

BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES

*THE STORY OF ELEVEN
FAMOUS LAND COMBATS*

BY
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ILLUSTRATED

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FOREWORD

Theodore Roosevelt once very fittingly said: "As a civilized people we desire peace, but the only peace worth having is obtained by readiness to fight when wronged."

It was squarely upon this principle that our own country gained its democratic birth and freedom in 1776. And it was no less squarely upon this principle that she recently went a step farther by crossing the big sea to lend a helping hand to sister nations struggling in the avaricious clutches of an autocratic neighbor.

Far be it from my purpose in writing this book to glorify or exalt the horrors of battle. On the contrary my effort has been to put in the foreground only those elements of the field of conflict which to every growing, vibrant, red-blooded lad are so momentous and essential to his well-being—the lessons of heroism, self-sacrifice and patriotism with which the Grim Juggernaut seems, somewhat paradoxically, beautifully and lavishly invested.

Indeed, war is a theme full of interest and terror. Its history is a record of the fate of opinions, principles, social feelings, and political tendencies. Many of the great ideas and impulses that agitate communities report ultimately to the battlefield. The issues of combat have determined the progress of religions, the influence of governments, and the direction of morals. Thus out of much evil may come ultimate good—out of much suffering, a final benefit.

The eleven battles described in this volume are all as historically correct as extensive research among the works of the foremost authorities can make them. In some instances, particularly in the case of the battles of the late war, I have included authenticated items and episodes told me by participants themselves. Only in one instance does any fiction knowingly appear. This is merely in the characters of the three boys appearing in the Battle of Bunker Hill. The things they saw

and endured are all facts substantiated by the records of our race, the lads simply being a medium of expression.

These eleven battles are the most famous and important of their time, gauged in all cases not by the sizes of the opposing forces but by that truer standard: their significance and value to the peoples of the country or countries they affected. The fortunes of nations have balanced upon their outcome; the social and industrial fabric of a world has changed color at their conclusion.

In reading over this manuscript at its completion, I was mildly astounded at the contrasts in weapons and methods of warfare as exhibited in my century-and-half of battles. Picture there at Saratoga the clumsy, old-fashioned, unreliable flintlock musket, the unwieldy bayonet, the crude round-shot cannon, the open fighting, the pitiful lack of spiritual consolation and attention of good surgeons and nurses. Compare this, if you will, to the environs at Chateau-Thierry,—the neat, high-power repeating rifle; the lead-raining, regiment-decimating little machine gun; the great camouflaged field-pieces that send an explosive shell twenty miles or more to the target which its gunners cannot see; the giant man-carrying birds of the sky, equipped with deadly guns and bombs and means for constant communication with the earth, and capable of ripping through the air above or below the clouds at the stupendous rate of two miles a minute; the powerful electrical searchlights that cut swathes of daylight through the most inky night; the suffocating bombardments of diabolical gas-shells; the deep trenches; the adamantine dugout shelters thirty feet underground; and last, but not least, the extensive army of skilled surgeons, nurses, chaplains, cooks, dentists, barbers, social welfare workers—all anxious to serve at the first sign of need!

C.C.F

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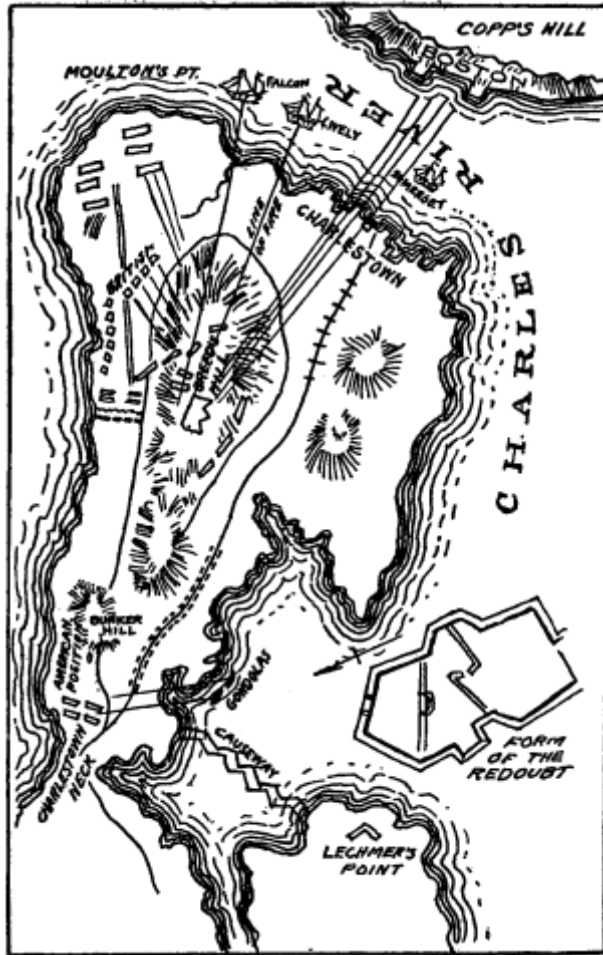
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CHAPTER I

BUNKER HILL



"Not yet; steady, steady!"
On came the foe, in even line:
Nearer and nearer to thrice paces nine.

We looked into their eyes. "Ready!"
A sheet of flame! A roll of death!
They fell by scores; we held our breath!
Then nearer still they came;
Another sheet of flame!
And brave men fled who never fled before.
Immortal fight!
Forshadowing fight
Back to the astounded shore.

—Calvert.

I. A MYSTERIOUS MISSION

Three youths, none of whom could have been more than seventeen years of age, lounged before a certain tavern in the town of Cambridge. It was a cool, bright day, early in the afternoon of June 12, 1775.

Two of the party occupied a portion of a weather-stained bench. The third, short and stocky, with a brow none too mild nor pleasant, sprawled upon the fresh green grass at their feet. All were dressed in the habiliments of the Colonial soldier. Nearby, in various attitudes of similar inactivity, some earnestly engaged in conversation, others jesting lightly, others pitching quoits, were other New England volunteers.

Suddenly a shout came from down the street. Householders and merchants alike dashed wildly to door. Dogs barked. The faint clanging of a bell reached the ears of the soldiers at the tavern. The startling, brazen notes grew louder and louder. Up the road, bridle gripped in one hand, handbell in the other, came Jonathan Wirth, the town-crier.

At the tavern he slowed up his frothy steed, but only sufficiently long to bawl out his message in the well-known shrill tones with which the townspeople had learned of late to readily identify him without sight. Those were troublous times. Jonathan Wirth, in his official capacity, had indeed become a

well-known figure. Now, as he galloped up before the tavern, every lounging soldier and civilian was on his feet and anxiously alert.

"Hearken! Hearken!" cried the newcomer, hushing his bell that he might be better understood. "'Tis news of a proclamation from the autocrat Gage that I bring you! He doth say that he will offer free pardon to all rebels who will lay down their arms and return to their allegiance, save only the ringleaders, John Hancock and Samuel Adams, whose crimes are 'too flagitious to be condoned.' All Provincials taken in arms are to be put to the gallows!"

Instantly he spurred on again, toward the entrenchments of Prospect Hill. Behind, at the tavern, he left a very excited and indignant party. One of the soldiers—an officer—struck his fist a terrible thwack against the side of the building, and swore prodigiously. Then he commenced to harangue those within earshot, who crowded sympathetically forward, and joined in the tirade against the British general and his staff in Boston whenever opportunity offered. Finally the officer retired, whereupon the soldiers broke up into groups and for some time continued to discuss the recent news among themselves.

The three young Colonials previously mentioned retired to the bench which they had formerly occupied. Only one—the dark-visaged boy, whose name was Shawmut Dinwoodie—seemed placable of nerve enough to sit down. His companions were still too excited for any such indolent posture, and stood, gesticulating and talking with great fervor. The taller of the two—Joel Whittaker—had removed his hat. With one hand he wiped his broad, hot forehead. With the other he formed a fist, and shook it menacingly off in the direction of Boston town.

"Does Gage take us for children, to be frightened at his impertinent threats?" cried Joel.

"Does he think for a moment that we would ever think of surrendering, and leaving the noble Hancock and Adams in his

unmerciful hands? Their punishment—undoubtedly death—would be an everlasting shame to every Colonist."

"But one must think of himself, Joel," remarked Shawmut Dinwoodie from his position on the bench. "The British are strong, and, after all, laying down arms may be better for us than hanging from a tree or post."

The hatless young soldier turned swiftly. His lips curled in scorn. His eyes blazed down upon the half-reclining speaker with such indignation that the other youth could not meet the look with steadfastness and turned his gaze awkwardly awry. The face of the third boy also displayed his disgust at such remarks. His fingers involuntarily knotted. His cheeks burned red.

"What is this we hear?" demanded Joel Whittaker. "If you did not wear that uniform, Shaw Dinwoodie, from the way you speak I would say that you were either a hireling of Gage, else a Tory in sympathy with his views! The shame of heaven on you!"

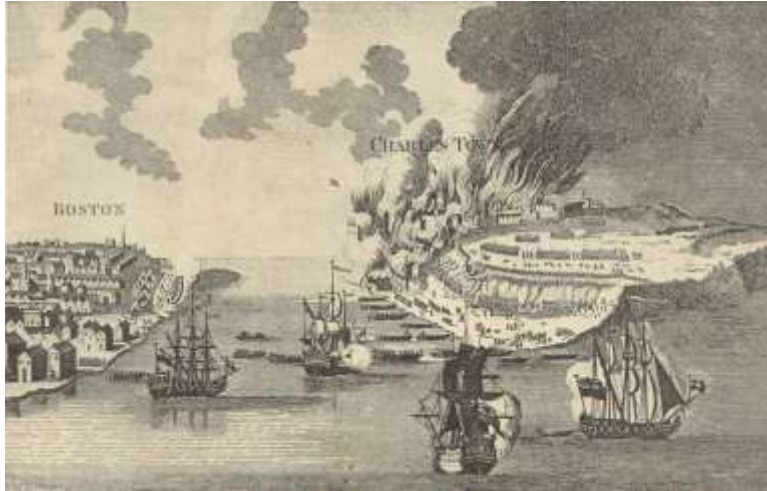
"By all that is good and true, Shaw Dinwoodie, if you utter more such unpatriotic remarks I swear you will have to fight me till one or the other of us cannot rise!" stormed Joel's companion, Ben Dwight, taking a step forward. "God be praised for the cause we espouse that there are not more like you in the Committee of Safety! 'Twere a fine thing for tyranny be it so!"

Apparently of the opinion that he had made a mistake, the lounging Continental attempted to smooth over his utterances. But with little success. His comrades treated him with such coolness that presently he arose and strolled down the road in the direction of the barracks at the university grounds.

"A good riddance, Joel; I never liked the fellow overmuch," declared Ben. "Sometimes I have fancied him a Tory at heart, so lukewarm are his expressions."

"I share your dislike for Shawmut," said Joel. "But unfortunately our country is rife with men of similar principle.

They are too weak-kneed to assert themselves for either side, ready to jump to the one which promises to gain the upper hand. When the battle goes against their compatriots, they desert at the first sign. But let us return to our command at the barracks ourselves. We can air our opinion about this latest proclamation of General Gage as we go along."



THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL FROM AN OLD PRINT.

At the time this account opens the army of New England men was busily pressing its siege of Boston. The soldiers extended about the town in a great semi-circle of approximately sixteen miles, with about a thousand men to the mile. All the way from Jamaica Plain to Charlestown Neck they stretched.

The headquarters were at Cambridge, where some of the university buildings had been utilized for barracks. To General Artemas Ward had been entrusted the chief command, under the direction of the Committee of Safety. Although in excellent spirits the little Provincial army was poorly equipped. Many who volunteered could not be provided with uniforms, and wore their every-day garb. Their arms were also limited, consisting for the most part of the clumsy, uncertain-firing flintlock musket, some of which were provided with crude bayonets from the

blacksmith's forge, but many of which lacked even this important adjunct to hand-to-hand engagements.

Also was the army poorly disciplined. Without previous military training of any description, used only to fighting their battles with the Indians individually or in small, hastily-gathered groups, they had come to depend each upon his own resources to a great extent. So when the call to arms against the British suddenly sounded, the vast majority of the Colonists responded willingly, but submitted reluctantly to the orders of the few officers who could be found to command them.

The military object of the Provincial army was to compel the British, who held Boston, to evacuate and take to their ships. As there was no American fleet, it was manifestly impossible to destroy or capture the enemy forces. Therefore, a retirement seemed the only way to annul their present power.

And there seemed but one way to bring this retirement about. This was for the Colonists to seize and fortify as many as possible of the neighboring hills which commanded the town. From these vantage points round shot could be pouted into Boston until the situation would become so uncomfortable for those in possession they would be only too glad to take to the salt water again. The most important of these elevations were those in Charlestown on the north, and in Dorchester on the southeast.

Gage was not slow himself to note the danger to his troops by reason of the hills. He straight-way made up his mind that to secure himself and maintain his foothold in Boston, he must take possession of at least the hills of Charlestown and Dorchester as early as possible. To his intense gratification, shortly after making this resolve, he was reinforced by the arrival of Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne, with sufficient men to bring his force up to ten thousand.

Now feeling the utmost confidence in an ultimate victory, but wishing to give the Colonial army a chance to surrender before their dreaded marksmen should decimate his

own command, General Gage issued his historical proclamation of June 12th, to which reference has already been made.

Everywhere this stirred up the Provincials—not with fear, as Gage and his staff had so fondly hoped, but with renewed animosity. Scarcely anything the British commander could do could have done his cause greater injury, nor cemented the bonds of loyalty of the rebels more closely together. They were veritable maddened hornets upon receipt of the insulting and menacing proclamation, ready to sting the encroachers of their domain at the slightest provocation.

The reply of the Committee of Safety to this proclamation was one to delight the heart of every patriot of the fair new country. Orders were immediately issued for the assembling of a force of twelve hundred men in Cambridge. This force, in complete ignorance of their destination or purpose, but wild and eager for any venture that smacked of action, was made up of portions of the regiments of Prescott, Frye and Bridge, in addition to a fatigue party of two hundred Connecticut troops with intrenching tools, consisting of spades, shovels, axes and pickaxes.

At sunset of June 16th, the troops, including Samuel Gridley's company of artillery, paraded on Cambridge Common. Following this, each soldier was furnished with packs and blankets, and ordered to take sufficient rations for twenty-four hours.

Then it was that President Langdon, of Harvard College, uttered a prayer whose impressiveness was never forgotten by the hundreds of soldiers and townspeople who heard it with bared heads and humble hearts but indomitable spirit.

Among these uniformed listeners were the three youths already introduced. They also were to go on this unknown, mysterious mission. At the end of the benediction, two of the young Colonials looked up with calm, fearless faces. The other appeared morose and agitated.

II. INTRENCHING THE HEIGHTS

At nine o'clock, with many other soldiers whose homes were in Cambridge, Joel, Ben and Shawmut, bade their relatives a brief but heart-felt good-by. With his mother's kiss still warm upon his ruddy cheek, and a tear in his eye, Joel Whittaker strode away, keeping step with the valiant soldiers by his side, of whom, as luck had it, Ben was very next. Shaw Dinwoodie was farther down the line. He did not face the direction of his going with the bold, determined look of the other two lads. On the contrary his step was listless, and often he looked back as if he were anxious to remain. Could his friends have witnessed these movements their righteous disgust for him would have been much intensified.

Word had been passed that not a word was to be spoken, and absolutely no unnecessary noise made. In this manner, under the bright starlight of that warm June night, the expedition moved up the road, mysteriously and silently, going in the direction of Charlestown Neck. The dull thud of many boots, treading as softly as possible, and behind the occasional rattle of the well-greased wheels of the wagons carrying the intrenching tools, wrapped in gunny sacks and blankets to obviate friction, or the hoof-beats of horses pulling the two heavy field-pieces of Gridley's artillery corps, were all that might have been heard.

A few paces in advance of the column were two sergeants carrying dark-lanterns. Directly behind came Colonel William Prescott, who was in charge of the expedition, Captain Samuel Gridley and Colonel Knowlton. In addition to being chief officer of the artillery, Captain Gridley had been given control of any engineering problems that might arise. Colonel Knowlton was at the head of the two companies of Connecticut troops.

In the meantime, General Isaac Putnam—"Old Put," as he was affectionately called—had been sent on ahead on horseback to Charlestown Neck, to make sure that all was clear.

Here, with Major Brooks, of Bridge's regiment, Putnam, the veteran fighter and hero of the colonists even then, awaited the arrival of Prescott's expedition.

Soon they were seen marching silently along through the darkness. With the addition of the admired and beloved "Old Put" to their ranks, the arriving men felt mightily like giving a loud huzzah, so heartened were they. But no noise must be made, so they had to welcome him with their smiles, while the officers issued orders for every one to load his musket with two balls.

Ben leaned toward Joel, and said in a low tone: "Whatever our undertaking, we must succeed with so brave and resourceful an officer along as General Putnam. I am now ready to face anything."

"He is truly a great leader, and the bravest of men," answered Joel in the same guarded voice. "I have heard that one time when a boy he climbed to the top of a high tree. A limb broke with him, and he was precipitated headlong toward the ground. Most fortunately, his coat caught on the tip of a lower branch. There he hung, helpless, head down, for some moments, his young companions frightened half to death. One of those below had a rifle, and was known to be a good shot. 'Old Put,' after trying vainly to extricate himself, finally calmly told the boy with the gun to try to shoot off the branch which held him prisoner. This called for a shot close to Putnam's own person, but the young sharp-shooter, still importuned, attempted it. The branch was neatly severed by the bullet, and down came the luckless climber, sprawling and clawing like a dislodged raccoon. Save for a few bruises he was quite unhurt."

Joel had barely finished this little story when Colonel Prescott announced that he would no longer keep his men in suspense as to the object of their undertaking. He then went on quietly to explain that the Committee of Safety, through Dr. Warren, its president, had secured information that the British planned an early attempt at occupation of the principal heights in

the vicinity of Charlestown—probably Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill—and had ordered him (Prescott) to proceed without delay to fortify the former, if not both.

Before proceeding farther a consultation of officers was held. This resulted in Colonel Prescott, by virtue of Putnam's rank and deeds and experience, turning over much of the leadership of the expedition to that seasoned soldier. It was also decided, during the council, that, in accordance with the general purpose of the project, if not the exact letter of it, it would be better to make sure of the fortification of Breed's Hill before devoting attention to Bunker Hill, since the former elevation was nearer Boston and offered fine opportunity to those holding it to bombard the city, as well as the shipping in the harbor.

There can be little doubt that, in thus departing from the strict text of his orders, Prescott made a mistake which might have proved fatal indeed had not the enemy blundered still more seriously. For the advanced position on Breed's Hill was not only exposed to attacks in the rear from an enemy who commanded the water, as did the British, but the line of retreat was ill-secured, and by seizing upon Charlestown Neck, it would have been easy for the redcoats, with small loss, to have compelled the Provincials to surrender. From such a disaster Prescott's force was saved, as it turned out, only by the stupid contempt which the enemy felt for them, or rather their over-confidence in their own strength and strategy.

Be that as it may the fact remains that, after detaching a small portion of his force to guard lower Charlestown, the main body of Prescott's troops passed on to Breed's Hill, which commanded the main road to Boston and was connected with Bunker Hill by a ridge. The former height reached an altitude of sixty-two feet; the latter, one hundred and ten feet. A road ran over Bunker Hill, around Breed's Hill, to Moulton's Point.

Across Bunker Hill, the men silently followed this road, then around the base of Breed's Hill, till they came to its most accessible side—the southern—where they made ascent. The

easterly and westerly sides of this height were quite steep. On the east, at its base, were brick-kilns, clay pits, and much sloughy land. The westerly portions of both eminences contained fine or-chards, to bear an abundance of delicious fruit a little later in the summer, but now the chief crop was hay, as attested by the extensive belts of maturing grasses to be seen here and there.

It was midnight. A herculean task confronted the small army of liberty-loving men. Only four hours of darkness remained in which to work in secrecy toward fortifying the height. With the break of dawn, discovery was inevitable. For then all movements and erections on the crest of the hill would be plainly visible to the eyes of the British on board the men-of-war *Falcon*, *Lively* and *Somerset*, lying in Charles River, as well as to the enemy force occupying Copp's Hill, just across the stream.

So Colonel Gridley lost no time in marking out the boundaries for the proposed entrenchments. Noiselessly the pick-axes and shovels were unloaded from the wagons and passed out. The men unslung their packs, stacked their arms, and seizing the digging implements set to work with a zeal. The officers worked side by side with them, General Putnam himself for a time making the dirt fly only a few paces from Joel and Ben, until he was called elsewhere. Every soldier of them had made up his mind that he would work as he had never worked before; that, when morning did break, the redcoats should have the surprise of their lives.

Few words were spoken, and these in an undertone. Most of the time the men had only the dim light of the starry heavens to guide them, except when, with the aid of the dark-lanterns, some urgent and particular problem had to be better illuminated. No one was allowed to strike a match, to smoke, under penalty of death. Only the deep, heavy breathing of the laborers, the soft thud of projected earth, and the occasional sharp click of a shovel against an unexpected stone, broke the stillness of the night; and these apparently did not reach the alert hearing of the

unsuspecting enemy sentinels pacing the decks of the shipping in the nearby watercourse, since their faint, regular calls of "All's well!" continued to be heard by the hard-working Provincials on Breed's Hill.

Shortly after the intrenchments had been well started, General Putnam rode back to Cambridge, as it was foreseen by this time that reinforcements were likely to be needed upon the morrow.

The short June night ended all too quickly for the Americans. But their labors had not been in vain. In their midst stood some stalwart-looking intrenchments which, when the British discovered them for the first time from the deck of the *Lively*, in the early light of the morning, quite dumfounded them. It took several looks on the parts of the British officers of the craft to assure them that the new erections of Breed's Hill were really all they first appeared. Then the captain of the vessel, in a violent rage, sent a shot screaming across the way from one of his heavy twelve-pounders. This was followed by several other discharges. And a few minutes later the sister ships of the *Lively* awoke to the situation, and from the *Falcon* and *Somerset* the deep roaring of other naval guns were heard. Added to the fire directed towards Prescott's men, came shots from the cannon of the British on Copp's Hill in Boston.

To show their contempt for this bombardment, the patriots, despite the danger, continued steadily at the task of strengthening their defenses. Of course the booming of the guns could easily be heard in Boston, as well as in Cambridge. In both towns people rushed out of their houses to see what had happened, and when the truth was known house tops, trees and steeples were sought by the anxious inhabitants for a better view.

Among those alarmed by the cannonading was Israel Putnam, who had reached Cambridge but who had found General Ward, in charge of the soldiers there, reluctant to send reinforcements for fear that the enemy might attack the town, in which event every available man would be needed for its

protection. At sound of the first shot "Old Put" surmised instantly that the earthworks of his compatriots had been discovered by the Royalists. At once he secured a fresh horse, and started back posthaste for Breed's Hill.

As the galloping officer neared the unfinished redoubt, he could plainly see the tall figure of the brave Prescott outlined against the gray sky of early day. Walking coolly and leisurely back-wards and forwards on the parapet, for all the world as though he were taking a little pre-breakfast exercise, the dauntless Colonel, fully exposed to the thundering guns from the men-of-war of the British, directed his men on in their task. Like Trojans they were toiling, inspired by the fearlessness of their leader. Higher and higher arose the earthworks. No time was taken to reply to the enemy. That could come better later on.

The sun arose red. The air soon became close and oppressive. There was every sign that the day would become intensely hot. Putnam, casting aside his hat and coat, seized a shovel and piled into the work with the toiling soldiers. He had gigantic strength; none of them could swing a shovel quite as fast, or with quite as great a load, as he. From group to group he passed with his flashing implement, encouraging and demonstrating. Those inclined to shirk were ashamed; those who thought they were working hard found they had, in some mysterious manner, been lent new powers.

But nature was not to be thwarted entirely by heroic resolve. All night those men had either tramped or toiled without a wink of sleep. In many cases the scanty rations carried along had already been consumed. Coupled to fatigue were the demands of hunger, especially thirst, as there was practically no water to be had upon the Hill.

Noting this, General Putnam once more set out for Cambridge. He had made up his mind to make another and more urgent appeal of General Ward for assistance, but this time for provisions and powder and water, as well as troops. Unmindful of his appearance, thoughtful only of the succor of his men, the

veteran farmer-soldier dashed away upon his mettlesome charger. In his shirt sleeves, an old white felt jammed carelessly upon his head, riding with the free and easy grace of an Indian plainsman, his figure was so picturesque that more than one man behind watched him with interest until he disappeared behind the rugged obtrusion of Bunker Hill.

Again General Ward showed reluctance to imperil Cambridge by sending a portion of his defences to the relief of the little expedition holding Breed's Hill. But Putnam would not give up; he advocated so earnestly that finally Ward gave in, and promised to order one third of General Stark's New Hampshire regiment to march to Charlestown. Supplies were also to be forthcoming, but as powder was very scarce owing to most of the explosive having been previously commandeered by the British, only a limited number of barrels could be dispatched, it was said, and most of this had come through the daring action of Major John Langdon who, six months previously, had all but single-handed captured it from the Royalist custodians of Fort William and Mary, at Newcastle.

It was close to ten o'clock that morning before Putnam was able to start back to his comrades. On his way thither he met Major Brooks, whom Colonel Prescott, irksome at Putnam's tardiness, had dispatched to Cambridge upon a similar purpose. Major Brooks wheeled about, and together they galloped toward the scene of activity, the dull *boom! boom!* of the big guns still throbbing the air at intervals.

III. IN ANXIOUS READINESS

Joel Whittaker was one of the first to espy the approaching figures of the two officers. With his chum Ben he had been toiling upon the earthworks, amid the random shots of the British batteries, and had just taken time to straighten up for a brief breathing spell.

"Look yonder, Ben!" he announced. "Tis 'Old Put' and Major Brooks both returning. I can spell gladness and success in the very swing of Putnam's gait and the wave of his free arm."

"The good Lord grant your surmise be true," said Ben, spitting the dry dust out of his drier throat. "I am about parched for a touch of water."

When, a few minutes later, the officers arrived with the good tidings of reinforcements and replenishments soon to come, a cheer went up that must have reached British ears and made them wonder.

By this time, with only one man killed as a result of the enemy all-morning shooting, most of the men had ceased labor, for the redoubt—eight yards square, with a breastwork extending one hundred yards on a line with its eastern side—was now substantially finished. General Putnam, observing the idle pickaxes and shovels, suggested the desirability of now taking a detachment of men for the purpose of also erecting works upon Bunker Hill, as a second rallying-point in case the Colonials were ultimately driven from their present stand.

To this, however, Colonel Prescott remonstrated, declaring that if any of the men began to intrench on the other height the enemy might cut them off unexpectedly and thus place those on Breed's Hill in a bad situation. But Putnam's persuasion at length prevailed, and about eleven o'clock volunteers to go to Bunker Hill were called for.

Although weary and hot and thirsty, both Joel and Ben stepped to the front for this duty. On the other hand, Shawmut Dinwoodie, much fresher because of the fact that he had worked only half-heartedly and had begged a portion of another soldier's canteen under the pretension that he was in a torture of thirst, slunk back. Such is the difference in boys as well as men.

So Joel and Ben, together with a company of other valiant patriots, took up intrenching tools and made their way along the ridge to the adjacent hill, led by the unconquerable

Putnam. Here, for upwards of an hour, they worked energetically and heroically. But about twelve o'clock, before they could accomplish a great deal, their movements were so hampered by renewed and heavier firing from the enemy, that Putnam, believing an attack was soon to be forthcoming, ordered the men back to Breed's Hill, while he, provoked that the promised reinforcements had not yet arrived, started off a third time for Cambridge.

In the meantime the frigate *Glasgow* and the transport *Symmetry*, of the British fleet, were doing their best to rake Charlestown Neck. Simultaneously the man-of-war *Somerset* and two floating batteries at the ferry, as well as the battery on Copp's Hill, were pouring a heavy fire on the redoubt of the patriots. And this was augmented by the *Lively* and *Falcon*, whose guns swept the low grounds in front of Breed's Hill.

The Provincials laid low, but a sharp lookout was kept, nevertheless. The big round balls, many separately, but others cunningly linked together by steel bars and chains, came whistling and screeching through the still, sultry air. Fortunately the great majority of them either fell short of the little earthwork or went harmlessly overhead.

Suddenly, in the midst of the thundering din, Ben clutched the arm of his young companion.

"Look, Joel,—look! The redcoats! They come!" cried Ben.

It was true. Now, under cover of the furious cannonading, barges and boats filled with scarlet-uniformed troops were seen making for a landing at Moulton's Point on the southwest corner of the peninsula. Slowly heavily-laden small craft came forward, propelled by numerous Royalist oarsmen. Presently the first boat landed in good order—then a second—then a third—then others—till the shoreline in the vicinity was all but blotted out by the bright-colored, pompous regimentals of the calm-acting, deliberate enemy.

Courageous as they were to a man, ready as they were to face the great host confronting them in spite of their own small force, no Colonial there was foolish enough to believe that there was any chance of holding off such an enemy unless assistance should come within the next hour. Why did not Putnam return? Why did not Ward, at Cambridge, keep his promise of additional troops? Why must their dauntless leader, "Old Put" endanger his life by these needless repeated journeys? Silently, some boldly aloud, the suffering men cursed Ward for his negligence. Nor did the sympathetic officers discipline the latter for their temerity.

But scarcely had such thoughts begun to shape themselves when the belated reinforcements came up. These were even larger than at first promised, consisting of the whole regiments of Colonels Reed and Stark of New Hampshire, also a company of artillery under Captain John Callendar.

The reaction of this happy arrival set the defenders of the height into a spontaneous cheer, especially when it was noted that the familiar form of Israel Putnam was also present. Through the enfiling fire that streaked across the Neck the newcomers had come without the loss of a man, strange to say.

By this time twenty-eight barges of British had landed at Moulton's Point, under the command of Generals Sir William Howe and Pigot. These had carried the Fifth, Thirty-eighth, Forty-third and Fifty-second battalions of infantry, also two companies of grenadiers, and two of light infantry. They had seemed in no hurry to make an offensive, but loitered on the shore, finally partaking of food, while General Howe reconnoitered the American position, and awaited reinforcements which he had solicited from Gage as soon as he saw that strong assistance had come up for the "rebels."

Putnam declared that when the intelligence of the landing of the British reached Cambridge, two miles distant, there was great excitement in the camp and throughout the town. Drums

beat to arms, bells were rung, and the people and military units were speeding in every direction.

At about two o'clock the reinforcements for Howe arrived, landing at the present navy-yard. These consisted of the Forty-seventh battalion of infantry, a battalion of marines, and some grenadiers and light-infantry. The entire force of about four thousand was commanded by the most skillful British officers then in Boston. Not only that, but every Royalist preparing to attack the undisciplined, poorly-equipped Provincials was a drilled soldier, trained in the art of war, well-armed, and well-clothed and fed.

During the forenoon Gage had earnestly discussed with Howe and Pigot the best means of ousting the Americans from their position on Breed's Hill. There was one sure and obvious method—to go around by sea, up the Mystic River, and take possession of Charlestown Neck, thereby cutting off the Colonials from the mainland and starving them out.

But it was thought that time was too precious to adopt so slow a method, for should the Americans succeed in planting a battery of siege guns on their elevation, the British position in Boston would be placed in great jeopardy. Therefore, it was decided, a direct assault upon Breed's Hill was most likely to prove speedily effective. It was unanimously agreed that these "peasants" could not withstand the charge of England's choicest soldiers; indeed, it was gravely doubted if they would stay and fight at all, once they saw the Regulars close to them.

So Gage accordingly watched the proceedings, now nearing a climax, buoyant with hope. In a few hours, he told himself, the disgrace of Lexington would be wiped out, and the stubborn, wicked rebellion put to an end!

Before the final reinforcements of the enemy had disappeared Colonel Prescott had arranged most of his forces for the coming onslaught, but now he saw fit to change some of them. While the British troops were forming, he sent Gridley's artillery, with its two field-pieces, and Colonel Knowlton, with

his two hundred Connecticut men to a position about two hundred yards in the rear of the redoubt.

Here nature had formed something of a breastwork of her own. What seemed an old ditch ran along the base of a fence. The latter consisted of a low stone wall upon which the occupant of the land had some day placed a series of stout rails. Some of these were broken, but were quickly replaced with other rails secured from an adjacent fence, following which the soldiers jammed in the interstices a compact filling of new-mown hay which they gathered in a nearby field. This crude breastwork, if not capable of shedding all bullets directed its way, would at least prove a partial shelter and screen the movements of its holders from the approaching enemy.

Captain Callendar's company of artillery was directed to join Gridley's artillery in defending the open space between the rail fence and the redoubt itself.

On wheeling his horse, after seeing that the cannon were properly placed, Colonel Prescott suddenly encountered Dr. Joseph Warren. This young President of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts had recently been appointed a major-general in the army of his colony. Though suffering from sickness and exhaustion, Dr. Warren, bent on assisting the little army on Breed's Hill, had hurried thither from Water-town, seven miles distant.

Colonel Prescott immediately saluted, inquired after the health of his superior officer, and offered to turn over the command to him.

But Warren shook his head decidedly. "I am come to fight as a volunteer, and feel honored in being allowed to serve under so brave an officer as yourself," he stated.

Prescott now completed his final arrangements. While Dr. Warren retired to the redoubt, where its original constructors were to fight. A few troops recalled from Charlestown after the British landed, and a part of Warner's company lined the cart-

way on the right of the earthworks. Three companies were also stationed in the main road at the foot of Breed's Hill.

Joel Whittaker and Ben Dwight clutched muskets back of the rail fence. It was probably the most hazardous position of all—this one with Knowlton's brave Connecticut followers. That is why the two young patriots had asked to leave their own company in the redoubt.

As for Shawmut Dinwoodie, the redoubt held *him*. Despite the fact that it seemed the safest place, he was nervous and frightened, and had all he could do to keep from showing it to his comrades.

IV. MUSKET-STOCKS AND FISTS

It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. The Americans, alert for the first movement from the enemy, saw it put into execution.

The dense, closely massed troops upon the shore at Moulton's Point began to quiver. Two strong flank guards moved out from the main body. The enemy heavy artillery commenced to play upon the American positions. At the same time the watchers saw a blue flag displayed as a signal. Immediately the guns upon Copp's Hill, also those from the British ships and floating batteries, began to project round shot at the same targets. And a furious cannonading was likewise opened upon the right wing of the Provincial army at Roxbury, undoubtedly to prevent reinforcements being sent by General Thomas to Charlestown.

Now Gridley and Callender, with their field-pieces, returned a feeble response to the heavy barks of the enemy guns. Some of the shots took effect, and a cheer went up from the hill. But it was not for long. Soon the American fire ceased.

Hurrying forward, General Putnam found that Captain Callendar had left his post, along with most of his men. Of the few faithful men remaining, the veteran general furiously

inquired after their officers. When told that the cartridges remaining seemed too large for the bore of the field-pieces and they could not be loaded, he swore that they *could* be loaded. Thereupon, he seized a cartridge in his hands, broke it open with a pickaxe, and loaded the missiles it contained with a ladle, firing it at the oncoming Regulars himself.

The gunners then relieved the dauntless officer, ashamed at the conduct of Callendar and their own lack of resourcefulness, and did valiant work with the loose ball and powder, cutting huge holes in the ranks of the oncoming British, which, however, were immediately closed as they continued to come on.

Galloping over to Bunker Hill, Putnam encountered the deserting Callendar and some of his followers. Angrily the general ordered him to return with his command to Breed's Hill, but the artillery officer refused, declaring that he was completely out of cartridges.

At this Putnam dismounted, examined Callendar's boxes of ammunition, and disclosed a number of cartridges. Thereupon he cursed the cowardly officer in his righteous indignation, and ordered him to immediately return under penalty of death, at which Callendar complied.

But he did not remain long in his new post. His men were disgusted with him, and left the field-pieces, refusing flatly to serve under him. Obtaining muskets they joined their comrades behind the rail fence and in the redoubt, ready to give their lives gladly with weapons with which they were more familiar. The fact is, most of the cannon by this time were disabled by the fire of the enemy, and the cannister exhausted.

Under cover of the discharges from their artillery, the British moved slowly forward in two divisions, General Howe with the right wing, and General Pigot with the left. It was evidently the intention of the former to attempt to penetrate the American line at the rail fence; the latter, to storm the redoubt.

Howe now ordered his cannon to be loaded with grape, but they soon became useless on account of the miry ground encountered at the base of the hill. Small arms now became their reliance, as they had become also the reliance of the Patriots.

Silently and grimly the British troops, burdened with their heavy knapsacks and accouterments, toiled up the ascent of Breed's Hill in the sultry heat of the hot mid-afternoon. The grenadiers, the tallest and finest-looking men in the British army, who could be readily distinguished by their high caps and other peculiarities of dress, led the attack.

All was still behind the American defenses. For all one might know now, the intrenchments had been deserted. But it was a misleading appearance—one, in truth, little understood by the enemy. For within those breastworks, and in reserve behind the hills, crouched fifteen hundred determined, sinew-hardened men, ready, at a prescribed signal, to fall upon the advancing foe.

With their companions, Joel and Ben lay behind the rail fence, musket barrels trained across the topmost rail, eyes ranging the sights, fingers just touching the triggers. Up came "Old Put." As he passed by, he said quietly:

"Men, you are marksmen, and know our powder is low. Don't one of you fire until you see the white of their eyes! Then aim at the waistbands of their handsome coats!"

The Royal troops were not more than eight rods distant when the Provincials, breathless and intent, received the order to shoot. Already the King's men had begun to fire a few random shots, but the reply they received quite stunned them. A great sheet of musketry flame spread along the rail fence, the rattle of the Patriots' guns was a veritable deafening clatter. Those rugged men had been trained since childhood to bring a squirrel out of the highest oak with no mark upon him but a shattered head. Now the gaping front ranks of the advancing British spoke eloquently of their skill with powder and ball.

Bewildered, the enemy staggered—and halted. The ground about them was strewn with the dead and wounded. But gamely the Royalists recovered, and took another step forward.

Again that withering, blinding sheet of yellow fire along the parapet of rails, stone and grass! This time the Americans had coolly picked out the redcoated officers, Joel seeing the big grenadier captain at whom he aimed pitch forward and fall as he leaped forward with uplifted sword to cleave the boy's own head. Ben, too, shot an officer, a lieutenant of marines, as the soldier was about to fire at the bold General Putnam, who rode hither and thither, careless of the flying bullets, while he issued orders to his men.

Aghast at the terrific slaughter, and particularly at their great loss of leaders, the British now turned and slowly retired, firing as they went.

About the same time the wing of the enemy attacking the redoubt also was driven back. A great shout went up from the Colonial forces when this fact was noted. It was the first noise, aside from the discharge of their weapons, that they had made since the beginning of the onslaught, and seemed to relieve them immensely. Several at the fence, leaped over the rails with the intention of pursuing, but were restrained by their more prudent officers.

Confident that the British would soon re-attack, General Putnam rode over to Bunker Hill and to the rear of it to urge on reinforcements. At the farther end of Charlestown Neck were gathered troops who dared not cross the isthmus on account of the deadly cannon balls that raked it. To this point Putnam galloped his horse in a great haste to hurry the new troops forward before the enemy returned. He entreated, threatened, encouraged them. Lashing his animal with the flat of his sword he rode backward and for-ward across the Neck, through the hottest fire, endeavoring by his example to convince them there was no danger. The balls, however, threw up clouds of dirt about him, and the soldiers for the most part were so perfectly

convinced that the veteran was invulnerable and bore a charmed life, that only a limited percentage of them ventured to follow him across the hearth of spattering death.

At last, with these, he tried to rally the reinforcements which had already reached the protection of the west side of Bunker Hill. In vain he tried to induce them to expose themselves long enough to join those holding the front lines. He ordered, coaxed, ridiculed, and threatened them. Some of the more cowardly he knocked down, in his ire and impatience, with his broad fist. But all in vain; the men persisted that they could not fight without their officers. Putnam offered to lead them himself. Then they excused themselves upon the grounds that the cannon were deserted and they "stood no chance without them."

Here, indeed, the battle appeared in all its horrors. In the midst of the confusion, in which one man scarcely knew whether or not he could depend upon the loyalty of his fighting mate in a pinch, the British forces were again seen advancing, and Putnam hurried away to rejoin those on Breed's Hill.

This time the British troops had been rein-forced by four hundred marines from Boston, under Major Small, a Loyalist well-known to Putnam. Boldly led by Howe the one wing began the advance toward the rail fence in the same formation as before, while the other wing, under Pigot, started for the redoubt proper.

It must have been a mournful march for the Britishers, as they had to cross over the dead bodies of scores of their fellow soldiers. But, with true English courage and tenacity, they pressed onward, now cloaked from the straining gaze of the Patriots by a great haze of smoke which began to envelop the heights occupied by them. This was caused by a severe conflagration which had started in Charlestown, just in front, as the result of a number of hot shot fired from the battery of the enemy at Copp's Hill. The buildings of the town were of wood in

those days. In a very short time the flames had spread until more than two hundred structures were burning.

In the veil of pungent vapor, the British hoped to rush unobserved up to the breastworks, scale them, and drive the Americans out at the point of the bayonet.

But at just the right moment to save the brave defenders of Breed's Hill, a gentle breeze, which appeared to the Colonials like the succoring breath of a guardian angel—the first zephyr that had been felt that torrid day—came from the west and swept the smoke seaward, exposing to full view of the Americans the rapidly advancing columns of the enemy, who fired as they approached, but with little execution. Colonels Brener, Nixon and Buckminster were wounded, while Major Moore was killed, however.

As before the Colonials reserved their own fire. Not until the British were within the prescribed distance again, did they shoot. Then their volley was terrible. The storm of leaden hail laid low whole ranks of officers and men. It seemed that a scythe had gone through them. In places redcoat lay upon redcoat. The accuracy of aim of the defenders was wonderful to behold.

Human beings could not withstand such carnal violence as this. The British line wavered, re-coiled. Their remaining officers, in a frenzy, ordered them on. They stepped forward, only to meet a second deluge of bullets. Once more great swathes were cut in their ranks by the unerring shots of the concealed Americans.

For a few moments General Howe, at the head of his men, found himself entirely alone. Immediately around him all had either fallen or beaten a retreat.

Joel Whittaker had just succeeded in reloading his musket. His bloodshot eyes glistened as they rested upon the bewildered British chief. What a chance to win glory for himself!—aye, to help the cause for which he fought by downing

one of its greatest enemies! He had not missed his aim yet. How easy it would be!

Deliberately he raised his gun to his eye. Deliberately he aimed at the left breast of the great British leader. Then, just as he was pressing the trigger, his muscles seemed to become paralyzed. A picture had arisen between his sights and the officer—a picture of this man's brother, the beloved Lord Howe whom his own father had followed through the French and Indian War.

With a sigh, the youth turned his unsteady musket in another direction, and a more luckless man received its fatal charge. The noted British general probably never realized how close he came to being killed that day by a boy who cherished the memory of his intrepid kinsman.

In various places the British line gave way to the punishment inflicted upon it by the Provincials. It required the utmost exertions of the remaining officers, from the generals down to the subalterns, to repair the disorder which this hot and unexpected fire had produced. All their efforts were at first fruitless, the Royalists having retreated in great confusion to the shore.

General Clinton, who had beheld the progress of the battle with mortified pride, crossed over the river in a boat, followed by a small reinforcement, and joined the broken army with the purpose of bolstering it up for a third charge. Some of the British officers objected to another attempt in the face of what they had already received, but when it became known that a number of the survivors had heard, in the heat of the last onslaught, an incautious Provincial in the redoubt (this individual was, in fact, none other than the cowardly Shawmut Dinwoodie) declare the ammunition was almost exhausted, the remonstrators took heart and concurred in once more making an attack, this time to do or die.

So again Howe rallied his men. But this time he changed his tactics. He had discovered the weakness of the point that lay

between the breastwork and the rail fence. His purpose was to lead his left wing thence, with the artillery. While a show of attack should be made at the rail fence on the other side, by Pigot's wing, his own detail was to rush the redoubt with bayonets.

The enemy was so long making preparations for the third attack that the Americans began to imagine none others were forthcoming. They had time to refresh themselves a little, and to take stock of their exact situation. While many of their number had fallen, they knew that the enemy had suffered a great deal more. Their worst fears were caused by the scarcity of ammunition. Only a few rounds remained. These were distributed by Prescott, with the admonition to every man to use his bayonet, if he had one, when his last shot would be gone, or to club his gun. Some of the soldiers even gathered the loose stones in the redoubt, bent upon selling life as dearly as possible should the call be made.

At last the British began to move once more toward the Heights. The Americans observed the change in formation with an uneasy feeling. On, on came the British, nearer and nearer. In a short time they were again coming up the side of Breed's Hill, their artillery was put in action, and the heavy charges of grape began to rake the defences in a heartrending manner to those back of them.

When the enemy was within twenty rods of them, the Provincials fired for the first time. As in the past, their aim was true, and the slaughter great. Among the British who fell at this volley were Colonel Abercrombie and Majors Williams and Speedlove.

But the enemy pressed on with bull-dog pertinacy, encouraged by the havoc being made by their artillery, which sent its balls through the sallyport directly into the redoubt, and played such destruction along the exposed breastwork that its brave defenders were obliged to desert it for the shelter of the earthwork enclosure.

Now the last grains of powder were rammed into the guns of the weary defenders. Grimly they awaited the next charge.

It came. There was a heavy volley from the artillery, another from the muskets of the British, a great rush of the enemy, and some of them sprang for the parapet of the redoubt. One of the first of these was Major Pitcairn, who had led the troops at Lexington. With the cry, "Now for the glory of the marines!" he gained the top of the redoubt. But the words were no sooner out of his mouth than the brave fellow was shot down by a negro volunteer within the walls with his last bullet. Simultaneously the final shots of most of the other Americans were then discharged.

Following came such a struggle at close quarters as none of the participants could ever forget to their dying day. Thrusting with bayonet, battering with gunstock, striking with bare fist, leveling to the ground with stones and other missiles that came to hand, the Provincials fought their way foot by foot through the heavy ranks of the enemy. Some walked backward, keeping at bay one or more of the British at a time with their crude weapons. Just outside the redoubt, Dr. Warren, bravely clubbing his powderless gun, fell, the victim of a musket ball through the head. As he was falling, a British grenadier lunged at his body with bayonet, but the chivalrous British officer, Major Small, warded off the wicked thrust.

The retreating Colonial soldiers made toward Bunker Hill, always under heavy fire from the enemy. Here new reinforcements had recently arrived, and after some intrenching work under the direction of Israel Putnam, had started to the relief of their sadly oppressed compatriots on Breed's Hill. But they had gone only a short distance, when a musket ball entered the groin of Colonel Gardner, their commander, and frightened and confused they had turned back. No amount of persuasion on the part of General Putnam, who constantly exposed himself in his efforts to stem the tide of fear and confusion that existed

now, could produce any degree of relief in the lamentable situation.

Meanwhile, the Americans at the rail fence, under Stark, Reed and Knowlton, reinforced by Clark, Coit, Chester's Connecticut companies, and a few others, maintained their ground with great firmness, as they still had some ammunition left. Both Joel and Ben were wet with perspiration, and their hands and faces grimy with dirt and powder stain. All along they had fought with might and main beside their older comrades back of the rails and hay. While many of their original number lay dead or wounded about them, a strong force still remained. Around Joel's left wrist was wound his handkerchief, covering a slough made by an enemy bullet. Ben had a bayonet cut in his leg. Both youths were weak with thirst and fatigue, but neither thought of resting.

This little force at the fence had thus far successfully resisted every effort of the enemy to turn their flank. Well was it that they did, for thereby they saved the main body, retreating from the redoubt, from being cut off.

But when they saw their comrades, with their chief, flying toward Bunker Hill, they too lost heart and beat a retreat after them.

Putnam, riding madly up, used every means to keep them firm. He commanded, pleaded, cursed like a man bereft. Now he was at this point, now at that one, ever where the troops were scattered and in a panic.

"Make a stand here!" he exclaimed. "We can stop them yet! In God's name, give them one shot more! Curse ye, for cowards, would ye see the redcoats master ye without winking an eye-lash?"

The gallant old Pomeroy, now in his seventieth year, who had ridden more than a hundred miles on his horse to join the men on the heights, also added his importunities for a halt. However, though some of the men stood by, among them Joel

Whittaker and his friend Ben Dwight, who added their own pleas, the majority kept on in their flight—among them Shawmut Dinwoodie and the others, after some display of resistance, perforce had to follow them.

As they retreated across the Neck, numbers of the Americans were killed by the fire from the British boats. The undaunted Putnam finally marshaled them on Winter Hill and Prospect Hill.

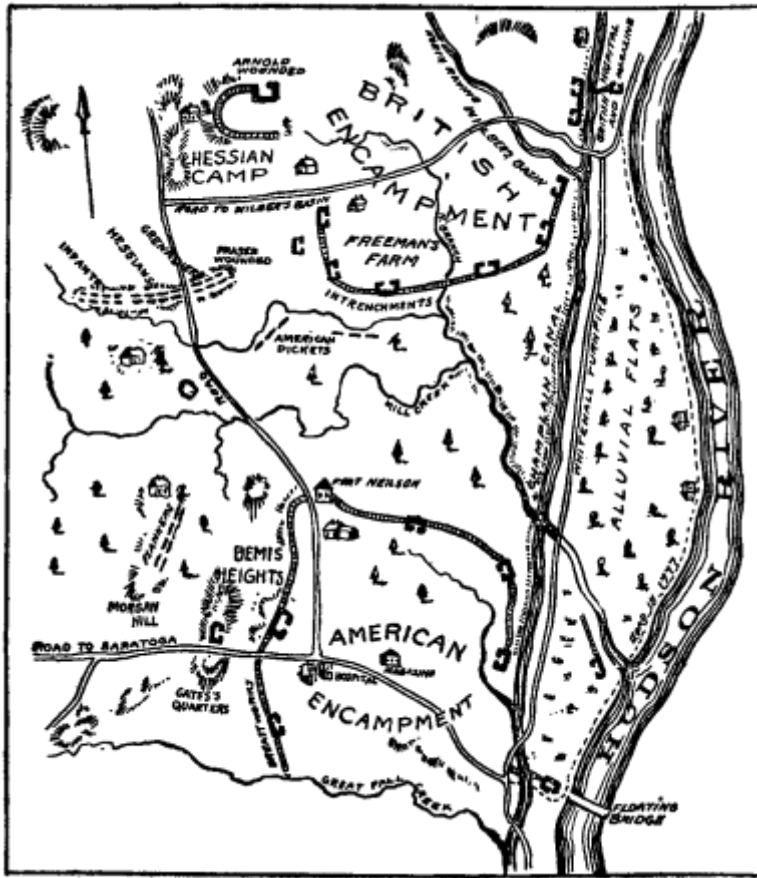
The British did not follow up their questionable success, but seemed content to rest upon Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill, which they proceeded to fortify.

