THE

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.

VOLUME II.

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA:

ITS ORIGIN,

AND

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS

DOWN TO THE DEATH OF

LORD RAGLAN.

By ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE.

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2nd ditto
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INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN it had been resolved that the French and the English forces already despatched to the East should be raised to a strength which might enable them to be more than auxiliary to the defence of the Turkish dominions, the French Emperor named an officer to the command of his army in the field, and the General who was to have charge of the Queen's land-forces had already been chosen. It seems right for me now to say something of these two commanders; and, the better to make each of them known, I am willing to speak of some of the transactions which brought them together between the time of their meeting in Paris, and the day when they received their instructions for the invasion of the Crimea.

The commanders of the French and the English armies.

The officer entrusted with the command of the French army in the East, was a Marshal of France, and was the person before spoken of who had changed his name from Le Roy to 'St. Arnaud,' and from James to 'Achilles.' He impersonated with singular exactness

Marshal St. Arnaud.

CHAP. I.

the idea which our forefathers had in their minds when they spoke of what they called 'a Frenchman;' for although (by cowing the rich, and by filling the poor with envy) the great French revolution had thrown a lasting gloom on the national character, it left this one man untouched. He was bold, gay, reckless, and vain, but beneath the mere glitter of the surface there was a great capacity for administrative business, and a more than common willingness to take away human life. In Algerine warfare, he had proved himself from the first an active, enterprising officer, and in later years a brisk commander. He was skilled in the duties of a military governor, knowing how to hold tight under martial law a conquered or a half-conquered province. The empire of his mind over his actions was so often interrupted by bodily pain and weakness, that it is hard to say whether, if he had been gifted with health, he would have been a firm, stedfast man; but he had violent energies, and a spirit so elastic, that when for any interval the pressure of misery or of bodily pain was lifted off, he seemed as strong and as joyous as though he had never been crushed. He chose to subordinate the lives and the rights of other men to his own advancement. Therefore he was ruthless; but not in any other sense cruel. No one, as he himself said, could be more good-natured. In the intervals between the grave deeds that he did, he danced and sung. To men in authority no less than to women he paid court with flattering stanzas and songs. He had extraordinary activity of body, and was highly

skilled in the performance of gymnastic feats; he played the violin; and, as though he were resolved in all things to be the Frenchman of the old time, there was once at least in his life, a time of depression, when (to the astonishment of the good priest, who fell on his knees and thanked God as for a miracle wrought), he knelt down and confessed himself, seeking comfort and absolution from his Church. CHAP. I.

He thrice went through a career in the army. First he entered it in 1816 as a sub-lieutenant of the Royal Guard. He soon plunged into a course of life which was of such a kind as to cause him to cease from being an officer. He kept away from France for many years, and became acquainted with several languages. For a long time he was in England, and he spoke our language very well; but in later years he was accustomed to be silent in regard to the time of his exile, and there is no need to lift the veil which he threw over this part of his life.

When the Revolution of 1830 broke out, he returned to France, and being then thirty-three years of age, he again entered the French army as a sub-lieutenant. He wrote some stanzas to Meunier, and gained a step by it. 'Tell me,' after that,' said he, 'that songs are good for nothing!' His next enterprise was in prose. It chanced that Bugeaud, then the General in command of the district, had printed a small military work on the camping of troops. St. Arnaud or Le Roy (for the time of the change of name is not certain) translated the book into several languages, and presented the fruit of his labour with,

CHAP. I. no doubt, an appropriate letter of dedication to the General. Bugeaud was pleased; and from that time until his death he never lost sight of the judicious translator. St. Arnaud was immediately put upon the General's staff, and soon became one of his aides-de-camp. When the Duchess of Berri fell a prisoner into the hands of the Government, M. St. Arnaud, whose regiment was on duty at the place of her detention, found means to make himself useful to the Government, without incurring the dislike of his captive; and he seemed to be in a fair road to promotion. But again the clouds passed over him.

In 1836, for the third and last time, being then near forty years of age, he entered the military profession. He began this his third career as a lieutenant in the 'Foreign Legion,' and joined the corps in Algeria. Every man of the corps, St. Arnaud said, had passed through a wild youth;* but with comrades of that quality a man might entertain better hopes of gaining renown, than with a mere French regiment of the line; and St. Arnaud at this time made a strong resolve. He said, 'I will be remarkable, or die.' And he remained so faithful to this his covenant with himself, that even by acute illness he could not be kept out of action. When he lay upon the sick-bed, if it chanced that the Arabs or the Kabyles were offering any prospect of a fight upon ground within

* "Jeunesse orageuse." I translate this by the words, "wild youth;" but I believe the phrase in the mouths of Frenchmen generally implies that the things done by the person spoken of, are closely bordering upon crime.

reach of the hospital, he almost always managed to drag his helpless, tortured body towards the scene of the conflict, and this he would do, not with an idea of being able to take an active part, but simply in order that the list of officers present might not fail to comprise his name. At the storming of Constantine, however, he really helped to govern the event; for when a great explosion took place, and many were blown into the air, the French soldiers ran back with a cry that all was ruined; but Bedeau and Combes, withstanding the madness of the common terror, strove hard to rally the crowd, and St. Arnaud having with him in his company of the legion some bold reckless outcasts of the North, he bethought him of the shout, very strange to the ears of Frenchmen, which he had heard in other climes. Skilled in the art of imitation, he uttered the warlike cry. Instantly from the Northmen around him, whether Germans or Swedes, or English, Scots, Irish, or Danes, there sprang their native 'Hurrah!' and with it came the thronging of men who must and would go forward. It was mainly the torrent of this new onslaught by St. Arnaud and his men of the 'stormy youth' which carried the breach, and brought about the fall of the city.

Even if for the recruiting of his health he were passing a few weeks of holiday in France, he would still seek personal distinction with a singular strength of will. If, for instance, there chanced to be a fire at night, he would fly to the spot, would scale the ladders, mount the roof, and contrive to appear aloft

CHAP. I. in seeming peril displayed to a wondering crowd by the lurid glare of the flames. Then he would disappear, and then suddenly he would be seen again suspended in the air, and passing athwart the sky that divided one roof from another by the help of a rope or a pole. In the early part of his service in Algeria, his old patron, General Bugeaud, was in command there, and was still a warm friend to him. Of course this circumstance helped to open a path for him, and the result was that, first by acts of bravery and vigour, and then by a display of administrative ability, the all but desperate lieutenant of the foreign legion rose in eight years to be entrusted with a General's command.* In 1845, he commanded in the valley of the Chelif, and he was so dire a scourge to the neighbouring tribes, that the force which obeyed his orders was called the 'Infernal Column.'

When first I saw him in that year he was moving with his force to wreak vengeance on a revolted tribe, and he was to march five weeks deep into the desert. He spoke with luminous force, and with a charming animation; and it seemed to me, as we rode along by the side of the heavy-laden soldiery, that the clear incisive words in which he described to me the mechanism of the 'moveable column,' were a model of military diction; but his keen, handsome, eager features so kindled with the mere stir and pomp of war, he seemed so to love the swift going and

* But up to that time with the rank of Colonel only.

coming of his aides-de-camp, and the rolling drums, and the joyful appeal of the bugles; he was so content with the gleam of his epaulettes half-hidden, and half-revealed by the graceful white cabaan; so happy in the bounding pride of his Arab charger, that he did not seem like a man destined to be chosen from out of all others as the instrument of a scheme requiring grave care and secrecy. Yet of secrecy he was most capable; and at that very time he had upon his mind,* and was concealing, not from me only (for that would be only natural), but from every officer and man around him, a deed of such a kind that few men perhaps have ever done the like of it in secret.

We saw that before the December of 1851, the enterprising and resolute Fleury was in Algeria, seeking out a fit African officer, who would take the post of Minister-of-War, with a view of joining the President in his plans for the overthrow of the Republic. Monsieur St. Arnaud, formerly Le Roy, had not so lived as to occasion any difficulty in approaching him with dishonouring proposals; and there was ground for inferring that he might prove equal to the task which was to be set before him. The able administrator of a great district in Algeria might be competent to head a department. The commander of the 'Infernal Column' was not likely to be wanting in the ruthlessness which was needed, and if his vanity made it seem doubtful whether he was a man who could keep a secret, there

* The act here alluded to is spoken of further on. It took place about six weeks before the time when I first saw Col. St. Arnaud.

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was a confidential paper in existence which might tend to allay the fear.

St. Arnaud had warmly approved the destruction of life which had been effected in 1844, by filling with smoke the crowded caves of the Dahra; but he had sagaciously observed that the popularity of the measure in Europe was not co-extensive with the approbation which seems to have been bestowed upon its author by the military authorities. These counter views guided M. St. Arnaud. In the summer of 1845 he received private information that a body of Arabs had taken refuge in the cave of Shelas. Thither he marched a body of troops. Eleven of the fugitives came out and surrendered, but it was known to St. Arnaud, though not to any other Frenchman, that five hundred men remained in the cave. All these people Colonel St. Arnaud determined to kill, and so far, he perhaps felt that he was only an imitator of Pelissier,* but the resolve which accompanied the formation of this scheme was original. He determined to keep the deed secret even from the troops engaged in the operation. Except his brother, and Marshal Bugeaud, whose approval was the prize he sought for, no one was to know what he did. He contrived to execute both his purposes. 'Then,' he writes to his brother, 'I had all the apertures hermetically stopped up. I made one vast sepulchre. 'No one went into the caverns. No one but myself

* It is believed, however, that Pelissier left open some of the entrances to the cave, and that he only resorted to the smoke as a means of compelling the fugitives to come out and surrender.

'knew that under there, there are five hundred 'brigands who will never again slaughter French-'men. A confidential report has told all to the 'Marshal without terrible poetry or imagery. Bro-'ther, no one is so good as I am by taste and by 'nature. From the 8th to the 12th, I have been 'ill, but my conscience does not reproach me. I 'have done my duty as a commander, and to-morrow 'I would do the same over again; but I have taken 'a disgust to Africa.'*

The officer who could cause French soldiery to be the unconscious instruments for putting to death five hundred fugitive men, and who could afterwards keep concealed from the whole force all knowledge of what it had done, was likely to be the very person for whom Fleury was seeking. He was brought back to Paris, and made Minister of War with a view to the great plot of the 2nd of December. France knows how well, sooner or later, he answered to Fleury's best hopes. He kept his counsel close until the appointed night, and then (whatever faltering there may have been between midnight and three in the morning) he was out in time for the deed, and before the daylight came he had stabbed France through in her sleep.

Amongst men who make a great capture, there will often spring up questions concerning the division of the spoil. When he helped to make prize of France, St. Arnaud of course got much, but his wants were vast, and he had earned a clear right to

* St. Arnaud's letters published by his relatives after his death.

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extort from his chief accomplice, and to go back again, and again, and yet again, with the terrible demand for 'more!' He was in such a condition of health as to be unfit to command an army in the field, for although during intervals he was free from pain and glowing with energy, he was from time to time utterly cast down by his recurring malady. It is possible that notwithstanding his bodily state, he may have sincerely longed to have the command of an army in an European campaign; but whether he thus longed or not, he unquestionably said that he did, and the French Emperor took him at his word, consenting, as was very natural, that his dangerous, insatiate friend should have a command which would take him into the country of the lower Danube. Apparently it was not believed that in point of warlike skill, M. St. Arnaud was well fitted to the command, for the French Emperor, as will be seen, resorted to the plan of surrounding him with men who were virtually empowered to guide him with their overruling counsels.

To try to understand the relations between the allied Generals of France and England without knowing something of the repute in which Marshal St. Arnaud was held by his fellow-countrymen would be to go blindfold; and a narrator keeping silence on this subject would be hiding a fact which belongs to history, and a fact too which is one of deep moment, and fruitful of lessons. Paris stripped of the weapons which kill the body, and robbed of her appeal to honest print, was more than ever pitiless

with the tongue; and M. St. Arnaud being laid open by the tenor of the life that he had led, his reputation fell a prey to cruel speech. The people of the capital knew of no crime too vile to be imputed to the new Marshal of France now entrusted with the command of her army in the field. Yet so far as I know they failed to make out that he had ever been convicted, or even arrested on a criminal charge; and when I look at the affectionate correspondence which almost through his life, M. St. Arnaud seems to have maintained with his near relatives, I am led to imagine that they at least—and they would have been likely to know something of the truth—could have hardly believed his worst errors to be errors of the more dishonouring sort. Therefore there is ground for surmising that the Marshal was a man slandered. But in these times the chief defence against slanders upon public men is to be found in the award that results from free printing, and the right of free printing in France, Marshal St. Arnaud with his own midnight hand had stealthily helped to destroy. Whether he was a man bitterly wronged by his fellow-countrymen, or whether what he suffered was mere justice, the state of his repute in the spring of 1854 is a thing lying within the reach of historical certainty. He had an ill name.

But state policy is a shameless leveller—is a leveller of even that difficult steep which seems to divide the man of high honour from those of mean repute. The plotters of the 2nd of December had overturned the social structure of France. They had stifled men's

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minds, and had made their eloquence mute. They had forced those who were of high estate by character, or by intellect, or by birth, or by honourable wealth to endure to see France handled at will by persons of no account, and to submit to be governed by them, and to pay taxes into their hands, and to maintain them in luxury, and in all so much of pomp as can be copied from the splendour of kings. The new Emperor could not but know that he was breaking down yet another of the world's barriers, and was carrying subversion across the Channel when he contrived that all Europe should see him presenting his fellow-venturer of the December night to the appointed commander of an English army.

But when he knew who the English General was to be, he might well give the rein to his cynic joy. He could have been sure that the General, placed in command of our army, would be an officer of unsullied name; but he who had been chosen was one whose life was mixed with history—the friend, the companion of Wellington. It is true this Englishman was known to be very simple, very careless of self, a man hardly capable of imagining that he could be humbled by obeying the orders of his sovereign; and it is true also that the mass of the English people being eager in the war, and little used to lay stress, as the French do, on the impersonation of a principle, were blind to the moral import of what their Government was doing; but the French Emperor understood England, and he remembered that his coming guest was one of a great and powerful body of nobles,

who were proud on behalf of this favourite member of their class, and fenced him round with honour. For the levelling of these heights, and for the bringing down of those in Europe who were tall with the pride which sustains man's old strife between good and evil, no dreamer could dream of a solemnization more signal than the coming together of Marshal Le Roy St. Arnaud, and him whom old friends still called Lord Fitzroy Somerset. The French Emperor knew that the mind of Germany and France would be swift to interpret this public contact, and would see in it the terms of a great surrender. CHAP. I.

Lord Raglan.

I conceive that in these latter times the scale upon which we measure warlike prowess has been brought down too low by the custom of awarding wild, violent praise to the common performance of duty, and even now and then to actual misfeasance; so if I keep from this path, it is not because I think coldly of our army, or our navy, but because I desire—as I am very sure our best officers do—that we should return to our ancient and more severe standard of excellence. There is another reason which moves me in the same direction. Not only is the utterance of mere praise a lazy and futile method of attempting to do justice to worthy deeds, but it even intercepts the honest growth of a man's renown by serving as a contrivance for avoiding that labour of narration upon which for the most part all lasting fame must rest.

