns. At the same time, no unattached camp-followers were tolerated along the line of march; so that one frequent cause of demoralization to troops and danger to inhabitants, was, in the case of the German armies invading France, entirely avoided. At a later period, when invasion had become occupation, dealers of various kinds arrived, and, duly licensed, offered cigars and other manufactures for sale in the occupied towns; but during the invasion, properly so called, every non-combatant who accompanied the armies (with the

exception of a few privileged visitors) had fixed duties assigned to him; and even the unhappy French peasants who, with their carts and horses, were impressed into the service of the invaders, received numbers, and were duly ticketed and registered. Nevertheless, the commissariat arrangements were not found perfect during the war by the Prussians themselves—their own severest critics; and changes before the war broke out had already been undertaken in connection with the body of *marketenders*, or sutlers, to which, among other extensions and reforms, a more decidedly military character will henceforth be given.

A complete account of the organization of the invasion in regard to civil as well as military matters, including in particular the proclamations of all kinds published by the German authorities in France, would form a very valuable book; for which, however, it would be difficult to collect all the necessary materials. In the present volume I have only touched upon such features and results of the system as came directly beneath my notice; and as the conduct of the Germans in France has been much criticised and often severely blamed, it may be interesting to see what they did, and in obedience to what rules. Then to determine the precise character of the invasion, it would be necessary to compare these rules with the rules observed

in previous invasions, and with those generally accepted by civilized nations in the present day.

There exists no international military code for regulating the conduct of armies in the field, though there is a perfect understanding between nations, in regard to a few important points sure to arise when hostile armies are face to face. Thus it is generally agreed that soldiers who surrender shall, if possible, receive quarter,* and that the bearers of flags of truce shall not, if it can be avoided, be fired upon;† while it is expressly stipulated, by the terms of the St. Petersburg‡ Convention, that explosive bullets shall not be used; and by those of the Geneva Convention, that surgeons and persons actually engaged in hospital service shall not be made prisoners.

Moreover, by common consent, civilians offering no resistance, and conforming to the terms of authorized requisitions, are protected in person and property. Civilians, however, who take up arms against an invading army are, according to some military codes, treated as brigands; while, by others, they are, under certain circumstances, regarded as soldiers, and entitled, if captured, to be treated as prisoners of war.

* See American Instructions, art. 60, in Appendix.

† Ibid., art. 112, 113.

The principles that prevail among civilized nations on these and similar points, have been observed and put together by various writers ; among others in recent times, by Professor Bluntschli,* of Heidelberg, whose work on the "Law of Nations," published in 1868, contains the latest and most complete collection of rules—or, perhaps I should say, maxims—for the guidance of combatant armies that has appeared. But cases occur in war for which Professor Bluntschli has not provided ; and some of the rules he puts forward—as, for example, that money contributions are not to be levied, that military "executions" are to be avoided, that hostages are not to be taken, and that a duly authorized rising en masse is to be considered a legitimate operation of defence—are disregarded by the government Professor Bluntschli serves.

The German commanders who entered France in 1870 seem, for the most part, to have regulated their conduct towards the French by German historical precedents ; as, for instance, in the invasion of 1792, of which Göthe has left an admirable memoir,† and in that of 1814, of which a valuable documentary history was published, two years be-

"Das moderne Völkerrecht." Von Dr. T. C. Bluntschli, Nördlingen, 1868.

† Göthe's "Campaign of France."

fore the late war broke out, by M. Steenackers.* New rules had, of course, to be introduced, to suit new circumstances (in 1814 there were no railways to break up, no telegraph wires to cut down—no cigars to include in the daily requisitions); but, in general, the principles on which the war of 1870 was carried on may be said to have been those observed in 1792 and in 1814. If the invasion of 1870 was conducted less harshly than previous invasions, that is to be accounted for, not by any modification of the German Laws of War, but by the general softening of manners during the last half century.

As an indication of this change, it may be noticed that, for the last five-and-twenty years, corporal punishment has been unknown in the Prussian army. In 1814, and for 30 years afterwards,† it was freely administered; and men who receive blows are generally the most ready to give them. In this last invasion, apart from military “executions,” violence towards individuals—illegal violence, that is to say—was almost unknown.

On the other hand, the war, in a military point of view, was conducted with all possible severity—

* “L’Invasion de 1814 dans la Haute Marne.” Par F. F. Steenackers, Membre du Conseil Général de la Haute Marne. Paris, 1868.

† Restricted, 1845; suspended, 1848; abolished, 1852.

or apparent severity; for sharp action in war is not severity in the end.

Thus the fortified towns attacked—except in the case of Strasburgh, where the attempt failed, and of Metz, where the system was impracticable—were reduced by “simple bombardment;” bombardment, that is to say, not of the fortifications, but of the town itself.* As one of the results, however, of the “simple bombardment” system, no town had to be entered by assault; and that the vanquished were everywhere spared is sufficiently shown by the half million prisoners taken.

In the proclamations affixed to the walls of occupied villages and towns, reference was constantly made to the “Code Militaire de la Prusse,” under which certain penalties were to be inflicted; as, for instance, upon civilians taking up arms. I have not been able to find any such code. The Prussian Articles of War, the Prussian Book of Punishments (*Strafgesetzbuch*), are addressed to Prussian soldiers alone; who, for example, are warned not to maltreat civilians, or prisoners, in the enemy’s country, but are, of course, not empowered to take the law into their own hands against enemies of any kind.

In fact, the only government which has ever publicly issued a complete set of instructions for

* See, on this subject, “Siege of Strasburgh,” page 162.

regulating the conduct of its armies towards the enemy and the hostile civil population, is that of the United States. This species of code* was drawn up by Professor Lieber, submitted to and approved by a committee of officers, sanctioned by President Lincoln, and made public just before the commencement of hostilities between North and South. Its author seems to have foreseen every case demanding judicial treatment, every question requiring a prompt decision, every difficulty, of whatever kind, that could arise during war; and, as a matter of fact, no case presented itself during the war of 1870 which had not been provided for in the American Instructions. Perhaps an exception might be pointed out in regard to the offence—so difficult to bring home to an individual—of concealing, in an occupied district, arms or provisions for the enemy. Such offences were punished by the Americans during the civil war much as they were three years ago by the Germans in France. In America, the house in an occupied district found to contain stores for the enemy was sacked and burned.† In France, the village in an occupied district harbouring francs-tireurs, or, in-

* "Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field. 1863." See Appendix C.

† From a communication made to the Author by an American (Federal) general who carried out instructions to that effect.

deed, troops of any kind making an attack by surprise, was burned, or, at least, set on fire.

On one or two points the American rules are in direct opposition, or seeming opposition, to the Prussian. Thus, the former expressly tolerate a levy *en masse*—but under these conditions; that it shall have been formally commanded by the government, and that it shall take place in a part of the country not yet occupied by the invader. The latter do not accord the civilian the right, under any circumstances, to take up arms. In order to be treated as a soldier, he must wear uniform, act under officers bearing commissions from the government, and belong to a corps carrying on regular operations of war; must *be* a soldier, in fact.

Moreover, the American Instructions (art. 81) permit the employment of guerilla bands apart from the main body of the army, provided they be composed of regular soldiers, wearing the uniform of the army, and acting under officers; nor would the Prussians deny to the operations of such bands—under the conditions prescribed by the American Instructions—the character of legitimate warfare. The Prussians, however, only recognize as warriors those who play the game of war according to Prussian rules; and their government—resembling, in that respect, every other government in Europe—

has not yet told the world what those rules really are.

The American Instructions are distinguished by a liberal and humane spirit, and it is to be noticed that they contain all the essential points in regard to the neutrality of surgeons, the inviolability of hospitals, and so on, which were afterwards adopted by the Geneva Conference. Some few of the "instructions," however, are not of universal application, and seem to have been drawn up with a special view to the interests of the Northern States. Thus, while one of them describes civilized warfare as "the kind of warfare carried on by Europeans and their descendants in other portions of the globe" (article 25), another sets forth that "the law of nations knows no distinction of colour" (art. 58), which might be made to justify the absolutely unjustifiable employment in European warfare of Turcos by the French, or of Tcherkesses by the Russians, or (retrospectively) of North American Indians by the English, in the war against the American colonies; a practice which, as every one knows, was indignantly condemned at the time by Lord Chatham in the British Parliament.

The value of a general statement to the effect that "hostages are rare in the present age" (art. 54),* was shown by the fact that, during the

* See Chapter entitled "The Usages of War."

American war, hostages were repeatedly taken by the government which, in a platonic manner, had declared the practice all but obsolete. It is to be observed too, that the levy *en masse*, which, under certain conditions, the American instructions allow, was a means more likely to be adopted by the North than by the South. Generally, however, it is a means for the invaded alone; and, as such, is universally condemned by invaders.

It may be said that the Prussians condemn it everywhere. But, on its own territory, the Prussian, like every other government, approves and commands it. Not to speak of 1813, a general rising and arming of the local population was ordered in July, 1870,* when the French were expected to land on the Prussian coast. Would General Vogel von Falkenstein, who decreed the levy, have permitted, without making reprisals, that all members of the coast population falling into the hands of the French should be shot as brigands? Or are laws against civilians taking up arms, laws, not of principle, but of expediency; to be applied abroad, to be ignored at home?

A remarkable conversation on this very subject between Prince Bismarck and M. Jules Favre is reported by the latter in his "Gouvernement de la

* "Kölnische Zeitung," July 27, 1870, and Schlosser's "Geschichts Kalender, 1870," under the head of "July 26."

Défense Nationale,”* from which it appears that according to M. Favre the civilian has an absolute right to take up arms against invaders; while according to Prince Bismarck, armed men subject to no regular discipline, cannot be recognized as soldiers, but are simply “assassins.” When M. Favre reminded Prince Bismarck that the Prussians had, as a nation, taken up arms against the French in 1813, the Prince replied: “Yes; but our trees preserve the traces of the inhabitants whom your generals hung upon them.”

The French, in fact, mistook the Prussian patriots of 1813 for “assassins;” and the Prussians in 1870, made the same error, if error it was, in regard to the French. Similarly, Napoleon’s generals, in Spain, executed members of guerilla bands as “assassins,” which did not prevent Napoleon from ordering a levy *en masse* in France when the country was invaded by the allies in 1814; nor Prince Schwarzenberg from treating as “assassins,” or would-be “assassins,” all who took part in it.

Practically the Germans had nothing resembling a levy *en masse* to deal with in France during this last war. Neither had they in 1814; while in 1792 it was only after the Duke of Brunswick’s army had begun its retreat that the peasants rose against it.

So, as a rule, it will always be. The population

* In the section entitled “Entrevue de Ferrières.”

will not rise against invaders until the invaders are already defeated ; and it is then too late to enforce laws against civilians bearing arms. But, if only to remove occasions for sanguinary reprisals, there should and might be a law, clearly understood and generally accepted, on this and other points of warfare about which there is at present much ignorance and consequent misunderstanding, to say nothing of positive disagreement.

One necessary first step towards such a desirable result is to bring the questionable points to light ; and many such points which, among other matters of perhaps more general interest, came directly beneath the writer's notice during the late war, will be indicated in this volume.





CHAPTER II.

INVADERS OR INVADED ?

EVERY one, and especially every Frenchman, is astonished that the French Government should have thought, with the limited and uncertain resources at its disposal in July, 1870, of declaring war against such a formidable military power as Prussia. The popular view of the matter in France, if not in Europe generally, is that the Emperor Napoleon, with an army barely 300,000 strong, challenged a power which could bring a million men into the field. That, no doubt, is the truth, but it is far from being all the truth. The million men could not be brought into the field forthwith, and as a matter of course; and the Emperor Napoleon reckoned on commencing hostilities with an army not of 300,000, but of 600,000 men.

“We are only waiting now for your dispatch,” wrote the Duke de Gramont to M. Benedetti on the

10th of July,* "to call in the 300,000 men who are ready to be called in. If the King will not advise the Prince of Hohenzollern to renounce, it is war immediately, and in a few days we are on the Rhine."

There the French expected to meet a portion of the North German army, which, on a peace footing, was 300,000 strong. Preparations had already been made for sending a fleet to the North Sea,† and a Prussian army would be required, and was, in fact, formed, to guard against a landing.

Then, whatever good understanding there might be between the Prussian and Bavarian Governments, it was quite certain that the Prussians were not liked in Bavaria; and even if the French were not quick enough to profit by this feeling, they might still count on the unfriendly, or at least doubtful attitude of Austria towards Prussia. On the latter head they were so little wrong, that the Crown Prince, when the rest of his army was entering France, thought it desirable to leave in Silesia the 6th or Silesian army corps, to watch the Austrian frontier. In the end it appeared that France had no more to expect from Austria than

* "Ma Mission en Prusse," par Benedetti.

† These preparations, however, had been mismanaged, as appears from the curious telegrams on the subject published in the "Papiers Secrets de l'Empire."

from her own navy, or from her own reserves for the army; but it cannot all the same be said that the position of France was obviously hopeless when she declared war.

The French did indeed underestimate both the quality and the numbers of the Prussian troops. "The Prussian army," said the *Military Almanack* for 1870, published at Metz, "is only a school for the landwehr. Of doubtful value for defensive purposes, it would be useless for an attack."

Similarly they had overestimated their own military and naval strength; and when, after war had been declared, the French army still made no sign, possible neutrals, possible allies become actual enemies. Austria, however, still maintained her demeanour of unfriendly neutrality; until at last, but not until after Wörth and Spicheren, it became quite certain that the Austrian "corpse" of a few years before would make no alliance with the newly-made French cripple; and the Silesian army corps marched after the rest of the Crown Prince's army, and joined it in plenty of time to take up a strategical position near Sedan on the 1st September.

The French, then, if they had commenced the war as they originally intended to do, the morning after its actual declaration in the Chamber, would have had some slight chances in their favour, which, as it was, they missed; and the long inactivity of

Napoleon's army must, at least as regards a portion of it, be attributed less to its alleged unreadiness to take the field, than to a political check received by the French Government. Enough troops for the surprise meditated by the Duke de Gramont, could have been sent into Germany the day war was declared; and arrangements were in fact made for crossing the frontier the day afterwards.

It is believed that a march, or rather a passage by railway through Luxemburg, formed part of Marshal Niel's plan for a campaign against Germany, and on the 15th of July, the day war was effectively declared in the French Chamber, M. van Suylen, Minister of the Netherlands at Paris, was asked what his government would say to a brief violation of the Treaty of London. M. Jonas, diplomatic agent of Luxemburg at Paris, spoke to M. van Suylen on the same point, when the Dutch minister replied that the French might pass through the Grand Duchy but must not remain there. In any case, M. Jonas sent his secretary, M. Weber, to Luxemburg, where he arrived the next day (Saturday, July 16), saying that his chief despaired of saving the neutralized territory from the violation contemplated by France. The Luxemburg Government telegraphed to M. Jonas that they would send a representative to meet the French troops at the frontier, and protest against their entry; and, more-

over, that they were about to make a formal appeal to the signatory powers of the Treaty of London. The commissary of the arrondissement through which the French troops would enter was instructed to meet them; and he remained for that purpose at the frontier station of Bettingbourg, from Saturday to Sunday. On Saturday, too, the French Vice Consul at Luxemburg, Baron de Cussy, accompanied by the superior officials of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est (of which it must be remembered the administration was entirely French), went to the Luxemburg station to receive the expected invaders.

Meanwhile, in reply to the remonstrances of the Luxemburg Government, the French minister of foreign affairs had telegraphed to say that France would respect the neutrality of Luxemburg if Prussia would do the same. Prussia, on her side, promised observance of the London Treaty, conditionally on its observance by France. At the same time Prussian workmen took up the rails and broke the railway bridge close to the frontier station of Wasserbillig, by which troops would pass moving from Thionville, through Luxemburg upon Trèves. The line from Luxemburg through Gouvy to Aix la Chapelle, by which, if the Duke de Gramont had been in a position to carry out his original idea, the French would also have profited, was not

interfered with; and far from being surprised on the Rhine or even on the Moselle, it was not until nearly three weeks after the effective declaration of war* that the Prussians were seriously threatened on the Saar.

* Col. Rustow assigns the same date—July 19th—to the reception of the official declaration of war and the issue of the order for mobilisation; but the order for mobilisation was issued July 16th, the day after the effective declaration of war in the French Chamber.





CHAPTER III.

COMPOSITION OF THE PRUSSIAN INVADING FORCES.

THE most remarkable thing, in a social and historical sense, about the German invasion of France was that every class and condition of men took part in it. Indeed, about one-half of the invaders bearing arms were, until the order of mobilisation appeared, engaged in peaceful occupations. Without counting the landwehr (upwards of 300,000) who did not march to Strasburgh, Metz, Paris, and the little fortresses in Alsace and Lorraine until some time afterwards, the North German regular army of about 300,000 had forthwith to be increased by about 300,000 men of the reserve.* The men of from 23 to 27,

* Baron Stoffel's correct numbers are 300,000, more or less, for each of the three great classes. Each = 1 per cent. of

who having finished their three years' service in the regular army, were still liable as reserve men to be recalled, went back to their old regiments, some from agriculture, some from industry and trade, some from mercantile, professional, and official pursuits. Each man of the reserve as of the landwehr belongs to a regiment included in the army corps, recruited from and permanently established in the province to which, as a civilian, he belongs. Thus, to join his regiment, or, rather, his battalion,* he cannot have to travel far; and he knows beforehand where his regiment is stationed and where he must apply for his arms and equipment.

He joins, in fact, as he and the others about him are in the habit of joining for the manœuvres in which annually, or once in two years, reserve men

the population. These, however, are not precisely the figures given by the *Officier d'Etat-Major de l'Armée du Rhin*, writing during the war, nor by Lieutenant Talbot (*Analysis of Prussian Army*), writing after the war.

* The Prussian army is recruited and mobilised, not by regiments but by battalions, and the whole of Germany (German empire) is now divided into seventeen army-corps districts, including each two divisional districts, including each two brigade districts, including each two regimental districts, including each three battalion districts. In every German village a board is exhibited inscribed in black and white with the number of the regiment and battalion to which the male inhabitants, with scarcely an exception, belong, or have belonged, or will belong.

and regulars are exercised together. The great difference is that, this time, he will be longer out, that he will have to fire with ball instead of blank cartridge at a real instead of a sham enemy, and, when he has once passed the frontier, will be quartered not upon Germans but upon Frenchmen.

In the Rhine province, which may be taken for an example as the Prussian province best known to Englishmen, a reserve man cultivating his vineyard in the neighbourhood of the Seven Mountains, would, on the order for mobilisation being issued, report himself to the burgomaster of some such place as Godesberg or Königswinter, whence, with other reserve men, he would be sent on to Bonn, the chief town of the Circle, whence, with more reserves, he might be forwarded to Cologne, where we will suppose the head-quarters of his regiment or battalion to be.

The Cologne battalions would find most of their reserve men at or near Cologne. So at Coblenz, head-quarters of the Eighth Corps; so at Trèves, head-quarters of the Fifteenth Division, which, with the Sixteenth Division, head-quarters at Cologne, makes up the Eighth or Rhenish Army Corps.

With the head-quarters of the army corps at Coblenz and divisional head-quarters at Cologne and Trèves, there are brigade head-quarters at

Cologne (1), Coblentz (1), and at Trèves (2); while the eight infantry regiments comprised in the army corps (two regiments to each brigade, two brigades to each of the two divisions) have headquarters at Cologne, Coblentz, Aix la Chapelle, Trèves, and Saarlouis.

The battalion of Sharp-Shooters (one to each army corps) is at Wetzlar. The four regiments forming the two cavalry brigades are partly in the same towns as the infantry regiments, partly at Bonn, Deutz, and Saarbrücken; and the artillery brigade has, according to the invariable rule, the same headquarters as the army corps, and bears the same number. Thus it is designated 8th Artillery Brigade, and comprises two regiments, the 8th Field Artillery regiment, consisting of one horse detachment and three foot detachments, and the 8th Fortress Artillery (*i.e.* garrison artillery) regiment.

The army corps, then, is spread over the whole province to which it belongs; and as each province has its little army, so each district, each important town has its regiment, which, war being declared, is increased to its full number by the addition of reserve men from the neighbourhood of the regiment's headquarters.

The Prussians do not make each province, each district, contribute to the army its quota of horses

as well as of men. The horses (like the men of the guard) are drawn from the whole country; but classification of some sort being necessary, they are classified by age in such a manner that in every squadron the age of each horse is indicated by the initial of its name. Thus, Paris, Priam, Perdita, are (1872) names of six year olds; Romulus, Reinette, Robinson, of seven year olds; while the rare initial Q (Quelle, Quaker, Quirinus)* is reserved for horses of one-year volunteers, of whom there are seldom more than half-a-dozen in the same squadron. It has been suggested that in a thoroughly disciplined country this system might be extended to the human inhabitants of both sexes. Thus, a man's Christian name would at once point him out for service in this or that year's contingent; and (as a minor advantage) there could be no mistake as to the age of a well-authenticated Arabella being (1872) eighteen, that of a Bertha nineteen, that of a Clara twenty, and so on.

Besides civilians who are once more soldiers, we must count among the invading forces of Prussia civilians who have finally ceased to be soldiers, civilians who are not yet old enough to be soldiers, civilians whose vocation forbids them to be soldiers, and some few civilians whose religion forbids absolutely the shedding of blood.

* Names of horses in the 9th Prussian Hussars.

There are retired officers, for instance, who have become Johanniters, or Knights of the Prussian Protestant Order of St. John. This order exists quite independently of the Geneva Convention; but, in tending the wounded, the Johanniters profit by its stipulations, and exhibit, on their left arm, the red cross on a white ground adopted as its symbol. There are civil surgeons, too, who, having completed their military service, have volunteered to share the labours of the army-surgeons in the field, and who receive the rank and pay of army-surgeons on engaging to serve throughout the war.

Then there were students of the universities, who had not yet commenced their military service, and who went to the war as helps to the Johanniters, or, in the case of medical students, as dressers. This class of young men was, if anything, too numerous represented, not precisely on the field of battle, but in the neighbourhood. There is a German word, "bummler," signifying something between a flâneur and a viveur—a jovial sort of Bohemian; and during the war a type manifested itself to which the appropriate name of "Schlactbummler"—"War-Bohemian," or "Bohemian of the battle-field"—was given.

Then there were priests, pastors, brethren of various religious orders, ecclesiastical students,

who, as such, are free from the general obligation to serve in the army; and regimental sick-bearers, or "Kranken-träger," recruited largely from among the Mennonites, of East Prussia, whose faith condemns all bloodshed, and who are appointed by a wise and practical government to take part in healing the wounds they dare not help to make.

With the exception of mediatised princes, only sons of widows, theological students, and Mennonites, every Prussian of twenty in fit bodily condition, and not incapacitated by crime, must enter the army; and if his bodily condition be not absolutely fit, in a high military point of view, he may still be taken, as a workman, according to the craft he has learned; or he may be employed in the field-telegraph service, or in the field post-office, or in the commissariat department.

The Prussian system of universal service has the advantage of imparting manliness to the whole population; for the actual performance of military duty develops virile qualities more certainly even than the playing of cricket. One of its provisions, moreover, has the effect of raising the educational standard of the country; inasmuch as a young man who can pass a prescribed examination, or who rises in his gymnasium to the first or second class, is allowed to fulfil his military obligations by serving in the ranks, at his own cost, nominally for

one year, actually for eight or ten months. Such service, in the arm and regiment of the volunteer's own choice, forms a useful and most agreeable holiday for a young man of twenty, which few would care to miss. It need not even, (in time of peace) interfere with the studies of those who are really studious; for the one-year volunteer lives where he pleases, and messes where he pleases—usually with his fellow-volunteers; and after spending a few hours every morning in the barrack-yard, or, if a cavalry volunteer, in the barrack-yard and riding-school, has the rest of the day to himself.

On the other hand, though I am not competent to decide, on my own judgment, whether the three-years' system produces the best possible soldiers, I am inclined to think, from the opinions, recorded or acted upon, of those whose competence is undeniable, that it does nothing of the kind. Baron Stoffel, an ardent admirer of the Prussian military system, reported to his government that the best men in the Prussian army were the line-soldiers of the third year, and the reserve men of the first—the men, that is to say, who were performing their third year's service, and those who had just completed it. According, then, to Baron Stoffel, the Prussian army would be more formidable if it contained a greater number of men of, at least, from

two to three years' service in the line. The Prussian military authorities are, apparently, of the same opinion, or they would not, as they, in fact, do, encourage cavalry soldiers and non-commissioned officers generally to re-enlist.

However, universal military service is the fundamental principle of the Prussian military and political system; and Marshal Bazaine was not far wrong when, on the 20th of July, 1870, he telegraphed from Metz to Paris, saying: "The Prussians are putting cripples into the public offices, and sending all their able-bodied men from eighteen to thirty-six to the frontier."*

Civil officials of all kinds followed the army, including, in particular, financial and legal officials, and officials of the postal service. Every *etappen-commandant*, moreover, who, as the troops pushed forward, established a new post for the maintenance of communications, was accompanied by a medical and judicial officer, and, as a first step, provided for accidents and offences by organizing a hospital and a prison.

The *etappen-commandant* was, indeed, an eminently useful personage in the invasion; and, when no one could as yet say who would be the invaders and who the invaded, it was upon him that the

* *Papiers secrets de l'Empire.*

first important duties fell in connexion with the movement of troops towards the frontier. In a great war waged by Prussia all the active forces of the nation are engaged; and there is significance in the fact that the central commission for arranging the transport of troops by rail included among its members representatives, not only of the general staff and of the ministry of war, but also of the ministry of the interior, and ministry of commerce.*

An executive commission, composed of army and railway officials, issued orders, in accordance with the rules laid down by the central commission; line commissions sat at each starting-point, and superintended the transport of troops along the particular line to which they were attached; and *etappen*-commissions, presided over by *etappen*-commandants, sat at the starting-points and at each of the resting-points along the line, and attended to the embarkment and disembarkment of troops, and all details connected therewith. The chief resting-points were fixed at intervals of eight hours; a battalion of infantry, or a squadron of cavalry, was sent by each train; and it was part

* See the "Order in regard to the Transport of large bodies of troops, 1866 [spring of that year] and 1869," in which, as regards fundamental points, this organization is already prescribed.

of the duty of the *etappen-commandant* to see that the trains arrived and started at the proper time, and that at the appointed stations food was ready for the men and forage for the horses.

The most important *étapes* were the "*Anfangs-ort-Etape*," or "*étape*" (to adopt the original French word) "of the starting-place"—such as Coblenz, where, on the 26th July, the first army was concentrated ; and the chief *étape*, "*Haupt Etape*," at the nearest important station to the scene of active operations—as Amiens, head-quarters of the first army during the greater part of the winter campaign. One of these stations might be called the "*Home Station*," the other the "*Head-Quarters' Station*."

At the principal stations along the line the *etappen-commandant*, who was usually a colonel, or perhaps a major—at inferior stations a major or a captain—had attached to him a *platz-major*, or town-major, capable of replacing him, and performing, in the meanwhile, the duties of chief clerk ; a commissariat officer, a medical officer, a judicial officer, a post-office clerk, and a railway official. The number of *étapes* in the district occupied by an army corps naturally varied. But there were, on the average, about eight *etappen-commandants* to each army corps ; and each army corps had attached to it an inspector, whose duty it was to

visit periodically the *étapes*, or stations, included in the district occupied by the army corps, while each army had an inspector-general, who similarly visited and reported on the *étapes* included in the whole district occupied by the army. Both these inspectors were general officers.

Besides such adjuncts as a prison, a hospital, a soup-kitchen, and a refreshment-room, the office of the *etappen-commandant* included everywhere a post-office, and, above all, a telegraph-office; for, even in fully occupied districts, a train was never sent on until a telegram had been received to say that the line was clear.

The greatest trouble of the *etappen-commandant* was often with stragglers and casual invalids. "To have provisions ready for the starving prisoners of Metz as they came in a thousand at a time, was nothing," an *etappen-commandant* once said to me, "compared to the worry of having to attend to the little unforeseen wants of men arrived late or gone astray who had to be sent on to their regiments, and men fallen sick who were unable to continue their journey." Everything had been prepared for, say, one thousand men; but the arrival of one thousand and fifty put everything out of order.

At the beginning of the campaign the work of the *etappen-commandants* was comparatively easy, or at least simple. They were overworked; but all

they had to do was to forward convoys in one direction, and through their own country towards the frontier. At first the return trains were empty; then they came back full of wounded men; then with wounded in some carriages, prisoners in others, and in such numbers that altogether the railways may be said to have brought during the war almost as many men into Germany as they took out of it.

The first I saw of the war was a train full of wounded soldiers at Saarburg, on the Trèves and Saarbrücken line. As I walked into the station the train passed out, followed by the sorrowful gaze of a long line of women, many of whom were weeping, because they had seen some friend lying among the wounded; while others were sobbing, because looking for a friend they had failed even among the wounded to find him. One of the divisions of the provincial corps had been in action almost on its own ground; indeed it was the 40th Regiment belonging to this corps (the 8th Rhenish), and mainly recruited in the Saar district, that, at the battle of the 6th, after immense losses, took the Spichenen heights; and it was the 9th Regiment of Hussars, with head-quarters at Trèves, that led the pursuit and captured the enemy's baggage. Of course the news of such incidents as these excites special interest, and enthusiasm in the localities where the regiments engaged have been recruited,

and where their depôt battalion or squadron still remains.

I had arrived at Saarburg directly from ultra Gallican Luxemburg, full of the belief general in those parts that the French had occupied Saarbrücken, and, advancing, were about to invest Saarlouis. Preparations had indeed been made for defending the place. The ditches had been filled, and the country around inundated.

At Saarlouis, a late cavalry officer and actual Johanniter, of moderate acquirements in English, left the train to speak to a friend who had been wounded, and was waiting to get on to Trèves.

“My friend was first blessed” [blessé] “in the eye, and now he is shot in the leg,” he said, on his return; “but he has killed many men, and when his wounds are repaired he begins again.”

This pleasing delusion that they have killed many men, when all they have done has been to fire many shots is, I believe, very general with soldiers. The fact, however, is, that with each new improvement in fire-arms, the number of shots fired to each man hit becomes greater. In primitive times, when men fought hand to hand, every blow told; then arrows were introduced, and, fired from afar, proved less fatal, blow for blow, than clubs used at close quarters; and to jump to modern times, the infantry of the present day, with chassepôts and needle guns,

do not kill so many men with the same number of shots as the infantry of the last century with the old-fashioned musket. With the old musket it was calculated that one bullet in sixty was effective. With the needle gun the German papers say that in the last war one shot in 250 killed or wounded. The explanation of this seeming anomaly is, I suppose, that as arms become more perfect, troops open fire at a greater distance, and make a greater use of entrenchments and all sorts of cover, natural and artificial.

At the beginning of the late war the French counted much on the superiority of their arms; and one object of the highly demonstrative but practically ineffective attack made at Saarbrücken, on the 2nd of August, seemed to be to inspire the French army and France generally with confidence in the mitrailleuse. The *Charivari* had already published an engraving in which a soldier, turning the handle of a mitrailleuse, was represented as sweeping the field of battle with his murderous machine, and looking in vain, after a few minutes' grinding, for one remaining enemy. Spectators on the French side before Saarbrücken fancied that, through the smoke, they had really seen some such effect as this. The mitrailleuse at Saarbrücken, like the chassépôt at Mentana, "did wonders"—in the columns of the French papers; and one corre-

spondent narrated, not without sadness, how a whole "battalion" had disappeared when the fire of a mitrailleuse was turned upon it.

In fact, a company of the 40th Regiment, finding itself thus maltreated, did disappear beneath a bridge, but actively, not passively, and with a view to cover.





CHAPTER IV.

ENTRY INTO THE INVADED COUNTRY.

THE passage of the frontier, between Saarbruck and Forbach, on the 8th of August, was a noteworthy but by no means a noisy affair ; indeed, apart from the call to arms, neither drum nor bugle, nor any sort of musical instrument, was heard, as hussars in light blue and red, dragoons of all colours, cuirassiers with steel glistening over tunics of white cloth, lancers with banners furled, in token, not of having struck, but of an intention to strike, cavalry of all kinds, passed from the main street up the streets at right angles to it, gained the heights on and before which the recent battles had been fought, and made for Forbach.

The infantry, marching strongly and steadily forward in long snake-like columns, looked far better than any one would have imagined who knew the

Prussian private from his deportment as an individual, and in time of peace alone. A Prussian soldier, walking with a perhaps military, but certainly stiff and awkward gait, covered with a helmet evidently not made to measure, looks something like a Roman in a burlesque. But see Prussian infantry moving in masses, or, better still, drawn up in order of battle, and there is nothing comic in their appearance, while there is, probably, much that is Roman.

When two modern nations engage in a great war, it is customary to compare them to two ancient nations in the same predicament. Napoleon I. likened France at war with England to Rome at war with Carthage. The Germans besieging Paris reminded Professor Mömmsen of the virtuous Goths besieging dissolute Rome. The Germans victorious over the French, are to Professor Curtius Greeks victorious over Persians. It would suit neither French nor Germans to compare France and Germany to Greece and Rome, for that would be to recognise military and methodical superiority on the one side, artistic superiority on the other, and each combatant considers itself the superior of the other in all respects. The French, however, have certainly some of the characteristic qualities and defects of the Greeks; and not only do the Prussians possess Roman virtues, but Prussia, from her

origin, has nourished Roman aspirations. When the Prussians reproach the French with their want of method, the French might reply to them that in their methodical training the Prussians resemble the youths of Rome, "learning by long calculations to subdivide an *as* into a hundred parts." But figures, on the other hand, according to a German saying, "govern the world;" and to rule the nations is the goal of Prussian ambition, as proclaimed in the famous Virgilian lines, adopted as the motto of the Prussian State, and inscribed in letters of gold over the principal gate of the old capital, where I remember reading them nearly a dozen years ago, wondering at the time how a second-rate power could venture to entertain such ideas.

To return from Königsberg to Saarbrücken, and from 1862 to 1870, the Roman or Prussian infantry have gone on, and artillery ammunition-waggons, provisions carried in carts, and live self-transporting provisions in the shape of oxen, are following. Then more troops; then, after the destructive columns, the sanitary columns, and, finally, what may be called the spiritual columns. Infantry to perforate the foe, artillery to smash him, cavalry to lacerate him, and at the same time, knights hospitallers, bearing the red-and-white cross of neutrality, to drag him from the field of

death ; sisters of mercy to tend him, doctors to cure him, or, if it be too late for that, priests to save his soul.

The sanitary and spiritual columns gave almost a religious aspect to the warlike procession, which, as it moved away over the hills, looked here and there, when the red crosses of the sick-bearers, and the black-and-white dresses of the sisters of mercy, struck the eye, more like a procession of pilgrims approaching a holy shrine than of soldiers invading a hostile country.

Besides the sisters in black and white, there was a corps of sisters who wore dark, slate-coloured dresses and white hoods with butterfly wings, and, like the krankenträger, displayed round the left arm the red cross on a white ground. All the sisters marched on foot, each little company preceded by a priest or pastor. When the troops had fairly quitted the town and reached the hills outside, they were joined by other troops from neighbouring encampments, as, in an unbroken line, the main body made its way towards Forbach. Parties of cavalry kept the heights on the left, and patrolled the forests on the right ; the krankenträger went across the hills, where numbers of the dead were still lying, and whence the last of the wounded had only that morning been removed.

The heights commanding the town, which the

French had occupied for some days after the affair of the 2nd, looked now like the scene of a recent picnic. Here a bottle, there a piece of paper, which might have enveloped sandwiches or the *butter-brod* of the country; there the remains of a wood fire; there the lid of a tin pot; then more remains of wood fires, more lids of tin pots, and broken bottles innumerable—the sort of *débris* that one sees on a racecourse the day after the race, an idea which is again suggested by a number of sticks still remaining in the ground at a distance of fifty or sixty yards ahead on the way to the Spicheren heights.

These are not sticks, however, they are needle-guns; and approaching them one passes from false indications of peace to true indications of war. Where these five needle-guns are planted in the earth (with bayonets for roots) five Prussian soldiers have fallen. The men are buried; but their arms, for this day at least, are to be left here. A few yards ahead there are three more of these needle-plants; then nine, then a dozen; then close to a ridge, where the Prussian assailants had thought they would find cover, but failed to do so, some twenty or thirty. The military geology of the Spicheren heights can be clearly understood. After the first needle-gun region, the region of Prussian knapsacks and accoutrements; then the region of the Prussian dead, whom the “dead-buriers,” under

the direction of the "sick-bearers," have not yet been able to remove ; then the first line of French dead, lying thick behind the natural and artificial entrenchments which, to the last moment, protected them as they shot down, or drove back regiment after regiment of the advancing, rising Prussians ; then Prussians and French lying mingled together on the summit of the mount ; then more French than Prussians ; then French alone. As on war maps the position of the armies is indicated by different-coloured flags, so on the field of battle, the position of regiments and portions of regiments is shown by the different-coloured uniforms of the slain.

The frontier line passed through the battle-field, and the first house the troops came to on the other side was a *type* of ruin. It had received a crushing blow on the roof, it was shot-marked all over, it had had its windows knocked in, and one of its sides had been terribly battered. The first occupied house in the first occupied district was not worth occupying ; and the disconsolate Frenchwoman to whom it belonged sat on the doorstep of her dilapidated inn, the image of desolation.

At Forbach, the first small town, all the shops were shut, most of the cafés and hotels had been converted into hospitals and there were no French, except prisoners under escort, to be seen in the streets. The behaviour of the Prussians in such

inns and hotels as were still kept open, was studiously courteous; but already a French peasant was said to have fired at a Prussian soldier; and a proclamation, signed by General Zastrow, was to be seen on the walls, warning the inhabitants of the penalty with which such offences, and all offences of a lesser degree, but of the same kind, would be visited. By its side was the celebrated proclamation from the King of Prussia, in which his Majesty announced to the invaded population that he made war upon "the French troops, and not upon peaceable citizens."

This historical document—so often misquoted—ran literally as follows:—

"We, William, King of Prussia, make known the following to all the inhabitants of the French territories occupied by the German armies:—

"The Emperor Napoleon having attacked by land and by sea the German nation, which desired and desires to live in peace with the French people, I have taken the command of the German armies, and have been led by military events to pass the frontiers of France. I make war upon French soldiers, not upon French citizens. The latter will therefore continue to enjoy entire security for their persons and property, so long as they do not themselves deprive me by hostile enterprises against the

German troops of the right of granting them my protection.

“The generals commanding the different corps will determine by special dispositions, which will be made known to the public, the measures to be taken against communes or persons putting themselves in contradiction with the usages of war. They will regulate in the same manner all that relates to the requisitions which may be thought necessary for the wants of the troops, and they will fix the rate of exchange for German and French money, in order to facilitate individual transactions between the troops and the inhabitants.

“WILLIAM.”

The invasion of Lorraine followed by only two days that of Alsace, into which the army of the Crown Prince had made forcible entry, through Weissenburg, on the 4th of August. A week afterwards, when Marshal Bazaine's army still stood between the Prussians and Metz, and when General von Werder had, as yet, scarcely begun to invest Strasburg, Alsace and Lorraine were separated from the rest of France, and placed definitively under a German administration. They were not quite conquered ; but they were already annexed.

On the 14th of August, Count Bismarck-Bohlen was appointed Governor-General of Alsace, and

Count Bonin of Lorraine. On the 26th, President von Kühlwetter was appointed Civil Commissary of Alsace, and the Marquis de Villers of Lorraine. On the 30th, Counts Luxburgh and Tauffkirchen commenced their functions as Prefects, the former of Alsace, the latter of Lorraine. On the 4th of September, Dr. Harless, Director of the State Archives at Düsseldorf, and Assistant-Director Dr. Pfannenschmid, were sent by order of the Director of the Prussian Archives, Dr. Max-Duncker, to Nancy, in order to examine the archives first of Lorraine and afterwards of Alsace. Finally, on the 8th of October, ten days after the fall of Strasbourg, the seat of the general government of Alsace, was established in that city.

The fact, too, may be here noted that, without waiting for the result of the battles about to be fought near Metz, the Prussians—or rather the Saxon railway engineer company of the 4th army—commenced, on the 12th of August, the railway, “turning” Metz, by a line from Remilly to Pont-à-Mousson; and that, on the 19th of August, Herr Stephan, General Director of the Post-Office, arrived to superintend the postal arrangements in the conquered provinces; under which the inhabitants were enabled to send post-cards and open letters, treating briefly of private and personal matters, to French prisoners in Germany, and from town to town in the occupied territory.

Another important object, with which Herr Stephan is said to have arrived in the occupied provinces, was to verify the accounts of the French postmasters, and to see that the cash in hand, which, as government money fell at once to the invaders, corresponded to the entries in the books.

Thus the Prussians took not only military, but administrative, possession of all Alsace and more of Lorraine than they meant to keep, immediately after the battles of Wörth and Spicheren.





CHAPTER V.

AN OCCUPIED TOWN.

DURING the Prussian manœuvres of each autumn, one or more army corps invade and occupy a province which really belongs to some other army corps ; and thus, in time of peace, the Prussians study, not only the main business of war, which undoubtedly is fighting, but also that very important branch of the art which consists in finding convenient quarters and plentiful supplies. In Prussia, every householder is obliged to keep a certificated register of the number of men his house will hold in time of peace, and the number during war—that is to say, under pressure ; and though they cannot force their neighbours to imitate them in this respect, the Prussians possess lists of the quartering accommodation afforded, not indeed by every house, but by every town in the countries bordering on their own.