The American loss in this engagement was one hundred and fifteen killed and missing, and three hundred and five wounded, with thirty-two taken prisoner. The British loss was reported as two hundred and twenty-six killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded. Several Americans had shamefully deserted to the enemy's side at the last moment, among them the weak-spined Shawmut Dinwoodie.

Despite the victory of the King's arms, the moral advantage was felt to be entirely on the side of the Americans. It was they who were elated by the day's work, while it was the British who were dispirited. The belief of the latter that the Colonials could not fight was dispelled that day forever.

CHAPTER II

SARATOGA



The morning came. There stood the foe;
Stark eyed them as they stood;
Few words he spake—'twas not a time
For moralizing mood.
"See there the enemy, my boys!
Now strong in valor's might;

Beat them, or Molly Stark will sleep
In widowhood to-night!"

—Rodman

I. FORT TICONDEROGA

Carlyle speaks of certain English armies being "led by wooden poles wearing cocked hats." General Burgoyne, chief British leader in the famous Saratoga campaign, was without question a brilliant illustration of the comparison.

His personality, from all accounts, must have been quite charming, and kindness his of heart and loftiness of spirit amply attested by many little anecdotes of reliable historians. He was honorable in his dealings—a man of his word. Perhaps he was too pleasure-loving, too easy-going, too much a man of fashion and of letters for a good soldier. Be that as it may, he was a conspicuous failure as a commander. America will ever owe a big debt of gratitude to the mother country for sending Burgoyne and Howe to her as military leaders!

In the spring of 1777 the British made their supreme attempt to cut in two the confederate colonies. It was planned to possess themselves of the line of the Hudson River, thus separating the colonies into two or three divisions incapable of assisting each other, whereupon the invaders, with their ability to mass great numbers at any desired point, could calmly smother the weakened units as they saw fit. The scheme was for General Howe, in New York, to go up the Hudson with his force, while General Burgoyne should come down, both main forces and several auxiliary expeditions to finally meet at Albany, after having swept everything before them.

This was truly a splendid, well-conceived piece of strategy. The truth is, it might have worked but for one thing. That thing loomed up in the human shape of a certain Lord George Germaine, who was the English Prime Minister. In some way this worthy managed to stick the order for Howe to

cooperate into a pigeon-hole of his desk, and there very kindly forgot it, while he was visiting at a country house, until it was too late to help the cause of his country.

Burgoyne, who had distinguished himself in a subordinate capacity in Portugal, was appointed to succeed Sir Guy Garleton, whose previous attempt in the same direction the year before had been checked by Arnold's heroic naval battle off Valcour Island on Lake Champlain.

Parliament allowed Burgoyne everything he wanted—even told him he could fit out the expedition just about as he chose; "but," said they, very emphatically, "if you fail, do not blame us. Rather find fault with yourself."

The force that he took with him consisted of nearly ten thousand men. These were made up of four thousand British regulars, three thousand Germans, five hundred artillerymen and a large body of Canadians. Great care was taken in selecting these troops. One of the latter—Ackland's Grenadiers—was one of the finest regiments in all England.

Second in command was Major-General Fraser, a distinguished and able soldier with a long and brilliant record. Phillips, the chief of the artillery, was among the first in his profession. Lord Balcarras, a dashing soldier, commanded the light infantry. Leading the German contingent was Baron Riedesel, a capable veteran, while Colonels Baum and Breyman were subordinate officers under him.

As if they thought it were going to be a picnic on a large scale, or a sight-seeing trip, the wives of many of the officers accompanied them.

On his way to Albany it was Burgoyne's plan to first take Fort Ticonderoga. Through Tory spies, of which the country at this time was literally alive, it had been no trouble for him to learn that his force in Canada had been a great deal underrated both by Washington and by Congress. In fact they believed, when it was suggested as a possibility, that if an attack were

made upon Ticonderoga, it would be feigned, in order to distract attention from Philadelphia which was now threatened by Howe.

This blindness on the part of the Americans tickled Burgoyne immensely. He would show these rebels, he thought, whether his attack on Ticonderoga would be a bluff or not! His spies had told him the true situation at the Fort—that St. Clair had less than three hundred poorly-armed men there. He knew that it would take closer to ten thousand to keep his own forces at bay.

So Burgoyne felt very complacent as he set out with his troops for the unsuspecting Provincials who held Ticonderoga. On the western shore of Lake Champlain, near Crown Point, he met the Six Nations tribes in council. After a great feast, which an inciting speech by Burgoyne, four hundred of the best Indian warriors were induced to join the expedition. To these he promised, as a reward for success in driving out the Provincials, not only the return of the coveted lands they held, but many fine Ponies, loud-barking guns, gay blankets and trinkets from the King. Be it said to his great credit, he did not hold out to the redskins the gruesome promise of white scalps, like some British commanders of the day, but especially warned them not to use their scalping knives.

While at first he had planned on an absolute surprise for the small force of defenders at Ticonderoga, the somewhat unexpected addition to his of the Indians changed Burgoyne's plans slightly. He felt so sure of success now that he wanted the little mouse, with no hole by which to escape, to know that the big cat waited on the other side of the open door.

So, in very grandiloquent style, he issued a proclamation on June 29 in which he told of the power of his forces, their nearness to the helpless fortification, and the rage and fury that might be expected from such warriors as he had when they should once see the flow of blood. He declared that it would be absolute suicide for the garrison to attempt to fight; that if they did all of the extremities and penalties of war would be put upon

them. By a fleet Iroquois runner, with a truce, he sent this notice on to the commander at Ticonderoga.

Probably the British commander pictured an immediate surrender on the part of St. Clair, and hoped thus to save a heavy slaughter of his own choice troops, as well as to add more glory to his reputation as a military leader who won by strategy (?) instead of bloodshed. If so, he was grievously disappointed. For back came the Indian runner the next morning still bearing Burgoyne's proclamation. Mutely he turned it over. With his dusky finger he indicated a few words scribbled in pencil. "Talk's cheap. Show yourselves. St. Clair." That was all.



RUINS OF FORT TICONDEROGA.

In as much of a rage as so mild a man could get, Burgoyne immediately ordered an advance upon the Fort.

The next day, on July 1st, he arrived in the immediate vicinity, and at once proceeded to occupy Mount Defiance, a precipitous height towering some six hundred feet above the water of the lake, and less than a mile from the fortification, which it fully commanded. Although St. Clair had warned his superior officers of the urgency of defending this height with a

battery, the American engineers had laughed at the idea of an enemy ever getting heavy guns up such a rugged elevation.

Just how Burgoyne accomplished the feat they never knew, but accomplish it he did,—undoubtedly by pulleys and cables,—and on the morning of July 5th, the guard at Ticonderoga reported that Mount Defiance was swarming with men. Great consternation ensued. From every bastion and loophole—even from the big gate—the defenders stared off toward the peopled height. With their glasses the officers saw that most of the men wore red coats, and that many Indians were with them. At that moment they were setting up a heavy battery.

All that day the defenders of Ticonderoga watched the British as they worked on the distant height firmly mounting their battery. By nightfall St. Clair saw that the situation for him was hopeless. He knew that with the opening of another dawn the powerful cannon of the enemy would be belching death-dealing round shot into his works, and that the post must surely be destroyed before reinforcements of sufficient strength to withstand the attack could be sent him. Therefore, there seemed nothing to do but to evacuate and at least save the lives and freedom of his force.

This decision cost the American commander a great heart pang. He realized that a goodly quantity of precious ammunition and supplies, which he could not destroy or take with him in his flight, would fall into the hands of the British to be used against his own countrymen at some future date and place. But his keenest remorse no doubt, for he was a sentimental man, was because he would have to relinquish the Fort which Ethan Allen had captured in such a romantic manner not long before.

So when it grew dark the women and children of Ticonderoga were embarked in two hundred boats and sent down the lake under a strong guard toward Fort Edward. St. Clair committed the charge of the rear guards to Colonels Seth Warner (Ethan Allen's Whilom associate), Francis and Hale, and

retreated toward Castleton in all haste, first spiking the guns and destroying the deserted stores as much as possible.

Unfortunately for the secrecy of the escape, a building was accidentally set on fire by a soldier, and by its brilliant illumination the watching British and Indians detected the truth. The enemy immediately occupied the Fort, and a strong detachment of nine hundred under Major-General Fraser started in pursuit of the fleeing Americans.

They came up with the rear-guard at Hubbardton. Here a desperate encounter took place. The Americans, numbering about one thousand men, fought with the greatest spirit. Several times they beat off the British, and finally drove them back in confusion. But just then Fraser was reinforced by troops of Hessians under Riedesel. Completely outnumbered, the Provincials were at last compelled to withdraw, leaving on the field about three hundred killed and wounded, among whom was Colonel Francis. Colonel Hale was taken prisoner.

With the remnant of his troops, Colonel Warner retreated eastward through Vermont. Though somewhat delayed by the necessity of looking after their own long list of stricken soldiers, the British pursued the Americans so closely that the fugitives were compelled to burn and abandon Fort Ann. From there they fell back south with all speed to Fort Edward. Here St. Clair's men joined General Schuyler's little force on July 12th.

Schuyler, who was in chief command of the surrounding American department at that time, worked in the most heroic manner to check the advance of the British. To this end he summoned to his aid the settlers of the surrounding country. These hardy men gave up their homes reluctantly, but were glad of the chance to use their fine knowledge of woodcraft to harass the enemy. So they went about destroying all crops they could not hide or take away. Bridges were torn down to make streams impassable on the main roads. Rivers and creeks were dammed up to flood portions of ground over which the British must pass. Great trees were felled by the keen axes of the skilled woodsmen

and were placed in a terrible tangle across paths which Burgoyne seemed most likely to take.

Under these adverse conditions it took the British army thirty days to cover twenty-four miles through the wilderness. To accomplish this, Burgoyne afterward admitted that his engineers built no less than forty bridges! Practically every rod of the road had to be built anew. The British soldiers fumed and fretted. Even the easy-going Burgoyne grew ill-tempered and abusive. Only the Indians failed to heap abuse upon the heads of the cunning colonists; on the other hand they admired such sagacity, for it was an art in which they themselves were extremely well versed. "Heap like fox," commented one of the Iroquois who spoke a little English. And that seemed the attitude of his brother redskins, who, while they were willing to fight with the English against the encroachers of their domain, had really little respect for the gaily-adorned men from across the big water.

Before the slow advance of the British, the Americans had every opportunity to retire at their leisure and in good order.

Burgoyne had hoped to live off the land as he progressed, but owing to the thoroughness with which the evacuating inhabitants removed their crops and supplies of food, he found very scanty foraging. Indeed, before starting out he had been led to believe that this territory was infested in the main by the King's sympathizers, and that his ranks, as he went along, would be greatly swelled by them as volunteers.

In this supposition he was grievously disappointed. The inhabitants did not rally to his standard to any appreciable extent; instead of assisting him, every one seemed to be putting obstacles in his way, and his position was rapidly becoming a difficult one. Finally he reached Skenesborough, where he rested. His forces were completely tired out, hungry, and many of the soldiers ill.

II. STANWIX AND ORISKANY

Meanwhile another expedition had been organized by the British. This had started out at the same time as Burgoyne's, but by way of Lake Ontario. Its purpose was to make an attack on Fort Stanwix, which was situated at the head-waters of the Mohawk River, at a point where navigation ceased.

This army was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel St. Leger, and comprised about seventeen hundred British Regulars, numerous Provincials, Sir John Johnson's Tory contingent, and a good-sized body of Indians. After they should capture the Fort, they planned to swoop down the Mohawk Valley, gathering stores by pillage, and then join Howe and Burgoyne at Albany. As a matter of fact my young readers have already read enough of this military enterprise in the preceding episode to appreciate the error of judgment made by the various army leaders, and to know that since the plans had been so carefully laid certain unlooked-for exigencies of war—such as the pigeon-holed order in London and the delays caused Burgoyne in his march by the harassing patriotic settlers—had conspired to knock the possibility of such a meeting as that at Albany higher than a cocked hat.

The force under Lieutenant-Colonel St. Leger landed at Oswego about the middle of July. With very little opposition they made their way to Fort Stanwix. On August 3rd they managed to completely invest the place.

Fort Stanwix was occupied by Colonel Peter Gansevoort, with about six hundred men. The stout old Dutch Colonel refused to surrender, and as the post had recently been strengthened St. Leger feared the outcome of an assault, and saw no way to effect its capitulation except by a regular siege.

During this interval, Schuyler had called out the militia of Tryon County, under the direction of General Nicholas Herkimer, who was a veteran soldier now in his sixtieth year. Herkimer, despite his age, had the pluck and enterprise of a

young man, and readily assumed the task Schuyler imposed upon him; namely, the relief of Fort Stanwix.

So Herkimer's little army of some eight hundred men pursued their way up the Mohawk Valley. Their passage was uncontested, so secretly had they moved.

Very early in the morning of August 5th, while it was still dark, they reached Oriskany Creek, at a point about eight miles from the Fort itself. Here they halted. Three of the most agile and courageous men in the command were selected. Each was given duplicates of a note to Gansevoort, so that in case one was captured at least one messenger was likely to succeed in safely entering the stockade. This note advised the Dutch commander of the stronghold of the presence of Herkimer and his troops, and suggested that as soon as the messenger arrived to fire three successive shots and immediately make a sortie to engage the enemy. At the same instant Herkimer would advance, and endeavor to break through the besieging lines at their weakest point, gain the enclosure of the Fort, and assist its hard-pressed defenders.

Unhappily, all three messengers, as adroit as they were, were caught by the British as they tried to sneak through their closely-drawn lines. Meanwhile the long hours dragged away, and no welcome sound of three shots greeted the expectant ears of the waiting American force. The impatient militia chafed bitterly at the suspense, finally going so far as to reproach General Herkimer for not permitting them to go on. Most unjustly, he was suspected of Tory leanings, and his principal officers, Colonels Cox and Paris, did not refrain, in the stress of their excitement, from apprising him of their suspicions, and charging him with cowardice. The wise old man both resisted their importunities and disregarded their taunts, until he became convinced in his own mind that his messengers must all have failed in their mission, whereupon he reluctantly ordered an advance.

The way led across a causeway of logs which had at some future day been placed there to make passage for some purpose or other over a marshy tract of ground. On either side big trees and dense undergrowth hemmed in the narrow defile.

Herkimer could have chosen no worse path than this. It was an ideal spot for an enemy ambuscade had he thought of it, but evidently he did not dream of the enemy having discovered his exact whereabouts, even if they had captured his couriers, so he proceeded rather carelessly along at the head of his troops.

But some of St. Leger's clever Indian scouts had really discovered the waiting Americans in time for St. Leger to despatch a large detachment to intercept Herkimer. This body was made up of a considerable number of Tories who termed themselves "Johnson's Greens," and a good-sized band of fierce Mohawk warriors, under the leadership of the notorious Joseph Brant. Many of the members of the Tory contingent had been former neighbors and acquaintances of Herkimer's. On account of the differing political views between these men, under the command of Major Watts, there existed the most acrid and bitter feeling, so that they literally longed to get at the throats of one another.

Watts honored the sagacity of Brant by turning over to him the leadership of his detachment. Brant at once recognized the value of the old corduroy road as an ambuscade, and directed the placement of the Indians and soldiers at this point.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning when the Americans walked into the trap set for them by the wily Brant. Had it not been for the impetuosity of the Indians, it is probable that the entire force would have been annihilated. As it was the redskins commenced firing at the first appearance of Herkimer's van-guard. While most of them fell, those behind were given warning, and a staggering volley was poured into the brush by the quick-witted men who came immediately behind.

While the American rear-guard, bewildered by this close proximity of an unseen enemy whose strength could not even be

guessed at, fell back incontinently, practically all of those ahead held their ground valiantly and returned the heavy fire that now began to pour out upon them from all sides. These men at once sought cover behind logs, stumps and trees, for they were nearly as old hands as the Indians themselves at this sort of game. Then commenced a battle between these two forces of bitterly-hating American white men and redmen which, for sanguinary ferocity and determined persistence, has hardly been paralleled on the continent.

To their political differences these men who had lived in time of peace so close to one another, added personal antagonisms of the most galling kind. And as the conflict grew fiercer, and the skulking, red-eyed men drew closer and closer to each other, often a facing pair of them unable to draw the enemy from shelter sufficiently for a telling shot, would suddenly rush out, and knives in hand, fight it out to the death in a terrible grapple. The Indians attempted to scalp the dead and dying in some instances, but usually they paid the cost of the exposure with their lives, for keen eyes and unerring muskets watched them from almost every tree and log they did not occupy themselves.

A furious thunder-storm, accompanied by vivid lightning, presently broke over the horrid scene, as if to wash away from the beautiful carpet of Nature the nauseating stains of red that splotched the green grasses and leaves with their record of death and suffering. The rain fell in torrents. In a very short time the firearms were rendered useless. But that did not end the fight. Knives now were universally resorted to by the white men, and more than once cudgels of wood served to save one life at the expense of another. Colonels Cox and Paris both succumbed.

Gradually the Americans worked their way to a more advantageous position on higher ground. Soon it was noticed that the Mohawks were thinning out and giving way. But Watts, with his Tories, incensed at this, ordered a desperate advance with bayonets. At once the Americans accepted the challenge. The struggle previously was in reality a mild one compared to

that which followed now. The opposing combatants raged and lunged and crushed and tore at one another like wild animals. In many instances they reeled over the ground, then rolled upon it, locked in each other's embrace, quite unable to find a weapon or use one except that which was born with them as babes. When fists and fingers failed, teeth were used!

Finally, after more than five hundred on both sides had been killed or wounded, the Indians completely fled, and close upon their departure the Tories and Americans seemed also to sullenly withdraw as if by telepathic mutual consent.

Very early in the fight Herkimer had been disabled by a bullet which shattered his knee and killed his noble horse. Refusing to withdraw, the brave old man had his aides remove the saddle. Seated in this, with his back against a tree, he had calmly smoked his pipe and directed, so far as he could such a personal encounter, the lines of the strife.

Herkimer's advance was, of course checked. He did not succeed in reaching Fort Stanwix with his relief party. But the terrible slaughter he had inflicted upon the enemy had greatly discouraged St. Leger, and at the same time greatly encouraged the garrison.

In the heat of the conflict one of Herkimer's messengers succeeded in making his escape, and gaining admittance to the Fort. Fortunately his captors had been unable to discover his message, which he had put into the lining of his coat, so in addition to being able to acquaint Gansevoort with the meaning of the firing he had heard and wondered about, he was able to deliver his commander's communication.

Immediately Gansevoort sent out Colonel Marinus Willett with two hundred and fifty picked men, who fell upon St. Leger's camp and stampeded a portion of his force with great loss. The best part of this sortie was that they captured five standards, and twenty wagon loads of supplies, returning to the Fort without the loss of a single man!

The five captured flags were at once hoisted below an improvised American banner. The latter had been made out of a white sheet, a blanket and a woman's petticoat, cut up so as to provide the necessary stars and stripes. Fiske says that this was the first star-and-stripe American flag ever hoisted. Be that as it may, it certainly was the first American banner to appear in triumph over the English emblem.

In spite of this defeat, St. Leger still pressed the siege vigorously, so much so that Colonel Willet volunteered to carry the news of their condition to Schuyler. After some very thrilling adventures, Willet managed to escape through the cordon of the enemy. Schuyler immediately called for an officer to volunteer to lead a force to the relief of Fort Stanwix. Arnold stepped forward, was given twelve hundred men, and started forthwith for the post.

This was comparatively a small force with which to cope with St. Leger. But Arnold was a host in himself. He was not only exceedingly brave in battle, but also very strong in strategical powers. Cunningly he caused reports to be spread greatly exaggerating the number of his force. As he drew near, these reports, brought in to St. Leger by Tories more energetic than wise, actually caused a panic among the troops of that disgusted leader. On August 10th, the Indians filled up on liquor, deserted, then raided the British camp, and finally the English were forced to raise the siege and beat a retreat. In this procedure they left behind most of their tents, provisions and artillery.

During his retreat St. Leger's army disintegrated, and the defenders at Fort Stanwix had nothing to fear from them. The post had been saved. The Mohawk Valley, from which the British had hoped to gain large supplies, remained, moreover, in the hands of the Americans.

The heroic Herkimer died at his own home a few days after the bloody battle, chiefly from the effects of unskillful surgery—a common occurrence in those times, but one of rare happening to-day. Conscious of his approaching end, he

assembled his family, and calmly smoked his pipe and read his Bible at the thirty-eighth Psalm until he expired. May the memory of the stout-hearted maligned old man be held ever in grateful remembrance by the sons of America, for whom he fought while under the terrible cloud of suspicion of being a Tory, and for whom he died most willingly!

III. BENNINGTON

It will be remembered that we left Burgoyne, with his main army, back at Skenesborough where he rested after his tiresome, obstructed march through the wilderness after the battle of Hubbardton.

While here, and during the siege of St. Leger's detachment of Stanwix, Burgoyne's need of provisions, forage and horses became extremely acute. One day he learned from Tory sources that there was a very large depot of supplies at Bennington, in Vermont.

On August 13th, the British leader despatched a force of five hundred men, most of whom were dismounted Hessian dragoons, to capture the supplies. Colonel Baum was the officer in command of the expedition, and Major Skene, a Royalist of the neighborhood, also went along. A hundred Indians followed Baum's force. In addition to the units named, there also accompanied the party a skeleton organization for a regiment of Royalists, which it was hoped might be raised among the people along the way.

As soon as the news of Burgoyne's new movement reached the American district headquarters, the New Hampshire militia rallied to oppose him under the command of that famous veteran of the old French and Indian War—John Stark. He it was—this same John Stark—who had had charge of those who valiantly held the rail fence, stuffed with hay, at Bunker Hill. He had fought in practically all of the battles around Boston and

New York, and had led the advance of Sullivan's column on the famous Christmas night at Trenton.

Stark had the men of his command assemble at Bennington, where, as stated, the supply depot that had attracted the eye of Burgoyne was located.

They were a rough and motley array of soldiers. It would have been impossible to find a single complete uniform among their number; in fact, very few had any military vestments at all. Most of them came either in hunting frocks or homespun working clothes. Very little martial training had they been through. But every man of them, from the youngest to the oldest, carried a bright, well-kept rifle over whose behavior he held almost absolute control. When these men shot wild turkeys it was considered a disgrace to hit a gobbler anywhere, at a hundred yards, except in the head. So woe to the foeman who should ever show so much of his body as his left ear!

Baum was not joined by any Loyalists during his march toward Bennington, as he had fondly hoped. To add to his ill-feeling, when he reached the vicinity of the town his scouts reported that there was quite a formidable force of militia on guard. Satisfying himself that this condition was not exaggerated Baum paused near Bennington on the 15th of August and cautiously entrenched on a little hillock near a creek. He then sent a courier back to Burgoyne for reinforcements. In compliance, Burgoyne despatched Lieutenant-Colonel Breymann with five hundred Germans and two field-pieces.

Meanwhile Colonel Stark, who had become cognizant of the near presence of the enemy, was busy preparing a warm welcome for him. He had sent word to General Lincoln, at Manchester in the Green Mountains, asking him to lend him the services of Colonel Seth Warner, with the gallant regiment which had checked the advance of Fraser at Hubbardton. Lincoln sent the regiment without delay, and after marching all night in a drenching rain, the men reached Bennington in the

morning, wet to the skin, but cheerful and eager for the coming fray.

Telling these reinforcements to follow him as soon as they had dried and rested up, Stark now departed with his men from the little town of a hundred buildings, in quest of the enemy, bent upon forcing matters. He found Baum intrenched on the rising ground near Walloomsac Creek, and went into camp himself, planning to storm the foe position on the morrow.

During the night a company of Berkshire militia joined Stark. With them was the excellent Mr. Allen, the warlike parson of Pittsfield. At once the reverend gentleman went up to Stark, and said: "Colonel, our Berkshire people have been often called out to no purpose, and if you don't let them fight now they will never turn out again."

"Well," returned Stark, "would you have us turn out now, while it is pitch dark and raining buckets?"

"No, not just this minute," was the reply.

"Then," went on the doughty veteran of the Seven Years' War, "as soon as the Lord shall once more send us sunshine, if I don't give you fighting enough I'll never ask you to come out again!"

An next morning the sun arose bright and clear. Soon the hot rays sent up a steam from the sodden fields. It was a true dog-day of summer—the air close, sultry and stifling.

The forenoon was occupied in preparing the attack, while Baum, behind his intrenchments, worked diligently to strengthen his position.

By this time the New Englanders outnumbered the Germans two to one. This fact Baum did not know, else his nervousness would have been greatly increased.

It is true that the Colonials had neither bayonets or cannon, and that Baum's soldiers were all Regulars, picked from the bravest of the troops which Ferdinand of Brunswick had led

to victory at Crevelt and Minden. But the German commander knew full well that here in this strange country, facing men who were familiar with every inch of the ground and could send a penny spinning with rifle ball as far as they could see it, military prowess was a second-rate value.

Moreover, could Baum have seen—toward the close of that hot morning—these New England farmers leisurely and stealthily making their way around in his rear, he would have been thrown into an alarm bordering close to a panic. They did not march in military formation, but in squads of half a dozen at a time. It is said by some historians that Baum really did spy some of them, but mistook them for some those blessed blue-frocked Tories whom he had been told to look out for and welcome, and whom he now thought were getting back of his forces for protection in the impending battle.

If the latter version be correct, early in the afternoon poor Baum and his soldiers were cruelly undeceived. For upwards of five hundred of these innocent-looking creatures in homespun suddenly opened up on him from the rear and on both flanks a deadly fire. It seemed that flame leapt from every tree trunk, stump, boulder, hillock and log on these sides. No wonder that Baum's Hessians, unused to such guerilla warfare, staggered. No wonder that they were confused and dismayed when, a moment later, Stark himself led five hundred more across the shallow stream and assailed him in front like a horde of angry hornets.

Even the Indians, who might have been expected to understand and face such methods, were not proof against the assault. They broke and fled precipitately, screeching, while there was still a chance for escape.

Be it said to the credit of the Hessians, they partly recovered their courage after the first moment's panic. They stood their ground, fighting desperately. But it was a hopeless prospect of victory for them. Attacked from every quarter were soon thrown into such dire disorder that the fight lasted less than

two hours, at the end of which time Baum had been mortally wounded and every one of his remaining men captured.

Just as the Americans were on the point of scattering in order to plunder the German camp, the relieving force of Breymann, from Burgoyne, came upon the scene. This would have rendered a tight situation for Stark, undoubtedly, and the fortune of the day might right then and there have been turned against his men had not the fickle goddess seen fit to also throw upon the rugged stage, at about the same instant, the force of Warner, whose one hundred and fifty men were as fresh as daisies after their rest at Bennington.

With this addition to his troops, Stark made a furious charge upon Breymann. The Hessian commander slowly gave way, retreating from hill to hill, while parties of Americans kept working around to his rear in an effort to envelop him. All through the remaining hours of the afternoon the running fight was kept up.

By eight in the evening, by which time it had become too dark for either side to see to aim their guns, this second German force was either dispersed or captured. Breymann himself, with a mere corporal's guard of sixty or seventy men, managed to escape under cover of the darkness, and eventually reached the British main camp in safety but in wretched physical condition.

All in all, of the whole German forces of one thousand men, more than two hundred had been killed and wounded, and more than seven hundred had been taken prisoner. Among the spoils of victory were one thousand stand of arms, one thousand dragoon swords, and four field-pieces. Of the New Englanders fourteen were killed and forty-two wounded.

The news of this brilliant victory spread joy and hope throughout the Colonies. But to Burgoyne it brought a different message, of course. There at Fort Edward, surrounded by a country-side of strongest animosity, daily growing more so, he was fast losing heart. Instead of securing a fresh supply of horses, wagons and food by his stroke at Bennington, he had lost

one-seventh part of his available army, and the creamy part at that.

He was now not only still in need of supplies, but also in desperate need of men.

IV. FREEMAN'S FARM

Burgoyne was an unusually humane man for a soldier of his time. At the outset of his campaign he made every effort, in his well-intentioned way, of impressing the fact upon his redskin allies that they were to indulge in no atrocities, among which he specifically mentioned the killing of women and children and the taking of scalps from wounded and dying soldiers. To these injunctions, which must have inspired their savage natures with pitying contempt, the wily chiefs had laconically replied that they had "sharpened their tomahawks upon their affections," and were ready to do whatever their "great white father" (King George) might wish.

When the British Parliament heard of Burgoyne's speech to the Indians, filled as it was full of sentimental phrases in which the savage mind is supposed to delight, it was bitterly ridiculed by Burke, who took a sounder view of the natural instincts of the red man.

"Suppose," said Burke, "that there was a riot on Tower Hill. What would the keeper of His Majesty's lions do? Would he not fling open the dens of the wild beasts, and then address them thus: 'My gentle lions, my humane bears, my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth! But I exhort you, as you are Christians and members of civilized society, to take care not to hurt any man, woman or child!'"

The House of Commons was convulsed over this grotesque picture. To Lord North it appeared irresistibly funny, and he sat choking with mirth while the tears rolled down his great fat cheeks.

However, it soon turned out to be no laughing matter. The cruelties practiced by the Indians upon Patriots and Loyalists alike were not long in maddening the yeomanry and arraying them against the invaders whatever political views they formerly held. This explains why Burgoyne was unable to add reinforcements of Loyalists to his ranks during his march to and occupation of Fort Edward.

One sad incident of Indian outrage in particular did more at this time to stir up the country than any other. This has been treasured in the memory of the people of America to this day, and has been circulated in both song and story.

Jennie McCrea, the accounts tell us, was the beautiful daughter of a Scotch clergyman of Paulus Hook. She had been at Fort Edward visiting her friend, Mrs. McNeil, who was a Loyalist and a cousin of General Fraser.

On the morning of July 27th, a marauding party of Indians burst into the house and carried away the two ladies. American soldiers at once took up the pursuit, came up, and exchanged shots with the fleeing redskins. In this flight Mrs. McNeil was rescued, but the younger girl was carried off by some of the savages.

The next day an Indian of gigantic stature—a famous sachem known as the "Wyandot Panther"—came into the camp with a scalp. By its long silky black tresses, Mrs. McNeil instantly recognized the bloody trophy as that belonging to the unhappy Jennie. A search was made. This disclosed the body of the poor girl lying beside a spring in the deep forest. She had been pierced by several bullets.

The Panther plausibly declared that she had been accidentally shot in the fight with the soldiers, had been carried as far as the spring by his red brothers, but there had succumbed to her wounds.

Few of the whites believed this story, and popular imagination soon framed its own version of the affair with a

romantic completeness that soon caused the real facts to grow obscure.

But in whatever way Jennie McCrea may have come to her death there can be no doubt as to the mischief which it swiftly wrought the invading army. Its effect of turning the Loyalist sentiment to the advantage of the Colonists has already been stated. In addition, it led to the desertion of the Indian allies themselves.

Burgoyne was a man of quick and tender sympathies, and the fate of this sweet young lady shocked him wholly as much as it did the American people. At first he was for hanging the Panther, but the guilt of the savage was not clearly established, and, moreover, some of the British officers argued that the execution of so famous and popular a sachem would enrage all the Indians and would be sure to result in a terrible massacre of the whites. So the Panther's life was spared, but Burgoyne made it a rule that henceforth no party of Indians should be allowed to go on expeditions except under the lead of some British officer, who could watch and restrain them.

When this edict was made known to the savages, they looked extremely sullen, and after a few days, with hoarse yells and hoots, the whole five hundred with Burgoyne scampered off to the Adirondack wilderness.

From a military viewpoint the loss to the British was small, save insofar as it deprived them of valuable scouts and guides. And this feature, in a strange, rugged country such as that in which Burgoyne now found himself, was indeed one not to be lightly ignored.

The defeats of Baum and St. Leger left the British in a very crippled condition. Nothing whatever had been heard from the expected movement of Sir William Howe up the river. The reader knows, although Burgoyne did not, that the unwise Howe had gone on a wild-goose chase toward Philadelphia.

Later on Sir Henry Clinton had moved up the Hudson from New York, out generaling "Old Put" in a rather clever campaign, and capturing Forts Washington and Lee. Finding that his brilliant exploit had not affected the final issue in the slightest degree, Clinton had retired to New York again.

Prudence would have dictated that a Burgoyne should have retreated back into Canada, if it were yet possible. But, being a very chivalrous gentleman, Burgoyne could not think of such a procedure, as this would permit the large American army in front of him to crush Howe who, as he supposed was then coming up the river. Probably another factor that prompted him to refrain from a withdrawal from New England was that his main army up to this time had done no serious fighting. He thought that he should at least engage in one good stiff combat with the Americans before going back to Canada, if for no other purpose than to test the enemy strength and show his countrymen in England that he was still very much alive.

Therefore, against the advice of some of his best officers, Burgoyne decided to force the enemy to a battle. On the 13th of September he threw a bridge of boats across the Hudson, and crossed his whole army to the west bank.

In the meantime the American army had taken a strong position on Bemis Heights, where Kosciusko had skillfully fortified their camp with batteries and redoubts.

Burgoyne felt that the American position might be turned and carried by an attack upon its left flank. On the morning of the 19th, he advanced through the woods with the center of his army toward the point where the Quaker road passes Bemis Heights. The right wing, under Fraser, proceeded in a more roundabout manner toward the same station, the plan being that they should join forces and strike the rear of the American camp, while Riedesel and Phillips, with the left wing and artillery, should march down the road and assail the enemy in front. Three heavy guns were to announce to the left wing the junction of Burgoyne and Fraser, and provide the signal for the assault.

Lurking among the upper branches of tall trees that grew on the steep hillsides were American scouts. Presently these lookouts caught sight of the bright scarlet uniforms of the enemy, showing strongly through the interstices of leaves, while the rays of the early morning sun caused their bayonets to gleam in tell-tale scintillance. By noon the eagle-eyed American scouts had fully interpreted Burgoyne's plans. Arnold, who commanded the left wing of the Colonial army, was then made acquainted with it. He at once conferred with Gates. The latter was at first unwilling to risk any of the forces descending from their strong position, but Arnold urged to such good advantage that finally he got permission to take Morgan's riflemen and Dearborn's infantry, and go forth to attack the enemy.

About three o'clock the impetuous Arnold fell upon the advancing British center, under Burgoyne himself, at Freeman's Farm. The conflict immediately became sanguinary and desperate. Arnold's force was somewhat greater at the point of encounter, and the enemy was driven slowly back, fighting stoutly and contesting every foot of the way.

General Fraser, on the right, made all haste to come to the succor of the center. But Arnold flushed with success, daringly thrust his men forward and interposed them between the two British sections. The consequence was that Fraser had a desperate time to maintain his division intact.

By this time the battle had become general. Arnold was attacking fiercely, driving the British center straight back. Charge and countercharge followed each other, heels upon heels. Guns and positions were taken, then retaken, and taken again. Finally the fight became a terrible hand- to-hand struggle in the woods, with Arnold seeming to be everywhere at the same moment, where-ever the worst conflict was taking place.

Nor were the British officers less brave, if not quite so omnipresent and active. Burgoyne and Fraser fought valiantly, side by side with their privates. Yet Arnold's forces seemed absolutely irresistible. Gradually the resistance of the British

slackened, but just as the Americans seemed about to win the day, Riedesel hurried up from the river road with reinforcements and vigorously attacked the winning side.

Arnold had already sent to Gates for reinforcements for himself, anticipating some such play as this on the part of the British, but this request was refused. Afterward Arnold maintained that this was a gross blunder on the part of his superior officer, and that with two thousand more men he could have right then and there crushed the British center and defeated their army.

In this opinion he was probably right, for the record of Gates, who had replaced the brave and energetic Schuyler through the order of Congress, has shown him to have been a weak and most inefficient leader; and Arnold, with his now smaller force, managed by the most desperate sort of fighting to have kept the enemy's hands full for two long hours more, until at last darkness put an end to the struggle. Completely exhausted, Arnold withdrew.

The losses on each side are variously estimated at from six hundred to one thousand, or from one-fifth to one-fourth of the forces engaged, which indicates unusually severe fighting. Arnold's contingent numbered about three thousand men. With these he had faced, in the course of the afternoon, fully four thousand British.

In his dispatches to Congress, Gates slyly took to himself all the credit of this affair, and did not even mention Arnold's name. The army, however, rang loud with praise of the fighting General until Gates, who never could bear to hear any one but himself well-spoken of, grew angry and revengeful. As if to fan up the smouldering embers of fire between them, Arnold freely blamed Gates for not sending him support. Hot words passed, Arnold's warm friendship for Schuyler gave further offence to Gates, and the latter told Arnold that as soon as Lincoln should arrive he would have no further use for him, and he might go back to Washington's camp as soon as he liked. White with rage,

Arnold said he would go, and demanded a pass, which Gates promptly gave him. But before he could leave all the general officers of the American armies except Lincoln united in signing a letter begging him to remain. "You have been sent here by Washington to aid the northern army at a critical time," they wrote, "and clearly it would be wrong to leave it now, right on the eve of a decisive battle."

So the proud, fiery soldier, smarting as he was under an accumulation of injuries, made up his mind to swallow the affront. He remained in his quarters, awaiting the inevitable battle with Burgoyne's forces, uncertain just how much power of command he was to enjoy. And Gates took no more notice of him than if he had been a dog.

News came on the 21st that a detachment of Lincoln's troops had laid siege to Fort Ticonderoga, and while holding the garrison in check, had captured several ships and taken three hundred prisoners. Word was received a day or two later that the men had embarked on Lake George in the captured ships and were succeeding in cutting off from Burgoyne the last sources of his supply. To make matters worse for the British, Lincoln's main force soon appeared in front, swelling the numbers of the American army to more than sixteen thousand.

And now, with barely three weeks' food for his army, even on the shortest rations, Burgoyne's case had become as desperate as that of the Athenians at Syracuse before their last dreadful battle in the harbor. So, after eighteen weary days, no word yet coming from Clinton, the gallant British commander determined to make a prodigious effort to break through the lines of an army now outnumbering him more than three to one.

On the morning of October 7th, Burgoyne advanced with a little less than two thousand men to turn the American left wing. The rest of his force he left in camp. He figured that with a comparatively small detachment of this kind, made up of the best soldiers and officers, the latter including Fraser, Riedesel, Phillips, Balcarras and Ackland, he might maneuver to far better

advantage than with a stronger force. Should he find the American position on the left too strong for penetration, it would be much easier to retreat.

Undoubtedly, too, the knowledge that Gates was a sluggard and that the spitfire Arnold had been reported to him as holding no tangible command, encouraged the hapless Burgoyne into thinking his situation not quite so bad as it looked at first.

But he was quickly made aware of his mistake in the latter event, if he ever entertained such thoughts.

As Burgoyne came on, his movement was detected. Instead of attacking himself, he was suddenly set upon by the redoubtable Morgan and his famous riflemen. At the same time the New England Regulars, with three thousand New York militia, assailed him in front.

Beset in this fashion, the heroism of that little party of English soldiers was such as to make any country proud. In fact, their defense bordered upon the marvelous, and a new dignity came to their more numerous antagonists in fighting them—a respect that led them to chivalrously discard all thoughts of inflicting unnecessary suffering upon their brave foe or taking any mean advantage of them, even if it were war.

General Fraser, on a big gray horse, dashed hither and thither. By word and personal action he animated his red-coated men to a superhuman effort, contesting every inch of the ground, as they were forced to slowly fall back, with a rare courage and remarkable skill.

Ackland, fighting hard at the head of his fine regiment of grenadiers, was wounded. Pushing his men with vigor, the Americans took him prisoner, whereupon the British line broke in a hasty retreat, leaving their cannon behind them.

Not ready even yet to acknowledge himself beaten, Fraser sought to reform his shattered lines a little farther back on the west border of Freeman's Farm. In this effort he was ably

seconded by the other British commanders, who exposed themselves with the highest degree of personal gallantry.

At this moment, Arnold, who had been watching his opportunity from the heights, saw that a well-directed blow might not only ruin his retreating column, but also crumple the whole British army. Quick as thought, without consulting the cowardly Gates, who kept in the background as before, Arnold sprang upon his trusty horse, and galloped to the scene of action.

His arrival, although he had no definite command, was instantly greeted with wild enthusiasm by the Americans. Full of exultation and ardor at the coming of their beloved former leader, they rushed headlong at Fraser's half-formed line.

Meantime Morgan's riflemen were continuing to press upon the British right. In their effort to break them up, matters were not progressing as fast as Morgan hoped. The brave fellow felt almost as much of a pang at the fall of every British man as he did at the fall of his own, so great was his admiration for the dauntless behavior of the overwhelmed enemy troops. Thinking to adopt some better method to put an early end to the slaughter than the general fighting now going on promised, he was struck by the untold value of Fraser's services to the British.

He winced at the thought which now took hold of him. Then shutting his lips resolutely together, he called two of his best marksmen to his side. Pointing to the unfortunate English leader, he said simply and quietly, "That is General Fraser, lads. He is a brave man. I honor him. But every minute he lives a dozen of his own men and ours are stricken. When he falls this fight will be over. For the sake of humanity and our cause, go do your duty."

As quietly, the two riflemen took up positions that would give them good shots at the plucky British general. A few moments later, in answer to the sharp, whip-like crack of one of their guns, poor Fraser fell mortally wounded with a ball in his breast. He was carried back to the British camp in a wheelbarrow, suffering greatly, but making no complaint.

Even the loss of Burgoyne himself could have been no more disheartening to the British. And now with the terrible Arnold assaulting them so fiercely in front, they precipitately fell back toward their headquarters. Arnold then turned his attention to the contingent under Lord Balcarras, who had intrenched at the north of the Farm; but finding the resistance here a little too strong to suit him, he swept by with his men and charged upon the Canadian auxiliaries who occupied a position just north of Balcarras and covered the left wing of Breymann's forces at the extreme right of the British camp.

The Canadians soon fled. This left Breymann exposed, and Arnold at once assaulted him on the left. At the same moment Morgan came up, and charged him on the opposite side. There was no withstanding such an attack; Breymann was slain, and his force utterly broken up, crushing the British right wing and rendering their whole position untenable.

During this fight a wounded German soldier, lying on the ground, took careful aim at Arnold. The bullet went a little lower than intended, passing through the General's left leg, fracturing the bone a little above the knee, and killing his horse.

As Arnold fell, one of his men rushed up to bayonet the wounded German. But Arnold remonstrated. "Stop! For God's sake, don't hurt him; he's a fine fellow!" he cried. The scared German, to his great wonder, was saved.

For the good of Benedict Arnold, it seems too bad that this man's bullet did not reach a more vital spot. Then and there he could have died conscience free with a hero's untarnished honors, whereas—but why tell it? Every boy knows of his later dreadful, unpatriotic conduct, so strange, so unlike the brave and beloved man who led the American forces in the two battles of Freeman's Farm that we scarce can compel ourselves to believe they could ever have been one and the same person!

Darkness at length put an end to the battle; but the Americans slept on their arms, prepared to renew it the next day. The advantages they had gained were decisive. The British had

lost as many as four hundred men in killed, wounded and prisoners; much of their artillery and ammunition, and many tents, had been taken, and the possession of a strong portion of the intrenchments would enable them to renew the attack the next day with every promise of success.

A change of position was now absolutely indispensable for the safety of the British army. So while the Americans slept, Burgoyne, with silence and no little skill, drew back his worn troops to some high grounds in the rear.

The next morning the stricken General Fraser died. The journal of the Baroness Riedesel who, with her three little children, endured the hardships of the campaign, tells of the fortitude with which the gallant soldier bore his sufferings. That evening he was buried by his own request on a high hill in the center of the camp. Burgoyne and his principal officers stood by the grave, while the chaplain of the grenadiers, the Rev. Mr. Brudenell, calmly read the burial service.

Meantime the American army had followed the British to their new position. All that day was spent in skirmishes, during which General Lincoln was severely wounded. Not realizing the nature of the gathering about the grave of the late British general, the heavy guns of the American batteries continued to play upon the enemy camp. Balls struck so near as to actually scatter the earth over the chaplain, who continued to read the ritual in his mild and even way. Before the service was over, the Americans discovered the truth of the situation. Then, in honor of the dead, minute guns were fired until the burial was over, whereupon the harsh business of war was resumed again.

Lady Harriet Ackland, the wife of the captive commander of the grenadiers, who had devotedly followed the army from Quebec and nursed her husband through an attack of illness as well as a period of wounded incapacity, now applied to General Burgoyne for a pass to the American lines. It seems she could bear to be away from her helpmate no longer, fearing that his wound should require her individual attention.

In the dark, rainy night, accompanied by the Rev. Brudenell, she was rowed down the river to the American camp. Gates, who, whatever his faults in other respects, was always very courteous to the fair sex, received her and her companion very graciously, and at once had her conducted into the presence of her wounded husband.

V. SURRENDER OF BURGOYNE

That same night Burgoyne decided to continue his retreat. All day the Americans had harassed his army terribly, and he felt that should the light of another morning's sun find him still in his present poor position, his forces would have to surrender.

So, under cloak of the friendly darkness, Burgoyne very carefully worked his wrecked army away from the heights where they had paid their last respects to one of their ablest officers, and fell back upon Saratoga.

General Gates was right upon their heels, and numerous skirmishes occurred during this retirement. In one of these Burgoyne's soldiers burned General Schuyler's princely country-house, with its splendid barns and granaries.

When the British army reached the place where they had crossed the Hudson some weeks previously, they found, to their chagrin, a force of some three thousand Americans occupying the hills on the other side, so that it was now utterly impossible to cross. A council of war was hastily called. This resulted in a decision to abandon all the artillery and baggage, and push through the woods at night to a point near Fort Edward where the great river was known to be shallow enough for fording.

Hardly, however, had this plan been formulated, when word was brought that the Americans were guarding all the fords, and had also planted detachments in a strong position to the northward between Fort Edward and Fort George.

Burgoyne, almost distracted, saw the whole truth of the situation now. His crippled forces, destitute of water, provisions, weapons, ammunition, and men, were surrounded. There was no visible means of escape.



THE SURRENDER OF BURGOYNE.

Even as the British commander realized his precarious position, the Americans opened a brisk cannonading upon his army from the east and south. And the next moment Morgan's riflemen began a raking fire from the rear.

So inefficient was his shelter in his present position that Burgoyne immediately sent some of the women and wounded men to a large house in the vicinity. Here they took refuge in a cellar, and here the Baroness Riedesel tells us how she passed six dismal nights and days, crouching in a corner near the doorway, with her three little children clinging to her, while every now and then, with a hideous crashing, a heavy cannon-ball from the American guns came tearing through the room overhead.

As the hours drew on, she says, the house became a general hospital, filled with crippled and dying men. Scarcely

any food could be had. The wounded cried piteously for water, not a drop of which was available. It was only a few steps to the river, but every man who ventured out with a bucket fell in his tracks—cut down by the Virginia rifles that never missed their aim. Little did the American gunners know of the true conditions in that shot-torn house, which they supposed occupied by armed soldiers, else their fire would surely have been suspended.

As it was, at last the brave wife of a British soldier volunteered to go for water. She returned presently with the bucket filled. Again she went. And again. By then she and her companions all knew the reason for her safety: the Americans would not shoot at a woman!

Utterly worn out, and despairing at last of receiving expected reinforcements from Sir Henry Clinton who had been slowly making his way up the Hudson toward Albany, Burgoyne, on the seventh day, sent a flag of truce to General Gates, inquiring what terms of surrender would be accepted. Gates at first demanded an unconditional surrender, but upon Burgoyne's indignant refusal he consented to make terms.

After three days' discussion the details of surrender were agreed upon. Just as Burgoyne was about to sign the articles a Tory made his way into camp with hearsay news that part of Clinton's delayed army was close to Albany. This caused the British leader to hesitate. With his brother officers an interesting discussion then took place. They wondered whether they had so far pledged their faith to the surrender that they could not in honor withdraw. It was finally the consensus of opinion that their faith had been irrevocably pledged.

So, on the 17th of October, the terms were duly signed, exchanged, and put into execution. These conditions specified that the British army should march out of camp with the honors of war, stack their arms at an appointed place, march through Massachusetts to Boston, and from this port those who wished might sail for Europe; but none were to serve again in America during the war. It was further agreed that all the officers might

retain their small arms, and that no soldier's private luggage should be searched or molested.

In compliance with Burgoyne's earnest request, General Gates consented that these proceedings should be styled a "convention" rather than a surrender, in imitation of the famous Convention of Kloster-Seven, by which the Duke of Cumberland, twenty years before, had sought to save his feelings while losing his army which had been beleaguered by the French in Hanover. Indeed, the soothing phrase has been well remembered by English historians who to this day continue to refer to Burgoyne's surrender as the "Convention of Saratoga."

Praiseworthy courtesy was shown by both Gates and his soldiers in carrying out the provisions of the so-called convention. As the British marched off to a meadow by the river bank and laid down their arms, the Americans remained within their own lines, reluctant to add to the humiliation of a gallant enemy by standing by and looking on. "As the disarmed soldiers then passed by the American lines," declares Lieutenant Anbury, one of the captured British officers, in an account some years later, "I did not observe the least disrespect; not even a taunting look. Their faces were mute with pity for us."

Burgoyne stepped up, and handed his sword to General Gates. The soldiers looting on could not but admire the tall, imposing figure of the scarlet-dressed British leader as he stood there for a moment in sharp contrast to the small, insignificant-looking American leader whom he faced. Burgoyne bowed sadly, but with all of his native well-known grace. "The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner," he said simply.

Gates instantly returned the sword, replying: "I shall always be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault of your excellency."