Too often the repute of a soldier who has done some heroic act is dealt with by a formal report, declaring that he has been 'brave,' or 'gallant,' or, 'has con-

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'ducted himself to the perfect satisfaction of his commanding officer.' The cheap, sugared words are quickly forgotten, and nothing remains; whereas if his countrymen were told—not of the mere conclusion that the man had done bravely, but—of the very deed from which the inference was drawn, the story, however simple, might dwell perhaps in their minds, and they might tell it to their children, and the soldier would have his fame. Now this history will virtually embrace the whole of the short period in which Lord Raglan's quality as a General was tried, and it seems to me therefore that if in narrating what happened I can reach to near the truth; if I give honest samples of what our General said, and of what he wrote—of his manner of commanding men, and his way of maintaining an alliance; if I show how he dealt with armies in the hour of battle, and how he comported himself in times of heavy trial, his true nature, with its strength and with its human failings, will be so far brought to light, that I may be dispensed from the need of striving to portray it; and, contenting myself with speaking of some of the mere outward and visible signs which showed upon the surface, may leave it to his countrymen to ascend by the knowledge of what he did to the knowledge of what he was. Where I think Lord Raglan's measures were right, I suppose I shall allow my belief to appear, and where I think they were wrong, I shall be likely to speak with an equal freedom; but it is not for me who am no soldier to undertake to compute the great account between the English people and a General who commanded

their Queen's army in the field. Still, it must be remembered that the less I take upon myself in this regard, the graver will be the task of those who read. When the countrymen of Lord Raglan shall believe that they have in their hands sufficing means of knowledge, they will pass judgment, — not, as I should, with the slender authority of a single bystander, but with the weight of an honest nation in time of calm, judging firmly, yet not ungenerously the career of a public servant.

Lord Fitzroy Somerset, afterwards Lord Raglan, was a younger son of the fifth Duke of Beaufort, and of a daughter of Admiral Boscawen. He was born in 1788. He entered the army in 1804. In 1807, Sir Arthur Wellesley being about to depart for the expedition against Copenhagen, attached the young Lord Fitzroy Somerset to his staff, and during his career in the Peninsula, he kept him close to his side, first as his aide-de-camp, and then as military secretary. Between the time of the first restoration of the Bourbons in 1814, and the flight of Louis XVIII. in the spring of the following year, Lord Fitzroy Somerset was secretary of the embassy at Paris. It was during this interval of peace that he married Emily Wellesley, a daughter of the 3rd Earl of Mornington and a niece of the Duke of Wellington. When the war was renewed, he again became military secretary and aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington, and served with him in his last campaign. At Waterloo—he was riding at the time near the farm of La Haie Sainte—he lost his right arm from a shot. But he quickly

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gained a great facility of writing with his left hand; and, the war being ended, he resumed his function as secretary of embassy at Paris. There he remained until 1819. He then returned to England and became secretary to the Master-General of the Ordnance. In 1825 he went with the Duke of Wellington to St. Petersburg as secretary of embassy. In 1827 he was appointed military secretary to the Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards, and there he remained until the death of the Duke of Wellington in 1852. After that event, he was made Master-General of the Ordnance, was appointed a Privy Councillor, and raised to the peerage. In February, 1854, he became a full General.

Thus from his very boyhood until the autumn of 1852, Lord Fitzroy Somerset had passed his life under the immediate guidance of the Duke of Wellington. The gain was not without its drawback; for in proportion as the great Duke's comprehensive grasp and prodigious power of work made him independent and self-sufficing, his subordinates were of course relieved from the necessity, and even shut out from the opportunity of thinking for themselves; but still, to have been in the close presence and intimacy of Wellington from the very rising of his fame in Europe,—to have toiled at the desk where the immortal despatches were penned,—to have ridden at his side, and carried his orders in all the great campaigns,—and then when peace returned, to have engaged in the labours of diplomacy and military administration under the auspices of the same commanding mind; all this was to have a wealth of experience which common times cannot g

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But for more than thirty years of his life, Lord Raglan had been administering the current business of military offices in peace time, and this is a kind of experience which, if it be very long protracted, is far from being a good preparative for the command of an army in the field; because a military office in time of peace is impelled by its very constitution to aim at uniformity; and on the other hand, the genius of war abhors uniformity, and tramples upon forms and regulations.

An armed force is a means to an end. The end is victory over enemies, and this is to be achieved, partly indeed by a due use of discipline and method, but partly also by keeping alive in those who may come to have command a knowledge and love of war, and by cherishing that unlabelled, undocketed state of mind which shall enable a man to encounter the unknown. In England, however, and in all the great states of Europe, except France, the end had been so much forgotten in pursuit of the means, and the industry exerted in the regulation of troops in peace time had become so foreign to the business of war, that the more a man was military in the narrowed sense of the term, the less he was likely to be fitted for the perturbing exigencies of a campaign. In one country this singular perversity of busy, cold, formal 'man,' had been carried so far, that an army and a war had been actually treated as things antagonistic the one to the other; for the late Grand Duke Constantine of Russia once declared that he dreaded a v because he was sure it would spoil the troops,

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which with ceaseless care and labour he had striven to bring to perfection.

It is to be observed also that partly from the way in which our military system was framed, and partly from political causes, the sympathy which England ought ever to have with her troops, had been materially lessened after the first few years of the peace. The Duke of Wellington dreading lest our forces should be dangerously reduced by the House of Commons, made it his policy to withdraw the army as much as possible from public observation. This method had tended still further to dissociate the country from its armed defenders; but naturally the Duke of Wellington's view was law, and it became the duty of those who were employed in the military administration—not to cause the country to practise itself heartily for the eventuality of another war, but—simply to maintain as far as they could, a monotonous quiet in the army. For half a lifetime, Lord Fitzroy Somerset was engaged in preventing and allaying discussion, and making the wheels of office run smooth. Against the baneful effect of this sort of experience, and against the habit of mind which it tended to generate, Lord Raglan had to combat with all the fire and strength of his nature.

When Lord Raglan was appointed to the command he was sixty-six years old. But although there were intervals when a sudden relaxation of the muscles of the face used to show the impress of time, those moments were few; and in general his well-braced features, his wakeful attention, his uncommon swift-

ness of thought, his upright manly carriage, and his easy seat on horseback, made him look the same as a man in the strong mid-season of life. CHAP. I.

He had one peculiarity which, although it went near to being a foible, was likely to give smoothness to his relations with the French. Beyond and apart from a just contempt for mere display, he had a strange hatred of the outward signs and tokens of military energy. Versed of old in real war, he knew that the clatter of a General briskly galloping hither and thither with staff and orderlies, did not of necessity imply any momentous resolve,—that the aides-de-camp swiftly shot off by a word like arrows from a bow, were no sure signs of despatch or decisive action. And, because such outward signs might mean little, he shrank from them more than was right. He would have liked, if it had been possible, that he and his army should have glided unnoticed from the banks of the Thames to their position in the battle-field. It was certain, therefore, that although a French General would be sure to find himself checked in any really hurtful attempt to encroach upon the just station of the British army, yet that if, as was not unnatural, he should evince a desire for personal prominence, he would find no rival in Lord Raglan until he reached the enemy's presence.

He was gifted with a diction very apt for public business, and of a kind rarely found in Englishmen; for though it was so easy as to be just what men like in the intercourse of private friendship, it was still so constructed as to be fit for the ear of all

CHAP. I. the world; and whether he spoke, or whether he wrote, whether he used the French tongue, or his own clear, graceful English, it seemed that there had come from him the very words which were the best and no more. It was so natural to him to be prudent in speech, that he avoided dangerous utterance without seeming cautious or reserved.

He had the subtle power to draw men along with him. To say that he was persuasive might mean that he could adduce reasons which tended to bring men to his views. His was a power of another sort, for without pressure of argument, his mind by its mere impact broke down resistance for the moment; and although the easy graciousness of his manner quickly set people free from all awkward constraint, it did not so liberate men's minds, that whilst they were still in his presence, they at all liked the duty of trying to uphold their own opinions against him. This dominion, however, was in a great degree dependent upon his actual personal presence; for, with all the power and grace of his pen, he could not, at a distance, work effects proportioned to those which he wrought when he dealt with men face to face.

It is plain that in one respect his empire over those who were in his presence was of a kind likely to become dangerous to him in the command of an army; because it prevented men from differing from him, and even made them shrink from conveying to him an unwelcome truth. Indeed, after the death of the Duke of Wellington, the proudest Englishman, if only he had intellect and a little knowledge of his

country's latter history, had generally the grace to understand that, unless he too were a soldier who had taken his orders from the lips of Sir Arthur Wellesley, he could hardly be the equal of one whose mere presence was a record of England's great days. Thence it followed that, without pretension on the one side, or servility on the other, men who were with him had a tendency to become courtiers. It was in vain that, so far as it had to do with their personal contentment, his manner placed men at their ease; there was some quality in him, or else some outward circumstance —it was partly perhaps the historic appeal of his maimed sword-arm—which was always enforcing remembrance, and preventing his fusion with other men. CHAP. I.

In truth, Lord Raglan's manner was of such a kind as to be—not simply ornament, but—a real engine of power. It swayed events. There was no mere gloss in it. By some gift of imagination he divined the feelings of all sorts and conditions of men; and whether he talked to a statesman or a schoolboy, his hearer went away captive. I knew a shy, thoughtful, sensitive youth just gazetted to a regiment of the Guards, who had to render his visit of thanks to the military secretary at the Horse Guards. He went in trepidation. He came back radiant with joy and wholesome confidence. Lord Fitzroy instead of receiving him in solemn form and ceremony, had walked forward to meet him, had put his hand kindly on the boy's shoulder, and had said a few words so cheering, so interesting, and so free from the vice of being

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commonplace, that the impression clung to the lad, shaping his career for years, and helped to make him the man he was when he was out with his battalion in the winter of the first campaign. From the same presence the foremost statesman of the time once came away saying, that the man in England most fitted by nature to be at the head of the Government was Lord Fitzroy Somerset; and he who so judged, was himself a Prime Minister.

Marshal St. Arnaud and Lord Raglan brought together at the Tuileries.

The enemies of the Imperial Government in France had long made it a reproach against the English, that they were joining in close alliance with the midnight destroyers of law and freedom; but when Lord Raglan came to Paris, when he went to the Tuileries, when he was presented by the Emperor to Marshal St. Arnaud, the notion that such things could be was a very torment to those of the Parisian malcontents who chanced to know something of the English General:—'You English are a robust, stirring people, 'and perhaps every man of you imagines that he 'covers himself with dignity and grandeur, by tramp-'ling upon the feelings of the rest of mankind; but 'surely those men wrong you who call you a proud 'people. Pride causes men to stand aloof, as we 'do, from that which is base; and if ever again we 'call you haughty islanders, you may silence the 'calumny by reminding us of this 13th day of April 'in the year of grace 1854. It was not enough that, 'for the sake of this silly war, you should ally your-'selves body and soul to "Monsieur de Morny's '"Lawgiver," and that you should suffer him to

'drag you down into close intercourse with persons 'whom the humblest of us here decline to know; 'but now—as though you really wished that your 'dishonour should be made signal in Europe—you 'send hither your General to be presented by 'this "French Emperor," as you call him, to his 'henchman, Mr. Le Roy St. Arnaud, and the man 'whom you choose out for this great public sacrifice 'is Fitzroy Somerset, the friend and the companion 'in arms of your Wellington. You say that Lord 'Raglan cares not with whom he associates, so that 'he is under the orders of the Queen whom he serves, 'and in the performance of a public duty; but because 'he in the loyalty, in the high-bred simplicity of his 'nature is careless and forgetful of self, is that a 'reason why you should fail to be proud for him,—why 'you should forget to be careful on his behalf? If 'the modesty of his nature hindered him from seeing 'the momentous significance of his contact with the 'people who have got into our palaces, ought you not 'to have interposed to prevent him from incurring 'the scene of to-day? We imagined that you knew 'how to honour the memory of your Wellington, and 'that after his death when you looked towards Fitzroy 'Somerset, or spoke to him, or listened to his words, 'you looked, and spoke, and listened like men who 'remembered. Him, nevertheless, you now offer up. 'To have brought you down to this is a great achieve- 'ment, the realization of what they call here, a '"Napoleonic idea!" The prisoner of St. Helena is 'avenged at last. We are classic here, and we strike

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'commemorative medals. You will soon see the 'honoured image of your Fitzroy Somerset under- 'going presentation at the Tuileries. Already our 'artists have caught some glimpses of him, and they 'declare it is the colouring, the glow of the complexion 'which makes him look so English, and that in bronze 'he will be grandly Roman. Those noble lineaments 'of his, that upright manly form, nay even the empty 'sleeve which speaks to you of your day of glory, will 'worthily signify what England was; and then the 'effigy of our counterfeit Cæsar receiving the homage 'of a stainless Englishman, and joining him hand to 'hand with Mr. Le Roy St. Arnaud, this will show 'what England is. We hear that you are well 'pleased with the prospect of all this, and that— 'far from shrinking—your "virtuous middle class," 'as you call it, is going into a state of coarse rapture. 'For shame!'

Lord Raglan all unconscious of exciting this kind of sympathy in the heart of the angry Faubourg, had left England on the 10th of April, 1854; and on the following day both he and His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge were received in state at the Tuileries. The presence of a member of our Royal Family was welcome to the new Emperor. He understood its significance. The Parisians love to see a momentous idea so impersonated as to be visible to the eyes of the body, and when their monarch attained to be seen riding between the near kinsman of the English Queen and the appointed commander of her army in the field; when

on a bright spring day he showed his guests some thirty thousand of his best troops in the Champ de Mars, and the scarlet of the ancient enemy sparkled gaily by the side of the blue and the gold, the people seemed to accept the scene as a fitting picture of the great alliance of the West. Almost for the first time in the history of France the accustomed cheers given to the Head of the State were mingled with cheers for England.

But now the time for concerted action had come; and though France and England were already allied by such bonds as are made with parchment and wax, it remained to be seen whether the great rivals could act together in arms. The conjuncture, indeed, drew them towards each other; but it was certain that the coherence of the union would greatly depend on one man. It might seem that he who had first sworn to maintain the French Republic, and had afterwards destroyed it by stealth in the night-time would not be much trusted again by his fellow creatures; but the alliance rested upon ground more firm than the trust which one prince puts in another. It rested—not indeed upon the common interests of France and England, for France, as we have seen, was suppressed, but—upon the prospect of personal advantage which was offered to the new French Emperor by an armed and warlike alliance with England. It being clear that the alliance was for his good, and that, for the time, he had really the control of France, the only remaining question was whether he would pursue what was plainly for his own

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advantage with steadiness and good sense. Upon the whole it seemed likely that he would; for though he was not a man to be stopped by scruples, he did not discard the use of loyalty and faithfulness, where loyalty and faithfulness seemed likely to answer his purpose; and there was a persistency in his nature, which gave ground for hoping that, unless he should be induced to change by some really cogent reason, his stedfastness would endure. Moreover, as we have seen, he had the faculty—very easy to apply to geometry, but harder to use in politics—the faculty of keeping himself awake to the distinction between the Greater and the Less; and he did not forget that for the time the alliance with England was the greater thing, and that most other objects belonged to the category of the Less. These qualities, supported by good humour and often by generous impulses, went far to make him an ally with whom (so long as he might find it advantageous to remain in accord with us) it would be possible, nay easy, and not unpleasant to act.

Conference at the Tuileries.

Lord Raglan submitted to the publicity and ceremonial visits forced upon him during the days of the 11th and 12th of April, and at one o'clock on the 13th he had a private interview with the French Emperor at the Tuileries. The Emperor and the English General were not strangers to one another. They had been frequently brought together in London, and indeed it was by Lord Fitzroy Somerset that the heir of the first Napoleon—deeply moved by the historic significance of the incident—had been

brought to Apsley House and presented to the Duke of Wellington. The Emperor showed Lord Raglan the draught of the instructions which he proposed to address to Marshal St. Arnaud. CHAP I.