All the Prussians, then, had to do on entering French villages and towns, was to quarter themselves on the inhabitants, as they are in the habit of doing in their own country ; writing in chalk on the door of each house, the number of soldiers provided for within. The houses of Prussian villages during the marching season are marked in a similar manner.

But there was this important difference in regard to supplies. Requisitions issued by the Germans in their own country during the autumn campaigns, are addressed to the local authorities, who pay those executing the requisitions, and get repaid out of the state exchequer. In France also (when there was time and opportunity for doing things in an orderly manner), the requisitions were addressed to the mayor, and by him given out to private individuals ; then it was for the person executing the requisitions to obtain payment from the mayor, who generally did pay in whole or in part out of the local funds, looking, on behalf of his commune, to the state for future indemnification.

An idea somehow got abroad when the Germans first entered France, that it was they who were, on the conclusion of peace, to redeem the requisition papers. This supposition may have had its origin in the fact, that during the invasion of 1792, the requisitions issued by the Duke of Brunswick's

army were made out in the name of Louis the Sixteenth, and not, as during the invasion of 1870, in that of the German commanders.* The requisition papers of 1870 served, like those of 1814 and 1815, to show (in the absence of receipts, which in small transactions were not invariably given) precisely what the persons executing them had been "required" to supply.

Requisitions were issued for every imaginable thing, in great quantities and small. Horses, oxen, sheep, were taken by requisition; and I have seen a requisition paper (dishonoured) for six eggs. Requisitions were often made out for coffins, and a boot-jack is said to have been somewhere procured by the same simple means. Horse shoes were constantly the object of requisitions; indeed, along the great lines of march the blacksmiths were everywhere impressed into the Prussian service.

In the time of Frederick the Great, the Prussian soldier on a campaign received two pounds of bread a day, and two pounds of meat a week, "which," says Frederick, "the poor soldier well deserves for his troubles and fatigues."† If those were his full deserts then, he gets more than his deserts now; for proclamations exhibited in all the occupied towns announced that soldiers quartered upon

* Göthe's "Campaign of France."

† Frederick the Great's "Instructions aux Officiers," etc.

inhabitants were to receive daily "750 grammes of bread, 500 grammes of meat,* 250 grammes of bacon, 30 grammes of coffee, 60 grammes of tobacco or 5 cigars, half a litre of wine or a litre of beer or one tenth part of a litre of brandy. Individuals, especially in the country, were often called upon in a direct manner, to furnish what was wanted; but requisitions for supplies on a large scale, whether of food, wine, horses, carts, or no matter what, were addressed to the authorities, who summoned the inhabitants, and distributed the order among them.

The only officers who possessed the right of issuing requisitions, were generals and commanders of detached corps; and the rule was, that when objects "requisitioned" were supplied, receipts should be given. Numerous requisitions were no doubt executed in pure loss; while, on the other hand, some ingenious Frenchmen are said to have obtained payment from the authorities, not only on account of requisition papers, but also for the receipts corresponding to them. For the requisition system, to have worked at its best, the French ought to have known beforehand that they were going to be invaded, and under what conditions. The Prussians certainly announced, in many of the towns they entered, that receipts would be given;

* 500 grammes = 1 lb. 1½ oz. avoirdupois.

and they made a general announcement to that effect on crossing the frontier. But in country places this formality could not always be gone through; and numbers of unfortunate peasants, on receiving requisitions, contented themselves with executing them, never dreaming that they would, under any circumstances, receive payment for their produce and their cattle.

The billeting arrangements were, under the direction of the mayor, based on the amount of taxes paid by each householder. The houses of fugitives were, justly, the first to be filled; and the mayors were, often unjustly, accused of sparing their friends and overwhelming their enemies with lodgers. In some places the inhabitants, unless they were without means, boarded the Prussian soldiers absolutely at their own expense. In others they sent in their accounts to the mairie; so that the householder, with twenty men to support, paid, theoretically, no more (except that his future taxes would be proportionately higher) than the householder who had only to feed one or two.

In country houses where, the ordinary resources having been exhausted, it was difficult to get provisions, the Prussians often furnished their own supplies—supplies, that is to say, which had become their own by virtue of requisition. To attract supplies, they were sometimes obliged to offer

money; and they received supplies—above all, oxen and corn—from Germany. It has been said that they might have furnished their commissariat entirely from their own country; but, even had they desired to do so, they would certainly have found it impossible. Railway conveyance is a very slow process in war-time; and numbers of oxen died on the journey; while the corn, on the other hand, often came in alive, and might be seen sprouting through the sacks.

At hotels, where, perhaps, the entire staff of an army corps would be quartered, the bill for food and wine (lodging, both in hotels and in private houses, was counted as nothing) went to the mayor. At an hotel in one of the largest cities occupied, the bill sent in daily to the mairie amounted on the average to 2000 francs. The hotel-keeper told me that, from time to time, he received sums of money on account. The mayor in the meanwhile taxed his charges, allowing (for example) seven francs for champagne when the bill said ten. Officers not officially quartered at hotels, but going there of their own free will to breakfast or dine paid for what they ordered in the usual manner; and probably, on the whole, the hotel-keepers were not great losers by the invasion.

If, as sometimes happened, soldiers were quartered on indigent persons, the mairie paid for the

rations at the optional rate fixed by the Prussians, of two francs a day per man.

It is held that invaders are entitled to claim from the invaded lodging, food and drink, fuel, clothing, and carriage.* Prussian soldiers, however, always start for a campaign in new clothes, which are cheap (the Prussian uniform is the cheapest in all Europe) but strong; and though they requisitioned a considerable quantity of cloth at Elbœuf, Louviers, and other manufacturing towns in Normandy, I do not think the enemy was called upon, as a rule, to dress them. Boots, however, were requisitioned in large numbers wherever they could be obtained. So also, but less numerously, were socks;† and it was a common practice, late in the campaign, to order a general horse-show on entering a new town. Then suitable animals were selected, and requisition papers stating their value, as estimated by Prussian officers appointed for that duty, given in their stead.

Peasants with their carts, some with one, some with two horses, according to the terms of the requisition, had to fetch and carry provisions, and

* Bluntschli.

† General Fridherbe, in his "Campagne de l'Armée du Nord," is much struck by the solicitude shown by General Von Göben, in a cited "Order of the Day," on the subject of socks for his soldiers.

convey whatever had to be conveyed from point to point; and long files of country carts might be seen early every morning in the occupied towns, waiting for orders from head-quarters. The drivers, while actively employed, received food from the Prussians, and charged their day's work to the mairie, which was expected to make good all losses suffered through the execution of requisitions.

But even in an invasion conducted with such uniform success as that which attended the last invasion of France by the Prussians, it is not always possible to be methodical; and I believe my unsystematic account of the manner in which the invaders carried on their operations with a view to board and lodging, is already more systematic than were the operations themselves. If troops entered a village or town late in the evening, they did not always knock up the mayor, but entered the first houses they found vacant, or not vacant. Sometimes, when there was no time to go to the mairie, and troops came crowding into a town in large masses—though the rule, however, was to halt them outside until all the billeting arrangements had been completed—the officers counted the windows of the houses, and by the number of windows regulated the number of lodgers.

Often, too, when food was urgently wanted, no time could be allowed for formalities; and many a

gratuitously served meal was eaten for which no requisition paper was given at all. Still, the art of living on the invaded country was practised as much as possible on fixed principles; and, in theory, nothing was taken for which a receipt, in some shape, was not given. After a time, inhabitants who had witnessed the passage through their town of more than one body of troops, got to understand perfectly the terms on which they were bound to receive them. They would sometimes decline to execute requisitions of an informal character, and said, if soldiers entered the houses without billeting orders, "Why don't they go to the mairie for their tickets?"

In the country, however, peasants who had informal requisitions presented to them, were often afraid to complain. "You ought to go to the officer in command," I have more than once heard it suggested in such cases.

"What is the use?" was the invariable reply. "The officer who is here to-day may go away to-morrow, and if any one gets into trouble through us, it is we who shall suffer for it in the end."

One of the sharpest things I heard of in the way of requisitions, was told me at Aumale, near Amiens, where a local butcher had, first, an ox taken from him by requisition out of a field in which it was grazing; secondly, was "required"

to kill the ox—his own ox, as he still persisted in calling it; and, thirdly, was called on in a friendly but business-like way, to say what he would give for the horns and skin, which were ultimately knocked down to him for the nominal sum of five francs.

Similarly, on a more heroic scale, General von Göben, in temporary occupation of Dieppe, seized the tobacco factory, which, as a government building, was lawful "prize of war,"* and, not being able to raise money on it by any other means, threatened to burn it down unless the municipality bought it back for 75,000 francs. Thus the Prussians received 75,000 francs from Dieppe, while still ranking Dieppe among the towns which had not yet been called upon to pay a regular war contribution.

I must not forget to mention one very remarkable practice which, until the last Prussian invasion of France, had never been heard of in the history of invasions. In important towns where the occupation was complete, and likely to last some time, the invaders requisitioned printing-offices, type, printing presses, and the services of printers and compositors. The printing-office of the principal local journal was militarily occupied, and the director of the establishment ordered to set up a

*Not, however, by the American Instructions (art. 31).

newspaper, for which "copy" was supplied by official journalists in the service of the invaders.

As a newspaper is nothing without readers, they, or at least subscribers, were also "requisitioned." Thus every café, every public office still remaining open, had to take one or more copies. "Fas est et ab hoste doceri" might have been the motto of these journals, in which the French were constantly reminded of their national failings, of the hopelessness of the contest in which they were engaged, and so on. To talk politics to a man when he is down is a sin against the human spirit, and some of the preachings administered to the French through Prusso-French journals, in which the writers argued at ease, knowing well that no one could answer them, were highly grotesque.

One of the favourite subjects of satire in this journalism by requisition was the title of "capital of civilization" given to Paris—a title not invented by the French, but by the Germans themselves. It was, at least, no Frenchman who wrote of that city—"Paris is not simply the capital of France, but of the whole civilized world, and the rendezvous of its intellectual notabilities. Assembled here is all that is great by love or hatred, by feeling or thought, by knowledge or power, by happiness or unhappiness, by the future or by the past."*

* Heinrich Heine's "Sämmtliche Werke, achter Band (Französische Zustände)," p. 101.

While disparaging everything French, these journals, by a curious and somewhat bewildering fiction, were put forward as the work of Frenchmen; and one had sometimes to read a passage twice before understanding that "our" troops (who had just been ignominiously defeated) were the troops of France, and that the "enemy" (who had once more gained a glorious victory) was the army of Germany. The main purpose, however, for which journals, written in French for French readers by Prussians at war with France, were established was not only reasonable but laudable. They were the official mediums for communicating to the inhabitants of the occupied towns the rules and regulations under which the town was governed, together with cautions, warnings, list of penalties, and decrees of all kinds.

Besides "requiring" lodging, food, and drink, clothing, carriage, and the printing of newspapers, the Prussians levied contributions in money. On what political or military principle these sums were raised, or according to what scale, I cannot say; except indeed that towns offering resistance or throwing obstacles in the way of the invaders were heavily fined, while peaceful and well-behaved towns which the invaders wished to reward, or at least to spare, were not called upon to make any

money payments. Dieppe (apart from the redemption money paid for the confiscated tobacco manufactory) was fined £2000 for a few shots fired from the deck of a French steamer at some Prussian dragoons riding along the beach. Rouen, on the other hand, was held free from money contributions of all kinds until the armistice, when they were levied everywhere. Fortified towns, too, which had been severely bombarded, were, in some cases at least, released from the payment of contributions; for instance (to keep within the sphere of my own experience) Strasburg, out of commiseration for its sufferings; and Peronne, probably from the same motive, but ostensibly "as a mark of respect for the courage of its defenders."

According to some authorities, contributions are levied by way of commutation, in lieu of the right to plunder; but the right or custom of plundering having been abandoned, except in specific cases as a punishment, no commutation of that "right" can well be recognised. The true theory, I fancy, is that contributions are taken in lieu of taxes no longer payable to the invaded government; and it is perhaps held that the invaded may be justly called upon to furnish pay for the invader's troops.

Bluntschli strongly condemns the levying of contributions, though the practice is expressly recog-

nized by the American Articles,* which he for the most part adopts.

One very certain effect of the contribution system is to crush the occupied portion of the country, and make its inhabitants long for peace. But the impoverishment of Chalons and Nancy did not help to bring Bordeaux to terms; and war is such a crushing misfortune in itself that the sufferings it inevitably causes need scarcely be increased by the imposition of arbitrary fines.

In occupied towns officials receive no salaries, professional men no fees. The law courts are closed. Holders of house property can get no rent. Holders of land can neither get rent, nor can they cultivate the soil, nor sell their crops. The State Funds pay no dividends, or if they do, all communication between occupied and unoccupied districts being broken off, the dividends cannot be touched. Railway dividends are equally intangible, and perhaps the line on which the shareholder has especially counted is in the hand of the enemy. Banks will make no advances—bankers, indeed like nearly all persons with money in hand, having disappeared.

On the other hand, a few journeymen and doers of odd jobs may be actual gainers by the invasion.

* American Instructions (art. 37).

At Metz, soon after the capitulation, the Prussian authorities offered five francs a day to working bakers, who in ordinary times gained two francs a day only. A porter received five francs, a stableman five francs. These, however, were exceptional cases, and on the working-classes generally foreign invasion has an absolutely pauperising effect.

In a commercial city all business but that of petty trade is brought to a standstill. In a manufacturing city all factories are of necessity shut up. Whole classes of the population are deprived of the means of living, and men and women ordinarily in the receipt of good wages are reduced to beggary, and may be seen asking for alms.

In some French towns, where in particular branches of trade (glove-making, lace-making, and so on) much female labour is employed, numbers of young girls were turned loose upon the streets. In the great manufacturing town of Rouen, the streets were full all day of workmen without work, who had to be supported at the public cost. Imagine Manchester during the cotton famine, entirely cut off from the rest of England, and some idea will be formed of the sufferings of a city like Rouen, occupied by a foreign army. Rouen, as before said, was for some time spared in the matter of contributions, and at Rouen, Rheims, and elsewhere the Prussians did their best to get the factories

re-opened. They offered facilities for the arrival of cotton and coal, and at Rheims threatened to take the factories into their own hands if the proprietors would not carry them on. But they could not tell the manufacturers what to do with their goods after producing them; and in that condition of things it was as illogical as it was cruel to strike Rheims, among so many other towns, with a money contribution. Requisitions, with such immense armies as Prussia moves, are indispensable, and the levying of contributions is often, no doubt, a convenient means of raising ready money for the purchase of those additional supplies which, even in the most perfectly organized invasions, *must* be paid for, or they would often not be forthcoming. I believe, all the same, and as a general rule, nothing would be easier than to dispense, until the signing of peace, with money contributions.

To facilitate regular purchases in the occupied towns, tables of exchange were published, declaring the currency value at which German money was to be received. The Prussians, with perfect fairness, counted eight silber-groschen as the equivalent of a franc, and 3 fr. 75 cent. as the equivalent of a thaler. The shopkeepers in the occupied French towns charged what they pleased for their goods, but at some of the hotels—notably those of Versailles—an arrangement was made with the proprietor by

which he engaged to supply Prussian officers with breakfast at from two to three francs a head, and dinner at from three to four francs a head, according to the character of the hotel. The printed conditions, including a stipulated number of dishes, were exhibited in the public dining-room; and extra dishes and extra wines (anything, that is to say, beyond the regulation half-bottle of ordinaire), had to be paid for according to the list of prices in the carte.

During the first few days of occupation the shops usually remained closed, and in some of the hotels and cafés the plate seemed to have entirely disappeared. But after a time, when it was seen that no such thing as pillage need be apprehended, the shops reopened, and the forks and spoons came back. In towns which had been occupied some days, or perhaps I should say some weeks, a closed shop was often the exception, especially in the principal streets, where officers, with money in their pockets, chiefly congregated.

Soldiers, then, are billeted on the inhabitants, and have to be fed; the peasants of the neighbourhood are impressed as drivers, and, if necessary, as grave-diggers; requisitions are issued; contributions are levied; the invaders' money is made legally current, and, at the same time, regulations

as to the general conduct of the inhabitants are published in the form of proclamations.

They must give up their arms. They must, at a certain hour, put out their lights; in case of disturbance at night they must show lights in all their windows. They must hold no communication with "the enemy," or with any person in the unoccupied part of the country. They must not act voluntarily as guides to the enemy. If called upon to act as guides to the occupying troops, they will mislead them at their peril. If they must not join the hostile army, still less must they form bands on their own account. They must not cut the telegraph, or injure the railway; and the penalty for disobedience in every case is death. If the railway or telegraph is injured, and the offender cannot be discovered, a fine is imposed on the town, or commune; and if the fine, or the usual money contribution, be not forthcoming, hostages are taken and detained until it is paid.

Let the townspeople, however, remain tranquil; let all in their neighbourhood remain tranquil; let them furnish the requisitions demanded from them, and help the local authorities to pay the money contribution; and their lives and persons will be safe, and their property protected.

Nothing is sadder than the position of a conquered population. Every minute of their life is

full of the most bitter humiliation; but, at the same time, those who maintain that the German invasion was not conducted in a more humane spirit, and, as a matter of fact, in a more humane manner than all previous invasions of the same vast character, show that they have not studied the history of previous invasions, nor the general laws and customs of invaders.





CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY THROUGH AN OCCUPIED DISTRICT.

HAVING given a general account of the system of occupation, I will now describe my experiences during a journey made towards the end of August, 1870, from the neighbourhood of Metz to the neighbourhood of Sedan, through occupied and newly invaded territory. The district from which I started was fully occupied, not to say annexed; and, already, one or two innkeepers by the wayside were mean enough to display the black-and-white flag of Prussia. But innkeepers, it may be said, are cosmopolitan; and these newly-made Prussians had, of course, a tri-colour concealed somewhere in case of a reverse.

At a village unknown to fame I stopped to dine, or, at least, to eat. The inn, from which the sign had been carefully removed (good wine needs no

bush when invading troops are passing) was by its personnel singularly well adapted to the existing situation, the innkeeper being a Frenchman, the innkeeper's wife a Prussian. Between them they seemed to have got on comparatively well. They began by saying that they had been plundered of everything; but it soon appeared that this statement was exaggerated, and at the sight of money, and, above all, French money, the innkeeper's instincts asserted themselves. The husband, perhaps out of compliment to his wife, declared himself the uncompromising enemy of all Germans. They would be caught in a trap, he said, before long. General Frossard, who was *très malin*, had, in the first place, drawn them away from Saarbrück into France; and Marshal Bazaine, who was one of the greatest tacticians of modern times, had succeeded, notwithstanding the superior force opposed to him, in getting his troops into Metz, where they would be quite at home and would have a good time of it, while the foolish Prussians would be encamped outside in the wet and cold. However, when they had been repulsed, I had only to remember his house; and whatever he might have to say to the Prussians, the Russians, the Hungarians, and all the rest of them, he would take care that nothing happened to me. The enemy, he declared, had taken all the live stock they could find. He could

give me no milk, because there were no longer any cows. He should be unable to plough his land, because he had no horses. There was not a horse in the village, so that there could be no ploughing, no sowing, no harvest next year; nothing but famine. As for the bits of paper given in acknowledgment of the things taken—the “requisitions,” as they were called—he looked upon them as worthless. At all events, no money could be raised upon them; and numbers of poor people would be ruined before the time of redemption arrived. He considered that it would have been better policy on the part of the French not to have allowed the Prussians to come into France at all. He, for his part, had done his best to prevent them, not personally, but through a substitute, whom he had bought to replace his son, now a tradesman in Paris. The substitute, who had cost him 2,400 francs, had performed wonders on the field of battle, and at Forbach had been badly wounded.

At Faulquemont, where I proposed to pass the night, every inn was crowded with troops. I succeeded, however, at the railway hotel in getting some bread and wine for myself, some bread for my horse (all the oats and hay in the place had been seized by the troops), and permission to sleep in the dining-room on chairs. Here the people of

the house had been thoroughly plundered. The officers, they said, had behaved well, but the soldiers had cleared out all the cupboards, closets, and chests of drawers in the rooms they had occupied. "Not to speak of hams, tongues, wine, and spirits," said the landlady, "they have stolen my linen, my handkerchiefs, and, worst of all, my wedding shawl." She added, however, that the colonel commanding the regiment to which the culprits belonged had done his best to discover them, and had told her that if she could point them out he would punish them severely and make them restore as much as possible of what they had stolen. But one soldier is so much like another, and there are so many soldiers quartered every day in the same house, that to identify the offenders was impossible. At this inn the great complaint was quite as much of the trouble given as of the things taken. The officers, in fact, the night I spent there, did not go to bed until two in the morning, and the soldiers were up and about three hours afterwards. For breakfast nothing could be had but black coffee and bread. Of milk, seeing that the cows had been captured, it was impossible to get a drop. However, some officers who had been sleeping in the railway carriages at the neighbouring station dropped in about seven, and by means of requisitions obtained a little meat and a few

eggs from the village. The innkeeper had nothing whatever to offer—even his bread and his coffee were now gone. His inn, apparently a desirable place to put up at when it is maintained on a peace footing, had degenerated into a sort of tavern, where people bringing their own food could get it cooked. “Three eggs for the captain; he likes them hard,” cried an infantry soldier, coming into the kitchen and sternly depositing them on a dresser. “The Colonel sends this meat,” said a Hussar, exhibiting some kind of flesh, which he carried in his hand, “and wishes for it as soon as it is cooked.” “What meat is it?” asked the cook. “*Das weiss ich nicht, Madame,*” answered the Hussar. On examination it was declared to be a slice of cow, and, being assimilated to beefsteak, was treated accordingly.

From Faulquemont I went to Remilly, in the neighbourhood of Metz, and in close proximity to the operations then being carried on against that city. At Remilly all the inns and all the inn stables were occupied; but horses could be taken out and fed in the market-place, and a hospitable welcome was given to travellers at the houses reserved for the Sisters of Mercy, who mercifully treated me to half a pint of broth, hot, with salt, in a tumbler. No wounded had yet reached them; and in the fulness of their benevolence they would not allow me to

plead that, being in a sound condition of body, I had no right even to taste the preparation which they insisted on my swallowing.

The road from Remilly to Pont-à-Mousson was marked by the newly-constructed Prussian telegraph. Proceeding along this road I met the waggons of the 8th Army Corps going back empty, and several hundred country carts. Each of the carts—army-waggons and peasant-carts alike—bore the name of the corps to which it belonged, and the number of the driver. The driver also carried a numbered badge in his hat, corresponding to the number inscribed on the cart. The private carts were the property of the French peasants in charge of them; and it was the fact, no doubt, of French peasants having been impressed for drivers' service in the Prussian army that gave rise to the report circulated in the French papers of their having been forced to join the Prussian army—a monstrously absurd fiction which, nevertheless, like many absurd fictions, was not without some species of foundation. In the fields by the side of the road more peasants were working, under the direction of military engineers, at the railway which afterwards connected Remilly with Pont-à-Mousson. At the cross-road where the sign-post marked 18 kilometres to Metz, 21 kilometres to Pont-à-Mousson, several hundred men were doing navi-

gators' work; and the trees were cut down all along the road for sleepers.

The Prussians, or rather the Saxons, had brought their own rails, and a survey was said to have been made privately three years before, immediately after the settlement of the Luxemburg question, which, as the Prussians, equally with the French, understood, was not a settlement of the general question between France and Prussia. The road between Remilly and Pont-à-Mousson was lined with orchards, and towards Pont-à-Mousson with vineyards. Considering that the apples were ripe, it seemed marvellous that the orchards should have been respected as they had been. As to the grapes, which were well within reach, they were in reality "too green."

At Pont-à-Mousson, several of the hotel-keepers had taken to flight. At the Hôtel de France, which was still open, and still applied to the ordinary purposes of an hotel, the landlady had nothing, literally nothing, to offer. Then, relenting, she thought she had a piece of German sausage left; and the landlady's daughter, in a moment of forgetfulness, revealed the fact that there were some pigs' feet in the larder. Another guest had extorted the promise of an egg, and a few minutes afterwards a waiter or waitress entered a dining-room crowded with hungry visitors, and called out, "Which is the

gentleman who was promised the egg, which is the gentleman who was promised the pigs' feet, and which is the gentleman who was promised the slice of German sausage?" I asserted that the two latter gentlemen were but one, and though not readily believed, triumphed in the end.

A proclamation on the walls of Pont-à-Mousson, issued the moment possession was taken, promised security to the inhabitants on the following conditions:—1. All arms to be given up at the Mairie within two hours, each arm labelled with the name of the owner, so that it might be restored him at some future period. It was added that after the expiration of two hours patrols would visit every house, when, if arms were discovered, the occupier would be treated "with all the severity of military law." 2. No groups to be formed in the streets. 3. Shutters to be kept open, blinds drawn up. 4. The inhabitants to supply troops marching through the town with water. 5. No impediment to be offered to the advance of troops. "Any one offering impediments of any kind," concluded the proclamation, "will be at once taken and shot." It was not thought necessary to visit the houses; and it was, indeed, improbable, in the face of such a proclamation, that any arms would be retained. Most, however, of the population capable of bearing arms had disappeared before the arrival of the French,

and it may be presumed that they did not leave their arms behind.

Of the few shops which still remained open nearly all were devoted to the sale of articles of ornament or luxury—such things as officers would be likely to buy, and would not be likely to pay for with “requisitions.” You could purchase gloves, or pastry, or wine, or cigars; but the haberdashers’, tailors’, butchers’, bakers’, and ironmongers’ shops were all closed. The hairdressers, too, kept open, and one of them seemed to be doing rather a brisk business. A Westphalian infantry soldier came into the shop while I was there, and requested me quite gravely to say that he wished to have his hair curled. The Frenchman, who had just been telling me that all the German troops were savages, that they had stolen several boxes of cigars from a room in which he had put some of them to sleep (I can believe that of them), and that he thoroughly despised them, became positively frantic on hearing that the poor Westphalian wanted to have his hair curled. The Prussians had taken his curling irons, the Prussians had taken his charcoal, he protested. Besides, for a soldier on a campaign to think even of having his hair curled was insufferable, and he ended by declaring (in French) that for fifty centimes he would clip the Westphalian’s hair to the roots. Either because the fifty centimes were not

forthcoming, or for some other reason, this threat was not executed.

The doors of the closed houses and the walls of the open ones were all chalked with the number of officers, under-officers, soldiers, or horses allotted to each. On one door, beneath a magnificent painted inscription, setting forth that "Madame Bérot, midwife, receives boarders," the billeting officer had recklessly added, "seven men and thirteen horses."

At the Mairie two new proclamations had just appeared. One was from the mayor himself, who made mention of some "regrettable incident" which had occurred, and conjured his "dear fellow-citizens" to take care that such a thing did not occur again. "You hear me, you understand me," he continued. "Remember that by the usages of war no injury is done to peaceful populations, while violent and hostile populations are treated with the utmost rigour."

A proclamation from the Military Commandant warned all whom it might concern against interfering with the Prussian telegraphs, and imposed a fine of from 2,000 to 10,000 francs on all communes in which any sort of injury might be done to them, the fines to be apportioned among the landowners.

After passing the night at Pont-à-Mousson, I was awakened the next morning by a variety of sounds.

In the room next to mine the landlady's daughter was whispering on the piano, in the faintest possible pianissimo, the *Marseillaise*. In the court-yard just beneath my bedroom window, some thirty coachmen were disputing about the French equivalents for certain German words. "If you want bread," said one of them, who spoke like an oracle, say, '*Donnez moi pain ;*' if you want water, '*Donnez moi eau ;*' if you want meat, '*Donnez moi viande ;*' if you want wine, '*Donnez moi vin.*'"

"And if you want coffee?" asked one of the pupils.

"If you want coffee," replied the professor, "you say, '*Donnez moi café ;*' but as there is none even for the officers, you needn't trouble yourself; you won't get any."

I found at breakfast that the oracular coachman had spoken only too truly. There was no coffee for any one. "If we had known you were coming," said the attendant, in the style of a comedy *soubrette*, to an officer who was very urgent on the subject, "we would have laid in a stock. We will do so next time, for I suppose we shall see you again. Only send word beforehand, and I can answer for one thing—you will not find *me* here." To keep an hotel in an invaded city is doubtless not the most pleasant occupation in the world. The running to and fro is perpetual; everything is

turned upside down ; there is a general dearth of provisions, and four or five times a day absolute famine declares itself.

The hotel at Pont-à-Mousson was governed by whatever the feminine equivalent may be for a triumvirate. At the entrance to the kitchen, knitting stockings, sat a benevolent grandmother, who might almost have remembered the invasion of 1792. In the kitchen presided an amiable mother, whose memory probably dated from the revolution of 1830 ; and the dining-room was occasionally visited by a charming daughter, who certainly could not have recollected the *coup d'état* of 1851. The mother showed me a communication she had received from four Prussian officers, very young men, fresh from the cadet school, whom, looking upon them as motherless children, she had invited to tea the night before, and who, leaving too early in the morning to wish her good-bye, wrote her a most polite letter, thanking her for her hospitality, and expressing all sorts of kind wishes for her and her daughter's happiness.

At St. Mihiel, on the road from Pont-à-Mousson to Bar-le-Duc, a proclamation informed the inhabitants that in case of an alarm being given at night, a light must be shown in the window of every house, and that if this order was not complied with, "grave misfortunes might befall the town, and

especially those persons who set the order at defiance." Between Pont-à-Mousson and St. Mihiel I had met 600 or 700 French prisoners, for the most part in plain clothes, possibly *Francs-tireurs*, more probably *Gardes Mobiles*, who had not yet had time to get their uniforms. A notice exhibited on the walls of St. Mihiel, set forth that *Francs-tireurs* or other persons bearing arms, but not wearing uniforms, so as to distinguish them from the civil population, were, by the "Prussian laws of war," punishable with death. In the principal street of St. Mihiel I saw some more prisoners, in white blouses, strung together by the elbows, their rifles placed in a cart which followed them. Much indignation was expressed by the lookers-on at respectable young men, "some of them sons of landed proprietors and bankers," being treated like criminals. But the fact was the prisoners were being marched through a town under a very small escort, and they might possibly have escaped, or attempted to escape, if the precautions taken had been omitted.

"What a shame," said a Bavarian officer who was a spectator of the scene, "to employ such pretended soldiers at all. They can do no good in the field, and if we are to be attacked by peasants, or persons in the costume of peasants, we shall be unable to distinguish the offensive from the inoffensive part of the population, and the latter will suffer." In the

hotel a dark, sleepy, almond-eyed young lady, who resided in Algeria, and seemed to have become slightly Algerianized, was remarking that she had come to France on a visit of pleasure, and that the result had not been what she had expected. A few days before she had left Toul, in the immediate neighbourhood, to see some friends at St. Mihiel, and now Toul was invested, and she could not get back. It was scarcely a hardship, however, for this young lady not to be able to get back to Toul, for the place had already been once bombarded; and an attempt had even been made to take it by escalade.

Bar-le-Duc is remarkable for a great many things, but what chiefly struck me on entering the town was the proclamation of the mayor, issued, it would seem, immediately before the arrival of the Prussians, when their scouts were already in sight. "We are informed," it began, "that Prussian scouts are approaching. As our town is entirely open, it would be useless, and might even prove dangerous, to defend it." The citizens of Bar-le-Duc were accordingly exhorted to "close their ranks, and support a temporary misfortune with prudence, calmness, and manly resignation."

How they hated the Prussians and all who accompanied them! "The first who came behaved very well," said a member of what is called the

“gentler” sex, “and we were almost sorry when they went away. We told them that if by chance they came back wounded, we would attend to them and nurse them, and do anything for them. But as fresh bodies of troops arrive, they become worse and worse, and now if they are driven back, and if any of them want to come in here, we will kick them out like dogs, wounded or not.”

The sentiments expressed by this amiable young person may not have been those of all her fellow-citizens, but I think she only uttered what others thought and felt. The citizens of Bar-le-Duc seemed “good haters,” and nothing but a sense of powerlessness could have prevented them from doing the deadliest injury to the foe. They were, no doubt, right in saying that the invaders from mild had become harsh. The explanation of that is very simple. The first invaders were much feared, and every one was astonished and delighted to find that they were better than the reputation which had preceded them. Everything they wanted was given freely and willingly, and the people of Bar-le-Duc came to the conclusion that a Prussian invasion was not, after all, such a terrible thing as they had imagined. But when the second body of invaders arrived they were not quite so pleased—they had had enough of it; nor were the Prussians (or the Bavarians, for I don’t know which arrived first) pleased when they found

that what had been given liberally to the first-comers was—for the sufficient reason that it *had* been given—refused to them. Of course the thing became worse and worse as it proceeded. As the inhabitants were more pressed the invaders showed themselves more pressing, and in a short time the situation became intolerable.

On Sunday, the morning after my arrival at Bar-le-Duc, I went to the Roman Catholic church of Notre Dame, where I found that, whether from a secret understanding or from an instinctive feeling of propriety common to all, every woman, with the exception of the peasantry, was attired in deep black—black dresses, black bonnets, black veils, black shawls, black gloves. It was like Warsaw during the insurrection. The interior of Notre Dame de Bar-le-Duc is chiefly remarkable for an admirable series of bronzes representing the incidents of the Via Dolorosa ; and it seemed, from the great number of persons praying around it, that a mystical signification was attached to No. 9 of the series : “ Jesus falls for the third time.”

The high town of Bar-le-Duc, the old habitation and possession of the Dukes of Bar, stands, as becomes a feudal stronghold, on a lofty eminence, from which the vine-clad hills of the surrounding country may be seen for miles on all sides. Bar-le-Duc is further distinguished (to descend a little)

by its café, called "Le Café des Oiseaux," which might be called the coffeehouse of birds, beasts, fishes, reptiles, flowers, plants, minerals, and coins. It is a most curious combination of the museum and café; or, rather, it is a very complete museum with a café in the middle. "Drink, but learn," might have been the motto of the man who founded it; and when once it was established, every rich inhabitant of Bar-le-Duc made some kind of addition to the collection. The place, when I visited it, was crowded with Prussian and Bavarian soldiers, who seemed very much astonished, and were slightly deceived, if they looked upon this as a specimen of French cafés in general. All the Prussian ministers and generals who passed through Bar-le-Duc visited the Café des Oiseaux. Count Bismarck had tea there one night; and the Crown Prince, who came in at the same time, was seen to order and drink a *choppe* of beer.

But what, above all, gives fame to Bar-le-Duc is its preserves. Every dealer in the town—including one watchmaker and one ironmonger—sells "confitures de Bar-le-Duc;" and every one who visits the town buys some of the little pots in which they are sold. All the ladies of the Prussian Royal Family had had boxes of "Confitures de Bar-le-Duc" sent to them; and Count Bismarck himself bought a box. "He passes all the same," said the

confectioner from whom the purchase was made, "for a man *qui n'aime pas les douceurs.*" As at Pont-à-Mousson, every one at Bar-le-Duc dealing in mere luxuries kept his shop open. A bookseller, too, offered his wares for sale, but I could see nothing in his window except copies of the "Marseillaise," bought largely by the Prussian soldiers, and a work, written probably by a native of Bar-le-Duc, which bore this curious and comprehensive title, "*The Art of Living Cheaply, of Preventing Inundations, and of Creating Incalculable Riches.*"

The head-quarters of his Majesty had only just moved from Bar-le-Duc to Clermont, and already a telegraph was constructed along the line. The single telegraph wire was, in fact, a clue by which the progress of head-quarters might have been followed from the very beginning of the invasion. The townspeople believed the army was still advancing towards Chalons. "Yet the carts," said an observant hotel-keeper, "have been ordered this morning northwards, to Clermont," a route I accordingly took. The trees which lined the road all the way on each side served the purpose admirably of telegraph posts; but all the trees which stood in the way of the wires had, of course, to be cut down, and they had been felled by thousands.

Half way between Bar-le-Duc and Clermont I met a solitary peasant, got him to bring my horse

some water, and was asked in return to tell him "what had happened since the taking of Berlin." I told him first of all that I had not heard of the taking of Berlin, when he assured me that it had been captured by the French fleet operating on the Spree, that the thing was the common talk of the village, and (he added in a whisper) had become known through a letter dropped by a Prussian officer, in which a friend wrote to him, "You will be sorry to hear that Berlin has fallen into the hands of the French."

At another village I was stopped by some peasants, who said that, seeing I was not in uniform, they imagined I was going to the army in order to make peace, in which case they implored me to make it on any terms, so that "requisitions" might no longer be served upon them. They were "exhausted," they were "crucified," and could stand it no longer. Even in the matter of requisitions they were cheated; for, instead of being furnished with the signature and stamp of the mayor, the papers given to them bore the signature of some Prussian officer only. They complained further that the Prussians had taken all their cattle and drunk all their wine, besides which they had killed more animals than was necessary, and had broken bottles and tapped casks without any necessity at all. The innkeeper had suffered like every

one else. He had taken his sign down, which, however, had done him very little good, since he, like the rest of them, had had soldiers quartered upon him, and had had his substance entirely devoured.

At Clermont I found nothing remarkable, except a very original old woman, mother of the landlady of the hotel, who asked me in confidence whether there was to be any pillaging, and, if so, when it was going to begin. I assured her that there was no likelihood of any house in the place being either pillaged or burnt; at which she expressed herself much relieved. Pillage, she observed, was the great thing to be dreaded in war. She had seen three revolutions, and at each revolution there had been a little pillage, and sometimes a great deal. She thought an invasion was the same sort of thing as a revolution, except, of course, that you saw more troops in an invasion and less fighting. Just then a herd of oxen began to pass, whose appearance caused her much more alarm than that of the troops had done. "Oh, my child!" she called out to her daughter, "look at those wild animals with horns like lances! I have seen many fearful things these last three days, but this is the fearfulest sight of all."

The animals which inspired her with so much terror were simply oxen of remarkable beauty and of Hungarian breed. It was a herd about eight

hundred strong, attached to the Saxon Army Corps. The driver in chief had accompanied them all the way from Saxony on foot, and seemed delighted when I complimented him on the appearance of his beasts. They were a little tired, but were very beautiful, and had all milk-white coats, black sentimental eyes fringed with black eyelashes, and white horns of prodigious length, tipped at the tapering ends with black.

From Clermont his Majesty proceeded through Varennes to Buzancy. At the Hôtel du Grand Monarque, where Louis XVI. is generally, but erroneously, supposed to have been arrested, still exists, and a very good hotel it is, kept by Madame Gauthier and her daughters—a kind and cultivated family, by no means unknown to literature. Thus Victor Hugo has mentioned the Hôtel du Grand Monarque and the Gauthier family in his book of “Travels to and along the Rhine;” and Alexandre Dumas has given a whole chapter to them in his “Route de Varennes.” The little girls of five and six years old, whom Victor Hugo saw at the Hôtel du Grand Monarque, were young women when Alexandre Dumas made their acquaintance; and one of them is now married, and has herself a child eight or ten years old, and was, when I saw her, in a constant state of anxiety about her husband, an officer in the administrative department of Ba-

zaine's army. At Varennes all the clocks had stopped; and a servant at the hotel to whom I spoke on the subject attributed the general stoppage to some malevolent influence exercised by the Prussians. The fact was, people in the towns occupied by the Prussian troops got so worried, so terrified, so utterly perplexed, that they took no note of the day of the month, the day of the week, or of the time of day. It mattered very little to them what o'clock it was. Why, then, should they wind their clocks up? The hour which they remembered above all, and were not likely to forget, was that in which the Prussians first appeared among them.

The Hôtel du Grand Monarque, where dinner was prepared for Louis XVI. eight days running, but which he never reached, has existed since the reign of Louis XIV. He, of course, was the original "Grand Monarque." His likeness formed the sign of the inn, and it has been replaced at each subsequent accession by the portrait of the new sovereign. There was a *hiatus*, naturally, in the series of signs when the Revolution broke out. But the head of the reigning "Grand Monarque" re-appeared with the Restoration, and the old custom of placing the hotel under the visible auspices of the reigning prince was kept up until the flight of Louis-Philippe. In 1848, however, some silly Republicans painted out the head of the last

of the French kings; and Madame Gauthier—an amiable cynic—determined, in view of the instability of the French throne, to leave the sign as the Republican had left it. Accordingly, the sign of the Grand Monarque was, when I saw it, and no doubt is, at the present moment, a blank.

Besides the sign which had represented in succession so many “grand monarchs,” Madame Gauthier possesses another interesting historical curiosity—a collection of assignats framed and glazed. It was, of course, suggested to her to form a companion picture by framing and glazing a number of Prussian requisitions. The delusive notion was at that time entertained that the requisitions were a sort of promissory note which the Prussians might or might not take up at the end of the war.

A great denouncer of requisitions who came into the kitchen of the hotel (which, as in many country hotels in France, seemed to be used as a general reception-room) expressed his regret that the newspapers in all the occupied districts had been stopped. Otherwise, he said, he could, though only a peasant, have written a few phrases in the local journal which would have made the Prussians themselves tremble. I invited him to communicate the awe-inspiring words to me; and at last, after much pressing, he confided to me that what he longed so to proclaim to the world was this: “That

nothing like the present invasion had been seen since the days of Attila."