With such generosity and delicacy of feeling on the parts of generals and soldiers, it is painful to acknowledge the rudeness and bad faith with which Congress proceeded to treat

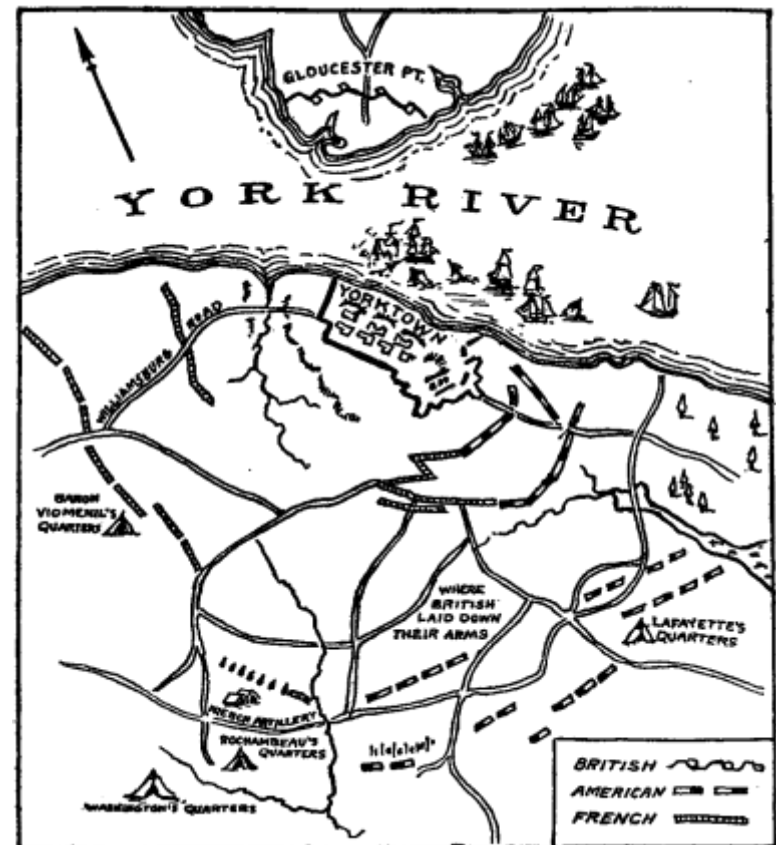
the surrendered army. In some manner Congress became imbued with the idea that Sir William Howe intended to bring the paroled troops to New York for immediate service. As a retaliation the British captured were not allowed to go aboard Lord Howe's transports when they arrived at Boston for them. The officers were treated as ordinary prisoners of war, and from time to time were exchanged. Burgoyne was allowed to go to England in the spring. While still a prisoner on parole, he took his seat in Parliament, and there became conspicuous among the defenders of the American cause.

As for his former troops, these were detained in the neighborhood of Boston until the autumn of 1778, when they were all transferred to the vicinity of Charlottesville, Virginia. Here they built a rude village on the brow of a pretty ridge of hills, where they planted gardens and proceeded to make themselves as much at home as possible. Two years afterward, when Virginia became the seat of war, some of them removed to Winchester, in the Shenandoah Valley; to Frederick, in Maryland, and to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania. Those who wished were allowed to return to Europe, and no attention was paid to those who chose to escape. But the greater number, consisting of Germans, seemed to prefer to stay in this country and become American citizens.

Such was the peculiar sequel of a campaign full of picturesque incident and magnitude of result. Saratoga must ever remain one of the most memorable battle words in the history of man-kind. Its varied scenes, framed in landscapes of grand and stirring beauty, had brought together on the one canvas types of rugged manhood covering the gamut of world history, with a touch of prophecy added. In the feathered, painted Mohawk sachem it is easy to see Ancient Barbarism fully outlined. In the helmeted Brunswick dragoon stands Militancy, bequeathed from the Middle Ages. In the blue-frocked yeoman of New England we discern the shadow of the great Spirit of Democracy that must throttle all and control the future of the whole world!

CHAPTER III

YORKTOWN



From State to State with rapid stride,
His troops had marched before, sir,
Till quite elate with martial pride,
He thought all dangers o'er, sir.
—Unknown.

I. CORNWALLIS CHASES BUT DOES NOT CATCH.

As a member of the British Parliament just prior to the war, Lord Charles Cornwallis had personally opposed the measure of opening up hostilities with America. But when, a little later, he was asked to command a regiment sent to the new country, he made no objection and forthwith set off across the seas.

Whatever his reason for standing by the Colonists when the question of war was brought up, one thing seems certain, to judge from the man's later unenviable reputation,—he could not have been actuated by any kindly motives for the Provincials. No sooner did he take up arms in America than he began to institute and support measures whereby the Tories were enabled to practice many despicable and cruel atrocities upon their patriotic neighbors without risk of punishment to themselves. So Cornwallis, though a capable military man, soon came to be much disliked by the Americans. Even his own men grew to have little regard for him, owing to the severe and inexorable punishments he meted out to them for slight transgressions.

In the invasion of the South by Cornwallis, as in the invasion of the North by Burgoyne, the first serious blow which the enemy felt was delivered by the militia. After his great victory over Gates, Cornwallis remained nearly a month at Camden resting his troops.

By the middle of September, 1780, he had started on his march to North Carolina. He expected to realize here an easy conquest. But his reception in that State was anything but hospitable. Bands of yeomen lurked about every woodland road, cut off his foraging parties, slew his couriers, and captured his dispatches. To use his own words, Lord Cornwallis began to think he had "walked into a hornet's nest."

On October 7th, at King's Mountain, on a high ridge midway between the two Carolinas, the British were assailed

and badly defeated. Cornwallis then fell back upon Winnesborough, to await reinforcements.

At this time the army of the South, which it was now sought to restore, needed a new commander-in-chief more than anything else. In every campaign since the beginning of the war, Greene had been Washington's right arm, as it were. For strength, indefatigable industry, and breadth of intelligence, as well as for unselfish devotion to the public service, he was scarcely inferior to Washington himself.

Therefore, when Congress, on October 5th, called upon Washington to name a successor to Gates, he immediately appointed Greene, who arrived at Charlotte, South Carolina, and took command on December 2nd.

The Southern army, though weak in numbers, was splendidly well officered. Among the leaders was William Washington, of Virginia, a distant cousin of the commander-in-chief and a commissioned lieutenant-colonel.

Although he had insufficient men to cope with Cornwallis as a unit, Greene conceived the fact that he might divide his force and cause the British chief a lot of trouble. This was done. The larger division—a little over one thousand strong—he led in person to Cheraw Hill, on the Pedee River, where he cooperated with Marion and from which base they kept up a series of rapid movements which not only annoyed Cornwallis greatly, but also threatened his communications with the coast. The other division—about nine hundred men—went westward under Morgan, Lieutenant-Colonel Washington accompanying. They were to threaten the important British inland posts in conjunction with the mountain militia of the State.

Thus worried and menaced upon both his flanks, Cornwallis hardly knew which way to turn. In his dilemma he finally decided to divide his own forces. With his main body of about two thousand he advanced into North Carolina, hoping to draw Greene after him. At the same time he sent Tarleton, with

the rest of his army of slightly more than a thousand men, to look up Morgan and invite a conflict.

In thus sending Tarleton after a man of Morgan's powerful caliber, Cornwallis blundered badly. Morgan cunningly retreated as his enemy approached him, coaxing him on. Finally the veteran American woodsman-soldier took up a position on a grazing-grounds known as the Cowpens, a few miles from King's Mountain. On the morning of January 17th the two divisions clashed. By daring and skilful maneuvering Colonel Washington and Pickens encompassed both flanks of the British, resulting in most of Tarleton's command being captured and the remainder taking to flight.

Greene now conceived the brilliant scheme of drawing Cornwallis far enough northward to place him under disadvantageous circumstances and then give him final battle. In carrying this out, he put his main army under General Huger with orders to push northward, while he himself, taking only a sergeant's guard of dragoons, with all possible speed rode a hundred and fifty miles across the country and put himself at the head of Morgan's force, which Cornwallis was now pursuing.

For the next ten days a most exciting game of strategy was kept up between the two foe commanders. Greene adroitly worked northward, ever keeping close to Cornwallis, but never allowing the British leader to really involve him in battle. In his anxiety to catch up with his prize, Cornwallis destroyed most of his heavy baggage in an effort to accelerate his own ponderous movements. But still he did not seem to be able to overtake the agile Americans ahead, who gradually converged toward the point where they planned to join their main body.

Greene's plan worked out perfectly. On the 9th of February he reached the point desired—Guilford Court-House—and there to his joy found the main army awaiting his coming. But Greene was sure that his combined force was still too weak to risk the final battle with the British. Therefore, when Cornwallis came up, the Americans retreated.

Once more the astute American leader led poor Cornwallis a will-o'-the-wisp chase, marching and counter-marching, and foiling every attempt to bring him at bay. At length, on March 14th, he had been reinforced to the extent of possessing an army of some four thousand men. He at once returned to Guilford Court-House, and the next day, on the 15th, the well-known battle of that name took place. Cornwallis was afterward sorry that he had been so desirous of getting into this conflict, for matters went against him, and, after fighting desperately for three days, he was forced to abandon his wounded and make all haste for Wilmington, where he hoped for aid from the British fleet.

When the British commander arrived at Wilmington he debated for a while whether to send his troops by boat back to Charleston and begin his work all over again, or march into Virginia, where a fresh opportunity seemed to present itself. As the first-named step would be a confession of defeat, he decided upon the latter.

Sir Henry Clinton had just sent General Phillips down into Virginia with a force which, if combined with that of Cornwallis, would amount to more than five thousand men. With this army, Cornwallis told himself, it might be possible to strike the Americans there a mighty blow. Afterward he could invade the Carolinas, this time from the north.

Influenced by such considerations, Lord Cornwallis started from Wilmington on April 25th. On May 10th, at Petersburg, Virginia, he effected a junction with the forces of Phillips and Arnold—Benedict Arnold only a brief while ago the beloved and honored of all Americans, now, as a traitor, the hated and despised of all the enemy.

At this time the youthful Lafayette, but twenty-three years of age, whom Washington had sent to watch the movements of Arnold, was stationed at Richmond. With him was a little army of three thousand men, two-thirds of which were raw militia.

Lafayette has never been considered a great general, for though a noble and interesting character, he was in no wise a man of original genius such as every military strategist needs must be; but he had much good sense and a strong capacity for learning. Kind of heart to a degree, he had all of the boy's wholesome enthusiasm and buoyancy of spirits.

At first Cornwallis, unwilling to risk his army without an overwhelming force, applied to Clinton to abandon New York and send all available British to Virginia and make the conquering of the State a sure thing. In this Clinton wisely refused, whereupon Cornwallis cast aside his fears and determined to begin his new operations by crushing Lafayette forthwith.

"The boy cannot escape me," said Cornwallis grimly.

But the young Frenchman, whose name will ever be dear to future generations of Americans, as it is to-day, was more formidable than the British Earl fancied. When Cornwallis advanced upon Richmond, Lafayette adopted the tactics of Greene, which had lately proved the undoing of the British chief, and skillfully retreated. Unable to even deal him a blow, Cornwallis finally gave up the chase, and retreated down the James River to Richmond.

But he did not remain here long, finding the people much more hostile than he had anticipated. Thinking it more prudent to get closer to his base of operations, and there obtain reinforcements before continuing his invasion, he crossed the Chickahominy a little above White Oak Swamp, and marched down the York peninsula as far as Williamsburg.

Cornwallis was closely followed by Lafayette, who had received reinforcements which brought his army to more than five thousand men. On July 6th two portions of the opposing armies engaged in a sharp but brief conflict at Green Spring, in which the Americans were repulsed with a loss of one hundred and forty-five men.

During the first week of August Cornwallis entered Yorktown, adding the garrison of Portsmouth to his forces so that they now numbered seven thousand. Lafayette then occupied Malvern Hill, near the junction of the James and Appomattox Rivers, and here awaited further developments.

Throughout this little game of chess, "the boy" had shown no mean skill, proving himself a worthy antagonist for the ablest British general, who now began to have greater respect for his abilities.

And yet a far greater commander than either the youthful Frenchman or the middle-aged Englishman was now to enter unexpectedly upon the scene. The various settings of the great disaster for the British were all prepared. Only a master hand was required to make them function.

II. SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS

The retreat of Cornwallis upon Yorktown was based entirely upon the assumption that he could still depend upon the British naval supremacy which all along had been complete and unchallenged. He realized as well as anybody could that the safety of his position depended wholly upon the ability of the war craft of his own country to control the Virginia waters. One thing he did not know, else he never would have allowed himself to occupy his present quarters. This was that there was a strong likelihood of the French taking a prominent part in altering the waterway war checkerboard.

As early as the 22nd of May, General George Washington had held a conference with Rochambeau, and it was decided that a combined attack should be made upon New York (then in the hands of the enemy) by the French and American armies. In order to make this attack successful, they saw that it would be necessary to have the assistance of a strong fleet, and they thought that at last they knew where to put their hands upon just what they wanted.

The naval war between France and England in the West Indies had now raged, with varying fortune, for a matter of two years, or ever since the French government had declared a state of hostilities to exist between herself and Great Britain. Bent on gaining greater victories, France had exerted herself in preparing additional ships, and early in the spring of the present year had sent out a magnificent fleet of twenty-eight ships-of-the-line and six frigates, which carried seventeen hundred guns and about twenty thousand men.

This fine flotilla was commanded by Count de Grasse, one of the ablest French admirals. It was intended to take from England the great island of Jamaica; but as the need for naval co-operation along the North American coast had been strongly urged upon the French ministry, de Grasse was ordered to communicate with Washington and Rochambeau, and to avail himself of the earliest opportunity of acting in concert with them.

News traveled at a snail's pace in those days compared to its lightning rapidity at the present time. It was in April, a full month after Greene's exploit of elbowing Cornwallis up into Virginia, before Washington received the report of it. At once Washington began to secretly consider the possibility of leaving a small force to guard the Hudson while he should take the bulk of his army southward in an effort to overwhelm Cornwallis. He spoke of this to Rochambeau, which resulted in a dispatch being sent to de Grasse, giving him the choice of sailing either for the Hudson or Chesapeake when he should arrive.

Thus matters stood until the middle of August — Washington undecided, but grasping all the elements of the problem, and ready to strike New York, close at hand, or to hurl his army four hundred miles into Virginia, if either demand should suddenly arise.

On August 14th a message came from de Grasse stating that he was just starting from the West Indies for Chesapeake Bay. Added to this good news came another bit of welcome

information—this time from Lafayette—disclosing the fact that Cornwallis had established himself at Yorktown, with the young French leader close by.

Upon receipt of this pleasing information, Washington's master mind, picturing Cornwallis surrounded on three sides by deep water, with a narrow neck of land in front, quickly finished the arrangement of his plans. He must have realized that the supreme moment of his military career had all but come—the moment when he would have a golden chance to prove that the trust of his countrymen in his ability to carry them through their troubles was not misplaced. It would only be a short time now—a very, very short time—when Cornwallis would rue the day he settled in Yorktown!

He had everything in readiness. Only the arrival of de Grasse himself was needed to complete matters. In July the army of Rochambeau had marched through Connecticut and joined him on the Hudson. He felt that he could afford to leave West Point with a comparatively small force, as the fortress was so strong it could be conquered only by a very long siege; and he had planned his march so as to blind Sir Henry Clinton entirely. The latter was anxiously looking out for an attack upon New York; therefore, it would be an easy matter for Washington to take his army more than half way through New Jersey without even arousing suspicion, as such a movement would be sure to be interpreted as preliminary to occupation of Staten Island, from whence to attack New York.

Every detail of his scheme was thus carefully worked out by Washington. The forthcoming events justified his keen foresight.

On the 19th of August, just five days after the receipt of the dispatch from de Grasse, Washington's army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry, and began its march. Lord Stirling was left with a small force at Saratoga, while General Heath remained at West Point with four thousand men.

With Washington went two thousand Continentals and four thousand French. It was the only time during the war that French and American troops marched together, except on the occasion of the disastrous attack upon Savannah.

None save Washington and Rochambeau knew whither they were going. The fact is that Washington guarded the secret so preciously that not until New Brunswick was passed did even the general staff officers know their destination was other than Staten Island.

When the army reached Philadelphia, and marched through the streets, there was an outburst of exulting hope. The plan could no longer be concealed. Congress, for the first time, was informed of it, and the hearts of the people, already elated at the news of Greene's career in the south, felt wonderfully lightened. It seemed that every window along the thoroughfare was filled with fair ladies. These threw fresh flowers upon the dusty soldiers as they passed, while the sidewalks were crowded with men, women and children, all of whom made the welkin ring with their glad shouts, anticipating the great deliverance which seemed so close at hand.

The column of soldiers, in the loose order adapted to its swift march, was close to two miles long. First came the war-worn Americans, clad in their plain homespun which spoke eloquently of the meager resources of a country so new that it had not yet attained the dignity of a government. Closely following were the gallant Frenchmen, their gorgeous trappings contrasting sharply with the rough, nondescript garments of the valiant men they had come so far to help—elaborate uniforms which it was no hardship to provide by a government which at that time took three-fourths of the earnings of its people in unrighteous taxes.

Parading in Philadelphia only long enough for the president of Congress and other officials to witness the condition of his troops, Washington hurried on southward. At Chester he received word that de Grasse had actually arrived in Chesapeake

Bay. At this intelligence the joy of his soldiers, as well as that of the people in the town, knew no bounds. Bands of music played in the streets, every house hoisted its new stars-and-stripes. And as Washington continued his journey all the roadside taverns shouted success to the bold American general and his army.

"Long live Washington!" was the toast of the day. "He has gone to catch Cornwallis in his mouse-trap!"

Swiftly the Americans covered the dusty way. At last, on September 5th, they reached the head of Chesapeake Bay. Embarking in ships, they reached the scene of intended action, near Yorktown, by the 18th.

Meanwhile, everything seemed to be developing perfectly for the success of American arms in the expected battle. On the 31st of August the big French squadron had arrived on the scene. It had been closely followed by Admiral Rodney's fleet of British boats, under the command of Sir Samuel Hood. Hood really out-sailed de Grasse, passing him on the ocean at night without knowing it, and seeing nothing suspicious when he looked in at Chesapeake Bay on August 25th, had sailed on to New York to get instructions from Admiral Graves, who commanded the British naval force in the North.

This was the first intimation Graves had had of the threatened danger. He was greatly alarmed. Assuming chief command, and favored by good winds, he had crowded all sail for the Chesapeake, where he had arrived on the 5th of September—the very day on which Washington's army was embarking at the head of the great bay.

Graves found the French fleet blocking the entrance to the bay. At once he attacked it. The fight was not carried to any great length, but while it lasted was very sharp and bloody. After two hours Admiral Graves withdrew. Three of his ships were badly damaged, and upwards of five hundred of his men had been killed and wounded. After maneuvering for four days, and accomplishing nothing but additional damage to himself, he

returned to New York, baffled and despondent, leaving de Grasse in full possession of the Virginia waters.

The toils were thus fast closing around Lord Cornwallis. He knew nothing as yet of Washington's proximity; but there was just a chance that he might discover his peril at any moment, cross the James River, and seek safety in a retreat upon North Carolina.



THE SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS—BY JOHN TRUMBULL.

But young Lafayette forestalled this solitary chance for the "mouse" to escape out of his prepared trap. With his own force increased by the troops of the Marquis de Saint-Simon—which had been sent ashore upon the arrival of the French fleet,—"the boy" came down the peninsula on the 7th of September, and took his stand across the neck of land at Williamsburg, effectually cutting off any possible retreat on the part of the British commander. In brief, the door of the mouse-trap had at last been neatly shut, with the "mouse" still inside!

However, there was still an avenue of escape for Lord Cornwallis. This was not an open one, but one which he might possibly have forced had he possessed the military acumen to

attempt it. His force was nearly equal to Lafayette's in numbers, and better in quality, for the latter's contained three thousand militia. The fact is, Cornwallis carefully reconnoitered the American lines, and once seriously thought of trying to break through. But he feared the great slaughter of his men that must inevitably ensue, and having no inkling of Washington's movements, he thought Graves would soon return with sufficient force to put to rout de Grasse's blockading squadron, and thus give him an open avenue for retirement.

So he decided to wait before striking a hazardous blow at Lafayette. It was losing his last chance.

On the 14th, Washington reached Lafayette's headquarters, and took command. On the 18th the northern army began to arrive in detachments. By the 20th it was all concentrated at Williamsburg, more than sixteen thousand strong.

At last every gear and pinion of Washington's elaborate and skillfully-designed little invention for the capture of Lord Cornwallis was in its case and properly assembled. The machine, planned with such rare foresight, and evolved with such consummate military genius, could not help working. It only required to be set going by the same master mind that conceived and executed it.

So, after the American lines had, day by day, been slowly drawn closer and closer about the doomed army in Yorktown, at length, on the 6th of October, the first parallel was opened by General Lincoln. This was followed, on the 11th, by the second parallel, which was opened by Steuben within three hundred yards of the enemy's works.

On the night of the 14th, Alexander Hamilton and the Baron de Viomenil carried two of the British redoubts by storm. The next night the British made a brave but fruitless sortie, returning without a prisoner and without wreaking any particular damage upon the foe.

Washington now had more than seventy heavy cannon playing upon the British defenses. These were well-supplied with ammunition, and manned by tireless, well-trained gunners. Their shots made havoc with the earthworks of the enemy. It was observed by noon of the 16th that these defences were crumbling to pieces very fast. Apparently within twenty-four hours the British would be practically uncovered, and exposed to the full fire of the Americans.

The cannon continued to play upon the remaining fortifications with relentless aim and savagery of destruction. All that afternoon, till darkness put a restraint upon their use, did their big balls go on biting into the planks, sandbags, mortar and earth of the protecting erections of the helpless enemy.

Next day—on the 17th, and the fourth anniversary of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga,—Cornwallis hoisted the white flag.

The terms of surrender were like those of Lincoln's signing at Charleston. The British soldiers became prisoners of war, subject to the ordinary rules of exchange. The only delicate question arising was that involving the American Loyalists with the British forces, but this point was neatly disposed of by allowing Lord Cornwallis to embark such soldiers as he chose on a ship which would carry them, with news of the catastrophe, to Sir Henry Clinton in New York.

On a little matter of etiquette Washington was more exacting. The practice of playing the enemy's tunes had always been cherished as an inalienable prerogative of British soldiery; and at the surrender of Charleston, in token of humiliation, General Lincoln's army had been expressly forbidden to play any but an American air.

Colonel Laurens, who now conducted the negotiations, directed that Lord Cornwallis's sword should be received by General Lincoln, and that the foe army, on marching out to lay down its arms, should play either a British or a German tune.

There was absolutely no way out of it. And on the 19th of October, Cornwallis's army of slightly more than eight thousand, including nearly a thousand seamen, marched out with colors furled and cased, while the band played a quaint old English melody, of which the significant title was "The World Turned Upside Down!"

The surrender of Cornwallis was the great military surprise of the Revolutionary War. Had any one predicted, eight months before, that Washington on the Hudson and Cornwallis on the Catawba, eight hundred miles apart, would so soon come together and terminate the war on the coast of Virginia, he would have been thought a reckless prophet indeed. For thoroughness of elaboration and promptness of execution, Washington's movement was as remarkable as the march of Napoleon in the autumn of 1805, when he swooped from the shore of the English Channel into Bavaria, and captured the Austrian army at Ulm, about which more is told subsequently in this volume.

Very early one morning during the last week of October, 1781, while it was still dark and the heavens were studded with brilliant stars, a stolid old German, slowly pacing the streets of Philadelphia on his night watch, began shouting:

"Basht dree o'glock, and Gornvallis ish dakendt!"

Light sleepers in the old town sprang out of bed, and threw up their windows for a second hearing, to make certain their ears had not deceived them or they had not been the victims of a wild dream.

But clear enough for understanding, again came the garbled cry of the old night-watchman, and all was excitement.

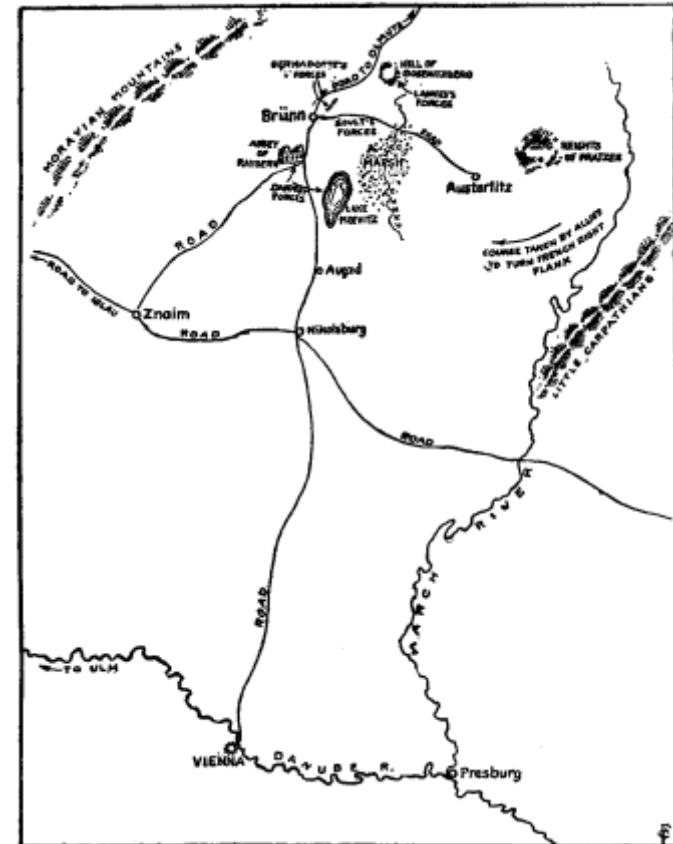
That forenoon Washington's couriers laid the dispatches before Congress, and after dinner a service of prayer and thanksgiving was held in the Lutheran Church. This over, the remainder of the day and evening was given up to wild rejoicings.

Everywhere, as fast as the wonderful news spread, a great agitation was set up. At New Haven and Cambridge the students sang triumphal hymns and frolicked gaily, and every village green in the country was ablaze with gigantic bonfires stimulated by many a tar-barrel.

Not only this, but the Duke de Lauzun set sail for France in a swift ship, and on the 27th of November all the houses in Paris were brilliantly illuminated, while the aisles of Notre Dame resounded with the Te Deum.

CHAPTER IV

AUSTERLITZ



With cunning rare he left the cake
For the ants to gorge their taste,
And as the foe rushed toward the prize,
His legions laid them waste!

—Unknown.

I. NAPOLEON PREPARES THE WAY

A wise man knows that eminence and glory in any profession come from thoroughly knowing the laws which belong to the profession, and acting in complete obedience to them. And so when one hears that some famous person has attained that prestige just because he was favored by being born with a rare genius, or has always been smiled upon by the Goddess of Good Fortune, he knows that science has been trampled under by the foot of ignorance.

Like all other great characters—when one knows the inside story of their lives—the greatness of Napoleon Bonaparte can easily be reduced to elements of reality and reason. Spirit, brilliance and glamor, did invest his movements, 'tis true, making his career one of intense, romantic action. Yet when the causes for these movements are known it is seen that they sprang, not from accident or witchery, but from good hard study and sound analysis.

At the opening of the French Revolution, when twenty-two and a lieutenant-colonel, Napoleon presents the picture of a young man of good family and distinguished position, thoroughly educated in general instruction, and particularly well trained, through years of tutelage, in militarism—the profession of his early choice. He had enjoyed unusual opportunities of military and political experience, but not through "pull," having forced them upon himself through his own strong personality. As a boy of ten, a King's scholar at the royal military school at Brienne, he had shown a strong aptitude for mathematics. It is said that one time, when given an exceptionally difficult problem to work out, he shut himself up for two days and nights, neither eating nor sleeping, till he was able to appear before his instructor with the correct solution. This is but one example of many that might be furnished which demonstrate not only the great perseverance of the boy over a task, but which goes to bear out my claim that his early lessons in analysis, for one thing, were gained solely at the expense of severe application.

He was also, as a boy, a very heavy reader. Of his reading he liked history best, but he left behind him numerous essays which show that he was a deep thinker as well as a vivid writer. At the age of fifteen, while at the royal school at Paris, he voluntarily prepared a memoir upon the luxury and expense of education at that place. In this he urged his fellow students to adopt hardy habits and a simple fare, enuring themselves to such toils and exposure as they might expect to encounter in war!

No man ever had greater advantages for forming his mind and character by the aid of old and regular institutions; and it was from them that he derived that discipline of the powers of thought and action, and that illumination of judgment whose operation under the stimulus of passion, and in the blaze of imperial glory, dazzled the whole world as the miracle of history.

With this little introduction of the man himself it will be well now to proceed to show him under action in the campaign of Austerlitz, in 1805, the outcome of which did much in adding to the brilliancy of his already scintillating name.

The assumption of the imperial crown by Napoleon was the signal for the first formation of the mighty coalition of the North. This, though baffled for ten years by his extraordinary genius and activity, succeeded at last in overwhelming him.

The diplomacy of Mr. Pitt had managed to establish a military alliance with Russia, Austria and Sweden, by which these powers would appear against France with three hundred and fifty thousand troops during the autumn of 1805. Of this immense host, fifty-five thousand were to operate, under Archduke Charles, on Italy against Massena; thirty thousand had assembled in the Tyrol, under Archduke John; eighty thousand, under Mack and Archduke Ferdinand, had crossed the Inn on the 9th of September, entered Bavaria and occupied the Black Forest and its debouches into the valley of the Rhine; and one hundred and sixteen thousand Russians were advancing in two armies through Poland, but could not arrive before months. Beside these

an Austrian reserve of thirty thousand was forming at Vienna, and there was an equal force of Russians and Swedes in Pomerania.

In September Napoleon, satisfied that the disasters of his fleet under Villeneuve, on the 22nd of July, and the subsequent mistakes of that admiral, had rendered his armament at Boulogne unavailing against England, issued orders for all the troops between Cherbourg and Hamburg to concentrate in Bavaria. The forces at his disposal then consisted of thirty-five thousand men in Italy under Massena, beside fifteen thousand near Naples; twenty-four thousand Bavarian and Wurtemberg troops, in alliance with France; and his grand army of one hundred and eighty thousand men on the shores of the channel in Holland, and in Hanover.

Occupying a central position, he determined again to put into operation the form of strategy which had so often led to the most brilliant results, and by taking advantage of Mack's advanced situation, fall suddenly upon his communications, and surround him before any relief could reach him.

Early in September this army of Napoleon's had moved forward, from the various mobilization points of its units, with the utmost celerity, and had arrived on the Rhine by the 23rd of that month. His marshals, Ney, Lannes and Soult, with the Guards and Murat's corps of cavalry, were directed upon Donaworth and Dettingen on the Danube beyond Ulm; Davoust and Marmont, upon Neuberg; Bernadotte and the Bavarian corps, upon Ingolstadt; while Augereau advanced from the defiles of the Black Forest into the rugged Tyrolese Alps.

At the first intelligence of the movement of this army, Mack concentrated his forces at Ulm, Memmingen and Stockach, expecting an attack in front. But, to his dismay, in the beginning of October he found the whole army of Napoleon in his rear, between Vienna and his headquarters. He immediately threw up intrenchments at Memmingen, assembling his forces in that place and in Ulm.

By the middle of October, the corps of Marmont and Soult, and the Imperial Guards, were in Augsburg; Bernadotte was in possession of Munich, in observation of the expected Russian army; Murat on the right bank of the Danube, and Ney on the left, were in possession of all the bridges crossing that river; and the other corps were arranged in such manner as to complete the circle as closely as possible around the devoted Mack.

A body of four thousand Austrians, under General Oauffemberg, who were dispatched by Mack to give assistance to Reinmayer, near Donaworth, were surrounded and cut to pieces by Murat.

To deliver himself from the fate which now seemed to threaten him, Mack, about the 8th of October, turned his army toward the northeast, in hopes of regaining the Bohemian frontier. Finally he established his headquarters in Burgau, between Ulm and Augsburg, where there was a bridge over the Danube.

On the 9th the Austrians in this town were attacked by Ney with superior numbers, and driven out at the point of the bayonet. Quite discouraged, Mack retired to Ulm with his headquarters. At once he was followed by Ney, whose advance guard, under Dupont, had a sharp and sanguinary engagement with twenty thousand Austrians at Hasslach on the 11th.

The same day Soult was sent against Memmingen, and having completed the investment of it on the 13th, began the onslaught with great fury. Being without supplies, the garrison of four thousand immediately surrendered.

Directly after this, Soult marched with three of his divisions to Biberach, while his fourth division was sent to the southeast of Ulm to join Marmont and Lannes. At the same time Napoleon, with his Imperial Guard, advanced from Augsburg to Burgau. Ney, on the north, completed the fatal circle which surrounded the Austrian.

On the 14th occurred the battle of Elchingen. Ney, with his Sixth Corps of the Grand Army, arrived about daylight on the right bank of the Danube, where General Reisch had taken up a strong position in opposition. The skeleton of a bridge remained, which the Austrians the day before had dismantled and damaged, but not wholly destroyed.

This passage was guarded by six pieces of cannon, also numerous troops. But the ardor of the French troops was irrepressible; they rushed upon the remnants of the bridge, and sprang from timber to timber, sweeping all before them, soon debouching on the left bank. Forming in a narrow meadow, they marched forward, driving the enemy from house to house and from garden to garden.

An obstinate resistance was made by Reisch's men in the Abbey of Elchingen, but at last the Austrians were entirely driven from the building. They then drew up their shattered force on an elevated terrace, and the contest was renewed with the greatest fury.

Ney, in his full marshal's uniform, exposed his person in the most daring manner, seeming to invite the aim of his enemies rather than to avoid it. After a long, bitter struggle there in the open, his gallantry was rewarded with a complete victory, five thousand prisoners and numerous cannon and colors being taken. The glory of this day was perpetuated in the family of Ney by the ducal title conferred upon him a few years later.

Archduke Ferdinand, on the same day, made a sortie for the purpose of reaching Bohemia, and though he effected his own escape, the greater part of his troops under Werneck were captured by Murat.

On the 18th, the heights of Michelsberg, which look down into Ulm at half-cannon-shot distance, were carried; and Napoleon, having now a hundred thousand men surrounding forty thousand Austrians, summoned Mack to surrender, and sent General De Segur to negotiate with him. Segur was authorized to offer the enemy no more than five days, and as

Mack, who had some hopes of being relieved by the Russians, demanded eight days, this conference ended without success.

On the following day Segur was sent again by Napoleon, this time offering Mack the eight days he wished, but counting from the first day on which the blockade began, which, in effect, reduced the time really to six days. But Mack, whose imbecile obstinacy thought it a greater triumph to carry a trifling point of the kind than to secure an important one, replied, "Eight days or death!"



THE BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ.

Soon after this, Prince Lichtenstein visited the French quarters, and the picture which the Emperor drew of the hopelessness of the Austrian leader's position, induced him to make such a report to Mack that the latter, on the next day, signed a capitulation, agreeing that the fort should be relinquished and the soldiers turned over as prisoners of war on the 25th, if not sooner relieved by the Russians.

However, this did not suit the energetic Napoleon. He sent for Mack, who came, and impressed him with such terror

that he consented to surrender immediately if Ney's corps should remain at Ulm until the 25th.

The garrison of men at Ulm, amounting to some twenty thousand men and sixty cannon, marched out on the morning of the 10th. Defiling for five hours past Napoleon and his staff, who stood before the fire of a bivouac on an elevation to the north of the city, this force laid down their arms in sullen stillness. Napoleon behaved with magnanimity, addressing the officers with dignity but great kindness and respect.

"Gentlemen," said he, "war has its chances. Victorious yourselves many times, you must expect the occasion to come when you, too, must endure reverses."

As a result of the fall of Ulm, the Emperor was able to send to the Senate, at Paris, forty standards. Soon afterward he issued to the army one of the finest proclamations that he ever sent forth.

"Soldiers of the Grand Army," he said. "In a fortnight we have finished one campaign. What we proposed to do has been done. . . . The army which with equal presumption and rashness marched upon our frontiers is annihilated. Of one hundred thousand men who formed that army, sixty thousand are prisoners. Two hundred pieces of cannon, ninety flags, and all their generals, are in our power. Soldiers, I announce to you the result of a great battle; but thanks to the ill-advised conduct of the enemy, I secured this result without encountering danger, and, what is without example in history, it has been gained at the sacrifice of scarce fifteen hundred men . . . But we will not stop here. The Russian army which English gold has brought from the extremity of the world, shall share the fate of that which we have just defeated . . . All that I am anxious for is to obtain my victories with the least possible bloodshed. My soldiers are my children."

Not a moment was lost in putting these ulterior designs into execution. Ney was detached to clear the Tyrol of the troops which threatened the right flank of the advancing army; and

Napoleon himself arrived at Munich on the 24th. Augsburg was made the grand depot; and the entire army, in successive corps, rolled in a resistless torrent down the valley of the Danube. During this march Mortier, who was on the left bank, diverged too far from the advance-guard. He encountered the Russian army under Kutusoff at Diernstein, who attacked his rear-guard fiercely. While this fight was in progress, Doctoroff marched back through the mountains, and by occupying Diernstein, cut off Mortier from a retreat. With the utmost discretion the French marshal adopted the only avenue of escape left open to him, which was to cut his way through the Russians to the other divisions of his own party which were coming as fast as they could. He succeeded in this desperate undertaking, but only, after two-thirds of his division had been killed and three eagles taken.

Meanwhile, Archduke Charles, who had gained some advantage over Massena in Italy, alarmed for the safety of the capital, retreated hastily to Laybach, with the intention of throwing himself into Vienna. But Napoleon, with his usual rapidity, had sent forward Lannes and Murat, who, on the 13th of November, seized the bridge of Vienna, and thus cut off the communication of that prince with the Russian army on the north, and forced him back into Hungary.

On the same day Napoleon entered Vienna, and established his headquarters at Schoenbrunn.

Kutusoff, thus separated from the Archduke, and deprived of the barrier of the river, was obliged to retire upon the second Russian army, which was now approaching. Mortier and Bernadotte pressed eagerly upon their rear, and Murat was sent forward with orders to reach Znaim if possible before the retreating enemy could do so, thus cutting in twain their communication with their allies.

However, Kutusoff was too clever to be caught napping in this fashion. He eluded the designs of Murat, sent Bagrathion to Grund to encounter and delay the French troops, and on the

19th effected a junction with the residue of the Russian forces at Wischau, in Moravia.

The next day Napoleon moved his headquarters to Brunn, and on the 25th, while reconnoitering with his staff, he came to the village of Austerlitz, where the road from Brunn toward Hungary crosses the thoroughfare from Nikolsburg. Struck with the military advantages of the position, he turned to his officers and said:

"Examine these localities well. In a few days this will be your field of battle!"

II. FRENCH ARMS VICTORIOUS

Search as one may throughout the annals of war, he will find no more splendid illustration of faultless military science than is shown in the dispositions of the various corps of Napoleon's army at this time.

Advanced an immense distance into the very midst of enemy nations in arms against him, surrounded by armies far more numerous in men than his own, only the superiority of his fine generalship could ever have saved him from utter ruin, and presented him with the glorious victory which was close at hand.

Napoleon's arrangements at this time were nothing more than an exhibition on a magnificent scale of the simple principle which he had so often acted on before—of occupying a central position, with all his forces in perfect communication, in such a way that, spread out, they divided the enemy's corps from one another. Drawing together, Napoleon's men could, in a very brief space of time, bolster any wing he chose, and precipitate a sudden and terrific onslaught upon any part of the circumference which the enemy covered.

On the 25th of November, the positions of the contending powers were as follows:

The Allied Army, eighty thousand strong, led by the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and Grand-duke Constantine, was in a strong position under the cannon of Olmutz. Archduke Charles, with a force quite as large, was approaching on the southeast of Vienna, his purpose being to effect a junction with the others.

Napoleon's entire French forces numbered sixty thousand. With the divisions of Lannes and Soult, the Imperial Guard, and the cavalry under Murat, the Emperor himself was stationed at Brunn. Mortier, with his shattered corps, was in garrison at Vienna. Bernadotte, with his own troops and the Bavarians, was near Iglau, watching Archduke Ferdinand, who, with the force with which he escaped from Ulm, was approaching along the Danube. Davoust was advanced toward Presburg, while Marmont was on the road to Styria, observing Archduke Charles, and in communication with Massena on the extreme right.

On the 27th and 28th the movements of the Imperial troops proclaimed the bringing on of a general engagement: The French advanced guards were driven in, and the Allied headquarters were shoved forward to Wischau, bringing their outposts within two leagues of Austerlitz.

Instantly Napoleon dispatched orders to Bernadotte to leave the Bavarians at Iglau, and make a forced march to Brunn. Similar orders were sent to Mortier, at Vienna. Marmont was directed to occupy Vienna, while Davoust was recalled from Presburg to Nikolsburg to form the French right.

By reason of this concentration, the army under Napoleon was raised at once to ninety thousand men.

On the 29th the enemy maneuvered in a contradictory manner, as if their plans were undecided. But on the following day, their light troops were observed marching by their left, apparently with the view of turning the French right, so as to cut them off from Vienna.

This plan looked feasible, but it involved one fatal military error: that of executing a lateral movement directly in front of a formidable enemy.

Napoleon for two days had been constantly on horseback at his advanced posts. Now observing the enemy's operations, he immediately saw the design. He felt that if he could draw their whole army into such a movement, its fate was sealed beyond the peradventure of a doubt.

To lure the enemy more certainly into the error which they seemed disposed to commit, he abandoned the heights of Pratzen, the highest ground in the neighborhood, evacuated Austerlitz, and concentrated his army about Brunn.

If this unexplained movement astounded and puzzled the enemy, it did scarcely less to Napoleon's own staff. Seeing their horror at his course clearly expressed, the great French leader thought it fit to explain to his marshals the profound conception back of his orders.

"If," said he, "I wished to gain an ordinary victory, I should receive battle on these heights which I have evacuated; but as my object is to betray the enemy into irretrievable ruin, I seduce him by the bribe of that position."

On the morning of the 1st of December the whole force of the Allies was seen moving upon their left in an evident effort to turn the right flank of the French army. As he watched the operation, Napoleon exclaimed with the prophetic confidence of science, "Before to-morrow night that army is my own!"

During that whole day the Allies were executing this flank movement, divided into five columns. When night came their positions were thus:

The first column, constituting their left wing, under Buxhowden, was advanced as far as Augezd, beyond the French right. The second column, under Langeron, and the third, under Prybyszeweki, were on the heights of Pratzen and the eminence directly behind. The fourth and fifth columns, under

Miloradowitch and Lichtenstein, respectively, came next in order. Finally the reserves, under Grand-duke Constantine, were on the elevated ground before Austerlitz. Altogether the entire Allied force numbered about sixty-five thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry.

Opposing this great force, the French army, consisting now of ninety thousand men, occupied a position behind a small stream, and some marshes between Brunn and Austerlitz. On both sides were they of the great road which runs from Brunn to Olmutz. Their right, under Davoust, rested on Lake Moenitz, with its reserve behind the Abbey of Raygern. The center, under Soult, was pushed forward into and beyond the village directly in front of Pratzen, so that as soon as the lateral movement of the enemy should be resumed with the coming of another day, and should be sufficiently developed, Soult might fall upon their flank and sever the army in half. The left wing rested on the hill of Bosenitzberg, which was occupied by artillery, with an advance-guard of cavalry in front of it. This wing consisted of Lannes' corp, which was at the base of the hill; Bernadotte, on the right; the grenadiers of Oudinot, on the left, on the other side of the Olmutz road; while Murat's cavalry, and the Imperial Guard under Bessieres, formed a second line.

At two o'clock in the morning, while it was still dark, the enemy columns were detected to be in full march, undoubtedly their idea being to carry out their movement began the day before. By three o'clock their advanced cavalry had reached the village of Tilnitz.

It was a cold, snappy winter morning. A low fog, damp and exceedingly penetrating, hung over the ground. Napoleon stood in front of his tent, which was pitched on an elevated spot to the right of the high road. He could see little, yet enough to interest him greatly. His marshals, on horseback, ready to dash away at an instant's notice, were grouped around him.

At length the mists rolled away. The broad yellow sun arose in cloudless effulgence above the horizon. It was that "sun

of Austerlitz" which later in history became famous and which Napoleon subsequently designated as the prophetic omen of his success.

By this time the enemy, clearly seen in the bright light of the new-born day, had descended from the heights of Pratzen, and the whole army was in motion toward the French right wing. At sight of this, Napoleon's marshals comprehended the splendid advantage which the genius of their leader had foreseen and prepared. Eagerly they asked for the order to advance.

"Not yet, gentlemen," said Napoleon coolly; "not yet. When your enemy is executing a false movement never think of interrupting him until it is as bad as possible."

At length a violent firing was heard on the right. Soon after intelligence arrived that the left wing of the Allies was entering Tilnitz.

"Now is the moment!" observed the Emperor, his dark eyes flashing like a mettlesome charger's.

At this signal the marshals galloped off, each at the head of his corps. Napoleon mounted his horse, and rode fast along the line, exclaiming as he went:

"Soldiers, the enemy has imprudently exposed himself to our blows. We shall finish the campaign by a clap of thunder!"

At first it looked as if he might be mistaken; for on the French right the Russian left wing assaulted and carried the village of Tilnitz, employing the utmost fury. They then pressed on to Sokelnitz, which they also carried, and finally appeared in triumph beyond the flank of Davoust. That cool and courageous commander, however, marched in his reserves from behind Raygern, and drew them in front of Sokelnitz just as the Russians, disordered and careless by the amount of their success, were issuing out of the town. Davoust attacked them tigerishly, speedily driving them back and retaking the village. Directly afterward he renewed the fight, and a protracted and sanguinary contest ensued.

On the left Lannes and Bernadotte advanced with great rapidity for the purpose of detaining the Allied right or rear. Then Soult fell upon the enemy center, just as Lannes and Bernadotte came up with their infantry and, acting in conjunction with Kellermann's horse, charged the Russian Imperial Guard.

But the enemy, though in a trap, was not now sleeping. Lichtenstein suddenly issued forth with his powerful corps of Austrian cuirassiers. Driving Kellermann back, he disordered the remainder of the French line, and penetrated into the interval between Lannes and Bernadotte. Here they suffered a setback by being met by Murat, who repelled them. In this the French marshal was ably assisted by the artillery, which attacked on both flanks of the enemy, although half their number were killed in the action.

Meanwhile Soult's decisive movement, on the enemy center, was proceeding with full measure of success. The second and third columns had just descended the heights of Pratzen, and the fourth was preparing to cross them when Soult's front, in attacking formation, appeared upon the flank of their open marching column. Kutusoff immediately ordered the third column to regain the heights, and disposed of his fourth column in battle array, two lines deep, awaiting the charge of the French.

But before this was forthcoming, Soult had ascended the heights and broken and driven back the Russian front line with the loss of several pieces of cannon.

Then followed a most desperate conflict. But the final outcome was inevitable. After two hours of bloody fighting the six Russian battalions which occupied the highest position, were cut to pieces, and the heights were carried.

About one o'clock, while the victory was still undecided, a very formidable body of enemy infantry and cavalry was seen debouching upon the plain between the French center and left. It consisted of the Russian Imperial Guard, led by the Grand-duke Constantine in person; a number of squadrons of horse made up

of Ouvaroff's cavalry and what was left of Lichtenstein's cuirassiers, together with a battery of four pieces of cannon.

The advancing infantry engaged with Vandamme's division, while the cavalry attacked the French column in flank and threw them into disorder. Napoleon immediately dispatched Rapp with two squadrons of chasseurs, and the grenadiers of the guard, to check the enemy horse, also requesting Bessieres to support him with all the cavalry of the guard.

Rapp cried out to his men, "Forward! See how your brothers and friends are getting cut to pieces! Avenge them! Avenge our flags!" And rushing forward impetuously they drove back the enemy's cavalry and captured the guns.

The Russians rallied, and advanced in great force. But by this time Bessieres had arrived, and then ensued as fierce a struggle at close quarters as one could imagine. Horse to horse, hand to hand, the combatants fought, first one side and then the other staggering as though on the point of falling back, only to rush madly into the heat of the fray again. So intermingled were the men that the artillery of both parties was forced to lie inactive for fear of doing more damage to its own men than to those of the enemy.

Finally the enthusiasm of the French bore everything before them; in plain view of the two emperors of Austria and Russia, who, from the neighboring height beheld the ruin of their fond hopes, the enemy fled in a panic, leaving many guns and prisoners behind them, to say nothing of heaps of dead and wounded.

This action decided the day. Rapp, to whom unstinted praise should be given for thus rescuing Vandamme's division and putting his attackers to rout, had been severely wounded in the head during the engagement. Despite his sufferings, at the first opportunity he rode up, covered with blood from his wound, to inform Napoleon that the battle was gained.

Soult, who was now advanced nearly a mile from the first line of battle, inclined to the right, and cooperated with Davoust in surrounding the Austrian left wing; while Napoleon sent the Imperial Guard to aid in the same design.

Doctoroff's, Langeron's and Buxhowden's corps, forming the entire enemy left, were successfully flanked, separated and surrounded. Ten thousand were made prisoners or slain. In addition, a large body were driven over a frozen lake. When about half-way over, the ice suddenly gave way under the excessive weight, and over two thousand were drowned.

On the left, after a protracted contest, the advantage had been decided in favor of the French. The heights of Blasowitz and Kruh, and the village of Hollubitz, were carried. The enemy were routed with the exception of one close column which retreated under Bagrathion, and which, though repeatedly assailed by Suchet's and Murat's cavalry, made good its escape to Austerlitz, although leaving behind all of its baggage.

On this memorable day the Allies lost ten thousand killed and wounded, twenty thousand prisoners, one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, and forty-five standards, while so utter was the disorganization of their army and the panic of their leaders, that, at a council held at the Imperial Headquarters that night, it was decided that a further continuation of hostilities was hopeless. At four o'clock the next morning Prince Lichtenstein arrived at Napoleon's head-quarters with proposals for an armistice.

When Napoleon met Soult, in the evening, upon the field of battle, still dank with the odor of burned gunpowder, he said to him, as he watched the stretcher-bearers taking away the last of the dead and wounded:

"Marshal, you are the first tactician in Europe."