It may be said that at this hour Lord Raglan began to have upon him the weight of that anxious charge which was never again to be thrown off so long as life and consciousness should endure. He had charge on behalf of England of the great alliance of the West; and, since it happened that in this the outset of his undertaking he followed a method which characterized his relations with the French from first to last, there is a reason for now pointing it out. It seemed to him that in the intercourse of two proud and sensitive nations undertaking to act in concert, one of the chief dangers lay in that kind of mental activity which is generated by the process of arguing. He made it a rule to avoid and avert all needless discussion, and he regarded as needless—not only those discussions which spring out of abstract questions but—many also of those which are generated by men's anxiety to provide for hypothetical conjunctures. He was very English in this respect, and he was no less English in the simple contrivance by which he sought to ward off the evil. Whenever there seemed to be impending a question which he regarded as avoidable, he prevented or obstructed its discussion by interposing for consideration some practical matter which was more or less important in its way, but not unsafe. And now when there was perhaps some fear that questions of an embarrassing and delicate kind might be raised by

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the pondering Emperor, Lord Raglan kept them aloof by engaging attention to the choice of the camping ground best suited for the two armies. He seems to have succeeded in confining all discussion to this one safe and practical subject.

When the Emperor at length brought his guest back into the outer room there were there assembled Prince Jerome, the Duke of Cambridge, Marshal Vaillant the Minister of War, Marshal St. Arnaud, and Lord De Ros. The vital business of making arrangements best fitted to prevent collision between the armies was anxiously weighed. Marshal Vaillant, laborious, well instructed, precise, and rather, perhaps, fatiguing in his tendency to probe deep every question, strove hard to anticipate the eventualities likely to occasion difficulty in the relations of the two armies, and to force a clear understanding beforehand as to the way in which each question should be dealt with. This he endeavoured to do by putting it to St. Arnaud in a categorical way* to say what solution he proposed for each of the imagined problems; but St. Arnaud, it then appeared, was hardly more fond than Lord Raglan was of hypothetical questions, for after a little while his endurance of Vaillant's interrogatories came to an end; and he answered impatiently, and in a general way, that when the conjunctures arose, they would be met as best they might, by the concerted action of the Generals.

* The French verb 'poser' would describe Marshal Vaillant's labours. The English verb active 'to pose' would describe the effect upon the patient.

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The period of the great French Revolution has gathered so much of the mellowness of age from later events that it seems like a disturbance of chronology to be bringing into the joint-council of France and England in the year 1854, a brother of the first Napoleon. Yet Prince Jerome was one of the speakers, and he spoke with sound judgment upon the great problem of how France and England should act together in arms. He spoke, as might be expected, with less sagacity when the subject of 'The Turks' floated up into notice. The whole French people and many even of the people of this country imagine that the wisdom and power of man are tested by his proximity to the newest stage of civilization, and from those whose minds are in that state the true worth of the Osmanli, whether in policy or in arms, must always be hidden. If he sustains reverses, their minds are satisfied, because in that case the sum of their knowledge seems to have come right; but his success disturbs their most deep-set notions of logical sequence; and now, after all Omar Pacha's achievements on the Danube, it seemed to be the impression of Prince Jerome and the French Marshals, that the Turkish General would be a source of trouble and anxiety to the alliance. They looked upon the events which had been occurring as accidental and anomalous, and tending to produce a wrong conclusion. The Russians, as they well knew, had carried the industry of military preparation to the utmost verge of human endurance. The Turks had provided themselves with a powerful field artil-

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lery, had kept their old yatagans bright, and had cherished their ancient love of war; but for the rest, they had trusted much in Heaven. Yet during some six or seven months these pious, improvident, warlike men had been getting the better of drilled masses. Their success seemed to carry a dangerous lesson; and the French Councillors thought it so important for the Turks to be broken in to the yoke of a newer civilization, that they even said it might be advantageous for Omar Pacha to undergo the discipline of a few wholesome reverses.*

From all he observed in the course of these interviews, Lord Raglan was led to believe in the stability of the Emperor's character, and the value he set upon the alliance.

Lord Raglan's departure for the East.

After a few days, the arrangements detaining Lord Raglan in Paris were complete, and he took his departure for the East.

The French and the English troops on the shores of the Dardanelles.

The joint occupation by French and English troops of the ground on the shore of the Dardanelles had yielded the first experience of the relations likely to subsist between the armies of the two nations when quartered near to each other. It quickly appeared that the troops of each force could be cordially good-humoured in their intercourse with those of the other.

Cordial intercourse between the two armies.

Canrobert, Bosquet, and Sir George Brown, all destined to take prominent share in the coming events, made a kindly beginning of acquaintanceship amid

* Some might imagine that this hope must have been expressed in jest, but that is not the case. Incredible as it may seem, it is nevertheless certain that this view was gravely put forward.

the early difficulties and discomforts of Gallipoli; and upon the departure of Sir George Brown from the Dardanelles, there occurred one of those opportunities for the display of good feeling on which the French are accustomed to seize with a quickness, tact, and grace belonging to no other nation. Sir George Brown was to bring up with him to head-quarters two of the English regiments; and the French—spontaneously as it appeared and from a simple impulse of good will—came down to aid in the embarkation. They set themselves to the work with all that briskness and gay energy by which the French soldiery convert an operation of mere labour and industry into a cheerful and animating scene. The incident in itself was a small one; but, viewed as a sign of things to come, it had greater proportions. It was accepted at the time by Lord Raglan as a happy omen—an omen which seemed to promise that the alliance of the West would hold good.

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But whilst the soldier was giving the best of sanctions to the great Alliance, the Marshal of France was putting it in jeopardy. M. St. Arnaud had not been long on the shores of the Bosphorus when he entered upon a tempting scheme of ambition. General Bosquet, despatched to the head-quarters at Shumla, had brought back accounts, which the Marshal at first could hardly credit, of the good state and apparent effectiveness of the Turkish troops, and it was then perhaps that St. Arnaud first thought of the step which he afterwards took. He conceived the idea of obtaining the command of the whole

St. Arnaud's scheme for obtaining the command of the Turkish army.

CHAP. I. of the welcome. For the welcome was such as the great Eltchi would be sure to give to one who (for imperative reasons of State) was to be treated as his honoured guest, but who was also a vain mortal, pretending to the command of the Ottoman army, and daring to come with his plot avowed into the very presence of an English ambassador. Afterwards Lord Raglan came into the room, and then the Marshal began upon the business in hand. He said he had required, and the Turkish Government had consented, that Omar Pacha should be placed under his orders; that a brigade of Turkish infantry and a battery of artillery should be incorporated into each of the French divisions; that fifteen hundred of the Bashi-Bazouks should be dismounted, that their horses should be turned over to the French troopers, and that the Bashi-Bazouks should be paid (it was not said by whom), and then be sent back to their homes.

If this proposal had been then for the first time made known to Lord Stratford, his fiery nature would scarcely perhaps have suffered him to hear with temper; but he had been prepared by Lord Raglan for what was coming, and he seemed all calm and gentleness. After hearing the proposal with benign attention, he quietly asked the Marshal whether he had cognizance of the tripartite treaty; and then turning to a copy of the treaty which happened—not at all by chance—to be lying within his reach, he read aloud the fourth article: an article which proceeds upon the assumption that the three armies

would be under the orders of distinct commanders. The Marshal—ready perhaps to encounter the more obvious arguments against the expediency of the plan—was scarcely prepared for this quiet reference to the terms of the treaty. Lord Raglan then said that he thought a good deal of inconvenience might result from the adoption of the Marshal's plan—that Omar Pacha was the ablest of the Turkish generals, that his services had been recognised by the grant of the rank of Generalissimo, and the title of Highness, and that to deprive him of the superior command, and to dismember his army, at a moment when it was in presence of the enemy, would not only lower him in the estimation of those who looked up to him with confidence, but would probably induce him to throw up his charge in disgust, and declare that he would not suffer himself to be degraded. CHAP. I.

But both Lord Raglan and the English Ambassador were gifted with the power which is one of the most keen and graceful of all the accomplishments of the diplomatist—the power of affecting the hearer with an apprehension of what remains unsaid. It is a power which exerts great sway over human actions; for men are more cogently governed by what they are forced to imagine than by what they are allowed to know. 'The Marshal,' Lord Raglan wrote, 'saw 'that our opinions were stronger than our expression 'of them.' He gave way. He immediately declared that, far from wishing to diminish the consequence of Omar Pacha, he was anxious to add to it, to uphold him to the utmost, and to increase his importance;

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and he added that he saw the propriety of deciding nothing until after a conference with Omar Pacha. By the time that St. Arnaud passed out of the Embassy gate, his enterprise was virtually abandoned.

His scheme defeated.

Some good perhaps resulted from the attempt to bring the Ottoman army under French command. Of all the faults tending to impair the value of Lord Raglan's advice to the home Government, there was none more grave than his want of power to appreciate warlike people belonging to an earlier state of civilization than that to which he had been accustomed in his latter years; and although nothing could ever soften his antipathy towards Turkish Irregulars of all kinds, and especially to the Bashi-Bazouks, he was by this incident drawn more than ever towards the Turkish Generalissimo, and he always thenceforth did his best to defeat any plan which tended to narrow the sphere of the Pacha's authority.

His scheme for obtaining the command of English troops.

So great was the elasticity of Marshal St. Arnaud's mind that, far from remaining cast down under the discomfiture which he had undergone, he very soon entered upon a scheme yet more ambitious than the first. It seems he had become possessed with the idea that great achievements were within his reach, if only he could add to the powers which he already wielded the occasional command of English troops. He proposed that when French and English troops were acting together, the senior officer, whether he chanced to be French or English, should take the command of the joint force; and although this proposal was so expressed that it might be regarded as

applying only to the command of detachments it was surmised that (M. St. Arnaud's military rank being higher than that of Lord Raglan) the control of the whole British force was the object really in view.

The experience of the conference at the British embassy had proved the good sedative effect of a dry document; and as the instructions addressed to the English General chanced to contain some words directing him to take no orders except from the Secretary of State,* the clause was happily put forward by Lord Raglan as an impediment to the proposed plan. Marshal St. Arnaud gave way, and thenceforth desisted from all further prosecution of his scheme.

This also defeated.

So skilful was the resistance opposed to these enterprises of M. St. Arnaud, and the character of the Marshal was so free from all admixture of spite and bitterness, that their frustration did not create ill-feeling. It was plain, however, that recurrence to projects of this sort would be dangerous to the alliance; and when the French Emperor knew that these schemes had been tried and defeated, he forbade all attempts to revive them.

Attempts of this kind checked by the French Emperor.

Hitherto, the cause which had been threatening the cohesion of the alliance was M. St. Arnaud's ambition. The next obstruction which Lord Raglan had to deal with was one of a very different kind. Checked, as is supposed, by the authoritative counsels sent out

St. Arnaud suddenly declines to move his army towards the seat of war.

* The clause, I imagine, had been introduced in order to negative the supposition that the Ambassador at Constantinople was to have the control of the military operations.

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to him from Paris, Marshal St. Arnaud suddenly announced that, for some time to come, the French army could not be suffered to move towards the seat of the war.

The measures for sending up the British forces to Varna were in progress; and the Light Division had been already despatched, when at eleven o'clock at night Colonel Trochu presented himself at the British head-quarters, and requested an immediate interview with Lord Raglan. The name of Colonel Trochu will recur in this narrative, for he was an officer of great weight in the councils of the French army. He had come from France so lately as the 10th of May, and, although his nominal office was simply that of first aide-de-camp to Marshal St. Arnaud, it was known that he came out fully charged with the notions and the wishes of the French Emperor. Colonel Trochu was a cautious, thinking man, well versed in strategic science, and it was surmised that it was part of his mission to check anything like wildness in the movements of the French Marshal.* He stated that he had been sent by Marshal St. Arnaud to request that Lord Raglan would postpone any further movement towards Varna, until the Marshal should have an opportunity of satisfying himself that any considerable portion of the French army was in a condition to take the field.

Up to this moment, no doubt had been entertained of the forwardness of the French preparations; and

* Modérer la fougue de M. le Marechal.

Lord Raglan, much astonished, expressed strong objection to the proposed delay. CHAP. I.

Colonel Trochu replied, that upon his arrival in the Levant, he had gone to Gallipoli in order to see what degree of forwardness the preparations of the French army had really attained; and he had come, he said, to the conclusion that the French army was not as yet so equipped and provided as to render it practicable, with anything like common prudence, to attempt operations against the enemy. He went on to justify his conclusion by details, showing the deficiencies under which the French army laboured; he said that he had communicated the result of his inspection, and the opinion which he had formed to Marshal St. Arnaud, and that Marshal St. Arnaud, entirely adopting that opinion, had sent him to the English head-quarters in order that he might prevail upon Lord Raglan to suspend the intended movement.

Lord Raglan's disapproval of the proposed delay.

Lord Raglan observed that great inconvenience would result from the proposed suspension of the movement; that the movement was one actually proposed by the French and English commanders to Omar Pacha, and by him, as well as by the Turkish ministers, entirely approved; and that thus the French and the English commanders stood pledged to Omar Pacha, and to the Porte, at a moment too when much anxiety existed for the fate of Silistria. Colonel Trochu admitted all this; but he again urged the necessity for delay.

The interview lasted till an hour after midnight,

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and Colonel Trochu's request was followed up on the ensuing day by written communications from the French Marshal. But the importance of these discussions was superseded by a further and more perilous change in the French counsels.

St. Arnaud's sudden determination to take up a defensive position in rear of the Balkan.

At seven o'clock in the morning of Sunday the 4th of June, Marshal St. Arnaud called upon Lord Raglan, and announced that he had determined upon an entirely new plan of operations for his army. Instead of moving his force to Varna, as had been agreed, he had resolved, he said, to send there only one division, and to place all the rest of his army in position—not in advance, but in rear of the Balkan range. He was to have his right resting on the sea at Bourgas. His head-quarters were to be at Aidos, and he hoped, he said, to be able to establish himself there by the third week of June. He invited Lord Raglan to conform to this plan, and to take up a position at Bournabat, a part of the proposed position which was the most remote from the sea.

Thus, at a time when the eyes of all Europe were upon Silistria and the campaign on the Danube, it was proposed that the armies of the Western Powers should take up a mere defensive—a timidly defensive—position, placing all Bulgaria, a part of Roumelia, and the whole range of the Balkan between them and the scene of conflict! What made the matter still more grave was this: that Marshal St. Arnaud did not come to consult. He had already adopted this almost incredible plan, and his troops were then actually in march for the new position.

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It might now indeed seem that those were right who had deemed the great alliance of the West to be impracticable. For all the purposes of the campaign the proposed plan would have caused the armies of the two Western Powers to become simply null. Lord Raglan at once declared his entire disapproval of it.

Lord Raglan's determined resistance to this plan.

Tied perhaps to this singular plan by the counsels which Trochu had brought him, Marshal St. Arnaud, for the time, did not yield. But the English General, as I have already said, had a quality which made it difficult and painful for men to maintain a difference with him whilst they were in his presence. St. Arnaud was under this stress; and, as though he shrank from the ascendancy of Lord Raglan, and sought a respite from the effort of having to oppose him in oral discussion, he imagined the idea of bending over a table and writing down what he had to say. This he did; and when the writing was finished, he left it with Lord Raglan. But the Marshal seems to have inwardly determined that Colonel Trochu, who had probably suggested this new plan of campaign, should himself be made to bear the pain of further sustaining it; for he took his leave, saying that the Colonel should be sent to Lord Raglan on the following day.