The poor fellow was indignant, and had suffered losses, and I believe he was originally from the neighbourhood of Chalons, where Attila still figures in the local guide-books. I could not help thinking of him when some months afterwards I met almost the same phrase, and quite the same idea, in the *Quarterly Review*. "The desolation which followed in the train of the armies of Attila," says the writer of an article on the "Political Lessons of the War," "could not have been worse than that which marks the track of the Prussian armies,"* from which it might be inferred that Attila's armies slew no unoffending inhabitants, burned no unoffending villages, destroyed no crops, devastated no fields, and even respected the fruit on the fruit trees. From Saarbrucken to Pont-à-Mousson, along the line of march, followed by portions of the 1st, 2nd, and 4th armies, and from Pont-à-Mousson through St. Mihiel and Bar-le-Duc towards Sedan along the line of march followed by the Bavarians of the 3rd army, no "desolation," and nothing resembling destruction was to be seen up to the immediate neighbourhood of Beaumont; whence, to Raucourt, to Remilly, and straight on to Bazailles and Sedan, the whole country was a battle-field.

* *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1871.

Later in the campaign, discipline may in some measure have given way ; the spirit of reprisals was introduced, and the character of the war degenerated, as must always be the case when hostilities are prolonged beyond a certain time, and armies are extended over an immense tract of country. But there was nothing in the condition of the districts traversed by the Prussians to suggest Attila either at the beginning or at the end of the campaign.

Alexandre Dumas, in his "Route de Varennes," tells us, with his usual candour, that on arriving at Varennes he was received in a somewhat reproachful manner by Madame Gauthier's daughters.

"Nicely we have been scolded for you !" one of them said.

"Why for me ?" asked the novelist.

"Because," exclaimed the young lady, "we used to steal candle-ends to read your books upstairs, after we had been told to shut them up and go to bed."

I resolved to do the same—not, that is to say, to steal candle-ends, but to read Dumas's "Route de Varennes," at least for a short time before going to bed. It was imprudent ; but the book was very interesting, and if there is a place and time for reading books—the place and time for reading the "Route de Varennes," was at Varennes, and at the

Grand Monarque, after talking to Madame Gauthier and her daughters about Dumas and his visit to their hotel.

Dumas had given Madame Gauthier half-a-dozen copies of his work, and I prevailed upon her the next morning to let me take one, as a memento of her kind hospitality in war time, and of the occasion generally. Beneath her name she wrote this date: "Le 30 Aôut, 1870: Année mémorable!"

"Jour mémorable" she might also have written, for a few hours later the Prussians and Bavarians began at Beaumont the fighting which only ended two days afterwards at Sedan. It has since been pointed out by some observer of curious coincidences that the 30th of August, 1870, was the hundredth anniversary of Hegel's birthday. The centenary of the historical philosopher who had pointed to the coming predominance of Germany in Europe, and the moral and military means by which it would be brought about, was to have been celebrated that day at the German Universities. But war broke out, and it was commemorated in a more striking manner by Saxons, Bavarians, Wurtemburghers, and Prussians, on French battlefields.



CHAPTER VII.

INVASION OF A DISTRICT HELD BY THE ENEMY.

QUITSIDE Varennes, on the road to Buzancy, I passed a camp full, as usual, of picturesque and grotesque sights—an ox's head stuck on a pole, a cuirassier plucking a fowl, a party of uhlans roasting a goose over a wood fire; in the background a number of huts in the form of bowers, constructed with branches torn from the trees in the adjacent forest. The Prussians do not burden themselves with canvas and poles, but improvise their huts out of any materials at hand, as they want them, and their camp architecture is often admirable.

At Buzancy I rested for a time at an hotel, with next to nothing in it. An interesting personage, however, soon entered—an officer of one of the cavalry regiments of the Prussian Guard—who said that he was very hungry, that he had not eaten

meat for two days, and that now he could not get even a piece of bread. I had just secured the last loaf, and made over half of it to him. Fortunately, too, I had brought some cold meat with me, which I also transferred. The hungry officer, having partially satisfied the cravings of his stomach, began to curse his luck, saying that his regiment was once more put in reserve, that there would be a great battle that very day, and that he should see nothing of it, inasmuch as no reserves could possibly be wanted. He had been out on a reconnoissance the evening before (Monday, August 29), and knew every position held by the French. They were 120,000 strong. But the German armies ready to deal with them were 240,000 strong—eight army corps, he counted, reckoning them at their full strength—and the French, unless they could concentrate their attack on a portion of this immense force, had not even a temporary chance. The King, commanding in chief, would be with the centre, the Crown Prince of Prussia with the left, the Crown Prince of Saxony with the right. The battle, he thought, would begin about three o'clock, and it was now nearly one.

Just then the troops which, for the last hour had been pouring through the town on the road to La Besace, quickened their pace. Several batteries of artillery

went by at a rapid trot, the infantry standing aside to make way for them. Then a battalion of infantry marched hurriedly past without knapsacks, the knapsacks being driven after them in carts. Ammunition waggons followed and to some extent blocked up the road, so that for the moment it was no use my attempting to get on. I accordingly remained for the next quarter of an hour talking to the officer who had been out on a reconnoissance. He said he was very sorry to take the whole of my cold meat, but he was so hungry, and war had somewhat demoralized him, so that he now often found himself doing things which in strict politeness he, perhaps, ought not to do. I assured him that I had had an excellent breakfast, and, moreover (little knowing what I was talking about!), that I should be able to buy whatever I wanted at the next village. I promised to dine with him some day in Berlin (it was difficult, under the circumstances, to fix the day), and he then got on horseback and rode off to his regiment, encamped somewhere at the back of Buzancy, while I drove forward after the advancing troops, who, in the most obliging manner, made way for me to pass them. I had not gone 20 yards before, on turning a corner, I heard the sound of artillery. The action had already begun. After about ten minutes the reports became fainter and fainter, and then

altogether ceased. But the action had not yet finished.

The road along which the troops were moving runs directly north from Buzancy to Raucourt, passing through the village of La Besace, which is distant from Raucourt some three miles. About half a mile on the Buzancy side of La Besace is a branch road leading to the right, and almost at right angles, towards the large village or small town of Beaumont, distant from the Buzancy-Besace-Raucourt road about a mile and a half. As I approached La Besace I heard, and could see the effects of, heavy firing around Beaumont, which at one time was so enveloped in smoke that it was thought to be on fire. The road leading eastwards, to the right—from within half a mile of La Besace towards Beaumont—had already been taken from the French (a portion of De Failly's corps) by the 1st Bavarians, acting in support of the 4th Prussians, who, passing through a wood, had surprised the enemy. The road, as I saw the next morning, was lined on both sides with bodies, the Germans, for the most part, lying on the side nearest Buzancy, the French on the side nearest Raucourt.

The latter, driven from the road, now had retreated, some in the direction of Raucourt and Mouzon, and some towards Beaumont itself.

They were pursued in both directions, and those who had gone towards Beaumont were followed into the place, which was at the same time attacked along another line of road leading to the same point, and, after a severe struggle, occupied by the Prussians, or Bavarians and Prussians combined. The French made a desperate stand at the entrance to the village, firing from windows, from behind walls, and taking advantage of every possible species of cover; and, after retiring into the market-place, renewed the contest, of which I found terrible traces the next day in the thick groups and long lines of dead, in the number of wounded men in the hospitals, or lying in carts ready to be conveyed to some less crowded place.

The village of Beaumont formed the principal point at the extreme right of the French, who, before the action had lasted very long, had been driven from the two roads which connect Beaumont with the road from Buzancy, through La Besace, to Raucourt; driven in and then out of Beaumont, and driven again from Beaumont on the other side by Saxon and Prussian troops, who were now pushing them towards Mouzon and also towards Raucourt, or some point between Raucourt and La Besace.

The object, then, of the Bavarians who were moving in a straight line from Buzancy to La

Besace was first to drive the French from the neighbourhood of La Besace, and then to wait for the French, who were being urged westward—from right to left—by the army of the Crown Prince of Saxony, and catch them as they passed in front.

“They are certainly in a nice position,” said a Bavarian Artillery officer, whose acquaintance I had made, as he advanced with his battery towards La Besace. “I would not be in MacMahon’s place for something. Which ever way he goes we shall have him within range. We can drive him from point to point, as in a hunt, until he is compelled to move in the direction we wish him to take. He is beaten on the right, and will have to come in front of us directly. If he passes us he will meet the Crown Prince, so that one way or the other he is sure to be disposed of.”

Just then my friend’s regiment was ordered on, and started at a trot. I had promised to look for his battery, which was not likely, he thought, to go very far ahead, and soon afterwards got out and walked, telling the coachman to wait as near as possible to La Besace, from which the French must now have retired, pressed by Bavarian infantry. Some squadrons of Bavarian Cheveau-légers were sent in pursuit, but could not have followed very far. The artillery remained silent.

Infantry were now sent up the hills in front and on

both sides of us, and soon the heights were covered with them in every direction. The extreme ridges on each side, close to the woods, were occupied by cavalry; and artillery was posted on all the prominent points and in a continuous line on a hill in the very front of the position. After all these preparations had been made for the reception of the French they still did not appear. At last Prussian, or rather Bavarian, patience could stand it no longer. Infantry in skirmishing order was sent forward, the artillery retaining for the most part their previous positions. As new available points, however, presented themselves, guns were brought up and placed on them; and, once more, all the heights were covered. The cavalry, still moving, kept close to the woods by which the position was hemmed in.

The whole country around La Besace and between La Besace and Raucourt is a succession of hills and dales. Here and there the hills are very high, and the dales deep valleys; and the hills in many parts are thickly wooded. But the general character of the country for miles around in every direction is quite uniform in its picturesque variety; and it was open to the weaker side either to defend itself on the heights, or to seek the shelter of the woods, or to endeavour to march unobserved along the lines of valleys. Instead of trying only one of these courses, they, perhaps, meant to adopt all three.

At all events the Bavarian cavalry continued to observe the woods; the Bavarian infantry went down into the valleys and up the hills on the other side; and, a few minutes afterwards, the Bavarian artillery began to throw shells into a not very distant hollow on the left. The French, against whom these missiles were directed, must have been recently in the neighbourhood of the Crown Prince.

These were not the French whose arrival had been so anxiously looked for; but soon afterwards another body of French appeared from the right, and these being the troops which had long been expected from Beaumont and its vicinity, they were at once attacked, the infantry firing at them from the crests of the hills, the artillery firing at them obliquely over the heads of the infantry advancing to support the first line, the cavalry leaving them alone, except by threatening them, which, I suppose, had the effect of keeping them together. Between the two bodies of French—two separate parallelograms with red trousers, affixed in a not altogether irremovable manner, to the side of a hill—and the Prussians who were posted on the hill opposite, with any number of regiments in support and in reserve at their back, the distance across the intervening valley must have been nearly equal to the extreme range of the chasseur and Werder—the Werder being the rifle with which the

Bavarians were armed, a rifle much superior to the needle-gun. The firing could not have been very effective in a purely physical sense on either side. It kept the French moving, however, and in a few minutes the Bavarians followed them into the valley and drove them up and over the hill beyond.

My object being to see as much as possible at the least possible risk, I remained a little behind the crest of the hill down which the Bavarian skirmishers were pushing forward, and then, as the French continued to retreat, heard for the first time the hissing of the chassépôt bullets, which fell about me, and, what was worse, beyond me, so that the further I retreated the more chance (within limits) there seemed to be of getting under the French fire. Here was a proof, and a very impressive one, of what Prussian officers had often told me, that the French when they got flurried—and they had reason to feel nervous on this particular occasion—fired high in the air without waiting to take aim. If there had been a dense body of troops on the ground where I was standing, a certain number of men would, of course, have been hit; but of a thick line of skirmishers much nearer the French, not one in the course of several minutes seemed to have been touched.

I had been assured that the French artillery fire was not so good even as their musketry fire; so, all things considered, I thought the safest and most

interesting place for me would be at the back of the battery commanded by the Bavarian captain of artillery before mentioned. His regiment, the first of the first division of the First Bavarian Army Corps, was behind me, firing in two different directions, high above the heads of the infantry, and I observed that the French artillery fire in reply never by any chance, reached its address. I was taking a circuitous route, in order to get to the back of the fifth battery, when, coming down the hill from which a portion of the said artillery regiment was operating, a battalion of the regiment which had furnished the skirmishers, now a couple of hundred yards ahead, appeared. A general who, as I afterwards learned, commanded the brigade to which this regiment belonged rode at the head of the battalion; and as I could see that my plain clothes had attracted his attention, I walked up to him, and was at once asked to explain my presence on the field of battle. The explanation was soon given, and quite understood, but not accepted as perfectly satisfactory.

“Of course, I carried a pass from the military authorities?”

I replied that I had a passport (which the general declined to look at, saying that passports were worthless on the battle-field), and the positive promise of a pass which I might almost say was

waiting for me at the office of the general staff, King's head-quarters. I had, in fact, been following his Majesty's head-quarters for days without ever reaching them. At Buzancy they were just half-an-hour ahead ; and on the road to La Besace I passed the carriages of the King, Prince Karl (easily recognisable by the black man sitting beside the coachman on the box), Count Bismarck, General Moltke, General Roon, and other princes, ministers, and generals, who had mounted their horses and gone on to some high ground a mile or so behind where I was then standing to see the attack on Beaumont.

The Bavarian general justly observed that between a pass and the promise of a pass there was a certain difference, and charged me with having shown a "want of foresight" in getting into the position I at that moment occupied. He added that he was bound to ask me whether I carried arms, and put the question twice, reminding me the second time that if after being called upon to give up any arms I might have about me I failed to do so, I rendered myself liable to the punishment of death. I assured the general that my only arm was an opera-glass, and he suggested that I should remain with the battalion, now marching past us, until the end of the action, after which he would send me to head-quarters. It was a suggestion

which I could not very well have refused to adopt, and I assured the general that I should be only too glad to accompany the battalion to which I thus found myself temporarily attached. "These men," he said a few minutes afterwards, pointing to two sergeants who had some duty assigned to them in connection with the staff, "will keep near you, and I have told them that all you have to do is not to go away from the battalion."

I found the sergeants, who marched on each side of me, pleasant companions enough. One of them seemed to take a purely picturesque view of war. Among other things, he described, in glowing colours, the encampment at Fröschwiller the night after the battle—a church burning on one side, a village on the other, camp fires in all directions, the moon shining, the bands playing, the soldiers rejoicing, and, in contrast to all this, the field covered with heaps of dead and wounded.

"What do you think of that?" he asked, as the shells from the batteries which I had failed to reach flew high above us towards the retiring French. I said (out of compliment to the Bavarian artillery) that it was "terrible," to which he replied that it was not "terrible" at all; that, on the contrary, it was very beautiful; and to lookers-on in our position the fire from the artillery on the heights behind us was, in fact, as harmless as a display of fireworks.

The reader knows that Prussian and Bavarian shells are fitted with percussion fuses, so that they do not, as sometimes happens with shells bearing time fuses, burst in the air.

What really did astonish me was the unruffled calmness of the Bavarian artillerymen, who, placed just beyond *chassepôt* range, fired at the French advancing, or trying to advance, from the left, as coolly as in an exercise ground. No order to "cease smoking" had been issued; and the drivers still puffed away at their long porcelain pipes, as though the business they were engaged upon was of the most ordinary kind. Well or ill, wounding or wounded, killing or all but killed, German soldiers will still smoke. The lightness and compactness of the pieces (four-pounders, firing nine-pound elongated shells), and the rapidity and ease with which they were moved from point to point over difficult ground seemed to me very remarkable. The artillery officers, with whom I had entered into conversation just before the advance from Beaumont towards Raucourt, had told me that there could be no doubt as to the superiority of their artillery over that of the French; but what they seemed to attach more importance to was the superiority of their shells, which burst where they fell, or at least where they struck, provided, that is to say, they did not fall on soft ground. The French shells burst, they said, only at 1800 and

2200 metres, and they claimed to be able to avoid the French range.

The sergeant now suggested to me that if I wanted to see the war thoroughly, and to go first on one side, then on the other (a plan which he evidently thought I had been endeavouring to carry out), I ought to get a Geneva badge, which he erroneously imagined would enable me to pass freely from the Germans to the French, from the French to the Germans.

We had not marched far, when the captain of one of the companies, after asking the two sergeants who I was, and where I had come from, told me his name, and called my attention to some earthworks on the top of a hill we were about to ascend. Here MacMahon was supposed to have made a great stand (only MacMahon was not present), and the position, on the summit of a steep slope a hundred yards from one end to the other, was indeed a strong one. Behind the embankments thrown up by the French, broken accoutrements, exploded shells, and on the embankment holes where the shells had struck were to be seen; but neither dead nor wounded. The wounded had probably been carried down to the French field hospital at La Besace—we were then just passing it, leaving it on our left; or the retiring French had borne off both dead and wounded in their carts.

At this moment a staff officer rode up to my sergeants, and told them that several men had just fallen in the company on our right, and had crawled into the wood, and that they had better attend to them. The sergeants, however, did nothing of the kind; and the lover of the picturesque assured me that the proper time for attending to the wounded was not during but after the battle. Besides, they were advancing, and though there was an ambulance waggon attached to the battalion, it only carried medical stores, and there were no stretchers; so it seemed to me that, unless they were picked up by the rear-guard, the unfortunate wounded men would have to lie where they had been struck down until the next morning. In the meanwhile the staff-officer had disappeared.

Let me here remark that none of the volunteer civilian attendants on the wounded are allowed to come on the field of battle while fighting is going on. Soldiers bearing the red-cross badge carry them off (when they *do* carry them off), and I found that the sergeant who had a taste for the picturesque, was furnished with the emblem of neutrality, but, disdaining to wear it, kept it in his pocket, and shouldered a rifle instead.

Soon afterwards a party of soldiers bearing poles and canvas came up from the rear, and said as they passed between the company I was with and the

one following it, towards the wood on our right, where more wounded had taken refuge, how much they wished that, instead of poles, they had been allowed to carry rifles like the others. I dare say it was a very good sign in a military point of view; but, however that may be, the troops I was accompanying had a taste for fighting and a dislike for hospital duty.

The rule, I believe, in regard to soldiers appointed to carry off the wounded, is that they shall not put on the badge until they have thrown aside the rifle. If they are not wanted for ambulance service they continue their duty as fighting men, and in that case do not, of course, exhibit the badge.*

Artillery now came up from one of the hills behind us, and, taking up a new position on a ridge in front, opened fire. We passed down into the valley, a thick line of skirmishers driving the French, not straight up the hill opposite, but round the corner to the right. On our left, where the musketry and artillery fire had, during the last few minutes, become hotter and hotter, we suddenly heard a loud cheer, which, it was thought, signified

* On this subject see the order from General Von Göben, cited by General Faideherbe in his "Campagne de l'Armée du Nord," setting forth that soldiers occasionally employed to carry off the wounded are not to wear badges when engaged as combatants, &c. (p. 113).

a charge. But the hills prevented us from seeing. Then there was another more prolonged cheer, a partial cessation of firing, and it could be understood that the infantry had conquered some important position; probably, too, they had captured guns, of which a large number were taken in the course of the day.

Night was now approaching, and when we reached the next ridge, and a battery, hurrying up the slope, halted, and prepared to fire on a mass of troops, which could only be seen very indistinctly in the distance, one of the officers looked at them through his glass, and said they were not French at all, they were Bavarians or Prussians, who had crept round the hill in pursuit of the French. "Where are the red trousers?" he asked.

Some thought they could recognize the red trousers. Others declared it was impossible to do so; and in the end the French, if French they were, got the benefit of the doubt. It was eight o'clock. The affair was at an end. I had seen the last three or four hours of it, and was told that the battalion I had accompanied, which seemed to me to have lost some eight or ten men, had, in fact, lost twenty, of whom, however, only three were killed outright. The captain, who had called my attention to the earthworks on one of the hills, told me that we had reached a village close to Raucourt,

and that if he could get quarters in a house he would ask me to share them with him. This officer was mounted on a remarkable animal, which crawled up and down steep places like a cat. It was a peasant's horse, he said, which he had bought just after the declaration of war, when captains of infantry in the Bavarian service were for the first time ordered to ride. He thought the order quite reasonable, seeing that to command a company of 250 men effectively on foot was all but impossible; but as Austria, where the Bavarians generally bought their horses, was now closed to them in that respect by the laws of neutrality, many officers, himself among the number, had not known where to turn at a moment's notice for a horse qualified to perform the duties of a hard campaign. The peasant's horse, however, had shown himself well up to his work, and had taken kindly to the sound of artillery from the very first. His master left me to get the animal some hay—oats there were none—and he promised, some time in the course of the night, to procure me a piece of bread. "I would offer you some soup," he added, "but we have not an ox in the place. We have made a forced march to-day, and have left our herd and all our provisions miles in the rear."

It soon appeared that there was no chance of any officer possessing only the rank of captain

getting a bed that night in the village. The village was only large enough to give accommodation to the superior officers, and the captains had all to sleep on the ground in the open air, like their men. Even the modest luxury of straw was denied them. When we had reached the ground chosen for the encampment—a spacious valley, thickly wooded on one of its slopes—a party of men were sent into the forest to cut fagots, and fires were soon lighted everywhere around us, except on the heights, where, on each side, a troop of unfortunate Uhlans could for a time be dimly discerned.

The Uhlans sent down word that they were very thirsty and wanted water, and water was taken to them, but I am afraid that night they had very little food. The infantry soldiers round the camp fires were, in the meanwhile, roasting apples gathered in a neighbouring orchard, and potatoes dug from the very field in which we were encamped. Some of them, too, made soups and curious messes out of flour, rice, potatoes, pepper, salt, and water. Not one of them had a morsel of bread. I was more fortunate, for the friendly captain, as he had promised, brought me a piece, telling me at the same time that he had sent into the village to "*requiriren*" some sheep, and that mutton might be expected before long.

How I should have pitied the unfortunate villagers

if I had heard but their side of the story! As it was, I confess that I fully sympathized with those by whom the requisitions were issued. The Bavarians had been marching since eight in the morning. They had done a good twenty miles. They had been at Beaumont, and the battalion whose fortunes I was sharing had been for the last two hours under a light fire, which might, however, at any moment have become heavy. In any case they had eaten nothing since eight in the morning, and it was now nine at night.

I began to understand that there were circumstances under which some pressure might justifiably be exercised by the invaders upon the invaded. If, for instance, the invader wants food and the invaded refuses it, or declares he has none, the invader has a right to look in cupboards and drawers for what he needs; and if the invaded has foolishly run away, leaving his cupboards, drawers, and wine cellar locked up, the invader has a right to break them open. All the stories of pillage told me had, on examination, resolved themselves into that sort of thing. Troops, famished, exhausted, and at the same time excited by battle, arrive at a village from which the panic-stricken residents have fled. The troops help themselves; and what else are they to do? I had not hitherto met with any instances of wanton destruction done by them. Smashed

cellar doors, larders, of which the secrecy had been violated, had been shown to me; but all that can be said to such sights is, "Why were not the doors left open? Why did not the owners of the occupied houses remain to receive the requisition papers which would have been given if there had been any one to ask for them?"

But let me return *à mes moutons*, which, after we had been encamped about an hour, announced their arrival by a bleating that was listened to with general delight.

In about half an hour they were killed, skinned, cut up, roasted, and eaten. Some soldiers, it is true, took their mutton stewed; but for the most part the pieces of meat were stuck on long, improvised skewers, and the skewers held over the fire until the meat was done. More for the sake of experience than from any strong desire to taste the so lately palpitating flesh, I took my fair share of mutton like every one else, and it was very good indeed. The never-to-be-sufficiently thanked captain appeared while the repast was going on with a flask of Bordeaux, which he insisted on my accepting. He had taken the *bidon* which contained the wine from a Turco at the battle of Fröchswiller, and a very superior *bidon* it was; not merely a bottle, such as the Prussians carry, but a bottle with a glass attached. The Prussians may be superior in

respect to artillery, but the French possess, undoubtedly, the best drinking flasks.

- The captain also brought me half a dozen of the most detestable cigars. He had "required" them, he said, in a French village, and knew they were bad, but he had no others. Among soldiers, however, one cigar is as good as another; and I gained popularity and a good place near the fire by a judicious distribution of these, to me, unsmokable weeds. I was indebted to the kindness of the same officer for a mackintosh, a very useful protector against the dampness of the night, and one of those quarters of a *tente d'abri* which each French soldier carries with him, and, when hard pressed by the enemy, throws away.

Let me here mention that the mackintosh worn by the German officers bears with it this disadvantage: it enables the enemy's riflemen to distinguish the officers from the men. It keeps off water, but attracts fire.

Fortunately, there was no rain. There was a little mist, but the night, on the whole, was fine, and the moon shone beautifully. Talking and laughing went on until about half-past one; and most of us, including myself, were up again at half-past three. The cold was so acute at that hour, there was no resisting it. I got up for the simple purpose of thawing my toes at one of the fires

still burning, and I soon found half the camp occupied in the same manner. It was a strange sight. Eight or ten tall, gaunt-looking men encircling each fire—the flare, the smoke, the grotesque shadows, the contrast of light and darkness round the various groups making up a picture of the most fantastic kind.

At half-past four I could just make out the forms of the Uhlans and their horses on the heights. Each lancer was standing by the side of his horse with his lance resting on the ground. Of course, no fires had been lighted on these heights, the first duty of the Uhlans being to see without being seen. I cannot say whether they had slept during the night, but I know that before five in the morning they mounted their horses and slowly descended the hills, gained the high road, and passed through the village at a trot. A regiment of Cheveau-légers (of which neither the men nor the horses were light) followed, also at a trot. Then, at the same pace, more Uhlans, then Horse Artillery, then Cheveau-légers again; all hurrying through Raucourt at the heels of the French, whom they had only lost sight of the night before, when it was physically impossible to see them. From Raucourt they reached Remilly—a couple of miles north of Raucourt, and a couple of miles south of Bazeilles.

I remarked that the uniform of the Bavarian

Cheveau-légers was very like that of some regiments of Cuirassiers in the French army, and was there-upon told the story, which I had already heard from one of the Bavarian artillery officers, of the destruction of one of several regiments of French Cuirassiers at the battle of Wörth. The said regiment found itself at 800 yards' distance from some Bavarian batteries, and, encouraged by the fact of the artillerymen not firing, approached nearer and nearer. The Bavarians mistook them for one of their own regiments, a delusion which the continued advance of the French rendered more and more natural. Probably the French imagined that the Bavarian gunners had no more ammunition. They continued, in any case, to go forward until, when they were within 300 yards, the colonel turned round and gave the order to charge. Then for the first time the officer commanding the Bavarian batteries saw the black horsehair tail which hangs down from the helmet of the French Cuirassier. He fired point-blank into the regiment, fired a second time into its remains, and, in a few minutes, men and horses, almost to the last, were destroyed. The colonel, unhorsed, but not wounded, was made prisoner and taken to Munich, where he fell into a state of melancholy, and gradually lost his reason.

It was six, and coffee was made. It was not

good. Madame Veuve Gauthier, of the Hôtel du Grand Monarque at Varennes, who, even in time of war, makes the best coffee in Europe, would have condemned it. But it was hot ; and heat, not flavour, was what we wanted. At seven I wished the captain who had shown me so much true hospitality good-bye, and went to see the divisional general from whom I hoped to obtain a pass to his Majesty's head-quarters.

The picturesque-loving sergeant accompanied me to the general's head-quarters, which were at Raucourt. As I was leaving the camp I overtook a French peasant, who was being marched out between two soldiers with fixed bayonets. The poor man had been taken from his home the night before and made to serve as guide when it was already dark, and convenient camping ground was wanted. No one had done him the least harm, but he was in a state of abject terror, and believed that the men with fixed bayonets were taking him out to shoot him because he was a Frenchman and they Germans. I did my best to reassure him, and as soon as he felt convinced that he was not going to be murdered he burst into tears and, speaking of himself as though he were a bottle of wine, exclaimed, " I am an eighteen-hundred-and-ten man, I am ! " (*" Je suis de l'année dix-huit-cent-dix, moi ! "*), by which he meant that he was sixty

years of age, and that if the Bavarians wanted a guide they might have taken a youth, and not a sexagenarian. Only the youths had disappeared, and if soldiers are tired and want to get quietly to bed on the hard ground they must take the first serviceable guide they can find.

The general of division, a most courteous old gentleman, was amused when he heard under what circumstances I had come to pass the night in the Bavarian camp. He said he hoped I had not found it very unpleasant, and I told him, in good faith, that I had never spent a more interesting night in my life. He could not give a pass himself, but the chief of his staff, he assured me, would do so. Accordingly, I went to see the chief of the staff. The chief of the staff, however, said I must get it from the chief of some Prussian corps. All he could do was to direct me to the general of the 5th Army Corps, whose head-quarters were at La Besace. (The left of the 1st Bavarians and the right of the 5th Prussian Corps were close together at La Besace on the afternoon of the 30th.)

Downstairs I found the members of the divisional staff at breakfast, and was asked to join them. I was told that the Emperor Napoleon had been in the very house and room I was sitting in, the afternoon before. Douay's, and part of De Faily's corps, much diminished during the retreat, had

passed through Raucourt; and the little town—in the public buildings, in the private houses, and in the open streets—was full of wounded Frenchmen. There were no wounded Bavarians to be seen. They had been left behind. Besides, as I had myself witnessed, the Bavarians in this pursuit had given much and taken little. That is to say, they had taken little in one sense. They had, however, captured several batteries, and a certain number of prisoners.

The breakfast went off pleasantly enough, except that, as new guests arrived, a little difficulty arose about the coffee. We were, I believe, in the house of the mayor; and the Bavarian officers begged him and his wife to bring some more *café au lait*, but in vain. They declared it was all gone.

“Try the café close by,” said the officers; but the café had been turned into a hospital, and the proprietor had been out of coffee since the previous afternoon.

“Are there no grocers?” they inquired.

Yes, but the grocers had no coffee, no sugar, no anything.

“You must get coffee somehow or other,” was urged at last; but the only reply was, that no coffee could possibly be obtained.

Then one Bavarian officer said to another, “Do

you think the Prussians would stand this sort of thing?"

- "Certainly not," answered the other. "When the Prussians order anything, they take no denial. The fact is, we are a great deal too gentle with the inhabitants. If we could only bring ourselves to treat them as the Prussians do, there would not be all this fuss about a little *café au lait*."

Ultimately, on a harsher tone being assumed, more *café au lait* was produced; which seemed to prove the truth of what the Bavarians had been saying. If they had insisted a little more strongly they would have had it sooner.

"Are you the gentleman who has kindly consented to act as guide?" said an officer who now came in, and who, it appeared, had to march some troops to Remilly, opposite Bazeilles.

I explained that I was in need of a guide myself, and soon afterwards took my leave. Infantry—the Leib regiment and two battalions of Chasseurs—were now moving towards Remilly. The cavalry had gone on before. The artillery, or, at least, a portion of it, I found still drawn up in a plain close to the road at the back of Raucourt; that is to say, on the side next La Besace.

The Bavarian officers thought it odd that the retreating French had sent on their cavalry ahead—even as the Bavarians pursuing them naturally

had done. MacMahon's cavalry had passed through Raucourt a clear day before the last of his infantry; and it was said that the last division of his infantry, belonging to Douay's army corps, had somehow got separated from its artillery—probably the Bavarians had taken it. It must be remembered, however, that, on the 30th, MacMahon's army was not retreating but advancing upon Montmédy, when the 5th Corps, placed at Beaumont to cover the advance, was surprised.

The whole of MacMahon's army (including even some of the disbanded troops of the 5th corps), which, as a body, was driven across the Meuse at and near Mouzon, had passed through or close to Raucourt; and the only German troops the inhabitants of Raucourt had hitherto seen were the 1st Bavarians, who had been in possession since the evening before. The townspeople—as always when the first invaders enter—were much terrified; but I could see nothing in the conduct of the Bavarians to justify alarm.

As turning back from Raucourt, I walked towards the head-quarters of the 5th Army Corps, at La Besace, I found the number of dead on the slopes leading from the heights, across which we had marched the afternoon before, down to the high road much greater than I had expected. Certainly, the dead were not lying thick together,

as I afterwards saw them at Beaumont ; but every fifty yards or so there was a corpse or a little group of corpses, and that along a line nearly three miles in length. I did not go up the heights, where the greatest losses must have occurred, but hurried on to La Besace, where I found, not the general commanding the 5th Army Corps, but, what was even more important, the carriage I had left near Besace the afternoon before.

The coachman, a well-disciplined Prussian, explained that, since he had been told to stay there, there he had stayed. In the meanwhile he had seen horrible sights. The Bavarians had come to the inn where he had put up the horses, and had taken away everything they could find—bread, meat, wine, eggs, poultry, and pigs. They had left the woman who kept the inn absolutely nothing—not even a piece of bread. A few minutes afterwards the poor woman appeared, and, coming towards me, held out some money and asked me if I would mind selling her something to eat. -I had nothing but that half loaf which I had wisely refrained from ceding to the hungry cavalry officer at Buzancy—that half loaf which is proverbially better than no bread. I gave her a piece of it, when she burst into tears, and called up another woman, with whom she shared her portion. I was just going to seek the head-quarters, when a tired,

foot-sore soldier of one of the Bavarian regiments still marching towards Raucourt, limped up to the carriage, and seeing me with a piece of bread in my hand pulled out a two-sous piece and asked me to take it and give him some bread in exchange. He had no more right to the bread than half-a-dozen other soldiers, who, attracted by the sight of food, now came towards me, and surrounded me like fowls waiting to be fed. But I could not divide half a pound of bread between seven; and these seven had no more claim to be relieved than any other seven or seventy or seven hundred in the same regiment. However, I had only been appealed to by one, and to him I gave the longed-for remnant of a loaf, telling him not to show it to his comrades, or they would be pestering me for what I had not got, and could not in that village, by any possibility, obtain. The soldier said he was very grateful, and he certainly was much pleased. He had been marching, he assured me, since daybreak that morning and during the whole of the previous day, and, having had scarcely anything to eat, was quite exhausted.

The innkeeper had ignobly fled, and it was the very fact of his having done so that had exposed his family to such harsh treatment. The innkeeper's daughter, a naïve, hitherto well-fed young lady, of more courage than her papa, boasted that

she was the only girl who had remained in the village after the passage of the French the day before. I asked her whether any of the Bavarians had behaved rudely to her. No, she said, she should like to see them; the first who tried would receive "*un joli soufflet.*"

General Kirchbach was not at home, but an officer of his staff gave me a species of pass to enable me to get to the head-quarters of the King, which had now gone back from Buzancy to Varennes. On the floor of the house where the general had established his head-quarters I found a "requisition" for six eggs in the following terms:—"Requis, pour l'état-major du Cinquième Corps d'Armée, six œufs.—Lieutenant —, La Besace, Aug. 30, 1870."

Returning to Raucourt, I met in the main street close to the house where we had breakfasted, the excellent correspondent of a Vienna paper engaged in angry conversation with a Bavarian staff officer, who, it appeared, objected to his remaining with the troops. The Austrian correspondent exhibited his pass, and threatened to address a complaint to the "Head-Quarter Staff of the Entire Army," whence he had obtained it.

"But what do you want here?" the officer persisted.

"I did want," answered the military critic, "to

describe the bravery of the Bavarian troops against the French ; but, if you continue your present conduct, I shall only be able to speak of the courage of a Bavarian captain against an Austrian newspaper correspondent." Or, in other words, "If you don't let me see the performance I will cut you up in my paper, and the people of Vienna will know what to think of you."

It had struck me that the argument was too strong for undiluted use ; but my Austrian friend, to whom I made a brief representation on the subject in English, assured me it was just the thing ; and some hours later he was still at Raucourt preparing to move with the troops towards Remilly in our immediate neighbourhood, whence the Bavarians were now cannonading Bazeilles.





CHAPTER VIII.

SEDAN.

THE disposition of the German forces at Sedan was, in principle, the same as at Beaumont—where, in fact, the battle finished at Sedan was commenced. In the battle of the 30th, the Bavarians, forming the left wing of the force engaged, acted in close support of the 4th Prussian Corps, who commenced the attack at Beaumont; as, in the battle of the 1st, the Bavarians themselves began the attack some eight miles north-west of Beaumont, before Bazeilles. On both days the engagement spread to the right; the 4th Prussian Corps to the right of the Bavarians, and the 12th, or Saxon, Corps to the right of the 4th Prussians, forming a line, which, on the 30th, extended, as the French retreated, from Beaumont north-east to Mouzon, and ultimately from Raucourt east to Mouzon.

The Prussian Guard Corps, which on both days was to the right of the force commencing the attack, remained in reserve on the 30th, but on the 1st was employed to turn the French position from the east and north-east of Sedan.

The two Army Corps, 5th and 11th, which, on the 1st, turned the French position from the west and north-west of Sedan, had been ready to perform a similar office on the 30th, on which day, however; marching to the left of the Bavarians, and a little in the direction of the north-west, they took no active part in the fighting. When, early on the afternoon of the 1st, due north of the Bavarian position before Bazeilles, the 11th Corps from the west joined hands with the Guard Corps from the north-east, the French were surrounded, and the battle won.

What meanwhile the French were aiming at is not clear, as regards the time during which MacMahon was directing the operations. But when, MacMahon being wounded, the command devolved upon Ducrot, we know, from Ducrot's own account, that an attempt was made to counteract the turning movement from the west and north-west, and to escape in a north-westerly direction towards Mézieres.

For this plan another diametrically opposite was substituted, when, in virtue of a private order from

the minister of war, the command was assumed by General de Wimpffen, who pressed with all his available forces towards the south-east.

Indeed, of the three, or, I may say four, chiefs who directed that day the movements of the French, the first had apparently no plan; the second adopted, and sought to execute, a plan which the third caused him to abandon; and the third was still making unavailing attempts to carry out *his* plan, in exact opposition to that of his predecessor, when the fourth, in the person of the Emperor, came forward, and seeing that there now remained but one plan—caused the white flag to be hoisted.

It was within the circle, and not on the outside edge, whence the Germans pressed and pounded the French, that the terrible drama of Sedan was enacted. Except that the battle-field usually remains with the conquerors, it might be said that, to be seen in all its horror, war should always be viewed from the losing side. But, at Sedan, the worst part of the battle-field remained with the conquered—dead, dying, wounded, panic-stricken, being all huddled together against and within the walls of the feeble fortress.

A little later, and it was neither within nor around Sedan that the drama was being played.

The scene had changed to a house near Sedan, where General Moltke, on the part of the King of Prussia, Count Bismarck accompanying him, was about to meet General de Wimpffen, commander-in-chief of the French army now driven into the town.

"You bring credentials?" asked Moltke.

"I do," replied General de Wimpffen.

"Please show them."

Then the principal personages, with the officers in attendance on each side, sat down, and there was a pause. General de Wimpffen hoped Moltke would speak first; but Moltke, whose talent for silence is proverbial, exercised it on this occasion. At last General de Wimpffen, seeing that if any speaking was to be done, it would be for him to begin, asked what conditions were offered.

"They are very simple," answered Moltke. "The officers and soldiers of the French army are prisoners of war; but, in testimony of their courage, the officers will be allowed to retain their arms."

General de Wimpffen was in despair. He appealed for better terms, and finding Moltke inflexible, talked of beginning the battle again, of cutting his way out, and so on.

"I have a high esteem for you, and fully sympathise with you in your present position," said

Moltke ; "but what you speak of cannot be done. No one doubts the bravery of your troops, especially the cavalry, artillery, and picked infantry regiments ; but we have already made 20,000 prisoners, and of the 80,000 men remaining to you, a great portion among the infantry of the line is demoralized. How, then, are you to cut your way out, when I have 240,000 men around you, with 500 guns, 300 of which are already placed, while the 200 others will be placed at daybreak ? Send an officer to look at my positions, and you will see whether you can cut your way out. As for defending yourselves inside Sedan, you have provisions for forty-eight hours, and are already short of ammunition."

General de Wimpffen now struck another note, and suggested that if generous terms were accorded the French nation would be grateful, and would live on good terms with Prussia for ever afterwards.

"Your argument, general," interposed Count Bismarck, who now came forward, "is specious, but it will not bear examination. It is a mistake as a rule to reckon on gratitude, especially the gratitude of a nation—and, above all, a nation like the French, with which everything changes from day to day. In two centuries you have declared war thirty times against Prussia—that is to say, against Germany. You could not forgive us our victory of

Sadowa, which cost you nothing, and in no way diminished your glory; and you could pardon us the disaster of Sedan? Never! In five, ten years—as soon as you are strong enough—you will begin again; and we must be prepared for you. We must have a frontier, fortresses, a territory, a glacis between you and us. No, general! whatever interest we may feel in you personally, however high an opinion we may have of your army, we cannot acquiesce in your demand, and change the conditions as first laid down.”

“It is equally impossible for me to accept such conditions!” exclaimed De Wimpffen. “We must renew the battle.”

As he repeated these words, General Moltke said to him, “The truce expires at four in the morning. At four precisely I shall open fire.”

The horses were ordered, and the French officers had got up to leave the room, when Count Bismarck begged General de Wimpffen to re-consider his determination. “General Moltke will, I hope, convince you,” he added, “that further resistance would be madness on your part.” They sat down again, and Moltke once more assured General de Wimpffen that, independently of the great numerical superiority of his forces, he held positions from which, in a few hours, he could burn Sedan; which, moreover, commanded all the issues from the place,

and were so strong that it would be impossible to take them from him.

"Oh, they are not so strong as all that!" interrupted General de Wimpffen.

"You do not know the topography of the environs of Sedan," replied Moltke; "and here is a curious detail which is characteristic of your presumptuous and thoughtless nation. At the beginning of the campaign you distributed to all your officers maps of Germany, when you had no means of studying the geography of France, when you had no maps of your own territory. Well! I tell you that these positions are not only strong; they are formidable and inexpugnable."