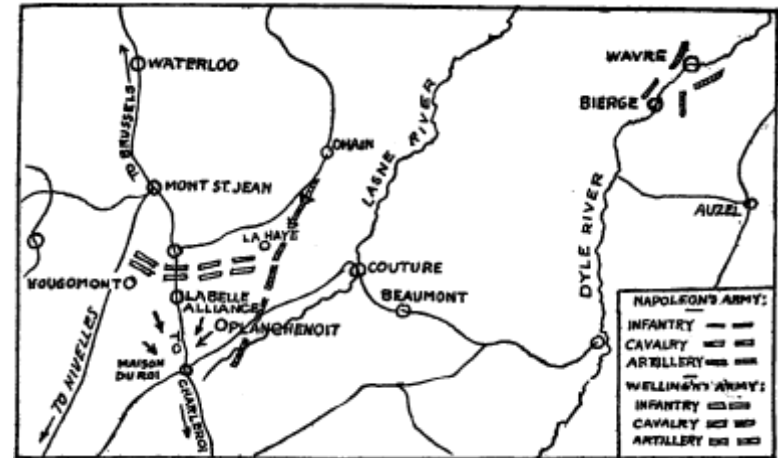
"Sire," replied Soult, with a felicity of compliment that would have done honor to the court of Louis XIV., "I believe it, since it is your majesty that has the goodness to tell me so!"

On the 4th of December Napoleon and Emperor Francis had a personal interview at a mill about three leagues from Austerlitz; on the 6th an armistice was signed at Austerlitz; on the 27th the peace of Presburg was concluded between France and Austria; and, on the 25th of January, 1806, Napoleon, having passed through Vienna and Munich, reached Paris, which he entered at night, quite unattended.

Just four months had elapsed since he left that big city to take command of the army. And in that time the magnificent forces of Austria and Russia had been utterly torn in shreds, and the former empire trampled under the feet of the conqueror.

CHAPTER V

WATERLOO



On came the whirlwind—like the last
 But fiercest sweep of tempest blast
 On came the whirlwind—steel gleams broke
 Like lightning through the rolling smoke;
 The war was waked anew,
 Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
 And from their throats with flash and cloud,
 Their showers of iron threw.
 Beneath their fire, in full career,
 Rushed on the ponderous cuirassier;
 The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
 And hurrying as to havoc near,
 The cohorts' eagles flew.
 In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
 The advancing onset roll'd along,
 Forth harbinger'd by fierce acclaim
 That, from the shroud of smoke and flame,
 Peal'd wildly the imperial name.

—Scott.

I. NAPOLEON MEETS HIS ENEMY HALF-WAY

The congress of emperors, kings, princes, generals and statesmen, had assembled at Vienna to remodel the world after the overthrow of Napoleon, the mighty conqueror. At this time they had not a thought but that Napoleon had passed away forever from the great drama of European politics. However, before they had yet completed their triumphant festivities and their diplomatic toils, Talleyrand, on the 11th of March, 1815, rose up among them, and announced that the famous soldier-statesman had escaped from Elba, and what was more, was once again Emperor of France.

Unable at first to credit such a statement, the delegates laughed disbelievingly. But the jest was a bitter one, as each and every member of the body soon found out, and it was not long before they were busily engaged in anxious deliberations as to the best method for meeting and tying up the hands of their old arch-enemy.

On the 13th of March, the ministers of the seven powers—Austria, Spain, England, Russia, Portugal, Prussia and Sweden—signed a manifesto by which they declared Napoleon an outlaw. This denunciation was immediately followed up by a treaty between England, Austria, Prussia and Russia, to which other powers soon acceded. By this they bound themselves to enforce the outlaw decree, and to press the war until Napoleon should be driven from the throne of France, and rendered incapable of ever again disturbing the peace of Europe.

The Duke of Wellington was England's representative at the conference, and was at once sought for advice on a tentative plan of military operations against France. It was obvious that Belgium would provide the first battle-field, in the Duke's opinion, to which the other members of the congress as a whole agreed. Accordingly Wellington proceeded thither to assemble an army from the contingents of Dutch, Belgian and Hanoverian

troops which were available, and from the English regiments which his own country was hastening to send over.

Truly gigantic were the exertions which the Allied powers made at this crisis to grapple promptly with the threatened danger. At the same time never was the genius and activity of Napoleon more signally displayed than in the celerity and skill by which he brought forward all the military resources of France, which the reverses of the three preceding years had greatly diminished and disorganized. By the end of May he had an army assembled in the northeast, for active operations under his own hand, which approximated one hundred and thirty thousand men, including a superb park of artillery. His soldiers were in the highest state of efficiency and discipline, and unusually well equipped considering the short time in which they had been mobilizing.

The approach to the Rhine of the multitudinous Russian, Austrian, Bavarian, and other foes of the French, was necessarily slow; but the two most active corps of the Allied powers had already occupied Belgium while Napoleon was organizing his forces. One of these corps, under Marshal Blucher, consisted of one hundred and sixteen thousand Prussians; the other, commanded by the Duke of Wellington, was not more than ten thousand less.

Napoleon determined to attack these enemies in Belgium without delay. The disparity of numbers, to his disadvantage, was indeed great, but he knew that delay would only serve to make the odds against him still greater. He felt that he was favored by the fact that each of the Allied corps in Belgium was composed of soldiers from a different nation whose feelings and interest must obviously be at more or less variance, and with commanders of the same type, intense co-operation was not to be expected.

The Emperor's own army was composed, on the other hand, entirely of Frenchmen, most of whom were veterans well acquainted with their officers and with each other, and filled to

the brim with enthusiastic confidence in their leader. If he could work his old scheme of separating the divisions of the enemy, so as to attack each one separately, he felt sanguine of success—not only against these, the most resolute of his many adversaries, but also against the hordes that were laboring toward his eastern dominions.

Behind the triple chain of strong fortresses, which the French possessed on the Belgian frontier, Napoleon was able to concentrate his army. These erections acted as a mammoth curtain, and would thoroughly screen his movements from the enemy till the very moment he wished to make some certain line of attack.

The Allies were less fortunate in this respect. Both Blucher and Wellington were obliged to canton their troops along a strip of open country of considerable length, so as to be on the lookout for the expected outbreak of Napoleon. Blucher occupied the banks of the Sambre and the Meuse, from Liege, on his left, to Charleroi on his right. The Duke of Wellington covered Brussels, his cantonments being partly in front of that city and between it and the French frontier, and partly on its west. The extreme right of both armies reached to Courtray and Tournay, while the left approached Charleroi and communicated with the Prussian right.

It was upon Charleroi that Napoleon resolved to level his attack, in hopes of severing the two Allied corps from each other.

The situation of the French elements at this time was as follows: The First Corps d'Armée, commanded by Count d'Erlon, was stationed in and around the city of Lille. The Second Corps, under Count Reille, was at Valenciennes, to the right of the first one. The Third Corps, commanded by Count Vandamme, was at Mezières. The Fourth, under Count Gerard, had its head-quarters at Metz; and the Sixth, headed by Count Lobau, was at Laon. Four corps of the reserve cavalry, led by

Marshal Grouchy, were also near the frontier, between the rivers Aisne and Sambre.

On the 14th of June, Napoleon arrived among his troops. Great was their exultation at the celerity with which he had organized and placed his divisions in position. This enthusiasm was still more excited by the issuance of his "Order of the Day," in which he thus appealed to them:

"Napoleon, by the Grace of God, and the Constitution of the Empire, Emperor of the French, &c., to the Grand Army.

"AT THE IMPERIAL HEADQUARTERS,

Avesnes, June 14th, 1815.

"Soldiers! this day is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland, which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after Austerlitz, as after Agram, we were too generous. We believed in the protestations and in the oaths of princes, whom we left on their thrones. Now, however, leagued together, they aim at the independence and the most sacred rights of France. They have commenced the most unjust of aggressions. Let us, then, march to meet them. Are they and we no longer the same men?

"Soldiers! at Jena, against these same Prussians, now so arrogant, you were one to three, and at Montmirail one to six!

"Let those among you who have been captives to the English, describe the nature of their prison-ships, and the frightful miseries they endured.

"The Saxons, the Belgians, the Hanoverians, the soldiers of the Confederation of the Rhine, lament that they are compelled to use their arms in the cause of princes, the enemies of justice and of the rights of all nations. They know

that this coalition is insatiable! After having devoured twelve millions of Poles, twelve millions of Italians, one million of Saxons, and six millions of Belgians, it now wishes to devour the states of the second rank in Germany.

"Madmen! one moment of prosperity has bewildered them. The oppression and the humiliation of the French people are beyond their power. If they enter France they will there find their grave.

"Soldiers! we have forced marches to make, battles to fight, dangers to encounter; but, with firmness, victory will be ours. The rights, the honor, and the happiness of the country will be recovered!

"To every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment is now arrived to conquer or to die!

"NAPOLEON,

"THE MARSHAL DUKE OF DALMATIA,

"MAJOR-GENERAL.

The 15th of June had scarcely dawned before the French army was in motion for the decisive campaign. It crossed the frontier in three columns which were pointed straight at Charleroi and its vicinity. Their line of advance upon Brussels, which Napoleon resolved to occupy, lay straight through the center of the cantonments of the Allies. The French leader felt certain that if he could take Brussels the greater part of Belgium undoubtedly would declare in his favor, and such a condition thus early in the campaign would exert a most powerful influence to his credit in events to follow.

On the 15th of June certain intelligence, however, reached the Allies that the French had crossed the frontier in large force near Thuin, that they had driven back the Prussian

advanced troops under General Ziethen, and were also moving across the Sambre upon Charleroi.

Marshal Blucher now rapidly concentrated his forces. Wellington also marshaled his own troops in Brussels and its immediate vicinity, ready to move due southward upon Quatre Bras and cooperate with Blucher, who was taking his station at Ligny. In his present position Wellington thought he could defeat any maneuver the enemy might suddenly make to turn off to the right and occupy Brussels by a flanking action.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon that a Prussian officer reached Brussels with word from General Ziethen to General Muffling, informing the latter of the French advance upon Charleroi. Muffling at once informed the Duke of Wellington who said that he would be in the utmost readiness.

That night a ball was given in Brussels by the Duchess of Richmond, and the Duke and General Muffling attended with hundreds of others. They stayed only a few hours, however, stealing quietly away from the festal scene in the early morning, and rode hard to overtake a brigade of their men who had been ordered on to Quatre Bras. It was a strange and incongruous situation, this one of the two officers first indulging in the light-hearted gaieties of the ballroom, and then deliberately leaving at a pre-arranged hour to guide their men in an expected bloody slaughter! But such is war.

By this time Napoleon had advanced right through Charleroi upon Fleurus, inflicting considerable loss. His right column with little opposition had moved forward as far as the bridge of Chatelet.

Napoleon had thus a powerful force immediately in front of the point upon which Blucher had fixed for the concentration of the Prussian army, and that concentration was still incomplete. He gave the command of his left wing to Marshal Ney, who had marched toward Quatre Bras along the road that leads from Charleroi to Brussels, through Gosselies, Frasne, Quatre Bras, Genappe and Waterloo. Before ten o'clock on the

night of the 15th, Ney had occupied Gosselies and Frasne, driving out the weak forces of Belgians holding these places. Before proceeding on to Quatre Bras, Ney thought it best to rest his tired soldiers. He also wished to obtain some information about the commanders of the enemy.

In the meantime Wellington and Baron Muffling, who had been in attendance at the Duchess of Richmond's ball at Brussels, arrived at Quatre Bras with their men about eleven o'clock of the night Ney entered Frasne. Noting that the French about Frasne were very quiet, and thinking their numbers far smaller than they were, Wellington and Mining went on to the wind-mill near Bry, with the purpose of offering to reinforce Blucher, who they heard was menaced at that point by a very large force under Napoleon.

When Wellington and Muffling reached their destination, they found the Prussian army, eighty thousand strong, drawn up chiefly along a chain of heights, with the villages of Sombref, St. Amand and Ligny in their front. These villages were also strongly occupied with Prussian detachments, and formed the keys of Blucher's position.

The heads of the columns which Napoleon was forming for the attack were visible in the distance.

The Prussian leaders said they would be glad to have the assistance of Wellington's and Muffling's corps, and asked that they be marched from Quatre Bras along the Namur road, so as to form a reserve in the rear of Blucher's army. Replying that he would see to this if he were not attacked at Quatre Bras himself, the Duke and his companion galloped back to rejoin their command.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when Marshal Ney began the battle with about sixteen thousand infantry, two thousand cavalry and thirty-eight guns. The force which Napoleon nominally placed at his command exceeded forty thousand, but more than half of these consisted of the First Corps d'Armee, under Count d'Erlon, and Ney was deprived of

the use of this corps at a time when he most needed it, in consequence of its receiving orders to march to the aid of the Emperor at Ligny.

The force of the Allies in Quatre Bras was something less than ten thousand, mostly Dutch and Belgian infantry, commanded by the Prince of Orange. A wood, called the Bois de Bossu, stretched along the right (or western) flank, a farmhouse and building called Gemiancourt, stood on some elevated ground in front, and to the left (or east) were the enclosures of the village of Pierremont.

The Prince of Orange endeavored to secure these posts, but Ney carried both Gemiancourt and Pierremont, and gained occupation of the southern part of the Wood of Bossu. Ranging his artillery on the high ground of Gemiancourt, he played upon the Allies a most destructive fire. Fresh troops of the Allies were brought forward, and the engagement became very hot. The Dutch and Belgian infantry finally gave way before Kellermann's cuirassiers and Pire's lancers, and the whole brunt of the battle fell on the British and German infantry. They sustained it nobly. Though repeatedly charged by the French cavalry, though exposed constantly to the murderous fire of the French batteries on the heights, they not only repelled their assailants, but Kempt's and Pack's brigades, led on by Picton, actually advanced against their foes, and with stern determination made good to the end of the day the ground which they had thus boldly won.

However, some of the British regiments suffered greatly, one—the Ninety-second—being almost wholly destroyed by the fierce cuirassiers.

The arrival of the English Guards about half-past six o'clock, enabled the Duke of Wellington to recover the Wood of Bossu. When night really set in the French had been driven back on all points toward Frasne, but they still held the farm of Gemiancourt in front of the Duke's center. A few hours later this was also taken with little loss to the English.



THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

Meanwhile the sound of firing had been heard all the afternoon from the direction of Ligny, and it was rightly presumed that Blucher had been engaged by Napoleon's forces in that locality. Here Blucher had a superiority of more than twelve thousand men. After five hours and a half of desperate struggle, Napoleon succeeded in breaking the center of the Prussian line, and forcing his obstinate antagonists off the field. They retreated towards Wavre, where they could maintain their communication with Wellington's army. A messenger was sent to inform Wellington of the defeat, but was shot on the way, and it was not until the morning of the 17th that the Allies at Quatre Bras knew of the result of the fight at Ligny.

Fearing that Napoleon's main army would now be directed against him at Quatre Bras, Wellington evacuated and marched his men back towards Brussels, intending to halt at a point in line with Wavre and there restore his broken communication with Blucher. Near Mont St. Jean he paused.

Wellington was now about twelve miles from Wavre, where the Prussian army had been completely reorganized, and

where it had been joined by Bulow's troops, which, through conflicting orders, had marched and counter-marched between Ligny and Quatre Bras during the engagements in those positions, and had taken no part at all in the actual fighting, strange as it may seem.

Blucher sent word that he was coming in the morning to help the English at Mont St. Jean, bringing his entire army, and that if Napoleon himself failed to attack by the 18th, they should open up on him on the morning of the 19th.

Much pleased at the prospect of this great addition to his force, the Duke of Wellington immediately set about strengthening his position for the battle which was to become world famous.

II. WELLINGTON PROVES A WORTHY ADVERSARY

If you would see one of the most historic, most ideal, battle-grounds in the world's history, come with me for a few minutes till I show you the field of Waterloo, just as it looked on the memorable 18th day of June, 1815.

Standing here on this low hill, we look down into a beautiful green valley stretching, in varying widths of from one-quarter to one-half mile, for a distance of two or three miles. Along each side of this refreshing vale runs a winding chain of moderate hills, similar to the one from whose crest we gaze about us. The slopes of the hills, leading to the valley below, are of gentle angle, inviting a climb at almost any point. Here and there, scattered most haphazardly, rise up frequent undulations along the slopes, affording admirable natural shelters to infantry storming the valley or opposite heights. And each of these facing chains of hills now hide and protect such a body of soldiery as they had never before dreamed of, each body set upon destroying the other with the quickest and most effective dispatch.

The English army occupies the northern ridge; the French army, the southern ridge. A little behind the center of the northern chain of hills lies the village of Mont St. Jean; in a similar position back of the southern heights, nestles the village of La Belle Alliance. We wonder where the town of Waterloo touches the scenery. It does not. Although there is such a town at a neighboring distance from Mont St. Jean, it is far out of vision. Just why this famous battle-to-be should have been later tagged with the name "Waterloo" is not quite clear unless we attribute the reason to the fact that Waterloo was the nearest settlement of size, isolated battles often being titled on this basis.

The high road from Charleroi to Brussels runs through both Mont St. Jean and La Belle Alliance, thus bisecting the positions of each opposing army. This road, which is a broad, paved causeway, was the line of Napoleon's intended advance on Brussels, as stated previously.

In front of the British right—that is to say, on the northern slope of the valley towards its western end—there stands an old-fashioned Flemish farm-house called Goumont, with out-buildings and a garden, and with a copse of beech trees around it. This is strongly garrisoned by the Allied troops, and as long as it stands in their possession it will be difficult for the French to press on and force the British right wing. On the other hand, if the French should take it, the British troops quartered therein must probably evacuate the heights—a very serious situation.

Almost immediately in front of the British center, and not so far down the slope as Goumont, there stands still another farm-house, but of a smaller size, called La Haye Sainte, which is also held by the British troops.

With respect to the French position, the principal feature we notice is the village of Planchenoit. This lies a little in the rear of their right—or eastern side—and later proved of great importance in helping the French to check the advance of the Prussians.

The French and British armies lie on the open field, behind their respective heights, during the wet and stormy night of the 17th; and when the dawn of another morning comes there is no welcome sunshine, but a continued clouded sky and water-leaking heavens. The rival armies rise from their dreary bivouacs, and begin to form for that terrible struggle which now has gone too far in the way of preparation for prolonging a single hour, be it wet or be it dry.

The Duke of Wellington draws up his army in two lines, the principal one being stationed near the crest of the ridge of hills already described, and the other arranged along the slope in the rear of his position. The artillery is distributed at convenient intervals along the front of the whole line.

On the opposite heights the French are also drawn up in two general lines, with the entire force of the Imperial Guards, cavalry as well as infantry, in the rear of the center, as a reserve. English military critics have highly eulogized the admirable arrangement which Napoleon made of the various units of his forces, which made it possible for him to sustain any of them by a quick and efficient support should the enemy suddenly assail one or another.

When his troops are all arrayed Napoleon rides along the lines, receiving everywhere the most enthusiastic cheers from his men, of whose entire devotion to him his assurance is now doubly strong.

The Duke of Wellington has passed the night at his headquarters in the village of Waterloo. He has slept but little, and rising on the morning of the 18th, while it is still dark, he writes several letters. Among these is one to the Governor of Antwerp and the English Minister at Brussels, to whom he expresses his confidence in the outcome of the imminent struggle. After this he makes arrangements for the proper distribution of ammunition to his army, and the care of the wounded. Then mounting a favorite charger, he rides forward to the range of hills where his men are posted. With Baron

Muffling and his staff he visits his lines, gives a few orders and returns to the high ground in the right center of his position. Halting here he sits watching the enemy on the opposite heights, and converses with his staff with that cheerful serenity which was ever Wellington's characteristic in the hour of battle.

And across that little green valley, also astride his mettlesome charger, sits the short, stern figure of Napoleon Bonaparte, fully as calm as his arch-enemy commander. All is hushed. Only the plaintive bleat of a stray sheep, browsing on the tender grasses among the undulations of the valley side, reaches a soldier ear. The brazen, grim bark of the cannon, which the day before had shattered the peace of the surroundings at desultory intervals, is now stilled, as if ashamed to disrupt the soothing quiet. All the world about this little green valley seems wrapped in a blanket of contentedness and brooding happiness. The hillsides and valley levels are decked with the rare beauty of hundreds of gently-waving red poppy heads, struggling for supremacy among the delicate emerald grasses.

But it is all a horrible deceit, a sham of mammoth proportions, a pretense that covers the most dreadful plans for a discordant tumult of heart-wrenching sounds, and a sickening vision of sights to make the beholder shudder. It is the awful calm before the coming of the awful storm. Soon the grasses themselves—aye, and the earth where barrenness prohibits their growth—will be running wet with a stain fully as crimson as the poppy heads—a nauseating stain that comes from human death, wrought by hate and violence.

Napoleon and Wellington both had often seen such pictures as this. Doubtless now, as they sit on their steeds, silently awaiting that which must come, they do so not without vague inward shudders and a feeling of guilt hard to shut out by argument of conscience. Well may we hope that many a soldier spirit sought aid from a higher and holier source that Sunday morning (the battle of Waterloo was fought on a Sunday) and asked forgiveness of the God of Battles for any life or lives that

he might take before the setting of another sun, which must be over a landscape far changed!

The two great champions of the battle-field who now confront each other on opposite elevations are about equals in years; each had entered the military profession at the same early age. In this circumstance, it is quite remarkable that Napoleon, during his numerous campaigns in Spain as well as in other countries of Europe not only has never encountered the Duke of Wellington before the day of Waterloo, but that he has never until now been personally engaged with British troops, except at the siege of Toulon, in 1793, which was the very first incident of his military career. Yet both generals know full well the strong caliber of the other, for with them are many officers on their staffs who have personally fought against each chieftain and who are not 10th to describe his strong character and brilliant military attainments.

It is almost noon of the 18th before the action commences. This delay is due to the fact that the rains of the preceding day and night have rendered the ground too moist and miry for the use of cavalry or artillery, and a few hours' drying has seemed essential to both leaders.

At last, about half-past eleven o'clock, Napoleon began the eventful battle by directing a powerful force from his left wing, under his brother, Prince Jerome, to attack Goumont. Column after column of the French now descended from the west of the southern heights, and assailed that post with fiery valor. The onslaught, however, was met by the British with the most determined bravery. Before long the French took the wood surrounding the house, but Byng's brigade of Guards held the house throughout the day. Amid shot and shell, and the blazing fragments of part of the buildings, this obstinate contest was continued.

The cannonading, which commenced at first between the British right and the French left in consequence of the attack on Goumont, soon became general along both lines. About one

o'clock Napoleon directed Marshal Ney to make a grand attack upon the center and left wing of the enemy. For this purpose Ney had with him four columns' of infantry, amounting to about eighteen thousand men, and seventy-four guns. He hoped to force the left center of the British position, to then take La Haye Sainte, and then the farm of Mont St. Jean, when he would be able to cut the mass of Wellington's troops off from their line of retreat upon Brussels, completely severing them from any Prussian troops that might be approaching.

Ney's command descended majestically from the French line of hills, and gained the ridge of the intervening eminence, on which were ranged the batteries that supported them. As the columns went down again from the last-named eminence, the seventy-four guns opened over their heads with terrible effect upon the troops of the Allies stationed on the heights to the left of the Charleroi road. One column kept to the east, and attacked the extreme left of the enemy; the other three continued to move rapidly forward upon the left center of the Allied position.

The front line of the Allies here was composed of Bylandt's brigade of Dutch and Belgians. As the French columns moved up the southward slope of the height on which the Dutch and Belgians stood, the skirmishers ahead began to open up their fire. At this Bylandt's entire brigade turned and fled in disgraceful and disorderly panic.

But there were soldiers more worthy of the name behind. In this part of the line of the Allies were posted Pack's and Kempt's brigades of English infantry, which had suffered severely at Quatre Bras. Picton was here as general-of-division. Not even the formidable veteran Ney himself surpassed in resolute bravery that stern and fiery spirit.

Picton brought forward his two brigades, side by side, in a thin, two-deep line. They were not quite three thousand strong, but with them Picton had to make head against the three victorious French columns, which were more than four times his

strength, and which, encouraged by the easy rout of the Dutch and Belgians, now came confidently over the ridge of the hill.

The British infantry stood firm, and as the French halted and began to deploy into line, Picton seized the critical moment.

"A volley, and then charge!" he shouted in his stentorian voice to Kempt's brigade.

At a distance of less than thirty yards that volley was poured upon the first sections of the nearest French column. And then, with a fierce hurrah, the British dashed in with the bayonet.

Picton was shot dead as he rushed forward, but his men pushed on with the cold steel shoved just before them.

The French reeled back in consternation and confusion. Pack's infantry had checked the other two French columns, and now down came a whirl-wind of British horse on the whole mass of French, sending them staggering from the crest of the hill, and cutting them down by whole battalions. On went the horsemen amid the wrecks of the French columns, capturing two eagles and two thousand prisoners. Onward still they galloped, sabering the artillerymen of Ney's seventy-four gun battery; then, severing the traces, and cutting the throats of the artillery horses, they damaged the guns so that the French could use them no more that day.

While thus engaged at the cannon, they were suddenly charged by a large body of French lancers, who drove them back with severe losses, until Vandeleur's light cavalry came to their aid, and beat off the French lancers in turn.

Fully as unsuccessful had been the efforts of the French cavalry, who had moved forward in support of the advance of the infantry, along the east of the Charleroi road. Against the French horse had been sent Somerset's British cavalry of the Household Brigade. This brigade, led by the Earl of Uxbridge, spurred forward to the encounter as they saw the French cavalry coming over the ridge in front of them, near La Haye Sainte.

In an instant the two adverse lines of strong swordsmen, on their sturdy animals, dashed furiously together, each anxious for the combat. The sanguinary hand-to-hand fight that followed was extremely desperate. The air was filled with flashing steel, striking, clashing and dealing death on every side. Finally the French retreated, and after them, in hot pursuit, spurred the English Guards. Their impetuosity carried them a little too far; the fleeing Frenchmen were soon joined by comrades who dealt out a heavy retribution to the rash Englishmen, and the latter scurried back to their own lines.

Napoleon's grand effort to break the English center had thus completely failed, and while he had inflicted considerable loss in men upon his adversary, his own right wing had been seriously weakened by the death of many of his soldiers.

III. NAPOLEON TASTES THE BITTER DREGS OF DEFEAT

Napoleon had witnessed with bitter disappointment the rout of his troops—foot, horse and artillery. He now caused the batteries along the line of high ground held by him to be strengthened, and for some time an unremitting and most destructive cannonading raged across the valley.

About half-past three, Napoleon sent fresh troops to assail La Haye Sainte and Goumont. Squadron after squadron of French cuirassiers rode forward with dauntless courage against the British artillery in that part of the field. The artillerymen were driven from their guns, and the cuirassiers cheered loudly at their supposed triumph. But the Duke had formed his infantry in squares, and when the cuirassiers threw themselves upon the hedges of bristling bayonets, they found them impenetrable, the fire from the inner ranks of the squares telling with terrible effect upon them. Time after time they persisted in trying to break through, but it was useless. Nearly the whole of Napoleon's magnificent body of heavy cavalry was destroyed in these fruitless attempts upon the British right.

And now, to add to the French commander's troubles, a new menace loomed up. This came in the form of strong reinforcements for the English under Blucher and Bulow, who had come over the heights of St. Lambert and executed a skillful flanking movement upon the Emperor's right.

Knowing that he must not let the new arrivals take Planchenoit, for fear that his retreat to Brussels would be cut off, Napoleon dispatched his Young Guards to occupy that village. Three times did the Prussians fight their way into Planchenoit, and as often did the French drive them out. The contest was maintained with the fiercest desperation on both sides, such being the animosity that quarter was seldom asked or given.

Other Prussian troops were now appearing on the field nearer to the English left. These Napoleon kept in check by forces which he detached for that purpose. Thus a large part of the French army was now thrown back on a line at right angles with the line of that portion which still confronted and assailed the British position. Owing to the gross misconduct of the greater part of the Dutch and Belgian troops, the Duke was compelled to rely almost entirely on his English and German soldiers, and the ranks of these had been fearfully thinned. But the survivors stood their ground heroically, presenting a resolute front to the forward movements of the enemy.

On no point of the British line was the pressure more severe than on Halkett's brigade, in the right center. To show more lucidly the nature of this strenuous combat, I will quote from the journal of the late Major Macready, who served at Waterloo in the light company of the Thirtieth, one of the three battalions engaged under Halkett. The extent of the peril and carnage encountered may be judged by the fact that this light company marched into the field with three officers and fifty-one men, and came out of it with but one officer (Major Macready) and ten men! During the earlier part of the day Macready and his men were thrown forward as skirmishers, but when the French cavalry commenced their attacks they were ordered to fall back. The brave soldier thus describes what he saw and felt:

"Before the commencement of this attack our company and the Seventy-third Grenadiers were skirmishing briskly in the low ground, covering our guns and annoying those of the enemy. The line of tirailleurs opposed to us was not stronger, but on a sudden they were reinforced by numerous French bodies, and several guns began playing on us with cannister.

"Our poor fellows dropped very fast, and Colonel Vigoureux, Rumley and Pratt, were carried off badly wounded in about two minutes. I was now commander of our company—so unexpectedly it almost shocked me. We stood under the hurricane of shot till Halkett sent an order for us to come in, and I brought away about a third of the light bobs; the rest were killed or wounded, and I really wonder how one of them escaped.

"As our bugler was killed I shouted and made signals for my men to move to the left, in order to avoid the fire of our own guns farther back. When I reached Lloyd's abandoned guns, I stood near them for a minute to contemplate the scene. It was grand beyond description. Goumont and its wood sent up a broad flame through the dark masses of smoke that overhung the field. Beneath this cloud the French were distinctly visible. Here a waving mass of long red feathers could be seen; there, gleams as from a sheet of burnished steel showed that the cuirassiers were moving. Four hundred cannon were belching forth fire and death on every side. The roaring and shouting were indescribably mixed; together they gave me the idea of a laboring volcano. Bodies of infantry and cavalry were pouring down on us. I saw it was high time to leave off

such peaceful pursuits as contemplation; so I moved towards our columns, which were now standing up in square formation.

"As I entered the rear face of our square I had to step over a body. On looking down I recognized Harry Beere, an officer of our Grenadiers. Less than an hour before he had shook hands with me, laughing, as I left the columns. I had been on the usual terms of military intimacy with Harry—that is to say, if either of us had died a natural death, the other would have pitied him as a good fellow and smiled to think he had missed a worse fate—but seeing his herculean frame and once animated countenance thus suddenly stiff and motionless before me (I know not whence the feeling could have originated, for I had just seen my dearest friend drop, almost with indifference), the tears started in my eyes, and I sighed out, 'Poor Harry!'

"The tear was not dry on my cheek when poor Harry was no longer thought of. In a few minutes the enemy's cavalry galloped up and crowned the crest of our position. Our guns were abandoned, and they formed between the two brigades, about a hundred paces in our front.

"Their first charge was magnificent. As soon as they quickened their trot into a gallop, the cuirassiers bent their heads so that the peaks of their helmets looked like visors, and they seemed cased in armor from plume to saddle. Not a shot was fired till they were within thirty yards. Then the word was given, and our men fired away at them.

"The effect was magical. Through the smoke we could see helmets falling, cavaliers

starting from their saddles with convulsive springs, horses plunging and rearing in the agonies of fright and pain, crowds of soldiery quickly dismounting, other crowds in wild retreat a-foot and a-horse.

. . . . "The main body reformed in our front, and gallantly repeated their attack, but we repulsed them. In fact, from four until six o'clock we endured a constant repetition of these brave but unavailing charges. The devotion of the Frenchmen was admirable. One officer, whom we had taken prisoner, was asked what force Napoleon might have in the field. He replied with a smile mingled with threat and derision, '*Vous verrez bientôt sa force, messieurs.*' A private cuirassier was wounded and dragged into the square. His only cry was, '*Tuez donc, tuez, tuez moi, soldats!*' and as one of our men dropped dead close to him, he seized his bayonet and forced it into his own neck; but this not dispatching him, he raised up his cuirass, and plunging the steel into his stomach, kept working it about till he ceased to breathe.

"Though we constantly thrashed our steel-clad opponents, we found more troublesome customers in the round shot and grape which all this time played on us with terrible effect and fully avenged the cuirassiers. . . . A body of Belgian cavalry advanced to aid us, but on passing our square they stopped short. A few shots whizzed through them, and they turned about and galloped like fury. As they passed our square the men, irritated by their cowardly conduct, unanimously took hold of their pieces and fired a volley into them!

"About six o'clock I perceived some artillery trotting up our hill which I knew by their caps to belong to the French Imperial Guard. I had hardly mentioned this to a brother officer when two of their guns unlimbered within seventy paces of us, and at their first discharge of grape, blew seven of our men into the center of the square. They . . . continued to reload and fire. It was noble to see our fellows fill up the gaps after every discharge. I was much distressed, and ordered up three of my light bobs. Hardly had they taken their stations when two of them fell, horribly lacerated. One of them looked up in my face, and uttered a sort of reproachful groan, and I involuntarily exclaimed, 'I couldn't help it.' We would willingly have charged these guns, but had we deployed the cavalry that flanked them would have made an example of us.

"The glow which fires one upon entering into action had ceased. It was now to be seen which side had most bottom and would stand killing the longer. The Duke visited us frequently at this momentous period. He was coolness personified. . . . No leader ever possessed more fully the confidence of his soldiery. Wherever he appeared a murmur of 'Silence—stand to your front—here's the Duke,' was heard, and then all was steady as on a parade. . . ."

All accounts of the battle go to confirm this report of Major Macready's concerning the conduct of the Duke of Wellington. The great British leader was ever present at each spot where danger seemed the most threatening, inspiring his men by his boldness, encouraging them by a few homely and good-humored words, and restraining their impatience to be led forward to attack. His personal danger was great throughout the

day. Although he escaped without injury to himself or horse, only one of his numerous staff was equally fortunate.

Napoleon had stationed himself during the battle on a little hillock near La Belle Alliance, in the center of the French position. Here he was seated before a large table which had been taken from the neighboring farm-house before him. On the table maps and plans were spread, and with a telescope he surveyed the various distant parts of the field. His staff was grouped on horseback a few paces in the rear, while Soult watched his orders close at his left hand.

Here Napoleon remained till near the close of the day, preserving the appearance at least of calmness no matter how he may have felt at some of his reverses. But now that the crisis of the battle was evidently approaching, he mounted his white Persian charger, which it was his wont to ride in action because his troops could more easily recognize him by the horse's unusual color.

The Emperor's Old Guard had thus far taken no part in the engagement. Under cover of it he might easily have withdrawn his shattered forces and retired upon the French frontier, but this would only have given the English and Prussians the opportunity of completing their junction, besides which he knew that other enemy armies were fast coming up to aid them in their march upon Paris, and a retreat now would therefore only invite another fight later on where he would be no better situated to meet it than here.

Between seven and eight o'clock Napoleon had the Old Guard formed in two columns on the declivity near La Belle Alliance. Ney was placed at their head. Napoleon himself rode forward to a spot by which his veterans were to pass, and as they approached he raised his arm and pointed to the position of the Allies, as if to tell them that their path lay there. They answered with loud cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and descended the hill from their own side into that "valley of the shadow of death,"

while the batteries thundered with redoubled vigor over their heads upon the British line.

Against the British right center, between Goumont and La Haye Sainte, the Old Guard hurled themselves impetuously, bent upon redeeming the day. The French tirailleurs, who were posted in groups in La Haye Sainte and the sheltered spots near it, picked off the artillerymen of the English batteries near them. Field-pieces were then brought up, and these belched a terrible rain of grape into the allied infantry at a distance of less than a hundred yards. Great holes were torn in the squares of the German infantry, but they gamely held on.

Meanwhile the Old Guard was coming to assail Maitland's brigade of British Guards. Maitland's men were lying down, to avoid as much as possible the destructive fire of the French artillery. At the same time the British guns were far from idle, and shot and shell ploughed fast through the ranks of the stately array of French veterans who still came imposingly on.

Several of the French superior officers were at its head. Ney's horse was shot from under him, but he still led the way on foot, sword in hand. The British could not but admire the gallantry of the unflinching soldiers as they rapidly drew nearer, leaping over the bodies of their constantly falling comrades.

The front of the French column now was on the ridge of the hill. To their surprise they saw no troops before them. All they could discern through the haze of smoke was a small band of mounted officers. One of these was the Duke himself.

The French advanced a little farther, when suddenly one of the enemy officers was heard calling, as if to the ground before him:

"Up, men, and at them!"

It was the Duke who gave the order. At the words, as if by magic, from out of the long grass less than fifty yards in front of the Old Guards, arose an immense line of the British Guards. Four deep were they, in most compact and perfect order. Even as

they straightened up, they poured a terrific volley into the front ranks of the oncoming French, and more than three hundred of these magnificent veterans went down like autumn leaves before a windstorm.

Their officers sprang forward and bravely tried to rally their men into fighting order. But the British sent in another destructive volley, and another, and another, finally charging with the bayonet, at which the remnant of Old Guards fled in great disorder.

During this time the second column of the French Guards had advanced by the eastern wall of Goumont, then diverged slightly to the right, approaching the British position very near to the spot where the first column of their brethren had being repulsed. Adam's British brigade formed a line parallel to their left flank, and aided by Maitland's Guards, attacked the French with such fury that all their bravery and resistance was futile, and they, too, broke and fled back to their surviving comrades.

The Duke of Wellington now instantly formed the resolution of becoming himself the assailant. As the close approach of the Prussians now completely protected the Duke's left, he drew some reserves of horse from that quarter and added them to a brigade of Huzzars under Vivian. Without hesitation he launched these against the French cavalry near La Belle Alliance.

The charge was as successful as it was daring. As the French horse retreated under the severe punishment, Wellington gave the long-wished-for command for a general advance of the army upon the foe along the whole line.

As the Allies joyously sprang forward against the discomfited masses of the French the setting sun broke through the clouds, which had obscured the sky during the greater part of the day. Its bright rays glittered on the bayonets of the charging soldiers until the whole area they covered was dazzlingly lighted. With wild cries and mad cheers they poured down the

hillside and into the valley, then up towards the heights occupied by the French.

Foremost in the advance was the Duke himself. He rode in front of Adams' brigade, cheering it forward, and even galloped up to the foremost British skirmishers to give them a friendly word of encouragement. Around him whistled the bullets of both friend and foe. When one of the few survivors of his staff remonstrated with him, on one occasion, for thus exposing a life so valuable, he quickly retorted, "Never mind, never mind; let them fire away. The battle's won, and my life is of no consequence now!"

And, indeed, the battle did seem to be won. The French host was now in irreparable confusion. Some regiments of the Old Guard endeavored in vain to form in squares and stem the current. They were swept away and totally wrecked by the flying waves of Prussians. The daylight was now entirely gone. But the young moon had risen, and the light which it cast, aided by the awesome glare from scores of burning buildings in the line of the fleeing French, enabled Wellington, standing grimly on an elevation formerly occupied by his enemy, to understand that he had won the day.

Quite exhausted themselves from the long day's fight, the British allowed the Prussians alone to take up the pursuit of the vanquished. In merciless chase throughout that night they drove the French, giving them no chance to rally. Behind them the fugitives left a broad and heart-rending trail of wounded and dead. Crippled cannon, pieces of baggage—even small arms—lay scattered here and there along the moonlit way. As one survivor afterward wrote: "It was a hideous spectacle. The disorder and panic were indescribable. The mountain torrent that uproots and whirls along with it every infinitesimal obstacle, is a feeble image of that heap of fear-driven men, maddened horses, reeling equipage, gathering before the least object which dams up their way for a few seconds, only to scatter it like a straw as their numbers grow to sufficient strength. Woe to him whose

footing failed him in that deluge of rushing humanity! He was crushed, trampled to death! It was every man for himself!"

The French were pursued by the relentless Prussians through Quatre Bras, and even over the heights of Frasne. Finally they regained the left bank of the Sambre, which they had crossed in such pomp and splendor not a hundred hours before.

During the first few minutes of the rout, Napoleon did everything with his generals to reform his panic-stricken men. He succeeded in getting a portion of his Old Guard into a square. With him were Marshal Soult and Generals Bertrand, Drouot, Corbineau, De Flahaut and Gourgaud. The Emperor spoke of dying on the field. But Soult seized his bridle and turned his charger around, exclaiming, "Sire, are not the enemy already lucky enough?"

At this Napoleon consented to join the fugitives. Only by the utmost exertion of his devoted officers did he succeed in getting through their disorderly ranks alive. He first halted at Charleroi, but the approach of the pursuing Prussians, who slew those they overtook, drove him onward before he had had an hour's rest. With difficulty he cleared the wrecks of his own army and made his way to Philippeville. Here he remained a few hours, and sent orders to the French generals in the various extremities of France to converge with their troops upon Paris. He also sent word to Soult to collect the fugitives of his own force, and lead them to Laon. He then hurried on to Paris, where he arrived ahead of the news of his defeat.

But the stern truth soon came out. At the demand of the Chamber of Peers and Representatives, he abandoned the throne by a second and final abdication on June 22nd. And on the 29th he left Paris and proceeded to Rochefort in the hope of escaping to America. But the coast was closely watched, and on the 15th of July the ex-Emperor surrendered himself on board the English man-of-war *Bellerophon*.

Meanwhile the Allied armies had advanced steadily upon Paris, driving before them Grouchy's corps and the scanty force which Soult had managed to rally at Laon. Cambray, Peronne, and other fortresses, were speedily taken, and by the 29th of June the invaders were before Paris. Another battle was prevented by the Provisional Government of France signing articles of capitulation on the third day of July.

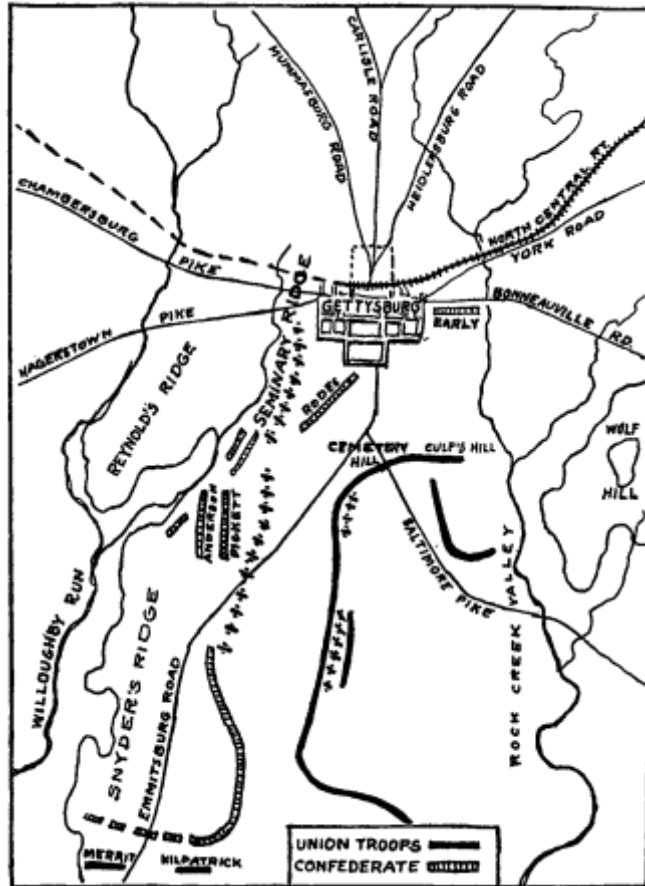
No returns were ever made by the French of their loss in the battle of Waterloo, but, compared with the British reports, it must have been immense. Of the army that fought under the Duke of Wellington nearly fifteen thousand were killed or wounded. In addition, seven thousand Prussians also fell.

At such a fearful price was the deliverance of Europe purchased in the war that began and ended in a single battle. By none, perhaps, was the severity of the British loss more keenly felt than by the Duke of Wellington himself. In a letter written almost immediately after his return from the field, he thus expresses himself:

"My heart is broken by the terrible loss I have sustained in the death of many of my old friends and companions, and my poor soldiers. Believe me, nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won. The bravery of my troops has saved me from the greater evil; but to win such a battle as this of Waterloo, at the expense of so many gallant friends, could only be termed a heavy misfortune except for the result to the public."

CHAPTER VI

GETTYSBURG



Above the bayonets, mixed and crossed,
Men saw a gray, gigantic ghost
Receding through the battle-cloud,
And heard across the tempest loud
The death-cry of a nation lost!
—Thompson.

I. SEMINARY RIDGE

If there had been such a thing as an airplane in the year 1863, and we could have been in it hovering over a certain large eminence in Virginia, we might have seen a good-sized town nestling upon the northern slope of this hill. This town is Gettysburg. It is now, on the last day of June, as little known as other American settlements of its size. But within the short space of seventy-two hours it is destined to become famous throughout the world as the scene of one of the most terrific and momentous battles of modern times.

Imagine a great fishing-hook, and you will have a very clear idea of the contour of this big hill, four hundred and eighty feet above the valley below Gettysburg. Standing now with your back toward the town, and your eye following the course of the hook on your left and to the southward, and towards its eye, you will find it crosses a slight depression a few hundred yards from the widest bulge of the bend, then begins to rise until it attains the top of Culp's Hill. Passing that, it terminates at the eye in what is termed McAllister's Hill. Along the base of this hilly ridge runs Rock Creek; and on the east side of it, opposite McAllister's Hill, rises another elevation called Wolf Hill, and from this point there continues northeastward a high ridge for a considerable distance.

Turning now to the other side of the hook you will observe that it is about three miles long, whereas the other was but two. You will also note that it is more uniform in its course, although otherwise characterized by the same general outlines. A few hundred yards from the point of the bend is a bluff. This is followed by a depression for a half-mile, where the ridge is less than twenty feet above Steven's Run, a rivulet. Then the ground rises rapidly into a bold, rocky ledge known as Little Round Top. Another dip, and still another elevation looms up which is called plain Round Top.

The distance across the hook, from barb to lower shank, is something like two and one-half miles, and the circumference about five miles. Within the hook the ground is low and tolerably level, but as you approach the bend it becomes hilly, emerging abruptly into a height called Cemetery Hill. The Baltimore Pike and the Taneytown Road enter Gettysburg through the level space within the hook, and cross it at the end.

Looking toward the north, right over the tops of the houses on the westerly side of Gettysburg, you will see a ridge about a mile away on the farther side of the valley, running nearly north and south, but much lower than the Cemetery Hill. On this ridge stands the Lutheran Seminary, and the ridge itself is called Seminary Ridge. Beyond, at short intervals, ridge and valley succeed each other until the South Mountain range terminates the rugged scene.

Woods rich in their summer foliage stand as a beautiful green framework around the cultivated fields on this fine last June day. Here and there the vagrant crows fly peacefully and thievingly about the planted lands. But the wary birds are more watchful than usual, for many strange men in uniform, and carrying guns, have come down the roads of late and camped in large parties near Gettysburg. What does it mean? Well, may the crows ask the question. For soon, very soon, there is to go up from those peaceful, brooding fields such a terrific thunder of guns, and clatter of steel, and cry of man, as to scare those crows into the very densest clusters of the topmost boughs of the tallest trees for many long, weary hours to come!

Yes, for several days Rebel troops, both infantry and cavalry, have visited Gettysburg, and numerous bodies of soldiers are hovering on the north side of the town. And now came the first of their enemy, in the form of General Buford, who rides into the town about ten o'clock at the head of six thousand Federal cavalry. Passing on through Gettysburg, he takes position on the farm of the Honorable E. McPherson, where he sets his guns and makes preparations to resist an attack.

But he is not alone in the vicinity in the midst of so many of the enemy. Far from it. General Meade, in command of the Union army, by evening is at Taneytown, thirteen miles southeast; the First Corps of his army, under General Reynolds, is at Marsh Run, seven miles south; the Eleventh Corps, under General Howard, is at Emmettsburg, three miles south; and the Third Corps, under General Sickles, is at Bridgeport, five miles southeast of Emmettsburg.

Hastily preparing to meet this array of Federal forces, the Confederate army marches slowly toward Gettysburg with about sixty thousand men, coming in close ranks from the Potomac. When they arrive, their total force will equal seventy-five thousand, with two hundred and eighty-seven cannon. On the other hand the Union army will total about eighty thousand men, with three hundred and seventy cannon.

Through the night couriers are coming and going over all the roads around Gettysburg. General Buford, from the cupola of the Lutheran Seminary, looking westward, can see the glimmering bivouac-fires of Hill's Confederate corps in the fields of Cashtown. He is very sure Hill's men will advance and attack him in the morning. So he sends a messenger to General Meade at Taneytown, asking for reinforcements.

It is eight o'clock on the morning of July 1st. The early sun's rays are glinting from the spires of Gettysburg when a cavalryman comes dashing down the hill past Herr's tavern, and informs Buford that the Confederates are coming. A few minutes later and they reach the tavern, which occupies a position on the other side of the unfinished railroad and deep cut fronting the Seminary. The Confederate cannoneers jump from the limbers, wheel their cannon, and send a ball whirring across the depression. This is quickly answered by Lieutenant Rodes, commanding two guns of Calef's Federal battery on the ridge just north of McPherson's house, and a shell is thrown toward the tavern, screaming out its mortal challenge.

Thus the great battle begins. No one has selected the ground. Buford has been directed to hold Gettysburg at all costs. Heth, his opponent, has been ordered by Lee to advance on Gettysburg.

The Confederates descend the slope towards Willoughby Run, when suddenly from the grove of fine hickories and oak about the Seminary, there comes a volley of musketry which arrests their advance. The fire is so determined that General Heth believes he is confronted by a large column of infantry, and at once sends word to General Pender to advance and assist him. While that division is on its way from Cashtown, the cannonading goes on between his force at the tavern and the Union troops on Seminary Ridge, accompanied by the rattling fire of musketry.

From the cupola of the Seminary, General Buford looks out and down upon the scene. He sees a group of horsemen coming up the Emmetsburg road, and still farther away the sunlight glints on many an approaching Union gun barrel and bayonet. Buford has already sent a cavalryman to guide these welcome reinforcements. They leave the turnpike at Mr. Codori's house, and turn northwest across the fields. A few minutes later the brave General Reynolds hastens forward and shakes hands with Buford.

The two officers retire to the cupola. They sweep the horizon with their glasses—anxiously. Afar off, on the Chambersburg pike, they see another party of the enemy coming. It is Pender's Division, hurrying along at full speed to assist Heth.

Now General Reynolds sends couriers riding down the Emmetsburg road to General Howard, asking the Eleventh to hasten to Gettysburg. Other couriers seek out Wadsworth's division, who are bivouacked on Marsh Run. The word goes quickly. All are needed to support Buford and Reynolds on Seminary Ridge.

As the brigade of General Cutler, leading the way, goes across the fields, which are cleared by axemen and pioneers who tear down the rail fences, they see an old gray-haired man coming across the meadow from his small one-story house on the Chambersburg road at the western end of the town. This is John Burns, a veteran of the Mexican war. He has his trusty gun in his hand, and eagerly joins one of the passing regiments. With it he will fight valiantly until he is finally wounded and carried off the field.