In this curious paper, written by St. Arnaud in Lord Raglan's presence, the Marshal said the great advantage of the French and English having only one division each at Varna, would be that they would not get entangled prematurely in hostile operations, for with such a small force, no one could taunt the

CHAP. I. Western Powers for not marching to relieve Silistria, or for not giving battle to the Russians; whereas, argued the Marshal, if the Allies were present in greater strength, it was to be feared that they might suffer themselves to be carried away by the Turks. 'It is important,' said the Marshal, 'not to give battle 'to the Russians, except with all possible chances of 'success, and the certainty of obtaining great results.' Then, after describing the supposed advantages of his intended position in rear of the Balkan, the Marshal reverted to his dread of being carried forward by the warlike Turks. 'We must not,' said he, 'lose sight 'of this; that we are here to aid the Turks—to 'succour them, to save them; but not by following 'their plans and their ideas. It is evident that Omar 'Pacha has no other idea but that of drawing on the 'allied army to give battle to the Russians, and to 'relieve Silistria. The safety of Turkey is not in 'Silistria; and it is necessary to aid and succour the 'Turks in our own way.'

No one perhaps will now defend a plan of campaign which was to place the allied armies of the Western Powers in a position some hundreds of miles from the scene of any conflict, and to withdraw them from the very proximity of the Turk because of his warlike counsels. Still, such justice as is due must be rendered to the French strategists. France and England had sent to the East that portion of the two armies which consists of combatants; but neither of the Western Powers had hitherto constituted on the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus that vast accumula-

tion of stores, of munitions of war, and means of transport which would enable it to live, to move freely, and to fight. Both of the two armies had the most of what for the moment they needed, but neither of them had hitherto any sufficing base of operations to rest upon. Both of the armies had means of subsistence for the next few days, and were so equipped as to be able to fight a battle on the beach; but neither army had nor could have, for many months, those vast warehouses of stores, and those immense means of land-transport which could alone sustain regular and extended operations in the field. Therefore, if purely military views were to govern, and if Russia were really the formidable invader of Turkey which the world had believed her to be, there would have been some rashness in pushing forward the combatants of the two armies towards the scene of conflict with a knowledge that for some time to come they would be unable to move freely in the field.

The true ground for overruling the hesitation of the French strategists lay in the now obvious fact that (to say nothing of the armies of France and England assembled on the Bosphorus with vast means of sea transport at their command) Russia ill-prepared for a great war in the South, driven out of the Euxine, threatened by Austria, and fiercely encountered and hitherto repulsed by the Ottoman forces, was not so formidable an invader of European Turkey as to deserve that her despairing struggles in the country of the Lower Danube should be encountered with all the resources of strategic prudence. Besides, the question

CHAP. I. was not purely a military one. It was certain that the mere presence of the French and the English forces in the neighbourhood of the conflict would have a moral weight more than proportioned to their actual readiness for offensive operations. Finally, the question had been settled. The allied Generals in their conference with Omar Pacha had engaged to move their troops to Varna, and the honour of France and England stood pledged.

But if there was a semblance of military wisdom in the hesitation of the French to move up to Varna, there was none in their plan for the defensive line behind the Balkan at Aidos; for if the want of means of land-transport threatened to hamper the activity of the force even in the advanced position of Varna, it is obvious that the same cause would have reduced the French and English forces to sheer uselessness if they had taken up a position at so vast a distance as Aidos is from the scene of the conflict. If the plan had been followed, no French nor English troops in that year would have seen the shape of a Russian battalion. Yet Marshal St. Arnaud, so far as concerned France, had determined thus to forfeit all military significance in the pending campaign, and had done so, and had begun to carry the plan into execution without consulting his English colleague.

How France was saved from this humiliation; and how the great alliance was preserved, will now be seen.

On the day following the interview with Marshal

St. Arnaud, Colonel Trochu came, as had been agreed, to Lord Raglan's quarters. After repeating what Marshal St. Arnaud had stated the day before, namely, that Bosquet's Division was already in march for Adrianople, the Colonel pressed the advantages of the position which Marshal St. Arnaud had proposed to take up in rear of the Balkan.

Lord Raglan refuses to place any part of his army behind the Balkan.

Lord Raglan heard all, and then simply requested Colonel Trochu to inform Marshal St. Arnaud, that he, Lord Raglan, objected to place any portion of Her Majesty's army in Roumelia.

Lord Raglan added that the movement which seemed to him the best was an advance to the front with a view to join Omar Pacha in an effort to relieve Silistria; and he said that if the Marshal were not prepared for such a movement he (Lord Raglan) would keep his divisions on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, and hold them ready to embark at any moment for Varna.

St. Arnaud gives way, abandons his plan of a position behind the Balkan, and consents to move his army to Varna.

Firmness conquered. On the morning of the 10th of June, Colonel Rose came to the English headquarters, and announced that Marshal St. Arnaud now consented to abandon his plan of taking up a defensive position behind the Balkan, and that, reverting to the original determination of the Allies, he would assemble his army at Varna.

Thus the danger passed. Secresy, it would appear, had been well maintained, and the world did not know that for all purposes of concerted military operations, the alliance of the Western Powers had lain in abeyance for five days.

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The armies moved accordingly.

Leaving small detachments at Gallipoli, the French and the English armies were now moved up to Varna. General Bosquet's Division, however, was made to feel the consequences of the resolution adopted by the French strategists; for, this division having actually commenced its march towards Adrianople in furtherance of the then intended plan of taking up a position behind the Balkan, Marshal St. Arnaud, it seems, did not like to issue a countermand which would have disclosed to a sagacious soldiery his double change of counsels—nay, perhaps might have given them a glimpse of the almost ridiculous destiny from which they had been saved by Lord Raglan.

Bosquet's overland march.

So, whilst all the rest of the allied forces were gliding up to Varna by water, Bosquet's Division continued to follow the direction first given it, and was brought into Bulgaria by long, painful marches. If the warlike Zouaves, composing part of the division, had known that their long toilsome movement in the midst of the great summer heats was the result of a plan for placing the French army in position at a distance of several hundreds of miles from the enemy, they would have solaced the labours of the march by fearing the repute of the schemer who contrived it, and making him the butt for their wit.

The way in which St. Arnaud's schemes escaped publicity.

It is obvious that the premature disclosure either of Marshal St. Arnaud's ambitious schemes, or of his faltering counsels would have been fraught with danger to the alliance; and since it used to happen in those days that tidings freshly entrusted to the English Cabinet were often disclosed to the

world, it seems useful to show how it was that Lord Raglan was able to screen these transactions of Marshal St. Arnaud from the inquiring eye of the public. Apparently he did this by being careful in the choice of the time for making disclosures to the authorities at home. Except when there was a good reason for taking a contrary course, he liked to delay the communication of affairs involving danger until the danger was past. Thus, for instance, he would describe the beginning of an intrigue and also its final defeat at the same time; and the result was that the end of the despatch not only made the disclosure of the earlier part of it comparatively harmless, but even destroyed its value as an article of 'news,' for in proportion as people were greedy for fresh tidings they were careless of things which ranged with the past, and the time was so stirring that the tale of an abandoned plan of campaign, or an intrigue already baffled and extinct, was hardly a rich enough gift for a Minister to carry to a newsman. CHAP. I.

Thus were averted the early dangers which threatened the alliance; and thus, after resolving to take up a position some hundreds of miles distant from the nearest Russian outpost, the French Marshal gave way at last to Lord Raglan's ascendant, and was soon pushed forward to a camping ground within hearing of the enemy's guns.

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. II.

Tidings which kindled in England a zeal for the invasion of the Crimea.

THE closing events of the summer campaign in Bulgaria did so much to kindle that zeal which forced on the invasion of the Crimea, that it seems right to speak of them here: not with any notion of putting into the set form of "History" things which all Europe knew at the time in the most authentic way; but rather for the purpose of showing how the armies at Varna, and the statesmen and the people in England, were touched, were stirred, nay, were governed by the tidings which came from the Danube. Prince Paskievitch stood charged to execute with his own hand the plan of campaign which his Sovereign had persuaded him to design,* and accordingly in the summer of the year 1854, he found himself marching on the Danube at the head of the Russian army then engaged in attempting an invasion of the Ottoman Empire. He had insisted, as we have seen, that as the needful condition of a prosperous campaign, Silistria must fall by the 1st of May.† It was not before the middle of the month

Siege of Silistria.

* See Vol. i. p. 391. † Ibid. p. 394.

that he was able to appear before the place; but thenceforth he lost no time, and on the 19th he opened his first parallel.

The new defences of the fortress had been planned by Colonel Grach, a Prussian officer in the service of the Porte. He had brought to the work a great deal of knowledge and judgment. He was still in the place, and he continued to lend the aid of his science to the garrison whenever he could do so without going out of his dwelling-house; but, adhering, it seems, to the bare terms on which he had engaged his services, he stiffly abstained from taking any other than a scientific part in the struggle.

Prince Paskievitch pressed the siege with a vehemence which seemed to disdain all economy of the lives of his soldiery, and, the place being weakly garrisoned, and seemingly abandoned to its fate, its fall was supposed to be nigh. To uphold the Sultan's cause three armies were at hand, but no one of them was moved forward with a view to relieve the place. Omar Pasha, shrewd and wary, was gathering the strength of the Ottoman Empire at Schumla, and it did not enter into his plan of campaign to smooth the path of the Russian General by going forward in strength to give him a meeting under the guns of the beleaguered fortress. On the other hand, France and England were rapidly assembling their forces in the neighbourhood of Varna, but for want of sufficing means of land-transport they were not yet in a condition to take the field.

Day by day the two armies at Varna were moved

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by fitful tidings of a conflict in which, though it raged within ear-shot, they were suffered to take no part. At first, few men harboured the thought that—without deliverance brought by a relieving force—a humble Turkish fortress would be able to hold out against the collected strength of Russia, and the most renowned of her Generals. Soon, it was known that of their own free will and humours two young Englishmen, Captain Butler of the Ceylon Rifles and Lieutenant Nasmyth of the East India Company's Service, had thrown themselves into the place, and were exercising a strange mastery over the garrison. On one of the hills overlooking the town there was a seam of earth which—as though it were a kind of low fence designed and thrown up by a peasant—passed along three sides of the slope in a doubtful meandering course. This was the earthwork which soon became famous in Europe. It was called the Arab Tabia. The work was one of a slight and rude sort; but the ground it stood on was judged to be needful to the besiegers, and, at almost any cost of life to his people, Prince Paskievitch resolved to seize it. By diligent fighting on the hill-side, by sapping close up to the ditch, by springing mines which more than once blew in the counterscarp and levelled the parapet, by storming it in the day time, by storming it at night, the Russians strove hard to carry the work; but when they sprang a mine, they ever found that behind the ruins the Turks stood retrenched; and whether they stormed it by day or by night, their masses of columns

were always met fiercely, were always driven back with a cruel slaughter. Prince Paskievitch, the General commanding in chief, and General Schilders who commanded the siege works, were both struck down by shot and disabled. On the side of the Turks, Mussa Pasha, who commanded the garrison, was killed; but Butler and Nasmyth, now obeyed with a touching affection and trustfulness by the Ottoman soldiery, were equal to the historic occasion which they had had the fortune and the spirit to seize. At one time they were laying down some new work of defence. At another, the two firm lads were governing the judgment of the Turkish commanders in a council of war. Sometimes, with ear pressed to the earth, they were listening for the dull blows of the enemy's underground pickaxes. Now and then, they were engaged in dragging to his place under fire some unworthy Turkish commander; and once in their sportive and English way they were busy in getting together a sweepstakes, to be won by him who should name the day when Silistria would be relieved; but always when danger gathered in the Arab Tabia, the grateful Turks looked and saw that their young English guests were amongst them, ever ready with counsel for the new emergency, forbidding all thought of surrender, and even, it seems, determined to lay rough hands on the General who sought to withdraw with his troops from the famous earth-work.* It seemed that the presence of these youths

* I take it that this is what was meant by Nasmyth's expression, "peculiar inducement." The man upon whom the "peculiar inducement"

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was all that was needed for making of the Moslem hordes a faithful, heroic, and devoted soldiery. Upon ground known to be mined they stood as tranquilly as upon any other hill-side. 'It was impossible,' said Nasmyth's successor in the Arab Tabia; 'it was 'impossible not to admire the cool indifference of the 'Turks to danger. Three men were shot in the space 'of five minutes while throwing up earth for the new 'parapet, at which only two men could work at a time 'so as to be at all protected; and they were succeeded 'by the nearest bystander, who took the spade from 'the dying man's hands and set to work as calmly as 'if he were going to cut a ditch by the road-side.' Indeed, the child-like trust which these men were able to put in their young English leaders, so freed them from all doubt and question concerning the wisdom of the orders given, that they joyfully abandoned themselves to the rapture of fighting for religion, and grew so enamoured of death—so enamoured of the very blackness of the grave, that sometimes in the pauses of the fight a pious Mussulman, intent on close fighting and blissful thoughts of Paradise, would come up with a pickaxe in hand, would speak some touching words of devotion and gratitude to Butler and Nasmyth, and then proudly fall to work and dig for himself the last home, where he charged his comrades to lay him as soon as he attained to die.

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was brought to bear was one whom Butler had dragged out bodily from his hiding-place.

Omar Pasha not choosing to march to the relief of Silistria, but being unwilling to leave its defenders to sheer despair, sent General Cannon * (Behram Pasha he was called in the Turkish army) with a brigade of irregular light infantry, and instructed him to occupy some of the wooded ground in the neighbourhood of the place, with a view to trouble the enemy, and to encourage the garrison. General Cannon, however, learnt on reaching the neighbourhood of Silistria, that the hopes of the garrison had already ebbed very low; and therefore, though without the warrant of orders, he resolved to throw himself into the place with his whole brigade. This, by means of a stratagem and a long, circuitous, night-march, he was able to do. His achievement, as was natural, gave joy to the garrison; and turning to account the enthusiasm of the moment, he administered, as is said, a direful oath to the Pasha in command—an oath whereby the Turk swore that, happen what might, he would never surrender the place.

It was whilst General Cannon was in Silistria that Captain Butler received the wound of which he afterwards died. The Russians had sapped up so close to the ditch that, if a man behind the parapet spoke much above a whisper, the sound of his voice used to draw the enemy's fire towards the nearest loophole or embrasure. Captain Butler, it seems,

* General Cannon was an officer of our Indian army who had served with distinction in India, and in the force (the British Legion) which operated in Spain under the orders of General Evans.

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with a view to throw up a new work of defence, was reconnoitring the enemy's approaches through an aperture made in the parapet, and in consulting about his plan with General Cannon, he spoke loud enough to be heard by a Russian marksman, for the sound of his voice brought a rifle ball in through the loophole and struck him the blow from which (being weakened by toil and privation) he died before the end of the siege.