"I will profit by your previous suggestion, and send an officer to look at them," said General de Wimpffen.

"You will do nothing of the kind," returned Moltke: "you will take my word for it. Besides, you have not much time for reflection. It is now midnight, the truce expires at four in the morning, and I shall not give you one moment's grace."

Ultimately, on Count Bismarck whispering to him that the King was expected at nine, and that it would be better to await his Majesty's arrival, General Moltke agreed to give General de Wimpffen until nine o'clock, but no longer. General de Wimpffen, and the French officers accompany-

ing him, then returned to Sedan, where a council of war was held.*

Meanwhile, the 200 "other guns" were placed in position. But at nine it was not necessary to open fire.

* The above account of the interview, in which the fate of MacMahon's army, and of France, was decided, is from a report communicated by an officer of General de Wimpffen's staff, Captain d'Orcet, to General Ducrot, from whose *Journée de Sedan* I have ventured to borrow it, in a slightly abridged form. (See Appendix A.)





CHAPTER IX.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

THE inhabitants of the muddy, melancholy little village in which I tried to find a bed the night before the battle, were not precisely starving ; indeed, they seemed much more inclined to starve others than to starve themselves. But they were in a miserable state of fright, and had apparently passed one another the word to say that there was no food in the place ; at all events there was none for me, and but for the hospitality of friends I should at last have had to beg a piece of bread from the bakers of the Prussian army. The first evening—the night before the battle—all went well enough. A Prussian officer with whom I was travelling had a right to insist upon being fed, and he insisted upon it for himself and friend.

Then the wine question arose. “There is no

wine in the house, dear gentlemen," said the woman into whose house we had, locust-like, descended. "Not one single drop. Your soldiers drank as many bottles as they could, and smashed what remained."

"I know that," said my Prussian friend, "and deeply I regret it. But your husband told me that you had kept a little private cellar of your own, which the Prussians knew nothing about."

"If my husband has told you," answered the woman, thrown completely off her guard, "that alters the question. Will you have Burgundy or Bordeaux?"

When I wanted to pay for this repast, I found that we were in a private house, and that my money would not be accepted. In private houses it was often difficult to know whether to offer money or not. The people considered themselves robbed if you didn't offer it, insulted if you did.

When the dinner was over we had to get some sort of lodging, and were recommended to go to a certain M. Picard, who, we were told, had no one in his house.

Picard said, "Try next door;" but next door we were assured that Picard was the man, and that if he liked to do it he could give us a room.

"Of course, if you insist upon it, you must have it," said Picard—a cunning sort of boor, whom

Balzac might have introduced into *Les Paysans*. "Let me see! Would you like to have the room next this? There is a wounded man in here—you see he is not dead. The ball has been extracted. The surgeon even says that he thinks he can bring him round; but his wound has to be dressed every half hour, and that might disturb you; otherwise, if you like both of you to sleep on the ground by the side of the wounded man, for God's sake do so."

Declined with thanks.

"Then," said Picard, "you would perhaps like the room upstairs where my little boy is lying dangerously ill with the scarlet fever? You have only to say so, and a bed shall be prepared for you at once."

The scarlet fever was also declined.

"You have an excellent room on the first floor, looking into the street," said the Prussian; "I have already examined your house from the outside."

"Yes," answered Picard, "and two young ladies on a visit to my wife—they went out for a walk an hour ago, and have not yet returned—are going to sleep in it. You would not, I suppose," glaring at us with dull, stupid, but ferocious eyes, as much as to say "there is no sort of atrocity, all the same, of which you are not capable"—"you would not, I suppose, ask me to make you up a bed there?"

“What other rooms have you?” we asked.

“This one, the one you are now standing in,” he replied (we had left the room occupied by the wounded man), “and I will now tell you what I can do for you. In this room, in that bed, my wife and myself have slept every night for the last thirty-five years. I will now give it up to you, gentlemen, and my wife and myself will walk up and down the street all night while you are reposing.”

At last we went to the mayor, who kept, or ought to have kept, a list of available quarters. He could tell us of none; but it appeared that in his own house, at one of the extreme ends of the town, doors shut, windows darkened, there were two magnificent suites of rooms, of which we occupied one.

M. le maire could give us no breakfast next morning. He pleaded bachelorhood, and swore he had no cook; nor could he say where even a piece of bread was to be bought.

The night after the battle every one thought the war was at an end; and, certainly, even the victors themselves were pleased to think so. As for the vanquished, their delight was something humiliating to witness. The triumph of the baser over the nobler instincts of humanity was complete. Their Emperor had surrendered himself a prisoner, their army had been beaten as no army in this world was ever beaten before, and the miserable, panic-stricken,

famine-threatened people could not do otherwise than rejoice, for, at all events, no more Prussian soldiers would be quartered upon them.

"*Nous voila Prussiens !*" exclaimed one man, with contented cynicism, as much as to say, "We are mortally disgraced, but we, at least, shall not die of hunger." The inhabitants in general were I cannot say whether better or worse than this obnoxious personage. In their simple *naïveté* they did not know, could not feel, how sad the result of the three days' fighting had been for France as a nation. They only knew, or believed they knew, that they were not to be plagued, worried, frightened any more by the presence of German troops.

I said to one man, "You will not have many more soldiers marching in this direction. The other departments will now suffer."

"Let them suffer," he replied. "We have had our turn."

There was an official cry of "Light up!" when the Crown Prince was about to return. Candles had to be shown in every house, and I heard the commandant of the town call out when he passed one house in which no windows on the first floor were illuminated,—for the simple, but sufficient reason, that the first floor of the house in question had none—

"Lights, or your house shall be demolished!"

There is something strange, anomalous, paradoxical—not to say cruel—in calling upon and forcing a population to illuminate, in celebration of what they ought to consider a heavy national calamity. The illumination was insisted upon, however, and very droll it was. Candles were displayed wherever it was possible to display them. I saw one man perched on the box of a carriage with a candle in his hand, and another man with a candle in his hand sitting astride a barrel. In one house the women shrieked and yelled under the impression that a battle was about to begin, and cried out that what they had long foreseen was now coming to pass, and that every inhabitant of Chémery would be put to the sword.

Several officers had copies of the Emperor's letter, which, repeated from mouth to mouth, acquired curious variations. A copy shown to me, and declared to be accurate, presented a strange and significant error. Instead of "N'ayant pas *pu* mourir à la tête de mes troupes, je dépose mon épée aux pieds de votre majesté," it ran: "N'ayant pas *su* mourir à la tête de mes troupes," etc.

General von Roon, who did not seem acquainted with all the circumstances of the Emperor's submission, now arrived, and was soon supplied with full particulars. An officer, who, after speaking to him for a moment, came away quickly from the

side of his carriage, said to me: "I was afraid he would ask me about his son, and I could not have answered him. He is in the artillery of the guard, and has received a terrible wound, from which it is impossible he can recover."

Early the next morning I again took the road to Sedan, a few miles distant. Some thought the battle would be re-commenced—that is to say, that the town would be bombarded until, not only the Emperor, but the whole army surrendered. I had not slept the night before, nor breakfasted that morning, and on the road to Sedan had to make the usual, not always unprofitable, attempt to get something to eat, for, in the absence of food, there was generally an incident, or a curious illustration of character, to be met with.

On my inquiring at a roadside inn, about half-way between Chémery and Sedan, whether the proprietor could give me breakfast on his own terms, the customary negative answer was returned.

"I have nothing in the house," said the host, a burly, red-faced man, whom a day's fasting would not have injured; "your soldiers have taken everything. But I must not abuse them," he added, "for if one of them had not given my wife and myself a piece of bread yesterday, we should have starved.

Moi qui vous parle, monsieur, I should at this moment be dead from hunger!"

Without criticising the man's statement too closely, I felt somewhat ashamed at having applied for food to one who had so nearly fallen a victim to famine. He asked me whether there was anything new.

"Nothing," I replied, "but what you must have already heard. You know that the Emperor has surrendered?"

"What!" he exclaimed. "That brigand, that coward, has surrendered? And are they going to put a rope round his neck, and drag him three times round the walls of Sedan?"

I said I had not heard of any such intention being entertained by the Prussians, and at the same time asked for the address of the village mayor.

The innkeeper, after some little hesitation, showed me where the mayor lived. I drove to his house, and asked whether there was any well-to-do man in the place who could be supposed to have a loaf of bread in his possession, and to be willing, for a consideration, to part with it. I might as well have searched for the philosopher's stone.

I was continuing my way towards Sedan, when a lad ran after me, and shouted to me to return.

I thought he had discovered a baker's shop, or, perhaps, that the mayor had conceived hospitable

intentions towards me. He told me, however, that the innkeeper had sent him to say that his wife had just returned, and that she was surprised and charmed to find that, if I would take the trouble to retrace my steps, she should be able, in a very few minutes, to give me some breakfast.

The lad who had run after me was a young carter who had lost his cart, and with it his means of living. The Prussians, he believed, had wanted to make him a soldier, which, for a young man like him, who had never fired a gun in his life, was, he said, too hard.

I agreed with him on that point, but also asked him of what use he thought a boy who had never fired a gun would be to the Prussians, who had already a good many trained soldiers of their own.

He replied that perhaps the Prussians who had spoken to him had only wished to frighten him, but he was sure, though he did not understand their language, that they had said they would take him for a soldier. Accordingly, he had run away, leaving his cart and his two horses behind him. He was now many leagues away from home, and, as he could not get back to his mother and sisters, he had gone, he said, to live with the innkeeper, simply that he might not be without food.

It seemed to me that he had gone to the wrong place; but, on arriving at the inn, I found a rich

and varied repast prepared. Whence it came, and why, did not for the moment concern me; but I afterwards sought an explanation of the mystery. The innkeeper then pointed out to me, that, from the remotest ages, it had been the custom to honour the bearer of good news; that, to him, as an advanced republican, and a wine-merchant who once, under the Empire, had, for his political opinions, been refused a licence, the news of the Imperial collapse was glorious, and hence that breakfast, for which he declined to receive payment, either directly, or in the shape of an offering for the poor.

All this may have been true, or the man may have disbelieved my statement that I was an Englishman, and assigned to me some occupation in connection with the Prussians. From a few hints that he let drop I gathered that my visit to the mairie had alarmed him. In any case, he gave me breakfast, and I left the inn fortified for the day.

In the meanwhile, I had heard no sound of cannon. It was plain that the battle had not been recommenced, and that the army had capitulated.

An hour or two afterwards I saw, near Donchery, a French farmer sitting outside his house, with an immense pile of grapes before him, which he began to distribute to a number of Würtemberg soldiers, exclaiming, as he gave them away :

“There, brigand! there, Arab! there, bandit!”

“Why,” I could not help saying to him, “do you abuse these men, and at the same time give them such excellent grapes?”

“You may well say they are excellent,” he replied. “I had the finest vine in all Champagne at the back of my house, and these *chipaillours*” (a word not to be found in the dictionary of the Academy, but which signifies, I believe, “pilferers”) “have all but stripped it. So I thought I would pick what grapes were left and give them away myself.”

“There, flayer of the poor!” he continued, resuming his distribution, while the unconscious Würtembergers bowed their acknowledgments in silence; “there, devourer of children! there, son of the gallows! there, man who believes neither in God nor devil!”

When this curious but not incomprehensible person had given away all his grapes, he lighted a pipe and looked calm. You may see much that is sadly comic, but much more that is seriously sad, in time of war.

The condition of a conquered population, especially the morning after the conquest, must always be lamentable; but, on the other hand, the invaded in this last invasion had no violence to fear

at the hands of the invaders; and this seems to me a very important point.

“Violence, indeed!” said the French, when you spoke to them, as I often did, on the subject. “Why should they have recourse to violence when they get everything they want?”

Nevertheless other invaders have not only used personal violence to enforce the slightest demand, they have carried fire and sword into unoffending villages, so that the consequences of a battle have sometimes been more terrible than the battle itself.

One of the least available cures for melancholy recommended by the learned author of the “Anatomy,” is to see “two kings engaged in single combat.” I had the satisfaction, though the sight was not one to inspire gaiety, to see the King of Prussia take leave of his late adversary, the Emperor Napoleon, at the Château de Belle Vue, near Sedan. I also saw the French Emperor, when King William had gone, come out into the garden and begin smoking his historical cigarettes, and was much struck by his composed manner, and the urbanity with which, in the modern French military style, he raised his cap to all who saluted him.

But what struck me, above all, in the appearance of his Majesty, and of the four generals—Prince Ney de la Moskowa, Pajol, Castelnau, and Reille

—who were with him, was the brilliant get-up of the whole party: their costumes were perfect, and they wore them with an excellent air. If I had just arrived in a balloon from China, landing on that memorable day in front of the Belle Vue Château, I should have fancied that the Frenchmen lounging on the stone steps or walking in the garden, and not the Prussians with whom they conversed, were masters of the situation.

This brilliancy of attire did not, I was assured, have the best effect on the fatigued and harassed soldiers. When Ducrot's 1st and 3rd divisions saw the Emperor, his staff, and the whole of the Maison Militaire arrive in all their splendour at Douzy, two days before the battle of Sedan—the day of the flight and pursuit from Beaumont—not one soldier (though Napoleon III. had not, by these particular troops, been seen since he left Chalons) cried, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" As for the members of the household, they were hissed and hooted.

"*Les Zouaves les ont gueulés,*" said the French officer who gave me this information, adding (with justice), that the expression he used was "more fitted for the camp than the drawing-room." The soldiers, moreover, were of opinion that the generals and the Emperor himself fared much better in the matter of food than the great bulk of the fight-

ing men ; and this opinion was, no doubt, well founded.

I fancy, too, that the King of Prussia and the Prussian and Saxon Princes were not quite so hard up for victuals as that Bavarian soldier who asked me at La Besace to sell him part of my bread. The grumbling of the French troops proved only one thing—that they had no confidence in their leaders, and that there was perhaps some want of discipline in the army.

On the esplanade in front of the Château of Belle Vue, from which, until two o'clock on Friday, the 2nd of September, artillery was still kept pointed towards the town of Sedan, I recognized, among the members of the military household, M. Caumont, the well-known hairdresser of the Rue Rivoli. M. Caumont, like other Frenchmen, holds theories, and he communicated to me his views respecting socialism in the ranks, to which he insisted on attributing the otherwise unaccountable defeat and capture of the French army.

“Where was the Emperor during yesterday's battle?” I asked M. Caumont, who had been in personal attendance on his Majesty since the commencement of the war.

“For some hours, towards the end of the action,” he replied, “the Emperor stood behind a battery and pointed guns himself.”

Some of the French soldiers attributed their defeat to the badness of the cartridges served out to them. Others believed that Count Bismarck had "squared" the Emperor; and some of the Prussian soldiers had got hold of a curious fancy to the effect that Napoleon was only to be kept at Wilhelmshöhe until Paris was taken and the Republic quashed, when, "to punish the French," Count Bismarck would reinstate him!

It is true that the Prussian were, in one respect, better than the French cartridges. An English officer once picked up a needle-gun and a chassépôt cartridge, which had both been out all night on a damp battle-field, and, breaking them open, pointed out to me that in the latter the powder was caked, while in the former it was dry and serviceable. But the French were not defeated at Sedan, or anywhere else, because their ammunition was either bad or insufficient, or because they were badly fed, or because they were without discipline. They must have been at least as well off for food up to the date of the battle as the Germans, who had outmarched their provision columns, and, living for the most part on the resources of the country, and in many places that the French had anticipated them.

Neither was it "the Prussian schoolmaster" who

beat the French schoolmaster at Sedan, whatever he may have done to the Austrian schoolmaster at Sadowa. The Prussian sergeant had more to do with it, and the Prussian officer more still, and the Prussian general most of all. If "the schoolmaster" decided battles, the Saxon schoolmaster ought to have been victorious in 1866, for the Saxons are the best educated people in Germany; and the Russians ought never to have held their ground against any description of European troops.

I do not even think it was the immorality of the French that caused their defeats in the late war. They were never a very moral people, in our sense of the word; and, judging by their literature, they are not more immoral now than they were in the days of the first republic and of the first Napoleon, when, in spite of their immorality, they gained a few victories.

Nor had the French army suffered, as is often alleged, from the system of substitutes; for it was precisely of substitutes—of re-enlisted men—that the Zouaves, Chasseurs, and other picked regiments ("regiments of élite" as Moltke called them, in awarding to them special praise*) were mainly composed.

The French were in no want of ammunition, and in no great want of provisions; and they were not

* See page 130.

nearly so much demoralised as is generally asserted. But there was no unity of command, no commander-in-chief of the entire army on the spot ; and if, moreover, at Sedan, MacMahon's army had been an army of Puritans, and every man in it had taken his Bachelor's degree, the Prussians, better led, twice as numerous, with more artillery and of longer range, elated by previous victories, and fully conscious of their immediate superiority to the French in men and material, must all the same have crushed them.





CHAPTER X.

FRANCS-TIREURS AND THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE.

T PASSED the night of the 2nd in the kitchen of a farm-house near Vendresse, with two correspondents, and I forget how many officers of one of the companies of a Polish regiment belonging to the Fifth (Posen) Army Corps. The ancient, massively constructed building had exterior walls with turrets, like a fortress; and the captain, as if to keep up the illusion, had placed sentinels outside the gates. The farm-house had been deserted, except by two farm servants, husband and wife—simple, good-natured people, who gave us hot wine at night, and plenty of straw to lie upon, and coffee with milk the next morning. I don't know why we slept in the kitchen; perhaps because all the other rooms, together with the passages, barns, and stables, were occupied by about three hundred soldiers—a

diminished company, with the remains of another company added to it.

At Vendresse, where the King's head-quarters remained, from the night of the 31st until the 4th—starting on the morning of that day for Rheims—I noticed a proclamation, in great detail, against francs-tireurs, in which it was announced that, in accordance with the "Prussian military code," those using arms against the Germans must, in order to be looked upon as soldiers, wear a uniform bearing "distinctive marks inseparable from the person," and "recognizable at gunshot distance;" and must, moreover, carry papers showing that they formed part of the French army. Persons in plain clothes, fighting without authorization from their government, would, if captured, be brought before a court-martial; and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in a German fortress, or, in aggravated cases, executed.

I believe that every case in which a franc-tireur actually shot a German soldier, was looked upon as an "aggravated case," and entailed the punishment of death.

The proclamation against francs-tireurs had caused great indignation among the few French at Vendresse, with whom I conversed on the subject; but in the absence of some such law, marking clearly the difference between soldiers and civilians,

and establishing the principle that, if an enemy is to enjoy the privileges of a soldier when captured, he must accept the liabilities of a soldier when free, it would be impossible for an invading army to treat non-combatants as, in modern warfare, non-combatants are usually treated. If the apparently noble, but really barbarous, principle be recognized, that every man has, without conditions, a right to defend his native land, his village, and the house in which he was born, then it follows that an invading army must, for its own safety, imprison or destroy all inhabitants thus claiming an absolute right to resist it.

At the same time, it is only successful invaders who can systematically enforce laws against un-military persons bearing arms. The Duke of Brunswick's army in 1792, being defeated, was often attacked by volunteers not in uniform—by armed peasants, in fact; and no proclamations concerning distinctive marks, papers from the government, and so on, could at that time have been of any avail.

In 1814, Prince Schwarzenberg, finding that a levy *en masse* had been ordered, issued a proclamation, not quite so explicit as to details, but in effect almost identical with the one published at Vendresse in 1870 against francs-tireurs.

Napoleon, without believing much in the levy

en masse ("how," he asked, "can a general rising take place in a country where the revolution has killed the priests and nobles, and I have killed the revolution?"), declared that he would retaliate, and that for every French volunteer executed, he would execute a prisoner of the allied army. But, as he retired without making prisoners, and the allies advanced, the threat was disregarded; the peasantry saw which side was the strongest, and the levy *en masse* proved a failure.*

The Prussians, on entering France, had made known their views as to those against whom they waged war, and those whom they proposed not to molest; but it was not until after the battle of Sedan, when nearly the whole of the regular troops of France had been disposed of—one half shut up in Metz, the other half captured—that I met with a proclamation setting forth distinctly and in detail what sort of volunteer soldiers would *not* be regarded as soldiers if they fell into Prussian hands: in plain language, partisans not in the regular service of the Government, and National Guards not embodied for service throughout the war.

While in the neighbourhood of Sedan, and on the subject of civilians appearing as soldiers, I may appropriately say a few words about Bazeilles, and

* "L'Invasion dans le Département de la Marne." Par F. F. Steenackers, Chapitre vi.

its destruction by the Bavarians. It has already passed into French history that the Bavarians, in consequence of having been fired upon by some civilians, who had beforehand put on their uniforms as National Guards, set the place on fire by hand, and drove back into the flames the inhabitants—old and young, women and children—as they endeavoured to escape. The Duke de Fitzjames, in a letter published in the *Times*, gives that version of the affair; but he does not profess to have seen what he describes. All he saw was the lamentable sight of Bazeilles in ruins.

Baron Von der Tann, replying to the Duke de Fitzjames, confined himself to proving, by the official evidence of the mayor of Bazeilles, that only some forty inhabitants (and not seventeen hundred, as the Duke de Fitzjames had been informed), were missing from the village after the conflagration; which, he argued, was sufficiently accounted for by the number of shells thrown into it from both sides. The general left untouched the question, whether the Bavarian infantry did or did not set fire to a portion of Bazeilles by hand; and, if so, under what circumstances.

I believe I have read everything that has been written on the subject of the burning of Bazeilles; and nearly the whole of the evidence on the subject is of the indirect, hearsay kind, not very valuable in

time of peace, and utterly worthless turning up in and just after the excitement of war. But the fighting at Bazeilles has also been described by an observant eye-witness, and by one eye-witness only; and the author of the remarkable narrative of personal adventures published in the *Times* (Sept. 8), under the signature of "M.P.," writing immediately after the battle of Sedan, had no idea that the Bavarians had been or ever would be charged with burning Bazeilles as a punishment to the inhabitants for taking up arms; still less that they would be accused of burning with the village 1700 out of 2000 of the villagers. It is clear, however, that, during the progress of the action, Bazeilles, being already on fire in several places from the effect of shells, the Bavarians did their best to burn out French soldiers, who were attacking them from houses, and who refused to surrender; clear, also, that the armed civilians, though mercilessly treated, were yet not burned alive. "I saw them," writes "M.P.," "taken with the arms in their hands. The men (but not the women, I was assured) would be hanged next day."

A field of battle is first a terrible, then a pitiable, then a loathsome sight; and the field or fields on which the battle of Sedan had been fought soon reached the loathsome stage. On the ground nearest the city the dead men, only two days after

the fight, had, for the most part, been buried. The dead horses had been skinned, cut up, and partially eaten. The huge red carcasses were lying about everywhere, amid smashed helmets, broken muskets, rusty sabres, torn knapsacks, stray epaulettes, and battered accoutrements of all kinds—a slaughter-house and a depôt for marine stores combined.

On the way from Sedan to Bouillon, a manufacturer from Sedan, whose acquaintance I had made on the road, asked me to stop at La Chapelle, the last village on the French side of the frontier, that he might make inquiries after a friend whom he had not seen since the great battle.

La Chapelle may be said to have marked the last gap left open in the circle drawn around the French; and the friend assured us that four or five hundred francs-tireurs, not belonging to the neighbourhood of Sedan, but for the most part Parisians—the corps, as I afterwards learned, of M. Mocquard—had made their appearance there, and fired upon the Prussian cavalry stationed at this point. Thereupon artillery was sent for, and the place bombarded.

Our informant had quitted his house at the beginning of the general action, and told us that on his return he found that the "Crown Prince" of Prussia had made a call, and that he had even left his name written in pencil on one of the walls.

I could not understand the presence of the "Crown Prince" of Prussia at La Chapelle, and went into the house to see what the inscription spoken of really was. I copied it down, and it was literally as follows:—

"Cette maison a été quitée intacte.

"Schulenburg Maréchal de la Cour de S. A. R. le

"Prince Albert de Prusse, 1, 9, 70.

"IV. Cav. Div. III. Armée."

The band of francs-tireurs who occupied La Chapelle with such disastrous results, had been recruited at Paris. From Paris they reached Mézières, and from Mézières marched the day of the battle to La Chapelle, whence, as some said, they were dislodged by artillery. Others, however, declared that the place had been deliberately bombarded, by way of punishment to the inhabitants for having harboured francs-tireurs—a course the inhabitants thought unjustifiably severe, seeing that the francs-tireurs had not been invited, and did not even belong to their neighbourhood. I cannot say that I saw any traces of a systematic bombardment; but the Prussians would certainly have regarded as illegitimate an attack by an irregular, insignificant body of men, whose perfectly independent action might cause some injury to individuals, but could have no effect on the result of the battle.

I met several of these francs-tireurs at a café in Bouillon, and found them by no means the desperate characters imagined by the Prussians; clearly, however, not soldiers, or they would have been made prisoners at the frontier.

In the café patronized by "les Mocquard" a great number of correspondents, from all parts, newly arrived *viâ* Brussels, were now writing accounts of the battle of Sedan. In one of these narratives which I afterwards saw in print, I was much struck by a flight of the peasants, imitated from Göthe's "Hermann and Dorothea," and a retreat of demoralized French troops, after Stendhal's description of the rout at Waterloo. I also observed a reminiscence of Géricault's wounded cuirassier, but nothing that belonged especially to the battle of Sedan.

It is really, however, on the vanquished, not the victorious side, that the most dramatic incidents of war are to be seen—witness the accounts of Sedan in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," by M. Albert Duruy and M. Paul de Cassagnac, both in the fight; and by M. Claretie, an outside observer. Only Sedan, to the inhabitants at least, was the next thing to a surprise.

Indeed, in the neighbourhood of Sedan, gaiety rather than fear would seem to have been the prevailing sentiment until the very eve of the

battle. An officer of Ducrot's corps, in reading to me from his note-book the names of places at which his regiment had halted since Rheims, said, when he came to the date of the 30th, "Douzy; yes, that's where we had the ball."

The 30th was the day of Beaumont, two days before Sedan.

"What could possibly make you give a ball at such a moment as that?" I asked him.

"Well," he replied, "we had the band with us, and a number of young ladies had come to see us from Sedan."

The explanation seemed scarcely sufficient, so I made some inquiries on the subject. An inhabitant of Sedan told me that he had seen the dancing at Douzy, and it evidently had not occurred to him that there was anything unbecoming in it. As Ducrot's corps was the one alleged to have danced, I turned a year or so afterwards to that general's narrative of the campaign, to see whether it contained any mention of the gay interlude between the rout of a portion of the army at Beaumont and the capture of the entire army at Sedan.

General Ducrot does not describe the dancing, but it is possible to gather from his pages when, where, and how it took place. On the 30th of August the 12th, 1st, and 7th Corps were making for Montmédy, while the 5th Corps (General de

Failly) stood at Beaumont facing south, to cover the march of the rest of the army. A portion of the 1st corps (Ducrot's) advancing through Raucourt and Rémilly, reached Douzy on the morning of the 30th. "The march forward," writes one of Ducrot's officers, "the beauty of the banks of the Meuse, a splendid sunshine . . . made us forget our previous wretchedness, and restored confidence to every one."—*Journée de Sedan*, p. 142. "A dazzling sun," writes another, "had succeeded the distressing rains of the preceding days. . . Several regiments marched through Rémilly, making the air resound with their joyous strains, so long silent" (p. 94). In short, the weather was magnificent, the men were in good spirits, and, young ladies coming to see them, they asked them to dance.

But this it is to be hoped has little to do with the "usages of war." More closely connected therewith was a sight I saw in the streets of Bouillon, where about daybreak a most enterprising correspondent "might have been observed" making a wood fire, by which to boil some coffee. Instead of accepting his invitation to share with him his public breakfast, I hastened with terrible slowness, by a constantly blocked-up system of railway communication, to Strasburgh, which with all Alsace was already in effect lost to France.



CHAPTER XI.

THE SIEGE OF STRASBURGH AND THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORTIFIED TOWNS.

THE siege of Strasburgh from a general military point of view possessed no great importance. A few days, sooner or later, the old-fashioned fortress, unprotected by detached forts, its ramparts destitute of shell-proof casemates, the place closely invested, without the least prospect of relief, was sure to fall. The result being known beforehand, the chief interest of the siege lay in certain engineering experiments, and in the trial of various kinds of new guns and mortars, destined afterwards to be employed against Paris, and which would probably have been essayed against Metz itself, or at least against the forts around it if that inassailable city had held out long enough. Although in the course of the last war the Germans commenced parallels before more than one fortress

(as, for example, Schlestadt), they never had occasion, except before Strasburgh, to complete their siege works. In front of Strasburgh, however, they made the three traditional parallels, with a half parallel in advance, crowned the glacis, met mine with counter mine, crossed the moat, captured the outworks immediately opposed to them, breached the walls, and would have entered by assault had not the untenable place almost at the last moment surrendered.

The experience was quite new to the Prussians, practised warriors as they are; and it was said that, in the whole German army, there was not one officer who, elsewhere than at a military academy, had followed, step by step, the operations of a regular siege. One foreign Government, that of Austria, sent a commissioner to the head-quarters before Strasburgh; and the technical account of the operations published by the officer in question, with the equally technical but more generally interesting narrative contributed to the *Militarische Blätter*, by Lieutenant Maier, of the Magdeburgh fortress artillery (4th Army Corps), are the sources to which military readers should turn for scientific information on the subject. Several important novelties were introduced. Thus it was found possible to breach walls and demolish sluices at immense distances by indirect firing; and, invariably, not with solid shot

but with shell. Indeed, "cannon balls" and solid shot in general seem to belong to the past more even than regular sieges. The modern mode of dealing with fortified towns is to shell them from a distance with rifled guns, and—later invention still—rifled mortars, such as for the first time in the history of war were used against Strasburgh.

The Prussians have never liked sieges; nevertheless the plan of reducing fortresses by means of "simple bombardment," is only peculiar to them in so far that they alone have had the opportunity of employing it systematically since the introduction of rifled artillery. French military writers declared openly before the war that it would be the duty of French commanders to bombard the civil and commercial quarters of the fortified towns they might attack;* and as a matter of fact, the French bombarded Paris under the Commune, without the least regard to the protests they themselves had raised against its bombardment a few months before by the Prussians. Vauban's fortresses were never constructed on the supposition that, in case of attack, their walls alone would be fired upon, but in the belief that, unless regular siege operations were undertaken, the system of defence adopted would prove sufficient against the artillery of that time,

* See article in *Spectateur Militaire*, referred to in Appendix B.

which was only effective within a range of from about five to six hundred yards.* The reason why formerly the civil population of fortified towns was often spared the terror and torture of a bombardment, was not because the warriors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were more humane than those of the present day, but because their guns were less powerful.

There were political reasons, however—national reasons, it may be said—for which the besiegers hesitated to lay the whole of Strasburgh in ruins; and as no relieving army was to be expected,† they could afford to wait a little longer before Strasburgh than before some other fortified towns, which met with shorter, sharper, but not in the long run such severe treatment. For the unhappy capital of Alsace, which held out to a greater extremity than any other bombarded town, suffered ten times as much as Paris, in order to prove that it was French; and was visited with a prolonged bombardment of the ramparts encircling and touching the city, instead of a decisive bombardment of the city itself, because the Germans regarded it as already German.

* General Ducrot's figures *apropos* of the guns of Sedan.

† Once only, when for a time the Prussians had lost sight of MacMahon, a telegram of caution was received at the head-quarters before Strasburgh, to the effect that French troops might perhaps be marching to the relief of the place.

Strasburgh was summoned to surrender on the 8th of August, two days after the battle of Wörth, and approached by a considerable body of troops on the 12th. On the 14th, the day on which Count Bismarck-Bohlen and Count Bonin entered upon their functions as general-governors of Alsace and of Lorraine, General Werder, having left the staff of the Crown Prince of Prussia for that purpose, assumed the command of the army before Strasburgh, consisting of the Baden division, the division of the landwehr of the guard, and a mixed division of Prussian and other regiments of the line. On the 16th, Strasburgh having meanwhile been invested, the French made their first sortie; and on the 18th the citadel and Finckmatt barracks—known as the scene of Prince Louis Napoleon's arrest when he entered Strasburgh as a pretender to the French throne in 1836—were bombarded from batteries established on the right bank of the Rhine at Kehl. Although the orders on this occasion—as they were read to me by an artillery officer from his order-book—were to shell the military buildings just named, many private houses and public establishments of a civil character were struck and set on fire while the Baden artillerymen were getting the range.

The French replied by bombarding Kehl, a portion of which, including nearly the whole of the

principal street, was burned to the ground. Kehl that night was entirely deserted by the inhabitants, who did not return until after the fall of Strasburgh; and General Werder was said at the time to have addressed to General Uhrich an impossible complaint as to his having bombarded an open city.

The bombardment of the 18th was little more than an experiment made by the Baden artillery with heavy guns brought from the fortress of Rastadt before the regular siege-artillery had arrived. The batteries at Kehl were some 1400 yards from the fortifications; and it was thought that at that distance their fire would not prove very effective. The result, however, was so satisfactory, that it was resolved to try whether Strasburgh might not be brought to capitulate by "simple bombardment" alone. Notwithstanding the absence of detached forts, there were difficulties worth considering in the way of a regular siege. The place was surrounded by water except on the north-west side, which was specially protected by ravelins, horn-works, lunettes, and all the most approved impediments to a hostile approach. Then the operations of a siege could not fail to occupy some weeks, while, on the other hand, "simple bombardment" directed against a rich and populous city like Strasburgh, with a feeble garrison, which would have to defend itself on the ramparts in open batteries, might force the inha-

bitants to bring such pressure to bear on the commandant that he would surrender forthwith. General Uhrich's garrison consisted of only 11,000* regular troops with 6000 mobiles, francs-tireurs, national guards, and sailors; and Strasburgh had 84,000 inhabitants. The sailors, it may be here mentioned, had come to Strasburgh under the command of Admiral Excelmans, to man a fleet of gunboats which was to have manœuvred on the Rhine.

The arrival of 200 rifled guns, and about 100 smooth-bore mortars, enabled the besiegers to commence a regular bombardment from various points on the evening of the 24th August. In addition to the Baden batteries, the artillery now before Strasburgh included the fortress artillery† of the 4th 5th, 6th, 7th, and 10th Army Corps, and of the Guard Corps, besides that of the Wurtemburgh division, and of one or both of the two Bavarian corps; making in all 33 fortress companies, with

* These are the Prussian numbers. General Uhrich, in a proclamation to the inhabitants of Strasburgh (10th of August), declaring that he means to defend the place as long as possible, puts down the number of the garrison at 11,000 men, without counting the sedentary national guard.

† A Prussian artillery brigade, of which there is one to each army corps, consists of two artillery regiments, one of field artillery, the other of fortress, or, as it would be called in England, garrison artillery.

from 7000 to 8000 men. Batteries were constructed for about 100 pieces, partly rifled 24-pounders (carrying 60-pound shells), and partly heavy mortars.

A fresh summons to surrender, threatening bombardment as the alternative, had been sent in on the 22nd; and on the evening of the 24th a terrible fire was opened upon all parts of the city. The bombardment was kept up relentlessly throughout the night of the 24th, and again throughout the night of the 25th. On the 26th the white flag was looked for in vain; and it was determined, as the two nights' bombardment had not produced the desired effect, to undertake regular siege operations.

Meanwhile, the famous Library and the Picture Gallery, among other public buildings, had been entirely destroyed. The roof of the Cathedral, too, had been burned, and the cross on the tower struck by a shell, so that, but for the surrounding props which maintained it in a crooked position throughout the siege, it would have fallen.

The besiegers had hoped that the bombardment would bring about an immediate surrender, and thus liberate the 50,000 men detained around the fortress. But no such result had ensued, so that the Library might, after all, have been spared. Certainly, the rarest of its rare contents might have been saved; for the authorities of Strasburgh,

warned beforehand, had had time enough to put them in some place of security. •

The bombardment was continued while preparations for commencing the siege-works were being made, but was now directed, as much as possible, against the ramparts. As new batteries, however, were erected, and brought nearer and nearer to the walls, so did the number of projectiles directed against the fortifications increase; and though the centre of the city was as much as possible spared, fires were lighted every night, and houses, and sometimes whole streets, destroyed. The two quarters which especially suffered, and which the besieging artillery, in fact, laid in ruins, were the Stone Faubourg, at the back of the gate of the same name, that being the main object of attack in the north-west front, before which the siege-works were constructed; and the National Faubourg at the back of the citadel on the other side of the town, which, as the garrison's chief stronghold, was bombarded without intermission from the batteries at Kehl. Sometimes the shells fired continuously at the citadel on one side, and at the Stone Gate on the other, went considerably beyond their mark, and fell in the centre of the town. Shells, too—so completely was all Strasburgh within range—were thrown right across the town, so as to take the soldiers on the ramparts in rear. Thus the distinc-

tion between bombarding the town and bombarding the ramparts alone must to the inhabitants have appeared somewhat illusory. It is certain, all the same, that, after their first ineffective endeavour to reduce Strasburgh by "simple bombardment," the besiegers spared the town as much as they could, consistently with their resolution to take it as rapidly as possible, by means of siege operations. If occasionally they threw a shell at the observatory established by the French on one of the towers of the Cathedral, that is to be explained by the fact that the French had not thought fit to discontinue its use.

On the morning of August the 25th, after the first deliberate night-bombardment of the city, the Bishop of Strasburgh went out under a flag of truce, and endeavoured to reach General Werder's head-quarters, where he hoped to find the Grand Duke of Baden, with whose family he had long been on friendly terms. He was anxious to obtain permission for the women and children to leave Strasburgh, but was informed at the outposts that his application would be in vain, and that he could not proceed. As Strasburgh ultimately fell through the effect of siege operations, and neither through famine, nor through the terror caused by "simple bombardment," it is obvious that the women and children might have been suffered to depart with-

out the result of the siege being thereby affected. It is, at the same time, only fair to remember that General von Werder was bound to leave no means untried for forcing the enemy to capitulate; and, one, apparently possible, probable means of influencing a population of 84,000, was the severe one of hunger.

The first parallel was made on the night of the 29th, without accidents, and almost without interference. It was dark, and the officers marched to the foot of the glacis, and measured the distance unobserved. Soon, however, fire-balls were thrown in the neighbourhood of the working parties; and the men of the 30th Regiment, beneath whose cover they dug, and who were themselves entrenched at about 400 paces from the fortress, expected an attack, though none was made. The ground laid open was just before Schilitigheim, a village commanding the north-west front of the fortress, where General Ducrot, chief of the Strasburgh military district, had vainly urged, in 1866, that a fort should be constructed. Such a fort would have closed the one possible approach by means of trenches, since, on all other sides, the place was surrounded by canals and canalized streams.

A parallel is a trench—usually about three feet deep and ten feet wide, with a breastwork thrown up before it, about three feet high—more or less

“parallel” to that front of the fortress which it is proposed to attack, and probably some five or six hundred yards distant from it. Batteries are established in the first parallel (which, at Strasburgh, was 1200 yards (1800 paces) long); and zig-zag communications, or “approaches,” are dug to a second parallel, which may be 250 or 300 yards in advance of the first, and about half as long.

Approaches and second parallels are armed with batteries; and fresh approaches, equally armed, are pushed forward to a third parallel, about half the length of the second, and some hundred and twenty or hundred and fifty yards nearer the fortress. Guns are placed in the third parallel, and in a “half parallel” yet farther in advance. The third parallel and “half parallel” both lead by short approaches to the glacis; on the summit of which a last trench is dug, and armed with batteries commanding the outworks in front of the main wall. This is called “crowning the glacis;” and when the glacis has been crowned the work is approaching its end.

The first parallel ran in front of one of the great Schilitigheim breweries, from which a good view of Strasburgh could be obtained, but which was naturally much exposed to artillery and other fire. Fortunately for lookers-on, the shots from chasse-pôts and wall-pieces were generally aimed too high, and passed, whizzing, over the brewery roof.

The shells were better directed, and often fell in and about the trenches. But the besiegers' batteries were not much injured, and their loss in killed and wounded, chiefly from shell, amounted to only about ten a day. The civil population of Strasburgh lost that number daily, in killed alone.

The second parallel ran through the cemetery; and the excited Strasburghers used to imagine that the besiegers—without the least regard to the material unfitness of such projectiles—fired at them crosses torn from the desecrated graves. But bits of iron from shells are of various forms, and the leaden sheath in which the elongated shell is enveloped assumes, violently separated from its contents, the most fantastic shapes.

In sieges, as in other operations of war, that peaceful invention, the electric telegraph, plays an important part; and at Strasburgh a telegraphic wire ran through the trenches, and connected the parallels and approaches with head-quarters. There was also telegraphic communication between the batteries at Kehl and a church tower close by; whence an artillery officer watched each shot, and corrected or approved the gunner's aim according to its effect. Before quitting the trenches I must not forget to mention that, in the first parallel a so-called café was established, which, in contempt, as it were, of the French artillery, was named "Café Sans Souci."