In strong contrast to this spirited aged fighter, there is a boy named John Weakly, but fourteen years old. With gun, soldier's cap and blue blouse, he marches proudly along with the men of the Twelfth Massachusetts. He is thin, pale, and not very strong. But his spirit is something wonderful to behold. He has begged long of Colonel Bates, commanding the regiment, to be mustered in as a soldier, and at last has been accepted. Poor, happy boy! before dark he will be lying upon the field, his young blood staining the green grass from two wounds, one in his right arm and another in his thigh.

In the meantime, Heth, finding only dismounted cavalrymen in front of him, has sent Archer's brigade across the stream and is driving Gamble, step by step, back towards the Seminary. North of the turnpike Davis's Confederate brigade is sweeping across the fields, compelling Devin to fall back. From Herr's Tavern Pegram's sixteen guns are sending shot and shell upon Calef's and Devin's unprotected troops. Pender's division is deploying in the fields of Herr's Tavern.

By this time all the forces on both sides, constantly growing, are more or less engaged. The atmosphere is thick with drifting cannon and musketry smoke, and the smell of burning powder is strong everywhere. Slowly the Union cavalry in the woods falls back. The Confederates, under Archer, press forward, cross Willoughby Run, and pick their way through the thicket and tangled vines along its banks, taking position on its eastern side. Here the conflict is renewed at close range with strong effect.

About ten o'clock, General Reynolds comes riding down through McPherson's field into the woods, where the air is thick with bullets. As he issues instructions to a staff-officer of General Doubleday's, he is a conspicuous figure on his horse. The Confederates are but a few rods distant, and can see that he is giving important directions. A sharpshooter singles him out, and pulls the trigger. His aim is true. At the crack of the musket, the gallant Reynolds pitches from his animal, a bullet through his brain, and dies without a sound.

The sad news runs along the lines of the "Iron Brigade," as Meredith's has been called. The men are determined to avenge the death of their beloved commander. Meredith himself gives the command to charge, and in spite of their desperate defense, the Confederate line of Archer crumbles like dust, retreating to the other side of the stream.

General Howard succeeds General Reynolds in command of the right wing of the Union army, and the fighting continues at various points, with the Union getting a little the best of it.

In mid-afternoon Lieutenant Wilkeson, in charge of Battery G, Fourth United States Artillery, is sorely wounded on a knoll near Rock Creek while defending the place against Early's advancing Confederates. A rifled cannon shot strikes Wilkeson in the right leg, crushing the bones and mangling the flesh. His soldiers lay him tenderly on the ground. With great and admirable composure the young officer ties his handkerchief around the wound, twists it into a tourniquet, then with his own hand and knife severs the cords and tendons by which the lower extremity is held to the upper. He now coolly directs the firing of his men at the enemy, till forcibly carried off the field. Before morning his brave spirit will have succumbed to the Angel of Death.

A little later that day General Paul is made totally blind for life by a bullet which passes between his eyes. General Robinson has two horses shot from under him, but is himself

uninjured. This occurs during the retreat of the First and Eleventh Corps down the Carlisle and Harrisburg roads—the first pretentious falling back of the Union forces that day. As the Union men retreat, they turn about and walk backward, fighting desperately for every foot of ground they relinquish to Early's Confederates. General Barlow falls, and is taken prisoner. General Schimmelpfennig manages to conceal himself under some loose pieces of wood in the shed of a Mr. Garloch's home. Here, fed by the children of the household, he hides for three days, undiscovered by the searching enemy.

About four o'clock General Hancock receives instructions from General Meade to take command of the troops at Gettysburg. And not more than an hour later General Lee, his contemporary, arrives upon the scene. Lee is much pleased at the success of his troops thus far in the battle. He tells General Longstreet that he is sure his men can defeat Meade's army, and that on the morrow they will make a decided attack and finish up with Meade in quick order.

General Stuart has captured four hundred prisoners and over two hundred wagons.

The skirmishing is kept up till darkness puts an end to it, no marked advantage accruing to either side. The Union cavalry bivouac near the town, while Stuart makes an all-night march to get away from Kilpatrick. Horses and men are worn out. Whole regiments fall asleep; horses stumble wearily, bringing their riders to the ground.

Thus closes the first day of July. It finds the Confederate army well concentrated, and greatly elated at an anticipated victory. The Union army, on the other hand, is widely separated still, and considerably dispirited by the defeat of two corps with heavy loss.

II. LITTLE ROUND TOP

It was one o'clock in the morning of July 2nd when General Meade, who on Sunday had accepted the great trust laid upon him by President Lincoln, came up the Taneytown road, and dismounted from his horse in front of the home of a Mrs. Leister. He was worn out from want of sleep and from constant thinking of the great war problem that had lately been confronting him.

General Hancock had informed him that the position to which the First and Eleventh corps had retreated was a strong one. He had now come to see. With General Howard he rode along the lines. The moon was shining, and he could dimly make out the general features of the country. He noted that Culp's Hill was covered with trees; that its northern side was sharp and steep; that Cemetery Hill commanded a wide sweep of country; that there was a low ridge running southeast towards Little Round Top, two miles from the cemetery.

And a little later, sitting upon his horse amid the white headstones of the cemetery itself, he could look over the houses in the town, and see Seminary Ridge, where the First Corps had fought so stubbornly the day before; could see, also, the level fields to the northward, where the Eleventh Corps had stood. More than this, he could trace the dark line of forest extending southward from the Seminary, and see that the entire region would be under the sweep of artillery placed in the cemetery and north of it, along the ridge. It was a place where it seemed possible a battle might be successfully fought by holders.

General Meade lost no time in directing Generals Warren and Slocum to examine the ground in front of Culp's Hill, with a view to attacking Lee in that direction. As a result of this examination, from two o'clock till daylight Union soldiers, with axes, picks and shovels, were hard at work erecting breastworks on Culp's Hill, on Cemetery Hill, and in the grove of oaks on the farm of Mr. Zeigler, south of the cemetery.

General Lee was up very early that morning. Even before the sun appeared he was eating his breakfast in his tent north of the Seminary. General Longstreet came to see him from Cashtown, and tried to dissuade the Confederate commander from attacking the Union army; but General Lee had made up his mind firmly to do so. General Hill came, and also General Heth, who was wounded in the head the day previous and now wore a handkerchief bound about the injury. Up in a tree nearby was Lieutenant-Colonel Freemantle, of the British army. He was looking across the fields with his glass at the Union position. With him were a Prussian and an Austrian officer. The South had drawn among many nationalities.

So, except for minor exchanges of shots among pickets of both sides as they hid along the fences and in wheat fields, and the occasional boom of a cannon from the Union forces among the white headstones in the cemetery, answered invariably by a similar boom of a Confederate big gun sending a ball whirring over the town, the morning of the second day passed comparatively free from noteworthy incident.

If you were to ride up the Baltimore turnpike, you would meet the Union Twelfth Corps on your right, partly hidden from view by the woods. You would pass the toll-gate, from which the old tollman had fled. You would reach the summit of the hill, where, on your right, the soldiers of the Eleventh Corps were lying down in the long grasses; and, on your left, where those of the First Corps were crouching watchfully behind a stonewall. On both sides you would note that breastworks had been thrown up behind which the artillerymen were shielding themselves.

Suppose you climb the stairs of the arched gateway of the cemetery, and behold the grand panorama of the field where yesterday's battle has been fought—the town, with its red brick houses, its Gothic spires and steeples, the white walls of the Pennsylvania College north of the town; the Almshouse beyond, where Barlow's division has fought and left its line of dead. With your glass you can see scores of prostrate forms—men and horse—still lying where they fell.

A yellow flag is flying above the cupola of the Theological Seminary, which has been turned into a hospital. The field in the distance, by Herr's Tavern, where the Confederate cannon had been planted, is dotted with white tents. Trains of wagons are winding along the turn-pikes, and horsemen are riding savagely. Southward are fields and woodlands and farm-houses—the ground where yet the greatest battle is to be fought. Eastward is Culp's Hill, dotted with Union soldiers busily throwing up earthworks. Just around the circle, upon Cemetery Hill, cannon are thickly planted, some pointing north, others west, others southwest.

On the Emmetsburg road it is not difficult to make out the brick house of Mr. Codori, with its large barn. Beyond, to the west, is the farm-house of Mr. Sherfy, close to an orchard of peach-trees, whence the cross-road runs eastward towards Little Round Top. Notice the cannon along the Emmetsburg road, and the troops of the Third Corps as they rest themselves, kindling fires and cooking coffee, after their hard march from Emmetsburg. By the house of Mrs. Leister, on the Taneytown road, the headquarters' flag of General Meade is waving. The Second Corps is on the ridge west of it. Long lines of white-topped wagons dot the landscape eastward.

From the first General Meade was in great uncertainty as to the intentions of Lee. Had he known that the latter's attack would be postponed that day till four o'clock, there is little doubt but that Meade would have taken the offensive early in the morning and made an effort to occupy the enemy line. But he did not know this, expecting an attack at any moment, and on account of the vast risks involved in taking a chance he had decided on a strictly defensive attitude.

A few minutes after four, the Confederate troops of Ewell moved east towards Culp's Hill, and at once the Union batteries on Cemetery Hill opened up fire on them. At this time Lee's army consisted of forty brigades, eighteen of which were in position to take part in the attack upon the six brigades of the

Third Corps, which must look to the Second and Fifth Corps for any needed assistance.



GENERAL MEADE'S HEADQUARTERS.

The sun was going down in the western heavens. It was the waning time of a beautiful afternoon. Swallows twittered and flitted around the eaves of Mrs. Leister's humble home, quite unmindful of the hurried coming and going of men on horseback. Fleecy white clouds flecked the sky. A gentle breeze, yet untainted with tile nauseating nitrous and sulphurous fumes of battle, blew soothingly across from the southwest.

But now the rattling fire of musketry from Stoughton's sharpshooters comes echoing across the fields as scores of bullets are sent into the ranks of Law's Alabama brigade in the vicinity of Culp's Hill. Repulsed twice, with more than a fourth of his men fallen, Colonel Sheffield, of the Forty-eighth Alabama, still came on.

The sharpshooters give way to superior numbers. Onward through the woods, crossing the brook south of Mr. Rose's home, past his spring-house, marched Law's and Robertson's brigades, closely following the retreating Federals.

Soon they were in the woods, where there were large trees and boulders. They began to descend the slope towards the position held by Ward.

In a short time they had reached their welcome haven. Ward prepared to give the enemy a warm reception as soon as he showed himself. Presently they came rushing up. Four cannon of the Union force began to spit fire. This was followed immediately by a deafening clatter of musketry, also from the Union men. Wild yells of challenge arose from the Texans of Hood's division, and these turned into wilder cheers as the Confederates staggered and fell back.

In this manner a Confederate artilleryman in this engagement describes it:

"The Federal infantry on the slope of the hill were thick as flies in summer time, and were assisted by artillery which poured a stream of shrapnel into our ranks. Rhea's battery of our battalion were already blazing away from the crest of the hill, and are said to have lost thirty men in as many minutes.

"At the order, 'Cannoneers, mount! Forward!' we rushed between the already moving cannon-wheels, and nimbly sprang into our seats—all except John Hightower, who missed his hold, and the great heavy weight of the vehicle rolled over his form. Did we halt? No! Not if your brother falls by your side must you heed his dying cry in an emergency like this! Such is the grim discipline of war.

"Never shall I forget the scene presented on this hill opposite Round Top. The Federal shrapnel rattled like hail through the trees around us, while our confused infantry swayed first back-ward, then forward, in and out, like a storm-cloud vexed by contrary winds. But after a few moments we had rallied. Our charging Georgians swept down the slope, cheering madly, driving the Union men before us."

Suppose that once more you act, young reader, the part of a spectator at this great drama of war. Suppose you clatter

over the rocks on your horse up the steep sides of Little Round Top, where stands an officer of the Signal Corps and his assistant. The whole panorama of the battle lies before, as it does before them.

At your feet is Plum Run and a meadow thickly strewn with boulders. Beyond them a bit is the Devil's Den, with Ward's brigade and the four guns of Smith's battery on the edge of a wheatfield. And up the line, beyond another grove, rests Bigelow's Ninth Massachusetts, Phillips's Fifth Massachusetts, and Clark's batteries. In the peach orchard is Hart's. Along the Emmetsburg road you see a line of guns, all smoking.

A white cloud is rising from the woods between the Devil's Den and Rose's house, with rolls of musketry mingling with the heavy reverberations of field-pieces. From the timber by Warfield's house, the Confederate cannon are sending solid shot and shells towards the peach orchard. Northward towards the Seminary, and the scene of the 'first day's battle, Confederate artillery is throwing its heavy missiles through the air. The Seminary itself is almost hidden in a white cloud of smoke. Union ambulances dash out of the woods and go tearing toward the Taneytown road. Galloping over the fields and pastures are staff-officers carrying orders.

The battle-cloud is too dense to see what is going on beyond the Confederate lines, but from the woods comes a prolonged yell from the South's soldiers, mingled, from another point, with the hurrahs of the Union men. The air is thick with shells. White clouds suddenly burst into view where before there was only the blue sky. There is a singing, whining sound of musketry bullets all through the air, commingled with the whirring, shrieking sounds of jagged pieces of iron from the heavier weapons.

The battle came nearer. It began to break at the foot of Little Round Top, on the flank of the Fourth Maine. Now a battery of the Fifth Artillery arrived with their rifled cannon, and took up a position on the top of the elevation. Vincent's brigade

followed. A few minutes later the battle was raging furiously on the western slope and around the summit.

Slowly the Confederates gained ground around the left flank of the Union troops. Vincent, Weed, Hazlett and Colonel O'Rorke all fell. All at once the Confederates were surprised to receive a heavy volley from behind their backs. This came from a squad of Union men sheltered behind rocks and trees—in fact, from the sharp-shooters of Stoughton's regiment, which we have encountered before. Robertson's Confederate troops turned to see whence the volley came, whereupon Vincent's troops sprang over the rocks and dashed down the hill capturing two colonels, fifteen minor officers, and nearly five hundred prisoners, driving the enemy back to the boulders of Devil's Den.

Not long after this General Sickles was wounded, and Hancock was sent to take his place. A little later the Mississippians gave a great cheer as they rushed forward and captured Bigelow's four guns. South of them Wofford was pushing towards the ridge when there came a sheet of flame from its crest. It was McGilvery's opening fire, and was so destructive that the advancing Georgians could not face it and were compelled to find shelter behind rocks, trees and fences.

It was now seven o'clock, the sun all but gone. The time had come for Longstreet to hurl the whole of Alexander's division of Confederates into the conflict. On the other hand, Hancock had ordered in nearly all of Gibbon's division.

In the meadow east of Codori's house the fight rages with great violence—as it does at almost all points just now. Here, in an effort to reach Cemetery Ridge, Generals Willard and Barksdale both receive mortal wounds.

The Sixth and Twelfth corps arrive, but will they be in season to roll back the Confederates before they gain possession of the ridge? Hancock comes up. Pointing to the dim figures of the advancing foe, he cries, "Colonel Coville, advance and take those colors!"

There is a cheer as the Federals rush forward. The powerful Enfield rifles of the Southerners do great damage. Men fall on every side. But the gaps are closed as fast as they occur, and the Federal soldiers press bravely on, firing as they go. Soon the enemy becomes demoralized, breaks and flees, leaving behind many prisoners and dead and wounded.

Though the contest had ceased in the fields around Codori's and Trostle's farm-houses, it began suddenly amid the woods on Culp's Hill and on the northern slope of Cemetery Hill. Johnson captured the Union breastworks on Culp's Hill, and on Cemetery Hill Hays's and Hoke's brigades engaged in a fierce hand-to-hand combat with the Eleventh Corps, but were finally repulsed.

It was ten o'clock before the engagement ceased. So ended the second day.

III. CEMETERY RIDGE

The clouds hung low upon the hills. It was a sultry morning—this one of July 3rd—the third one of the battle. Two guns, deep and heavy, boomed across the fields with the first gray streaks of dawn. They were Union cannon, with an ominous threat in their deep-throated growl. As plain as could be they said, "Watch out for me; I am coming after you."

In other words, General Meade had taken the defensive, determined to recover Culp's Hill. His big guns were telling General Lee that the Union army was ready to fight it out on the spot; that, instead of being disheartened they were about to put forth every ounce of their aggressive strength.

Now two other cannon—these from Culp's Hill and the Confederates in possession of the breastworks there—answer the challenge. And, one by one, others join in from various points of the compass till the calm of the early hours is a perfect bedlam of sound.

Colonel Colgrove's brigade formed in a grove between the turnpike and Rock Creek. On his right was the Twenty-seventh Indiana; then came the Second Massachusetts. They were to charge across the marshy lowland and the brook which winds through it, to strike the left of the Confederate line. It was but a few rods. Five minutes would suffice to carry them across the meadow.

The signal was given, and they moved on. There came a volley—a terrible, crashing volley. Men dropped, but the living continued forward on the run.

The five minutes were up. Back drifted the remnant of that valiant, spirited brigade—broken, shattered.

On a granite boulder near the eastern edge of the meadow there stands to-day an imposing tablet erected by the survivors of the Second Massachusetts. Thus it reads:

"From the hill behind this monument, on the morning of July 3rd, 1863, the Second Massachusetts Infantry made an assault on the Confederate troops in the works at the base of Culp's Hill, opposite. The regiment carried into the charge twenty-two officers and two hundred and ninety-four enlisted men. It lost four officers and forty-one enlisted men killed, and six officers and eighty-four enlisted men wounded."

Back over the meadow they retreated, followed by the exultant Confederates. But suddenly they re-formed among the trees, faced bravely about, and within a very brief time the ground was strewn with the enemy dead and wounded from their deliberate volleys.

From seven o'clock till eleven there was a ceaseless hurricane of fire, all wholly in the woods and for the possession of the breastworks on the crest of the height. From behind every tree and boulder shots were proceeding. The oaks were pitted with bullets as if stricken with the smallpox. Gradually the

Confederates were pushed back. Finally, in a violent charge by the Union troops, they lost three stands of colors, two thousand killed and wounded, and five hundred prisoners.

At eleven o'clock the Union line was intact once more, holding the ground from Culp's Hill to Cemetery Hill, and thence to the summit of Round Top, with breastworks nearly the entire distance.

Cemetery Ridge, south of Zeigler's Grove, is lower than Codori's house. General Lee confidently believed that he could open fire with all his artillery upon the Union lines from an assaulting column in the woods west of Codori's; that when the Union line had become demoralized by this cannonading he could sweep his troops across the field west of the Emmetsburg road, hurl them like a thunderbolt upon the Union troops south of Zeigler's Grove, divide Meade's line at the center, and fold the two halves back—one upon Little Round Top, the other upon Culp's Hill—as he would open two folding-doors, thus acquiring a masterful victory in a single crushing blow. At the same instant, he thought, he would have Stuart's cavalry gain the rear of the Federal army, east of Culp's Hill, fall upon Meade's wagons, and make the rout complete.

As indications pointed to a renewal of the battle on the part of the Confederates, every Union officer along the line was on the alert—especially along the ridge between Zeigler's Grove and Little Round Top, where Lee's attack had been anticipated. Robinson's division of the First Corps was in the grove. Then came Hays's division of the Second Corps—the front line along a stone wall, and the second line east of the crest of the ridge. Beyond was Gibbon's division, concealed behind a fence, the rails of which had been taken down by the soldiers and laid in a pile during the forenoon, and a shallow trench scooped out to accommodate their prostrate bodies. A small copse of scrub-oak marked the last-named position. Three regiments of Stannard's Vermont brigade were in front of the main line, encircling a copse of trees and tangled vines.

The troops selected by Lee to coöperate in the attack consisted in Hill's corps and Pickett's division—in all, twenty-one brigades, under the direction of Longstreet, that there might be united action under one commander. Pickett and his men had not yet taken part in any of the encounters, having only the night previous come upon the scene from Chambersburg. They were all fresh, and eager for their part, especially the gallant Southern leader himself. On the other hand, Longstreet was doubtful of Lee's wisdom in the movement, and had frankly admitted to the high commander previously that he did not believe the hill could be carried.

Of the Confederates, Pickett's, Anderson's and Heth's divisions were to lead in the assault. They were to be supported by the divisions of Pender, Rodes and Trimble. To insure success the troops were to advance in a column or lines of brigades. In the peach orchard, Colonel Alexander had seventy-five cannon, and along the woods, behind Hill's troops, were sixty-three more. All of these were to fire directly upon the cemetery and the ridge south of it as soon as the general advance took place, which was to be announced by two cannon shots.

Pitted against these guns of the Confederates, General Hunt, commanding the Union artillery, had compactly arranged forty-one cannon on the crest of the ridge, under McGilvery. Well to the right was the artillery of the Second Corps. Woodruff's battery was in Zeigler's Grove; and on his left were posted twenty-six additional guns, under Cushing, Arnold, Brown and Rorty. There were also a few others here and there, making a total of seventy-one Union guns to oppose nearly one hundred and fifty of the enemy. And, moreover, they were on an open crest, plainly visible from all parts of the line.

At just five minutes past one, Washington time, two cannon shots broke in upon the tense stillness which had ominously pervaded the scene for some little time. It was the signal of Lee for the advance of his men.

Instantly from below the peach orchard, northward to the Theological Seminary, came a heavy rain of solid shot and shells from more than one hundred and fifty cannon. The air seemed to be full of large missiles. The next moment there came a startling crash from the Union artillery—all the batteries—those on Little Round Top, those along the ridge, those in the cemetery, those sprinkled around the western slope of Culp's Hill.

The din now was something terrific. It seemed every big gun in the vicinity was barking its loudest. From Round Top to Cemetery Hill the Confederate positions were blazing like a volcano. General Meade's headquarters were directly in the line of enemy fire from over a hundred cannon. The balls from these tore through the frail house as if it were made of cardboard, while shells exploded in the yard, wounding horses, cutting down peach-trees, ripping open bags of oats—and finally sending the commander-in-chief, with his staff and several newspaper correspondents, in quest of better shelter. This was found in the shape of a spot beside a huge boulder in the woods to the eastward, where the headquarters flag was stuck in the ground, and where the General continued to calmly give out his orders, sitting on a camp chair and using the top of the rock for a writing-table. One hundred missiles a minute swept across the ridge, crashing through baggage wagons and ambulances, exploding caissons, and adding indescribable horror to the scene. One Confederate shell alone, bursting in the cemetery, killed and wounded twenty-seven men!

For upwards of an hour the terrible storm howls and rages. Then there comes a sudden silence on the part of the Union guns. This is occasioned by General Hunt suspecting the intention of Lee to follow up the cannonading with an advance; and wishing to conserve his ammunition for the decisive moment, Hunt wisely orders a cessation. The gunners, hot and tired, throw themselves on the cool ground, grateful for the respite.

The Confederate artillery continues to blaze away, while Colonel Anderson dispatches a courier to Pickett imploring him

to make his attack without delay or his (Anderson's) ammunition will be so low that he will be unable to lend Pickett proper support.

"Shall I advance, sir?" asks Pickett of Longstreet. Longstreet rides away without deigning to reply. It is clear he has no faith in the success of the charge, and does not wish to commit himself.

At this Pickett, relying entirely upon Lee's former order, decides to go ahead. His division sweeps suddenly out of the woods, showing the full length of its long gray ranks and shining bayonets, as grand a martial sight as man ever looked upon. Joining on his left wing, Pettigrew adds to the stretch with his own brigade of Confederates. How imposing, how irresistible they look, these men from the South, as they dash determinedly across the field toward the Union position!

As for the Federals, they lose little time in admiring the oncoming gray horde. Up from the ground in the cemetery spring the cannoneers. They quickly run their guns forward, and pointing them toward the force of Pickett, begin to make them "talk." Simultaneously the cannon on Little Round Top breaks the silence again. But the Union cannon on the ridge are still dumb; their time has not yet come.

The front line of the approaching Confederates reaches the Emmetsburg road, the Union pickets falling back. There is an ominous silence along Cemetery Ridge, still. On, on, come the men in gray. Now they are within musket range of the Federals on the ridge.

Just as they are crossing the road north of Codori's house, the woods along the ridge spits fire from end to end, and solid shot and shell go hurtling through the quivering air into Pickett's ranks. The Confederates descend the gentle slope, leaving many behind, but still advancing. Now comes the first roll of musketry. It emanates from the guns of two Vernlont regiments, thrown out in front of the main line.

This time the Confederates stagger. They halt, return the fire bravely—and then advance again. Another volley from the Union infantry-men. Garnett falls dead; Kemper goes down, wounded. Armistead, the only general officer of the division after Pickett, waves his sword; his gray hair is there, but forgotten, "Come on, boys!" he cries. And they rush on towards the wall from behind which Gibbon's and Hays's troops have been firing upon them so disastrously. Before they have gone three rods, the gray-haired leader throws up his hands, and falls mortally wounded.



BATTLEFIELD OF GETTYSBURG FROM ROUND TOP.

At this time the supporting brigades on the left were coming within cannister range of the Federals, and the double-shotted cannon in the cemetery were cutting them to pieces, the howitzers firing twice in sixty seconds—a death tempest so pitiless that the Confederate troops melted away like snowflakes in a warm spring rain. Soon the men broke in great disorder. Officers tried to rally them, but in vain. Even the importunities of their admired and beloved Pickett failed to inject sufficient courage into them to prompt another effort forward.

In the meanwhile, the brigades of Pickett had gained the stonewall, and were pouring their volleys into the faces of the Sixty-ninth and Seventy-first Pennsylvania of Webb's brigade. Slowly they are forced back by Armistead's men; and Robert Tyler, seventeen years old, a grandson of ex-President Tyler, is the first to proudly plant the Southern colors on the wall.

Barely is the standard in place when a rifle cracks. A bullet tears through young Tyler's shoulder. He falls, carrying the banner with him. As he tries to rise another bullet lays the brave boy low forever.

Wildly the Confederates rush up to the muzzles of Cushing's cannon. Cushing fires his last shot, and falls dead beside his guns. There is a desperate struggle. Bayonets are thrust wickedly at short jab. Where room permits, the stocks are clubbed. Pistols go off so close to the victims' faces that powder marks border the ugly wounds. Men without weapons, or with broken ones, use their fists. No loose stone is permitted to lie long, but goes hurtling against some poor fellow's head, stretching him stark.

Hancock is everywhere along the line. He orders Stannard to strike the enemy in the flank, calls upon Devereux to take his Nineteenth Massachusetts and fill the gap by Cushing's guns, commands the brigades of the Second Corps to press in. Smyth's brigade is confronting Pettigrew, while Harrow's brigade comes from the left, and the Eighth Ohio closes in upon his flank. All these forces cluster about and support the two Vermont brigades which originally held the wall, and which are still fighting heroically.

In the mêlée, uproar, confusion and carnage, amid the roar of cannon, rattle of musketry, bursting of shells, whirring and shrieking of canister and musket-balls, amid yells and oaths, cheers and commands, brave deeds are done momentarily by Confederate and Union soldier and officer alike. There is an utter disregard of life; men in blue and men in gray are animated by one thought only—to win.

Fifteen minutes! But it seems an hour! When General Pickett looks around for his supports they are not there. There is no one to fold back the door which he has opened, and which has already closed again. The cannon in the cemetery have decimated his supporting brigades on the left, and those which were to have appeared at his right are still, by some misunderstanding of orders, far back, west of the Emmetsburg road.

There is no help for them now. Surrounded, a retreat will mean annihilation. Four thousand five hundred throw down their arms and surrender, while those farther away from the stone wall seek safety in flight. Then, from Little Round Top all the way to Cemetery Ridge, there rises a mighty chorus of voices shouting the paean of victory, which rises even above that awful roar of other battle noises.

The conflict has ceased in Codori's fields, but south of Round Top and out on Rummel's farm the cavalry is still engaged. The Union troops here make an effort to capture some of Long-street's trains and also create a diversion which will prevent him from advancing once more against Little Round Top. Farnsworth is mortally wounded by the Confederate infantry, and his troops repulsed.

The First New Jersey Regiment, under Stuart, advances across a level field in the direction of Mr. Rummel's house. Suddenly from the barn swarms a strong body of dismounted Confederates. Muskets and carbines begin to rattle. A Confederate battery appears at the edge of the woods to assist, but is counterbalanced by the arrival of Randol's Union battery. Hard the men on both sides fight. Stuart knows no fear or flinch. Hampton is equally as gallant. But the spirit of the South has been broken by the defeat of Pickett. After a while it tells, and his brave men in gray fall slowly back, just as the sun is going down.

It is the last blow. The battle of Gettysburg has been fought and lost by General Lee. More than twenty thousand of

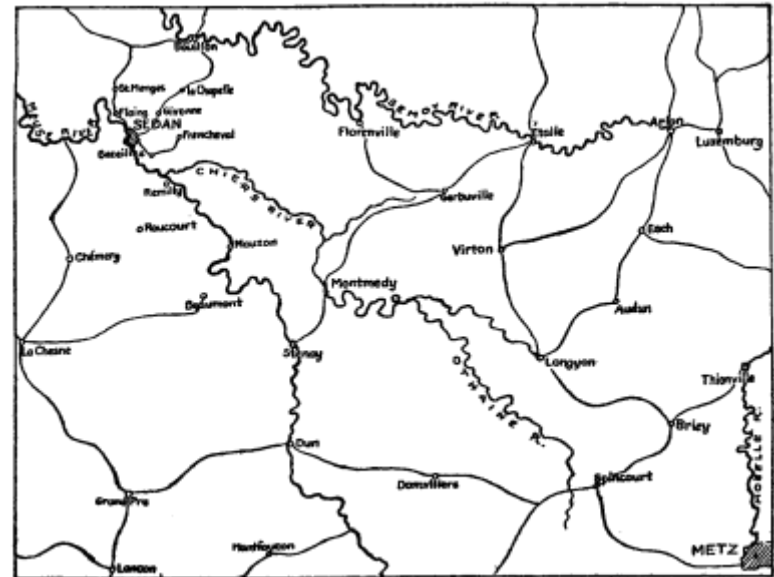
his men may be counted in the total list of killed, wounded and prisoners.

No wonder that the night of the third day is one of gloom and despondency for the Confederates! Nearly every one of their regiments has taken part in the engagement, with frightful losses. All the way from Fredericksburg had they come with a feeling of contempt for the Union army, and a confidence in victory. Now how bitter the reversal of feeling! The morning of July 4th dawns—anniversary of the Declaration of Independence—the birth of a great nation. From Cemetery Hill you may see with your glasses the white canvas tops of many army wagons and ambulances, far away in the southwest, moving toward the mountains, in the direction of the Potomac.

It is the Confederates, enacting the last sad scene of the intense conflict. The very gait of horse, the very posture of man, as they go, tell you of heavy hearts caused by a long-held hope crushingly shattered.

CHAPTER VII

SEDAN



Around the borders of the trap,
The German host, with sardonic grin,
Shoot at the hapless French within—
Until resistance, bound to snap,
At last gives up to those iron shod
Who came to snatch this ground of God.
—Curtis.

I. THE INVESTMENT

In the latter part of August, 1870, during the Franco-German War, Marshal MacMahon set out from Chalons with the purpose of effecting the relief of Metz, where Bazaine had been

locked up by the German forces, after the series of engagements terminating with the battle of Gravelotte.

MacMahon was at the head of the Second Army Corps, but was really the acting commander-in-chief of the French forces, in association with Emperor Napoleon. He was now sixty-three years old—an age not too far advanced for activity of mind and body, yet sufficiently so for a wide range and variety of valuable experience. He had served with distinction in Algeria, and had acquired a brilliant name in Crimea, although it was in the Italian war of 1859 that he finally established his reputation as one of the ablest commanders of the time.

Even before the declaration of war, Prussia had begun to mobilize her troops, and to make other preparations for the conflict—a condition of affairs not unlike her movements in the late World War, showing the same degree of extensive cunning, planning and conditioning, from which it is easy to guess she knew what was coming before her adversaries ever dreamed of it. In the Franco-German War she had brought to the front, within less than three weeks after declaration of hostilities, as many as half a million highly-trained soldiers, and back of them was one of the most perfect military organizations of directors, under Count von Moltke and Count Bismarck, that the world had ever known. The Third and Fourth German armies, by forced marches, succeeded in barring the way to Metz, and pressed the French northward towards the Belgian frontier, which it was a part of the German plan to compel them to cross. MacMahon, however, after several days' fighting, chose the alternative of throwing himself into the fortress of Sedan, and occupied the heights which surrounded the fortress on the east, north, and west.

The early dawn of Thursday, September 1st, therefore, found Marshal MacMahon in his position of defense, confronted by enormous masses of the enemy, who opened a vigorous fire shortly after daylight.

During the night the Prussians had received reinforcements which occupied the heights of Frencheval. The French also had been strengthened by some fresh corps, but even then they were greatly outnumbered by the enemy, who had at his command nearly two hundred and forty thousand men, with nearly seven hundred guns.

It was now the plan of the Germans to have the Crown Prince of Saxony turn the extreme left of the French, to assail their front at the same time, and when these operations should have been crowned with success, to send a force around to the rear, which, meeting a detachment from the German Third Army, was to close upon the shattered and reeling lines of the adversary. At the same time, the Crown Prince of Prussia was to attack the right center of MacMahon at the projecting points of Bazeilles and Balan, to overwhelm the French right wing and to effect a junction with the Crown Prince of Saxony to the north.

To ensure the success of these movements the whole of the 31st of August had been devoted to placing the various corps in the necessary positions: those of the Crown Prince of Saxony along the course of the Chiers, and those of the Crown Prince of Prussia beyond Rémilly in the direction of the Meuse, with supports in other positions where they would be required to cooperate in the great turning movement that was to be the leading feature of the climax. When the French, in the early morning of the following day, found themselves attacked by the Germans, they must have seen how desperate was their situation. Partly by their own rashness, and partly by the admirable plans of the enemy, they found themselves trapped—driven into a corner of the country where there was no retreat open to them except into a foreign land.

Under cover of a thick fog, the advanced guard of the Crown Prince of Saxony crossed the Chiers, while the Bavarians, who had already crossed the Meuse, came into line with his left wing, and prepare to attack Bazeilles. By an extraordinary and culpable oversight, the French had neglected to break down the bridges over the Chiers, so that the advance of

the Germans met with no obstacles. The forces of the Saxon Crown Prince proceeded towards Givonne, while the Bavarians simultaneously advanced upon Bazeilles.

The action did not fully commence until six o'clock A. M. By nine, a furious artillery fight at close range was going on along the whole line. The troops stationed at Givonne were panic-stricken at the approach of the Germans. Hastily they gave way, their adversaries, after a brief combat, having no trouble in turning the French left wing, as planned. The beaten troops fled in disorder into the woods, or fell back upon the center, which they incommoded and discouraged by their precipitate appearance on a part of the field where they were not wanted.

On the other hand the victors, by ten o'clock, were getting far to the rear of the whole French position. Shortly afterwards, as a consequence, the junction with the Prussian Crown Prince was accomplished.

Equal success for the Germans was obtained in other directions. The French center began to recede, although the contest was still prolonged with desperate tenacity, the weaker side fiercely disputing every hill-slope and other point of vantage, and inflicting as well as sustaining tremendous losses.

Bazeilles and Balan were the two great scenes of carnage; for the French knew the importance of holding those places, and clung to them as long as it was possible to hold an inch of ground. This was done for a time despite the murderous cross-fire which the Bavarians poured in from their supporting batteries. Headed by the Emperor himself, who in the heat of battle exposed himself recklessly and was the acme of energy, the French at one time succeeded in driving back the enemy, and it seemed as if they might possibly win.

Meanwhile the French right was as hotly engaged. A railway bridge which crosses the Meuse had been broken down by MacMahon; but in the early morning the Crown Prince of Prussia had moved a division over the river on pontoon bridges. This was effected at the loop made by the Meuse in the rear of

Sedan, and it enabled the prince to plant his batteries on the crest of a hill which overlooks Floing and the surrounding country.

The French, suddenly attacked in the rear, were astonished at their position. But they bravely confronted the enemy with all their available strength, and maintained a prolonged and heroic resistance. Their musketry fire was poured in with such deadliness and determination, that it was heard even above the deeper, dry, shrieking notes of the mitrailleuses, which were now playing with terrible results upon the Germans.

By noon, however, the Prussian battery of six guns on the slope above the broken bridge over the Meuse, near La Villette, had silenced two batteries of French guns near the village of Floing. And in another ten minutes the French infantry were compelled to retire from that position. At twelve-thirty, twelve large bodies of French were seen on the hill between Floing and Sedan, their ranks shelled by a Prussian battery in front of St. Menges.

At ten minutes to one, another French column appeared in full retreat to the right of Sedan, on the road leading from Bazeilles to the wood of La Garenne. Then a third French column was observed moving up a broad grassy road immediately above Sedan. It seemed designed for the support of the troops defending the ravine of Bazeilles, to the northeast of the town.

About one o'clock the French batteries on the edge of this wood and above it opened up a most terrific fire on the Prussian columns of the Third Corps, advancing with a view to gaining possession of the hill northwest of La Garenne. The batteries created so much havoc among these regiments that they were obliged to keep shifting their ground till ready for the final rush.

Soon the French forced the Germans down the hill. But at the bottom they were strongly rein-forced, though still inferior in numbers to the French. The French cuirassiers now dashed for-ward to charge the scattered ranks that began to stagger up the slope, heartened by the fresh assistance.

Squares, it seems, are not used by the Prussians. On this occasion they did not even form line, but received the cavalry with a fearful fire at a distance of not more than a hundred yards. Men and horses fell by the score. The survivors turned and fled, and the Prussians dashed after them at double-quick.

It was now the turn of the French infantry to advance. They threw into the Germans a heavy fire with their chassepots. They were allowed to come on within ninety yards, whereupon the Germans replied so vigorously that the infantry, like the cavalry, retired behind a ridge on the road to Sedan.

A little later another regiment of French infantry made a renewed attempt to dislodge the enemy, who was now being reinforced every minute. This effort was quite as unsuccessful as its predecessor, and shortly afterwards it became apparent that the Prussians, by some extraordinary effort, had gotten a couple of four-pounders up the steep elevation, for they began to use them with telling results.

Although still outnumbering their opponents, the French infantry seemed paralyzed. They stood still most of the time, doing nothing. Further cavalry charges followed, however, but even these, executed with dash and bravery, were productive of no effect, the Prussians coolly standing their ground, and killing many with their destructive volleys.

Now giving up the position for lost, the French rapidly fell back. By two o'clock the Prussians' reinforcements were such that there was little further likelihood of the hill being taken away from them.

The closing of the German line on the French rear, which took place about one o'clock in the afternoon, cut off all chance for retreat. A little after three the Bavarians managed to get inside the fortifications of Sedan, and to maintain them-selves there. At four the ridge above Bazeilles was carried by the attacking force, and Sedan was swept on all sides by the German cannon.

Battery after battery was opposed to the advancing armies; charge after charge was frantic-ally directed against the German ranks. But the French were steadily pressed back, until, losing all order and restraint, they were driven head-long into Sedan, under a most scathing shower of artillery fire.

The Germans had completed their circle of investment. The French found themselves hemmed in on all sides—held in a grip of iron—placed beyond all hope of escape.

II. THE GERMANS VICTORIOUS

Very sultry is the day. Low the smoke clouds hang over the Meuse, as if the sea of early mist had disintegrated and gathered in martial array above the beleaguered town—great, soft, billowy balls which awaited only some mysterious signal of the heavens to drop down and crush the hamlet hopelessly.

Through the interstices of sky-blue and cloud-gray, a brazen sun glitters down upon the cuirasses of a Prussian regiment that trots along to support a battery of Bavarian guns. A second—and a third—regiment of cavalry follows, with a great jingling of thin steel and clatter of hoof. Dark clusters of horsemen and footmen, bearing the heavy brow of the Teutonic soldier, seem to have sprung up everywhere around Sedan. These clusters are close together—almost blending—but ever in one gigantic circle about the little town, girdling it with a relentless hoop of steel which continually vomits out its wrath in nauseating powder puffs, missiles of death, and fagots of destructive flame.

Meanwhile the state of things within Sedan was terrible beyond the power of words to express. Huddled up in cellars, pits, corners here and there, the civilians,—mostly old men, women and children,—did their best to protect their bodies; but scores of them were slain as solid shot tore great gaps in their refuges and other balls from the German guns on the heights caught them fleeing to other shelters. Soon, too, buildings in the

town and in nearby villages, were fired by hot-shot, and many were burned to death while the survivors were kept frantically at work to subdue the flames before the conflagration should get beyond control and sweep all buildings before it.



AFTER THE BATTLE OF SEDAN—FIRST MEETING OF NAPOLEON III AND BISMARCK.

In the fortress conditions were not much better. Here the soldiers were better protected, of course, but all were weary from the hard fighting on the outskirts the day before, many were suffering from thirst, many were ill and wounded, and so crowded was the place that the well were made so weak they could hardly stand.

The most frightful incident of the day was the burning of the village of Bazeilles by the Bavarians. This dreadful atrocity alone would be sufficient to cast disgrace upon the German arms; but, although the greatest of that period, it was far from the only instance of a ferocious spirit of revenge manifested by the invaders of France.

There had been a desperate conflict in the streets, in the course of which the Germans had suffered severely. At last, gaining the upper hand of the inhabitants, they set the place on

fire, and not content with this destruction of property, added to it the wanton sacrifice of innocent lives, burning the greater number of the people alive.

As an extenuating circumstance, the Germans claimed afterwards that they had been treacherously fired on from the houses, and that the inhabitants had acted with horrible cruelty to some wounded Bavarian soldiers whom they had seized. But the villagers most emphatically denied this, and subsequent investigations proved that the excuse was a myth, just as similar stories to alleviate their inhuman practices in many instances in the late Great War have proven the Hun a resourceful fabricator.

Indeed, a correspondent of a London paper, whose sympathies at the time were with the Germans, and who was loth to believe that they could have been guilty of the foul conduct claimed by the French, found that conditions had been even worse than told him, when he looked into the matter. Many were dragged from cellars and ruthlessly shot down. Others were tied to planks, then cast upon bonfires. The sick and infirm were bayoneted in their beds. Two infants were thrown alive out of an upstairs window, the house fired, and cast back inside again through a lower window. In short, this skeptical correspondent found that acts had been committed which, in their utter depravity and horror, he had never known to be surpassed in the remote ages, much less equaled in a civilized era. Out of a population of over two thousand, less than fifty of these poor French people had escaped with their lives.

As the day came to a close and there was no sign of Pazaine, who had been expected with reinforcements, all hope of relief departed among the defenders of Sedan. A council of war was called by the Emperor. In this it was almost unanimously decided that there was no alternative but to submit to surrender. The town was completely surrounded by the enemy; batteries, planted on all the hilltops dominated the place, and could lay it in ashes before another sunset; the Germans were intoxicated with the degree of their success thus far; and the French troops

were in a state of disheartenment which must soon develop into dissolution, if not indeed mutiny itself.

General Wimpffen, who had succeeded Marshal MacMahon as active leader of the French since the latter's injury early in the morning, at first strongly opposed the capitulation. He declared he would sooner die than sign it, and argued that the situation was not so desperate as the other staff officers represented. But maps were brought out, and the positions and force of the enemy (of which he was scarcely aware, owing to his recent arrival) were pointed out.

Bitter as was his mortification, General Wimpffen had no choice but to give way. "And now," he added, "my name will go down linked with a humiliating capitulation for all time." It was the irony of fate that he who had not committed the fault should thus have to bear the burden of shame, but there seemed no help for it.

Night closed in upon Sedan with gloom and menace. Watch-fires were lighted in every direction, and the heavens reflected a crimson glow beneath which the threatened fortress lay black and still, a supplicating, gaunt specter. And during those short hours of darkness, an eternity of emotion must have passed through the troubled mind of Napoleon III.

When the French statesman surveyed the situation early on the morning of the 2nd of September, it must have appeared still more obvious than on the previous night that further resistance was useless. Dense bodies of German troops were to be seen on the heights above the Meuse; the elevations bristled with guns in a threatening position; the plains were covered, as far as the eye could reach, with regiment upon regiment of the enemy.

The Emperor dispatched a colonel of his staff to King William to ask for the latter's terms of surrender. The King and Count von Moltke consulted a while, and the messenger was told that, in a matter so important as the surrender of a great army

and a strong fortress, an officer of higher rank should have been sent.

"You are therefore to return to Sedan," said the King, imperiously, "and tell the commandant of the town to report himself immediately to the King of Prussia. If he does not arrive within an hour, our guns will open up again. You will also tell him that it is useless to attempt to obtain other terms than an unconditional surrender."

Without waiting for word from this message, King William a little later sent Lieutenant-Colonel von Broussart, of his general staff, with a flag of truce, to demand the capitulation of the fortress and the army.

On being admitted into Sedan, and asking for the commander-in-chief Colonel von Broussart was unexpectedly brought into the presence of the Emperor of France himself. Napoleon asked Colonel Broussart what his message was, and on being informed, referred him to General Wimpffen, who had undertaken the command in place of Marshal MacMahon. Just before the arrival of the officer from the Prussians, Napoleon had written a letter to the King, and this he now gave to his adjutant-general, Reille, with orders to deliver it at once.

But Colonel von Broussart arrived in the Prussian camp a little ahead of General Reille, and through his own messenger the King first learned with certainty of the presence in Sedan of Emperor Napoleon. Barely had this information been delivered, when General Reille came up. Springing from his horse, he handed to the King the letter from his own sovereign, with the words: "Sire, I have no other orders from Napoleon than these."

"But I demanded as the first condition that your army lay down its arms," said King William to Reille, before opening the communication. Evidently he jumped at the conclusion, from the Frenchman's manner and words, that Napoleon had sent a highly conditional message, if a surrender at all.

As General Reille stood mute, the King irritably opened the message. It was a memorable letter—one of the most remarkable, considered with reference to the events to which it referred, and the issue to which it led, in all history. It commenced with these words: "Not being able to die at the head of my army, I lay my sword at the feet of your majesty." All arrangements of the surrender were left to the King!

In answer to this surprising letter, King William wrote a brief reply, in which he deplored the manner of his meeting with the Emperor, and begged that a plenipotentiary might be sent, with whom the capitulation might be concluded.

The effect on the field of battle, as the fighting men began to sense a probable surrender, was most extraordinary. The opening of one of the gates of Sedan, to permit the exit of the officer originally dispatched to the King, gave the first impression of an approaching capitulation. This had gradually gained strength, until it acquired all the force of actual knowledge. Then ringing cheers and gleeful antics went all along the German lines. Shakos, helmets, bayonets and sabers were flourished and thrown high into the air, and the vast army of King William swayed to and fro in the excitement of a stupendous, easily-won triumph. Even the dying shared in the general enthusiasm. An officer told Dr. Russel, of the *London Times*, that he saw a huge Prussian who had been lying in mortal agony, with his hand at his wounded side, rise suddenly to his feet as he comprehended the meaning of the cries, utter a choking "Hurrah!" wave his hands once on high, and then, as the blood rushed from his injury, fall dead across a Frenchman at his feet.

Accompanied by a few of his staff, Napoleon started from Sedan about five o'clock in the morning, and proceeded along the road to Donchery, where the negotiations for the capitulation were to take place. When the carriage of the Emperor had gotten among the Germans, Napoleon put his head out of the window, and asked some Uhlans in their own language where Count Bismarck was, as he must see him at

once. It was replied that Donchery was the most likely place in which to find Bismarck. The carriage therefore continued on its way towards the little town.

Count Bismarck was still in bed in Donchery when an officer entered in hot haste and advised him that the Emperor of France was near and wished to see him and the King. Hurriedly dressing, the Count rode off to meet his distinguished guest. He encountered the royal equipage and its attendants just outside of town.

The Emperor alighted, and Count Bismarck, uncovering his head, stood respectfully, with his cap in his hand. Napoleon requested him to resume the cap, to which Bismarck replied, with fine deference, "Sire, I receive your majesty as I would my own royal master."

Together they went on towards Donchery. At a small weaver's cottage by the wayside they halted, tempted by the inviting surroundings and bright morning. Chairs were brought out on a little flat esplanade in front of the house, and the two illustrious negotiators sat down, while their staff officers occupied the grassy slope of the grounds just out of earshot.

Napoleon,—who wore the undress uniform of a general, with a decoration on his breast, and the usual kepi,—looked anxious and careworn, though he was not ill in health. Count Bismarck, on the contrary, was fresh and vigorous in appearance—as, indeed, he might have been expected to be—he, the minister of a great and victorious power which had lost little and gained much.

Napoleon opened the discussion by saying that he placed himself at King William's disposal, but added that he could not enter into any engagements of a political character by which he might hamper the French people or the government of the Empress Regent. He went on to state, in answer to remarks of Bismarck, that he had no power to negotiate a general state of peace; that he could not give orders to Marshal Bazaine, and that

the Empress and her ministers must decide the future policy of the State.

At this Count Bismarck coldly declared that it would be of no avail to hold any further conversation on political matters.

"Then I would like to see the King himself," said Napoleon, rising.

"That you cannot do, sire," was the decided answer. "It would be useless to see His Majesty. The capitulation must be signed first. After that the King will arrange terms with your generals."

At this, Napoleon went to consult with his staff, while Count Bismarck sought out his sovereign, to report matters.

"It was a stupendous moment," writes Dr. Russel. "The garrison of Sedan was furious at the idea of capitulation. But there, in grim, black lines, on every bluff and knoll, on every ridge above the Meuse, on all the heights around, were drawn up the batteries which would rain a hail of fire on the little town. Some six hundred guns would burst in a sheet of red-hot iron against every house. The town, with a few old guns on the walls, with the French field artillery utterly crushed, could offer no real resistance. The troops outside the fortress would simply have been turned into a mass of shattered bones and torn flesh in such a shambles as history has never recorded in its pages of horrors."

Count von Moltke so clearly explained his plans to General Wimpffen, and made it so evident that nothing but a frightful massacre could result from any attempt to further opposition, that the French commander reluctantly agreed to sign the act of capitulation as the only resource left.