For some reason which he deemed to be imperative—stringent orders, perhaps, from Schumla,—General Cannon marched out of the place with his brigade on the 17th of June, and at his request Nasmyth also went away for a time, in order to confer with Omar Pasha at the Turkish head-quarters; but meanwhile, Lieutenant Ballard of the Indian army coming thither of his own free will had thrown himself into the besieged town, and whenever the enemy stirred, there was always at the least one English lad in the Arab Tabia, directing the counsels of the garrison, repressing the thought of surrender, and keeping the men in good heart.*

There was a part of the allied camp where the

* The narratives of the siege of Silistria which appeared in the *Times* were given, as is well known, by Nasmyth himself, and by the officer who succeeded to him and, to Butler in governing the counsels of the garrison and helping to defend the Arab Tabia. Therefore any other account of the siege which I might have founded upon the official materials in my possession would have been obviously inferior to the newspaper in point of authenticity. Accordingly, with the exception of two or three minor facts drawn from the correspondence which is in my possession, all I have said of the siege is taken from those journals of Nasmyth and his successor which were printed in the *Times* during the summer of 1854.

French and the English soldiery could hear in a quiet hour the distant guns of Silistria. Day after day they listened for the continuing of the sound, and they listened keenly, for they were expecting the end, and there was nothing but the booming of the cannon to assure them that the fortress held out. On the 22nd of June, and during a great part of the night which followed it, they heard the low thunder of the siege more continuously than ever before; but on the dawn of the following day they listened, and listened in vain. The cannonade had ceased, and it was believed in camp that the place had been taken. The opposite of this was the truth. The siege had been raised. The event was one upon which the course of history was destined to hinge; for this miscarriage at Silistria put an end at once to all schemes for the invasion of the Sultan's dominions in Europe.

Whilst Europe was still in wonder at the deliverance of Silistria, the French and the English armies at Varna were greeted with tidings of yet another victory won by the Turks.

Hassan Pasha was at Rustchuk, with a large body of Turkish troops; and at Giurgevo, on the opposite bank of the river, General Soimonoff commanded twelve battalions of Russian infantry, with several squadrons of horse, and some guns. Both the Russian and the Turkish commanders desired that at this time there should be no conflict; and it might be thought that in this respect they would have their way; for, although the forces at Rustchuk and

The battle of Giurgevo.

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at Giurgevo were near to each other, the broad Danube rolled between them. But the Ottoman soldiery are of so warlike a nature that, when their enemy is at hand, they are oftentimes seized with a raging desire for the fight; and the one check which tends to keep down this passion is a sense of the incoherency which results from the want of good officers. But so ready and so deep is their trust in any of our countrymen who will take the trouble to lead them, that, if Turkish soldiers be camped within reach of the enemy, the coming amongst them of a few English youths supplies the one thing needed, completes the electric circle, and in general brings on a fight. Now, it happened that besides General Cannon, who was on duty and in command of a Turkish brigade, seven young English officers had found their way to the camp of Hassan Pacha. Two of these, Captain Bent and Lieutenant Burke, were officers of the Royal Engineers; Meynell was a Lieutenant in the 75th Regiment; Hinde, Arnold, and Ballard (the last of them fresh come from Silistria) were officers of our Indian army; Colonel Ogilvy was General Cannon's aide-de-camp, but he gave his services freely, and, indeed, it may be said that, so far as concerns the part they took in the battle, every one of these seven young Englishmen was there of his own mere will.*

* The two engineer officers, Captain Bent and Lieutenant Burke, had been sent to the Turkish camp with instructions to advise and aid in the construction of military works; but of course they had not been ordered to lead the Turks into battle; and therefore I include them with the rest of the seven as men taking part in the battle without professional sanction.

On the morning of the 7th of July it was observed that the Russians had struck their tents; and they were so posted that their numbers could not be descried from the right bank of the river. It was believed in the Turkish camp that Soimonoff had withdrawn the main part of his force; and it seems that what Hassan Pasha really meant to do was to execute a reconnaissance, and assure himself of the enemy's retreat. Be this as it may, he ordered, or consented, that the river should be crossed at two points; and General Cannon embarking in boats with 300 riflemen, and speedily followed by a battalion of infantry under Ferik Bekir Pasha, succeeded in reaching the left bank of the river without encountering resistance. As soon as they had landed, the Turks tried to gain a lodgment upon a strip of ground where their front was covered by a long narrow mere or pool of water. Soon, however, they were attacked on their left flank by a body of Russian infantry, which issued from an earthwork placed above the western extremity of the mere. Cannon and Bent, with their riflemen, not only withstood this attack, but drove their assailants back into the fosse from which they had issued, and there, it seems, a good deal of slaughter took place. Afterwards the riflemen were forced to give way, and fall back upon the main body of the troops which had effected their landing; but young Ballard led forward another body of skirmishers, and kept the enemy back. What was needed was, that the troops which had landed should intrench themselves; but

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they had come without gabions or sand-bags, and nothing as yet could be done towards gaining a firm lodgment. There was a good deal of confusion amongst the troops, and the enterprise seemed likely to fail, when Ali Pasha, who was a brave and an able officer, came over with fresh troops. He soon restored order, and the men began to throw up intrenchments.

Meanwhile two battalions, led on by Ogilvy, Hinde, Arnold, Meynell, and Burke, had crossed the river higher up, in detached bodies, and, although these small bands were left from first to last without reinforcements, although they had to move flank-wise close under the guns of a Russian battery, which killed very many, and although they were sharply attacked and at one time hard pressed by the enemy's infantry, as well as by four squadrons of cavalry, the remnant of these venturesome men fought their way down along the river's bank, and at last made good their junction with the main body, then intrenching itself behind the mere. But before they attained to this, they had lost a great proportion of their comrades, and of their five youthful leaders they had lost three, for Burke, Arnold, and Meynell were killed.

Meanwhile fresh troops had been crossing the river at the point opposite to the landing-place first seized; and at length there was established, on the ground behind the mere, a force of some five thousand men.

Upon either flank of this body the Russian infantry

came down in strong columns. Four times the attack was made, and four times the Turks, commanded or led on by Ali Pasha and General Cannon, by Bent, Hinde, Ogilvy, and Ballard, drove back their assailants with great slaughter. With pious and warlike cries, the Turks sallied over their new-made parapets, brought their bayonets down to the charge, forced mass after mass to give way, and fiercely pressed the retreat.

At sunset the action ceased. All night the Turks were intrenching themselves on the ground which they had gained; but when the morning dawned there was no sign that the enemy would hasten to renew the battle.

To keep a safe hold of the ground which had been won, it was necessary for the Turks to advance in the direction of their left front, and occupy a ridge which went by the name of the Slobenzie Heights; but Hassan Pasha dreaded the blame which might fall upon him if the movement should prove to be a wrong one. General Cannon pressed him hard. For some time, in vain; but at length the Pasha yielded, upon condition that the English General would give him a written warranty, certifying the wisdom of the step.

On the third day after the battle, Prince Gortschakoff came up with a force, which was said to number some sixty or seventy thousand men. He had been set free by the raising of the siege of Silistria, and he now appeared upon one of the ranges of hills looking down upon Giurgevo from the north-west.

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It seemed that he meant to cover over the stain of the defeat sustained at Giurgevo by driving the Turks back into the river; but before he camped for the night, the British flag was already in the waters beneath him.

Lieutenant Glyn and the young Prince Leiningen, both serving on board the 'Britannia,' had come up from the sea, with some gunboats and thirty seamen, together with a like number of sappers. Glyn quickly carried his gunboats into the narrow loop-stream which escapes from the main of the river above Giurgevo, and meets it again lower down. By this movement Glyn thrust his gunboats into the interval which divided the Russian army from the Turks. Gortschakoff perhaps overrated the force which had come with the British flag. At all events, he did not instantly move down to the attack; and whilst he seemed to hesitate, the Turks and the English worked hard. Captain Bent and his sappers, with the aid of our seamen and the Turks, threw a bridge of boats across the main stream of the Danube. This done, it was plain that, if Gortschakoff were to attack, he would have to do, not merely with the five thousand Turks already established on the left bank, but with the whole of the force which lay at Rustchuk. He resolved to avoid the encounter. Retreating upon Bucharest, he no longer disputed with the Turks for the mastery of the Lower Danube.

In this campaign on the Danube, those who fought for the cause of the Sultan were helped, it is true, by Fortune, by the anger and unskilfulness of the Czar,

by the assured support of Austria, and by the impending power of England and France; but, still, there is one point of view in which their achievement was a great one. Military ascendancy is so closely connected with military reputation that, to be the first to bring down the warlike fame of a great empire, is to do a mighty work, and a work, too, which hardly can fail to change the career of nations. By the time that Prince Gortschakoff retreated upon Bucharest, people no longer thought of the Czar as they thought of him eight months before; and the glory of thus breaking down the military reputation of Russia is due of right, not to the Governments nor the armies of France or England, but to the warlike prowess of the Ottoman soldiery, and the ten or twelve resolute Englishmen who cheered and helped and led them.

Effect of the campaign of the Danube on the military ascendancy of Russia.

The failure of the attempted invasion was almost instantly followed by the relinquishment of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Emperor Nicholas, as we saw, had been placed by Austria under the stress of a peremptory summons requiring him to withdraw from the Principalities, and, the demand being supported by powerful bodies of troops which threatened the flank of the intruding army, the Czar was schooled at last, and compelled to see that he must surrender his hold of the provinces which he had chosen to call his 'material guarantee.'

Thus, by the course of the events which followed it, the Czar's last defeat on the Danube was made to appear more signal than it really was. Of course

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men versed in war and in politics knew that causes of a larger kind than a few hours' fight at Giurgevo were bringing about the abandonment of the Principalities; but people who drew their conclusions from the mere advance or retreat of armies, and from the issue of battles, were left to infer that the once dreaded Emperor of the Russias was chased from the country of the Danube by the sheer prowess of the victorious Turks.

The agony of the Czar.

It is, therefore, very easy to believe that this discomfiture at Giurgevo was more bitter to the Czar than any of the disasters which had hitherto tried his fortitude. People knew, or affected to know, what the troubled man uttered in torment, and the words they put in his mouth ran somewhat to this effect:—

'I can understand Oltenitza—I can even understand that Omar Pasha should have been able to hold against me his lines at Kalafat—I can partly account for the result of those fights at Citate—I can understand Silistria—the strongest may fail in a siege—and it chanced that both Paskievitch and Schilders were struck down and disabled by shot —but—but—but—that Turks—mere Turks—led on by a General of Sepoys and six or seven English boys—that they should dare to cross the Danube in the face of my troops—that daring to attempt this they should do it, and hold fast their ground—that my troops should give way before them, and that this—that this should be the last act of the campaign which is ending in the retreat

'of my whole army, and the abandonment of the 'Principalities. Heaven lays upon me more than I 'can bear!"

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Many men in the Anglo-French camp were fretted by the tidings of this last Turkish victory; for, besides that with their natural and healthy impatience of delay, they were stung by the example of their Moslem ally, there was in the staff of the French and the English armies a pedantic dislike of wild troops. In this respect Lord Raglan had no breadth of view. Far from understanding that the hardy, the fierce, the devout, the temperate Moslems of the Ottoman provinces were the rough yet sound material with which superb troops could be made, he always looked upon these brave men, but especially upon the genus which people called 'Bashi-Bazouks' with an almost superstitious horror. He was so constituted, or rather he was so schooled down by long years of flat office labour, that it shocked him to see a man bearing no uniform, yet warlike, and armed to the teeth. Indeed, from Bulgaria he once wrote and complained quite gravely that every Turk he saw had the appearance of being a 'bandit;' and the prejudice clung to him; for, long after the period now spoken of, and even in the very hour when the fatal storm of the 14th of November was roaring through his port and his camp, he found time to sit at a desk and write down the Bashi-Bazouks.

Lord Raglan's dislike of undisciplined combatants.

This hatred of undrilled warriors was the more perverse, since England above all other nations was rich in men (men like Hodson, for instance, or Jacob)

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The events on the Danube removed the grounds of the war.

By their own prowess, with the aid only of a moral support from their great allies and the actual presence of a few young English officers, the Ottoman soldiery had repelled the invasion; and, the defence of Turkey being accomplished in a way very glorious to the Sultan, and the deliverance of the Principalities being secured, it suddenly became apparent that the objects for which the Western Powers undertook the war had been already attained. And, since (by the mere act of declaring war against the Czar) the Porte had freed itself from the obnoxious treaties which heretofore entangled its freedom, the condition of affairs was such that a prudent statesman of France or of England or of the Ottoman empire might have well enough rested content. And in that condition of affairs the Emperor of Russia must have acquiesced, for having now learnt that he could not maintain an invasion of European Turkey, and being driven from the seas, he was cut off from all means of waging an offensive war against the Sultan except upon the desolate frontiers of Armenia, and the pressure of the naval blockade enforced against

him by the Allies, together with the torture of seeing the Baltic and the Euxine placed under the dominion of their fleets, would have more than sufficed to make him sign a peace.

If France had been mistress of herself, or if England had been free from passion and craving for adventure, the war would have been virtually at an end on the day when the Russian army completed its retreat from the country of the Danube, and re-entered the Czar's dominions.

How came it to happen that, rejecting the peace which seemed to be thus prepared by the mere course of events, the Western Powers determined to undertake the invasion of a Russian province?

Helplessness of the French people.

France was still lying under the men who had got her down on the night of the 2nd of December; and it was in vain that her people at that time chanced to love peace better than war, for they had no longer a voice in state affairs. The French Emperor still wielded the whole strength of the nation, and labouring to turn away men's thoughts from the origin of his power, he was very willing to try to earn for the restored Empire that kind of station and title which the newest of dynasties may acquire by signal achievements in war. It was still of great moment to him to remain in close friendship with England, and to use the alliance as an engine of war; but he observed that there was a spirit on this side of the Channel which—springing from motives very unlike his own—was nevertheless tending in the same direction, and therefore, to draw England

Course taken by the French Emperor.

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in, he no longer needed to resort to those ingenious contrivances which he had employed against her in the foregoing year. All that he had to do was to encourage her desire to go on with the war, and, if necessary, to make his own plans yield to those of his ally. To do all this he was very able, for he had, as we have seen, at that time the power of keeping his mind alive to the difference between the greater and the less, and after he had once resolved to engage in alliance with England, he did not allow his main purpose to be baffled by differences on minor questions. Therefore now when it became known that the Russian army was in full retreat, he was so willing to defer to English counsels, that, virtually, though not in terms, he left it to the Queen's Government to determine what next step the Western Powers should take in the conduct of the war.

Desire of the English for an offensive war.

England had become so eager for conflict that the idea of desisting from the war merely because the war had ceased to be necessary, was not tolerable to the people. In the Baltic their hopes had been bitterly disappointed, and, as soon as it became clear that the defence of Turkey was a thing already accomplished, men longed to try the prowess of our land and sea forces in some enterprise against the Russian dominions. Already they had cast their eyes upon Sebastopol.

Sebastopol.

With a view to the conquest of empire on the Bosphorus, the ambition of Russia had taken advantage of the spacious port on the south-west coast of the Crimea, had made there a great arsenal, and

furnished it with an enormous supply of warlike stores. And, having been warned a quarter of a century ago,* that if he thus gathered his strength in Sebastopol, he might have to count some day with the English, the Czar Nicholas had caused the place to be defended towards the sea by forts of great power. In the harbour, barred by these forts, his Black Sea fleet lay at anchor. Plainly it would be a natural and fitting consummation of a war in defence of the Sultan to destroy those very resources which the labours of years had gathered together against him. Moreover the English, who hate the mechanic contrivances which prevent fair, open fighting, could hardly now bear that the vast sea-forts of Sebastopol should continue to shelter the Russian fleet from the guns of our men-of-war. Those who thought more warily than the multitude, foresaw that the enterprise might take time; but they also perceived that even this result would not be one of unmixed evil, for if Russia should commit herself to a lengthened conflict in the neighbourhood of Sebastopol, she would be put to a great trial, and would see her wealth and strength ruinously consumed by the mere stress of the distance between the military centre of the empire and the south-westernmost angle of the Crimea.