The glacis having been reached by means of the parallels and approaches, and duly "crowned," it must now be explained that between the glacis and the Stone Gate, through which an entry was to be forced, stood two important outworks called "lunettes," numbered in the plans of Strasburgh "52" and "53," and separated from the wall of the glacis by a ditch or moat 14 feet deep and 180 wide. Lunette 54, which commanded lunettes 52 and 53, had been first made untenable by 160-pound shells from a rifled mortar battery, established about a mile off at the farthest extremity of the first parallel. The walls, too, of lunettes 52 and 53 had been battered by shells from a distant indirect breaching battery of rifled 24-pounders: but before these works could be entered by the besiegers, a reconnaissance all round them was made swimming by Captain Ledebour. The same gallant officer discovered a mine which, before further operations could be undertaken, had to be dealt with through an appropriate sap.

A few nights later the brave Captain Ledebour was mortally wounded; but not until the Prussians, crossing on a bridge of barrels, had occupied first lunette 53, and afterwards lunette 52.

From batteries established in the occupied lunettes, and from the indirect breaching batteries, the bastions at the side of the Stone Gate were literally

demolished. There was now an open breach: the ramparts were so swept by the besiegers' artillery that the French soldiers could no longer mount them; and at last, when the moment for the assault was approaching—though, inasmuch as there was still six feet of water in the moat between besiegers and besieged, it had not yet actually arrived—at last, on the 27th of September, at five o'clock in the afternoon, in the midst of a most infernal cannonade, the white flag was hoisted above the remains, the mere skeleton, the tottering frame-work, of the citadel.

Several shots were fired at the flag from the inside; and we afterwards heard that some foolish fanatics had raised the customary cry of "treason." Then another flag appeared on the Cathedral tower, and all at once the ear was surprised by a remarkable silence. There was a general feeling of relief on the part of the besiegers. The question of the assault, anxiously discussed for some days past, had been satisfactorily solved, and both sides were spared the final horror of an entry through the breach.

The surrender of Strasburgh on the 27th (it was formally delivered up on the 28th) was, in some measure, a surprise to the Germans. General Urich had lost it, but General von Werder could not have taken it from him for several days. The water in

front of the breach was too wide and too deep to be crossed in front of the French fire, feeble as that fire had become. Some doubted even whether the assault could be delivered on the 30th—the day on which, for sentimental national reasons, every one declared that it would be made. The 30th of September, 1681, was the day on which Louis XIV. seized Strasburgh in time of peace; and it was hoped that not later than the 30th of September, 1870, it would be recovered by the Germans. No salute was fired when Strasburgh fell. The 28th and 29th of September passed without any sign of rejoicing; and it was not until the 30th that the joy of the Germans at regaining possession of a city which, rightly or wrongly, they looked upon as national property, was expressed in the form of thanksgiving services.

For one thing the Germans were really thankful—for not having been obliged to take the city by assault.

Numerous French writers have reproached the Prussians with not caring to take fortified towns by the method of Vauban, and with habitually preferring the safer plan of reducing them by “simple bombardment.” But if an entry by assault cannot be effected in absolute security by the besiegers, it is the most terrible of all warlike operations to the besieged; and the inhabitants of those towns which

the Prussians bombarded most severely—even the cruelly-ried inhabitants of Strasburgh, where the loss of life was greater than in all the other bombarded cities and towns put together—may congratulate themselves on having escaped the last trial of an assault.

It is not to be supposed that the Prussians, had Strasburgh really been stormed, would have put in force the barbarous practice of sacking the city and (as an almost necessary consequence) slaying the inhabitants at will; though, in the absence of positive information, it is difficult to say what the rule on the subject may be, as laid down in that inaccessible document, the Prussian Military Code.* The theory at the bottom of the ancient Law of Sacking was that, to tempt the soldier to face the dangers of an assault, it was desirable to hold out to him the prospect of unlimited rapine. All laws, human and divine, were set aside as a temptation to ruffians who agreed to run great risks, on condition of being allowed, during a certain space of time, to indulge every brutal and savage propensity which at other moments they were condemned to

* The American Instructions are explicit enough on the point (Appendix C). They forbid pillage in all cases (art. 44), and specially forbid the sacking of towns taken by assault (art. 44). They at the same time repudiate the idea of restricting commanders as to the means to be employed for injuring the enemy (art. 30).

keep in something like restraint. But in those days criminals were freely admitted—were even deliberately drafted—into armies, and all soldiers were driven like slaves. The greater the reason, it may be said, for never relaxing a discipline which was of a purely mechanical kind. Soldiers, nevertheless, were let loose, like hounds, on certain occasions, and especially on such diabolical occasions as the storming of a town.

In the present day, that Prussian soldiers, representing the whole population of Prussia, except the criminal class, would need to be excited to the performance of their duty by the prospect of violence at will, to be perpetrated upon a defenceless population, is an idea that cannot be entertained. Nor would the kind of discipline now cultivated in the Prussian army admit of such exceptional licence. Nor would the chiefs, in any case, be likely to tolerate it. Nevertheless, in an assault upon a town houses would have to be stormed. It would be difficult to distinguish between the military and the civil occupants of the buildings attacked; and in all street fighting the civil population, whether taking up arms in the excitement or not, is sure to suffer. Moreover, by the laws of war in every country, a shot fired from a private house exposes the inmates to summary execution; and of this law the inhabitants of Strasburgh were in fact

reminded by a proclamation from the mayor the very day the Prussian and other German troops made their entry into the city.

As it was, a few shots were fired just as a portion of the 30th Regiment marched in; but it was impossible to see whence they came, and no one seemed to take the trouble to inquire. Probably some despondent soldiers, having to give up their arms, wished at least to give them up empty.

The French articles of war expressly forbid the surrender of a fortress unless the commandant shall previously have repelled at least one assault by a practicable breach.

“The Military Law,” says the article in question (art. 218), “condemns to capital punishment every commandant who gives up his place without having forced the besiegers to pass by the slow and successive stages of a siege, and before having repulsed at least one assault on the body of the place by practicable breaches.”

Accordingly, when during the siege the Grand Duke of Baden wrote to General Uhrich, entreating him, for the sake of the inhabitants, to give up Strasburgh, which he had bravely defended, but obviously could not defend beyond a certain point then fast approaching, General Uhrich felt himself bound to consider—not the interests and safety of

the inhabitants—not his own military credit, so far as that could be dissociated from strict observance of the injunction conveyed in the cited article of war—but the article of war itself. He had made such a defence as no other French general made throughout the war (“a proof,” said the ingenious Germans, “of his German origin”); but he could not “repel,” he could not even await, an assault, because at the last moment, in presence of the hurricane of fire kept up by the Prussians, it was a physical impossibility for his men to remain on the ramparts. He had declared, in one of his first proclamations, that he would hold the place as long as he had “a soldier, a biscuit, and a cartridge;” and when he *did* surrender he had, effectively, no soldiers left.

He was unable, all the same, to observe the strict letter of the article of war; and no other French general, in the whole course of the war, approached its observance. Metz, with its girdle of detached forts, was the one fortress in France where the inhabitants were safe from the besiegers’ fire. All the old Vauban fortresses, with the exception of a few minor ones perched on hills, proved mere traps, and held out just so long as the Prussians happened to be unable to bring suitable artillery against them. Then it was a mere question between the determination, perhaps also the humanity, of the defenders on one side, and the number and calibre of the guns on the other.

“It is admitted now,” says a French military writer, “that when all is lost, when neither the artillery nor the infantry have been able to arrest the advance of the enemy, it is due to the honour of the army to sacrifice a few squadrons of cavalry.”* So it may be said that when neither the walls of the fortress nor the fire of the garrison are found to be of the least avail against a bombardment, it is thought necessary, for the sake of an article of war which cannot be observed, to sacrifice a certain number of the townspeople.

Of course there are cases in which the commandant is bound, at whatever risk to the inhabitants, to hold out to the last moment; and these are just the cases in which the attacking force—also at whatever risk to the inhabitants—is bound to do all in its power to hasten the surrender. During the winter campaign in the north of France the Prussians attached great importance to the possession of the once impregnable fortress of Péronne. Péronne held out. The Prussians bombarded it. An army was marching to its relief, so it still held out. The Prussians bombarded it all the more, determined that it should fall before the relieving army arrived; and the end was that, when half the houses in the town had been more or less demolished, and the

* “Campagne de 1870.” Par un officier de l’Etat-Major de l’Armée du Rhin.

fine old cathedral not touched, here and there, like that of Strasburgh, but simply reduced to a heap of stones and rubbish, the commandant, after a twelve days' bombardment, which had injured neither the walls nor the guns nor one soldier of the garrison, gave in.

Meanwhile twelve inhabitants had been killed, General Faidherbe * says "une vingtaine;" and he himself shows, by a process of reasoning which he afterwards designates as "specious," but which is only logical, that the modern—or, as some say, the Prussian—method of taking towns is far more humane than the older and, according to general belief, milder method. Péronne taken by the ancient system would, he says, "have perhaps cost the besiegers from 3000 to 4000 men, and us from 1000 to 1500. But suppose," he goes on to say, "that a town resigned itself to utter ruin, and thus forced the enemy to follow up the bombardment by regular siege operations? Then," he concludes, "the besieger would find no advantage in the destruction of the civil population, and would be obliged to renounce his odious system under pressure of universal execration."

The experience, however, of the late war seems to show that "simple bombardment" practised

* "Campagne de l'Armée du Nord." Par le Général Faidherbe. Page 57.

against small places *must* bring about a surrender. Péronne yielded after twelve days' bombardment ; Soissons after four ; Thionville, exposed to the fire of the very heaviest guns, originally destined not for Thionville, but for the forts of Metz, after two. In the case of Thionville the Prussians knew they could not, within any reasonable time, reduce the place by investment, for it was full of provisions conveyed there from Luxemburgh for Bazaine's army, in view of a successful sortie. Eager, then, to secure the use of the railway from Metz to Luxemburgh, which Thionville blocked, they attacked the town with 160-pounders, of the Strasburgh pattern, and all sorts of minor artillery, until the Council of Defence, who in the first instance had solemnly cautioned the commandant against imitating the treasonable example of Bazaine, begged him, and for some little time begged him in vain, to capitulate, before the whole town was knocked to pieces. Bricks and mortar suffered terribly at Thionville ; but, though most of the houses were injured, only one inhabitant was killed.

General Ducrot, who pointed out the weakness of the French military system, and the powerlessness of France in face of Prussia,* long before the war

* "Papiers Secrets de l'Empire." (Letter of 1867 to General Trochu, saying that France could only put in the field 300,000 men and 600 guns, against Prussia's 600,000 and 1200 guns.)

broke out, thought Strasburgh incapable of standing a week's siege;* and, instead of entering useless and illogical protests against the bombardment of fortified towns, recommended, and still recommends, that the old fortified towns of France be deprived of their military character, and that in their place a system of entrenched camps, connected by lines of railway, be established. Indeed, the attacks made upon the Prussians in respect to the modern method of reducing fortified towns, will not, from any—above all, from a humanitarian—point of view, bear the slightest examination. As regards their alleged unwillingness to expose themselves, let it be remembered, that at the very beginning of the campaign they made an attempt to take the small, but important, because railway-protecting, fortress of Toul by escalade;† and that the attempt, however gallantly made, failed so disastrously that to repeat it elsewhere was not to be thought of.

At Strasburgh the losses among the civil population were scarcely greater day for day during the deliberate bombardment of the town than during the progress of regular siege operations; nor, in the case of a populous city, can it well be otherwise when siege operations are carried on vigorously with powerful modern artillery commanding, even.

* “La Journée de Sedan.” Page 48.

† See *ante*, page 79.

from the most distant parallel, the whole area of the place. But the fate of unhappy Strasburgh, the one fortified city in France which the Prussians in besieging are supposed to have "spared," was, indeed, lamentable; for after it had been bombarded with a severity deemed amply sufficient to bring about an immediate surrender, it was attacked by another method more prolonged, and, during the whole time of its continuance, almost equally severe.

From the first bombardment of Strasburgh until its capitulation, upwards of 300 of the inhabitants were killed and about 1700 wounded. The Parisians made light of *their* bombardment, but they never knew what bombardment really meant. If the bombardment of Paris had been on the same scale as that of Strasburgh, Paris would have lost all its libraries, all its picture galleries, many of its churches, all its theatres, and—due proportion being always observed—from 30,000 to 40,000 in killed and wounded of the civil population. -

I have seen it stated that the Germans on entering Strasburgh were received with a certain shyness, as though the Strasburghers felt that after all they had to deal with men of their own kindred. It is certain that the Strasburghers were solemnly cautioned against firing on their relatives by ethnology; and it seemed to me that they received

them as a brave but beaten population might be expected to receive soldiers who had destroyed or injured the greatest ornaments of their city, laid in ruins two large quarters, and wounded, mortally or otherwise, one man, woman, or child out of every forty inhabitants.

General Uhrich had already left the city, and his farewell proclamation, still on the walls, was as eloquent a testimony to the severity of the struggle that had been maintained as was the material evidence of the ruined faubourgs. "Again and again," he said, "I hesitated at the aspect of your sufferings; but I reflected that higher than the regard I felt for you was the duty I owed to my country. I determined to resist to the last, and to the last you supported me. Never, as long as I live, can I forget your heroic attitude during the last two months, and you will sometimes think of your old general who required such sacrifices from you, but whose heart bled for you while you were making them."

"Vive la France à jamais!" concluded the proclamation, which was read with admiration by the Strasburghers, little dreaming that before two years had passed they would be calumniated and their general insulted by a committee of their former countrymen, bent on exalting French courage as an ideal quality, by denying it where it was really shown.



CHAPTER XII.

OCCUPATION OF STRASBURGH.

IT would be interesting, though of no direct importance, to consider what traces of German civilization actually exist in Alsace. I say of no direct importance, because much as the nationalistic argument has been used by journalists and pamphleteers, and popular as it undoubtedly is in Germany generally, it is on military and political, not on nationalistic grounds, that the old German province has been annexed to the newly-formed German empire. If Strasburgh had contained a Provençal and Metz a Breton population, the two great frontier fortresses of France would all the same have been claimed by the victorious Germans. General Ducrot distinctly states that for defensive purposes* Strasburgh was valueless,

* "La Journée de Sedan" (before quoted).

thereby implying that the one military object of its existence was to serve as a sallying port against Germany.

Nevertheless, the great body of the German nation felt deep satisfaction at recovering an inheritance of which, truly or falsely, they considered that they had been wrongfully despoiled; and though Alsace is less German than the German cantons of Switzerland, and though Mulhausen and other Alsatian towns have had much closer relations with Switzerland than with any part of Germany, yet Alsace, in becoming once more German by its government, has become a sort of pledge for German unity. It belongs to no one German state, but forms part of the German empire, and, waiting the time when it shall have an army corps of its own, is garrisoned by troops from all parts of Germany.

While the siege of Strasburgh was going on poetical appeals to the Strasburghers used to be published in German, calling upon them to return to their true mother, and to shun the treacherous step-mother, who had too long supplanted her in their affections. In these effusions the French were styled "Welches," as Voltaire used to call them ("mes chers Welches") writing of them from Berlin. The objects of so much affection were, meanwhile, being maimed, if not blown to pieces, by the Ger-

man shells at the rate of some ten a day killed and fifty or sixty wounded.

The greater number of these appeals proceeded from, or at least were sold in, the cities and towns of the Grand Duchy of Baden, which, if political science were sufficiently advanced to admit such principles, might claim Alsace specially for itself on the ground of contiguity, identity of agricultural products, similarity of cottage architecture, and various minor features belonging to the two countries in common. I noticed, for instance (sign of moral resemblance!), the same popular pictures in the inns and farmhouses of Alsace and of the Grand Duchy of Baden. One, which was to be seen nearly everywhere, represented the Seven Ages of Man, showing how, at ten, the boy plays at soldiers; how, at twenty, the youth makes love; how, at thirty, the man is an officer of promise; how, at forty, he is an officer of distinction; how, at fifty, he has made his fortune; how, at sixty, he becomes a general; and how, at seventy, he is still a healthy old "greis," or gray-beard, with children of his own, some of whom play at soldiers, while others are old enough to make love.

A much more original series of designs, also to be found in almost every house on both sides of the Rhine, is one known as the Seven Conditions of Man, remarkable as the most democratic and re-

volutionary series of pictures extant ; though, obviously of ancient origin, they have, doubtless, long ceased to have any irritating effect on their simple-minded possessors.

The "Seven Conditions" are represented by typical figures, the first being the Emperor, who says, "I levy tribute ;"

Next comes the Nobleman, who says, "I have a free estate ;"

The Priest says, "I take tithes ;"

The Jew [mediaeval type of the trader] says, "I live by my profits ;"

The Soldier says, "I pay for nothing ;"

The Beggar says, "I have nothing ;"

The Peasant says, "God help me, for these six other men have all to be supported by me."

The legends of these pictures are in German, and the "kaiser" is, of course, the kaiser of the old German empire.

I forget many things that Alsace produces, though I remember reading at Offenburgh,* in the

* Though it has nothing whatever to do with my subject, I cannot help mentioning that the town of Offenburgh possesses a statue of Sir Francis Drake. An Englishman is naturally pleased at this mark of appreciation towards a great English admiral ; but on examining the inscription on the pedestal of the statue, he finds that it is erected "to the immortal introducer of the potato into Europe." I may connect this matter with my subject by adding that the sculptor

Grand Duchy of Baden, a printed sheet, which after enumerating all the national and sentimental reasons for which Alsace ought to belong to Germany, ended by setting forth a picture of its vast agricultural wealth. Tobacco fields, hop gardens, vineyards are to be seen on both sides of the Rhine; and if (as may some day be argued) a country ought to be the property of that nation to whose wants its products are particularly suited, then Alsace, which is not quite French by its wine,* might be pronounced thoroughly German by its beer and tobacco.

Alsace was no longer Alsace while the siege of its capital was going on. At other times Mundolsheim, Wolfisheim, Schiltigheim, and the other "heims" (*i.e.*, "homes") which swarm round Strasburgh may be nice places to live at, but they were

—a fanatical philanthropist who honoured in Drake, not the destroyer of England's enemies, but the benefactor of the European poor—was a native of Strasburgh, and that it was not until after ungrateful Strasburgh had refused to find a place for his statue that he made a present of it to the municipality of Offenburgh.

* Some growths of Alsatian wine when they have been kept an enormous number of years are, I believe, much esteemed; but the Alsations themselves laugh at their vintages, and call one of their wines the "three-men wine" (*dreimänner wein*), because they say it takes three men to drink it. The first man sitting in a chair, the second holds him there, while the third pours the wine down his throat.

terrible places during the siege. None of the villages, however, in the neighbourhood of Strasburgh were to any extent abandoned by the inhabitants, so that here there was no such destruction as I afterwards saw in the deserted villages near Paris.

The people of Alsace, too, had the advantage of understanding the language of the invaders; and if a German soldier took out a knife, and said he should like some bread and cheese, the people of the house did not think he was threatening to cut their throats. Great havoc, of course, had been caused in all the nearest suburbs, wherever public buildings, or private houses, gardens, groves, or cemeteries—bricks and mortar, trees, or foliage in any shape—stood in the way of the guns from either side. But nearly all this preparatory destruction was to be laid to the account of the defenders, whose first object it was to deprive the assailants of cover.

The celebrated Strasburgh breweries suffered greatly during the siege. They are, for the most part, outside the city; and one of the severest troubles of the besieged Strasburghers is said to have been want of beer. It is, indeed, recorded in the interesting history of the siege, written from the inside by M. Fischer,* that some beer-drinking

* "Le Siègè de Strasburgh." Par Gustave Fischer. (The same work in German.) Strasburgh.

bourgeois, deprived of their favourite beverage, proposed seriously that a sortie should be made, with the view of fetching in a few barrels.

The Strasburgh sorties, about which, perhaps, I ought to say a few words, were little more than affairs of honour. At Metz, the enclosed army, if it had only known where to go on issuing, might, perchance, have been able to fight its way out. But there was, of course, no idea of such a thing at Strasburgh; and the troops who did, from time to time, sally forth, seem to have done so merely to show that they were not inactive, or that they were not afraid of the Prussians, and not with any serious intention of injuring the besiegers' works.

At Strasburgh, the sorties were almost always made by night (just the contrary of what took place at Metz), and they were always announced beforehand by heavy discharges of artillery, followed by discharges of musketry in every direction as the troops marched out. As a matter of discipline, the German infantry had strict orders never to fire a shot in return until the enemy came well-in sight; and the only time I witnessed such an affair, the Prussian regiment I was with remained under arms close to its quarters, and almost entirely protected from fire, until a small reconnoitring party had been sent out to ascertain the precise point for which the French were making.

The French and Prussian outposts were, in some places, so close together that they were separated by little more than a garden-wall or by a hedge and a few bushes. For the protection of the second line, earthworks and trenches had been made; but the men of the first line stood behind trees or at the corners of convenient buildings, with one eye in the direction of the enemy, the other in that of the second line. Odd as it may seem, the only occasion on which I visited the foremost line (in advance of the Orangerie) the men were standing with their backs to the trees. When they saw an officer approaching, they motioned to him to step gently, and not to speak, and pointed over their shoulders to a garden where the French were concealed. Contrary to modern custom,* the outpost duty at Strasburgh was a game of hide-and-seek, in which the forfeit for discovery was a bullet. The invariable rule was to shoot at sight.

In spite of the investment, communication between Strasburgh and the outside world was not completely broken off until nearly the end of the siege. An inhabitant of Ruprechtsau, or "la Robertsau," as the French call it, informed me, the day after the fall of the fortress, that he had frequently carried in newspapers. His plan was to creep towards the place at dusk, by way of the

* See, on this point, American Instructions in Appendix C.

Orangerie, call out to the sentinels to whom he was known or could make himself known, get into one of the boats left floating on the outside moat, and then, by the system of canals, penetrate into the interior of the city. The boats, however, were at last drawn inside, and my informant admitted that after the 15th of September he had found it impossible to enter Strasburgh, by reason not only of the withdrawal of the boats, but also of the advance of the Prussian outposts. The Prussians had driven the French out of the Orangerie, and had put forward their first lines to within 400 paces of the ramparts. After the 15th I do not think much news was received at Strasburgh beyond what General von Werder may have thought fit to send in. From some source or other, however, the *Karlsruher Zeitung* used occasionally to reach the office of the *Courrier du Bas-Rhin*; and the number for September 27th contains extracts from the *Karlsruher Zeitung* for September 24th.

The principal local newspaper had rendered great service to the people of Strasburgh during the siege; for while all sorts of wild rumours were flying about the city, the *Courrier du Bas-Rhin* told the simple truth, as far as it could be ascertained from the journals which from time to time arrived. It showed itself throughout, not the inventor and

promoter of gossip, but its corrector and destroyer. Often it had a hateful task to perform—to state, for instance, that the victory for the French arms reported in town the day before was in fact a defeat. On the 2nd of September, when, in the ordinary course of things, news of the battle of Sedan would have been received, the following pretended despatch was circulated in manuscript through the city:—

“France saved! Victory at Donancourt and at Raucourt. Great victory at Toul. Forty-nine thousand killed, 35,000 wounded, 700 cannons taken from the Prussians. Steinmetz’s corps in full retreat, routed by Generals Douay and De Failly. MacMahon at Châlons-sur-Marne with 400,000 men. Alsace saved in two days. MacMahon to the Minister of the Interior. The French soldiers are making ramparts of the Prussian dead. From a despatch given by an emissary to Colonel Robert.”

The first intimation conveyed to the Strasburghers of the victory of Sedan was not understood. It came to them in the form of a salute of twenty-one guns, concerning which the *Courrier du Bas-Rhin* said on the day following:—

“Yesterday the enemy’s batteries threw, at regu-

lar intervals, twenty shells into the town" (the reporter had miscounted—there were twenty-one). "Our batteries made a vigorous reply, but after the twentieth shell had been fired the Prussian guns were silent."

A few days afterwards the explanation of this unfriendly salute reached Strasburgh, and the bitter truth was duly published.

The news of the revolution in Paris was first brought to Strasburgh on the 12th by the Swiss delegates. The Republic was proclaimed and a new Mayor elected, who issued a vigorous proclamation in condemnation of the Bonaparte family—"that disgraceful family," he called it, "which three times in half a century has brought upon France the horrors of an invasion."

The *Courrier* in the meanwhile was becoming smaller and smaller; the blockade was starving it. Its last number (September 27th) was about the size of a sheet of letter-paper, and the editor had no news to give beyond what he could find in an old number of the *Karlsruher Zeitung*, from which he had already made copious extracts when the siege had been going on for about a fortnight.

The delegates from Switzerland arrived with an offer to take charge of such persons as the Governor, with the consent of General von Werder, might

allow to leave the city; and, altogether, fourteen hundred—old men, women, and children—left Strasburgh for Switzerland. During the siege the Swiss papers were full of announcements that such a family, in such a town, offered lodgings, service, and, if necessary, board, to a family from Strasburgh; for the Swiss took a practical and humane view of the bombardment question. It may, in a military sense, be quite right to burn private houses, throw shells into girls' schools, and slaughter inoffensive men, women, and children indiscriminately. The Swiss, without considering the utility of "bringing pressure to bear on the civil population," saw only that there was terrible suffering in Strasburgh, and determined to relieve it.

In Strasburgh, as in other places at all times, the suffering was unequally distributed. "Only the rich people lived below in the cellars," said a Strasburgh workman, who was giving me some particulars of life during the siege; "*we* had to go about the streets to buy food, to help to clear away ruins, to endeavour to put out the fires that were constantly being lighted, and so on."

The very poor went twice a day to establishments where, at the expense of a private society, they could receive every morning soup, bread, and wine, and every evening bread and coffee. Those who wished to save their self-respect, or to deceive

themselves, could breakfast and dine for nothing, and sign engagements to pay, as the notification on the subject had it, "in happier days."

The walls of Strasburgh not only proclaimed the misery of a large portion of the population, they also testified to the delicacy of the fortunate few who were able to relieve the distress of their unhappy fellow-citizens. One announcement set forth that, "in consequence of the great and increasing sickness among old people and young children, an appeal is made to healthy persons receiving rations of milk to content themselves with half rations, and to make known their consent as soon as possible." There was a great scarcity of milk; and potatoes were charged nearly a franc a pound (75 francs or 80 francs for a sack containing 100 lb). Beef, however, cost no more than three francs a pound, horse-flesh one franc and a half a pound, while the price of bread, and ordinary wine, and of most "necessary luxuries" (as the Prussians say) remained stationary. In "superfluous luxuries" there was a downward movement. Thus the price fell of *pâté de foie gras*, for which all demand had ceased; and the festive champagne went down a franc and a franc and a half a bottle.

"It's nae a Sawboth wine!" said a waiter reprovingly to a friend of mine who once forgot himself so far as to order a bottle of the exhilarating

beverage on a Sunday at a Scotch inn ; and champagne would on all days have been out of place at the table of a besieged inhabitant of Strasburgh.

As to *pâtés de foie gras* they may well have been shunned by the rich Strasburghers, who found themselves compelled to take refuge in those very cellars which formerly had been reserved as places of imprisonment for the unfortunate geese. Theodore de Banville published during the siege of Paris a remarkable little poem, in which the rats of the capital cursed "Monsieur de Bismarck" as the prime cause of their being killed for food, threatening to destroy the crops on his estates, to consume the corn in his granaries, and, finally, to gnaw holes in the scarlet mantle of the new German emperor.

As a companion to "Les Rats," M. de Banville might have written "Les Oies," a poem in which the Strasburgh geese should have expressed bitter satisfaction at finding their tyrants driven at last to share with them the darkness and confinement of the Strasburgh cellars.



CHAPTER XIII.

AN OCCUPIED LINE OF RAILWAY.

THE reduction of Strasburgh, except that Strasburgh was taken with the view of being kept, possessed scarcely more importance than the reduction of Toul. The surrender of Strasburgh set free an army of 50,000 men, who soon afterwards, under General von Werder, marched south; but the surrender of Toul enabled the Germans for the first time to make serious use of the railway line, by which they proposed to send up artillery for the siege of Paris.

Railways in war-time are excellent for the transport of artillery and provision trains; excellent also for the conveyance of troops; but for ordinary passenger traffic, when not absolutely inaccessible, they are wholly intolerable. The trains do not run after dark; and almost as formidable as the dangers which put an end to travelling by night are the

obstacles by which day travelling is impeded. On the Great Eastern of France the post train was just tolerable, but the post train carried no horses. The military trains, of course, carried horses; but the journey from Weissenburgh, and stations between Weissenburgh and Strasburgh to Nanteuil—for a long time the last available station on the line to Paris—occupied them a week, and sometimes longer. A German wine-merchant, travelling with a cargo of hock and moselle, told me that, by the slowest of goods trains, it took him three weeks to go from Saarbrücken to Nanteuil. I do not know how long the cattle trains were making the journey, but numbers of oxen, even of those unaffected by typhus, were brought in dead. Provisions, too, of all kinds, got damaged on this much-crowded, and here and there completely blocked-up line.

At the same time the Chemin de fer de l'Est was practically the only great line of communication from Germany to the neighbourhood of Meaux and Paris. Indeed, when, after the taking of Toul, which blocked the line not far from Nancy, the eastern railway of France was opened from Weissenburgh, and from Saarbrück to Nanteuil the ordinary roads were in many parts abandoned, it being held that the presence of armed peasants and Francs-Tireurs on the hills, in the woods, and at various available

points, rendered them unsafe for Germans and persons with German belongings.

The Francs-Tireurs may be said to have had their head-quarters in the Vosges. They were, at least, more numerous there than in other parts of France. But of the cities not one, I believe, sent out so many as Nancy, and of the Francs-Tireurs around Luneville and Epinal a considerable number came from the capital of Lorraine. What a villain the Franc-Tireur was in the eyes of the Prussians, who regarded him as a poacher of the worst kind, shooting men without a licence; and what a hero in the eyes of his own countrymen, and, above all, countrywomen, who saw in him the ideal of a patriot! "Who are these Francs-Tireurs?" I said one day to a Frenchman. "Young men of good education who wish to defend their country," he replied. "Who are the Francs-Tireurs?" I said to a French young lady. "Charming young men, and as brave as lions," she answered; "I have the portrait of one of them in my brooch."

Almost as much nonsense has been written about the Francs-Tireurs in the German papers as about the Uhlans in the French. They were not necessarily savages nor assassins, nor anything of the kind. In the occupied provinces they were simply insurgents; and they led everywhere the life of insurgents, belonged to the same class or classes of

society from which insurgents usually come, and, like insurgents, were adored by their own people, and shot as felons if they fell into the hands of the enemy.

The few I came across in neutral territory were certainly not the kind of persons likely to commit the acts of violence and rapine with which the *Francs-Tireurs* were generally credited. The *Francs-Tireurs* I met were loungers from the Parisian boulevards, who had put on the semblance of a uniform, and gone out to see whether they could be of any use in stopping the advance of the Prussians, and they would no more have committed an act of highway robbery than General Garibaldi would pick a pocket. But, side by side with the *Francs-Tireurs* of good education—the *Francs-Tireurs* whose photographs were found worthy of being enclosed in lockets—there were *Francs-Tireurs* of a lower type; there were escaped prisoners, deserters, and fugitives, the last remnants of the great armies that had from time to time been cut to pieces, and the amalgam formed of these different elements was, doubtless, not a nice one. Even the gentlemanly *Franc-Tireur*, if fallen into very bad circumstances, might be a dangerous person to meet. He would be ashamed to show himself in the character of a robber, and from sheer self-respect would have to begin by killing his victim.

The Prussians, however, could not, like the young ladies of France, distinguish between the noble-minded Franc-Tireur and the Franc-Tireur who was a mere cut-throat. What they required was, that he should carry papers showing that he belonged to some regularly organized corps ; that he should wear a uniform recognizable at gun-shot distance ; and that the distinctive marks of the uniform should be "inseparable from his person." Let him comply with these conditions and the Franc-Tireur, if he fell into the hands of the enemy, instead of being shot or condemned to ten years' imprisonment (strange sentence?) was treated as a prisoner of war.

It seems hard to insist that William Tell shall put on a uniform "recognizable at gun-shot distance," and that the distinctive signs of the uniform worn by Masaniello shall be "inseparable from his person;" but if William Tell dresses like a civilian, he places his enemy at a notable disadvantage ; and the same may be said of Masaniello, if Masaniello has nothing military about him but his cap, which he can get rid of at a moment's notice, and replace by a wide-awake or a cotton nightcap.

There were, I believe, some bodies of Francs-Tireurs regularly incorporated in the French army, and they, to the Prussians, were, of course, like any other French soldiers. Such were "Les partisans

de Gers," who had account-books showing that they were in government service, whose officers carried commissions, and whose military character was admitted, though their only "distinctive marks" were a red sash worn over a black coat, and a Calabrian hat. Neither, then, of the "distinctive marks" was "inseparable from the person." It was evident, all the same, that the partisans of Gers were men who had assumed the character of soldiers in good faith, with the intention of supporting it to the end.

But the original typical Franc-Tireur carried no papers, wore no recognizable uniform; nor were the chiefs of bands responsible to any superior officer.

As for the individual members of such bands, how were the Prussians to distinguish between them and men shooting at other men from unpolitical motives; and, apart from "customs of war," would not the common law in every country, strictly administered, condemn them as brigands?

Why, then, did not the Francs-Tireurs, for their own sake, form themselves everywhere into regular bodies, and never show except in uniform? The reason was simple enough. They did not wish to be always soldiers. They desired, now and then, to retire into private life, and to profit by the privileges of the civilian. As troops, moreover, in the service of government, they would have had to drill, to do regular military duty, to subject themselves,

in short, to discipline, for which, as a rule, they had no taste. Otherwise why, instead of becoming *Francs-Tireurs*, did they not join the *Garde Mobile* or the regular army, from which they could, in the most legitimate manner, have been detached for partisan warfare?

I do not think that *Francs-Tireurs* ever existed in sufficient force to render it absolutely necessary for the Germans travelling towards Paris to keep to the occupied line of railway, but it was often desirable after dusk to avoid the high road; and even by daylight the surest, if the slowest, means of locomotion was by rail.

Apart from its importance, there was not a more interesting place in the whole of the occupied country than the Nancy railway-station. At that great cross-road on the high road of the invasion, where the *Saarbrück-Paris* line and the *Strasbourg-Paris* line converge and unite, every minute some incident suggestive of the state of the war was occurring, every minute some picture belonging to and formed out of the war, presented itself. The beautiful city of Nancy, which, as a whole, is not less beautiful than Paris, and which in proportion to its size possesses more fine streets, spacious squares, and picturesque gardens than any city in France, had returned in a great measure to its normal condition. All the shops were open, the shop-

keepers had learnt to sell to the invaders without misunderstanding them, and though the Germans were, of course, detested there as elsewhere in France, they were to a certain extent (and of necessity) tolerated. But the sight of French prisoners always affected the kind-hearted Nançois, and painful scenes used often to occur when prisoners were marched in large bodies through the town.

After the surrender of Toul the prisoners were all sent to Strasburgh or to Saarbrück by rail; and the railway bridge at Nancy was crowded with sympathizing spectators whenever a convoy of prisoners reached the station. To pity the captive beyond a certain point is, of course, to blame the captor, and, for the same reason that the German troops used to hurry the prisoners in marching them through the streets (they did as a rule, it must be admitted, make them march rather fast), the German Governmental authorities erected a hoarding on each side of the railway bridge at Nancy, so that no one might see the trains of prisoners arrive. In view of these unexpected barricades the townspeople armed themselves with gimlets, and the boards were soon perforated in all directions, and the bridge still was crowded whenever it was known that a fresh convoy of captive Frenchmen had come in.

I was told many stories at Nancy of the brutality of the German soldiery, and was actually intro-

duced to a young lady whom, it was said, a Bavarian had struck with the butt end of his musket because she had given a *brioche* (charmingly appropriate food!) to a wounded officer. But the blow turned out to have been a push given in a crowd, and the young lady admitted that on her slapping the Bavarian on the face, the man, instead of killing her, as in her fright at what she had so rashly done she had fully expected, only burst out laughing; so that he was not such a very brutal person after all.

The conquered could not of course understand that they had duties to perform towards the conquerors, as the conquerors had duties to perform towards them; and this was well put by General Bonin, governor of Lorraine, who, in a proclamation, made loud complaints of the injuries done to the railways and telegraphs, and pointed out that if the communications were impeded the Germans could not bring up their own provisions, and would be obliged to continue a system of requisitions which might otherwise be modified greatly to the advantage of the inhabitants of Nancy.

The conquerors ought certainly as much as possible to spare the conquered; but what is to be done if the conquered render impossible the execution of the very measures which might otherwise be taken for their relief? Of course uninterrupted railway communication was not wanted merely that

General Bonin might bring food to the German troops in Lorraine. It was wanted, above all, that heavy artillery might be quickly brought up for the siege of Paris ; but one of the results caused by the taking up of rails and the cutting of telegraph wires was, all the same, to delay the arrival of provisions from Germany.

The German governors did not naturally, in the matter of railway destruction, confine themselves to making appeals to the good sense of the governed. To take up rails or place obstacles on the line, was an offence punishable with death—punishable, also, when the criminal could not be discovered, by a fine of 1000 thalers imposed on the nearest commune, or, if the commune were insolvent, on the members of the municipal council of the nearest town.

I have seen dogs trotting leisurely in front of some of the trains, and wagging their tails as if in derision. But although one might have gone from Bombay in the time that it took heavy goods trains to go from Saarbrück to Nanteuil (these being put aside at every station for the post trains and military trains, especially those carrying artillery, to pass), the amount of work got through at the Nancy junction was stupendous, and, in spite of the seeming confusion, no accidents seemed to occur except where the patriots of Lorraine and Champagne had carefully prepared them beforehand.

Such a collection of locomotives was certainly never seen before. German unity was represented at the Nancy railway-station by engines, as it was represented in the field by regiments, from every part of the great Fatherland ; and the military situation was aptly symbolized by the presence of a certain number of French engines, once the property of the Great Eastern of France.

There were four lines of rails at the Nancy station, and side lines innumerable beyond the station, east and west ; and at times every inch of line was covered, and the trains extended half a quarter of a mile beyond the station each way. To look for any particular train was like looking for a carriage on Epsom Downs ; but you could make your search if you liked ; and it was curious, remembering the formalities to which the Germans are addicted in time of peace, to notice how entirely they disregarded them at a moment of supreme effort. You might walk between the trains, cross between the carriages, jump into a carriage while the train was in motion, jump similarly out of it, keep the carriage doors open or shut as you felt inclined, do anything, in short, except drive the engine. There was a general understanding that every one had to take care of himself, and the consequence was, that every one did take care of himself, and few accidents occurred of an avoidable kind.

Of course, as in time of peace, the trains did not start until news arrived that the line was clear, and now and then it turned out that the telegraph had been injured and would not work. When all was right, however, and another train could go on, preference was always given to artillery trains, and a great deal of manœuvring had sometimes to be gone through before an artillery train (which had, perhaps, only just arrived at the station) could be got to the front. Everything was being done to hurry the heavy artillery to Paris, and while I was waiting for my train at Nancy I saw two batteries of 24-pounders (the calibre in favour at Strasburgh, whence they probably came) and two 100-pound mortar batteries sent off together at something like express speed. One could understand the importance that was attached to the little fortress of Toul on seeing the use that was being made of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est as soon as the capitulation of Toul had rendered it possible to repair the line and use it in almost its entire length from the neighbourhood of Strasburgh to within about twenty miles of Meaux.

Steam and peace, it is well known, go together ; but the train which at last took me from Nancy carried a good deal of ammunition, and when at nightfall we halted in a field near Bar-le-Duc, it was

thought necessary to put soldiers to guard the convoy, to station sentinels, and even to send out advanced posts. Keen-sighted passengers saw francs-tireurs in the hazy distance. I can't say I did, though when it became dark I could discern here and there, a long way off, a flickering light, which might or might not have been that of a bivouac fire.

The dinner question, sure sooner or later to turn up, quickly presented itself; and in less than a quarter of an hour the whole train had emptied itself into a roadside inn, which, from a harmless village hostelry, was quickly converted into a sort of Calcutta black-hole. The scenes which followed were of a kind which should be painted, not described. Two hundred Prussian soldiers, in every variety of attitude and tone, call out for meat and drink to an old woman and two men, who protest energetically that they can't attend to two hundred persons all at once. Then the floor opens, and the proprietor goes down into the cellar with a candle, the soldiers crowding round the oblong opening, and peering into it wistfully, as though to take a long farewell of a departed friend. Then a bottle and an open palm appear above the level of the floor, the plan of conducting business at this inn, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, being that of money in one hand, wine in the other.

Then from the depths of the cave, in a hollow voice, these mystic words are uttered—" *Nix fort avec la flasche !*"—which, being interpreted, mean, " Don't run away with the bottle !" The soldiers posted in the neighbourhood of the inn had, it appears, been in the habit of paying for bottles, of wine, carrying them off bodily, and throwing the bottles away as worthless husks when they had once disposed of the contents. This, the proprietor afterwards assured me, ate up all the profits, which, as he only charged seven sous a bottle for his wine, I could readily believe.

The good man, when I complimented him on his German, assured me that he had learnt all he knew of that language during the invasions of 1814 and 1815, and that from the departure of the allies in 1818 until their return the other day, he had not spoken one word of it. The great thing, he explained to me, in acquiring a foreign tongue, was to get the numerals at your command. The rest could be learnt at leisure, or not learnt at all ; but you could do nothing without the numerals. He had a pleasant recollection, not only of the Prussians—he must have meant the Austrians—but also of the Russians, who had been quartered in his village. The Russians, he said, were a deeply religious people, and if you only had a picture of St. Nicholas in your house they would respect it and

everything in it. Commercial dealings with them, moreover, were easy, provided always that you could count up to ten in their language. This art, he assured me, he had not forgotten, and he began, "*adine*," "*dva*," and counted correctly up to ten in Russian, which, considering that he had had nothing to do with Russians for fifty odd years, evinced, I think, rather a tenacious memory. I afterwards found that he had lost the opportunity of exhibiting his Slavonic attainments to two Russian officers who were travelling with us, hurrying, like so many foreign officers just then, to Versailles, to see the most remarkable siege and the greatest artillery contest of modern times.