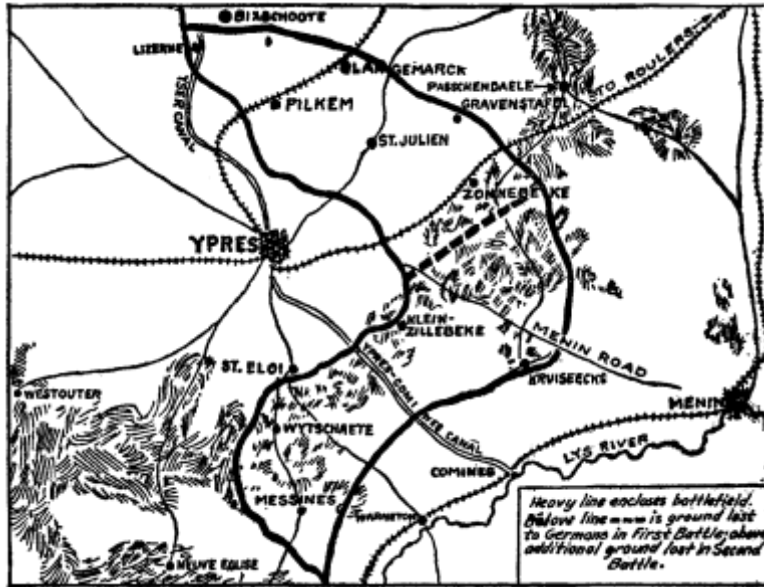
The discussion took place, and the document was executed, at Frenois, a little village not far from Donchery. It was dated September 2, 1870, and was signed "Von Moltke, Wimpffen." The articles provided that the French troops should give themselves up as prisoners of war; that all officers who pledged their word of honor not to bear arms again till the close

of the existing war, should be privileged to retain their side arms and personal effects; that all regular arms, flags, war appurtenances, etc., should be delivered to a German military commission, and that the town and fortified works of Sedan should be given up not later than the evening of September 2nd.

The Emperor of France expressed a wish—a most pathetic one it was, since only three years before he had been at the zenith of his power—not to be paraded before his troops, and to pass as little as possible through French territory. These points were conceded by his captors. He was allowed to take with him his personal luggage, his servants, his carriages, and a few of the officers of his household. A German military escort accompanied him and his party, by way of Belgium, to his place of captivity in Wilhelmshohe. A sad procession it was for the French of the party, and the limited French who witnessed it. Along the way Napoleon, pale and worn but well-groomed, smoked his everlasting cigarette, and pulled at his waxed mustache. At last he reached his destination, and became a prisoner in the same palace which his uncle had formerly occupied as a King.

CHAPTER VIII

YPRES



In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amidst the guns below.
We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

—McCrae.

I. THE BATTLEFIELD

Ypres deserves a place beside Waterloo and Blenheim in British military history. At Ypres the English "Tommy" did all that was expected of him—and that is saying a good deal. Yet here, as elsewhere in the Great War, the generalship was French, and the victory was won through the genius of Field-Marshal Foch, backed up most ably by the fighting ability of the British soldier. And for Foch—great strategist and leader, who had recently delivered the decisive thrust at the Marne—the supreme test came in the midnight hours of a day in which his son and son-in-law had died on the field of honor.

But however close the contest, the decision was absolute. The whole German conception of a swift, terrible, decisive thrust at France had ended in the bloody shambles of the Yser and Ypres. Not a French army had been destroyed. Not a French army had been captured. The great battle that was to come six weeks after the declaration of war had come. It had been a French victory; not a Waterloo or a Sedan, but a victory which compelled a general German retreat, and which dislocated the whole strategic conception of the Huns. Each separate offensive effort from St. Mihiel to Nieuport had been beaten down almost where it started.

At Ypres fifty thousand British were killed, wounded, or captured—a third of the whole Expeditionary Army. On the same field the French lost seventy thousand, and the Belgians mourned twenty thousand. As for the German loss, there can be no doubt it passed a quarter of a million!

Memorable, hereafter, will be the fact that as the last German attacks before Ypres were failing, there died within the British lines the one British soldier who had foreseen what was now happening—whose words had been greeted with sneers—whose voice had almost been silenced by the cheap and empty optimism of Liberal and Radical politicians. Come to France at the moment of the crisis, come to cheer his well-beloved Indian

troops, now fighting bravely on the western line, Lord Roberts died on the eve of a great victory which saved his own country from the worst he had feared for it. Worth repeating, too, is the legend—attributed to De Souza—that, having studied the maps and examined the plans and preparations of the French commander-in-chief, Lord Roberts said, with deep insight and true prophecy, to some staff-officers of Foch, "You have a great general."



YPRES—THE CLOTH HALL IN RUINS.

Let us now, before describing the First Battle of Ypres, devote a little study to the ground, also show the relation of the Second Battle of Ypres to the whole western campaign of 1915.

Turning first to the examination of the country itself, it should be remembered at the outset that Ypres (pronounced "Eapers") is in the midst of the typical Flanders region—that is, the country is quite flat, and is marked by innumerable little brooks and rivulets, many of which have been converted into canals for centuries.

This portion of France begins as far back as Bethune, and stretches northward to the estuary of the Scheldt. Hills,

mentioned so frequently in the battle dispatches from the front, are in reality only gently-sloping rises. Just as the American who is familiar with the history of the Battle of Waterloo, and has read of the height of Mont St. Jean, stands in amazement while he looks down upon the battlefield and recalls, not the rugged Appalachian seaboard, but the prairies of the West, so he would view the district between the Lys and the Yser, on which was fought a battle really greater than Waterloo itself and scarcely less momentous in human history—for, had the Germans broken through to Calais, they might have abolished most of the consequences of the French victory between Paris and Verdun.

Comparatively small though they may be, it is well for us to recognize that these hills played a decisive part in the various contests of arms in the Flanders area, and that for the possession of the most considerable of them three battles were fought—one in October and November, 1914; the second, in April and May, 1915; and the third and greatest (based upon the size of the armies engaged), from June to the end of the campaign of 1917.

Between Bixschoote, at the edge of the marshes along the Yser River, and Warneton on the Lys, there is a fifteen-mile stretch of solid ground, or it might be more explicit to state, ground suitable for the movement of troops and heavy guns. West of Bixschoote is the marshy region which was flooded when the Belgians closed the sluices at Nieuport and drove back the enemy in the critical days of the Battle of the Yser, which preceded the present one.

South and east of Warneton, on the right bank of the Lys, Allied operations were rendered impossible by the German occupation of the town of Lille, with its forts and defences.

The solid ground between the Lys and Yser was in the nature of a sallyport, should an army come north and seek to advance down the Lys valley toward Ghent and Bruges. On the other hand, for an army moving south it was the main gate to Calais and Boulogne, and to the Channel ports facing the

English coast, once the Yser front had been closed by inundation and the front south of the Yser barred by adequate armies.

Could an army moving north push up to Roulers and Menin it would insert a wedge between hostile armies operating on the coast in front of the Yser and those to the eastward about Lille. Could any army moving south thrust through this gateway it would similarly intervene between the troops defending the Yser front and the other forces before Lille.

And when the British army moved north in October, 1914, its main purpose was to isolate the Germans advancing along the coast from those about Lille. The German plan was, when the offensive should pass to them, to push down to Calais, cutting off all the adversary troops west of Ypres, which included the Belgian army and a large French force sent to aid the Belgians.

Ypres itself lies in a little basin about the tiny Yperlee stream which flows west to the Yser. It is the junction point of several roads and railways, and through it passes a canal from the Lys to the Yser. In the Eighteenth Century the town was a fortress, and some of the ramparts of Vauban have survived the artillery of Krupp, but these had no value on the contemporary military side.

Of the roads and railways the more important from east to west were: the Bethune-Bruges railway, which came up from the south and, after leaving Ypres, crossed the canal near Boesinghe, passed through Langemarck, and continued thence to Thourout; the Ypres-Roulers railway and highway, which paralleled each other and ran northeastward to Roulers; and the Menin road, which ran straight from Ypres southeast to Menin on the Lys. A mile south of this last, was the canal connecting the Lys with the Yser, and Ypres with Commines.

South, east, and northeast of Ypres, at a distance not quite three miles, is the famous Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge, which is the most important geographical detail in the entire country. This promontory runs from southwest to north-east. At

no point is it more than two miles wide, and at many not more than one. Its highest point is at the south near Messines, where it is two hundred and fifty feet above sea-level. At the other end, beyond Zonnebeke, it is rather less than two hundred feet. Nowhere is it more than a hundred feet above the surrounding country, and it rises in gentle slopes, making a far more impressive showing on the map than upon the vision of the tourist.

Along this ridge, from south to north, are a number of small villages, forever famous in British battle history. These are Messines, Hollebeke, Klein Zillebeke, Zandovorde, Gheluvelt, and Zonnebeke. North of the last-named village, the ridge narrows to a point at Paschendaele. Actually it is the watershed between the Lys and the Yser. Down its mildly-sloping western flanks flow a number of brooks which reach the Yser west of the inundated district. Eastward, over a much shorter course, flow other brooks leading to the Lys. Except in rainy weather—which is unhappily generally present in this particular corner of Europe—none of these little streams are obstacles to military operations.

Separating the streams which flow west to the Yser are a number of lower ridges running at right angles to the main Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge. Of these the only one of importance in the present narrative is that of Pilkem-Grafenstafel, which lies north. It is a natural extension of the main ridge, and troops in position upon the Pilkem-Grafenstafel would cover the flank of an army on the Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge. On the other hand, were both the southern end of the latter ridge and the western end of the Pilkem-Grafenstafel in possession of an enemy, the position of an army defending Ypres would be exceedingly dangerous, because its rear and communications would be under the constant fire and observation of its foe. The fact is, this contingency really happened; the Messines position was lost in 1914, and the Pilkem the following year.

So much for the general topography of the district. Bear in mind again that an army holding all the Messines-Zonnebeke

Ridge would look down upon a vast sweep of country to the east and southeast. It would be able, through its observation balloons, to see as far as Lille—to sweep the whole of the upper valley of the Lys. With its heavy artillery in position behind the ridge, it would even be able to command the Menin-Roulers road five miles to the east, and play havoc with enemy communications. At the same time its own operations would remain hidden, outside of aerial observation, and its communications would be well beyond reach of effective bombardment. Once, however, should the army be driven over and off the ridge, it would lose all these advantages, and would be huddled in the Ypres basin in a position which would subject it to constant peril and great loss of life and materials.

It is worth recalling that the First Battle of Ypres was, like that of Gettysburg, quite accidental. Neither army expected to encounter the other on the ground on which the meeting actually took place. And it is equally interesting to recall that this selfsame First Battle of Ypres was the last battle of the old-fashioned sort—that is, a battle in the open, as contrasted with trench warfare which immediately followed.

Over the entire western battle-front did this trench style of fighting become the rule. Mining and counter-mining superseded all other sheltering methods; the lines were in reality areas of parallel trenches protected by networks of barbed wire so thickly interlaid and interwoven that only long-sustained artillery fire proved equal to the task of breaking them down in clearing the way for an assault. The troops lived in and under the ground, so that the shrapnel—the ideal man-killing projectile, against troops in the open—proved nearly useless and was replaced by the high-explosive shell which is able to pierce these overhead shelters and injure the occupants.

The truth is, operations degenerated into a struggle of wear and tear. So close did the lines draw to each other that antiquated war methods and weapons sprang into new life: hand grenades, knives, and even clubs became popular. Trench-mortars were used. Asphyxiating gases, in violation of The

Hague Convention, were brought forward by the Germans, and afterward adopted in a retaliatory way by the Allies. Artillery took a position of first importance, as was natural.

The reason for this state of affairs is to be found, in part at least, in the air service. Here "blimps," or captive observation balloons, and air-planes equipped with wireless telephones and special cameras for photographing the enemy's position, soon made a surprise attack well-nigh impossible by either side.

II. THE FIRST BATTLE

On October 14, 1914, the first British troops reached Ypres. They comprised the immortal Seventh Division, under the command of General Rawlinson, and had landed at Ostend a few days before, since which they and some French formations had been busy covering the retreat of the Belgian army.

At this moment the Belgians, closely followed by General von Bessler's army of Germans, which had taken Antwerp and was advancing along the coast roads, were already near the Yser line. This line the Belgians were to hold, and French troops were being rallied up from the south to support them. True, the Belgian army was in a sad condition of inefficiency, yet it was believed—justly, as the result proved—that, with a little Allied assistance, they would be able to hold the Yser line.

The high command of the Allies also believed that between the German army approaching the Yser and the northern end of the main German front—which now extended from Switzerland to Lille,—there was a wide gap. This gap, it was thought, was squarely in front of Ypres, and extended from Menin to Roulers. Sir John French, British Field-Marshal, had sent Sir Douglas Haig north with the First Army Corps; Allenby's cavalry, already about Armentieres, was to cooperate with it; and this combined force, including the Seventh Division, after seizing the crossings of the Lys from Menin to Courtrai,

was designed to turn the extreme flank of all the German armies, aim at their communications, and compel a retirement from the coast toward Brussels, which was not felt to be beyond reach of the Allies. Such a success would isolate von Bessler on the Yser, and probably lead to the capture of his army. In any event it would release Lille and the industrial regions of northern France, now firmly held by the German armies which had been brought north and west from the Aisne and Lorraine fronts. And in conformity with this strategy, Sir John French ordered General Rawlinson to move out of Ypres on October 17th, and seize the crossings of the Lys at Menin.

Once more, as at Mons, British information proved wholly out of accord with the facts. In approaching the region between Lys and the Yser, the Allies had less than one hundred thousand men. These were from Rawlinson's Seventh Division and some French cavalry units. On the other hand, the Germans were moving four corps and some other formations, totaling upwards of a half-million men, into this Ypres sector. Already aware of an impending change, but still unable to measure the extent of the threat, Rawlinson conformed to the imperious order of the French and the next day had the Seventh Division go to Zonnebeke.

On October 19th, this division sent out a brigade which actually reached the Roulers-Menin highroad, but there it encountered the advance guards of two German corps, and was compelled to fall back rapidly to Zonnebeke. This date thus marks the end of the advance towards Menin and the crossings of the Lys.

That same night Sir Douglas Haig reached Ypres, and the next day his First Army Corps came up. At once there arose the question as to whether his corps should be put in to the east to support the Seventh Division on the Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge north of the Menin Road, or sent north to cover the flank from Zonnebeke through Langemarck to Bixschoote. Unless it were sent to the support of the Seventh, there was now danger that General Rawlinson would be overwhelmed; but if it were sent

thither, then a gap would open in the Allied line between Zonnebeke and the marshes. This would allow the Germans coming south through Langemarck, to outflank both the British and the Belgians, drive a wedge between them, and have an open road to Calais and Boulogne, and eventually to Paris.

Sir John French chose to risk the former peril. So he sent Haig north. When he was in position the Allied line from Switzerland to the sea was complete, but from the Lys to the Yser it was alarmingly thin, and for some days no reinforcements were available because the French troops which Joffre was sending up could not arrive before the 23rd—in fact, did not arrive until the 24th.

As the First Battle of Ypres begins, the British hold the front from the inundated district at Bixschoote along the Pilkem and Grafenstafel ridges to the Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge east of Zonnebeke, and thence south along the ridge through Becelaere and Zandevoorde to the Communes Canal. South of the canal Allenby's cavalry holds the Messines-Wytschaete sector with ridiculously insignificant cavalry screens.

The real battle opens October 20th—a battle so fierce and so filled with divers sanguine encounters that, in a work of the character of this volume, it is quite impossible to do much more than cover the general trend of events. As to the opening engagements it is enough to say that by October 22nd, it becomes clear that Sir John French's scheme of turning the German right in the neighborhood of Tourcoing is impracticable, for through the gap of west Flanders there is pouring a new German army, making more than a million Boche between Lille and the sea.

Thus the contemplated offensive of the Allies is closed early in the contest, and becomes now a purely defensive movement, and one against great odds, at that. The Germans are aiming at the Channel ports and the seaboard of northern France. If they attain their objective, the war in future will have to be conducted by the Allies under the gravest handicap. There are

three possible routes for Germany to break through—along the sea coast, through the gate of La Bassée, and through the gate of Arras. Of these routes the best is the third and last, for success at Arras will result in cutting off a large part of the Allied forces. But all three are possible, and a concentration upon any one might give Germany the victory. For some unknown reason she dissipates her gigantic strength and attacks at all three points simultaneously. Devoutly thankful can be the Allies for this blunder, which is only one of many committed by the Central powers throughout the long war, and which helped to bring it to an earlier termination.

On the 23rd and 24th the arrival of the French Ninth Corps allows Sir Douglas Haig to bring his First Corps from the Pilkem-Grafenstafel to the Messines-Zonnebeke Ridge, and thus reinforce the Seventh Division which has largely been bearing the brunt of the German attacks and is now fast approaching the point of annihilation. But, despite their utmost efforts, the British are slowly but surely driven from the crest of the Messines-Zonnebeke, and on October 31st, their line is actually broken on the Menin Road, near Gheluvelt. This is the crisis of the whole battle. It is at this moment that Sir John French himself sends every available man to the front line. Even cooks, hostlers, chauffeurs, surgeons and chaplains are called upon and gladly respond.

But for an intercepted wireless message of the enemy's it is doubtful if the British would have been thus well prepared. This message disclosed the fact that the Germans were about to make their main effort to force an issue. Already the point of the salient—the "nose" of the loop formed by the lines of the defenders—has been smashed in, but the main danger lies in the two reëntnants, that to the north between Bixschoote and Zonnebeke and that to the south between Zandevoorde and Messines. The enemy, confident in his numbers, attacks both, also the point of the bastion in front of Gheluvelt.

The thin British lines have already been in constant action for more than a week, with very few reserves. They are

very weary as they enter upon this critical and enormous struggle for the mastery. But their morale is high, their spirit indomitable. Rest assured they will give a good accounting of themselves. Even if defeated, rest assured of that!

The great battles of the world have not uncommonly been fought in places worthy of so fierce a drama. The mountains looked down upon Marathon and Thermopylae, Marengo, Solferino, and Plevna; mighty plains gave dignity to Châlons and Borodino; the magic of the desert encompassed Arbela and Omdurman; or some fantasy of the sky lent strangeness and glory to death, like the morning sun at Austerlitz, or the harvest moon at Chattanooga, against which was silhouetted Sheridan's memorable charge. But Ypres—Ypres was stark, naked, grim, below and above. The ground sweltered in harsh outline and harsher red blood; the heavens were leaden and foreboding. Nowhere was there a soothing touch to the grim picture. But hold! Yes, there was. And what a beautiful, what an inspiring sight it was, to see these brave men of the Allies march right into the maw of sure death, with a smile on their lips for the sake of their countrymen and the good of humanity at large!

But to go back to Sir John French's heroic efforts on the 31st of October to save the battle by calling in every type of man able to bear arms. Hard his army fought to retain their new ground. Charge after charge of the Germans is met and broken up. But slowly the British, against whom the enemy seem to have a special grudge, begins to weaken. A shell strikes the headquarters of the First and Second Divisions, and half the staff are killed or put out of action.

Between two and three o'clock that afternoon, the position seems desperate to Sir John French. Gheluvelt has been lost, and it now appears that before dark the German vanguard will be in Ypres. At this crisis General Charles Fitzclarence, V. C., commanding the First Brigade, gives an order on his own responsibility to the Second Division. As a result, the Second

Worcesters come suddenly upon the right of the enemy advance, check their onslaught, retake Gheluvelt, and reform the line.

On November 1st, the Germans shift their attack to the Messines-Wytschaete front, and seize the southern end of that ridge. This is their greatest success in the whole battle. Henceforth the Germans, from the highest ground in the whole region, are able to look down upon the British rear and are in command of the British communications in and east of Ypres.



MENIN ROAD—SHOWING EFFECTS OF ARTILLERY FIRE.

After November 1st, the battle continues with undiminished energy up to November 11th, when the celebrated Prussian Guard of the enemy makes its famous attack under the eye of Kaiser Wilhelm himself. The Guard is flung into the British line along the Menin road, and temporarily pierces it between Gheluvelt and Veldthook, but these crack enemy troops are soon overwhelmed and are practically annihilated.

A week later French reinforcements arrive, and the sorely-tried British troops are relieved from the trenches which they have stubbornly held for four weeks. The weather, at first

dark and rainy, has changed to high winds and snow-storms. In one of the latter tempests, the First Battle of Ypres dies away.

Let me put this remarkable achievement of British arms in its simplest terms. As I have stated, between Lille and the sea the Germans had not less than a million men, and six of their fourteen army corps were of the first line. Against that part of this force which faced Ypres, the British opposed numbers which began with less than one hundred thousand and later often reached one hundred and fifty thousand. In the actual salient there were three divisions and some cavalry of Allies to face five army corps, three of the first line, of the enemy. For the better part of two days one British division held a front of eight miles against three of Germany's army corps!

In this mad mella strange things happened. Units became hopelessly mixed, and officers had to fling into the breach whatever men they could collect. A subaltern often found himself in command of a battalion; a brigadier-general commanded a company or a division, as the Fates ordered. Indeed, at one time a certain brigadier had no less than thirteen battalions under him.

Many battalions were wiped out as fighting units, and had to be blended into other remnants to make a complete organization. For instance the Second Royal Scots Fusiliers, which had landed in Flanders over one thousand strong, came out with only seventy men commanded by a junior subaltern. In the famous Seventh Division, out of four hundred officers only forty-four were left, and out of twelve thousand men only two thousand. One divisional general, two brigadiers and nearly a dozen staff officers fell, and eighteen regiments and battalions lost their colonels. Scarcely a house famous in British history but mourned a son. Wyndham, Dawnay, Fitzclarence, Wellesley, Cadogan, Cavendish, Bruce, Fraser, Gordon-Lennox, Kinnaid, Hay, Hamilton—it was like scanning the death-roll after Agincourt or Flodden!

First Ypres was a decisive battle inasmuch as it wrecked that new German offensive plan which had been devised after the failure of the Marne. Like Albuera, it was a soldiers' battle, pure and simple, won by the dogged fighting quality of the rank and file rather than by any great tactical brilliance. There was no room, no time for ingenious tactics. More than once in the history of war we find a great army checkmated and bewildered strategically by one much smaller. A classic instance was Stonewall Jackson's performance in the spring and summer of 1862 when, in Colonel Henderson's own words, "one hundred and seventy-five thousand men were absolutely paralyzed by sixteen thousand."

It was the end of the old British army—for the future battles volunteers and drafted young men would be the rule—and a more noble culmination to a noble military history could not be imagined than this seemingly hopeless stand against a torrential invasion by a great and perfect war-machine.

If Fate had rendered the strategy of Marlborough impossible, General Sir John French had none the less fought his Malplaquet.

III. THE SECOND BATTLE

I am going to turn over the description of the Second Battle of Ypres to Paul Vondette, a participant. Young Vondette is a French-American—a boy born in France, but brought up in the United States. At the age of sixteen he left his home in eastern Michigan and joined the Sixty-Fifth Regiment of French-Canadians in Montreal, Canada. That was early in August, 1914. Within four weeks he was on the high seas, and four months later entered his first trench at Armentieres. Many strenuous battles did this lad go through. It is a miracle that his life was spared. But he has come back at the end of the Great War with three wound stripes upon his sleeve and the Croix de Guerre modestly tucked away in an inner pocket of his olive-drab uniform. This is his story:

I won't try to tell you of all I went through from the time our regiment left Montreal, September 25th, 1914, on board the Cunard liner *Alunia*, bound for Plymouth, England, till I finally brought up at Ypres early in the month of April, the following spring. It's enough, I think, to say that about half of my time had been put in training in Larkhill, and the remainder in working up to the front and in fighting the Fritzes at Richebourg, at Laventie, and at Neuve Chapelle.

At midnight of the eighth day of our little scrap at the last-named place, we were warned to get ready for marching again. We walked twenty-seven kilometers to Cassel, where General Dorrien, who was in charge of the battle when the English retreated from Mons in the early part of the war, told us that he was going to take charge of the whole Canadian division, and that our regiment would be transferred to another army corps. He gave us three days' rest, and told us we were to occupy French trenches at Ypres, where a fierce battle had been fought the previous fall.

Ypres is the graveyard of the old Seventh Division. We were carried to within six miles of the place in London buses, twenty-five men in a bus. We met there the Canadian Scottish Third Brigade of five thousand men, also the gallant French troops. My company was on the left of the English line, so that we acted as interpreters between the French and the English. A roadway ten yards wide separated the two lines, and a tunnel ran from the English to the French lines.

Before saying any more about our neighbors it will be best for me to make some explanations as to the situation about Ypres. The close of the First Battle saw the Allies holding one of the most remarkable positions in all the front from Belfort to Nieuport. Pushed eastward from Ypres was a sausage-shaped salient or bulge. It extended north-northeast to its greatest depth at

Grafenstafel, six miles from Ypres. The base of this salient was the Ypres-Commines-Yser Canal, and between the two points where the German line touched the canal, north and south of Ypres, was barely seven miles. The Boche had possession of the Messines and Wytschaete hills to the southward, and this gave them direct observation and a fine artillery sweep of the whole rear of the salient. But north of the canal the British still clung to the western slope of the ridge all the way from the vicinity of Gheluvelt to a point east of Zonnebeke; likewise from Zonnebeke westward they held both the Grafenstafel and Pilkem ridges as far as the western limits of Langemarck. Between Langemarck and the canal at Steenstrate a division of French Colonials was in line.

In April of this year the British were preparing for their subsequent offensive southward near La Bassée. The French had recalled their best troops from this front to participate in Foch's great Artois operation, and most of the few heavy British guns—I tell you they were few in those early days!—had likewise gone south. Nobody looked for any German didoes to be kicked up in the Ypres section—at least none of consequence. But right there is where everybody got nicely fooled.

I think it was on April 17th that the British, having decided to attempt to get possession of Hill 60, exploded a mine under the Fritzies in that locality, and followed it up with a hard attack. This so-called hill is not much more than a respectable little mound, and is located near the point where the Ypres-Commines Canal crossed the battle-front. Hill 60 was taken, but the British were not allowed to retain it in peace, and heavy counter-attacks on the part of the Germans came often during the course of the next few days.

Don't forget that Ypres was still a city in which civilian life went on as blissfully as before the war. The

inhabitants had become so used to the sound of guns and the whirl of an occasional shell that they paid no attention to a new outbreak of minor character.

But, say, a change was due in that burg mighty soon! On Tuesday, the 10th, there suddenly began a furious bombardment from the enemy that would have made you think all the world was being turned upside down had you been there. The biggest pills the Heinies had were tossed into the town—and fast, too. Children were killed at play, and some in their homes where they had run for refuge. Old men and old women were slaughtered before they could get off the streets. Of course there was a scamper by everybody that could walk or be put into a conveyance and trundled, for the protection of the surrounding hills.

It was only a little while before Ypres was a heap of ruins. It surely was a wretched sight—those shell-torn buildings, with bricks and mortar and splinters of wood scattered over the fair streets—as we saw it later on. The angering part of it all was, the destruction of the town served no military object in itself, without it were to block our communications against a coming attack, as the city was the neck of the bottle-like salient and through it all the roads passed to our lines within. Anyhow, the Allied command took this view of the bombardment, and later events proved it correct.

I can never forget the evening of Thursday, the 22nd. It was very calm and pleasant, with a light but steady breeze blowing from the north-east which cooled us immeasurably whenever we chose to take a chance on a German bullet and stick our heads above the trenches for a brief moment. About six-thirty our observers reported that a strange, greenish-colored vapor was moving over toward the French trenches in the northern angle, which was some little way from our quarters. Then, as the night closed in and the great shells still

rained upon Ypres, there were strange and awful scenes between the canal and the Pilkem road. Back through the dusk came a stream of French soldiers, blinded, coughing, clutching at their throats, wild with terror. Those diabolical Fritzies had let loose upon them some new form of black deviltry which they could not understand and before which they broke and fled in a panic that no human being likewise placed could have withstood. Behind them they left hundreds of their comrades stricken and dead, with froth on their lips and horrible blue faces staring up at the night sky.

The rout surged over the canal, and the road to Vlamertinghe was choked with broken infantry and galloping gun teams without guns. Some of the Zouaves and Turcos fled due south towards the Langemarck road, and in the early darkness came upon our Canadian reserve battalions. With amazement the Canadians of my company saw the wild, dark faces of the new-comers, saw their heaving chests, saw their lips essay to speak but remain mute in silent agony. Then our men, too, sniffed something peculiar in the breeze. This something gripped at their throats and made them deadly sick in a few minutes.

At this time I and a companion were not in our trench, as we had been sent out a short time before to examine the wire entanglements of the enemy. We heard a sound as of some one handling pipes, but in the darkness discovered nothing. Then, suddenly, the Boche sent up their flares—skyrockets whose bursting bombs turned night into daylight—in an effort to discover if any enemy prowlers were about their domain. Instantly we dropped into a friendly shell-hole and lay perfectly still.

After that the rockets and star-shells went up so often that we gave up getting any nearer the German lines as a hopeless task, and started to crawl back. When we had almost reached our trench another big flare burst

right over us, and we had to lie still until the welcome darkness gave us an opportunity to drop back into the trench with our comrades.

But it was an awful sight we had come back to. As I dropped to the bottom of the trench I came down upon the dead body of a young chap who had been one of my best friends ever since I left Canada. The terrible, mysterious stuff loosed by the Germans had got this fine, robust fellow—my own buddie—during my absence. In my grief I threw my arms about him and tried to call him back to life. But there was no longer anything human-looking about that ghastly, bluish face with the protruding eyeballs which stared up at me. I let go of the limp body, shuddering, and staggered back. In the brief few months I had been in the trenches at the front I had witnessed many a tragic death, and had become enured to such things. But this—*this* way of dying seemed so ignominious, so horrible—for a brave soldier, a soldier such as poor Dan, Dan who I knew would have gone into the very pit of hell itself if thereby he could save one other life!

However, Dan had not been a sacrifice to his country alone. As I regained control of myself and looked about me I saw on every side dead men and dying men. Eyes of the living were rolling, their faces drawn and twitching and terrible to behold there in the gray light of night. "Water! Water! I'm choking! Air! Air! Air!" From everywhere about me those pleading cries were going up. What a frightful thing it is to hear your friends taking on like that! Right before my eyes one poor chap was dying—rolling upon the ground as if mad—tearing at his chest. In a little while it was all over, his sufferings past, thank God! But his fingers were crooked after death, his body covered with blue blotches, his mouth ghostly white. Even as I turned from him, another unhappy wretch went reeling into the mud at the

bottom of the trench. Like a maniac he thrust a dirty handkerchief into the slimy earth, and fell to frantically sucking the moisture from the crumpled cloth.

All this time the bullets of the relentless enemy were *zing-zinging* over my head, as a reminder to keep low. There was a mighty swelling from an organ more sonorous than ever played by human organist. The rockets were bursting fitfully, the flares shedding white patches of light over the torn ground beneath. Our "coffee-grinders" were *put-put-put-putting* away in heavy retaliation, finding many a Boche mark, and levying a grim tax of death upon those devils who had introduced us so disastrously to the cowardly gas.

Suddenly I began to experience a stinging in my nose. At once I realized the situation: while the gas clouds were no longer coming over, some of the fumes still lingered in our trench and had assailed me. A moment later my eyes began to water and run. When I breathed I breathed fire, not air. It seemed, presently, that I would suffocate. I tore open my shirt at the throat for relief. There seemed to be a million needles and razors in it, and that I was drinking boiling tea over the raw sores. My head swam, and I was half-blind. Desperately I struggled up out of the trench, and threw myself flat upon the cool turf of the parapet, caring not if the Fritzies did pick me off so long as they ended my agony, or so long as I could get one good whiff of pure air.

Luckily for me I had inhaled very little of the gas. Luckily, too, the flares of the Germans were not then directed in my quarter. For fifteen minutes or more I lay there, my face buried in the coolness of a tuft of dewy grass, my pain gradually subsiding and strength returning. All this while German bullets whistled over my body in random shots towards our trench, but only one hit me, and this for a slight flesh wound in the left forearm which I did not discover till sometime later.

After a little while, just as I was thinking of trying the trench again, out sprang a lot of my comrades. They were off and by me, going madly toward the enemy trenches with a loud hurrah. I could not resist the impulse to join them. I believe if I had had to creep forward I would have gone. But I didn't. I found I could stand pretty well, and run pretty well, so going back into the trench after my gun, I followed quickly after them. An ecstatic confidence buoyed me up. It seemed to me that my life was charmed; that the bullet had not been moulded, the shrapnel not loaded, the gas not mixed, which would place me *hors de combat*. I felt unusually brave. I think this was because I was so sure of life.

My platoon, I found when I came up with it, was under a withering fire. As if under the scythe of some mighty husbandman the men about me were crumpling and melting away. All of the imps of Satan seemed to have risen from the bowels of the earth and to be pouring over us seething flame and molten lead. The ground was kicked up everywhere by exploding shells. The mitrailleuses vomited death.

Our thinned lines gave a yell of joy. I saw a black hole in the ground. Sergeant Albert Levan shouted, "Into their trench!" There was so much noise I could scarcely hear him. I leaped in. Four Germans were trying to escape on the further side. I did not fire, intending to take them prisoners. But the only thing I took was a hard blow on the side of the head from another and an unseen Boche, and away went my prospective prisoners! But the Boche who hit me with his gunstock was not with them. I got him, anyhow. As he came up to finish me, a jab of my bayonet did the business.

I crawled up the trench a few feet, and came upon two men trying to strangle each other. I thought, then, of motion pictures I had watched back home. Here was a more terrible drama than ever the movie camera showed.

A bayonet charge is a street fight magnified and made ten thousand times more fierce. At close range it becomes almost impossible to use your bayonet. So it was with us at times there in that Heine trench. We fought more than half the time with fists and feet, using our guns as clubs when we could.

We lay in our prize trench for about four hours. The boys, excited because they still lived and were masters of that dirty ditch, sang and jested, as if in a drawing-room, and told of queer experiences and narrow escapes they had met.

By ten o'clock came the news that the British had lost four machine guns, and we were asked to help recapture them. I was one of twenty-one from my company who volunteered to go. So we joined men from the Tenth and Sixteenth Battalions, and at eleven o'clock prepared to storm the wood where the guns were said to be.

We had only forty yards of open ground to cover, but the German artillery and machine-guns worked havoc among us. I tell you, it did not take us long to cover that forty yards!

We were soon in the wood, where it was so dark that we could hardly distinguish friend from foe.

I ran in and out among the trees, and asked every one I met who he was. In this way I came upon one big fellow. My mouth opened to ask him who he was, when his fist shot out and took me between the eyes. I went over like a ten-pin, but I retained logic enough in my reeling brain to figure out who he was now. He was a German! I got up as quickly as I could, you may be sure, and swung my rifle to hit him in the head, but the stock struck a tree and splintered. I thought I had broken all my fingers. The big German made himself scarce. I guess he

thought I was going to use one of the splinters on him next!

I wandered about until I found three wounded men in that gloom. These I took to be French. One by one I carried them back into our trench. As I brought in the last one, the officer said, "You are doing good work, Vondette." I blushed like a school-girl, and asked him why he thought so. His answer just about took the life clear out of me: "When we put the light on these fellows you have brought in we found they were Germans! I take it for granted this is another, my boy." And so it proved. Well, anyhow, I am glad I saved those pesky Fritzies. I guess I would have done so had I known their nationality. For we were all trained to give a wounded man help, whether he were friend or foe.

We found our machine-guns—that is, the pieces of them that were left when the retreating Germans destroyed them. Our sacrifice of men had largely been in vain.

Before morning we were relieved by a British regiment and marched back to our billets to have a rest. I slept all the rest of the night and until eleven o'clock the next morning. It was the first real rest I had had in forty-eight hours, with only a slice of raw bacon and a piece of bread to eat.

But to go back to that first terrible night—the first time in the history of the Great War that any faction had faced the awful chlorine gas of the Germans. The immediate result of the panic was, a four-mile breach in the Allied line between Langemarck and the canal. The German road to Ypres was at last open. The black troops had fled south and west, toward Ypres and across the canal.

East of the French-Colonial division were the Canadians. When the French troops fled, the Canadian

flank was left in the air, while the Canadians were themselves exposed to gas fumes and suffered severe losses from this cause. Yet, despite all the trying circumstances, the plucky Canadians hung on. They drew back their left flank, forming in a half-circle. Desperately they fought on, for many hours holding back the onrush of exultant Germans. And right here, on this very front, the Canadian contingent won their right to rank with the old British Army which had held the Ypres position in the autumn. Sharing in this privilege were their Anzac brethren, from Australia and New Zealand, who were soon to win equal glory at Gallipoli.

The next morning, Friday, April 23rd, was critical in the extreme. The Germans had forced the crossing of the Yser Canal between Boesinghe and Steenstrate and taken Lizerne. Already they were in possession of Langemarck and Pilkem, and crowding the roads from these towns to Ypres itself. Could they push on for three miles more, Ypres would be in their hands, and all the troops in the salient east of Ypres would be caught like rats in a trap. It's hard to state why they did not do this. Some say a part of it is due to the bravery of the Canadians and their British supports, and others declare the real reason is that the Germans had not expected so tremendous a success with their dastardly chemical and lacked reserves at the decisive point at the favorable moment. A better chance than the British had had at Neuve Chapelle, therefore, slipped through their fingers.

In the next few days the situation slowly improved. But it remained critical, nevertheless, throughout the first days of May. First the French threw the Germans back to the east bank of the canal. At the same time the British brought up troops from all points of their line and succeeded in closing the big gap between the canal and the right flank of our own Canadians.

Even the Belgians, from their side of the Yser River, sent over reinforcements. Meantime the German heavy artillery finished destroying the beautiful buildings of Ypres, and the British army suffered from shell-fire as it had not suffered even in the first bloody days of the battle about Ypres the previous year. To this heavy gun-fire it had neither the artillery nor the ammunition to make answer.

By the first of May—the day on which the Germans were to win their great victory of the Dunajec—it was plain that the old Ypres salient could no longer be held. By now it had become a rectangle three miles wide and six miles long, thrust forth into the Boche lines. From the Pilkem Ridge as well as from the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge the enemy had a clean sweep over British communications. From their height they also commanded our position, and delighted in raking us all day with machine-gun fire. Looking through my periscope, I counted between four and five hundred unburied German dead lying between the lines. They had lain there as they fell, days before, since neither side had given the other a chance to come out in the open and take away the dead for burial.

Realizing the futility of holding out any longer, the British, during the second week of May, reluctantly drew back from the Grafenstafel Ridge, from Zonnebeke, from all the ridge between the Roulers Railway and the Menin Road, and occupied a new front in a narrow semi-circle rather more than a mile east of Ypres.

Almost all the high ground was now lost. All the salvage of the First Battle, defended with such gallantry and obstinacy, was surrendered. Second Ypres had been far more costly than the First in territory given up, but this was due almost wholly to the costly gas attack and the consequent rout of the French troops. On May 13th the Second Battle of Ypres closed. Up to that time the

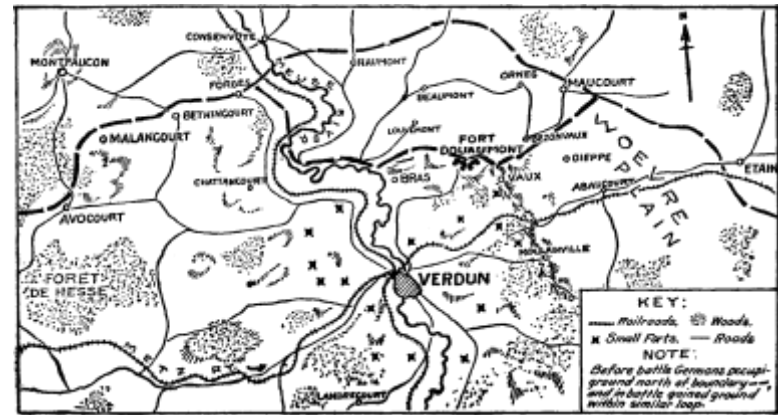
Fritzies made other attempts to use chlorine gas, but after that first dreadful experience with it the Allies invented a mask which thereafter robbed it of its worst power.

What little the Germans had gained in this fight was afterward all regained by the Allies in August and September, 1917, when the entire salient was abolished.

The battle lasted close to a month. When it was over they called a roll of our regiment. There were five hundred of us when we left Montreal. As the commander went down the sheet, name after name met with no response. There was a terrible hush, and when a chap did answer, almost in a whisper, it sounded like a thunderclap. I hate to say it, but only twenty of us were there to speak for ourselves. The rest—poor fellows—had gone to join the roll up Yonder.

CHAPTER IX

VERDUN



With out-thrust bayonet and heaving chest,
He faced the beasts who tried to wrest
His hearthstone from him.
Behind him, goading to the very last,
Ghosts of handless children stand amassed,
Tortured wives and sisters, grayheads, too,
Bowed by the tyrant lines passing through
With torch and bullet grim.
No wonder he fights like one gone mad,
And keeps it up, this Poilu lad,
Till all his senses swim!

—Atherton.

I. THE GERMAN ATTACK

Germany had created her Mitteleuropa. She had undermined the military power of Russia. She had, in fact,—although this fact was not yet plainly visible,—dealt a death-blow to the Russian Empire and made sure of the Revolution and collapse which were to follow. She had opened the road to the East. Now she only needed to open one to the West by a decisive victory over the French, and any peace which might follow would confirm her mastery, not alone in the Balkans, nor in Constantinople, but in Mesopotamia and in Palestine, on the road to India and at the gates of Egypt.

Under one more colossal blow the Germans might expect that France would collapse, lose heart and abandon a struggle in which she had to stand practically alone—for neither of her great Allies could help her, and the cost to her, moreover, was bound to be tremendous. A great success, even though it were not a complete triumph—a success which should win more territory and at least one of the great fortresses of France—might lead the French to consent to a separate peace, provided that the terms were not made too onerous and that the German military achievement had been sufficiently brilliant.

So all German comment focused upon the decision that this new campaign was to be a gigantic and final attempt to crush France and utterly break the spirit of the French people. To spend half a million casualties in such an undertaking, and make it successful, would be a mighty good investment, in German opinion.

Then came the selection of Verdun as the objective of this great German attack. It had been noted, by the actual achievement of German and Austrian artillery in August and September, 1914, that despite the strength of the old entrenched camp of Verdun, despite the great defences which had been constructed after 1871 and had made the fortress alike in the military and popular mind one of the stanchest garrisons in the

whole world, the powerful long-range guns of the Central Powers had mastered the fort and the great strongholds which but yesterday had been considered impregnable.

The French had realized this before the Marne, and Sarraill had moved the mobile defenders of the fortresses of Verdun well out beyond the fixed forts and into trenches. But the Marne campaign and the subsequent German operations had combined to make the Verdun position not merely a salient, but a salient with many defects, viewed from the defender's angle. The successful thrust of the Metz garrison up the valley of the little Rupt de Mad had enabled the Germans to seize St. Mihiel and thus to cut the Commercy-Verdun Railway, one of the two lines serving the fortress. And in their retreat from the Marne the Germans had halted about Montfaucon in positions from which their heavy artillery could interrupt the use of the Paris-Châlons-Verdun Railway, the other and more important line of communication.

Actually Verdun was isolated from the rest of France, as far as railway communication was concerned. The little narrow-gauge alone, which threads its way up from the valley of the Ornain, near Bar-le-Duc, was quite inadequate for the task of munitioning a great army, if Verdun should be made the objective of a major German attack, and the French Parliament had turned a deaf ear to all the appeals of the army for the construction of a strategic railway to meet the necessities of the situation. For its supplies Verdun was thus dependent almost wholly upon highway communication, as it remained dependent until the decisive phase of the attack was over.

It was thought by the Germans that, following a gigantic thrust, they might be able to insert a wedge between the French armies of the right, in Lorraine, and those of the center, in Champagne, whereupon the war movement might be resumed, the trench deadlock abolished, and that they might seriously again take up the road for Paris. This wedge would conceivably compel the French to quit all their positions from Toul to Rheims, enable the Germans to cut the Paris-Nancy Railway,

and might compel the abandonment of all of northern and eastern Lorraine and the line of fortresses and bases from Chalons right down to Belfort. Actual possession of Verdun meant nothing, all depended upon the circumstances attending its capture, all was conditioned upon the success or failure of the Germans in crushing the French troops beyond the Meuse; for if these troops were able to make an orderly retreat behind the Meuse, they would still maintain the whole French front intact. There would be no break through; only a local gain of little value would be realized.

To understand the German plans it is necessary to grasp the essential features of the Verdun country. The town itself lies in a wide valley through which flows the Meuse River. Seen from any of the surrounding hills, it rather suggests a lump of sugar in a saucer. The lump represents the mass of the town, rising about the slopes of Vauban's old citadel and crowned by the twin spires of the cathedral, the latter being the single conspicuous landmark in the town. The rim of the saucer stands for the surrounding hills occupied by the now useless forts. On the west bank of the river these hills, which draw back from the Meuse, are divided by a deep, open furrow, through which comes the Paris-Verdun Railway.

In the old days, Verdun, with its rocky citadel guarding the bridge across the Meuse, was the key to the main road from Metz to the capital; that is, from Germany to France. Taking Verdun, which surrendered without resistance, the Prussians had penetrated through the Argonne into the outskirts of the Plain of Chalons only to be defeated in the battle of Valmy, in the wars of the French Revolution. In 1870 Verdun had held out strongly, and German invasion had been deflected southward, although the town ultimately fell to German artillery.

But since the Germans had forced the northern gates to France and come south through Belgium, Verdun was no longer an outwork of the capital. In their position about Noyon the Germans were scarcely more than fifty miles from Paris, while Verdun was one hundred and forty. The Germans were fully

aware of these facts, and subsequent events have shown that it was not the town they wanted, nor the fortress, so much as to break the French line before Verdun and thereby wreck the French morale.

The real military value of the Verdun position was derived from the range of hills rising sharply from the east bank of the Meuse, and marked on all maps as the Heights of the Meuse (*cotes de Meuse*). This range of hills, some six hundred feet above the river, separate the Meuse from the peculiar Plain of the Woevre. They were, in fact, a sort of hog's back between two depressions. Both on the Meuse and Woevre side these hills—which in reality constitute a plateau upward of six miles wide on the average—break down sharply. Looking out upon the Woevre, from the crest about Fort de Vaux, in the early morning light, one could imagine himself standing upon a cliff overlooking the sea, so sharp is the fall to the marshy plain, at that hour, hidden in the mist.

While this plateau appears fairly regular upon the map, it is cut and seamed by an endless number of ravines. These descend rapidly, either to the Meuse or the Woevre Plain, ravines worn in the clayey soil by little brooks. There is thus an infinite number of hills, not much above the general level, yet distinct. Each has been in times past the prize of some mortal combat, and upon the more important stood the old forts of Verdun. Most of the slopes, too, were covered with little woodlands, designated by names upon the military maps, but now, after the terrible searing of shells which they endured during the Great War, all that remain of the beautiful green trees are shattered, forlorn-looking, branchless, leafless boles and stumps. Beneath are deserted trenches, dugouts, and many a grim grave marker.

For this Verdun offensive the Germans had begun preparations at least a year before the attack. New roads and light railways were constructed from Metz, their chief base. These ran in a circle about the Verdun salient as far west as Montfaucon, where the Crown Prince had his headquarters. For

many months the accumulation of munitions and material also went steadily forward.

The artillery, consisting of not less than fifteen hundred guns of large caliber, including German 42-centimeter and Austrian 380's, were solidly emplaced. But as an additional detail it was planned to make the major portion of the concentration movable, so that the guns could follow the men. It was also decided to make their infantry little more than a subsidiary arm. The artillery was to destroy the French positions, while the infantry was to advance and occupy the destroyed positions. Then the big guns were to be moved forward, and the second line of the French reduced. Figuring thus, the Germans thought that in four days, with slight loss, they could reach Verdun, after covering a little more than eight miles. They calculated that the French losses would far exceed their own, that demoralization such as had occurred at Morhange in the opening days of the war would again transpire.

In addition, the Germans counted much upon the element of surprise. And in a very large measure they counted not without good reason. Certainly the French were aware of the growing concentration of the enemy near Verdun; unmistakably their official documents disclosed suspicion of a coming thrust in this sector; but no less remarkable is the fact that the blow far surpassed any expectation; that it caught them without any adequate counter-preparation; that it temporarily paralyzed their high command, which in the opening days seriously contemplated a retreat across the Meuse and the surrender of Verdun; and that it brought them within a narrow margin of utter defeat—a margin so close that it was scarcely a margin of safety at all.

To follow up the guns, the Germans intended to use three of their very best corps. These, accordingly, were sent down to the east bank of the Meuse, and were put through a very careful training for the part they were to play in the coming conflict. They were given daily bayonet exercise and drill, and fed with that generosity known only to the Teuton himself. These three

corps, in addition to two which were regularly attached to the Crown Prince's army on this sector, supplied the resources for the early phases of the attack. Later, when the battle became a siege and the casualties swelled to the hundreds of thousands, many other units were drawn in, but at the outset rather less than three French divisions had to deal with five German army corps. The French troops, too, were territorials, while the Germans were the pick of the Kaiser's army, and, in certain stages, fought under his own eye, as they fought continuously under the Crown Prince, their nominal commander-in-chief. The real leader, however, was not the Kaiser's heir, but Count von Haeseler, the aged conqueror of Antwerp, who planned the whole campaign and went into retirement when it failed, followed closely by Falkenhayn, Chief of Staff, who was responsible for what proved the greatest of German defeats since the Marne.

For many weeks before the main attack the Germans carried on minor and deceptive operations on many fronts, which really made the French suspicious that a big blow was soon to be precipitated. Finally, as the ultimate incentive to his troops, the Crown Prince, in the order of the day, on February 21, 1916, thus addressed his soldiers: "I, William, see the German Fatherland compelled to pass to the attack." And this attack, his troops were told, was to be the brief prelude to a wonderful German victory.

At 7:15 on that same morning, the Battle of Verdun began. Unlike the French at Champagne, and the British at Loos, the Germans did not preface their attack with a bombardment of many days. On the contrary they sought to preserve the element of surprise to the latest possible moment, and relied upon the destructive effect of the heaviest concentration of artillery yet known in the history of war, to accomplish in a brief period of time that preparation which was essential to permit their infantry to advance. This concentration was made chiefly above the village of Gremilly and in the Forest of Spincourt, less than two miles from the French lines. Later French aviators reported that

the number of guns defied their ability to indicate upon their maps.



VERDUN—SHOWING EFFECTS OF BOMBARDMENT.