The ing of the English to attack it.

* Despatch from Count Pozzo di Borgo, dated the 28th of November, 1828-9. 'Although,' writes the Count, 'it may not be probable that we 'shall see an English fleet in the Black Sea, it will be prudent to make 'Sebastopol very secure against attacks from the sea. If ever England 'were to come to a rupture with us, this is the point to which she would 'direct her attacks, if only she believed them possible.'

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The more the English people thought of the enterprise, the more eager they became to attempt it, and it chanced that their feelings and opinions were shared and represented with great exactness by the Minister of War.

The Duke of Newcastle.

The Duke of Newcastle was a man of a sanguine, eager nature, very prone to action.* He had a good clear intellect with more of strength than keenness, unwearied industry, and an astonishing facility of writing. In the assumption of responsibility he was generous and bold even to rashness. Indeed he was so eager to see his views carried into effect, and so willing to take all the risk upon his own head, that there was danger of his withdrawing from other men their wholesome share of discretion. He threw his whole heart into the project of the invasion, and if the Prime Minister and Mr. Gladstone were men driven forward by the feeling of the country in spite of their opinions and their scruples, it was not so with the Duke of Newcastle. The character of his mind was such as to make him essentially one with the public. Far from being propelled by others against his will, he himself was one of the very foremost members of the warlike throng which was pressing upon the Cabinet and craving for adventure and glory. He easily received new impressions, and had nevertheless a quick good sense which generally

* I, of course, know that this view will not be assented to by those who found their opinion upon observation made in later years; but I am speaking of the summer of 1854, and I am very sure that the sentence to which this note has been appended is true.

enabled him to distinguish what was useful from what was worthless. He seemed to understand the great truth that without being military the English are a warlike people, and that, it is one of the great prerogatives of a nation gifted with this higher quality to be able to command other races of men and to impart to them the fire of martial virtue. He also knew that when England undertakes war against a great European power, she must engage the energies of the people at large, and must not presume to rely altogether upon the merely professional exertions of her small Peace Establishment. It was not from his default, but in spite of his endeavours, that for several months people lingered in the notion that our military system was an apparatus sufficing for war.

But the Duke had not an authority proportioned to the merits which a reader of his despatches and letters would be inclined to attribute to him. Perhaps the very zeal with which he seized and adopted the ideas of the outer public was one of the causes which tended to lessen his weight; for he who comes into council with common and popular views, however likely it may be that he will get them assented to, can scarcely hope to kindle men's minds with the fire that springs from a man's own thought, and from his own strong will. Moreover, it was by a kind of chance rather than by intentional selection that the Duke of Newcastle had become entrusted with the momentous business of the war; and seemingly it was only from this circum-

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stance, that the propriety of his continuing to hold the office was afterwards brought into question by one of his principal colleagues.* But, whatever may have been the cause, it seems clear that there was a languor, not to say hollowness, in the support which the Duke got from his colleagues. They did not perversely thwart him in the business of the war,† but on the other hand, they did not at all fasten themselves to his measures like men who would stand or fall with him. The Duke of Newcastle had not the gift of knowing how to surround himself with able assistants, and it was his misfortune to be without that precious aid, which a Minister

* So Lord John Russell himself declared. What I have above called 'a 'kind of chance' was brought about in this way:—According to the practice which was in force up to the summer of 1854, the Secretary of State for the Colonies was also the 'Secretary of War.' Before the war, however, the public hardly observed, and in fact hardly knew this, because in peace-time (thanks to the labours of the 'Horse Guards,' the office of the Secretary *at* War, the Ordnance, and several other offices) the duties of the Colonial Secretary, in his character as Secretary of War, were very slight; and there being no prospect of war when Lord Aberdeen's ministry was formed, the Duke of Newcastle was of course selected with a view to his qualifications for the administration of the Colonies, and not with any consideration, either one way or the other, as to his aptitude for the business of the War Department. When the rupture with Russia occurred, it became apparent that, unless a change were made, the minister who happened to be the Colonial Secretary, would stand charged with the business of the war.

† The rejection by the Cabinet of the Duke's proposal to ask for a vote adding 25,000 men to the army, does not in reality displace the above statement, because the addition to which the Cabinet agreed, though falling far short of the Duke's demand, was large enough to warrant the reception of all the recruits who could be obtained in the course of the year, and therefore the proposed vote for a number larger than what could be really obtained was a measure of general policy not tending in any direct way to increase the strength of the army.

commonly finds in the permanent staff of his office. At the outbreak of hostilities the little bevy of distinct public offices on which the military administration depended, was in a condition unfit to meet the exigencies of war. The first Army Surgeon who applied for certain of the medical stores required on foreign service was met with no less than five official theories as to the functionary upon whom the demand should be made; and when in the month of June the scattered departments connected with the land service were gathered at last into one, the office thus newly-formed was, after all, so ill constituted as to be wanting in some of the simplest appliances required for the transaction of business.

His zeal for the destruction of Sebastopol.

From the first, the Duke of Newcastle, resisting all proposals for operating against Russia on the side of Poland, had warmly shared the popular desire to invade the Crimea, and lay siege to Sebastopol. The Emperor of the French, steadily following his main policy, had long ago consented to look to this enterprise as next in importance to the defence of the Sultan's territory, and in the early part of April instructions to this effect had been given to the French and the English Generals.

It would seem, however, that at first the Duke of Newcastle was the only member of the Government who was fired with a great eagerness for the destruction of Sebastopol; and of himself he had not the ascendancy which sometimes enables a Minister to bend other men to his purpose. Unless by the help of a mighty force pressing from without, he could

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not have brought the Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen to partake his zeal for the enterprise.

But—impending over the counsels of all the ostensible rulers—there was an authority not deriving from the Queen or the Parliament, which was destined to have a great sway over events. It would be possible to elude the task, but it seems to me that a history would be wanting in fulness of truth if it failed to impart some conception of this other power.

Commanding power of the people when of one mind.

England was free; and although, whilst there was indifference or divided opinion in the country, the Government had very full latitude of action, yet, whenever it chanced that the feelings of the people were roused, and that they were known to be nearly of one mind, they spoke with a voice so commanding, that no Administration could safely try to withstand it.

But, the will of the nation being thus puissant, who was charged to declare it?

Means of forming and declaring the opinion of the nation.

In former times almost everybody who could was accustomed to contribute in an active way to the formation of opinion. Men evolved their own political ideas and drew forth the ideas of their friends by keen oral discussion, and, in later times, by long, elaborate letters. But gradually, and following somewhat slowly upon the invention of printing, there came to be introduced a new division of labour. It was found that if a small number of competent men would make it their calling to transact the business of thinking upon political questions, the work might be more handily performed by them than by the

casual efforts of people who were commonly busied in other sorts of toil; and as soon as this change took effect, the weighing of state questions, and the judging of public men lapsed away from the direct cognizance of the nation at large, and passed into the hands of those who knew how to utter in print. What had been an intellectual exercise practised in a random way by thousands, was turned into a branch of industry and pursued with great skill by a few. People soon found out that an essay in print, an essay strong and terse, but above all opportune, seemed to clear their minds more effectually than the sayings which they heard in conversation, or the letters they received from their friends; and at length the principle of divided labour became so complete in its application to the forming of political opinions, that by glancing at a newspaper, and giving swift assent to its assertions and arguments, many an Englishman was saved the labour of further examining his political conscience, and dispensed from the necessity of having to work his own way to a conclusion.

Effect of political writings in saving men from the trouble of thinking.

But to spare a man from a healthy toil is not always an unmixed good. To save a free-born citizen from the trouble of thinking upon questions of State is to take from him his share of dominion; and, although it be true that he who follows printed advice is under a guidance more skilful and dexterous than any he could have got from his own untutored mind, he is less of a man, and, upon the whole, is less fair, less righteous than one who in a ruder fashion

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contrives to think for himself. Just as a man's quality may in some respects be lowered by his habitual reliance on the policeman and the soldier who relieve him from the trouble and the anxiety of self-defence, so his intellectual strength and his means of knowing how to be just may easily become impaired if he suffers himself to walk too obediently under the leading of a political writer.

Want of proportion between the skill of the public writer and the judicial competence of his readers.

But the ability of men engaged in political writing grew even more rapidly than the power to which they were attaining, and after a while they so gained upon the ostensible statesmen that Parliament no longer stood alone as the exponent of opinion, and was obliged to share its privilege with a number of gifted men whose names it could hardly ever find out. Still, Parliament had valour and strength of its own, and, except in the matter of mere celebrity, it was a gainer rather than a loser from the wholesome rivalry forced upon it by its new and mysterious associate. It was the public which lagged. Men commonly take a long time to adapt themselves to the successive advances of civilization; and the people were backward in fitting themselves to deal with the increasing ability, and the increasing knowledge of the public writer. They indeed hardly knew the true scope of the change which had been taking place; for whilst the writer was a personage chosen for his skill, and acting with the force which belongs to discipline and organization, the readers were men straying loose; and for their means of acting in anything like concert with one another, they were

dependent in a great degree upon that very engine of publicity which was fast usurping their power. Moreover, these readers of public prints were slow to understand the new kind of duty which had come upon them. They were slow to see that it became them to look in a very critical spirit upon the writings of a stranger, unseen and unknown, who was not only proposing to guide them, but even to speak in their name; and they did not yet understand that they ought to read print—not perhaps in a captious spirit, but, to say the least, with something of the measured confidence which their forefathers had been accustomed to place in the words of princes and statesmen. The blessing conferred by print will perhaps be complete when the diligence, the wariness, and above all the courageous justice of those who read, shall be brought into fair proportion with the skill and the power of those who address them in print. Already a wholesome change has been wrought; and if in these days a man goes chanting and chanting in servile response to a newspaper he misses the voices of the tens of thousands of fellow-choristers who sang with him five years ago. But certainly at the time of the Russian war the common discourse of an Englishman was too often a mere "Amen" to something he had seen in print.

For a long time there had remained to the general public a vestige of their old custom of thinking for themselves; because in last resort they were privileged to determine between the rival counsels pressed upon them by contending journalists; but

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several years before the outbreak of the war there had come yet another change. The apparatus provided by the constitution for collecting the opinions of the people was far from being complete; and, notwithstanding the indications afforded by Parliament and by public writings, the direction which the nation's opinion had taken was a matter which could often be called in question. Some could say, that the people desired one thing, and some with equal boldness that the people desired the contrary. Thence it came that the task of finding out the will of the nation, and giving to it a full voice and expression, was undertaken by private citizens.

The task of ascertaining and declaring the opinion of the country falls into the hands of a company.

Long before the outbreak of the war there were living in some of the English counties certain widows and gentlemen, who were the depositaries of a power destined to exercise a great sway over the conduct of the war. Their ways were peaceful, and they were not perhaps more turned towards politics than other widows and country gentlemen, but by force of deeds and testaments, by force of births, deaths, and marriages, they had become the members of an ancient firm or Company which made it its business to collect and disseminate news. They had so much good sense of the worldly sort, that instead of struggling with one another for the control of their powerful engine, they remained quietly at their homes, and engaged some active and gifted men to manage the concern for them in London. The practice of the Company was to issue a paper daily, containing an account of what was going on in the world, together with

letters from men of all sorts and conditions who were seeking to bring their favourite subjects under the eye of the public, and also a few short essays upon the topics of the day. Likewise, upon paying the sum required by the Company, any person could cause whatever he chose to be inserted in the paper as an "advertisement," and the sheet containing these four descriptions of matter was sold to the public at a low rate.

Extraordinary enterprise was shown by the Company in the gathering of intelligence; and during the wars following the French Revolution they caused their despatches from the Continent to reach them so early that they were able to forestall the Government of the day. In other countries the spectacle of a Government outdone in this way by private enterprise would have seemed a scandal; but the Englishman liked the thought that he could buy and bring to his own home as much knowledge as was in the hands of a Minister of State, and he enjoyed the success of his fellow-countrymen in their rivalry with the Government. From this time the paper gathered strength. It became the foremost journal of the world; and this was no sooner the case than the mere fact of its being thus foremost gave a great acceleration to its rise, for simply because it was recognized as the most public of prints, it became the clue with which anxious man went seeking in the maze of the busy world for the lost, and the unknown, and all that was beyond his own reach. The prince who was claiming a king-

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dom, the servant who wanted a place, the mother who had lost her boy, they all went thither. Thither Folly ran hurrying, and was brought to a wholesome parley with Wisdom. Thither went righteous anger. Thither also went hatred and malice. And not in vain was all this concourse; for either the troubled and angry men got the discipline of finding that the world would not listen to their cries, or else they gained a vent for their passions, and brought all their theories to a test by calling a whole nation—nay, by calling the civilized world — to hearken and be their witness. Over all this throng of appellants men unknown sat in judgment, and —violently perhaps but never corruptly—a rough sort of justice was done. The style which Oriental hyperbole used to give to the Sultan might be claimed with more colour of truth by the journal. In a sense it was the 'asylum of the world.'

Still, up to this point the Company occupied ground in common with many other speculators, and if they had gone no further, it would not have been my province to notice the result of their labours. But many years ago it had occurred to the managers of this Company that there was one important article of news which had not been effectually supplied. It seemed likely that, without moving from his fireside, an Englishman would be glad to know what the bulk of his fellow-countrymen thought upon the uppermost questions of the day. The letters received from correspondents furnished some means of acquiring this knowledge, and it seemed to the

managers of the Company, that at some pains and at a moderate cost it would be possible to ascertain the opinions which were coming into vogue, and see the direction in which the current would flow. It is said that with this intent, they many years ago employed a shrewd, idle clergyman, who made it his duty to loiter about in places of common resort and find out what people thought upon the principal subjects of the time. He was not to listen very much to extreme foolishness, and still less was he to hearken to clever people. His duty was to wait and wait until he observed that some common and obvious thought was repeated in many places, and by numbers of men who had probably never seen one another. That one common thought was the prize he sought for, and he carried it home to his employers. He became so skilled in his peculiar calling that, as long as he served them, the Company was rarely misled; and although in later times they were frequently baffled in their pursuit of this kind of knowledge, they never neglected to do what they could to search the heart of the nation. CHAP. III.

When the managers had armed themselves with the knowledge thus gathered, they prepared to disseminate it, but they did not state baldly what they had ascertained to be the opinion of the country. Their method was as follows:—they employed able writers to argue in support of the opinion which, as they believed, the country was already adopting, and, supposing that they had been well informed, their arguments of course fell upon willing ears.

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Those who had already formed a judgment saw their own notions stated and pressed with an ability greater than they could themselves command; and those who had not yet come to an opinion were strongly moved to do so, when they saw the path taken by a Company which notoriously strove to follow the changes of the public mind. The report which the paper gave of the opinion formed by the public was so closely blended with arguments in support of that same opinion, that he who looked at the paper merely to know what other people thought, was seized as he read by the cogency of the reasoning; and on the other hand, he who imagined that he was being governed by the force of sheer logic, was merely obeying a guide who, by telling him that the world was already agreed, made him go and flock along with his fellows: for as the utterance of a prophecy is sometimes a main step towards its fulfilment, so a rumour asserting that multitudes have already adopted a given opinion will often generate that very concurrence of thought which was prematurely declared to exist. From the operation of this double process it resulted of course that the opinion of the English public was generally in accord with the writings of the Company; and the more the paper came to be regarded as a true exponent of the national mind, the more vast was the publicity which it obtained.