If it could only have been known beforehand how long the train would stop at each station, I might have gone from Chalons or from Château Thierry to see Soissons the day of the surrender.

Soissons had been for some time invested, and had no doubt been subjected from the beginning to partial bombardment. But it had wide water defences, and could not be effectively bombarded with the light artillery first brought against it. When heavier guns arrived the town was bombarded severely, and after four days' resistance, gave in. As a portion of the prisoners were being marched from Soissons to Château Thierry, the population, who had seen none of their countrymen

prisoners before, were much excited; and in front of the mairie, where several hundred prisoners were in confinement, there was a somewhat alarming scene. The crowd had to be dispersed, and, as the crowd itself believed, with unnecessary roughness. I came in just at the end, and heard a short speech from a cavalry officer commanding the small force (about 200 men) posted at Château Thierry, which I thought good. The mayor and municipal councillors, who had been standing with heads uncovered (quite unnecessarily) before him, were about to retire, when the officer told them that he had another complaint to make against the population. He said:—

“When the prisoners were passing I heard, as soon as my back was turned, such words as ‘*brigand*,’ ‘*bandit*,’ pronounced. These insults came, for the most part, from women, so I said nothing; but if ever again offensive names are applied to me by a man, I shall do what I have a right to do—I shall reply to him with my own hand. Please inform your fellow-citizens of my determination, and remember, moreover, that if you cannot induce them to remain more quiet, I shall be obliged to take hostages from among the municipal council.”

This little speech, which seemed to me dignified and thoroughly to the purpose, was not at all ap-

preciated by the population of Château Thierry. But in many of the towns along the line of the Marne, and probably not there alone, the inhabitants, besides making a feeble, and, therefore, foolish opposition to the invader, were also strongly opposed to one another. On the walls of Château Thierry there was a proclamation from the mayor setting forth that, since numbers of rich men had left the town, thus throwing the burden of supporting the German troops exclusively upon those who remained, the first houses placed at the service of the troops should be those of absentees, and that guardians would be appointed to the vacant houses at a charge of two francs a day. At Château Thierry, too, as everywhere along the line of railway, the afterwards notorious proclamation was exhibited, setting forth that with the view of guarding against accidents, the most important persons in each locality would be required to travel in the locomotive.

At Charly, near Nanteuil, the last available station on the line, I heard an announcement publicly read to the effect that the mayor and municipal council, in consequence of the unjustifiable attacks made upon them in connection with the billeting of soldiers, were anxious to resign, and that they only abstained from doing so because it would be impossible to find any one to supply their

places, in which case the commune, instead of having its own administration, would lose the advantages granted to it by the German authorities, and fall beneath direct military rule.

The Great Eastern of France had at that time two beginnings—Saarbrück and Wissemburg (or Weissenburgh) and three endings: Nanteuil, a sort of terminus terminorum, where passengers and artillery were landed; the station before Nanteuil, for carriages and goods in general; and the station next but one before Nanteuil, for cattle and forage.

At Nanteuil, and indeed at each of the termini, the amount of work that had to be got through in connection with the transport service was prodigious; and the peasants for miles around had been impressed.

It was impossible not to feel for these humiliated, though physically uninjured men. Indeed, a peasant in the service of invaders is really, while so employed, in the position of a slave.

“What am I but a slave, a regular galley slave?” a peasant said to me one day in the neighbourhood of the artillery terminus, from which he had to drive in his country cart a load of shell cases towards Paris. “It is bad enough to have to carry provisions for them; but they are forcing us now to help to destroy our own countrymen. C'est

pour tuer mon frère, cela," he added, pointing to one of the hollow iron projectiles with holes.

A German civilian, who was standing by, explained to the poor fellow with admirable promptitude, that it was the French Government, and especially the Emperor Napoleon, who was to blame in the matter; that war was war, and if its usages were harsh, that was an additional reason for not rushing into it lightly.

"It was you, you know, who declared war," he added, by way of final consolation.

"C'est nous qui avons déclaré la guerre," rejoined the unfortunate man; "mais c'est vous qui l'avez provoquée," which from a simple peasant attached to the conqueror's car, or, rather, to his own requisitioned cart, was a sufficiently spirited reply.

I asked him if he needed assistance, but he said he did not want money, and would not have any; that the Prussians gave him food, and that what irritated him was the work he had to do, and the absolute impossibility of his opening his mouth in the way of remonstrance. He had to "swallow his rage." "C'est qu'il faut manger son sang!" he complained, which, under the circumstances, was no doubt the wisest thing to do.

I don't think I ever saw a man called upon to talk politics under such disadvantageous conditions as this unhappy French peasant. The German

who had engaged him in discussion did not seem a bad man ; but he had a mania for argument, and if he had seen a French soldier dying on the field of battle would have spoken to him of the Hohenzollern candidature and the mistake the French had made in not contenting themselves with its simple withdrawal.

In a field close by were a number of peasants, all with their horses and carts, seeking to discover the meaning of some documents written in German and in German character, which had just been distributed among them. One thought he had received an order of release, another was sure that the mysterious writing signified an extra day's service, and so on. It cannot well be maintained that the invader is bound to employ none but officials who understand the language of the invaded ; but it was a farcical proceeding all the same, to give French peasants written orders in German.

The order, as most of them had wisely supposed (in war-time one should always suppose the worst), was to do more work ; and, if it was inconsiderate to issue the command in an unknown tongue, I must add that a couple of Prussian soldiers who understood French were considerate enough to come forward and volunteer their services as interpreters.

As a rule, the German officials employed in

France understood French; but I met some who did not, and a few who, to avoid importunity, pretended not to do so. At one of the largest railway stations I remember an *etappen-commandant* walking up and down and calling out to the French men and women who came towards him with all sorts of representations and requests, "Ich verstehe kein Französisch, nur Deutsch!" I afterwards found that this gentleman spoke French perfectly, and was, moreover, a very obliging man, but he could not attend to two hundred persons all at once.

That trenchant manner of settling a question struck me as highly Prussian; and I met with rather a curious example of it soon afterwards on this same line of railway at a station some miles farther on. I had got into the conductor's carriage almost before the train had stopped.

"What cattle in the train?" asked the *etappen-commandant*, coming forward eagerly.

"Seventeen oxen, thirty-five sheep!" cried the conductor, saluting him at the same time with a rapid gesture.

The *etappen-commandant* was satisfied, and the train went on. The conductor then said to me: "You *must* answer them like that in our service. If I had told him the plain truth, that the cattle were only put into the train at the last

station at the very last moment, and that I had had no opportunity of counting them, I should have been severely reprimanded.”*

* The idea that despotism begets deceit may be found developed in a comedy by Benedix, entitled “Die Herrschaft.”





CHAPTER XIV.

ARTILLERY TRAINS.

WHEN, some thirty years ago, the question of the propriety of fortifying Paris was discussed in the French Chambers, one objection made to the scheme was that it was uncalled for, inasmuch as the difficulty of bringing up heavy guns rendered it most improbable that the regular siege of the French capital would ever be undertaken. The use of railways as military roads was at that time scarcely foreseen, and the French Deputies of the Opposition would have laughed to scorn the idea—an idea which has, nevertheless, become a fact—of transporting siege guns, weighing with the carriage something like five tons, from Magdeburg to Villacoublay, in the environs of Paris. A full account of the Prussian Siege Park might, without impropriety, be made to include a history of artillery of all kinds during the last

century and a half, from the manufacture of the heaviest muzzle-loaders to that of the lightest breech-loaders for siege purposes, such as, under the name of "new 24-pounders," played so important a part in reducing Strasburgh. Even the "breech-battery" guns, as used at Strasburgh, throwing shells of nearly 2 cwt., were light, compact little pieces compared to the old-fashioned iron monsters, which, without the slightest respect for their age, had been torn from their historical resting-places in the fortresses of Central Germany to be employed against Paris.

The task of bringing up heavy guns from the interior of Germany to the neighbourhood of Paris was indeed a severe one; and it was impossible to begin it until so late as the 9th of October. The Eastern Railway of France was not available until after the surrender of Toul, and when that well-defended little fortress had at length capitulated, it was necessary in various places to repair the line before it could be used throughout, from Wissembourg to Nanteuil, where, for some time, an insuperable object in the way of further progress towards Paris existed in the shape of a blown-up tunnel.

Each of the four North-German armies had a corps of railway engineers belonging to it; indeed, as the Bavarians (of the 3rd army) had also their

own special railway engineers, there were altogether five of these corps attached to the German armies, whose particular duty it was to repair or destroy lines of railway as the necessity might arise. Each corps or company consisted of 230 men, of whom thirty were civilians acquainted with the details of railway engineering. To each company were appointed an engineer-in-chief, an ordinary engineer, and six *piqueurs* specially charged with keeping the rails in order; and each company was militarily commanded by a captain and three lieutenants, who were usually officers of the Landwehr. The first and fourth of these railway companies, belonging to the first and fourth armies, constructed at the beginning of the war the railway from Remilly to Pont à Mousson, which "turned" Metz—a detestable sloping, circular line, which, from its slipperiness, used to be known as the "Glacier-bahn," or "Ice-hill Railway." The second and third companies, belonging to the second and third armies, repaired the line from Wissembourg to Wentenheim, and from Nancy to Nanteuil. In executing the latter works they had to leave a gap in and about Toul (the outskirts of which are traversed by the railway line), and, in case of the fortress not surrendering by the end of September, they had, I believe, formed a plan for "turning" the place. To the second and third companies too, fell the duty

of replacing the fine railway bridge blown up at Vitry le Français, which they did by means of two wooden bridges, 120 feet long, one for each line of rails. These new bridges, each of which was supported by twelve wooden piles, were constructed in ten days. The blown-up tunnel near Nanteuil (between Nanteuil and Lagny) was a more serious affair to deal with. About 110 feet of sandy earth had been brought down upon it from an adjoining hill; and, after trying in vain to reconstruct the tunnel, or rather to retunnel the mound, the civil and military engineer companies were at last obliged to "turn" the difficulty.

To go back to the heavy artillery question, the first transport of siege guns from Wissembourg (conveyed thither from the interior of Germany) to Nanteuil was not made until the 9th of October,—a fortnight or so after the capitulation of Toul. A provisional siege park, or siege park of reception, was formed at Nanteuil; and from Nanteuil the guns were sent on under cavalry escort, and (to avoid the forts) by a very roundabout road to Villacoublay, where a park was established for supplying the siege batteries before Paris.

When the railway had once been replaced in good working order the heavy guns, for which everything was put aside, came up quickly enough. From the 9th to the 20th of October 160 ar-

rived at Nanteuil, and by the end of the month 230, for the most part of the newest make and of the most penetrating quality, were either at Villacoublay, or on their way to that place. It was interesting to see the various kinds of artillery collected at Nanteuil, and not less so the beautifully prepared ammunition, especially the elongated and almost elegant shells for the 180lb. weight rifled mortars, each packed carefully in its own peculiar case, or cabinet of wood, surrounded and protected by hay, like bottles of valuable old wine.

The artillery thus forwarded by train included breech-loading six-pounders, twelve-pounders, long twenty-four pounders and short twenty-four pounders, or fifteen centimetre guns (much admired before Strasburgh);* old-fashioned muzzle-loading twenty-five pounders (loans from the German fortresses); new fifty-pound mortars, and a few twenty-one centimetre rifled mortars of the Strasburgh breech-battery model, firing shells of 180lb. weight—not the most powerful mortars in existence, but the most powerful yet employed in actual warfare.

The transport of heavy guns by road from Nanteuil to Villacoublay was one of the great difficulties attendant upon the siege. The artillerymen

* Carrying an elongated shell of 15lbs. weight; an elongated projectile being generally equal to about two and a half round projectiles of the same calibre.

marched well and the horses pulled well. But some of the guns were very heavy, and the roads here and there were very steep; and it was so necessary in escorting a ponderous siege train to avoid the fire of the Paris forts, that the artillery journey from Nanteuil to Villacoublay extended over something like a hundred miles, and occupied five days, or, made with great celerity, four.

What a miserable morning was that on which we started from the residence of a hospitable Anglo-French proprietor, who, instead of allowing himself to be made the victim of Prussians, had conceived the happy idea of receiving them as though they were his invited guests—thus imposing obligations upon them to which, as gentlemen, the officers could not and did not fail to respond. What a day was that—*giorno d'orrore!* the horses every step sinking in the mud to their fetlocks, the rain pouring down in torrents, the wind blowing like a hurricane; all nature, as it were, conspiring against the progress of the guns, which, somehow, all the same had to be got on. However, the artillerymen, much less effectively protected against the hard weather than I was, did not seem to mind; and they did their twenty and twenty-five miles a day admirably throughout the march.

Our greatest trouble was with those horrible old 25-pounders detached from the walls of an-

tiquated German fortresses—things which would scarcely be out of place side by side with the mortar and long siege gun exhibited between St. James's Park and the Horse Guards, or with the "Lazy Margaret" of early Prussian history, as celebrated by Mr. Carlyle, or with the monsters of the Kremlin, constructed less to carry shot than to inspire fear.

Sometimes one of these huge 25-pounders (to which the rifled mortars carrying shells of 180lbs. were mere playthings) would, on being pulled up a hill, burst its bonds and slip down again, to the dire confusion of men and horses following. It needed ten horses to drag them up an ascent, and twenty men to hold them with ropes as they went down a declivity. Sometimes, under the pressure of five tons the break gave way. When it remained firm it struck light, and burnt and fumed until literally every gun was enveloped in a little cloud of smoke, and the whole road smelt suggestively of the infernal regions.

The train, then, consisted of pieces of small calibre, pieces of large calibre, but, above all, ponderous pieces—the aforesaid iron guns from the ancient German fortresses, the like of which, these once destroyed, will never be seen again. There were some twenty guns, about 300 fortress artillerymen, a small escort of cavalry, and eight or ten cavalry

and artillery officers, who jointly directed the progress of the little army. We had also an ox, which was driven in the rear of the column by an artilleryman. It mysteriously disappeared on the evening of the second day's march, which, perhaps, accounted for the beef so plentifully served to us on the afternoon of the third.

Our meals were very well managed. Sometimes, when we passed through a respectable town, we breakfasted or lunched at the principal inn, leaving the column to go on ahead and catching it up afterwards. Two or three times, too, we bivouacked in the open air, which, as there was abundance of provisions, and the officer in charge of the convoy had an excellent cook, was a matter easy and pleasant to accomplish.

Francs-Tireurs were promised to us at intervals; but, though we passed numbers of woods, no Francs-Tireurs showed themselves, or made any sign whatever.

Our road from Nanteuil to Villacoublay lay through a beautiful country marked here and there (more often, I fancy, than we knew of) by places of historical, literary, and social interest. At La Ferté we saw the house where Marie Antoinette made a temporary halt before completing her journey to Paris. At Séricourt was the château of the late M. Scribe, abandoned by Madame Scribe

to the Johanniters. At Fontenay the fine old house, formerly a fortress, of the Marquis de Biron; at Tournon, a place we mistook for some celebrated training stables, but which turned out to be the country house of M. Emile Péreire.

The "enfant terrible" is found in invaded as in all other countries; and at the café of the little town or village of Fontenay I met with an interesting specimen of the class in a little girl who, in the first place, could not be restrained by her mother from singing the "Marseillaise" in presence of Prussian officers. Secondly, seeing a portion of the escort pass before the windows, the dreadful child exclaimed:

"Voilà les Prussiens qui s'en vont, Dieu merci!"

"Oh, my darling," said the shocked mamma, "you must not say that. I am sure 'ces messieurs' are most amiable!"

"No, no," persisted the little girl, "you said yourself mamma just now that they were *très méchants!*"

At this same place a one-year volunteer, who was going on to Paris, told me that having been quartered on an infirm old woman, he had, not to incommode her, left her house and taken a room at the café, and that the proprietor now refused to accept payment from him, and at the same time thanked him warmly for the consideration he had shown.

towards his neighbour, who on her part sent him some grapes and a Neufchatel cheese, as a mark of her esteem.

The French, despite their ignorance of geography (as to which, once take us out of the British possessions, we can match them in England) are very quick in appreciating and responding to acts of kindness, which is, after all, a merit in its way.

We dined and passed our second night at the Marquis de Biron's. No great hardship for the marquis, since the officers brought their own provisions, their cook, and other servants; the only requisition made being for partial attendance at dinner and a few bottles of wine. Previous visitors had not, the marquis's servants declared, been so considerate. The first troops who passed through Fontenay on their way to Paris had drunk and carried off large quantities of wine. They were also reported, dining in the garden, to have thrown the forks and spoons about; and the servants assured us that the plate was now put away, and locked up in some place of which the marquis alone had the key. We were, in fact, obliged to eat our dinner with clasp knives and steel forks. The marquis (as will be inferred from what I have already said) was not at home; but his house and grounds were in charge of good servants, and no harm whatever had been done to any portion of his fine property. The

château is an historical building, and in one corner a room was shown to us in which, by an agreeable tradition, it was held that the edict for the massacre of St. Bartholomew had been signed.

I don't think one of the 300 or 350 men engaged in transporting the guns was knocked up by the bad weather and the heavy marching, which together formed a trying combination; and the distance of nearly a hundred miles was got through easily in four days.





CHAPTER XV.

OCCUPATION OF DESERTED DISTRICTS.

THE German troops are known to have felt aggrieved at the systematic manner in which the inhabitants of the villages and small towns near Paris fled before them, as from an invasion of barbarians. It may, or may not, have been bad taste on the part of the French to regard their enemies as Tartars ; but it was a mistake, in any case, to take refuge from them within the walls of a city about to be besieged. Similarly, many thousands of peasants* are said to have sought safety inside Metz ; and it is certain that numbers of Alsatian families hastened to swell the population of Strasburg immediately before its invest-

* I have seen the number estimated at 20,000 ; but have no better means of testing the accuracy of these figures than had, probably, the statistician who originally set them down.

ment. The fugitive in a fortified town saves himself for a time from all contact with the invader, which is always something. But he has to reckon with fever and famine; and, as regards the smaller fortified towns, there is no place so disagreeable and so dangerous for the inhabitants of an occupied country as the interior of one of those shell-traps—“*nids à bombes*”—which are to the surrounding districts what the fire is to the frying-pan, the river to the rain. During the wars of the last century the inhabitants of fortified towns were less at the mercy than they are now of the besiegers' artillery; and in the outside country they incurred risks and positive dangers, from which, if we may judge of the conduct of modern armies in general by that of the German army in France during the last war, the civil population is now altogether free.

The French, however, of the districts near Paris were not more sensitive in presence of invasion than other Frenchmen. They fled to the capital as to a place of safety; and the inhabitants of Lorraine and Champagne would probably have done the same, had Paris been within their reach. The two Villeneuves—Villeneuve and Villeneuve St. George—were, I remember, completely deserted, except by the bold inn-keepers, who, with a view to profit, remained everywhere. The houses were soon in a

lamentable condition. Let Richmond be entirely abandoned by its inhabitants. Then on the floor of each house quarter twenty soldiers, of no matter what nation; and a few days afterwards, though the conduct of the soldiers might have been excellent, you would find the place in something like the state in which I found the once delightful riverside retreat of Villeneuve St. George.

"Our soldiers are not malicious," said a Bavarian officer to me, entering into the philosophy of the matter; "they are simply children. Regard them as children, and you will understand them. Here you see, where we are, everything is in order; because here officers are quartered, and because the proprietor has remained. If he had fled, like the others, we should perhaps have gone somewhere else; this place would have been filled with soldiers; they would have begun by throwing these books" (pointing to the library) "at one another's heads; some would have defended themselves with chairs, or fragments of chairs prepared for purposes of attack; the looking-glass would soon have got broken; the cavalry men would have stretched themselves on the sofas, and torn the sofa covers with their spurs; and all this without any harm being meant. If a mania for destruction had seized them, it would have been much worse."

That same night I found myself trying to sleep

in a room next to one occupied by a considerable number of soldiers, who, in fact, passed much of their time in the innocent, child-like manner described by the Bavarian officer. Paying them a visit the next morning, I found them pelting one another with their own boots in a room completely destitute of furniture; the furniture had already been broken up, and the pieces removed.

Twice it happened to me to approach Paris by the route of the invasion. The second time it was already winter, and the telegraph wires, covered with frost and snow, looked like skeins of white worsted. Many of the Bavarian soldiers I met—more sensitive, apparently, to the cold than the Prussians—had wrapped themselves up in horse-cloths or blankets. The French drivers of requisitional carts, glad to get themselves warmly dressed by any means, had gone for their wardrobes to the battle-fields, and had attired themselves in the trousers, and sometimes in the coats and capotes of their fallen countrymen.

Another grotesque sight was a sentinel in a sort of sentry-box which he had made for himself out of the case of a square piano. The rightful owner of the instrument will have imagined that the German soldiers carried it away with them partly from love of art, chiefly for the sake of plunder. Another sentinel, by a skilful employment of branches and

boughs, had constructed a small harbour, in which he stood up, looking very like a Jack-in-the-green. By the side of each sentry-box, was a high, torch-like column of straw, to be set light to, by way of signal, in case of a sortie. I believe, however, that neither Germans nor French showed much knowledge of the art of visual telegraphy. The Americans, in their civil war, are known to have brought to perfection a system of signalling by means of coloured lights, which, by-the-way, General Werder employed, on a limited scale, in the battles outside Belfort. The Paris forts were connected with the interior fortifications by means of both subterranean and aerial telegraphs; but the Germans contented themselves with the ordinary aerial telegraphs, which were maintained systematically between the general head-quarters and the head-quarters of each particular army; sometimes also between the head-quarters of an army corps and those of its army; and of course round Strasburg, Metz, and Paris.*

At the risk of telling some readers what many are still at this moment not aware of, I may here

* Herr von Chauvin, at a meeting of engineers, held some two years ago, in London, was asked, in his character of director of telegraphs during the war, how much wire had been employed. Unable or unwilling to answer the question explicitly, he could only be got to say, "A great deal."

say a few words as to how Paris was cut off from all intercourse with the outside world. It was surrounded only in this sense: that the approaches to the city on all sides were blocked. It was as though around London the Hammersmith Road, the Uxbridge Road, the Edgware Road, the roads to Hampstead, to Highgate on one side, and on the other the Vauxhall, Waterloo, Blackfriars, Southwark, and City Roads were occupied impassably; with large bodies of troops at Richmond, Brentford, Ealing, and at similar distances—here somewhat greater, there somewhat less—from the centre. Plans were formed for cutting off the water and the gas of the besieged; and the besiegers had with them architects and engineers who were perfectly acquainted with the public works of Paris, and knew, moreover, how much coal and wood the city was likely to contain, and how long the fuel would probably last. It was held, I believe, that the Parisians would have acted prudently had they stopped locomotion on their suburban railways; and it was seen with satisfaction, that they continued to work them, thus needlessly increasing the consumption of coal, and hastening the moment at which it was hoped they would find themselves condemned, during fourteen out of the twenty-four hours, to total darkness.

The occupied places round Paris all suffered

more or less, not only as regards the interior, but also the exterior of buildings. The second time I passed Villeneuve St. George, a good many houses bore marks of shells—had, in fact, been perforated by them; and nearer Paris, wherever the Germans had established defensive positions, walls were loopholed and houses fortified and barricaded with their own furniture. Furniture, too, in the depth of winter, was often burned as fire-wood.

When the child-like soldier, in his infantine gambols, has played and fought up to breaking-point with the smaller pieces of furniture; when he has converted the piano into a sentry-box, has burned the side-board, and used the sofas and the fragments of chairs, wardrobes, chests of drawers, and so on for barricading purposes, he has done nothing for which any one but the owner of the property has much right to blame him. A young man in good spirits, having fought his way some two hundred miles into the heart of a country whose inhabitants mean to kill him if they get the chance, will naturally throw things about, make himself a sentry-box, if he wants one, out of whatever comes handy, and, in default of other timber more suitable for such a purpose, keep himself warm by burning rose-wood and mahogany. We need not forget, all the same, that war has its grotesque and ignoble, as well as its terrible and sublime side, and

that there is a certain want of fitness in looking to Erard or Pleyel for the materials of a sentry-box.

A good deal has been said about the plundering of houses in the neighbourhood of Paris. It is enough to say that, deserted by the inhabitants, they were occupied by the invading troops. To imagine that, in a general scene of destruction, the German soldier thought it a sin to appropriate any loose property that might be lying about would be absurd. Take away the one-year volunteers, who are to the entire mass in the proportion of about one to ten, and the German armies consisted for the most part of peasants, who had all been to school, but had not all learned to read. Their discipline was excellent, and they had none of the traditional brutality of the soldier inured to campaigning habits. They did not enter houses with a view to plunder, like the soldier of Juvenal ("*rarus venit in cœnacula miles*"); nor could it be said of them, as of the soldier of the Thirty Years' War, "the soldier pays for nothing."* As I have seen in a hundred occupied places, between Saarbrücken and Rouen, Strasburg and Amiens, the individual soldier, entering an inn or a shop, paid for what he took; and, though I was on the look-out for such incidents, I never heard anywhere of a shop having

* See *ante*, page 191.

been plundered. But to suppose the German soldiers would respect property without an ostensible owner, or the representative of an owner, in a deserted house, is to attribute to them a moral elevation which those who make the supposition would be the first to deny them. It is a fact, all the same, that watches and articles of jewellery used constantly to be advertised in the German *Moniteur de Versailles*. Probably not very many such articles were left behind. The retreating inhabitants would naturally take away with them as much valuable property as they could carry.

The French, well accustomed both to invade and to be invaded, understood from the beginning that it would be a security for property not utterly to abandon it; and I have been in houses where servants had been left, which were as well treated as though the master himself had been there. I am convinced, however, that on these occasions it is the duty of the proprietor himself to remain, especially if he be a man of position and influence, not only for his own sake, but also, and above all, for that of his neighbours and dependents. If he retires for the purpose of taking up arms, he should cause himself to be represented, if possible, by some member of his family.*

* Compare a letter in the *Times* at the very beginning of the campaign, from the head-quarters of Prince Frederick

Sutlers, authorized but not attached—to be distinguished therefore from the “marketenders” of the army—followed the route of the invasion when the German forces were once well-established in France. Sutlers in the regular military service ought alone to accompany troops; and such, as far as I could see, was the rule during the first few weeks of the invasion. The system of requisitions, in combination with the system of magazines in the rear of the army, supplemented or replaced, when the worst came to the worst, by purchases either through secret agents or in open market, sufficed to secure the troops all necessaries and necessary luxuries in the shape of food, drink, and tobacco; and the independent dealers had nothing to offer for sale which could not, I am convinced, have been obtained of better quality through the military authorities. Cigars, perhaps, would have run short, failing the independent supplies from Germany; but as the German soldier smokes a

Charles, in which the writer speaks of a château being left in charge of an old servant, who called himself “the Count,” with one of M. Ludovic Halévy’s admirable scenes of the occupation (“Madame Cardinal,” &c.), where the part of “Baroness” is played by an intelligent soubrette, bent on saving her mistress’s diamonds. The author (with M. Meilhac) of so many excellent comedies, has seized all the comic aspects of the invasion from a patriotic, but not a Chauvinistic, point of view.

certain number of cigars after every meal, the commissariat might think of his cigars as of his rations of bread and meat. A Prussian army corps, at its full strength, smokes from four to five million cigars a month; an enormous number, it is true, but nothing very immense in weight nor, properly packed, in bulk. The object in a great national invasion is to press and crush the invaded country, not only by defeating its armies but also by taxing, in the severest manner, the civil population. It forms no part, however, of such a plan to tolerate plunder; and plundering—or pilfering in unoccupied houses—is said to have been directly encouraged by the presence of these unattached dealers in cigars and spirits, who thought it undesirable to return to Germany with empty carts.

The immense scale on which requisitions were levied has caused many persons to lose sight of the fact that the German armies were followed into France by large convoys of grain and cattle. Erckmann-Châtريان says, very picturesquely, in "*Le Plébiscite*," that the course of the invasion was marked by the wheat sown in its track. The Germans, too, brought with their forage certain kinds of seed not previously known, or not previously naturalized in France, which have since taken root in the fields around Paris, as formally noted by professed herbalists.

What quantities of their own money the Germans must have left behind!—since returned to them no doubt in payment of contributions or of the indemnity.

A few of their words, too, will not be readily forgotten in France—"capout," "fort," "nix," for instance—"capout," above all. Two German words, "ross"—the old German heroic for "horse;" and "lustig," seem to have entered France peacefully and pleasantly through Alsace; the former becoming, oddly enough, "rosse" ("une vilaine rosse"); the latter, "loustic" ("le loustic du régiment). The newly-introduced German words will never be adopted as French—some of them do not even belong to the written language of Germany; but three or four of the number will long be remembered in the provinces occupied during the war. I once heard a Prussian soldier, just returned from action, call out, in a violent state of excitement, to a young person who apparently had been teasing him by predicting his speedy defeat if not destruction: "Soldat Prussienn nix capout! Soldat Prussienn nix capout!" which was at once understood to mean, "the Prussian soldier has not yet been done for!" "Nix" meant "no," "not," "do not;" any sort of negative.

Now that I am almost at the end of this book,

I find it difficult to place everything I wished to put into it. I will mention, then, at random that near Paris, I was mystified by seeing inscribed on numerous walls by the side of "Nach Paris," "Capout," and "Napoleon Capout," "Das ist gewiss Napoleum!" of which, when I afterwards met with the "Kutschke-lied," translated into twenty-four modern and ancient, western and eastern languages, the meaning became apparent to me; that I once heard a Prussian officer condemn an hotel-waiter, and with him the whole French nation, to eternal perdition, on ethnological principles, because he, a Frenchman and a Gaul, had not made the officer's boots shine. ("You say it is because they are damp? No, it is because you belong to a lazy and incorrigible race; otherwise, indeed, you would not have us here among you"); that a German professor, attached to an ambulance, whom I found established on the landing of an hotel where I had to pass the night, exclaimed, on being asked by the proprietor to explain his conduct: "I am here to assert the right of every German to encamp where he pleases on the occupied soil." These men were both types—types, perhaps, of a small class—but types all the same.

Then there was a German merchant, who travelled with what *he* called "types"—a typical ham, a typical tongue, a typical cheese, a typical

keg of butter ; and who proposed to submit these food specimens to Herr Von Brauschitz, the acting Prefect of the Seine, that His Excellency might say whether he would like Paris to be supplied with a certain number of each on the day of surrender. The typical keg of butter was, I remember, stolen in the train by a Bavarian soldier.

I must say a word, too, about the "love-gifts;" friendly remembrances, usually in the shape of food and drink, from the "old boys" of a regiment or from persons connected with a regiment by ties of neighbourhood or of good-fellowship. Expeditions with "love-gifts" were generally undertaken to places where it was known that the favoured regiments had, for a time at least, their fixed abode—outside Metz, for instance, Strasburg, or some other besieged town ; and occasionally, if the bearers of sausages, saur-kraut, and beer were in luck, they had the chance of seeing a sortie. Thus two gentlemen from Bremen who bore "love-gifts" to the officers of the 30th regiment, occupying one of the nearest suburbs of Strasburg, came in for an attack on a neighbouring position the very night of their arrival, and had a narrow escape of being blown to pieces by shells. One very handsome and useful "love-gift" made by a merchant of Bremen to the regiment there recruited, consisted of 3000 macintoshes. As a mere matter of economy, it might be

a good thing to supply soldiers as well as officers with waterproofs throughout the German army. Instead of 225 thalers, the cost of the German soldier would thus amount to perhaps 227 thalers* a year.

One sort of "love-gift" which possessed particular interest for me, and to which I invite the attention of persons who do not yet understand the national and political importance of empowering accredited correspondents to accompany troops, was the weekly war edition of the *Cologne Gazette* supplied gratuitously, so many copies to each company, from the office of that enterprising journal. The Prussians, having statesmen at the head of their armies, at once saw the advantage—not to say necessity—of maintaining a constant current of intercommunication and sympathy between the fighting men and their fellow-countrymen at home, from whose midst they were being constantly reinforced.

Perhaps the moral influences brought to bear upon the Prussian soldier have not been sufficiently taken into account by the numerous able writers who have studied Prussian organization and disci-

* Compare this with the cost of the English soldier—about £100 a year. Our soldiers then might receive in pay something like £66 a year more than the Prussians; at which rate it would not be difficult to find recruits.

pline in its results. Remark, for instance, the tone of the Prussian Book of Punishments (*Strafgesetzbuch*), which is no mere collection of rules and threats, but reminds the soldier, at every opportunity, of duties which no formal prescriptions, no menaces could compel him to perform. It impresses upon him, for instance, that he must be always ready to give up his life for his king and country ; that he owes to his comrade in moments of difficulty and danger his counsel, his purse, and his arm, and that he must never desert him should he be surrounded by enemies.

The worship of the weapon, too (the expression is scarcely too strong), is inculcated, and, as a matter of fact, inspired. Arms are given to the soldier for a sacred purpose, and he must not turn them to any ignoble or even ordinary use. A friend of mine once suggested, in perfect good humour, to a soldier at a bivouac, that he might use his sabre to cut a piece of bread ; on which the indignant warrior proposed to turn his holy blade against the scoffer who had made it the subject of a ribald jest. An officer to whom complaint was made took the man's part, saying that his soldiers must not be "insulted." I remember a similar fit of excitement on the part of a one-year volunteer—prosaically occupied, in times of peace, as clerk at an English bank—who, the day of the entry into

Strasburg, exclaimed violently against the baseness of the French in breaking their Chassepots before marching out. "I would rather break my arm, I would sooner lose one of my limbs than do such a thing!" he called out. Probably, however, this religion of the sword and musket, of which the great practical effect is to make the soldier stick to his weapon even in the last extremity, is not believed in with any too blind credulity by the upper classes of the army. I, at least, have seen a Prussian officer of hussars drive a donkey up a Rhine mountain with the flat of his sabre. But it was in time of peace, the sabre was sheathed, and the donkey was mounted by a young lady.





CHAPTER XVI.

THEORETICALLY OCCUPIED DISTRICTS.



A DISTRICT or tract of country is theoretically occupied when an invading army has occupied and disarmed it, without remaining in it. The actual occupation, too, of a particular district involves the occupation, in theory, of adjacent districts within certain limits. If Kensington were occupied, Brompton and Hammersmith, even though no troops had entered those places, would be regarded as occupied, and the inhabitants held subject to martial law. Wherever the Prussians passed, the fact of their passage placed the country traversed beneath the Prussian Military Code.

In a district not yet occupied, or of which the occupation is still disputed, resistance to the invader, on the part of regular soldiers, is, of course, an act of war, and no question of "complicity"

on the part of the inhabitants, can be raised, provided civilians have not actually taken up arms. But, in an occupied district—whether occupied practically or only theoretically—an attack even from regular soldiers might place the inhabitants in a very dangerous position, suspected as they would be of having given information to the attacking party, in defiance of the invariable warning, under the severest penalties, to hold no communication with “the enemy.”

It is, of course, to the interest of the invaders to incapacitate as many regions as possible from taking part in the defence of the invaded country; and where once the invading forces have placed their foot, the inhabitants will afterwards assist their countrymen at their own peril.

There were no merely theoretically occupied districts in France, during the late invasion, until after the surrender of Metz. Up to that important date, indeed, no advance had been made to any great distance beyond Paris, with the sole exception of that of General von der Tann to Orleans. Afterwards, the armies sent north, west, and south must, in their long and sometimes circuitous marches, have proclaimed the Prussian military law in numbers of districts which they were unable to hold except in virtue of the terror they were sure to inspire.

In regard to theoretically occupied districts, the noble game of "brag" must be played; and an army enjoying the prestige, conferred by a long and all but uninterrupted series of victories, may proclaim its dominion over an extent of country out of all proportion to what it could really hold in face of determined resistance. Should the published law of the invaders be anywhere set at naught, it is incumbent on them, for the maintenance of their character, to assert their authority in a marked manner. This they do by levying contributions, carrying away hostages, or, in face of armed resistance, by military executions. I once travelled from St. Germain to Louviers, a distance of fifty miles, along a road occupied theoretically by the Prussians, without seeing a Prussian soldier. From the outskirts of Rouen to Dieppe, nearly forty miles, I met here and there a Prussian soldier, and, at one place, found a post of perhaps half a dozen men. At Dieppe, Prussian proclamations on the walls and the local cannons spiked or otherwise spoiled; the police and firemen disarmed; the telegraph in every direction cut; the postal service stopped; but nowhere a Prussian or German soldier. From Dieppe to Neufchâtel, not a soldier, with the exception of a few invalids left at Neufchâtel in hospital; from Neufchâtel to the advanced posts of the army at Amiens, again not a soldier.

Yet from St. Germain, by way of Louviers and Elbœuf to Rouen, from Rouen to Dieppe, from Dieppe to Amiens, the roads and adjacent districts were all under Prussian rule.

As if to test the reality of the domination the invaders claimed to exercise, the inhabitants of Neufchâtel arrested some Frenchmen who had undertaken to supply provisions and forage to the Prussian army at Amiens. The immediate consequence of this act was a visit from Prussian troops, who seized the mayor and his secretary, or "ad-joint," and carried them both off as hostages, to be detained until payment of a fine of £2000.

At Dieppe, where the Prussians expected a French corps would be landed,* either to march upon Rouen, held, at forty miles' distance, by only a few thousand men, or to effect some other diversion in favour of Faidherbe, the only hostile act proceeded from the deck of a French war-steamer; whence a few rifle-shots were fired at some Prussian dragoons riding along the beach, and straining their eyes as if to see whether any more vessels were arriving. The dragoons disappeared, but returned the next day with troops of all arms. A sufficient display of force was made, a fine of 50,000 or 60,000 francs was imposed, and, as the town, which had just

* See Major Blume's work on the "Operations of the German Armies after Sedan."

before been required to pay 75,000 francs to redeem the Government tobacco manufactory,* was without funds, the mayor and his adjoint were, according to the custom in such cases, carried off as hostages. It has been said, in view of the alleged impossibility of a war between England and Prussia, that a fight between a fish and dog can lead to nothing; but for that to be true, the dog must not be already on the enemy's coast, which was the case at Dieppe when the captain of a French gun-boat went into action against six Prussian troopers.

Travelling in theoretically occupied districts—among people, that is to say, who have been humiliated by conquest without being awed into submission by the presence of the conquerors—is a thing to be avoided. Should complications arise, there are no authorities to appeal to. The ordinary government has been rendered powerless without being replaced by any effective government on the part of the invaders. In villages, the absence of all regular government seemed to be attended by no inconvenience; but a town population cannot support the indignity of an occupation, and then suddenly find itself released from the invaders' hold, without being profoundly agitated. When, after the first occupation of Amiens, the Prussians marched out,

* See ante, page 57.

leaving their wounded behind, serious fears were entertained for the safety of these unfortunate men. The mayor had no armed force at his disposal with which to restrain the excited rabble ; but he spared no personal exertions ; and the necessity of such exertions was shown by the inscriptions placed over the doors of the hospitals and ambulances : "Honneur d'Amiens ! Respect aux blessés !" The mob at the same time surrounded and threatened the chief of the English ambulance, the late Captain Uniacke, an officer who during his energetic service—terminated by an illness from which he never recovered—gained the esteem of the French quite as much as of the Prussians.*

It happened to me to arrive at Louviers, about half-way between Mantes and Rouen, in the evening, just as a detachment of Prussian infantry were marching, or rather driving in ; closely packed in country carts. They left the same night ; but I was told that a certain number of dragoons would remain at the Mairie. Early the next morning, however, some ill-disposed persons among the inhabitants induced the French commissary of police to pay me a visit, and from him I learnt that the dragoons had just gone away. The situation might

* As regards the latter, General von Goeben addressed to Captain Uniacke a most cordial letter of thanks, which may be found in the records of the National Society.

have been awkward ; but the commissary, when I explained to him that I could not recognize his authority, was no more anxious to arrest me than I was to be arrested, and a quarter of an hour afterwards I was in pursuit of the dragoons, whom I soon overtook.

The inhabitants of occupied districts had one thing to be thankful for, if it can be reasonably expected that an invaded population will be thankful for anything: the German armies were absolutely without marauders. In the invasions of the early part of the century, it was found so impossible to restrain military brigandage that Wellington, on entering France from Spain, empowered the village mayors to arm the peasantry for their own protection against the stragglers of his army. Similarly, but in a more jocular spirit, the unarmed villagers of Champagne were formally recommended, in 1814, by General D'Ærtel, to "arrest and bind" any Russian soldiers bent on attacking or plundering them. Just such a case is presented by the Russian fabulist Kriloff, in which the sheep, complaining of the wolves, have the right given to them of "seizing the wolves and bringing them to justice."

On the other hand—to return to this last war—attacks made by, or with the presumed aid of inhabitants on German troops, were never left

unpunished. At Mézières, between St. Germain and Mantes, I found a village, not, according to the conventional expression, "burned to the ground," but of which half, perhaps, had been consumed. One of the villagers whom I questioned on the subject told me that some Bavarian troops had halted at the place, and that when they marched away a shot was fired after them. Thereupon they demanded that the man who had fired the shot should be given up, and, as no one would denounce the offender, set the village on fire.