At the moment when they were assailed by this artillery deluge, the French were holding a front line straight across the Heights of the Meuse, from a point between the villages of Consenvoye and Brabant on the river to the edge of the Woëvre Plain, some seven miles to the east, whence it ran out into the plain for a few miles and curved back gradually to the edge of the Meuse Heights far below Verdun. But the German storm was mainly concentrated upon the line between the river and the plain, although there was heavy fighting all the way from Montfaucon to St. Mihiel.

Under this terrible fire the French line collapsed and disappeared. Before many hours trenches had practically ceased to exist. Yet somehow the French held on through the day over most of the front. The Germans, still adhering to their original plan to spare their infantry until complete entrance into the ranks of the adversary had been opened up by the artillery, attempted relatively little infantry charges.

But on the following day the real attack began. It was a violent cannonading the French now had to face—a terrific rain of shrapnel, high-explosive and gas shells. For four days the struggle was more of a terrible nightmare to the French territorials than anything else. Shelled out of their first and second lines, lacking a third line, it was the hardest matter in the world to keep a front to the Germans and maintain some sort of a line between the river and the edge of the plain. Gamely the remnants of these few French divisions clung to their ground; hills, villages, woods were fought for with a bitterness heretofore unknown in the Great War, save, perhaps, for a brief time at Ypres.

At this time the weather was very bad. Snow and fog crippled the aviation branches of both armies, and men who fell died of cold where they lay. Scenes recalling the fighting in the Wilderness in our own Civil War were enacted in a dozen of the little woodlands and ravines, and all the agonies of the American conflict were accentuated by the rigors of winter.

Under the weight of superior numbers and superior artillery the French troops, brave as they were, were gradually cut to pieces. Except for two brigades, which came in toward the end, they were without reinforcements of any kind. Their mission was to hold to the very last, and right nobly had they fulfilled it. Their duty was to exact the greatest possible price for each yard of German advance, and right powerfully had they exacted it. For every Frenchman who went down, it is said at least four Germans did likewise. The slaughter was great. Verdun thus gained, almost instantly, the place it was to hold for many months as the graveyard of the contending armies.

Steadily the hordes of Germans pressed forward. They did not keep to their schedule, however, which should have brought them to Verdun within four days. It proved impossible for the great guns to keep pace with the infantry, and little by little the Germans were compelled to lay aside their original conception of an advance in which the infantry soldier was only

an escort to the gun itself, and they threw their troops into the furnace of fire with a prodigious disregard for the value of life.

For four days, as stated, the advance of the Germans went on. By February 25th, they had reached the last line upon which the defenders of Verdun could stand—if, indeed, they were to make any stand. In this time the Germans had come down along the heights of the Meuse for more than four miles. They had set foot upon the Douaumont Plateau, looking directly down upon Verdun, four miles away, and they had taken the dismantled hulk of Fort Douaumont itself.

Verdun was in flames and ashes. Even now its inhabitants were fleeing along the roads afoot and a-cart, with what few possessions they could hastily snatch up and carry with them. More and more shells were thrown into the stricken town, and the Germans, looking down upon it, on February 25th, from the Douaumont Plateau, might well have believed that one more thrust, one more day, would tell the story. Already the price paid in lives had far exceeded the German calculations.

Eastward from Fort Douaumont, which they held with a firm if challenged grip, German troops were within a few hundred yards of Fort de Vaux, and little more than a mile in another direction was Fort de Souville. If these forts fell the end would be sure, and that end might bring with it a disaster to the whole French army east of the Meuse from Verdun to St. Mihiel. Yet, near as were these last barriers, it was not until the end of the first week in June that the Germans reached the ruined casements of Vaux, and six months were sufficient to permit them to enter Souville.

On February 26th the French counter-attacked on the Douaumont Plateau. In this operation they almost retook the fort and brought the German flood of men to a standstill. Although the truth was hidden from the people of Germany—who were still celebrating the preliminary victory and preparing for the fall of Verdun—hidden also from the people of France, at last

aroused to the full extent of the Verdun peril,—the Battle of Verdun was over, and the Siege of Verdun was about to begin.

Thus February 26th, at Verdun, like September 9th at the Marne, is a memorable day in all French history—and in all world history, for the matter of that. Like Foch's thrust at Fere-Champenoise, Balfourier's counter-attack on the Douaumont Plateau was a determining factor in one of the decisive battles of human history.

II. THE FRENCH DEFENSE

There seems little doubt but that the defense of Verdun is the finest achievement of the two thousand years of military history of the French race. Like the Marne, it was a rally after initial defeat. Also like the Marne, it was the sudden flash of the collective genius of the race, after preliminary mistakes and weaknesses which had imperilled all. But unlike the Marne, it was not a quick return to the offensive, followed by a swift and complete victory. No, indeed; the German attack upon Verdun lasted from February 21st to October 23rd, and during six months of this time the situation of the defenders was always precarious and frequently actually desperate.

It was the tenacity of the defense which amazed the world; it was the revelation of that obstinate and unyielding spirit which made "They shall not pass" the watchword of every French soldier and transformed him into a veritable tower of indomitable strength—which first thrilled the whole civilized world, then made it admire as it had seldom admired before. The real achievement at Verdun was in reality the achievement of the French soldier himself. Badly led at the outset, plunged into a contest against hopeless odds, denied the protection which ordinary care should have given him, he nevertheless was superbly commanded in the latter phases of the battle, and by his own wonderful courage and innate military genius, by his capacity for endless endurance and unmeasured sacrifice, he won his victory.

At the Marne there had been a small contingent of British soldiers who had fought gallantly but contributed little to the outcome. At Verdun, on the other hand, France stood alone. None contributed to her terrible sacrifice; her blood was spilled alone. And when victory did come she had won it all, and deserved it all. Had she failed, Britain would have been beaten before Britain was ready; Germany would have triumphed while the United States was still trying to solve the real issues at stake on the remote European battlefield. For the second time in the Great War, France saved all the western nations. Verdun was, then, an epilogue to the Marne, a preservation of the decision reached on the earlier battlefield, which must forever stand with Marathon, with Poitiers and Chalons, as one of the supreme battles and victories of arrest which halted Barbarism as it was on the point of destroying western civilization!

From the moment that the first German assault struck the French lines upon the heights of the Meuse, all France felt the greatness of the peril and the magnitude of the crisis. Thereafter, all through the long months of agony, when the battle had developed into a siege, when the German troops still slowly but surely pounded their way forward, it was as if the whole French nation had set its shoulder against this portal by which the Barbarian was seeking to force his venomous way into the heart of France. Bleeding terribly from the tremendous wounds inflicted by a more numerous, a better-equipped, and a more cruel enemy, the French people, at the front and behind it, echoed and re-echoed the words of the first defenders: "They shall not pass."

It is this fundamental fact which must be recognized as an element which cannot be embodied in any written description of what took place about the old Lorraine fortress. When Petain reached the broken lines, Verdun, by every law of war, was lost; when Douaumont fell, the road to Verdun was all but open; and the Kaiser did not go beyond probability when he forecast the speedy entrance of his troops into the old French town. To him,

and to his army, it must have seemed thereafter as if the very law of gravitation had been arrested to save Verdun.

Against the onslaught, dimly suspected in the weeks immediately preceding the German attack, the French had made certain preparations which were wise and far-seeing. By contrast, they had unfortunately neglected certain essentials which came very near to ending everything in disaster, and which really did put a close to the military career of more than one French general, chief among whom was Joffre, who went into honorable retirement at the request of his government.

When the German blow fell, not only were the existing French lines on the Meuse Heights in bad condition, but there was lacking a solid third line to which the troops might retire should the first two lines be pierced. As has been shown, the French were surprised, with no proper system of supports behind them, and had to face the tempest of leaden hail with barely three divisions of territorials, occupying trenches no longer in the best state of repair, having at their back a flooded river, and finding it necessary for the greater part of the first week to fight in open country far behind the last line of prepared trenches which had belonged to them on February 20th.

At the outbreak of German artillery in the Verdun sector, it was impossible for Joffre and his associates to act at once. Time must be allowed to determine whether this was a real attack or a mere feint. If the latter, to hurry an army to this point might be to leave the real objective of the enemy unguarded. So, while the High Command made preparations to move the transport machinery should the necessity become apparent, no actual steps were taken to relieve the troops defending the heights of the Meuse until February 24th.

By this time there was no mistaking the seriousness and magnitude of the German intention regarding Verdun. In fact, it was now a question whether or not it would be wise to attempt to defend the east bank of the Meuse at all. Joffre himself inclined to the belief that it would be a poor policy, even perilous. Under

pressure from Paris he sent his chief adviser—General de Castelnau, the defender of Nancy—to Verdun to make the great decision. In case he decided to withdraw the whole French line from the east bank, Germany could justly claim a very considerable victory. Then Verdun might fall, the Germans would be solidly established on the line of the Meuse if they should later have to retreat; but the new French position, resting on the western hills, would doubtless hold; the German advance would be halted at the western edge of the river, and the success would be local rather than decisive. With the extent of German advance already achieved, it seemed that it might be courting disaster to throw a great army across the flooded river whose crossings were now under enemy observation and fire.

Once at Verdun, however, Castelnau decided for the defense. He saw both the moral and the military significance; he recognized Verdun to be the same problem which he had solved at Nancy. So the French High Command accepted his choice, and Castelnau summoned Petain—the sagacious officer who had saved the situation at Soissons the preceding winter, gained reputation at the Artois fighting, and won real fame in the Battle of Champagne. The next day Petain was on the spot. But during the two days preceding his arrival the sacrifices of the trench territorials at Verdun were tremendous. Despite all their heroism and devotion the Germans were able to set foot upon the last defensive line. And when Petain at last began to throw his advance guards across the Meuse, the road to Verdun was wide open.

It was the Twentieth Army Corps which Petain projected against the victorious Brandenburgers, who had taken Douaumont. While the Iron Corps, the most famous in the French Army, counter-attacked, held the German advance, and even rewon considerable ground, new trenches were hastily dug behind them, new gun positions were selected and prepared, and the new army had things much better.

On Friday, February 25th, when the Brandenburgers took Fort Douaumont, the German success reached its high tide. They

captured the fort by surprise, the few men left to defend it seeing the folly of resistance and giving in without a struggle. But by contrast, on February 26th, the French counter-attack of Balfourier's, which was a thrust out to the Ravine of Death on the edge of the Douaumont Plateau, brought the whole German rush to a dead halt. In truth, the storm had worn itself out. The French had inflicted upon their enemy losses so great, and had opposed a barrier so obstinate, that the German reserves in men and munitions had become exhausted before the final blow could be delivered. In shell-holes, in ditches, in the ruins of villages, the defenders had found crude shelters, and thus protected had exacted an incredible toll of casualties from their foes. Lacking in heavy artillery they had used their "75's" with terrible effect and sacrificed guns freely that the artillery fire might be maintained to the last possible moment.

Only one of the old forts—although the most important of the outer circle—had been taken; only on a narrow front had the old limits of the entrenched camp of Verdun been passed; and the thin wedge which the Germans had driven in offered no immediate opening for a final push into Verdun itself. Against this situation, the French flanks on the Charny Ridge and Le Mort Homme, west of the Meuse, and on the Vaux Plateau, south and east of Fort Douaumont, offered admirable opportunity to sweep the German center about Douaumont with a converging artillery fire, and forbade any further attempt to break the French center until the French flanks had been disposed of.

In addition to this, the new French army's arrival changed the entire aspect of things. It was composed of first-line corps splendidly organized and well commanded. The momentary disorganization which was noted in Verdun in the first days of the attack—when terrified refugees, driven from the city by the bombardment, choked the roads, and every wounded man coming from the battlefield was a messenger bearing evil tidings—had vanished. The sorely-tried French heart began to flutter with a great hope. Just when all seemed lost—at the very

darkest moment—at the eleventh hour—Petain, Verdun's deliverer, had come.

As an interesting sidelight upon the generalities of the battle which I have just described, let me, before closing this chapter, give the story of Richard Cartier, a French lieutenant, who took part in the defense of Verdun. As he tells the tale, it runs in this wise:

We were in the early days of the battle. Enough had transpired, however, to make it clear to every one of us that at last we were face to face with a big affair. The roar of the big German guns was so deafening that we had to stuff our ears with cotton batting to deaden the dreadful sound. The ground shook under the shock of the exploding shells.

But neither the sounds which came to us, nor the sights which met our eyes as we looked down upon the ever-advancing masses of foe in their gray-green uniforms, had the slightest ill-effect upon our nerves. With pictures ever before our mind's eye of the inhuman sufferings these beasts had wantonly brought upon our defenseless aged fathers and mothers and wives and little brothers and sisters, as they advanced across our fair lands, we felt a fierce joy at this meeting. It seemed to me, especially, that I had been waiting all my life for this day. I was supremely, grimly, savagely happy.

"Come on, come on, gray-green battalions of vipers, and let us crush you under our heel! It matters not what cowardly things you have done now—what cowardly means you may adopt with us. Cast upon us your deadly gas fumes; poison our wells; shoot at us your devilish flaming liquids—in spite of them all you will never get through to despoil our precious homes just behind us! We are here to meet you. Come on, come on! Those of you who escape the *arrosage* of our '75's' will still find 'Rosalie,' the bayonet, awaiting you!"

Such was the substance of the savage hymn which my men sang in their hearts as the Boches came to close quarters.

And "Rosalie" did her work well, true enough. At times they got through to her, never past her. The snow-flecked ground in front of us, furrowed as though by a titanic plow, was covered with gray-green bodies—and many horizon-blue ones also. But what a difference in the up-turned faces! The gray-green were stolid, brutal, or fear-struck. The horizon-blue were calm, peaceful, happy, buoyant—and one of the most satisfied death-grins of all that I saw was upon the blood-smeared countenance of a little Poilu we found with his bayonet jabbed through the breast of a big Boche twice his size. That poor boy I knew. He had had a younger brother maimed for life the year before by Germans in northern France who had deliberately cut off one of his hands. Now he had had his revenge.

As the Germans continued to come against us in serried masses, it was decided that a retreat was necessary. Slowly we fell back to the Wood of Caures, still slaughtering the enemy as we went.

Since you may not know just where this wood is located, I will say that it is to the north of Verdun, lying between the Bois d'Haumont and the Herbe Bois, on the Bois des Fosses and the Forest of Spincourt.

That afternoon, after we had reached our position in the Wood of Caures, Captain Peyron came up to me and said: "I understand from Chief Engineer Moreau that we're to prepare a little surprise for the Kaiser's crack troops. We've got to hold the wood like grim death till all is ready, which will be sometime to-morrow, probably towards evening, and then Moreau will spring his little joke. All day he and his staff have been out in the wood propecting, and the sappers are already at work."

That night I learned a little more from one of Moreau's assistants, a Lieutenant Chabert. Chabert was a former brilliant pupil of the Ecole des Arts et Métiers. Owing to his deep knowledge of electrical science he has on countless occasions during the war rendered invaluable service. He is one of those men you sometimes meet who can turn their hands to almost anything in the scientific line. On this occasion, after ten hours of feverish and continuous work with the sappers, Chabert staggered into our dugout, dead-beat. Before throwing himself down to sleep he had just strength enough to mumble to me: "See that I'm called as early as possible, *mon ami*, will you? I have hundreds of yards of wiring to see to yet. *Dieu merci*, we have still a day before us!"

I promised to wake him at five sharp, and, envying him his sleep, immediately went in search of Sergeant Fleury, to delegate him to carry out the duty entrusted to me in case I might be prevented from arousing Chabert.

By the time I had found the sergeant the moon had risen over the battlefield, and if I live to be a hundred I shall never forget the sight. Our machine-guns were still firing two hundred rounds a minute on the German formations. As the enemy approached through the ravines round Flasbas the hollows were positively glutted with the dead.

Towards morning there came a lull. The respite was doubly welcome; it gave both sides time to breathe and behold the work done. A ghastly spectacle indeed was revealed when our search-lights swept their big paths of white over the shadowed battlefield. Men, dead and wounded, lay everywhere. Some of the latter were crawling as fast as they could toward their own lines. If they were sure these were their own men, the Boche suffered them to go scot free; but woe to the wounded if

they detected horizon-blue upon him! for efforts were made at once to shoot him down.

When dawn came the lull continued. But by noon both sides went into the clutch once more, and again we had to face the overwhelming odds of the Kaiser's and Crown Prince's troops. In the meantime I had called Chabert at the appointed hour, and after a great stretch and a yawn he had gone off to work among his human moles of the Caures Wood.

About noon Chief Engineer Moreau came to hold a consultation with Captain Peyron, under whose immediate orders we were. He then hurried back to his sappers and electricians, simply saying: "*Bon jour*, my friend. All goes well." But the satisfied expression upon his dark face would have told me all was well without the words.

I met neither Moreau nor Chabert till after the retreat. To tell you the truth, we were so busily engaged in keeping back the Germans till it suited our purpose to let them come on en masse that I had no time at all in which to make inquiries after them.

With the approach of evening the gradual move back to more advantageous positions began for the French. I shall not go into the details of a strategic retreat; it is enough here to simply state that we evacuated Caures Wood and got away to the high ground in the neighborhood of the Bois des Fosses. Here I encountered my chiefs again, and here we drew aside and I was made fully aware of the nature of the trick that the engineering force had planned. I must admit that, as I gazed off in the gathering darkness of night toward the Bois de Caures, I felt a strong excitement. Whether or not Moreau, Peyron, Chabert and Fleury had a similar feeling I do not know; at least, they gave no evidence of it in their calm faces as they gazed in the same direction I

did. In the gloom the Wood we had so recently vacated stood out across the shadowy meadowland a huge, black, portentous mass, a great blot against the blue sky of night. As I continued to stare, I recall that the mass seemed to move and mysteriously evolve itself into a gigantic interrogation point. But, of course, that was imagination, brought on from my own thoughts and expectations and overwrought nerves.

Finally, for relief, I turned to Captain Peyron. "What do you estimate the strength of the attacking force in our sector to be?" I inquired.

"Two thousand odd," was his reply. "And all of them have fallen into the trap. As our men retreated through the wood, they followed in a mad triumph of possession, blindly, stupidly—*les imbéciles!*"

"Not one of them shall escape," put in Moreau grimly. He glanced at his luminous watch. Turning to Chabert, he added: "One minute more—then France shall be avenged for at least some of the horrors these greyhounds of perdition have forced upon us!"

Again our eyes fixed themselves intently upon the dark mass across the fields. Somebody, somewhere, we knew, was about to press an electric button, and—

Bo-o-o-o-m-mm! Bo-o-o-o-m-mm! Bo-o-o-om-mm!

The loud reverberations startled even we who were looking for them. For an hour afterward I could hear their ringing in my ears. They came in a series of deafening, awful reports, unrivalled by any thunder clap I had ever heard. The earth beneath our feet quivered—even the air was disturbed. The scenery about took on a queer, wavering, unstable aspect, and I felt like a man gone suddenly tipsy.

The weirdness of it all was intensified greatly by huge sheets of flame which leaped high above the trees of Caures Wood as the series of terrific explosions occurred. Though quite a distance away, we could plainly make out stark objects in those blow-gusts of fire which looked to be either bits of shattered timber or bits of human anatomy. Inwardly we knew they were both.

I shuddered, and covered my eyes. This was war; war must be endured; a mad-dog must be met with something besides a mere cuff on the ears. Yet one does not always have to look as he inflicts deserved punishment upon another.

III. THE SIEGE

It will be remembered that on February 24th, General de Castelnau, representing the French High Command, had to make the momentous decision whether France would accept or decline battle on the Meuse Heights. To decline meant not only to confess defeat, and abandon the ruined town of Verdun itself whose traditions were of great importance in the eyes of the world at large, but it also meant to risk disaster in a retreat across a flooded valley.

On the other hand, to accept battle meant to throw a force of two hundred and fifty thousand piecemeal across the swollen Meuse, to face huge numbers of the enemy enthused by great successes and expecting a decisive victory. The first French divisions, moreover, must face the oncoming flood of Germans in the open field, without any but the most flimsy trenches to shelter them against the greatest concentration of heavy artillery yet known in war.

Castelnau, as we have shown, chose to accept the last-named situation on February 24th. By so doing he virtually signed France to engage Germany until Russian armies should

be restored and British armies ready. Once more France bravely bore the burden of the Great War.

But by March 1st the situation had changed materially. The great German advance, the drive down the Meuse Heights on a narrow front and behind a huge artillery fire, had come to an abrupt halt, owing to reinforcements under the valiant Petain. In the center further enemy advance was impossible, while from the flanks the French fire swept the communications and rear of the Germans in a withering manner.

It now became necessary for the German High Command to make a decision—a decision, at that, quite as momentous as that recently settled by the French. Should it continue the Verdun operation? The possibility of a supreme victory, once so glowing, was now gone. The chance to break the French line, to drive a wedge between the armies of the center and the right, and resume the march on Paris, had disappeared. True, Verdun might still be taken, but it could only be after a long siege, and by that time the French were sure to have prepared endless lines behind the town, lines of admirably defensible hills that rise to the west of the Meuse Valley.

Puzzling as the situation must have seemed, the Germans really had no choice. They had by now so far committed themselves that there was no alternative but to continue; they had spent many long weeks in preparing for this offensive; they had had to build long lines of railroad, repair highways, and transport thousands of tons of heavy artillery and munitions. For months hordes of men had been laboring upon earthworks, etc. In fact the German preparation had begun fifteen months before the Verdun battle! Therefore, they could not be expected to give up without a more decisive defeat than thus far inflicted upon them.

So Germany decided to continue her offensive. But she knew her new calculations must be far more modest than her previous reckonings. She could hope to capture Verdun and depress the soldiers and public of the Allies, but she could no

longer expect to drive in that separating wedge in opening the way to Paris between the Oise and Meuse. And now that the element of surprise and overwhelming numbers was gone, and the French wide-awake and thoroughly stirred to their real danger, she—Germany—must count on a tremendous sacrifice of her soldiery if she even attained the town. But she reasoned that this loss might be worth while, especially since the Meuse Heights in the possession of the French would serve as an important bridgehead, render a new German line perilous, and preserve a dire threat to the invaluable Briey iron district only a few miles to the east, from which Germany derived the larger part of the iron ore used in her war industries.

In this siege of Verdun, which lasted with little interruption from March to the end of August, and did not really come to a close until the December offensive of the French had cleared the whole area of the entrenched camp, a new order of fighting came into use. In all earlier battles the concentration of artillery had abolished the first and second line defenses, and thereafter the assailant had either advanced to victory or been halted at the third line, and the struggle had quickly fallen back to the old familiar routine of trench warfare.

But at Verdun the bombardment, which had heretofore been merely the prelude to infantry attack, endured for days and even weeks. Over eight thousand shells fell every day, for nearly three months, upon Fort de Vaux alone! Main trenches, dugouts, communication-trenches—all were soon abolished, never to be restored. Men fought in defenses supplied by chance, chiefly in shell-holes. The forest-clad hills of the Meuse Heights were soon swept clear of every vestige of tree or plant. The whole area was pock-marked with shell-craters until, looking down from an airplane, one might well believe himself examining the surface of the Sahara itself. In these the rains left sufficient waters to drown scores of men who unwittingly stepped into them, and who could, as in a well, get neither fingerhold nor foothold to succor themselves.

Roads were reduced to mere trails. Organized lines and ways of communication were completely blotted out. Landmarks familiar to one to-day were strange and weird to-morrow. In France, as in Germany, Verdun became a name of evil omen before the end of the fighting. It is estimated that well nigh a quarter-million men perished in both armies in the first ten months of the fighting.

No pen can describe, no brush paint, no tongue tell, the real horrors of this siege. The misery of those who fought is beyond all realization, the desolation of the country hardly believable. As for Verdun itself, the historic town melted into dust and ashes, as Arras had, as Rheims was to. Yet, strange to say, the wonderful, beautiful cathedral survived, as if protected by the Almighty Hand; and to the very end there were houses in which troops were billeted.

All the romance of the war of movement, the old-fashioned war in which the relative comforts arising from long months of experience made possible in the trench-lines elsewhere, were absent from Verdun. Men lived in mud and ruins. They fought with no shelter over them but the blue or gray heavens, and none about them but the partially frozen or extremely slimy portions of a shell-crater. In such positions they faced the terrific storm of shrapnel from the Germans for hours and days without interruption. Ground was won only after it had been pulverized to a powder and the dust mixed past flying with the life-blood of the fighters. In some instances the smallest gain of the French meant the sacrifice of more lives than had been given up in an entire battle in some of the memorable struggles of the Civil War in America.

The rifle played a relatively small part. Aside from the artillery, the deadliest weapons were bombs, liquid fire, asphyxiating gas, machine-guns and the bayonet. Such scientific butchery has never been equaled before in the world's history. While the artillery led in this decimation of life, every weapon that modern human ingenuity could devise on both sides was utilized. And to the horrors of the fight itself were added the

tortures of a relentless weather and a stern landscape. Forests, swamps and marshes—even fogs, rains and blizzards—had to be faced by the men of Verdun. In many instances Death seemed to be the kindest friend the soldiers knew, for scores of letters from French and German alike contained this sentiment when opened and read by the folk back home.

By the first day of March the German advance on the Meuse Heights had definitely halted. While in the next few days there were spasmodic efforts to gain ground on the Douaumont Plateau, the conflict, after several interludes, shifted from the center of the flanks, from the Douaumont Plateau to the westward, to the left bank of the river north of Verdun; to the eastward to the Vaux Plateau, south and east of Fort Douaumont.

At this moment the French lines were shaped like a crescent, with the horns facing the German line; and from these horns—formed by Le Mort Homme ("Dead Man's Hill") and by Fort de Vaux, on the Vaux Plateau,—the French directed a converging fire upon the enemy's center within the curve of the crescent.

Therefore, before they could push farther forward the Germans had to deal with the French flanks—with the left wing at Dead Man's Hill and the right at Fort de Vaux. In the end they were bound to reach Verdun, if at all, through the breach they had opened in the French center, because there they were nearest to their objective and there the ground was more favorable to their attack. But French artillery was sweeping this breach from both wings, and until it could be silenced and the horns of the crescent seized, no further advance in the center was possible.

The two operations that make up the "Battle of the Wings"—as the French term it—went on not simultaneously, but alternately, during nearly three months. First on the French left, and then on the right, the Germans attacked. New artillery concentrations and new infantry divisions and corps were brought up. German losses mounted rapidly, while the French, holding the unessential positions lightly, and counter-attacking

only when some vital trench or redoubt was temporarily lost, paid a far smaller price for their resistance. As a matter of fact there was nothing more costly to the Germans in the whole conflict than the struggles on the west bank of the river during March and April, excepting possibly the brusque attack upon the Vaux, which failed.

When the Germans began their attack on the left bank the French there were still holding the line occupied when the Battle of Verdun opened. This line ran westward from the Meuse along the south bank of the little Forges Brook, which enters the Meuse just opposite the village of Samogneux, lost by the French in the first days, the stream which our own Americans crossed in the first stage of their offensive between the Argonne and the Meuse more than two years later. A branch of this brook, coming down at right angles to the main stream and parallel to the Meuse, separates Dead Man's Hill from Hill 304, an adjoining summit, and the various German efforts aimed at taking these two isolated elevations, first by frontal attack, then by a push up the south branch of the Forges Brook, and finally by an attack from the west up the slopes of Hill 304.

The main French defensive position on the left bank of the river was not along the crest of the two contested hills, but a couple of miles south of them, along the Charny Ridge, which was higher than either and extended in an unbroken line westward from the Meuse, and more than four miles north of Verdun. Both Dead Man's Hill and Hill 304 were far outside the old area of the entrenched camp of Verdun. The French clung to them as long as they could without too great losses, and finally surrendered them when the attack became too fierce, although they retook them a year later, with little cost, when they had regained the offensive.

This battle on the left wing lasted from the first week of March to the last week of May. When it ended the French had been driven south and off both hills; they had lost their power to assail the Germans on the Douaumont Plateau by a flanking fire. Thus the enemy obtained the result which they sought, but at a

tremendous cost in men, and not until after three months of the hardest kind of fighting.

When they had attained their objectives, the tired Germans contented themselves with occupying and fortifying the captured hills, and the fighting on the left bank was over.

The fighting on the right wing attracted more attention, and will probably enjoy more lasting fame, because it had a single, clearly distinguishable objective in the shape of Fort de Vaux, and because the defense of this fort constitutes an epitome of the whole Verdun epic and one of the finest and most appealing chapters in the history of warfare.

Standing on a broad, fairly level plateau, Vaux faces east over the edge of the Woivre Plateau, and at the north fronts Fort Douaumont across the deep ravine carrying the brook of Vaux. Little water-courses have eaten so deeply into the clayey soil that Vaux is really almost surrounded by ravines, and is thus practically isolated from the mass of the heights of the Meuse behind it, which bears the inner line of old forts, Tavannes and Souville, among them.

The Germans who attacked Vaux from the north, advanced out of the valley at its feet, having taken the little village of Vaux-devant-Damloup, just under the fort. As they advanced the contour of the hills gave them a protected sector right under the fort, the slope being too sharp to permit the guns of Vaux to reach them.

From March 9th the battle of Vaux went forward with unending severity. Little by little the Germans crept up the Vaux Plateau. More and more closely their trench lines drew about the doomed fort, which now, by reason of terrific artillery fire, was nothing more than a heap of shapeless masonry and crumbling brick. By the first of June the investment was complete. Only a little garrison of six hundred men still held out; and this garrison, made up largely of survivors of other units who had sought refuge there, was beyond the resources of the fort to feed or furnish with water.

Ensconsed in the underground passages of the ruined fort, like rats fighting for life, the gallant little garrison still hung on, fighting the overwhelming force of attackers gamely. All communication with their brother forces outside had ceased. Carrier pigeons had supplied the lack for a while, but finally the last pigeon had been released. Then, for a day or two, messages were flashed back and forth by heliograph.

But by June 3rd, the end was in sight, for the Germans were, now pushing up and occupying the ground over the ruins of the fort, and the troops had to defend themselves against an attack from above. First a shower of bombs were thrown down the narrow staircases by the enemy, and these were quickly followed by a pouring in of the Germans themselves, who sought every underground passage they could find.

However, the comparatively small force of defenders did not yield. Desperately they defended the passages and inner stairways. Then the implacable foe reverted to the use of gas. They poured charge after charge of the deadly chemical down into the recesses, in which the air was already mephitic. And failing in this, they even tried shooting down liquid fire. But not until all food and water were gone did the stubborn Frenchmen give in. Then—and only then—did Major Raynal, whose last message from his commander had been one announcing his decoration for supreme bravery, yield his sword to a conqueror who, for once at least, honored himself by honoring the brave man who had defended his post to the very last moment. This occurred June 7th.

While the battle had raged on the flanks the lines in the center had changed but little. There had been a slight but immaterial German advance. The French, on their side, by a brilliant counter-attack designed to relieve the pressure on Vaux, had stormed the ruins of Fort Douaumont, and managed to hold them for one long May day, only to retire in the face of new German concentrations. This counter-offensive was really the last ray of light for the defenders for many days.

When the final German thrust for Verdun began, the positions of the two contending forces were something like this: No longer facing south, but west, the Germans were endeavoring to advance from the Douaumont Plateau down-hill toward the Meuse Valley and Verdun, four miles before them and in plain view. They and the French occupied halves of a gigantic letter "H." One of the sides represents the Douaumont Plateau; the other, the parallel ridge, which contained Fort Tavannes. Between the two sides ran the German route to Verdun. The crossbar represents the narrow ridge connecting the two longer ridges, and itself supported Fort de Souville. On this connecting ridge the French and German lines faced each other with only a few yards separating them, and the whole German desire was by frontal attacks to force the French off this ridge, seizing first the Thiaumont redoubt and the village of Fleury in their immediate front, and then Fort de Souville. If they could take the latter place they would then isolate and capture Tavannes, and advance upon Verdun along the three valleys giving access to that point.

This would enable the Germans to drive the French downhill, as they advanced, and once Souville and Tavannes had fallen, the French would have only St. Michel and Belleville—forts which stand upon the first slopes east of the Meuse and which, in the nature of things, could only be held lightly and for a brief time, since the retreat of their garrisons would be practically impossible and their destruction by German batteries on the higher ground to the east was bound to be only a matter of time. Forts, however, had long lost their old importance, and even Tavannes and Souville were desirable only because of gun positions about them and the cover their under-ground galleries afforded reserves and munitions and food supplies.

The final phase of the Verdun offensive came between June 8th and August 8th. In this time the German line was pushed forward a little more than a mile. On the right it entirely thrust the French off the Douaumont Plateau and back upon the subsidiary and lower elevation of Froide Terre. Here the German

advance was marked by the capture of Thiaumont Farm and redoubt. In the center, the German troops reached and passed the village of Fleury, attained the Chapelle St. Fine beyond, and halted exactly at the ditch of Fort de Souville, the extreme highwater mark. On their left, the Germans advanced from Fort de Vaux rather more than a mile, thus covering half the distance between Vaux and Tavannes.

By August 8th the German line between the Meuse and the Vaux Plateau curved inward toward Verdun, and then bent back toward the Vaux Plateau; it was, in fact, a gigantic wedge driven toward Verdun, penetrating most deeply southwest of Douaumont. The Germans were now on the downward slope, less than four miles from the old Vauban citadel. They had flung back both wings of the French army defending Verdun; they had also opened a breach in the venture. Souville, nothing but a collection of blackened ashes, was the single fragile barrier between them and an advance which would carry them to the Meuse.

But this advance was not to come. The Anglo-French offensive in Picardy was now five weeks old; there was a heavy call upon the Germans there for reserves. Now, with equally as insistent a call in the Verdun sector, it became obvious that the German High Command could not meet both appeals with the required reinforcements. Had the Germans been able to reach Fleury in May or June they might have forced the French to retreat beyond the river. But in August their opportunity had come too late. The Verdun game had been played out, and the assailants had failed in every particular to gain any of their principal objectives.

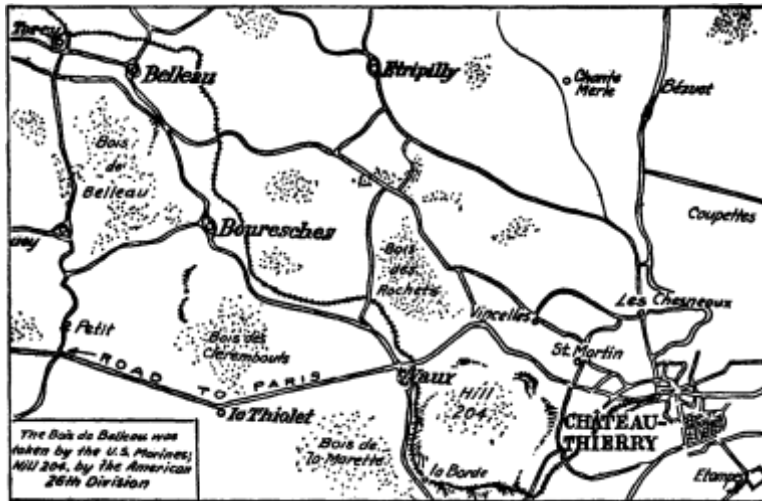
For the Allies, however, it was different. Verdun had served their purpose admirably. The military end of its victory had been attained in June; the moral value was now realized in August. In other words, in its six months of battle and siege, it had not only held out long enough to serve the purpose of Allied strategy, but it had also supplied the moral victory, which was

almost beyond calculation at this particularly trying stage of the war.

To the glory of Thermopylae, Verdun had added the achievement of Plataea. In February the Poilu had said stoutly, "They shall not pass." As late as August, following, they had *not* passed. The challenge had become a prophecy, and the prophecy was already fulfilled.

CHAPTER X

SECOND MARNE



Weary with the fight of weeks and weeks,
On wobbling legs back of the gate
To Paris,
The battered Frenchmen, defying fate,
Strive with a frenzy, maddened, great,
To keep the enemy from what he seeks
In Paris.

"O, for new blood!" Despairing the cry
That goes up from the feeble French guns
Near Paris.

Quick comes the answer. Brave, stalwart sons
From across the seas now face the Huns,
And drive them back, though many die,
From Paris!

I. BELLEAU WOOD AND THE "DEVIL DOGS"

On the great rugged face of the world the *Bois de Belleau*—Wood of Belleau—is but an insignificant little smudge of trees, a mere jumble of foliage and shrubbery, rocky ridges, steep slopes, and deep ravines. Topographically it is too small to place upon any but the largest of the maps of France. But sentimentally and historically it assumed mammoth proportions of importance to the peoples of the world in the month of June, 1918.

To those whose hearts thrill at the strains of the Marseillaise, to those who revere the billowing folds of the Stars and Stripes, to those whose blood quickens with the recital of brave and heroic deeds and unbounded self-sacrifice, Belleau Wood, blackened and stricken though it now be from shot, fire and shell, is a shrine that will ever live strong in the memory. In Belleau Wood the United States Marines earned from the fear-stricken foe the sobriquet bestowed upon them—"Devil Dogs." In Belleau Wood the Marines more than sustained the fighting reputation gained by their brother Americans in the first American fight on European soil a few days before—Cantigny. In Belleau Wood the Marines summarily stopped the blood-smeared march of the triumphant Hun on Paris.

Is it any wonder, then, that because of these facts the French government has issued an order that all maps of France shall designate the old *Bois de Belleau* as the "*Boise de la Brigade de Marines*"? Surely it might have been expected. Yet we Americans are very proud and grateful to the French for the honor conferred.

While perhaps not as picturesque, the parts played by other American units at Château-Thierry, in what is very properly termed the Second Battle of the Marne, form a no less remarkable chapter in the history of the American Expeditionary

Forces in France. Altogether eight American divisions participated at Château-Thierry. Of these only four had seen any real fighting, and only one had taken part in an offensive operation. The other four had either seen no fighting at all, or so little during their training in calm sectors that they had not yet received the classification of fighting units. But they gave so clear a demonstration of the combative quality of American troops, even though incompletely trained, that they completely restored the morale of the Allied battle-line in a very short time after being put to the test.



BELLEAU WOODS.

As stated, Cantigny tried out the Americans, and found them not wanting. The German High Command was astonished that comparatively green soldiers could fight as these men in brown khaki from across the great seas had done upon that occasion. They began to realize that if they were to take Paris and overwhelm the French army, they must do so without further delay, else the United States would have sent over altogether too many of these terrible "green" soldiers to make the operation successful.

With this idea in mind, in the latter days of May the Germans launched a terrific drive against the French along the Chemin des Dames. Outnumbered three to one, temporarily overwhelmed by a dense concentration of artillery, the French line broke and gave way on almost the entire front from Soissons to Craonne. Over the heights north of the Aisne, over the Aisne River itself and the heights to the south, the Huns poured. At the Vesle they did not hesitate, but continued an uninterrupted march southward toward the Marne. As they forged ahead, the French center gave way to the pressure, but the French flanks held.

Nearing the Marne, the Germans made an effort to spread out toward the west. But in this effort, which resulted in the battle of Château-Thierry, the Central Powers met with a determined resistance from Field-Marshal Foch, as we shall presently see.

At this time—the last week of May—matters looked desperate for the Allies. All the big industrial concerns near Paris engaged in the manufacture of ammunition and war material were moving their plants to points south of Paris, where greater safety lay, as fast as available transportation could be had. All government bureaus and all banks labored with records and books, securities and cash, to get them packed and ready for flight at a moment's notice. With the enemy only thirty-eight miles away, the situation seemed hopeless to many, serious to all. For the British dare not leave their positions farther north, and the Americans were not yet arrived in sufficient numbers to seem to be able to bolster up the weary Poilu at the Marne and stem the on-rushing tide of Imperialism.

Moreover, on May 26th, on the eve of the German drive at Château-Thierry, we find the American divisions then in France widely scattered, with more than half outside of the geographical—and even the supply—limits of the intended American sector, so that French and British regulating stations and railheads had largely to be used by the American Service of

Supply, a procedure which increased the problems and perplexities of the American general staff.

But by May 27th it was no longer a question as to which division had completed training according to adopted schedule; rather it was an emergency so dire as to call for all troops within ready reach. The two American units nearest were the Second and Third Divisions. These were rushed without delay to the point of danger.

It was on the 30th when word came from General Pershing for the first American division to take its place at the front lines. The Hun was getting ready to plunge forward again, to drive on in the final smash for that goal of the world-hungry barbarians—Paris. The greedy eyes of the Boche generals were looking far into the distance, to that place of spires and gaiety and beauty that had been unceasingly coveted for more than four years. Opposing them were the French, tired out from countless battles, wearied from months and months of continual, unceasing life-and-death strain, weak near to the breaking point, yet upheld by a spirit that seemed miraculously unquenchable. Like a frail straw, lodged and bending before the fierce onslaught of the mighty current, they stood, ready to meet the last rush of the enemy with the very last ounce their waning strength before crumpling up upon their threshold and giving him access to their long-guarded, precious homes.

New blood! New strength! Pitifully, but silently, France cried for relief from those at her back. But from the gray hordes she faced she asked no mercy. And to them, ahead, she even showed a smile—a grim, unmirthful, challenging smile that would stay there until either she were victorious or her last countryman had breathed his last.

The cry of France was answered at once. Truckload upon truckload of brown-garbed men—tall, lithe, clean-cut fellows, still on the edge of their boyhood—journeyed along the white roads toward the Château-Thierry sector. From primitive little villages that had formed their rest billets they streamed, along

this highway and that, welding the dusty byways of their coming into veritable living, straining sinews of war. Wild with the joy of a chance to assist their French comrades-in-arms, brimful of overflowing vitality and a serene confidence that come from healthy surroundings and healthy habits, they rolled on past their own great streams of slower-going supply wagons and ordnance, past tired, shoulder-bent French soldiers who were filtering back from the front, past plodding horses and high-loaded carts of refugees from the occupied and near-occupied districts.

Little children saw them, and threw them flowers; but in spite of their childish pleasure there was fear in the heart of more than one that those flowers would live only to be crushed under the ruthless heel of a German conqueror. Old men waved, and shouted a blessing in quavering voice. Old ladies, tottering upon tragically sad thrones of hastily-loaded household goods, blew their kisses, while others, not so fortunate, did likewise as they hobbled aside upon the road to let the long, winding snake of brown writhe by, a little later fingering their rosaries and mumbling heartfelt prayers. "Les Americains! Les Americains!" was the cry that went up from these poor people all along the way. And the very joy in it made these rapidly moving brown-garbed men look ahead with a sterner look, and the chauffeurs press the accelerator pedal of their human-laden trucks a bit harder.

The Americans were going forward to the relief!—the Americans, as a whole untried, yet unmeasured. In his heart every mother's son of them was praying that the French line might only hold until he and his comrades could arrive upon the scene!

Late that night some of them took their positions. Their wish was fulfilled. And by night of the 1st of June the whole Second Division was in position behind the French troops on a twelve-mile front, covering the Paris road at Le Thiolet.

The confidence born of the appearance of this help stiffened the resistance of the French soldiery sufficiently for

them to hold this part of the line, with the aid of small American reinforcements, until the afternoon of the 2nd. Then the French began to drop back. Between the lines of the Fifth and Sixth Regiments of Marines they began to filter, so weary they could scarcely support their arms, yet still bravely smiling as they passed through the long-strung lines of bronzed-faced Americans. Often they tried to call a greeting, some word of encouragement, but those words as often died on their pallid lips and in parched throats.

It is five o'clock of the 4th of June. Still strong in the mellowing light of the waning afternoon, contrasting sharply in its extensive green expanse of comparatively small patches of timber against the lighter-hued cultivated fields rolling about it, stands Belleau Wood, a few miles to the north-west of Château-Thierry. The French peasants have found it difficult to till the sides of the hills, numerous here, so the slopes have been given over to trees; but on the flats between and on the summits themselves are crops of oats and wheat.

Now the hearts of the waiting Marines flutter wildly, but not with fear. At last they are gazing at the anticipated. For out of the woods, advancing across the green fields of wheat, come the winding, plodding columns of Imperial Germany, their helmets bobbing, arms held in threatening readiness. Drunk from the victorious marches of the week, confidently goose-stepping forward to throw down the last bar of the barrier that stands in their way to Paris, these picked units of the great gray horde come on, unhesitatingly, arrogantly.

From the lines of the Marines comes the sudden crackling of rifle fire. Accompanying is the rattling, telegraphic stutter of machine-guns. These guns have been aimed by youngsters who are practically all sharpshooters, whose target records seldom fall below a hundred and eighty hits out of a possible two hundred! The gray lines quiver, as men go down and they become as porous as a sieve.

But still the Germans come on. Recovered, they advance in perfect order, but now in heavy waves, driving on through the wheat toward their goal, counting on their masses to overwhelm the opposition, whoever they may be.

Back of the Allied lines the telephones buzz. Marine officers, bending over their maps, snap orders. The little "75's" begin to spatter flame, and thunder out their defiance. And out there in the standing grain, where the gray-clad columns are moving doggedly forward, the shrapnel be-gins to break closer and closer with every shot.

Suddenly the whole great expanse of terrain just at the rear of the Marines seems to leap into puffs of creamy-white smoke, like some strange bulbous field of gigantic flowers simultaneously bursting into bloom. It is the Flower of Death. From the midst of the snowy petals and fiery-red stamen a metallic pollen is scattered broadcast into the oncoming ranks of the Boche. Here—there—everywhere—great patches of vacancy appear. Along the lines of the Marines, the repeaters, the automatics, the machine-guns, rattle forth their message of deadly import in ever-increasing rapidity. The gray waves falter. A moment more and they seek to stagger on again; pouring into the terrible Devil Dogs a fire more voluminous but far less deadly than their own. But the breaking point has come. As scores of Marines go down, in retaliation five times the number of Germans fall, and the latter suddenly turn and make for the friendly cover of the woods at their back!

So much for that defense. After two days of constant reconnoitering, word passes along the Marine lines to go ahead and mop up Belleau Wood, also take Bouresches and Torcy.

Although Captain Tribot Laspières, the French military adviser, has been shell-shocked and gassed, and Colonel Albertus Catlin has been drilled through the lung with a sniper's bullet—although in the timbered recesses of ravine and rock and ridge, the enemy has every advantage with snugly ensconced machine-gun nests and fortified position, the Devil Dogs spring

to the chase as eagerly as ever hunting canine bounded after game when unleashed by the controlling hand of his master. Some one else leaps into the place of Captain Laspieres, some other officer takes the work of Colonel Catlin—and the fight sweeps on, but in reversed manner.

It seemed that every tree clump was infested with a Boche machine-gun crew; that every tree-top of any thickness concealed a gray-backed sniper watching his chance to pick off the officers of the Marines with his heavy rifle. As heedless of the death that lurked on all sides of them as if they were at play, these men from across the seas completely upset the German theory that to advance in the face of a machine-gun barrage and take the position from the front, is beyond the realm of the possible for a foe. On few occasions do the Devil Dogs bother to work around to the rear of these nests. Usually they face them, squirming over the ground on their bellies and picking off the astounded gunners one by one with their unerring rifles, else boldly charging and carrying the position by sheer impetuous bravery. Thus from copse to copse they go, leaving behind clusters of German dead at every spot where Boche machine-guns have recently snarled at them, or the limp bodies of enemy snipers hanging in the forks of trees where their careers have ended with Colt pistol balls through their heads.

As they gain new positions, the Marines consolidate them. They re-gather their scattered forces; they press forward to the edges of the wooded areas. There they are confronted with flat fields, many of which are fully two hundred yards across, with timber again on the farther side. Across these, with a wild hurrah, they dash. The distant greenery fairly pulsates with the barrages of machine-gun and rifle bullets that rain out upon them. Great gaps are torn in their columns. Men drop, stifle their cries of pain, stagger to their feet and go on again with the rest! The word passes along for Sergeant "Johnny" Fuller. There is no answer for a moment. Then comes a sudden stirring in the grass; a gray faced lad, his teeth clenched, his eyes bleeding with agony, struggles to his feet and runs forward limpingly with the

others. "Johnny" is in the fight again with his mates—in again in spite of the bullet that felled him!

Sprays and streams and showers of lead sweep across the field. It seems miraculous that any living being can live five minutes in that deluge of shrieking, zipping pellets. But living, undaunted beings do. On, on go the Devil Dogs. What care they for this weird music? It is a goad to go on, rather than back. Time enough to pause when they are hit, hit hard, else attain their objective. "First to fight"—that is the Marine identification phrase. "Last to quit" fits him equally well. On, on go the Devil Dogs.

And so the mortal combat continues. Company G has been literally torn to pieces. Strung along the rear, in field, wood and ravine, are officers and men in forest-green uniform, dead, dying and maimed. Of the command only Corporal Roy W. Chase is left to direct the movements of the few men remaining in Company G. Loudly his call rings out for an attack on the machine-guns that are ripping them to pieces. Gladly the men respond. A charge, a brief moment of hand-to-hand bayonet thrusting, and two enemy emplacements have been obliterated forever. Then onward once more—not to stop until every man of Company G has been killed or wounded!

Columns might be written of the individual deeds of heroism performed in that battle of Belleau Wood by the Marines. Suffice it to say that in the eight long days of their continuous fighting, they never once faltered. They captured all of the villages in the forest, and advanced their line to the extreme northern limits of the woods. Men so torn with wounds that their clothes dripped blood, men so riddled with machine-gun bullets that it seemed one could almost look through them; men so lacerated by shrapnel, so seared by snipers' bullets, so reeling from shell-shock that they continued to pull trigger and press on with their last ounce of strength till they dropped unconscious in their tracks in many instances,—they, the "unknown quantity" to the veteran European belligerents a few days before, had now galvanized the name "United States

Marine" so deeply upon the marble page of History that it can never be effaced.

And as it is etched with an undying love into the heart of the French people, the name "Devil Dog" is graven with an unforgettable, almost supernatural fear, in the heart of the German soldier who survived that defeat at Belleau Wood. With a shudder he recalls that, in spite of their terrible punishment, these bronzed giants from America had never failed to go forward. He recalls that time after time, the German gunners killed until they went mad—only to see, still coming forward, more and more of the Devil Dogs. He recalls that, like uncanny beings of the spiritual world, they took bullet after bullet, and still came grimly on; that, with their very legs shot from under them, they writhed to a sitting posture and, unable to go on themselves, *sent on the last rounds of their deadly leaden talismen!*

Baptized in fire, christened in blood, consecrated in superhuman valor, these mothers' boys of the famous Marine Corps had reproved to all contestants and the word at large the true caliber of the American soldier fighting for Democracy, Humanity and Justice.