Plainly then this printing Company wielded a great power; and if I have written with sufficient clearness, I have made it apparent that this was a

power of more vast dimensions than that which men describe when they speak of "'the power of the Press." It is one thing, for instance, to denounce a public man by printed arguments and invectives which are believed to utter nothing more than the opinion of the writers, and it is another and a graver thing to denounce him in writings which, though having the form of arguments, are (rightly or wrongly), regarded as manifestoes—as manifestoes declaring the judgment of the English people. In the one case the man is only accused. In the other he seems to stand already condemned.

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But though the Company held all this power, their tenure of it was of such a kind that they could not exercise it perversely or whimsically without doing a great harm to their singular trade; for the whole scheme of their existence went to make them—not autocratic, but — representative in their character, and they were obliged by the law of their being to keep themselves as closely as they could in accord with the nation at large.

This then was the great English journal; and, whether men spoke of the mere printed sheet which lay upon their table, or of the mysterious organization which produced it, they habitually called either one or the other 'The Times.' Moreover they often prefixed to the word such adjectives and participles as showed that they regarded the subject of their comments in the light of a sentient, active being, having a life beyond the span of mortal men, gifted with reason, armed with a cruel strength, endued

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with some of the darkest of the human passions, but clearly liable hereafter to the direst penalty of sin.*

On the sabbath, England had rest, but in the early morning of all other days the irrevocable words were poured forth and scattered abroad to the corners of the earth, measuring out honour to some, and upon others bringing scorn and disgrace. Where and with whom the real power lay, and what was its true source, and how it was to be propitiated,—these were questions wrapped in more or less obscurity; for some had a theory that one man ruled, and some another, and some were sure that the Great Newspaper governed all England, and others that England governed the Newspaper. Philosophic politicians traced events to what they called 'Public opinion.' With almost the same meaning, women and practical men simply spoke of 'The Times.' But, whether the power of the great journal was a power all its own, or whether it was only the vast shadow of the public mind, it was almost equally to be dreaded and revered by worldly men; for plainly in that summer of 1854 it was one with England. Its words might be wrong, but it was certain that to tens of thousands of men they would seem to be

* The form of speech which thus impersonates a manufactory and its wares has now so obtained in our language that—discarding the forcible epithets—one may venture to adopt it in writing, and to give *The Times* the same place in grammatical construction as though it were the proper name of an angel, or a hero, a devil, or a saint, or a sinner already condemned. Custom makes it good English to say 'The *Times* will protect him,' 'The *Times* is savage,' 'The *Times* is crushing him,' 'The blessed *Times* has put the thing right,' 'That d——d *Times* has done all the mischief.'

right. They might be the collected voice of all these isles, or the mere utterance of some one unknown man sitting pale by a midnight lamp,—but there they were. They were the handwriting on the wall.

Of the temper and spirit in which this strange power had been wielded, up to the time of the outbreak of the war, it is not very hard to speak. In general, 'The Times' had been more willing to lead the nation in its tendencies to improvement than to follow it in its errors: what it mainly sought was—not to be much better or wiser than the English people, but to be the very same as they were, to go along with them in all their adventures, whether prudent or rash, to be one with them in their hopes and their despair, in their joy and in their sorrow, in their gratitude and in their anger. So, although in general it was willing enough to repress the growth of any new popular error which seemed to be weakly rooted, still the whole scheme and purpose of the Company forbade it all thought of trying to make a stand against any great and general delusion. Upon the whole, the potentate dealt with England in a bluff, kingly, Tudor-like way, but also with a Tudor-like policy, for, though he treated all adversaries as 'brute folk' until they became formidable, he had always been careful to mark the growth of a public sentiment or opinion, and, as soon as he was able to make out that a cause was waxing strong, he went up and offered to lead it; and so reigned.

I have said that partly by guiding, but more by

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ascertaining and following the current of men's opinion, 'The Times' always sought to be one with the great body of the people; and since it happened that there was at this period a rare concurrence of feeling, and that the journal, after a good deal of experiment, had now at length thoroughly seized and embodied the soul of the nation, its utterance came with increasing force; and in proportion as the growing concord of the people enabled it to speak with more and more authority, power lapsed and continued to lapse from out of the hands of the Government, until at length public opinion—no longer content to direct the general policy of the State—was preparing to undertake the almost scientific, the almost technical duty of planning a campaign.

The opinion of the nation as declared by the Company demands the destruction of Sebastopol.

On the morning of the 15th of June, the great newspaper declared and said that 'The grand political 'and military objects of the war could not be attained 'as long as Sebastopol and the Russian fleet were in 'existence, but that if that central position of the 'Russian power in the south of the empire were anni- 'hilated, the whole fabric which it had cost the Czars 'of Russia centuries to raise, must fall to the ground;' and moreover it declared, 'that the taking of Sebas- 'topol and the occupation of the Crimea were objects 'which would repay all the costs of the war and 'would permanently settle in our favour the principal 'questions in dispute, and that it was equally clear 'that those objects were to be accomplished by no 'other means, because a peace which should leave 'Russia in possession of the same means of aggression

'would only enable her to re-commence the war at 'her pleasure.' CHAP. III.

It was natural that some of the members of the Government should have qualms. They knew that Austria (supported for defensive purposes by Prussia) was at that time on the point of joining her arms to those of the Western Powers; and they could not but know that if the French and English armies were to be withdrawn from the mainland of Europe in order to invade the Crimea, the wholesome union of the Four Powers would of necessity be weakened. The Prime Minister was he who loved peace so fondly that, though peace was no more, he had hardly yet been torn from her cold embrace; and though he lived under a belief that the military strength of the Czar was beyond measure vast; yet of the twelve months which Russia gave him for preparation he had only used three.* Having the heaviness of these thoughts on his mind, he saw it declared aloud, that the country of which he happened to be the Prime Minister could not well do otherwise than invade the Russian dominions. To a prudent man the measure might seem to be rash. To a good man, impressed with horror of war, it might even seem to be very wicked, for it was a violent revival of a war which, unless this new torch were thrown,

* Computing from the time when the Czar's determination to seize the Principalities was known to our Government. If the computations are to be made from the time when the hostile character of Prince Mentshikoff's mission became known several months more would have to be added. See Lord Aberdeen's evidence before the Sebastopol Committee.

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would expire of its own accord. But the print was clear; like stern Ananǵkie it pressed upon feeble man's volition, for it was not to be construed away; and if an anxious Minister went back and looked again to see whether by chance he could find some loop in the wording, and whether possibly he might be able to fulfil his duty without besieging Sebastopol, he was met by the careful negation which taught him in four plain words that he could fulfil it 'by no other means.'

Before the seventh day from the manifesto of the 15th, the country had made loud answer to the appeal, and on the 22nd of June the great newspaper, informed with the deep will of the people, and taking little account of the fears of the prudent and the scruples of the good, laid it down that 'Sebastopol was the 'keystone of the arch which spanned the Euxine, from 'the mouths of the Danube to the confines of Min-'grelia,' and that 'a successful enterprise against the 'place was the essential condition of permanent peace.' And although this appeal was founded in part upon a false belief—a belief that the siege of Silistria had been raised, it seemed as though all mankind were making haste to adjust the world to the newspaper, for within twenty hours from the publication of the 22nd of June, truth obeyed the voice of false rumours, and followed in the wake of 'The Times.' *

Of course there were those who saw great obstacles in the way of the proposed invasion, and they said

* The siege, as we saw above, was raised early in the morning of the 23rd.

that since Russia was a first-rate military Power it must be rash to invade her territory, and to besiege her proudest fortress, without first gaining some safe knowledge of the enemy's strength. But the narrative then coming home in fragments from the valley of the Danube was heating the minds of the people in England.

When first England learnt that the Turks were to be besieged in their fortress of Silistria by a great Russian army under the renowned Paskievitch, few believed that the issue was doubtful, or even that the contest could be long sustained. But as soon as it became known that day after day the military strength of the Czar was exerted against the place with a violent energy, and that every attack was fiercely resisted and always as yet with success, our people began to give their heart to the struggle; and their eagerness rose into zeal when they heard that two young English travellers had thrown themselves into the fortress, were heading the Turkish soldiery, and were maintaining the conflict by day and by night.

The English were not of such a mettle as to be able to hear of tidings like these without growing more and more eager for warlike adventure. And in their hearts they liked the fact that the few young English travellers who helped to save Silistria and to turn away the war from the Danube, were men who did these things of their own free will and pleasure without the sanction of the public authorities; for our people are accustomed to think more

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highly of their fellow-countrymen individually than they do of our State machinery, and they can easily bear to see their Government in default, and can even smile at its awkwardness, if all the short-comings of office are effectually compensated by the vigour of private enterprise. Nasmyth has passed away from us. I knew him in the Crimea. He was a man of quiet and gentle manners, and so free from vanity, so free from all idea of self-gratulation, that he always seemed as though he were unconscious of having stood as he did in the path of the Czar, and had really omitted to think of the share which he had had in changing the course of events; but it chanced that he had gone to the seat of war in the service of 'The Times,' and naturally the lustre of his achievement was in some degree shed upon the keen, watchful Company which had had the foresight to send him at the right moment into the midst of events on which the fate of Russia was hanging; for whilst the State armies of France and England were as yet only gathering their strength, 'The Times' was able to say that its own officer had confronted the enemy upon the very ground he most needed to win, and helped to drive him back from the Danube in great discomfiture.

The Government yields.

Thus day after day in that month of June the authority of the Newspaper kept gaining and gaining upon the Queen's Government, and if Lord Aberdeen had any remaining unwillingness to renew the war by undertaking an invasion of Russia, his power of controlling the course of the Government

seems to have come to its end in the interval between the 23rd and the 28th of June. He continued to be the Prime Minister. His personal honour stood so high that no man attributed his continuance in office to other than worthy and unselfish motives; but, for those who lay stress upon the principle that office and power ought not to be put asunder, it was irksome to have to mark the difference between what the Prime Minister was believed to desire, and what he was now consenting to do.

No good stand made in Parliament against the invasion.

Parliament was sitting, and it might be imagined that there was something to say against the plan for invading a province of Russia at a moment when all the main causes of the dispute were vanishing; but the same causes which I have spoken of as paralyzing all resistance to the beginning of the war now hindered every attempt to withstand its renewal, for the orators who were believed to be tainted with the doctrines of the Peace Party, were still lying under the ban which they had brought upon themselves by their former excesses of language. So now again in June, as before at the opening of the session, the counsels of these eloquent men were lost to the world. They became as powerless as the Prime Minister, and the cause which they represented was so utterly brought to ruin, that the popular demand for an invasion which carried with it the virtual renewal of an otherwise expiring war, had the sound of that voice with which a nation speaks when the people are of one mind.

So now, in presenting to his colleagues this his

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favourite scheme of an enterprise against Sebastopol, the Duke of Newcastle was upheld—nay was urged and driven forward—by forces so overwhelming, that scruples and objections and fears were carried away as by a flood; and when it was proposed in the Cabinet to go and fetch, as it were, a new war by undertaking this bold adventure, there was not one Minister present who refused to give his consent.

reparation of the instructions addressed to Lord Raglan.

Forthwith the Duke of Newcastle announced the decision of the Government to the General commanding the English army in Bulgaria. He did this by a private letter written on the 28th of June,* and nearly at the same time he prepared the draught of a Despatch* which was to convey to the English head-quarters, in full detail and in official form, the deliberate instructions of the Queen's Government. This paper was to be the instrument for meting out to the General in command the allowance of discretion with which he was to be entrusted. A Despatch recommending the expedition, but leaving to the General in command the duty of determining whether it could be prudently undertaken, would not have been followed by any invasion of the Crimea; and that which brought about the event was—not the decision of the Cabinet already mentioned, but—the peculiar stringency of the language which was to convey it to the English head-quarters.† It there-

* The contents of this will be given in another chapter.

† The truth of this statement will be shown, as I think, in a future chapter, and indeed it is well enough proved by the tenour of Lord Raglan's reply to the despatch.

fore seems right to speak of what passed when the terms of this cogent Despatch were adopted by Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet. CHAP. III.

The Duke of Newcastle so framed the draught as to make it the means of narrowing very closely the discretion left to Lord Raglan; and it was to be expected that the Duke might wish his Despatch to stand in this shape, because he was eager for the undertaking, and very willing to bear upon his own shoulders a large share of the responsibility which it entailed; but it is difficult to believe that all the other members of the Government could have intended to place the English General under that degree of compulsion which is implied by the tenor of the instructions. It is certain, however, that the paper was well fitted to elicit at once the objections of those who might be inclined to disapprove it on account of its cogency, for it confined the discretion to be left to the General with a precision scarcely short of harshness.

The Duke of Newcastle took the Despatch to Richmond, for there was to be a meeting of the members of the Cabinet at Pembroke Lodge, and he intended to make this the occasion for submitting the proposed instructions to the judgment of his colleagues. It was evening, a summer evening, and all the members of the Cabinet were present when the Duke took out the draught of his proposed despatch and began to read it. Then, there occurred an incident, very trifling in itself, but yet so momentous in its consequences, that if it had happened in old

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times, it would have been attributed to the direct intervention of the immortal Gods. In these days, perhaps the physiologist will speak of the condition into which the human brain is naturally brought when it rests after anxious labours, and the analytical chemist may regret that he had not an opportunity of testing the food of which the Ministers had partaken, with a view to detect the presence of some narcotic poison; but no well-informed person will look upon the accident as characteristic of the men whom it befel, for the very faults, no less than the high qualities of the statesmen composing Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet, were of such a kind as to secure them against the imputation of being careless and torpid. However, it is very certain that before the reading of the paper had long continued, all the members of the Cabinet except a small minority were overcome with sleep.* For a moment, the noise of a tumbling chair disturbed the repose of the Government; but presently the Duke of Newcastle resumed the reading of his draught, and then again the fated sleep descended upon the eyelids of Ministers. Later in the evening, and in another room, the Duke of Newcastle made another and a last effort to win attention to the contents of the draught, but again a blissful rest (not, this time, actual sleep) interposed between Ministers and cares of State, and all, even those who from the first had remained awake, were in a quiet, assenting frame of mind. Upon the whole, the

* See Note in the Appendix.

Despatch, though it bristled with sentences tending to provoke objection, received from the Cabinet the kind of approval which is often awarded to an unobjectionable sermon. Not a letter of it was altered; and it will be seen by and by, that that cogency in the wording of the Despatch, which could hardly have failed to provoke objection from an awakened Cabinet, was the very cause which governed events.

Instructions sent to the French commander.

The instructions addressed from Paris to the French commander did not urge him to propose the invasion of the Crimea, nor even to lend the weight of his opinion to the proposed enterprise, but they forbade him from advancing towards the Danube. If it should be clear that the English were willing to undertake the expedition to the Crimea, then the French Commander was not to be at liberty to hold back.*

* I deduce this conclusion in an inferential way, from the general tenor of the materials at my command, and not from any one document distinctly warranting the statement.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAP. IV.

The Allies at Varna. Their state of preparation in the middle of July.

AT the time when the instructions from the Home Governments reached the camp of the Allies, the generals were preparing for an active campaign in Bulgaria, and Marshal St. Arnaud had around him, in the neighbourhood of Varna, or moving thither, four strong divisions of infantry, with cavalry and field-artillery. He had no siege train.

Lord Raglan had around him four divisions of infantry, the greater part of a division of cavalry, and of his field-artillery seven batteries. He had also on board ship off Varna the half of a battering train, and the other half of it was nearly ready to be despatched from England.