I spoke to some children who were playing among the ruins. "When they are grown up," said a man by their side, "they will go and burn villages in Germany."

At Foucancourt, a condemned village between Amiens and St. Quentin, I found that execution by fire had been done upon about a third of the houses. The inhabitants were accused of having been in collusion with so-called *Francs-Tireurs*, who had fired upon Prussian troops at the entrance to the village, approaching under cover of a thick fog. The mayor maintained that the attack had been made, without the aid or knowledge of the inhabitants, by *gardes mobiles*, whose action, whether by surprise or otherwise, in occupied or

unoccupied territory, would be as legitimate as that of regular troops wearing the uniform of the French army. The question, however, of collusion on the part of the inhabitants still remained ; and when in doubt what course to pursue, commanders often prefer the severest.

I must add that in another village at some distance, but in the same department, where a search had been made for arms, and arms found, the Prussians accepted the explanation that they were those of the national guard, deposited at the Mairie, and there forgotten.

At Vernon (road to Rouen), then in possession of the French, a French officer called my attention to the fact that, though an open town, the place had been shelled, and was about, he assured me, to be shelled again, the Prussians being at that particular time just on the other side of the Seine, and well within range. The explanation of what he regarded as a flagrant violation of the laws of war, was that some game-keepers and other persons in plain clothes, had fired across the river at Prussian troops. The bridges were broken, the Prussians were unable to cross ; so, unable to punish the offence in a direct manner, they brought up one or more field-pieces, and threw shells into the nearest town. The expected renewal of the attack was not made—at least, not during the next hour or two—nor had

the first one done any harm, except to a few houses.

Besides fully occupied and partially occupied, practically occupied and theoretically occupied districts, districts occupied by the Germans, and districts occupied by the French, I once passed between Mantes and Vernon, through a district occupied neither by Germans nor French, but which might at any moment have been occupied by either or both.

The Germans (Bavarians) were in force at Nantes with two lines, or rather stations, of outposts in advance on the road towards Gaillon and Vernon. The French were at Vernon with their most advanced post concealed behind some high ground at the side of the road between Vernon and Gaillon. Gaillon, midway between the hostile lines, was not occupied by the troops of either side, and it had the appearance of a deserted place, the inhabitants all keeping carefully to their houses. The Bavarians, however, had been there, and had left their marks in chalk on the doors; so that, whether by a fixed design or not, they kept a theoretically occupied place—a place, that is to say, held by invaders' law to be under invaders' rule—between themselves and the enemy.

A great point to bear in mind in connection with

what I call "theoretically occupied districts," is that without formal proclamation—without even chalk marks—a district is occupied and passes under invaders' law by the mere fact of the invaders entering it.





CHAPTER XVII.

OCCUPATION OF ROUEN AND NORMANDY.

THE morning after my arrival in Rouen, I was wakened by the sound of such music as under ordinary circumstances would never have been heard in France. A selection from "Lohengrin," was being played by the band of an East Prussian regiment, just in front of the hotel.

Here, then, was conquest symbolized in music. Nothing but a successful invasion could have brought Richard Wagner to the native city of Boieldieu; beneath whose statue the unfamiliar sounds were, at that moment, being produced. The sarcasm, however, met with very little notice from the inhabitants. Street-boys, whose curiosity and love of novelty are stronger everywhere than their patriotism, held the music sheets for their enemies; but the adult passers-by paid no more attention to the doubtful strains than did the orchestral dog

who had dragged the big drum after him, from somewhere near Königsberg* to the capital of Normandy, and who now, like a dog that had seen the world, lay down on the pavement, and calmly slept without once disturbing the general effect of the music by the unexpected *rinforzando* of a snore.

It was freezing hard, and the brass instruments, pinched by the cold, were terribly hoarse. What, however, was the frost to East Prussians?—one of whom, when a shivering Frenchman complained that the thermometer marked ten degrees below freezing point, is said to have replied: “Ten degrees? Why, in East Prussia, at ten degrees, it thaws.”

Rouen is not a military fortress, but an open and highly commercial city; and for that double reason surrendered to the Prussians without striking a blow, and after the merest gesture of self-defence. No adequate preparation, long as preparations had been talked of, had been made for resisting the enemy; and the general in command, not wishing to lead the troops and national guards, at his disposal, to unavailing destruction, retired with the former to Havre. The national guard, owing, it

* This dog, as I afterwards learned, had been captured with his Austrian drum, at Sadowa, when, contrary to the laws of modern warfare he was forced to enter the service of Prussia.

was said, to some mistake—which no one, however, need have regretted—was not called out; and the Prussians entered the city unopposed. The usual cry of treachery was raised, and after the withdrawal of the regular soldiers, and just before the arrival of the Prussian advanced guard, the rabble, with characteristic patriotism, fired upon the Prefecture, where the municipal authorities were assembled.

It was alleged too, that a bargain had been struck with the Prussians, by which, on condition of offering no resistance, Rouen was to pay no war contribution. This was false. Rouen was not visited with a crushing fine, such as undoubtedly would have been imposed if troops or national guards had, without the least prospect of success, sought to impede the entry of the Prussians; but the favour with which it was treated in the matter of contributions, was extended on principle to most cities and towns which, in the same manner, admitted the enemy without opposition.

The municipal body of Rouen were much mortified at the accusation made against them by the least estimable portion of their fellow-citizens; and one of its members published a pamphlet, entitled, "Why Rouen did not defend itself," in which it was argued that the fault lay with General Briant, commanding the troops, though it was at the same time

made evident that with the means at his command—many national guards, but few regular soldiers, a few good guns, but no gunners—resistance would have been worse than vain.

When the Prussian officer, who had entered the Prefecture to state what accommodation would be required for the approaching troops, asked the members of the municipality to guarantee their safety, one of them pointed to the windows shattered by the bullets of the mob.

“Revolution and foreign occupation at the same time!” exclaimed the officer; and no more was said about guaranteeing the safety of the Prussian troops. It probably occurred to the officer that they would be able to take care of themselves. It was announced as usual that such and such rations would be required for the men,* while in regard to officers, the manner of entertaining them was expressly left “to the delicacy of their hosts!”

Some Rouen speculators foreseeing—or more probably not foreseeing—that Rouen would be occupied by the enemy, had organized a very ingenious means for averting, or at least diminishing, the burdens of the occupation. They formed a company, called “La Société Réparatrice de l’Invasion,” the prospectus of which offered guarantees to subscribers,

* See Chapter V.

against "requisitions, pillage, and incendiarism." As neither pillage nor incendiarism took place at Rouen, the company, if on the approach of the enemy it had not suddenly collapsed, might—at Rouen, if nowhere else—have done a prosperous business. Assuming that it had rightly estimated the amount of requisitions likely to be levied, it would not have lost on that head, while on those of incendiarism and pillage, it would obviously have gained.

But, unless the Prussian generals could have been induced beforehand to accept shares, the proposed insurance company would scarcely, under any circumstances, have acquired the character of a solid speculation. Invasion strikes unequally the poor villages and the wealthy cities. As a rule, the town is taxed, and the village spared; and if here and there untaxed villages from which surprises had been made, or solitary shots fired on occupying troops, were wholly or partially burned, a similar fate befell more than one small town. The "*Société Réparatrice de l'Invasion*" invited, it is true (and doubtless would have accepted), subscriptions from all parts of France, not actually occupied by the enemy; and it apparently counted, as far back as the month of November, when the first prospectus was issued, that the invasion had already attained its utmost probable limits. But the prospectus, I

believe, was circulated only in Normandy ; and it was only in Rouen that I noticed its advertisements placarded against the walls.

On the whole, it was, perhaps, well that the company broke down at the outset ; for the Prussians would only have been provoked to fresh severities, if on entering a large town they had found the inhabitants assuming a defiant tone on the ground that they had paid their premiums and were insured against the horrors of war.

As it was, even in those parts of Normandy, where no Prussians were for the moment to be seen, the shadow they had left behind, or the shadow preceding their arrival or return, was sufficient to awe the inhabitants. They might come back at any moment, and in case of proved disobedience during their absence, levy contributions and carry away hostages. For it was not in occupied districts alone that hostages were seized. Indeed it was, above all, in districts theoretically but not practically occupied, that they were taken. I have already mentioned that at Neufchâtel, half way between Dieppe and Amiens—in the midst of a large district of theoretically occupied country—the mayor and his adjunct were both made prisoners for having allowed the arrest of some provision dealers engaged in supplying the Prussian army ; and, as a general rule, where a fine

was imposed on a town and not paid, the two chief officials were kept in custody, or under surveillance, until the money was forthcoming.

In regard, however, to direct attacks upon the Prussians on the part of the inhabitants—firing upon them, for instance, from the interior or from the immediate neighbourhood of a town or village which had surrendered—there was scarcely an instance of it in Normandy, where people are in the habit of weighing the consequences of their actions, and were well aware of the penalty such an act would entail. A subscriber to the *Société Réparatrice de l'Invasion* would, doubtless, have forfeited his policy if it could have been shown that he had brought injury upon himself or property by any wanton deed of aggression towards the enemy.

I once heard it maintained by a Prussian who had studied the question, that it was only in the wine countries—Champagne, Burgundy, and especially the Côte-d'Or—that free-shooting exploits were performed with energy or in any great number. In the apple and cheese countries, such as Normandy and Brie, the Frenchman (argued the Prussian) was of a more quiet and calculating disposition, and though not unpatriotic, would scarcely be guilty of an outrage in the name of patriotism. Whether for good or evil it is certain that the announcement of an insurance company against

the evils of invasion would, in the grape districts, have excited general indignation. The only companies against invasion the wine-growers of the south or south-east cared to join were companies of armed men; though these also, in their way, proved as great failures as the Société Réparatrice of Rouen.*

I think the Prussians made themselves at home sooner in Rouen than in any other French city. It was known that they were not going to stay there for ever, as at Strasburgh and Metz; and they had not entered by force, as at Amiens and so many other places.

The inhabitants declared that they never knew exactly how many troops at any given time were quartered upon them; and their belief was that the Prussians asked for more billeting-tickets than they required in order to produce a false impression as to their strength. So, when regiments moved out of the town to reconnoitre or to keep the roads clear, or for no matter what purpose, they held that

* On the Prussian side a syndicate of bankers was really formed for advancing money to the municipalities of towns unable to execute the requisitions or pay the war contributions demanded of them. Herr Betzold, the agent of the syndicate, advanced four million francs to Nancy. His offers to accommodate Versailles in a similar manner were politely but firmly declined. ("Versailles pendant l'Occupation," par E. Delerot, p. 144.)

the true object of this marching to and fro—for the troops that went out by one road often came in by another—was to make the inhabitants see double.

Such precautions, however, were scarcely necessary. Rouen, when the forces quartered there had any serious work to do outside, was left to all appearances unguarded; but there were always guns on the heights which command the city, and these would have been more than sufficient to put a speedy end to any attempt at a rising.

Nevertheless, during the last days of December and first days of January, the French *did* entertain serious intentions of endeavouring to retake Rouen; and the feasibility of their project seemed on the point of being tested when the Prussians suddenly marched out and upset the very basis of the arrangement by assailing and dispersing the intending assailants.

The plan of the campaign against Rouen, or rather the actual possessors of that city, was simple enough; and, like so many other plans, needed nothing but execution to be thoroughly admirable. While General Faidherbe, after routing the great bulk of Manteuffel's army, near Amiens, was to march upon Rouen from the north-east, General Peletingear, commanding the Army of Havre, was to approach it from the west; and General Roy, military commander of the Departments of Eure and Calva-

dos, from the south. I don't think the promised advance of General Faidherbe (detained at Bapaume) was much believed in; but the arrival of General Peletingéas from Havre, and of General Roy from the neighbourhood of Elbœuf, was, on the night of the 3rd, confidently expected for the following morning.

On the evening of the 3rd nearly the whole of the troops quartered at Rouen were seen to march across the Pont de Pierre, in the direction of Elbœuf, leaving about half a company to keep order in a city of 140,000 inhabitants, of whom at least 30,000 were workmen without work.

Six battalions of infantry had gone out to beat the army of the left bank; but even if they succeeded in their attempt, which was deemed more than improbable, Rouen, it was maintained, would be occupied during their absence by the army on the right bank,—the army, that is to say, advancing from Havre.

A more dramatic, and in its way touching, sight could scarcely be seen than that which already presented itself at seven in the morning, along the quays, and especially at the corner of the Pont de Pierre, across which the Prussians had marched triumphantly the evening before, and across which they were now expected, before long, to return with a remarkable change in their manners.

Among those who composed the numerous groups, which were fast becoming crowds, some looked anxious, some defiant, some absolutely joyful. All were in a state of high excitement, and this became very apparent whenever an officer—newly-arrived, or the bearer of a message—galloped across the bridge, or when a patrol went by. Even the ambulance waggons seemed to irritate the crowd; and the appearance of a hearse, bearing (very unnecessarily) the flag of neutrality, raised diabolical mirth. Indeed, if it had only depended upon the workmen of Rouen to fill any number of such vehicles, and if savage glances alone could kill, the returns of slain would have been considerably increased. Nor was it a disadvantage, on that particular day, that the half-dozen infantry soldiers who kept clear the approach to the bridge, and now and then pushed back with the butt-ends of their muskets the too eager members of the crowd, did not understand the French language. A proclamation recently displayed on the walls of Rouen attributed the differences, which in that as in other French cities sometimes *would* arise between conquerors and conquered, to the difficulty each side experienced in making itself understood. If the author of that proclamation could have heard what certain Frenchmen muttered, and sometimes said aloud, of the Prussians, when they were calculating

how long it was likely to be before their enemies returned as fugitives to Rouen, he would at least have admitted that his principle only held good with certain reservations.

On the St. Sever side of the bridge—in the workmen's quarter—I found less tumult, but greater crowds, than in the commercial and quasi-fashionable portion of Rouen—the only portion, by-the-way, which was ever occupied in force by the Prussians. But the more excitable of the Saint-Severians had gone forward to get tidings of the battle; and the road to Petit Couronne was lined with the same sort of persons—all insurgents in expectation, all bent upon what one of their number had called “a patriotic St. Bartholomew”—whom I had seen exultant and menacing, in view of the predicted Prussian defeat, at the corner of the Pont de Pierre. At about a mile from the outposts I passed an omnibus, the conductor of which was plying for hire under cover of an imitation Geneva cross.

In front of the village of Petit Couronne the groups were larger and more numerous than ever, and several workmen called out sarcastically that the Prussians would not allow me to proceed any farther, or that, if they did, they would of a certainty steal my horse. The battle was now not only within hearing but within sight; there were, in fact, two battles going on, with several minor

battles between the major ones, the whole constituting an engagement of some magnitude, though of less magnitude, perhaps, than extent. The enemy, had, in the true sense of the word, been scattered, and they were now being pursued along two different lines of high road, on the intervening ground between these high roads, and also through the woods to the right and left of the two main paths of retreat.

Many hours afterwards, when it was dark and the battle had been lost, and the French had been driven into Elbœuf and along the road to Bourgheroulde, I found, as I returned towards Rouen, the same groups still as close as possible to the outposts, and still expecting to see the Prussians come running towards them, pursued by *Francs-Tireurs* and *Mobiles*. A cavalry patrol trotting towards Rouen was thought to be in flight, and was chaffed on that account. Then as the main body of the troops still did not return, the workmen hoping against hope, maintained that the battle was still going on and that, whatever its result might be, Rouen would, in the meanwhile, be occupied (as with a little enterprise, I fancy, it might have been) by General Peletingas advancing from Havre.

But nothing came from Havre; and the next day the five or six thousand men who had gone out to attack General Roy's forces, and had pursued them a considerable distance, began to return, and

Rouen was once more an occupied city, not only in theory but in fact.

The Prussians came back triumphant and jocular; for to have finished a battle and finished it successfully is a source not only of relief but of exhilaration to the victorious side. I was assured that, after the capture of an ancient ruin, known as Le Château de Robert le Diable, in which the French had established their grand' garde, the band of the 43rd Regiment approached it and played the chorus of demons from Meyerbeer's celebrated opera. That is just possible, but I could scarcely believe, what I also heard, that when, at a later period of the day, a chief of Francs-Tireurs was brought in captive, the musicians struck up, "*Grâce, grâce, pour moi!*" from the same work, or that the sudden departure of a regiment of Mobiles, who seemed bent on escaping from the province, was made the signal for performing "*Quand je quittais la Normandie.*"

Meanwhile Elbœuf had been placed in a very trying position. Passing through Elbœuf, on my way to Rouen, some ten or twelve days before, I had fortunately found it occupied by the Prussians. The Prussians beginning, a few days afterwards, to concentrate their small available forces in and around Rouen, withdrew from Elbœuf, which was

then occupied by French troops, who quitted it to advance towards Rouen and retreated to Elbœuf, where the meditated combined attack on Rouen had been anticipated and completely frustrated.

It was now the Prussians' turn to re-occupy Elbœuf. They accordingly sent in word that, unless the French retired, they would drive them out by bombardment—in other words, would shell the town. The French could only march out. Here, then, was a case of an open town being menaced with bombardment—a fate to which, notwithstanding a popular belief to the contrary, every town, fortified or unfortified, which defends itself is equally exposed. The threatened fate can be averted either by the town surrendering or by the occupying troops coming out and driving away the assailants.

In such a contingency, supposing the assailants to be foreign invaders in adequate numbers, the situation is, of course, wholly in their favour. The town they propose to burn is not theirs; and their commander considers it his duty not to expose his soldiers unnecessarily to the perils of street-fighting amid a hostile population.

Should the invaders, however, be in occupation, it may be doubted whether an attempt to drive them from their position by threatening to bombard the town would prove effective. Probably such a

threat would not be carried out ; and, in any case, the foreigners would care less for the sufferings of the townspeople than would their own countrymen.

More than a year after the forced abandonment of the meditated attack on Rouen, I read in a French paper that "five places in the department of the Orne claimed 11,000fr. on account of requisitions levied by Francs-Tireurs in a regular manner, and 16,000fr. for requisitions levied by them in an irregular manner, between the 27th of December and the 7th of January." The reporter, on the claim which was embodied in a petition to the Assemblée Nationale, remarked as to the employment of the word "irregular" that he used it from politeness, from which it may be inferred that the Francs-Tireurs in the department of the Orne "took," without the authority of their chiefs, provisions or whatever it was they possessed themselves of, to the value of 16,000fr. It should be remembered, however, that Franc-Tireurs had no commissariat, and that it was part of their system to draw supplies from the nearest villages by the simplest means possible. Towards the close of the war food and drink were often refused them, the peasants having learned to look upon them as dangerous guests, whose visits, if the Prussians suddenly arrived, meant destruction to the houses in which they were being entertained.

The peasants were even accused of keeping back for the Prussians, whose orders they did not dare to disobey, the provisions they withheld from their own countrymen; and it is a fact that, on one occasion, in a village between Havre and Fécamp, a number of Mobiles, who entered a farmhouse at night, only succeeded in getting supper by pretending to be Prussians.* When, as quickly happened, the innocent deception was discovered, the farmer, who was not afraid of his own countrymen, wished to take the supper away, but was not allowed to do so. In such a condition of affairs it is not surprising that the "requisitions" issued by the proscribed *Francs-Tireurs*, who were only popular in districts where they had never operated, should often have been of an informal character.

The *Francs-Tireurs*, who visited for a week or so the department of the Orne, belonged to a crack corps, under the command of M. Mocquard, brother to the imperial secretary of the same name. The Duke de Chartres is said to have been among them; and if "*Les Mocquard*" did not know how to conduct themselves, the behaviour of the less distinguished, less numerous, and more loosely-disciplined bands must have been bad indeed.

When the well-conceived, but clumsily-prepared and all but publicly-revealed plan for "surprising"

* From an account published by a Havre paper.

the Rouen garrison had been disposed of through the defeat and dispersion of one of the two armies of attack, "Les Mocquard" found their way back to Havre, where they seemed to be much liked, and were held to be the next thing to invincible. They reminded me of the Polish insurgents, of 1863, so popular in the towns, so unpopular in the villages, where the cautious inhabitants knew that their presence could do no good and might do much harm.

I was interested to find that "Les Mocquard" were distant acquaintances of mine, and that theirs was the band whose disastrous exploits I had beheld, in their results, at La Chapelle, near Sedan,* immediately after the great battle.

* See page 158.





CHAPTER XVIII.

PRINCIPLES OF WAR LEGISLATION.

ONE day, in an occupied house, it was suddenly announced that a Prussian minister was about to arrive, on his way to Versailles.

“Who can it be?” was asked on all sides, the principal ministers being at Versailles already.

I suggested, by way of absurdity, that it was, perhaps, the Minister of Justice.

“God help him!” said a Prussian officer, who at once seized my idea. “To see how justice is administered here would drive him crazy.”

Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the district which the officer who had just spoken governed, or helped to govern, were not treated harshly; and I had had opportunities of observing for myself that their complaints were listened to and their grievances, if recognized as such, redressed. Only, what would

be looked upon as a very serious grievance in time of peace, is no grievance at all in time of war.

Since then, considering the nature of military punishments, and endeavouring to find out the principles by which commanders are guided in the rules they adopt for the government of occupied districts, I have often thought of the shock a Minister of Justice, or, better still, a professor of moral philosophy, would receive, brought suddenly face to face with the primitive and seemingly iniquitous laws through which obedience is enforced to the decrees of invading generals. M. Delarot, in his valuable documentary history of the occupation of Versailles,* hits the mark when he says, in a tone of sarcasm, what I repeat as a simple, natural fact, calculated to astonish no one who reflects for a moment on the matter, that the Prussians, in their dealings with the inhabitants of occupied places, considered what was "useful" (*i.e.*, expedient)

* A history full of unimpeachable materials, and written, not, of course, in a spirit of impartiality, but with an evident desire never, as regards statements of fact, to go beyond the exact truth. It was not for M. Delarot to consider whether the German occupation of Versailles, as he himself presents it, would not compare very favourably with the occupation of other cities by other armies. Nor was it for him to point out that, in the course of six months, 40,000 men, under the best circumstances, will always commit a certain number of offences and crimes.

rather than what was "just." In other words, the punishments they inflicted were intended to prevent the commission or repetition of the offences to which they were declared applicable.

Take, for instance, the question of the protection of communications. The sinews of modern war are railways; the nerves, telegraphs. Touch either, and the whole organization is paralyzed. Accordingly, both railways and telegraphs, in an occupied country, must be very strictly guarded; and, as they cannot be watched along the whole line, the only thing to do is to render attacks upon them practically impossible on the part of regular troops, perilous in the extreme on that of inhabitants, armed or unarmed.* In the case of a large army advancing in good order, with a widely-extended front covering every available road, hostile soldiers in uniform can scarcely get to the rear, and attempts on communications are sure to be the work either of peasants or of intermittent soldiers—soldiers in a semblance of uniform to-day, civilians in plain clothes to-morrow.

* Even at our autumn manœuvres of 1871, in "happy England," in the midst of peace, the temptation to cut the telegraph was so great that it could scarcely be resisted. The telegraphic cable was found to have been hacked in several places, "apparently from curiosity," says the author of a paper on Army Telegraphs, published in the *Telegraphic Journal*, for October, 1872.

Now, as regards the severe, and often indiscriminate manner in which these and other offences are punished, it must be remembered that the theory of punishment is essentially different under civil and under military law. Under the former, the punishment bears some relation to the immorality of the act punished, and care is taken that it shall fall on the guilty person alone. Under the latter, punishment is, in many cases, inflicted solely for the sake of its deterrent effect, and, in default of the actual offender, on presumed or possible accomplices; in any case, on some one. In the præ-telegraph, præ-railway period, the interruption of an army's communications meant nothing compared to what it means now. A convoy of provisions, or of ammunition, might be seized; a detached post might be surprised, or the tranquillity of an occupied village disturbed. All that amounted to very little, though such acts, unless done by soldiers in uniform, were always visited by severe punishment.* At present, however, to take up the

* Soon after the advance of Wellington, in 1814, from Spain into France, an attack by surprise was made far in his rear; in consequence of which the authorities of the village nearest the scene of attack were seized and carried off as prisoners. They were suspected of collusion; but as this could not be proved, and as it was afterwards ascertained that the surprise had been effected by a captain of partisans belonging to the French army, and attired in its uniform, the

rails, to destroy the bridges on lines of railway, to cut the telegraph wires, is to interrupt communications seriously, and possibly for a very considerable time. Such operations are attended with more danger to those suffering from them, and they are made correspondingly more dangerous to those who execute them, or in the remotest way connive at their execution. In campaign law, the great object is to punish some one, and by preference the guilty, for every offence committed; but in no case to leave an offence unpunished. In the American Instructions, a sort of apology is made for the severity proposed to be employed against actual, or would-be interrupters of communications. Laws, in fact, are not "silent" in the midst of arms, but the laws made to replace ordinary laws are of a primitive and barbarous type. In principle, they might not unfairly be summed up as follows:

I. For every offence punish some one; the guilty, if possible, but some one.

operation was held to be legitimate. The law proclaimed against peasants making war on their own account, then as now, was, that they should be shot, and their villages set on fire; and surprises made by partisans not belonging to the regular army would apparently have been punished by the Duke of Wellington in France as they were punished in 1870 by the Prussians. (See Napier's "History of the Peninsular War.")

2. Better a hundred innocent should suffer than that one guilty man should escape.

3. When in doubt shoot the prisoner.

These are the three great principles of invaders' law ; and they proceed naturally from the fact that the invader has to deal with a population unanimously opposed to him, and bent, not, as in a well-ordered civil state of society, on supporting the government, but on subverting and destroying it. But though the principles of punishment may be the same throughout an invaded country, they are, of course, applied in varying degrees of severity, according to the dictates of expediency.

Now all the propositions put forward for humanizing the character of war are based on notions of ordinary justice ; notions which undoubtedly may and often do influence the conduct of generals, officers, and soldiers during a campaign, but which cannot be made the basis of war-legislation. The task of preparing an improved Code of War would be less difficult if there were any general understanding among the governments of the world as to the precise nature of war, and if it were once agreed that war was to be carried on between armies alone. If war consisted only of battles, and could be decided by the result of battles, a very satisfactory code might be prepared, from which unpaid requisitions and war contributions could,

perhaps, be excluded. But in contests of moment between great powers war assumes the aspect of a costly judicial process, in which the beaten side finds itself constantly condemned to fresh and ruinous expenses, deliberately counted on as a means of terminating the suit.





CHAPTER XIX.

THE MODERN USAGES OF WAR.

THE Prussian Military Code, which, if it really exists in a separate and complete form, is as inaccessible to the public as those character-sketches of hostile commanders* with which Prussian generals are said to be furnished at the beginning of a campaign, may be studied all the same in the American "Instructions."† Mark out of the American Instructions the article which, under certain conditions (not easy to

* It would be interesting to see the character-portraits, done beforehand, of General Frossard, who, asked by Marshal Bazaine whether he had enough men at Forbach (Spichern), said he had, but without going near the battlefield to see; and of General de Failly, who failed to take his corps to the assistance of Mac Mahon, at Wörth, and was surprised by three army-corps at Beaumont.

† Appendix C.

comply with) sanctions a levy en masse ; and, substantially, the two codes are identical. The particular penalty—execution by incendiarism—of which the infliction by the Prussians has caused so much indignation, is not, it is true, prescribed by the American Instructions ; but incendiarism is a recognized military punishment everywhere. It was proclaimed by Wellington in the south of France, and it was practised in America during the civil war. Undoubtedly it has a terrifying effect which the mere imposition of a fine does not carry with it. It alarms the surrounding country far and wide—it is astonishing to what a distance the flames of a burning village are reflected. But both Americans and Prussians seem to have a strong suspicion that the punishment is a barbarous one ; for, as I was saying, it is not mentioned in the American Instructions ; nor did I once, between Forbach and Dieppe, between Strasburgh and Amiens, see it even alluded to in the numerous minatory proclamations put forward by the Prussians.

That the Prussian Laws of War, considered in themselves, are harsh there cannot be the least doubt ; but unless they are unnecessarily harsh, it ought not to be said that they are cruel. To test their necessity, let us suppose those laws which have been chiefly condemned not to exist, and see

what would follow. The American Instructions, for instance, condemn the non-toleration of properly ordered levies en masse, in unoccupied territory.

Professor Bluntschli* condemns, 1.—The levying of contributions; 2.—The taking of hostages; 3.—The non-toleration of authorized levies en masse; and 4.—The practice of military executions, whether by pillage or by incendiarism.

Colonel Hamley† condemns, 1.—The levying of unpaid requisitions; 2.—The non-toleration of levies en masse; and 3.—“Measures of vague revenge or of terrorism.”

The writer of the article on the Conduct of the War, in the *Quarterly Review*, April, 1871, condemns, 1.—The non-toleration of levies en masse; 2.—The non-recognition of foreign volunteers as legitimate soldiers; 3.—The practice of forcing the invaded to do military work; 4.—The taking of hostages; 5.—Measures of vicarious retaliation; 6.—The practice of bombarding towns “when they are not used as part of a defensive position, and when the bombardment does not serve to give the attacking party immediate possession by dislodging the defenders.”

This writer also condemns, 7.—The levying of

* Das moderne Völkerrecht.

† Letter to the *Times*, Jan. 7, 1871.

requisitions otherwise than through the authorities; and, 8.—“The execution of prisoners or civilians otherwise than for armed resistance.” But already the Prussian rule in respect to requisitions is to levy them through the authorities; while, as for the “execution of prisoners or civilians otherwise than for armed resistance,” that apparently belongs to the previous question of the levy en masse. Of course, even under their existing military laws, the Prussians put no civilians to death (except spies) “otherwise than for armed resistance.” The punishment decreed for civilians taking up arms was ten years’ imprisonment in a German fortress: the punishment of death being reserved for “aggravated cases”—practically, cases in which armed civilians used their weapons against German soldiers.*

A.—The non-toleration, then, of levies en masse is condemned very generally; but while some writers seem to think that civilians ought to be allowed to keep up a free fight all over the invaded country, Professor Bluntschli and the highly practical author of the “American Instructions” would limit their action to unoccupied territory, and would stipulate that such action should be in obe-

* Proclamation against *Francs-Tireurs*, Vendresse, Sept. 4, 1870.

dience to an order from government. Thus the Prussian coast* levy, though illegitimate by the Prussian military law, possessed a perfectly legitimate character according to the American Instructions and the principles enunciated by Professor Bluntschli. To recognize, however, the military character of civilians whenever and wherever it should please them for a time to take up arms, would lead to all civilians being regarded as active enemies. It would deprive civilians, in general, of all possibility of protection.

B.—Let us suppose, as Colonel Hamley suggests, that the right of levying unpaid requisitions be renounced. This, for the great military powers of the continent, would be to renounce the right of making war. Germany, maintaining an army of 500,000 men in an enemy's country by means of paid requisitions, would, counting men and horses, officers and men, have, at a moderate computation, to spend 1,500,000 francs a day. The invaded country would be enriched but the invaders would be impoverished. How, during this last war, could her portion of such an expenditure have been borne by Bavaria—who, on war being declared, had to borrow ten millions of thalers from Prussia?

* Ordered in view of a French landing.

C.—As a consequence of the renunciation of the right to levy unpaid requisitions, the right to levy contributions would naturally cease. Colonel Hamley, then, and Professor Bluntschli (who, however, says nothing against unpaid requisitions) are both opposed to the levying of contributions; which invaders may find a convenient practice but scarcely an indispensable one. Suppose it to be abolished? One cannot say that the conduct of an invasion would be thereby impeded. But the invader would lose a powerful and efficacious means of bringing the invaded to terms.

D.—With the contribution system at an end, there would almost be an end to the taking of hostages, who are generally prisoners—guarded or on parole—taken as a guarantee for the payment of contributions and fines. Suppose, however, the practice of taking hostages to be absolutely abolished? Then, in certain cases—as where fines had been imposed and the money was not forthcoming, it would be necessary to seize property instead of persons; which would not always be an advantage to the invaded.

Finally, let us suppose the practice of military execution, whether by pillage, or by incendiarism—what Colonel Hamley calls “measures of vague

revenge or terrorism"—to be abolished, would not the result be an increase in the number of offences against which these punishments are directed? Fines, or even the taking of hostages, might be substituted for the barbarous "executions;" but the abolition of "measures of vicarious retaliation," suggested by the writer in the *Quarterly Review* certainly could not be carried into effect. If such offences as taking sly shots at soldiers, cutting the telegraph wires, breaking up the railway, helping the enemy to surprise occupying troops, and so on, were not punished "vicariously," they could not, as a rule, be punished at all; and, consequently would go on increasing in number. Indeed, if apparent participation in an attempt to surprise occupying troops be not punished, then, as actual participation can scarcely ever be proved, it follows that to participate in such an attempt would entail no punishment whatever.

I have yet to speak of two very strange objections made by the writer in the *Quarterly Review* to the "Prussian Laws and Usages of War." He thinks it unreasonable that the Prussians being at war with a particular Government should refuse to recognize the right of that Government to oppose to them foreigners, with whose Government they have no quarrel. Humanity will at least not suffer by the

Prussians maintaining that principle. It is noticeable, however, that while the *Quarterly Review* blames the Prussians for objecting to the employment against their troops of soldiers belonging to a nation with whose government they were not at war, he has not a word to say against the French, who, apart from the question of employing foreigners, reckoned in their regular army several regiments of so-called "Turcos;" Algerians, formerly known in the Algerian army as "tirailleurs indigènes," of whose ferocity the French had boasted beforehand, and who did not belie their character on the field of battle. According to the American Instructions, troops who give no quarter are entitled to receive none; but if it be desired to give to war as humane a character as possible, troops in the habit of denying quarter, of mutilating the dead, and so on, should not be employed at all.

The same writer wishes the Prussians to be compelled to take fortified towns not by "simple bombardment," but by the more prolonged and sanguinary method of siege operations, ending with an assault. This question has been already discussed.*

The objection which the *Quarterly Review* makes to the alleged Prussian practice of "forcing the

* See page 162, "The Siege of Strasburgh and the Bombardment of Fortified Towns."

invaded to do military work" is better worth considering. The only military work, however, that I know of the invaded having been forced to do in France was on roads, where, after they had dug trenches and thrown up embankments for opposing the advance of the invaders, they were employed in making these impediments disappear; and, far worse than that, on roads along which they were required to drive carts laden with shell cases, destined to be hurled when filled upon their own countrymen. That was a legitimate requirement according to the received usages of war; but it was cruel all the same, if it could possibly have been avoided, and was at least an approach to the intolerable practice of impressing the invaded into the invaders' ranks. That the practice in question *was* unavoidable, and moreover that it will be avoided, at least by the Prussians, in future, is shown by the fact that a new service is being created in the Prussian army for the transport of siege ammunition along ordinary roads, as from a railway station to the vicinity of a fortress. It is found inconvenient to depend exclusively on the inhabitants of an occupied country either for conveyance or for supplies of food.

Apparently, then, the Prussian laws of war, to serve the double purpose of protecting the invaders, and enabling them to grant protection to the invaded, would not bear much modification; and the only possible, but by no means probable, modifications seem to be some few of those suggested by Professor Bluntschli, which embrace a portion only of those suggested by Colonel Hamley.

It is much to be desired all the same that the great military governments would simply make known those Laws of War by which, individually or collectively, they propose to abide. It will be objected perhaps that it would be impossible to enforce compliance with the terms of any formal code. But it is impossible in the same manner to compel obedience to the laws generally received on the subject of flags of truce, quarter, explosive bullets, neutrality of surgeons, and so on; and yet as a matter of fact these laws are observed with but rare exceptions. The mere proclamation of principles in harmony with the spirit of the age ensures to some extent their observance; and if the States of Europe would imitate the United States of America, and simply publish their Laws of War, that would lead to comparison, discussion, and in the end, perhaps, the adoption of some general military code, under which war would certainly not

be made tolerable, but might at least be conducted so that as little as possible should occur which, in the words of the American articles, would “render the return to peace unnecessarily difficult.”





APPENDIX A.

THE PRUSSIAN NEGOTIATORS AT SEDAN.

FOR the substance of the brief sketch I have given (page 129) of the interview between Prince Bismarck and Count Moltke on the one hand and General de Wimpffen on the other, I am indebted to Captain d'Orcet, one of the French officers present, whose full report of what took place is to be found in General Ducrot's interesting "Journée de Sedan." Apart from its substantial interest, it conveys in a few words a fair idea of the character and manner of the two eminent men who took part in the negotiations on the Prussian side.

General de Wimpffen, on the other hand, in his narrative of the proceedings, has failed to seize the physiognomy either of Prince Bismarck or of Count Moltke. Indeed, he represents the quiet, somewhat quaint, very thoughtful, earnest-looking chief of the

general staff as a conventional, ultra-military hero, with the well-known "eagle glance," and all sorts of fiery gestures to match. The portrait is worthy of another French writer, who has told us how Count Moltke, "with knitted brows and compressed lips," led a charge he did not lead at the battle of Gravelotte.

But the most remarkable thing as to the appearance of Count Moltke is that he is the least military-looking of all the celebrated military men in Europe; while one of the most remarkable things about Count Moltke himself is that he does not attach undue importance to the military profession or to military success, and that he is keenly alive to the effect great military success may have in turning away attention from the arts of peace. The detail I am about to mention may seem trivial, but it is a curious, and perhaps a characteristic fact, that the greatest soldier in Europe wears no moustache; with which may be classed the fact of a similar kind, that he alone among warriors causes himself to be photographed in plain clothes. In the best photograph I have seen of Count Moltke (taken at Munich, 1871), he is dressed in a black frock coat, and—except that he wears no decorations—might be taken for a distinguished professor, or a diplomatist of high rank. Place it side by side with one of the photographs of Prince Bismarck,

representing the chancellor in his cuirassier's uniform, and you see before you two complete men, in each of whom, in the words of Baron Stoffel—words originally applied to Count Bismarck alone—"you have a remarkable type of the most perfect balance between intellect and energy of will." One is a soldier, with many of the qualities of a statesman; the other, a statesman, with many of the qualities of a soldier. Indeed, Baron Stoffel, in his celebrated reports on the Prussian army, has faithfully reproduced the character of both men,—not by the unprofitable method of descriptive phrases, but by quoting from the lips of each what he knew to be characteristic words.

When, for instance, the King of Prussia visited Paris during the International Exhibition of 1867, Count Moltke told Baron Stoffel how happy he was to see his Majesty take so much interest in the artistic splendour of the French capital. "General Moltke," writes Baron Stoffel, "who is not in the habit of saying what he does not think, pronounced these words, addressing himself to me: 'I am very glad that the king has seen all the magnificence of Paris. At home he is occupied almost exclusively with the army. He has now been able to convince himself that a sovereign, without neglecting the army, for yours is excellent, can at the same time interest

himself in all that contributes to the greatness of a nation.' ”

Soon after the peace, a German poet, Oscar von Redwitz, sent to Count Moltke a copy of his work, “*Das Lied vom Neuen Deutschen Reich*,” which naturally contained verses in honour of Count Moltke himself. I do not think Count Moltke’s reply is known in England. It ought to be, for here again his simple, straightforward words are characteristic of the man. “The poet,” he wrote to Herr von Redwitz, in thanking him for his book, “must be prodigal. He distributes with full hands diamonds and pearls, the stars of heaven and the flowers of the earth; and in the same way he lavishes praise. That is the sense in which I take it when your poem likens me to the great men of the past. For these men were great in misfortune, and then especially; whereas we have met with nothing but success. Now, call that chance, luck, destiny, or the will of God—men alone do not produce it; and such gigantic results are essentially the outcome of circumstances which we can neither create nor control. The excellent, but unfortunate, Pope Hadrian had these words inscribed on his tomb: ‘What a difference does the epoch make in which the activity even of the best man is cast!’ Often the greatest work may be wrecked by the same invincible force of circumstances which bears the least great along. If, not

from any vain or false modesty, I must look upon a good part of the praise bestowed on me as undeserved, I am none the less grateful for it ; for verses like yours are indeed more lasting than monuments of brass and marble."





APPENDIX B.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORTIFIED TOWNS.

 WRITER in "Le Spectateur Militaire," for July, 1867, discusses with General Le Blois the question whether, in attacking a fortified place, the artillery ought to direct its fire at the fortifications only, or to shell the dwelling-houses, so as to make the position intolerable for the inhabitants? "Shell the dwelling-houses!" is the solution arrived at by General Le Blois, who, in his work entitled "Fortifications in Presence of the New Artillery" (1865), strongly recommends that "hollow projectiles" be thrown upon all points of the interior of the town. "When," he explains, "the shells fall in the various quarters the catastrophes are in proportion to the density of the population. Death hovers above the heads of all. Each individual feels threatened as to his own existence and that of all that he holds dear in the

world, while at any moment his property may be destroyed by fire. The situation becomes intolerable to the masses, and the very excess of the sufferings to which they are exposed brings about their termination. Experience proves that in such a case malevolent efforts are directed against the governor, who is made responsible for all the disasters that occur; and if he shows himself firmly attached to his duty, the people rise against him, and his own troops seek to compel him to an immediate capitulation, of which history furnishes only too many examples. Far be it from us," cries General Le Blois, "to counsel the governor to commit such an act of weakness." He adds, however, that the probability will be against the governor's holding out, and proceeds to prove his case in quite mathematical style. "Let G ," he says, "represent the effective force of the garrison, and P the valid portion of the population. Then, if the besieger wishes to conform to the principles of the French school of engineers, and directs his shells at the fortifications only, he will have $G + P$ opposed to him; whereas if his resources include material for a bombardment, and he fires upon the houses of the inhabitants, he will only have $G - P$ to contend with, P being now on his side and in favour of a capitulation. If, in the collision within the walls, which must take place, G succeeds in

crushing P., the siege will continue. But G. finding himself weakened by the struggle and deprived of the assistance of P., the resistance opposed to the besieger in the last period of the attack will evidently be less than if the siege had not been commenced by a bombardment." The "moral" is that "every general who wishes to attack a fortified town has the right to throw shells inside to hasten its surrender, and that it is his duty to do so inasmuch as his sovereign orders him to save time and spare the blood of his soldiers." The only objection raised by the critic of General Le Blois's book to his plan of setting private houses on fire is that the pyrotechnic material necessary for that end is difficult to carry.