II. THE MIRACLE OF CHÂTEAU-THIERRY

At Château-Thierry we are in the very heart of the *Ile de France*. This field of terrific battles and tragic death, bristling with ruins still permeated with the smell of burned wood and scorched stone, was not long ago, and soon will be again, a gracious, charming countryside, typical of French landscape. With its undulating plateaux, pleasant vales, broad green valleys, shady forests, luxuriant grasses, fragrant wild flowers, quaint châteaux and villas, small towns, and dear old villages thronged with precious works of art, the district between the Aisne and the Marne was peculiarly representative of France—the France of the Merovingians and Capets, as well as of the twentieth century.

The bright green ribbon of the Marne winds along the valley bottom. The placid stream, about a hundred meters wide and broken here and there by bewitching little islets, wanders along pretty banks that are lined by poplars and willows. On either side of its limpid waters are broad fields under rich cultivation, and interspersed here and there one could have seen the most magnificent orchards and vineyards where cherry tree blended with grape cluster, imparting to the slopes an aspect of decided rustic opulence. Huddled white villages, with tawny-hued pointed roofs, follow one another in almost regular succession on the rolling ground. Their names—Binson, Vandieres, Vincelles, Tréloup,—have lately won a terrible celebrity.

The valley widens as it enters the broad basin of Château-Thierry. It has long been a beautiful spot, and at the same time one of great military value. It has almost forgotten its role of fortress, but very soon will it be recalled in the most vicious but proudful manner.

In the foreground is the wide expanse of fields in the valley bottom. Scaling the slopes of a hill crowned by the ruins of an old castle, the town rises, terrace-like, at the mouth of a narrow valley. The position can only be carried by frontal attack on the heels of a defeated foe, as Napoleon carried it in 1814. But in 1918 the Americans had to take Château-Thierry in flank, and in order to gain egress to the town at all, had to first fight the bloody battles of Vaux, Bouresches, and Étrepilly. In the immediate neighborhood the ravines of Vaux, Brasles, Charteves, Julgonne, and Tréloup, and the valley of the Surmelin, slash the plateau on either side of the Marne into fragments—into forest-topped hillocks which are genuine fortresses, which provided the Germans with Hill 204, the forest of Fèze, and the wooded bastions of Saint-Agnan and La Chapelle-Monthodon, where the Allies were able to advance only a step at a time despite their fierce onslaughts, from the 15th to the 20th of July.

With this little introduction to the physical nature of the country about Château-Thierry it will be well now to return to military procedure.

Notwithstanding the early fighting of the U.S. Marines, the very first American unit to meet the German offensive was the Seventh Machine-Gun Battalion of the Third Division. It was a motorized unit, and rolled off to Condé-en-Brie to join the French, and then on to Château-Thierry. The men rode up practically to the battle-line, and immediately went into action, although they had just come a distance of a hundred and ten miles in thirty hours. This was May 31st. Stationing themselves beside the French Colonials on the south bank of the river, for seventy-two hours this battalion of expert machine-gunners, gradually reinforced by other units of the Third Division, contested the crossing of the enemy. The brave conduct of this Division is particularly interesting because it had not had its trench training, had never been under any kind of fire, and had not even been together as a unit since it left America until some days after it went into action, when its artillery came up.

The Second Division came into the battle area in much the same hurried way, but had had time to get together before it was actually engaged. Motor transport to Meaux, and an all-night march, brought its leading troops, early on the 1st of June, into a support position covering the Paris road at Le Thiolet. By midnight the whole division had come up.

From the 2nd of June until the end of the month, the Marine Corps, combating two of Germany's picked divisions, and given only minor reliefs, had worked its way through Belleau Wood and ridded it of the enemy and his terrible machine-gun nests. As a compliment to this brilliant success, the regulars of the Second Division topped off the proceedings by taking the village of Vaux, with five hundred prisoners.

The necessity for a quick decision now more than ever pressed upon the German High Command. If they suspected before that there was need of breaking through to Paris before

the steadily-coming American expeditionary forces should become numerous enough to forever prevent such an action, they now knew for a certainty that this situation actually existed. With amazing rapidity, reckless of their own losses, almost in a frenzy to attain their goal, the Boche officers attacked, retreated, counter-attacked, re-retreated.

Gradually the truth was forced upon them: The coveted road to Paris via Château-Thierry was firmly barred to them. Made desperate, they then planned a great offensive to widen their Marne salient on the western side. It was thought that by joining the Montdidier and Marne salients, Paris could not only be reached by another avenue, but the communications between the French and British could be nicely cut as well.

On the 9th of June the attack began. It made some progress, and heavy fighting continued for several weeks. But constantly the French were being bolstered by new-arriving American units, while the Germans were experiencing awful losses of life. Strategically, the attack was a failure. The Marne salient was still dangerously narrow; the Germans had derived no marked advantage from their costly operations.

Having failed on this side of the salient, they determined upon a similar movement on the other side. As planned, this would cut the lines at Châlons and Epernay and threaten the French communications. The main part of this attack was to be against General Gouraud's French army in the Champagne. The Germans counted upon massing both men and artillery in secret, and launching their infantry upon the point where they would have a great preponderance of both. The advantage of surprise and great numbers, it was thought, would give them a decisive victory.

But they reckoned without their host. Knowledge of the exact time and place of attack had come to Gouraud through orders and proclamations taken from German prisoners brought in by French and American trench-raiders. Quietly but swiftly making every effort to conceal the fact from the Boche that his

plans were known, units and divisions of French and Americans were shifted, and positions strengthened, to meet the onslaught when it should come.

From Vaux to Fossoy, opposite the German salient which had Château-Thierry as its apex, were the divisions of the American Third Army Corps which included troops from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Field artillery of the One Hundred and Thirty-second, One Hundred and Thirty-sixth, One Hundred and Forty-first, and One Hundred and Forty-ninth, was also engaged. On the right of the Americans was a wing of the French Third Army under Meurthier. On the left, part of Petain's Fifth Army held the line northward to Soissons. At Ablois, nineteen miles from Château-Thierry, eight thousand husky Marines were held in reserve.

At midnight on the 14th the German bombardment opened up. It was immediately answered by the cannon of the Allies, and the effect of the surprise was all against the plotters themselves. To add to this, when in the early gray of the morning, the attacking waves of the Prussians came on, poorly protected by their artillery, they were terribly lacerated by the French and Americans. In addition to the ordinary kinds of shelling, they were even subjected to the point-blank fire of batteries of terrible French "75's" which had been especially set up for the attack. These guns were with the French infantry, which had been withdrawn from the front lines so that the Germans would have to pass through a wide and withering zone of fire before reaching any one to fight.

And when they did finally reach the French lines, they were met first with all kinds of small-arms fire, and then with the deadly bayonet. July 15th, 1918, was probably the worst single day the Germans ever had. This last desperate attack in the Champagne was a terrible catastrophe for them. It took their last "offensive" reserve. They never attacked again, but were content to confine their fighting to purely defensive operations.

The Forty-second (Rainbow) Division had the honor of holding a small part of Gouraud's front line on that momentous day. Two battalions of the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth Infantry (the old "Fighting Sixty-ninth," New York) were also in the line near Somme-Py, and the rest of the division were disposed in the rear so as to handle any of the enemy that might break through. There was no break through, but the two battalions conducted themselves in a way to receive the praise and congratulations of General Gouraud.

While this was going on the Germans started their corollary attack across the Marne, intending to push south and east. South of Dormans, the onslaught caught some companies of the Pennsylvania Guard of the Twenty-eighth Division. They were not enough in numbers to hold, but made an heroic effort. As it was, they managed to stop the advance until most of them were killed or wounded. Only a few trickled back on their own legs.

A little farther west the German attack ran up against the same indomitable spirit, but backed by larger numbers. Here the Third Division held the south bank of the Marne from Château-Thierry to Mezy, five miles (eight kilometers) eastward. East of Mezy the Germans were across the river, so that the right flank of the Third, consisting of the Thirty-eighth Regiment, was already under fire when the battle commenced.

The German artillery poured a stream of shells on Mezy to drive the Thirty-eighth into its dug-outs, and then, under cover of a smoke-screen, the troops of the enemy started to cross the river in boats. As shown elsewhere the stream is not wide, and if the German fire could have accomplished its purpose of keeping the Americans underground, the chances are the passage would have been quickly achieved.

The Thirty-eighth recognized their danger. Taking the barrage as it came, they remained unflinchingly in the open, and with rifle and machine-gun fired as best they could through the smoke-screen at the dimly-defined enemy. Then the American

artillery got the range and the big guns began to thunder and add their huge missiles to the lesser ones cast toward the crossing Germans.

In a few minutes broken boats and dead Germans were floating down the stream. One boat got across, but there was a sergeant hiding in the bushes waiting for it. As it touched the shore he threw a hand-grenade into the craft—and the Marne once more claimed its victims.

But east of the village, where a point of land jutted out, the German cross-fire was so hot that the defenders were kept from preventing a landing. In boat, and on pontoon bridge hastily thrown across, the gray hordes of the Kaiser came in such numbers that it seemed impossible to stop them all. Allied machine-gun bullets raked them off into the crimsoning river by the score; other machine-gun bullets from swooping Allied airplanes poured into their close-packed ranks with as deadly a visitation; rifle-fire and artillery-fire protested every inch of way toward that southern bank; grenades were hurled into the boats by stalwart young arms used to throwing a baseball over a small plate at sixty feet; bombs from huge mechanical birds of the air fell into the seething area and sent spouts of water, spouts of blood, parts of human bodies, and bits of wrecked boats and bridge high into the murky air.

In this sanguinary defense, one entire platoon of the Thirty-eighth was annihilated. A second platoon was nearly so. But the third came in, and continued the fight.

Across at last, the Germans were in a turmoil even more distracting. Now they found automatic pistols and deftly-handled bayonets added to the weapons turned against them. With veritable devils in front of them, and above them, and with the river behind, there was but one thing to do in the eyes of these four hundred Grenadiers who had managed to get across. "Kamerad! Kamerad!" was their cry—and the surrender was accepted.

With the Boche on two sides of them, always under a heavy fire, the conduct of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, under Colonel McAlexander, resisting the enemy pressure for more than fourteen hours, is altogether admirable. If to this splendid performance is added the action of this regiment when, without having left its field of battle for rest or refit, it later crossed the Marne on the night of July 21st in the face of the Germans and advanced directly to the Jaulgonne Gorge, and the fact that in the ten days from July 15th to July 25th it captured prisoners from nine different German regiments, we may well appreciate the record in General Pershing's report where he refers to the Thirty-eighth as having written one of the finest chapters in the history of the American Expeditionary Forces.

A continuous attack upon the American and French positions began at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th. While daylight lasted the Germans were repulsed with great slaughter, but with the night they crossed in hordes. During the conflict which took place on the south bank of the Marne, thirty-three Bavarian and Saxon divisions, and eight Prussian divisions, were identified, making a total of over five hundred and fifty thousand German troops who actually crossed the Marne!

Outnumbered six to one, the Americans were gradually pressed back from their lines. The morning of the 16th found the enemy in possession of the fire-trench all along the Marne from Vaux to Gannat and fighting in the support-trenches.

The Allied line was bending slowly, steadily, but it had not broken. Conscious that the eyes of the civilized world were focused on them that morning, the Yankees fought on, even while messages were being brought from Marshal Foch's headquarters advising a retreat.

By noon the Germans had gained a substantial foothold across the river from Ville Tourbe, in Champagne, to Torcy, on the Clignon branch of the Marne. Despite French and American reserves rushed to the scene, the advance of the gray continued.

Fossoy, Crezancy, Azy, Etampes—all successively fell. The slaughter was sickening, but in pursuance of the German plan of gaining success regardless of cost, they gave no sign of halting.



FIRST AMERICAN PONTOON BRIDGE ACROSS THE MARNE ON CHATEAU THIERRY FRONT.

Then, with the last of the American reserves, came the Marines from Ablois. These men, who had been chafing under the restraint which held them back from a fight in which their comrades were being shot down, attacked like famished wolves. Within thirty minutes they had put an entire Saxon regiment into wild rout. They had no machine-guns, no hand-grenades; the rifle and the bayonet sufficed them.

Pouring like madmen into Etampes and Fossoy, they recaptured the two towns by the sheer impetuosity of their rush. Leaving these trophies to be taken care of by advancing lines of their own infantry, the Marines dashed for the German bridges. In less than two hours they had driven the Boche out of a swath close to three miles wide, had crossed the Marne and thrown themselves flat in the mud of the outskirts of Château-Thierry!

Then ensued what was the most remarkable fight of the whole battle. To understand this combat it is necessary to look again at the conditions.

The steep hill, sloping up from the river, confronted the Marines. On this hill was Château-Thierry, in the hands of the Germans. In the town of five thousand inhabitants, every street crossing, every basement, every tower, concealed an enemy machine-gun emplacement. In all, subsequent events showed, there were over six hundred of these vipers' nests waiting to spit out their venomous hate as soon as an intruder appeared.

And here lay the intruders—eight thousand of them in forest-green uniform—plastered with Marne mud. As flashes of fire leapt from town basement and tower up there on the hill above, and the "coffee-grinders" of the Germans sent a hell-fire of hot lead into the terrain about the turtled forms of the Marines, each man began squirming along the oozy ground. As they moved forward like slimy Saurians, just emerged from the waters nearby, their short rifles began to talk. At ranges varying from fifty to five hundred yards—it made no difference to these wonderfully expert marksmen—they looked for the slit of a pillbox, the stolid face that peered around a corner of a street, the eyes that leered down at them from the barricaded window of a church steeple, the unguarded elbow or shoulder that showed behind the ridge of a roof—and at these ranges they seldom missed the small objects at which they had aimed!

When the first cover was reached—a line of sheds running parallel with the river—hundreds of the gallant division that had recently crossed the Marne lay wounded behind. There was no time to attend to them, no place to take them. On went the Marines, those who had not been hit, and those who were still able to crawl. Taking advantage of every little shelter, they worked themselves into the town limits as a Sioux warrior would approach an enemy in the wilds of his domain.

A Marine would crawl cautiously around a corner. *Put-put-put-put-put!* would go a Boche machine-gun from an

unexpected point, and the poor fellow would fall without knowing what had struck him, perhaps. His comrades, making a detour, would locate the emplacement. While one of their number decoyed the gunner by holding out a helmet on a stick, the others would wait with leveled rifles. The second his face showed, a half-dozen bullets would hit him, and the gun would be out of action temporarily. Before another of his crew could command the weapon, a short charge and quick work with the bayonet would end matters for that particular nest at least.

At noon on the 17th, infantry moved forward to relieve the Marines. The detachment found Château-Thierry fully occupied by the remnant of the gallant forest-green division. As word of their sore straits was flashed back to headquarters scores of stretcher-bearers started for the town. The wonder of the tremendous achievement was in the mind of every one. The sad part of it was yet to be counted. In dead and wounded in this engagement the Devil Dogs had lost more than half of their eight thousand men!

It is necessary to look only at the events of the next few days to see how far-reaching were the results of this fight. Marshal Foch, finding that, after all, his final reserves would not be needed to block the old road to Paris, threw them on the line from Vaux to Soissons. With the German army badly demoralized, it was now time for the Allies to force the fighting, and time for the Boche to strive his hardest to get himself out of the net without being hopelessly crushed.

CHAPTER XI

ARGONNE-MEUSE



With her caterpillar tread,
With her armor-plated frown,
And her nose a-pointing down,
She keeps on wobbling right ahead!
See her rumbling,
Tumbling, grumbling

Down a shell-hole, up a bank,
Bouncing shrapnel off her forehead,
Shedding bullets from her flank,
Prehistoric, modern, horrid,
Comes the Yankee's awful tank!

—Winsor.

I. MOVING INTO POSITION

The Argonne-Meuse Battle, fought by the American First Army, was the largest battle in United States history. General Pershing's engaged forces were about ten times as large as those of General Lee at Gettysburg. It was a vital element in the subjugation of the German army, and America's main contribution to the war's decision.

The first great battle of the new British armies—the Somme—occurred twenty-three months after Great Britain entered the conflict. The American troops went into their first great struggle eighteen months after declaration of hostilities. At that, half or better of the troops and divisional staffs were green in the war game, the remainder having had but comparatively scanty battle experience which had been acquired in the Marne-Vesle campaign under the French and in their own brilliant operation at St. Mihiel. Their natural handicap in this respect was made more difficult by the fact that the terrain was extremely against them, and that General von der Marwitz and his German troops were seasoned veterans well supplied with every modern convenience of warfare.

On the morning of September 26th the Allied line from Switzerland to the sea was in contact with the main first lines of the elaborate and formidable Hindenburg system of defenses. Everywhere the Germans held these lines intact except in the old St. Mihiel salient. The Boche had the greatest confidence in the strength of these ingenious bulwarks to Allied advance, and it was entirely reasonable for them to feel that their defeats in the preceding months in a war of movement were no criterion by which to judge what they could do behind their much-touted and really praiseworthy defensive system.

Marshal Foch's plan was for the British army to break through these lines in the neighborhood of Cambrai, and push eastward; and for the French Fourth Army and the American First Army to drive northward on either side of the Argonne

Forest. This would crowd the bulk of the German forces back on the Ardennes Forest where their transportation facilities were the poorest. If this scheme could be carried out rapidly enough to throw the German retreat into confusion, a large part of the enemy would be forced to surrender in the same general locality in which the French had capitulated to German arms in 1870—that of Sedan. And—to get a little ahead of my story—this is exactly what occurred. Foch, Pershing, Haig, Ludendorf, and Hindenburg are all agreed that the German army was beaten, and the armistice (which was virtually a surrender) was signed to avoid a complete debacle.

As one of the first steps in the carrying out of its plan, the Allied High Command, between September 13th and 20th, moved to the Verdun-Argonne sector more than three hundred thousand American soldiers and the war paraphernalia necessary to their operations. These men came both from the St. Mihiel district and the rest-areas farther back. From officer to private every one of them was wild and eager for the change, as it promised another chance to get in a telling blow at the enemy.

To move an army of this gigantic proportion is no small task. The transportation of the biggest circus is but a drop in the bucket compared to it. To add to the normal difficulties of moving so many soldiers going to battle, all traveling must be done at night, as the fighting zone is approached, and the greatest quiet and secrecy maintained throughout the operation.

In the present instance the troops went for the most part in trucks, with twenty-four men to the vehicle. When you stop for a moment and consider that it takes about one thousand trucks to carry the troops of one single American division of twelve thousand men, not counting their own baggage train; that one division takes up approximately four miles of road, and that there were fifteen divisions moving into this area between Verdun and the western edge of the Argonne Forest, the enormity of the cavalcade can be somewhat realized. The truth is, the movement embraced as much as sixty miles of troops, not including the artillery carts, supply wagons, ammunition trucks,

motor kitchens, engineering supply vehicles, et cetera. There is neither the heroism nor the drama about moving troops that there is about actual fighting, but it is one of the most difficult and important features of the conduct of war, and this particular movement brought the American army more praise in Allied military circles than many a spectacular combat in which its units indulged while in Europe.

Quite a large proportion of the artillery, principally heavy, came from the French army, as America had not yet had time to get suitable big guns in any quantity across the seas. Besides the railroad artillery units there were thirty-five French artillery regiments. Not always were there plenty of guns at every point of the battle-line when needed, owing to the difficulties of transportation, but there was no lack in the aggregate.

In small arms, with the exception of one or two divisions which had the light Browning rifle, the American soldiers were using the Chauchat automatic which they did not like any too well. Of minor but useful weapons such as smoke-bombs and hand-grenades they had only small supplies. From their French brothers they had acquired one hundred and forty-two tanks—really more than the nature of the ground permitted them to use, in addition to which there were seventy-three tanks manned by and under the direct control of the French tank corps.

As for air service, when the battle began there were about five hundred airplanes attached to the First Army of which about forty were French. Many more could have been profitably used by the American contingent if they could have been secured. During the forty-seven days of battle the American air forces lost, in crashed and missing, three hundred twenty-four planes, and had nearly that many replacements. It is a mooted question as to which side had supremacy of the air, for many audacious and brave deeds were performed by airmen on both lines, and the opponents sent hurtling to the ground, wounded before they struck or trapped helplessly in their flaming death-chariots, were

pretty well distributed, although statistics show that the Allies got a little the best of this type of fighting.

Physically the forty-kilometer front which the American Army was to attack was about the most difficult point on the western front. For four years the Argonne Forest—a thick growth of trees and shrubbery, sudden rises and deep hollows, intermixed with unexpected ravines and rough and rocky ground, much like the Wilderness of Virginia military fame—had been considered impregnable. The Americans accepted this popular verdict also, in a broad measure, for the plan of battle was for them and the French, from their separate sides, to outflank the position in making it untenable.

The artificial difficulties—the defensive lines of the Germans—were perhaps even more formidable. Their lines between Verdun and the Argonne were close together. Just in front of the Americans were three, and in places four, well-prepared defensive lines of the main German artery of defense known as the Hindenburg Line. First came the Hagen Stellung and the Volker Stellung branches. Behind these was the very strong Kriemhilde Stellung, and back of that the surveyed but not finished Freya Stellung, the former being the basis of the thirty-day German defense in the Meuse-Argonne soon to begin.

These various lines consisted of trenches of unusually sturdy and permanent character, reinforced heavily in places with concrete. Before them stretched miles and miles of barbed wire, woven in and out in a perfect labyrinth of steel threads and wicked little spines, in some instances more than a half-mile deep, through which a woodchuck could not crawl unscathed, much less a man. At advantageous positions were concrete pillboxes, shell-proof, concealing deadly machine-guns. The dugouts were deep, also often made of concrete, and in the long months that the Germans had occupied them unmolested had in many cases been sumptuously fitted out by their owners with fine furniture and household accessories taken from nearby occupied towns.

A large operation such as the Argonne-Meuse Battle is very seldom a complete surprise to the enemy, owing to the very immensity of the movements of troops and supplies that must govern it; but the elements of surprise may still remain with the offensive in a very useful and marked degree if the enemy can be kept in ignorance of the exact spot of attack until the moment arrives. It was so in this case. From confessions and documents taken from captured German prisoners in preliminary trench raids, it became patent that the Boche were expecting either a demonstration or a real attack somewhere between the Argonne and Meuse, and were also nervous about the front east of the Meuse. But just where this offensive would be precipitated, and how many and what troops were to make it, they were all at sea about and delightfully guessing.

II. MONTFAUCON

With everything in readiness, with all the big guns squatting firmly in position, almost in tiers in some stretches of woods; with the completion of the spur track for the giant fifteen-inch barker, on a railroad mounting under a fringe of trees behind a certain bluff,—with these and many other equally important preparedness features of the attack all set, the big bombardment began at two-thirty on the morning of the 26th of September.

The timber also gave cover to all the American infantry which had been coming up to the front in the darkness. French infantry had been holding the line in a thin screen until the night before, but now they had retired while the nine American divisions slipped into their places, almost automatically, without talking, without the least confusion.

Added to the thundering roar of the American guns was the noise made by the artillery of the French troops on the American left. Altogether the tumult was deafening. It was like a great electric storm suddenly let loose, only the flashes were closer and more frequent by far, and the reverberations and

fulminations more continuous and jarring. There were darts of flame in the foreground from nearby batteries, while the leaping, constant flashes ran on in a great cycle as far as the eye could see, giving little time for the velvety black background of the night to swallow them up. Indeed, it seemed that all the world enclosed under the canopy of the shadowed heavens was aflame. Piercing tongues of lightning and broad flashes of lightning! Livid sheets! Little lightnings of the "75's" lost in the mighty lightnings of the big calibers!

It was the American challenge as an army to the big-bellied and sloping-shouldered enemy. The labors and sacrifices of the people at home were concentrated in this inferno of accumulated preparation. American guns were speaking the power of the States—of the Mississippi's flow, of the grandeur of the Rockies, of the salubrious climate of the coastline, of the richness of the prairies, of the strength of the cotton fields and wheat fields and orchards, of the great railroads and steel industry, the coal mines and granite quarries. And it was the thought of these men, handling these guns, the thought of the cause they espoused, which made you who shuddered at the sight of blood, ardently pray that the shells they sent screaming straight toward their tar-gets might accomplish their purpose!

The minutes pass as the lightnings continue their terrific witchery. It is five-thirty,—the "zero" hour. The signal is given. With a yell of fiercest joy, not entirely free of threat, the infantry is off and away.

Moist and slow-breaking dawn revealed dark patches ahead to be woods, and white streaks became roads in the developing outline of landscape.

The two battalions which comprised the attacking force of the Fourth Division were made up of two thousand infantry, two machine-gun companies, and a few wire-cutting teams of engineers. From their position in the battle-scarred French trenches on Hill 304, they shot forward with two more battalions as support. The battalions of the other eight divisions were of

course also in the charge at other points, but we shall for convenience follow the fortunes of the Fourth.



MONTFAUCON—SHOWING GERMAN OBSERVATION POSITIONS
CAPTURED BY THE AMERICAN ARMY.

Before the charging men lay the first obstacle—the Forges Brook. In the face of a heavy enemy machine-gun fire, the Americans reached the stream, which was narrow. At once foot-bridges, previously prepared and carried by the engineers, were thrown across the banks, and in a trice the men had surmounted the brook.

Along the opposite side of the stream was a lane of barbed wire, with other lanes immediately beyond. Through this maze of tangled steel, some of which had been previously severed by wire-men just before the attack, the Americans cut their way, and were upon the German first-line trenches. The German defense did not contemplate attempting to hold at this point, and had retired, the field-gun emplacements proving empty. Even at the second-line the German defense was not serious. A few machine-guns tried to keep back the Americans for a brief time, then they were effectually silenced.

When the Fourth Division stopped on orders, the German infantry and artillery in its front was still retreating. But shortly afterward the Boche came back, straightened themselves out, and prepared for a better defense.

The American plan had been that the whole line should go forward after the manner of the Fourth, and after reaching its first objective, should keep right on and try to break the Kriemhilde Stellung line, where it was expected the enemy would fight its hardest. But Montfaucon was the stumbling block to carrying out this operation. It lay in the path of the Seventy-ninth Division, composed of drafted men from Maryland and Virginia whose sole training had been at Camp Meade in the United States and who were entering their first battle.

From the start this division encountered a good deal of difficulty. The wire in front of them was so thick that they did not get through it in the allotted twenty-five minutes. Working on schedule, the barrage moved, and they were accordingly left without its protection. This resulted in their having a harder time in subduing the machine-gun nests encountered, especially those firing at them from the Malancourt, Montfaucon, and Cuisy Wood ahead of them, and from the town of Malancourt on their right. The total result was that by dusk they were in front of Montfaucon, but some four kilometers (2.4 miles) behind the line which the Fourth Division on their right had reached at two-thirty.

This was the critical moment at which events were to decide whether the advance was to continue on with a rush, or whether the attack was to slow up to hard plodding.

Orders came to make one more effort to keep the push going. The Fourth, the Seventy-ninth, and the next two divisions on the left—the Thirty-seventh and Ninety-first—were all ordered to attack Montfaucon about dusk.

This town is perched on a hill and flanked by wooded ridges, with the remains of its church in broken columns against the sky-line—a very formidable position which the Germans had

made theirs in 1914, when their initiative left them a choice in defenses. A year before, its taking would have been considered practicable only after a long artillery storming. Now, with the American engineers speedily completing a passable road through the sea of shell-craters in No-Man's Land, the troops were to include Montfaucon in the day's objective!

Wounded men and occasional prisoners were coming across the fields. Had you been there, young reader, you would not soon forget one of these wounded. In dressing the puncture from a bullet, the surgeon had removed his blouse which hung over one shoulder, showing the white flesh of the other shoulder and his chest in contrast with the circle of tan of his neck. Tall and spare, with his helmet on his arm, the afternoon sun turned his luxuriant hair to bronze and threw his definitely chiseled and really handsome features into a glowing silhouette. His back was a straight line, and his walk which had a great dignity, in keeping with the scene and the bare shoulder and breast, the languid blouse, and the heroic helmet on his broad forearm, suggested the very aristocracy of democracy as a perfectly fit and militant answer to the glitter in the eyes of the typical Prussian officer. If there were ever a picture of the crusader overseas it was this soldier, all unconscious of the symbolism.

With the help of two tanks, and screened by the darkness, the Seventy-ninth finally made its attack. They had gone perhaps two hundred yards when they were deluged with machine-gun fire, artillery, and even hand-grenades. They could not see the machine-gun positions, nor make any effective return fire. After a dauntless stand and suffering heavy casualties, they finally withdrew to the woods.

But it was not to give up. The next morning the Seventy-ninth attacked again. From seven to eleven o'clock they struggled to blot out the machine-guns ahead of them and take the town. Aided this time by the light of the day, and by heavy tanks which crawled slowly over the wire entanglements leveling them to the ground, making great gaps through which the infantry might follow, and by smaller tanks of swifter pace

called "mosquitoes" and "whippets", which were bullet- and shrapnel-proof and which were invaluable in reducing pillboxes, the task of taking Montfaucon was at last accomplished.

At three-thirty the Seventy-ninth started north again from Montfaucon, and continued attacking until six o'clock. But the advance was not very fast, and by night the men were badly exhausted. They were still about a kilometer behind the first day's objective.

The American Army had now left the prepared positions from which it had started out, and was dependent for everything on poor roads and few of them—roads which had had to be rebuilt entirely across pockmarked No Man's Land, likewise repaired, where the Germans had mined them or blown up bridges. In addition to this a great obstacle to advance was constantly encountered in the duplicity of the enemy in leaving in his wake ingenious and deadly infernal machines. Captured ammunition dumps and dugouts were often found planted with explosives timed to go off when in possession of the conquerors. Innocent looking baggage left behind, frequently was found by the cautious Americans to contain a heavy powder charge calculated to destroy the life of the unsuspecting handler. Even the bodies of the German dead, sought by American stretcher-bearers upon a recently-contested field, often proved to be the abiding place for a deposit of powerful explosive that would be discharged when the body was moved.

On the 28th of September the two wings of the army made further progress, and on the 1st of October the center made a small gain. In the meantime every one was working feverishly to get ready for another general attack which was scheduled for the morning of October 4th. The Seventy-ninth and Thirty-seventh Divisions, which had thus far borne the brunt of the German resistance, were replaced by the veteran First and Thirty-second.

III. TRIUMPH FOR AMERICA AND HUMANITY

On the day set came the first general attack all along the line. It gained, though not largely, at every point. Particularly it pushed forward up the Aire Valley along the eastern edge of the Argonne. By night the American line was as far north as Fleville. In the meanwhile the French had been forging along on their side, following the plan of forcing the Germans out of the Forest by a pincer process rather than a direct attack.

But the Boche, although threatened with being cut off, as at Montfaucon, stuck to their exposed position and kept their artillery working savagely on the bared flank of the Americans. To cure this situation the Eighty-second Division, which had relieved the Twenty-eighth, attacked due west on the morning of the 7th.

What they did was one of the extraordinary feats of the whole battle. To pass over a flat valley under the fiercest of artillery and machine-gun fire, capture a strongly defended town (in this case Châtel Chehery), get across a river and up wooded heights on the other side, is a matter not to be lightly considered or undertaken. And yet these fellows of the Eighty-second did it—and said very little about the feat afterward! With entire justification they can, when they get home, discuss war on even terms with the vanishing remnant in blue who went up Lookout Mountain in 1863.

By the 8th the French had closed in on their side of the Forest also. The next day the Germans began to retreat, and by night on the 10th, the Seventy-seventh (New York City draft) Division had the satisfaction of emerging on the north end of the Argonne. While greatly helped in its task by the pressure from the sides brought to bear from its cooperating units, the Seventy-seventh deserves great credit for its share of the work, for it was consistently ahead of its stated objectives, having maintained an unexpected aggressiveness in that hitherto impossible country.

It was during this forward push of the Seventy-seventh that Major Whittlesey and his historic "Lost Battalion" made introduction to fame. Separated from its division in the depths of the rugged woods during a hot bit of skirmishing, and not immediately missed, this battalion had been finally cut off from its main force by the enemy.

For four days, surrounded by superior numbers and subsisting on roots, bark and leaves when their rations gave out, they fought like tigers at bay and held off the Germans who crowded in closer and closer. Many of the brave fellows were killed. Their numbers finally became so depleted that even the wounded had to take their turn at guard duty. One of the officers—a second-lieutenant—had eighteen bullet holes in his garments when later rescued, but had not been injured. At one time the same man had his gas-mask cut away from his face by a German machine-gun less than thirty feet away, yet he was unhurt. He seemed, truly, to bear a charmed life.

But the real hero of the occasion was a little blue messenger—Cher Ami. Cher Ami is the only pigeon on earth that has ever been recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross.

It all came about because Cher Ami happened to be one of the members of Major Whittlesey's lost force. When matters became very desperate with the battalion, and a canvass showed the officer that not a man of the troop would think of surrendering in lieu of death while fighting, and every few minutes some poor chap was falling from exhaustion and starvation, Major Whittlesey bethought himself of his little carrier-pigeon.

Fastening to it an appeal for help he released the bird, and all the beleaguered soldiers anxiously watched Cher Ami wing his way out of sight over the tree-tops. They prayed that the watchful Boche might fail to hit the bird if they saw him, and their wish was granted. It was just after midnight when an American airplane, hovering for an instant over the hemmed-in

Americans in the woods, dropped down into their midst a capsuled assurance that Cher Ami had reached friends and help would speedily follow.

Soon came the rescuers. They rushed through the German cordon, breaking one defense after another, pocketed the weary members of the battalion, and then worked their way out again to the main force, with the rescued in their midst.

But this does not properly end the tale of Cher Ami. A little later it was this same feathered soldier who bore to General Pershing the tidings that the Yankees had crossed the Meuse in the great battle of the Argonne. This time unfortunately the German sharpshooters were on the lookout for carrier-pigeons, and a bullet cruelly ripped off Cher Ami's left leg as he rose in the air, but the dauntless little bird flew straight to headquarters, thirty-seven miles away, with the crease of another bullet across his breast!



ARGONNE FOREST—SHOWING THE CONCRETE DUGOUTS OF GERMAN HEADQUARTERS.

Both armies spent the next twenty days knocking holes in the Brunehilde and Kriemhilde lines preparatory to further advances.

It is very difficult to give a clear picture of the American fighting at this period, for it was neither like the fighting of previous wars nor of the earlier parts of this war. The American line, for example, was not a line at all, nor was the German, although as a last resort they had their trench and wire lines to hold. But the Germans had much more than this. In the first place they had their artillery maps worked out so that they knew exactly where the Americans could take shelter. These places they systematically shelled in the methodical Boche manner, at a certain time, with shots just so far apart. For this regularity the Americans came to be very grateful, as it usually gave them a chance, by anticipation, to better their protection.

Then, the enemy had their machine-guns planted in groups and well-sheltered. To hold a valley they mounted them in the woods or on the hills, or in any favoring position from which they could sweep the declivity. Until an attack was under way, no one could be certain from which direction the bullets which defended the valley would come. True, American airplanes spotted many of these nests for their compatriots, and bombed out others, but there were scores and scores they failed to either get or report.

Thus, to make any progress was a decidedly slow matter, involving usually the storming and capture of these pestiferous emplacements by frontal attacks. But this was only the first round in the game. The Germans had foreseen this and prepared from other positions a fire intended to be destructive enough to prevent the Americans from holding what they had taken. Their third and favorite trick, if the first two failed, was to counter-attack and snatch away the recently-won prize. If this also failed, their fourth procedure was to accept the advance, retire a little way to their next combination, and try all four moves over again. As may be surmised this was a pretty hard game to beat, especially when played by a superior force of the best troops in the German army.

Between the various attacks of the American troops, and the frequent counter-attacks of the enemy, the artillery on both

sides kept searching for the guns of the opponents, and the masses of opponents themselves. In this contest of hide-and-seek, with its deadly penalty, the Germans had all of the advantage by reason of familiarity with the ground and long-established dugouts. Wherever possible the Americans used the captured dugouts, but mostly they made little fox-holes in the ground and crawled into them. All over the south side of every hill in this section, if you go to the Argonne, you will see these American burrows, most of which are just large enough for a man to lie down in. And all around them are the shell-holes made by the ammunition of the enemy in an effort to make them untenable. These places were bad enough. The shelter in the captured villages was worse, for villages have a particular fascination for artillerymen.

During all this time the American Aviation Corps was doing exceptionally good service. Not only were the bombing planes doing destructive work in German trenches and occupied towns out of immediate reach of land fire, but observation planes were bringing back valuable information and photographs of the enemy positions and movements. In addition, combat planes were numerous enough and energetic enough to make the foe aircraft very cautious about venturing over the American lines, and anti-aircraft guns did much to add to this fear by their accurate marksmanship.

Never had confidence in the winning quality of its air service been so strong as now. Early in the spring of 1918 the first Liberty motor had been received from America. This, an experiment, had not come up to expectations, and the Expeditionary forces had been greatly disappointed. But now, thanks to the hardest kind of work by the home country's foremost motor engineers and mechanics, a new Liberty had been produced which, in the most grueling tests of the battlefield, was proving its superiority over anything of like nature the Germans could pit against it. So swift were the planes equipped with it that Boche airmen took pains to keep out of reach except when their preponderance of numbers promised a

pretty certain victory. Equipped with the latest American warfare device—a wireless telephone, by which the flying airman could at all times keep in verbal communication with his ground officers—these airplanes were a constant source of wonder and dread to the enemy.

As a better insight of the character of the American aviation work in this battle than can be given in generalisms, let me insert here the story of a morning sortie over the Argonne Forest made by a member of the Aviation Corps.

Our daily routine goes on with little change—but the things that happen in between are never alike, and stirring enough at times to make you marvel when you get back to your base that you are still in the land of the eating and living.

Whenever the weather permits—that is, when it isn't raining, or foggy, and the clouds aren't too low, we fly over the Argonne battlefield and the German trench system at the hours indicated by General Headquarters. As a rule the most successful sorties are those in the early morning. Sometimes we go out alone, but usually we have company, and it's a lot safer, too.

We are called while it is still dark. Sleepily I try to reconcile the orderly's muttered "*C'est l'heure, monsieur*" (John is a full-blooded Yank, but sometimes goes too far, I think, in his efforts to master French), that arouses me from slumber, with the strictly American words and music of "When That Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam," warbled by a particularly wide-awake pilot in the next room.

A few minutes later, having swallowed some coffee, we motor to the field. The east is just turning gray as the hangar curtains are drawn apart and our machines trundled out by the mechanics. All the

pilots whose busses—that's what we Yanks usually call our planes—are in commission for this trip prepare to leave. A few are to remain behind on guard. We average from four to six busses on a sortie, unless numerous flights are in prospect for the day, in which case only two or three go out at a time.

Now the east is pink, and overhead the sky that was gray has changed into a pale steel-blue. It is light enough to fly, and promises a fine day for the work in hand. We don our fur-lined shoes and combinations, and adjust the leather flying-hoods and goggles. A good deal of conversation occurs—perhaps because, once aloft, there is nobody to talk to. And it is usually of a jesting kind—perhaps because we are going on a grim sort of business.

"Hey, Bob!" one pilot cries to another, "I hope some Boche clips your memory short this morning, so I won't have to pay you that thirty francs I owe you for that souvenir ring!"

"Oh, do you?" retorts Bob, who is next on my right, as he swings into his machine. "Well, all I've got to say is just watch out, Gil, old top, that the Boche don't get you! If it hadn't been for me yesterday, saving you from that Fokker over the Kriemhilde so I could get that thirty francs later on sometime, you'd now be in a German prison-camp or worse. Fine sight you'd be in that Eskimo garb walking along the street of some Boche town, with a sauerkraut and wienerwurst lunch sticking out of your pockets, a beer-swigging military guard about you, and German women and children throwing sticks and stones at you, and dachshunds barking—"

The raillery is silenced by a deafening roar as the motors are tested. Quiet is briefly restored, only to be broken by a series of rapid explosions

incidental to the trying-out of the machine-guns. You loudly inquire at what altitude we are to meet above the field.

"Fifteen hundred meters—go ahead!" comes the answering yell of the squad commander.

"Oil and gas!" you call to your mechanician, adjusting your gasoline- and air-throttles while he grips the propeller.

"Contact!" he shrieks, and—

"Contact!" you reply.

You snap on the switch; he spins the propeller; the motor takes. Drawing forward out of line, you put on full power, race across the ground and take the air. Swiftly the field drops away as the hood slants up before you, but as you rise you seem to be going more and more slowly. (At a great height you hardly realize you are moving.) You glance at the clock to note the time of your departure, and at the oil-gauge to observe its throb. The altimeter registers six hundred and fifty feet. You turn and look back at the field. Others of your squadron are just taking off.

In three minutes you are at about four thousand feet. You make wide circles over the field, waiting for your comrades, and slowly mounting. Five hundred feet higher you throttle down and keep on that level till the last of the fellows come up to join you.

With them all caught up and well bunched, in V-shaped flying formation off you go toward the enemy lines. Again you begin climbing, and from time to time calmly survey the other busses accompanying you. You instantly recognize the pilot of each by the marks on the sides of his machine—or

by the way he flies, for aviators have their peculiarities of "gait" just the same as pedestrians, I'll let you know. Of course all American planes are marked on the wings with concentric circles of red, white and blue, the red being the "bull's-eye," and with bars of the same colors on the tail, but most of the boys had whimsically decorated the fuselage of their busses with some pet individual design, often calculated to represent national characteristics of the people back home, or to instill a healthy terror in the hearts of the foe, and we soon came to know these as we knew faces below.

By now the country beneath us has changed into a flat surface of vari-colored figures. The woods of the Argonne are irregular blocks of dark green, like daubs of paint on an artist's palette. Fields are geometrical designs of different shades of green and brown, forming in composite an ultra-cubist production on canvas. Roads have taken on the look of thin white lines of string, each with its distinctive windings and crossings—from which you determine your location in many instances. The higher you are the easier it is to read the distant map far below you.

Down there, to the right, you can plainly make out the Meuse River. It is sparkling in the sunlight like a never-ending snake with a diamond-studded back, crinkling, crawling, but never going anywhere. On either side you see a long line of sausage-shaped observation balloons, anchored and protected by obscure emplacements of anti-aircraft guns. Some of these air elephants are the enemy's, some are our own. How you ache to make the enemy's count shorter! But that isn't your business just now.

Immediately west and south there lies a broad brown band. It stretches away to the "S" bend

in the Meuse and into the Woivre plain, winding up near Verdun. From this height it is all plain. Peaceful fields and farms and villages adorned that landscape a few months ago—before there was any Battle of Verdun. Now there is only that sinister brown belt, a strip of murdered Nature. It seems to belong to Hades instead of the Earth. Every sign of humanity has been swept away by ruthless hands. The woods, the roads, have been obliterated into shapeless, meaningless things, as chalk outlines are semi-erased from a blackboard by the hand of a child. The great forts of Douaumont and Vaux are outlined faintly, like the tracings of a finger in wet sand. You cannot distinguish any one shell-crater, for at this distance they merge into a terrain whose surface seems only troubled with a rash. Of the villages, here and there, nothing remains but gray jumbles of stone.

Columns of muddy smoke spurt up as high explosives tear deeper into the ulcerated area within your range of vision. The countless towers of smoke remind you of Gustave Doré's picture of the fiery tombs of the arch-heretics in Dante's "Inferno." A pungent pall covers the sector under fire, rising so high that at the height of a thousand feet, were you down there, you would be enveloped. At that lower level, too, airmen have had their planes cut in two by the monster shells, and have been rocked so violently by the disturbed air currents when such shells came close, as to scarcely be able to control their busses.

But there is no roar of cannon up here. For you the battle passes in silence, the only noise being the constant roar of your motor which out-sounds everything else. In the green patches behind the brown belt, myriads of tiny flashes, and the spouts of smoke from bursting shells, are all you see of the

deadly duel going on beneath. It is a weird combination of stillness and havoc, this Argonne conflict viewed from the sky.

Far below you the observation and range-finding planes of both friend and foe circle over the contested territory like gliding gulls. At a feeble altitude, the target for scores of bullets, one can now be seen—one of your very own!—dashing back after downing a German Fokker. Involuntarily you thrill, and give a cheer unheard, as you see the daring American airman regain his own lines. Sometimes it falls to your lot to guard these machines from Germans eager to swoop down on their backs. Sailing about high above a busy flock of them, you know, makes you feel like an old mother hen protecting her chicks.

At times the clouds pass between you and the earth, shutting out everything below. Again you become involved in the midst of one. But that doesn't worry a man in the least. The fact is, many a time you and your mates seek such a refuge to escape a superior force of enemy planes out looking for you, or to screen yourselves so that you can swoop down unexpectedly on what seems promising prey.

Ah! here you go now behind a big gray cloud. your friends with you. Once there, you throttle down and linger along in a huddled flock. The reason is quickly apparent: From back of the German lines you have seen three German planes headed this way—mere specks—just your equal in numbers to a dot.

Closer and closer come the enemy, wary but unsuspecting. You maneuver to keep concealed, working behind an overlapping cloud, but watching

the foe like a hawk. Now he is almost directly underneath you, his black Maltese crosses plainly showing through rifts in your screen. By dipping your wings to one another signals have passed, and each aviator in your squadron knows his part.

Now! Like veritable birds of prey you suddenly tip up your tails and pounce down upon your astonished foemen. In irregular curves and circles you shoot groundward, at such an acute angle your upper body is almost horizontal. Your own German—the one just a bit ahead of the rest—you do not hate, but nevertheless you have an obsessing conviction that you must crush him, just as you would place your foot on a bug. That he may have the same feeling toward you never occurs to you; you have no fear, absolutely none.

He attempts to wheel around and use his machine-gun on you. Even though caught at a disadvantage, if he can get in the first shots—But you are too quick for him. Already your own, machine-gun begins to staccato as you press the release. But hardly has it begun its chatter when, to your consternation, it jams and will not work. You are at his mercy! He seems to know it. You fancy you can see the sardonic grin on his face as he drops suddenly to get under your tail where he can rake you to better advantage.

Of all things you know you must prevent that. Instantly you come up and go into a tail-spin. As you drop erratically you are a most uncertain mark. He is puzzled to get your range, but takes a chance and begins firing anyhow. All the while you work frantically to get the kink out of your gun. Once well below him, you recover and slip off towards his rear. Several bullets have pierced the upper wing a few feet from your head, and one has

plowed across your left shoulder, but you are not worrying about little matters of that kind. No, not a bit! For you are now the happiest fellow in France—Joy of joys! your machine-gun is out of jam and ready for business.

You note that your adversary, in his confidence of your helplessness, is now careless. After you he comes, avariciously, recklessly, apparently not caring what position you get into as long as he can get you in front of his nose once more.

A little more maneuvering, nicely done, and you are under his tail for a brief moment, although more holes have been put through your buss in the meantime and one bullet has zipped off a fragment from your sleeve. *Put-put-put put!* goes your little pet, no longer refractory. You cannot catch the sounds, but you feel the vibrations in your controlling arm with a wonderful satisfaction.

You cannot see your foe from your position, but his petrol tank—that is enough! Surely one of that fusillade of tracer-bullets you are firing must reach the tank of that Maltese-crossed raven!

It does! All at once there is a burst of flames from the fuselage of the German plane. It quivers for a moment, and then begins to drop earthward, a regular flaming torch. As it goes past you, you train your gun on the terror-stricken pilot, doomed to a death more frightful than that of crushed bones or bullet. There is another chatter from your weapon, and with a sigh of relief you see his head drop limply forward on his chest. Mercy!

Now, for the first time, you think of your comrades. Presently you are all together again, with two Boche planes subtracted from the sum total of

German aircraft. One, badly crippled, has managed to get back over his own lines.

Back you go to your base, after unsuccessful efforts to coax more enemy planes into combat—back a good bath and a nice warm meal.

To return to the general description of the Battle of the Argonne-Meuse, it may be said that the fighting was of the most stubborn kind in the efforts of the American Army to penetrate the staunch Kriemhilde defenses. The daily avances were small, the losses heavy on both sides, but particularly so to the German. The thing to do was to give him no rest in his sufferings, push him as hard as possible, and allow him no time to recuperate.

When the 30th of October arrived the American troops were through the Kriemhilde defenses in places. In others the Germans still clung desperately to the fringes, but Von der Marwitz must have known, despite the fact that he was backed up by forty-four German and two Austro-Hungarian divisions, that it would be only a matter of a short time when he must fall back and lose his precious railroad. The truth is, it was at this very time that Hindenburg sent his dispatch to his government telling them to make the best terms they could with the Allies as soon as possible, as his armies were beaten.

However, while the German government tried to arrange most unreasonable terms, the German commanders did the best they could to save as much as conditions would warrant from the approaching wreck. And Foch, having the enemy well within his grasp, stimulated every Allied effort to hasten and enlarge the great consummation of four years of terrific warfare.

The task of the American Army in this last phase was two-fold. First, its aim was to send part of its forces in a drive to the north to gather the fruits of the previous thirty-five days' effort, and cut the railroad in the neighborhood of Sedan. Second, the other contingent was to turn east and north in a drive on the eastern side of the Meuse toward Longwy.

The race for the railroad began on November 1st. The German resistance of the previous thirty days had disappeared, thanks to the steady hammering blows of the troops from across the seas. By evening the Second and Eighty-ninth Divisions, in the center, had gone five or six kilo-meters. The next day the same thing happened, and for five days following that, until the American leading troops were overlooking historic Sedan.

Unable to stop these operations, the Germans could do naught but retreat, which they managed to do in a fairly orderly manner, and when the armistice was finally signed, on November 11th, 1918, they were along the heights on the east bank of the river from Stenay to Mezieres. South of Stenay, American troops had crossed the Meuse in the drive toward Longwy. The enemy had lost practically every commanding position north-east of Verdun, and moreover had been backed out into the Woëvre plain, with no natural defenses to rely on and no such artificial defense lines as those they had lost.

Of the four hundred thousand Germans against the American First Army, about sixteen thousand officers and privates were made prisoners, or one in every twenty-five. In addition, one thousand four hundred and twenty-one large guns were taken, and six thousand five hundred and fifty-five machine-guns. The total enemy casualties are estimated at about one hundred thousand, or about one-fourth of their forces. On the American side (including about seven thousand French casualties) the total was one hundred twenty-two thousand.

The decisiveness and the significance of America's great battle in France will continue to grow as time goes on and people continue to study the war. During the forty-seven days' fighting in the Argonne-Meuse, although mistakes were made and graves dug because of them, the marvel is that untrained men and short-trained officers could ever have accomplished what they did against the world-dominant military power that had been tutoring all its young men and preparing for this very struggle as much as forty long years.

THE END.