APPENDIX C.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIELD.*

SECTION I.—*Martial Law—Military Jurisdiction* —*Military Necessity—Retaliation.*

I. A PLACE, district, or country occupied by an enemy stands, in consequence of the occupation, under the martial law of the invading or occupying

* The late Professor Lieber, author of these "Instructions," was a Prussian by birth, and in his youth served in the Prussian army, and took part in the campaigns of 1814 and 1815. The "Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field," are probably, then, based on the unpublished "Prussian Military Code," with which, as regards essential points, they are identical. Some of the expressions, moreover, used in the "American Instructions," such as "war-rebel," "war-traitor" (Sections IV. and V.), are certainly of German origin. I have already mentioned (Chapter I.) that, before being sanctioned by President Lincoln, these "Instructions" were submitted to, and approved by, a committee of officers.

army, whether any proclamation declaring martial law, or any public warning to the inhabitants, has been issued or not. Martial law is the immediate and direct effect and consequence of occupation or conquest.

The presence of a hostile army proclaims its martial law.

2. Martial law does not cease during the hostile occupation, except by special proclamation, ordered by the commander-in-chief; or by special mention in the treaty of peace concluding the war, when the occupation of a place or territory continues beyond the conclusion of peace as one of the conditions of the same.

3. Martial law in a hostile country consists in the suspension, by the occupying military authority, of the criminal and civil law, and of the domestic administration and government in the occupied place or territory, and in the substitution of military rule and force for the same, as well as in the dictation of general laws, as far as military necessity requires this suspension, substitution, or dictation.

The commander of the forces may proclaim that the administration of all civil and penal law shall continue, either wholly or in part, as in times of peace, unless otherwise ordered by the military authority.

4. Martial law is simply military authority exer-

cised in accordance with the laws and usages of war. Military oppression is not martial law; it is the abuse of the power which that law confers. As martial law is executed by military force, it is incumbent upon those who administer it to be strictly guided by the principles of justice, honour, and humanity—virtues adorning a soldier even more than other men, for the very reason that he possesses the power of his arms against the unarmed.

5. Martial law should be less stringent in places and countries fully occupied and fairly conquered. Much greater severity may be exercised in places or regions where actual hostilities exist, or are expected and must be prepared for. Its most complete sway is allowed—even in the commander's own country—when face to face with the enemy, because of the absolute necessities of the case, and of the paramount duty to defend the country against invasion.

To save the country is paramount to all other considerations.

6. All civil and penal law shall continue to take its usual course in the enemy's places and territories under martial law, unless interrupted or stopped by order of the occupying military power; but all the functions of the hostile government—legislative, executive, or administrative—whether of a general, provincial, or local character, cease

under martial law, or continue only with the sanction, or if deemed necessary, the participation of the occupier or invader.

7. Martial law extends to property, and to persons, whether they are subjects of the enemy or aliens to that government.

8. Consuls, among American and European nations, are not diplomatic agents. Nevertheless, their offices and persons will be subjected to martial law in cases of urgent necessity only: their property and business are not exempted. Any delinquency they commit against the established military rule may be punished as in the case of any other inhabitant, and such punishment furnishes no reasonable ground for international complaint.

9. The functions of ambassadors, ministers, or other diplomatic agents, accredited by neutral powers to the hostile government, cease, so far as regards the displaced government; but the conquering or occupying power usually recognizes them as temporarily accredited to itself.

10. Martial law affects chiefly the police and collection of public revenue and taxes, whether imposed by the expelled government or by the invader, and refers mainly to the support and efficiency of the army, its safety, and the safety of its operations.

11. The law of war does not only disclaim all

cruelty and bad faith concerning engagements concluded with the enemy during the war, but also the breaking of stipulations solemnly contracted by the belligerents in time of peace, and avowedly intended to remain in force in case of war between the contracting powers.

It disclaims all extortions and other transactions for individual gain ; all acts of private revenge, or connivance at such acts.

Offences to the contrary shall be severely punished, and especially so if committed by officers.

12. Whenever feasible, martial law is carried out in cases of individual offenders by military courts ; but sentences of death shall be executed only with the approval of the chief executive, provided the urgency of the case does not require a speedier execution, and then only with the approval of the chief commander.

13. Military jurisdiction is of two kinds : first, that which is conferred and defined by statute ; second, that which is derived from the common law of war. Military offences under the statute law must be tried in the manner therein directed ; but military offences which do not come within the statute must be tried and punished under the common law of war. The character of the courts which exercise these jurisdictions depends upon the local laws of each particular country.

In the armies of the United States the first is exercised by courts-martial; while cases which do not come within the "Rules and Articles of War," or the jurisdiction conferred by statute on courts-martial, are tried by military commissions.

14. Military necessity, as understood by modern civilized nations, consists in the necessity of those measures which are indispensable for securing the ends of the war, and which are lawful according to the modern law and usages of war.

15. Military necessity admits of all direct destruction of life or limb of *armed* enemies, and of other persons whose destruction is incidentally *unavoidable* in the armed contests of the war; it allows of the capturing of every armed enemy, and every enemy of importance to the hostile government, or of peculiar danger to the captor; it allows of all destruction of property, and obstruction of the ways and channels of traffic, travel, or communication, and of all withholding of sustenance or means of life from the enemy; of the appropriation of whatever an enemy's country affords necessary for the subsistence and safety of the army, and of such deception as does not involve the breaking of good faith either positively pledged, regarding agreements entered into during the war, or supposed by the modern law of war to exist. Men who take up arms against one another in public war do not

cease on this account to be moral beings, responsible to one another, and to God.

16. Military necessity does not admit of cruelty, that is, the infliction of suffering for the sake of suffering or for revenge, nor of maiming or wounding except in fight, nor of torture to extort confessions. It does not admit of the use of poison in any way, nor of the wanton devastation of a district. It admits of deception, but disclaims acts of perfidy; and, in general, military necessity does not include any act of hostility which makes the return to peace unnecessarily difficult.

17. War is not carried on by arms alone. It is lawful to starve the hostile belligerent, armed or unarmed, so that it leads to the speedier subjection of the enemy.

18. When the commander of a besieged place expels the non-combatants, in order to lessen the number of those who consume his stock of provisions, it is lawful, though an extreme measure, to drive them back, so as to hasten on the surrender.

19. Commanders, whenever admissible, inform the enemy of their intention to bombard a place, so that the non-combatants, and especially the women and children, may be removed before the bombardment commences. But it is no infraction of the common law of war to omit thus to inform the enemy. Surprise may be a necessity.

20. Public war is a state of armed hostility between sovereign nations or governments. It is a law and requisite of civilized existence that men live in political, continuous societies, forming organized units, called states or nations, whose constituents bear, enjoy, and suffer, advance and retrograde together, in peace and in war.

21. The citizen or native of a hostile country is thus an enemy, as one of the constituents of the hostile state or nation, and as such is subjected to the hardships of the war.

22. Nevertheless, as civilization has advanced during the last centuries, so has likewise steadily advanced, especially in war on land, the distinction between the private individual belonging to a hostile country and the hostile country itself, with its men in arms. The principle has been more and more acknowledged that the unarmed citizen is to be spared in person, property, and honour as much as the exigencies of war will admit.

23. Private citizens are no longer murdered, enslaved, or carried off to distant parts, and the inoffensive individual is as little disturbed in his private relations as the commander of the hostile troops can afford to grant in the overruling demands of a vigorous war.

24. The almost universal rule in remote times was, and continues to be with barbarous armies,

that the private individual of the hostile country is destined to suffer every privation of liberty and protection, and every disruption of family ties. Protection was, and still is with uncivilized people, the exception.

25. In modern regular wars of the Europeans, and their descendants in other portions of the globe, protection of the inoffensive citizen of the hostile country is the rule; privation and disturbance of private relations are the exceptions.

26. Commanding generals may cause the magistrates and civil officers of the hostile country to take the oath of temporary allegiance or an oath of fidelity to their own victorious government or rulers, and they may expel every one who declines to do so. But whether they do so or not, the people and their civil officers owe strict obedience to them as long as they hold sway over the district or country, at the peril of their lives.

27. The law of war can no more wholly dispense with retaliation than can the law of nations, of which it is a branch. Yet civilized nations acknowledge retaliation as the sternest feature of war. A reckless enemy often leaves to his opponent no other means of securing himself against the repetition of barbarous outrage.

28. Retaliation will, therefore, never be resorted to as a measure of mere revenge, but only as a means of

protective retribution, and, moreover cautiously and unavoidably ; that is to say, retaliation shall only be resorted to after careful inquiry into the real occurrence, and the character of the misdeeds that may demand retribution.

Unjust or inconsiderate retaliation removes the belligerents farther and farther from the mitigating rules of a regular war, and by rapid steps leads them nearer to the internecine wars of savages.

29. Modern times are distinguished from earlier ages by the existence, at one and the same time, of many nations and great governments related to one another in close intercourse.

Peace is their normal condition ; war is the exception. The ultimate object of all modern war is a renewed state of peace.

The more vigorously wars are pursued, the better it is for humanity. Sharp wars are brief.

30. Ever since the formation and co-existence of modern nations, and ever since wars have become great national wars, war has come to be acknowledged not to be its own end, but the means to obtain great ends of state, or to consist in defence against wrong ; and no conventional restriction of the modes adopted to injure the enemy is any longer admitted ; but the law of war imposes many limitations and restrictions on principles of justice, faith, and honour.

SECTION II.—*Public and Private Property of the Enemy—Protection of Persons, and especially Women; of Religion, the Arts and Sciences—Punishment of Crimes against the Inhabitants of Hostile Countries.*

31. A victorious army appropriates all public money, seizes all public movable property until further direction by its government, and sequesters for its own benefit or that of its government all the revenues of real property belonging to the hostile government or nation. The title to such real property remains in abeyance during military occupation, and until the conquest is made complete.

32. A victorious army, by the martial power inherent in the same, may suspend, change, or abolish, as far as the martial power extends, the relations which arise from the service, due, according to the existing laws of the invaded country, from one citizen, subject, or native of the same to another.

The commander of the army must leave it to the ultimate treaty of peace to settle the permanency of this change.

33. It is no longer considered lawful—on the contrary, it is held to be a serious breach of the law of war—to force the subjects of the enemy into the service of the victorious government, except the latter should proclaim, after a fair and complete

conquest of the hostile country or district, that it is resolved to keep the country, district, or place permanently as its own and make it a portion of its own country.

34. As a general rule, the property belonging to churches, to hospitals, or other establishments of an exclusively charitable character, to establishments of education, or foundations for the promotion of knowledge, whether public schools, universities, academies of learning or observatories, museums of the fine arts, or of a scientific character—such property is not to be considered public property in the sense of paragraph 31; but it may be taxed or used when the public service may require it.

35. Classical works of art, libraries, scientific collections, or precious instruments, such as astronomical telescopes, as well as hospitals, must be secured against all avoidable injury, even when they are contained in fortified places whilst besieged or bombarded.

36. If such works of art, libraries, collections, or instruments belonging to a hostile nation or government, can be removed without injury, the ruler of the conquering state or nation may order them to be seized and removed for the benefit of the said nation. The ultimate ownership is to be settled by the ensuing treaty of peace.

| In no case shall they be sold or given away, if

captured by the armies of the United States, nor shall they ever be privately appropriated, or wantonly destroyed or injured.

37. The United States acknowledge and protect, in hostile countries occupied by them, religion and morality; strictly private property; the persons of the inhabitants, especially those of women; and the sacredness of domestic relations. Offences to the contrary shall be rigorously punished.

This rule does not interfere with the right of the victorious invader to tax the people or their property, to levy forced loans, to billet soldiers, or to appropriate property, especially houses, land, boats or ships, and churches, for temporary and military uses.

38. Private property, unless forfeited by crimes or by offences of the owner, can be seized only by way of military necessity, for the support or other benefit of the army or of the United States.

If the owner has not fled, the commanding officer will cause receipts to be given, which may serve the spoliated owner to obtain indemnity.

39. The salaries of civil officers of the hostile government who remain in the invaded territory, and continue the work of their office, and can continue it according to the circumstances arising out of the war—such as judges, administrative or police officers, officers of city or communal governments

—are paid from the public revenue of the invaded territory, until the military government has reason wholly or partially to discontinue it. Salaries or incomes connected with purely honorary titles are always stopped.

40. There exists no law or body of authoritative rules of action between hostile armies, except that branch of the law of nature and nations which is called the law and usages of war on land.

41. All municipal law of the ground on which the armies stand, or of the countries to which they belong, is silent and of no effect between armies in the field.

42. Slavery, complicating and confounding the ideas of property (that is of a *thing*), and of personalty (that is of *humanity*), exists according to municipal or local law only. The law of nature and nations has never acknowledged it. The digest of the Roman law enacts the early dictum of the pagan jurist, that "so far as the law of nature is concerned, all men are equal." Fugitives escaping from a country in which they were slaves, villains, or serfs, into another country, have, for centuries past, been held free and acknowledged free by judicial decisions of European countries, even though the municipal law of the country in which the slave had taken refuge acknowledged slavery within its own dominions.

43. Therefore, in a war between the United States and a belligerent which admits of slavery, if a person held in bondage by that belligerent be captured by or come as a fugitive under the protection of the military forces of the United States, such person is immediately entitled to the rights and privileges of a freeman. To return such person into slavery would amount to enslaving a free person, and neither the United States nor any officer under their authority can enslave any human being. Moreover, a person so made free by the law of war is under the shield of the law of nations, and the former owner or State can have, by the law of post-liminy, no belligerent lien or claim of service.

44. All wanton violence committed against persons in the invaded country, all destruction of property not commanded by the authorized officer, all robbery, all pillage or sacking, even after taking a place by main force, all rape, wounding, maiming, or killing of such inhabitants, are prohibited under the penalty of death, or such other severe punishment as may seem adequate for the gravity of the offence.

A soldier, officer or private, in the act of committing such violence, and disobeying a superior ordering him to abstain from it, may be lawfully killed on the spot by such superior.

45. All captures and booty belong, according to

the modern law of war, primarily to the government of the captor.

Prize money, whether on sea or land, can now only be claimed under local law.

46. Neither officers nor soldiers are allowed to make use of their position or power in the hostile country for private gain, not even for commercial transactions otherwise legitimate. Offences to the contrary committed by commissioned officers will be punished with cashiering or such other punishment as the nature of the offence may require; if by soldiers, they shall be punished according to the nature of the offence.

47. Crimes punishable by all penal codes, such as arson, murder, maiming, assaults, highway robbery, theft, burglary, fraud, forgery, and rape, if committed by an American soldier in a hostile country against its inhabitants, are not only punishable as at home, but in all cases in which death is not inflicted, the severer punishment shall be preferred.

SECTION III.—*Deserters—Prisoners of War—Hostages—Booty on the Battle-field.*

48. Deserters from the American army, having entered the service of the enemy, suffer death if they fall again into the hands of the United States, whether by capture, or being delivered up to the American army; and if a deserter from the enemy,

having taken service in the army of the United States, is captured by the enemy, and punished by them with death or otherwise, it is not a breach against the law and usages of war, requiring redress or retaliation.

49. A prisoner of war is a public enemy armed or attached to the hostile army for active aid, who has fallen into the hands of the captor, either fighting or wounded, on the field or in the hospital, by individual surrender or by capitulation.

All soldiers, of whatever species of arms; all men who belong to the rising *en masse* of the hostile country; all those who are attached to the army for its efficiency and promote directly the object of the war, except such as are hereinafter provided for; all disabled men or officers on the field or elsewhere, if captured; all enemies who have thrown away their arms and ask for quarter, are prisoners of war, and as such exposed to the inconveniences as well as entitled to the privileges of a prisoner of war.

50. Moreover, citizens who accompany an army for whatever purpose, such as sutlers, editors, or reporters of journals, or contractors, if captured, may be made prisoners of war, and be detained as such.

The monarch and members of the hostile reigning family, male or female, the chief, and chief officers of the hostile government, its diplomatic

agents, and all persons who are of particular and singular use and benefit to the hostile army or its government, are, if captured on belligerent ground, and if unprovided with a safe-conduct granted by the captor's government, prisoners of war.

51. If the people of that portion of an invaded country which is not yet occupied by the enemy, or of the whole country, at the approach of a hostile army, rise, under a duly authorized levy, *en masse* to resist the invader, they are now treated as public enemies, and if captured, are prisoners of war.

52. No belligerent has the right to declare that he will treat every captured man in arms of a levy *en masse* as a brigand or bandit.

If, however, the people of a country, or any portion of the same, already occupied by an army, rise against it, they are violators of the laws of war, and are not entitled to their protection.

53. The enemy's chaplains, officers of the medical staff, apothecaries, hospital nurses and servants, if they fall into the hands of the American army, are not prisoners of war, unless the commander has reason to retain them. In this latter case, or if, at their own desire, they are allowed to remain with their captured companions, they are treated as prisoners of war, and may be exchanged if the commander sees fit.

54. A hostage is a person accepted as a pledge for

the fulfilment of an agreement concluded between belligerents during the war, or in consequence of a war. Hostages are rare in the present age.

55. If a hostage is accepted, he is treated like a prisoner of war, according to rank and condition, as circumstances may admit.

56. A prisoner of war is subject to no punishment for being a public enemy, nor is any revenge wreaked upon him by the intentional infliction of any suffering, or disgrace, by cruel imprisonment, want of food, by mutilation, death, or any other barbarity.

57. So soon as a man is armed by a sovereign government, and takes the soldier's oath of fidelity, he is a belligerent ; his killing, wounding, or other warlike acts, are no individual crimes or offences. No belligerent has a right to declare that enemies of a certain class, colour, or condition, when properly organized as soldiers, will not be treated by him as public enemies.

58. The law of nations knows of no distinction of colour, and if an enemy of the United States should enslave and sell any captured persons of their army, it would be a case for the severest retaliation, if not redressed upon complaint.

The United States cannot retaliate by enslavement ; therefore death must be the retaliation for this crime against the law of nations.

59. A prisoner of war remains answerable for his crimes committed against the captor's army or people, committed before he was captured, and for which he has not been punished by his own authorities.

All prisoners of war are liable to the infliction of retaliatory measures.

60. It is against the usage of modern war to resolve, in hatred and revenge, to give no quarter. No body of troops has the right to declare that it will not give, and therefore will not expect, quarter; but a commander is permitted to direct his troops to give no quarter, in great straits, when his own salvation makes it *impossible* to cumber himself with prisoners.

61. Troops that give no quarter have no right to kill enemies already disabled on the ground, or prisoners captured by other troops.

62. All troops of the enemy known or discovered to give no quarter in general, or to any portion of the army, receive none.

63. Troops who fight in the uniform of their enemies, without any plain, striking, and uniform mark of distinction of their own, can expect no quarter.

64. If American troops capture a train containing uniforms of the enemy, and the commander considers it advisable to distribute them for use among his men, some striking mark or sign must

be adopted to distinguish the American soldier from the enemy.

65. The use of the enemy's national standard, flag, or other emblem of nationality, for the purpose of deceiving the enemy in battle, is an act of perfidy by which they lose all claim to the protection of the laws of war.

66. Quarter having been given to an enemy by American troops, under a misapprehension of his true character, he may, nevertheless, be ordered to suffer death if, within three days after the battle, it be discovered that he belongs to a corps which gives no quarter.

67. The law of nations allows every sovereign government to make war upon another sovereign state, and, therefore, admits of no rules or laws different from those of regular warfare, regarding the treatment of prisoners of war, although they may belong to the army of a government which the captor may consider as a wanton and unjust assailant.

68. Modern wars are not internecine wars, in which the killing of the enemy is the object. The destruction of the enemy in modern war, and, indeed, modern war itself, are means to obtain that object of the belligerent which lies beyond the war.

Unnecessary or revengeful destruction of life is not lawful.

69. Outposts, sentinels, or pickets are not to be fired upon, except to drive them in, or when a positive order, special or general, has been issued to that effect.

70. The use of poison in any manner, be it to poison wells, or food, or arms, is wholly excluded from modern warfare. He that uses it puts himself out of the pale of the law and usages of war.

71. Whoever intentionally inflicts additional wounds on an enemy already wholly disabled, or kills such an enemy, or who orders or encourages soldiers to do so, shall suffer death, if duly convicted, whether he belongs to the army of the United States, or is an enemy captured after having committed his misdeed.

72. Money and other valuables on the person of a prisoner, such as watches or jewelry, as well as extra clothing, are regarded by the American army as the private property of the prisoner, and the appropriation of such valuables or money is considered dishonourable, and is prohibited.

Nevertheless, if *large* sums are found upon the persons of prisoners, or in their possession, they shall be taken from them, and the surplus, after providing for their own support, appropriated for the use of the army, under the direction of the commander, unless otherwise ordered by the government. Nor can prisoners claim as private

property large sums found and captured in their train, although they had been placed in the private luggage of the prisoners.

73. All officers, when captured, must surrender their side-arms to the captor. They may be restored to the prisoner in marked cases, by the commander, to signalize admiration of his distinguished bravery, or approbation of his humane treatment of prisoners before his capture. The captured officer to whom they may be restored cannot wear them during captivity.

74. A prisoner of war, being a public enemy, is the prisoner of the government, and not of the captor. No ransom can be paid by a prisoner of war to his individual captor, or to any officer in command. The government alone releases captives according to rules prescribed by itself.

75. Prisoners of war are subject to confinement or imprisonment such as may be deemed necessary on account of safety, but they are to be subjected to no other intentional suffering or indignity. The confinement and mode of treating a prisoner may be varied during his captivity according to the demands of safety.

76. Prisoners of war shall be fed upon plain and wholesome food, whenever practicable, and treated with humanity.

They may be required to work for the benefit of

the captor's government, according to their rank and condition.

77. A prisoner of war who escapes may be shot, or otherwise killed in his flight ; but neither death nor any other punishment shall be inflicted upon him simply for his attempt to escape, which the law of war does not consider a crime. Stricter means of security shall be used after an unsuccessful attempt at escape.

If, however, a conspiracy is discovered, the purpose of which is a united or general escape, the conspirators may be rigorously punished, even with death ; and capital punishment may also be inflicted upon prisoners of war discovered to have plotted rebellion against the authorities of the captors, whether in union with fellow-prisoners or other persons.

78. If prisoners of war, having given no pledge, nor made any promise on their honour, forcibly or otherwise escape, and are captured again in battle, after having rejoined their own army, they shall not be punished for their escape, but shall be treated as simple prisoners of war, although they will be subjected to stricter confinement.

79. Every captured wounded enemy shall be medically treated, according to the ability of the medical staff.

80. Honourable men, when captured, will abstain

from giving to the enemy information concerning their own army, and the modern law of war permits no longer the use of any violence against prisoners, in order to extort the desired information, or to punish them for having given false information.

SECTION IV. — *Partisans — Armed Enemies not belonging to the Hostile Army—Scouts—Armed Prowlers—War-Rebels.*

81. Partisans are soldiers armed and wearing the uniform of their army, but belonging to a corps which acts detached from the main body for the purpose of making inroads into the territory occupied by the enemy. If captured, they are entitled to all the privileges of the prisoner of war.

82. Men, or squads of men, who commit hostilities, whether by fighting, or inroads for destruction or plunder, or by raids of any kind, without commission, without being part and portion of the organized hostile army, and without sharing continuously in the war, but who do so with intermittent returns to their homes and avocations, or with the occasional assumption of the semblance of peaceful pursuits, divesting themselves of the character or appearance of soldiers—such men, or squads of men, are not public enemies, and therefore, if captured, are not entitled to the privileges of prisoners

of war, but shall be treated summarily as highway robbers or pirates.

83. Scouts or single soldiers, if disguised in the dress of the country, or in the uniform of the army hostile to their own, employed in obtaining information, if found within or lurking about the lines of the captor, are treated as spies, and suffer death.

84. Armed prowlers, by whatever names they may be called, or persons of the enemy's territory, who steal within the lines of the hostile army, for the purpose of robbing, killing, or of destroying bridges, roads, or canals, or of robbing or destroying the mail, or of cutting the telegraph wires, are not entitled to the privileges of the prisoner of war.

85. War-rebels are persons within an occupied territory who rise in arms against the occupying or conquering army, or against the authorities established by the same. If captured, they may suffer death, whether they rise singly, in small or large bands, and whether called upon to do so by their own, but expelled, government or not. They are not prisoners of war; nor are they, if discovered and secured before their conspiracy has matured to an actual rising, or to armed violence.

SECTION V.—*Safe-conduct—Spies—War-traitors—Captured Messengers—Abuse of the Flag of Truce.*

86. All intercourse between the territories occu-

pied by belligerent armies, whether by traffic, by letter, by travel, or in any other way, ceases. This is the general rule, to be observed without special proclamation.

Exceptions to this rule, whether by safe-conduct, or permission to trade on a small or large scale, or by exchanging mails, or by travel from one territory into the other, can take place only according to agreement approved by the government, or by the highest military authority.

Contraventions of this rule are highly punishable.

87. Ambassadors, and all other diplomatic agents of neutral powers, accredited to the enemy, may receive safe-conducts through the territories occupied by the belligerents, unless there are military reasons to the contrary, and unless they may reach the place of their destination conveniently by another route. It implies no international affront if the safe-conduct is declined. Such passes are usually given by the supreme authority of the state, and not by subordinate officers.

88. A spy is a person who secretly, in disguise or under false pretence, seeks information with the intention of communicating it to the enemy.

The spy is punishable with death by hanging by the neck, whether or not he succeed in obtaining the information or in conveying it to the enemy.

89. If a citizen of the United States obtains infor-

mation in a legitimate manner, and betrays it to the enemy, be he a military or civil officer, or a private citizen, he shall suffer death.

90. A traitor under the law of war, or a war-traitor, is a person in a place or district under martial law who, unauthorized by the military commander, gives information of any kind to the enemy, or holds intercourse with him.

91. The war-traitor is always severely punished. If his offence consists in betraying to the enemy anything concerning the condition, safety, operations or plans of the troops holding or occupying the place or district, his punishment is death.

92. If the citizen or subject of a country or place invaded or conquered gives information to his own government, from which he is separated by the hostile army, or to the army of his government, he is a war-traitor, and death is the penalty of his offence.

93. All armies in the field stand in need of guides, and impress them if they cannot obtain them otherwise.

94. No person having been forced by the enemy to serve as guide is punishable for having done so.

95. If a citizen of a hostile and invaded district voluntarily serves as a guide to the enemy, or offers to do so, he is deemed a war-traitor, and shall suffer death.

96. A citizen serving voluntarily as a guide against his own country commits treason, and will be dealt with according to the law of his country.

97. Guides, when it is clearly proved that they have misled intentionally, may be put to death.

98. All unauthorized or secret communication with the enemy is considered treasonable by the law of war.

Foreign residents in an invaded or occupied territory, or foreign visitors in the same, can claim no immunity from this law. They may communicate with foreign parts, or with the inhabitants of the hostile country, so far as the military authority permits, but no further. Instant expulsion from the occupied territory would be the very least punishment for the infraction of this rule.

99. A messenger carrying written despatches or verbal messages from one portion of the army, or from a besieged place, to another portion of the same army, or its government, if armed, and in the uniform of his army, and if captured while doing so, in the territory occupied by the enemy, is treated by the captor as a prisoner of war. If not in uniform, nor a soldier, the circumstances connected with his capture must determine the disposition that shall be made of him.

100. A messenger or agent who attempts to steal through the territory occupied by the enemy,

to further, in any manner, the interests of the enemy, if captured, is not entitled to the privileges of the prisoner of war, and may be dealt with according to the circumstances of the case.

101. While deception in war is admitted as a just and necessary means of hostility, and is consistent with honourable warfare, the common law of war allows even capital punishment for clandestine or treacherous attempts to injury an enemy because they are so dangerous, and it is so difficult to guard against them.

102. The law of war, like the criminal law regarding other offences, makes no difference on account of the difference of sexes, concerning the spy, the war-traitor, or the war-rebel.

103. Spies, war-traitors, and war-rebels are not exchanged according to the common law of war. The exchange of such persons would require a special cartel, authorized by the government, or, at a great distance from it, by the chief commander of the army in the field.

104. A successful spy or war-traitor, safely returned to his own army, and afterwards captured as an enemy, is not subject to punishment for his acts as a spy or war-traitor, but he may be held in closer custody as a person individually dangerous.

SECTION VI.—*Exchange of Prisoners—Flags of Truce—Flags of Protection.*

105. Exchanges of prisoners take place—number for number—rank for rank—wounded for wounded—with added condition for added condition—such, for instance, as not to serve for a certain period.

106. In exchanging prisoners of war, such numbers of persons of inferior rank may be substituted as an equivalent for one of superior rank as may be agreed upon by cartel, which requires the sanction of the government, or of the commander of the army in the field.

107. A prisoner of war is in honour bound truly to state to the captor his rank : and he is not to assume a lower rank than belongs to him, in order to cause a more advantageous exchange ; nor a higher rank, for the purpose of obtaining better treatment.

Offences to the contrary have been justly punished by the commanders of released prisoners, and may be good cause for refusing to release such prisoners.

108. The surplus number of prisoners of war remaining after an exchange has taken place is sometimes released either for the payment of a stipulated sum of money, or, in urgent cases, of provision, clothing, or other necessaries.

Such arrangement, however, requires the sanction of the highest authority.

109. The exchange of prisoners of war is an act of convenience to both belligerents. If no general cartel has been concluded, it cannot be demanded by either of them. No belligerent is obliged to exchange prisoners of war.

A cartel is voidable so soon as either party has violated it.

110. No exchange of prisoners shall be made except after complete capture, and after an accurate account of them, and a list of the captured officers, has been taken.

111. The bearer of a flag of truce cannot insist upon being admitted. He must always be admitted with great caution. Unnecessary frequency is carefully to be avoided.

112. If the bearer of a flag of truce offer himself during an engagement, he can be admitted as a very rare exception only. It is no breach of good faith to retain such a flag of truce, if admitted during the engagement. Firing is not required to cease on the appearance of a flag of truce in battle.

113. If the bearer of a flag of truce, presenting himself during an engagement, is killed or wounded, it furnishes no ground of complaint whatever.

114. If it be discovered, and fairly proved, that a flag of truce has been abused for surreptitiously

obtaining military knowledge, the bearer of the flag thus abusing his sacred character is deemed a spy.

So sacred is the character of a flag of truce, and so necessary is its sacredness, that while its abuse is an especially heinous offence, great caution is requisite, on the other hand, in convicting the bearer of a flag of truce as a spy.

115. It is customary to designate by certain flags (usually yellow), the hospitals in places which are shelled, so that the besieging enemy may avoid firing on them. The same has been done in battles, when hospitals are situated within the field of the engagement.

116. Honourable belligerents often request that the hospitals within the territory of the enemy may be designated, so that they may be spared.

An honourable belligerent allows himself to be guided by flags or signals of protection as much as the contingencies and the necessities of the fight will permit.

117. It is justly considered an act of bad faith, of infamy or fiendishness, to deceive the enemy by flags of protection. Such act of bad faith may be good cause for refusing to respect such flags.

118. The besieging belligerent has sometimes requested the besieged to designate the buildings containing collections of works of art, scientific museums, astronomical observatories, or precious

libraries, so that their destruction may be avoided as much as possible.

SECTION VII.—*The Parole.*

119. Prisoners of war may be released from captivity by exchange and, under certain circumstances, also by parole.

120. The term Parole designates the pledge of individual good faith and honour to do, or to omit doing, certain acts after he who gives his parole shall have been dismissed, wholly or partially, from the power of the captor.

121. The pledge of the parole is always an individual, but not a private, act.

122. The parole applies chiefly to prisoners of war whom the captor allows to return to their country, or to live in greater freedom within the captor's country or territory, on conditions stated in the parole.

123. Release of prisoners of war by exchange is the general rule ; release by parole is the exception.

124. Breaking the parole is punished with death when the person breaking the parole is captured again.

Accurate lists, therefore, of the paroled persons must be kept by the belligerents.

125. When paroles are given and received there must be an exchange of two written documents, in

which the name and rank of the paroled individuals are accurately and truthfully stated.

126. Commissioned officers only are allowed to give their parole, and they can give it only with the permission of their superior, as long as a superior in rank is within reach.

127. No non-commissioned officer or private can give his parole except through an officer. Individual paroles not given through an officer are not only void, but subject the individual giving them to the punishment of death as deserters. The only admissible exception is where individuals, properly separated from their commands, have suffered long confinement without the possibility of being paroled through an officer.

128. No paroling on the battle-field; no paroling of entire bodies of troops after a battle; and no dismissal of large numbers of prisoners, with a general declaration that they are paroled, is permitted, or of any value.

129. In capitulations for the surrender of strong places or fortified camps the commanding officer, in cases of urgent necessity, may agree that the troops under his command shall not fight again during the war, unless exchanged.

130. The usual pledge given in the parole is not to serve during the existing war, unless exchanged.

This pledge refers only to the active service in

the field, against the paroling belligerent or his allies actively engaged in the same war. These cases of breaking the parole are patent acts, and can be visited with the punishment of death ; but the pledge does not refer to internal service, such as recruiting or drilling the recruits, fortifying places not besieged, quelling civil commotions, fighting against belligerents unconnected with the paroling belligerents, or to civil or diplomatic service for which the paroled officer may be employed.

131. If the government does not approve of the parole, the paroled officer must return into captivity, and should the enemy refuse to receive him, he is free of his parole.

132. A belligerent government may declare, by a general order, whether it will allow paroling, and on what conditions it will allow it. Such order is communicated to the enemy.

133. No prisoner of war can be forced by the hostile government to parole himself, and no government is obliged to parole prisoners of war, or to parole all captured officers, if it paroles any. As the pledging of the parole is an individual act, so is paroling, on the other hand, an act of choice on the part of the belligerent.

134. The commander of an occupying army may require of the civil officers of the enemy, and of its citizens, any pledge he may consider necessary for

the safety or security of his army, and upon their failure to give it he may arrest, confine, or detain them.

SECTION VIII.—*Armistice—Capitulation.*

135. An armistice is the cessation of active hostilities for a period agreed upon between belligerents. It must be agreed upon in writing, and duly ratified by the highest authorities of the contending parties.

136. If an armistice be declared, without conditions, it extends no further than to require a total cessation of hostilities, along the front of both belligerents.

If conditions be agreed upon, they should be clearly expressed, and must be rigidly adhered to by both parties. If either party violates any express condition, the armistice may be declared null and void by the other.

137. An armistice may be general, and valid for all points and lines of the belligerents; or special, that is, referring to certain troops or certain localities only.

An armistice may be concluded for a definite time; or for an indefinite time, during which either belligerent may resume hostilities on giving the notice agreed upon to the other.

138. The motives which induce the one or the

other belligerent to conclude an armistice, whether it be expected to be preliminary to a treaty of peace, or to prepare during the armistice for a more vigorous prosecution of the war, does in no way affect the character of the armistice itself.

139. An armistice is binding upon the belligerents from the day of the agreed commencement; but the officers of the armies are responsible from the day only when they receive official information of its existence.

140. Commanding officers have the right to conclude armistices binding on the district over which their command extends, but such armistice is subject to the ratification of the superior authority, and ceases so soon as it is made known to the enemy that the armistice is not ratified, even if a certain time for the elapsing between giving notice of cessation and the resumption of hostilities should have been stipulated for.

141. It is incumbent upon the contracting parties of an armistice to stipulate what intercourse of persons or traffic between the inhabitants of the territories occupied by the hostile armies shall be allowed, if any.

If nothing is stipulated the intercourse remains suspended, as during actual hostilities.

142. An armistice is not a partial or a temporary

peace ; it is only the suspension of military operations to the extent agreed upon by the parties.

143. When an armistice is concluded between a fortified place and the army besieging it, it is agreed by all the authorities on this subject that the besieger must cease all extension, perfection, or advance of his attacking works as much so as from attacks by main force.

But as there is a difference of opinion among martial jurists, whether the besieged have the right to repair breaches or to erect new works of defence within the place during an armistice, this point should be determined by express agreement between the parties.

144. So soon as a capitulation is signed, the capitulator has no right to demolish, destroy, or injure the works, arms, stores, or ammunition, in his possession, during the time which elapses between the signing and the execution of the capitulation, unless otherwise stipulated in the same.

145. When an armistice is clearly broken by one of the parties, the other party is released from all obligation to observe it.

146. Prisoners, taken in the act of breaking an armistice, must be treated as prisoners of war, the officer alone being responsible who gives the order for such a violation of an armistice. The highest

authority of the belligerent aggrieved may demand redress for the infraction of an armistice.

147. Belligerents sometimes conclude an armistice while their plenipotentiaries are met to discuss the conditions of a treaty of peace; but plenipotentiaries may meet without a preliminary armistice; in the latter case, the war is carried on without any abatement.

SECTION IX.—*Assassination.*

148. The law of war does not allow proclaiming either an individual belonging to the hostile army, or a citizen, or a subject of the hostile government, an outlaw, who may be slain without trial by any captor; any more than the modern law of peace allows such international outlawry; on the contrary, it abhors such outrage. The sternest retaliation should follow the murder committed in consequence of such proclamation, made by whatever authority. Civilized nations look with horror upon offers of rewards for the assassination of enemies as relapses into barbarism.

SECTION X.—*Insurrection—Civil War—Rebellion.*

149. Insurrection is the rising of people in arms against their government, or a portion of it, or against one or more of its laws, or against an officer or officers of the government. It may be confined

to mere armed resistance, or it may have greater ends in view.

150. Civil war is war between two or more portions of a country or State, each contending for the mastery of the whole, and each claiming to be the legitimate government. The term is also sometimes applied to war of rebellion, when the rebellious provinces or portions of the State are contiguous to those containing the seat of government.

151. The term rebellion is applied to an insurrection of large extent, and is usually a war between the legitimate government of a country and portions or provinces of the same who seek to throw off their allegiance to it, and set up a government of their own.

152. When humanity induces the adoption of the rules of regular war toward rebels, whether the adoption is partial or entire, it does in no way whatever imply a partial or complete acknowledgment of their government, if they have set up one, or of them as an independent or sovereign power. Neutrals have no right to make the adoption of the rules of war by the assailed government toward rebels the ground of their own acknowledgment of the revolted people as an independent power.

153. Treating captured rebels as prisoners of war, exchanging them, concluding of cartels, capitulations, or other warlike agreements with them ;

addressing officers of a rebel army by the rank they may have in the same ; accepting flags of truce ; or, on the other hand, proclaiming martial law in their territory, or levying war-taxes or forced loans, or doing any other act sanctioned or demanded by the law and usages of public war between sovereign belligerents, neither proves nor establishes an acknowledgment of the rebellious people, or of the government which they may have erected, as a public or sovereign power. Nor does the adoption of the rules of war toward rebels imply an engagement with them extending beyond the limits of these rules. It is victory in the field that ends the strife and settles the future relations between the contending parties.

154. Treating, in the field, the rebellious enemy according to the law and usages of war has never prevented the legitimate government from trying the leaders of the rebellion or chief rebels for high treason, and from treating them accordingly, unless they are included in a general amnesty.

155. All enemies in regular war are divided into two general classes ; that is to say, into combatants and non-combatants, or unarmed citizens of the hostile government.

The military commander of the legitimate government, in a war of rebellion, distinguishes between the loyal citizen in the revolted portion of the

country and the disloyal citizen. The disloyal citizens may further be classified into those citizens known to sympathize with the rebellion, without positively aiding it, and those who, without taking up arms, give positive aid and comfort to the rebellious enemy, without being bodily forced thereto.

156. Common justice and plain expediency require that the military commander protect the manifestly loyal citizens, in revolted territories, against the hardships of the war as much as the common misfortune of all war admits.

The commander will throw the burden of the war, as much as lies within his power, on the disloyal citizens of the revolted portion or province, subjecting them to a stricter police than the non-combatant enemies have to suffer in regular war; and if he deems it appropriate, or if his government demands of him that every citizen shall, by an oath of allegiance, or by some other manifest act, declare his fidelity to the legitimate government, he may expel, transfer, imprison, or fine the revolted citizens who refuse to pledge themselves anew as citizens obedient to the law and loyal to the government.

Whether it is expedient to do so, and whether reliance can be placed upon such oaths, the commander or his government have the right to decide.

157. Armed or unarmed resistance by citizens of the United States against the lawful movements of their troops is levying war against the United States, and is therefore treason.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 97, line 17, *for* "right," *read* "left."

,, 121, line 12, close of parenthesis should come in 14th line,
after "Mouzon."

,, 265, line 25, *for* "its," *read* "the."

Elsewhere, *for* "Mömmesen," *read* "Mommesen;" *for* "chassepôt,"
"chassepot;" *for* "Fridherbe," "Faidherbe."

6152