The French Marshal was receiving and expecting constant additions to his force, and Lord Raglan had been apprised that a reserve division of infantry under Sir George Cathcart would speedily reach the Bosphorus.

So long as the French and English forces remained camped in the neighbourhood of Varna, their command of the sea-communication ensured to them the arrival of the supplies which were sent to them; but

the means of land-transport were not yet within their reach. It was estimated that, in order to move effectively in the interior, the English army alone would require packhorses or mules to the number of 14,000. To obtain these was difficult, but not impossible; and, at the time to which we point, about 5000 had been collected. By a continuance of these exertions in Bulgaria, and by due activity in forwarding munitions and stores from England, it is probable that the English force, after a further interval of about six weeks or two months, might have been prepared to move as an army carrying on regular operations; but of course this would only be true upon the supposition that the army should always march through countries yielding sufficient forage.

The preparations of the French were not, perhaps, quite so far advanced as our own; but it is probable that the two armies would have been found ready at about the same time for an active campaign in Bulgaria.

Their command of the sea.

The ships of the Allied Powers were at hand, and their fleets had dominion over all the Euxine home to the Straits of Kertch. They had the command of the Bosphorus, the Dardanelles, the Mediterranean, of the whole ocean; and of all the lesser seas, bays, gulfs, and straits, from the Gut of Gibraltar to within sight of St. Petersburg. The Czar's Black Sea fleet existed, but existed in close durance, shut up under the guns of Sebastopol.

In the matter of gaining information respecting the

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enemy's resources, our Foreign Office had not been idle; and a great deal of material, bearing upon this vital business, had been carefully got together and collated. It resulted from these data, that, spread over vast space, Russia might nominally have under arms forces approaching to a million of men; but that the force in the Crim Chersonese, including the 17,000 men who formed the crews of the ships, did not at the highest estimate amount to more than 45,000; and that, although there were a few battalions which Russia might draw towards Sebastopol from her army of the Caucasus, she had no more speedy method of largely reinforcing the Crimea than by availing herself of the troops then in retreat from the country of the Danube, and marching them round to Perekop by the northern shores of the Euxine.

Information obtained by the Foreign Office as to the defences of the Crimea.

Neither the ambassadors of France and England at Constantinople, nor any of their generals or admirals, had succeeded in obtaining for themselves any trustworthy information upon this vitally momentous business. For their failure in this respect more blame attaches upon the ambassadors than upon the military and naval commanders, because the ambassadors had been in the Levant during a period of many months, in which (since the war was impending, but not declared) they might have bought knowledge from Russian subjects without involving their informers in the perils of treason. The duty of gathering knowledge by clandestine means is one so repulsive to the feelings of an English gentleman, that there is always a danger of his neglecting it

No information obtained in the Levant.

or performing it ill. Perhaps no two men could be less fit for the business of employing spies than Lord Stratford and Lord Raglan. More diligence might have been expected from the French; but they also had failed. Marshal St. Arnaud had heard a rumour that the force of the enemy in the Crimea was 70,000; and Vice-Admiral Dundas had even received a statement that it amounted to 120,000. But these accounts were fables. In point of fact, the information obtained by our Foreign Office approached to near the truth, and the Duke of Newcastle had the firmness—it was a daring thing to do, but it turned out that he was right—he had the firmness to press Lord Raglan to rely upon it. It was natural, however, that a general who was within a few hours' sail of the country which he was to invade, and was yet unable to obtain from it any, even slight, glimmer of knowledge, should distrust information which had travelled round to him (through the aid of the Home Government) along the circumference of a vast circle; and Lord Raglan certainly considered that, in regard to the strength of the enemy in the Crimea and the land defences of Sebastopol, he was simply without knowledge.

Lord Raglan conceived that he was absolutely without any trustworthy information.

CHAPTER V.

CHAP. V.

The instructions for the invasion of the Crimea reach the Allied camp.

On the evening of the 13th of July Marshal St. Arnaud received a telegraphic despatch from his Government. The despatch had been forwarded by way of Belgrade, and was in cipher. The message came in an imperfect state. Part of it was intelligible, but the rest was beyond all the power of the decipherer. Yet the interpreted symbols showed plainly that the whole message, if only it could be read, would prove to be one of deep import. It forbade Marshal St. Arnaud from making any advance towards the Danube, and told him to look to the event of his army being conveyed from Varna by the fleet. This was all that could be deciphered. There were the mystic letters and figures which laid down, as was surmised, the destiny of the Allied armies, and no one could read. At night Colonel Trochu came to Lord Raglan's quarters, and communicated all that could be gathered from the telegraphic despatch. The English General had just received the Duke of Newcastle's letter of the 28th, but had not yet broken the seal of it. Now, however, Lord Raglan opened the letter, and in a few

moments he was able to give M. Trochu the means of inferring the matter contained in the illegible part of his despatch. Apparently it was the desire of both the Home Governments that the Allied commanders should prepare to make a descent upon the Crimea, and lay siege to Sebastopol.

On the 16th of July the despatch of the 29th of June was received at the English head-quarters; and a despatch forwarded from Paris at nearly the same time reached the hands of Marshal St. Arnaud.

The men who had to determine upon the effect to be given to the instructions.

Since the proposed expedition involved the employment of both land and sea forces, the duty of determining upon the effect to be given to the instructions from home devolved upon those who had the command of the Anglo-French armies and fleets. These were three: Marshal St. Arnaud (having Admiral Hamelin under his orders), Lord Raglan, and Vice-Admiral Dundas.

Marshal St. Arnaud.

Marshal St. Arnaud had not weight proportioned to the magnitude of his command. Reputed at first to be daring even to the verge of rashness, we have seen him so cautioned and schooled into strategic prudence as to have determined to place hundreds of miles of territory, and even the great range of the Balkan, between the French and the Russians; and now, within the last week, he had been almost reproved by his Government for want of enterprise. Colonel Trochu, admitted into consultation upon the most momentous affairs, seemed to wield great authority. At Constantinople and at Varna, no less than in Paris, the Marshal had been made the victim of

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unsparing tongues. Indeed at this time two of his divisional generals openly indulged in merciless invectives against their chief; and soldiers all know that a general officer thus setting himself against the commander-in-chief is never without a great following. Perhaps, as had been at first supposed, it may have been true that boldness and craving for adventure were the true lines of the Marshal's character; but if that were so, his native ideas had been overlaid by much counsel, and bent into unwonted shapes. After a while, as will be seen, his mind, fatigued by advice, and now and then broken down by bodily illness, began to lapse into a state which rendered him almost passive in very critical moments. Naturally, he had been cowed by the result of his endeavours to have his own way against Lord Stratford and Lord Raglan. He was without ascendancy in the camp of the Allies.

Colonel Trochu was a student of the principles applicable to formal inland warfare, and it was to be expected that, the more the obstacles to the proposed undertaking were canvassed, the more likely it would be that he would throw the weight of his scientific advice into the negative scale.

Upon the whole it resulted, from the composition of the various forces acting upon the mind of M. St. Arnaud, that whatever opinion he might lean to, he was not strong enough to be able to act upon events. If the English should decide against the project, he would be well content, and perhaps much relieved. If, on the other hand, the English

should press for its adoption, then the French Marshal would do his best to carry it to a good conclusion.

Admiral Hamelin.

The French fleet was commanded by Admiral Hamelin. It was understood that he disapproved the expedition, but he was under the orders of the chief who commanded the land forces.

Omar Pasha.

It was not at that time a part of the project to move any very large proportion of the Turkish army to the coast of the Crimea, and therefore the opinion of Omar Pasha would hardly become a governing ingredient in the counsels of the Allies. It was known, however, that he deprecated the proposed invasion.

Admiral Dundas.

The English fleet was commanded by Vice-admiral Dundas. Most of the Vice-admiral's latter years had been passed in political and official life, and it was by force of politics that he had now become troubled with the business of war; for his seat at the Admiralty Board, and his subsequent appointment in peace time to the command of the Mediterranean fleet, were things which stood in the relation of cause and effect. He had not sought to return to scenes of naval strife, but the war overtook him in his marine retirement, converting his expected repose into anxious toil. He was an able, a stedfast, a genial man, and his square Scottish head, and his rough, shrewd, good-humoured eyebrows, had grown grey in the faithful service of a political party. By nature he was so stout-hearted that he could afford to give free, manly counsel without the least dread lest men should say he was too

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cautious. His habits as a working subordinate member of Government, and perhaps also his natural temperament, inclined him to take a homely view of questions, a view recommended by what men term 'common sense.' I am sure, though I never heard him say so, that he believed the war to be extremely foolish, and that the less there was of it, the better it would be for the Whigs and for all the rest of mankind. He spoke and went straightforward. He thoroughly disapproved the project of invasion, and he said so in plain words. His opinion sprang—not from dread of peril to the forces which he himself commanded, but from anxiety — anxiety in every way honourable to him — for the safety of the English army. That that anxiety was altogether vain, or even that it was weakly founded, few men, speaking with the light of the past, will be ready to say. Still less will it be thought that the Vice-admiral was wrong in giving bold expression to his views.

Admiral Dundas's command was of course independent of the general in command of the English army; but the feasibility of the sea transit was not at all in question,* and it was plain therefore that the decision would properly rest with those who were responsible for the direction of the land-forces. So, although he held stoutly to his own opinion, the Vice-admiral did not fail to give assurance that, if the deci-

* Dundas, I think, said fairly and bluntly that he could undertake to land the army on the coast of the Crimea, but not to supply it, nor to bring it back.

sion of the Generals should be in favour of undertaking the expedition, they might rely upon the aid of the English fleet. CHAP. V.

There remained Lord Raglan: and now it is time to give the words of the instructions which had been addressed to him, as we have already seen, by the Secretary of State. Lord Raglan.

The private letter which was the forerunner of the detailed despatch ran thus:—

The instructions addressed to him by the Home Government.

'Since I last wrote to you, events unknown to you 'at the date of these letters have been brought to us 'by the telegraph, and the raising the siege of Silis- 'tria, and the retreat of the Russian army across the 'Danube (preparatory probably to a retreat across 'the Pruth), give an entirely new aspect to the war, 'and render it necessary at once to consider what 'shall be our next move.

'The Cabinet is unanimously of opinion that, unless 'you and Marshal St. Arnaud feel that you are not 'sufficiently prepared, you should lay siege to Sebas- 'topol, as we are more than ever convinced that, with- 'out the reduction of this fortress and the capture of 'the Russian fleet, it will be impossible to conclude 'an honourable and safe peace. The Emperor of the 'French has expressed his entire concurrence in this 'opinion, and, *I believe*, has written privately to the 'Marshal to that effect. I shall submit to the 'Cabinet a despatch to you on this subject, and 'if it is approved you may expect it by the next 'mail. In the mean time I hope you will be turning 'over in your own mind, and considering with your

CHAP. V. 'French colleague, what it will be safe and advisable 'to do.'*

So far as it related to the expedition which the Allies undertook, the promised despatch was in these words:—

'*Secret.*

'War Department, 29th June, 1854.

'My Lord,

'In my despatch of the 10th April, marked '"Secret," I directed your Lordship to make careful 'inquiry into the amount and condition of the Russian 'force in the Crimea, and the strength of the fortress 'of Sebastopol.

'At the same time I pointed out to your Lordship 'that, whilst it was your first duty to prevent, by 'every means in your power, the advance of the 'Russian army on Constantinople, supposing any 'such intention to exist, it might become essential for 'the attainment of the objects of the war to undertake 'operations of an offensive character, and that the 'heaviest blow which could be struck at the southern 'extremities of the Russian empire would be the 'taking or destruction of Sebastopol. The events 'which have recently occurred, and which have be-'come known to Her Majesty's Government by means 'of the telegraph from Belgrade,—the gallant and 'successful resistance of the Turkish army, the raising 'of the siege of Silistria, the retreat of the Russian

* Private letter from the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, dated 28th June, 1854.

'army across the Danube, and the anticipated evacua-
'tion of the Principalities—have given a new character
'to the war, and will render it necessary for you
'without delay to concert measures with Marshal St.
'Arnaud, and with Admirals Dundas and Hamelin,
'suited to the circumstances in which these events
'have placed the Allied forces.

'The safety of Constantinople from any invasion
'of the Russian army is now, for a time at least,
'secured, and the advance of the English and French
'armies to Varna and Pravadi, has succeeded in its
'object without their being called upon to meet the
'enemy in action.

'Any further advance of the Allied armies should
'on no account be contemplated. To occupy the
'Dobrutscha would be productive of no beneficial
'results, and would be fatally prejudicial to the health
'of the troops; and even if the Russian army should
'not recross the Pruth, but continue in the occupa-
'tion of the Principalities, it is the decided opinion
'of Her Majesty's Government that, for the present
'at least, no measures should be taken by you to
'dislodge them.

'The circumstances anticipated in my despatch
'before referred to have, therefore, now arrived; and
'I have, on the part of Her Majesty's Government,
'to instruct your Lordship to concert measures for
'the siege of Sebastopol, unless with the information
'in your possession, but at present unknown in this
'country, you should be decidedly of opinion that it
'could not be undertaken with a reasonable prospect

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'of success. The confidence with which Her Majesty 'placed under your command the gallant army now 'in Turkey is unabated; and if, upon mature reflec- 'tion, you should consider that the united strength 'of the two armies is insufficient for this undertaking, 'you are not to be precluded from the exercise of the 'discretion originally vested in you, though Her 'Majesty's Government will learn with regret that 'an attack from which such important consequences 'are anticipated must be any longer delayed.

'The difficulties of the siege of Sebastopol appear 'to Her Majesty's Government to be more likely to 'increase than diminish by delay; and as there is no 'prospect of a safe and honourable peace until the 'fortress is reduced, and the fleet taken or destroyed, 'it is, on all accounts, most important that nothing 'but insuperable impediments—such as the want of 'ample preparations by either army, or the possession 'by Russia of a force in the Crimea greatly out- 'numbering that which can be brought against it— 'should be allowed to prevent the early decision to 'undertake these operations.

'This decision should be taken solely with reference 'to the means at your disposal, as compared with the 'difficulties to be overcome.'

'It is probable that a large part of the Russian 'army now retreating from the Turkish territory may 'be poured into the Crimea to reinforce Sebastopol. 'If orders to this effect have not already been given, 'it is further probable that such a measure would be 'adopted as soon as it is known that the Allied

'armies are in motion to commence active hostilities. 'As all communications by sea are now in the hands 'of the Allied Powers, it becomes of importance to 'endeavour to cut off all communication by land 'between the Crimea and the other parts of the 'Russian dominions.

'It is unnecessary to express any opinion, at this 'distance from the scene, as to the mode in which 'these operations should be conducted, or the place 'at which a disembarkation should be effected; and 'as the latter will, of course, be decided with the 'advice and assistance of the French and English 'Admirals, it is equally unnecessary to impress upon 'your Lordship the importance of selecting favourable 'weather for the purpose, and avoiding all risks of 'being obliged by storms to withdraw from the shore 'the vessels of war and transports, when only a 'partial landing of the troops has been effected.

'I have only further to express to you, on the part 'of Her Majesty's Government, their entire reliance

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'in your judgment, zeal, and discretion; and their 'conviction that, whilst you will not expose the army 'under your command to unnecessary risk, you will 'not forget that to the gallantry and conduct of your 'troops their countrymen are now looking to secure, 'by the blessing of Providence, the great object of a 'just war, the vindication of national rights, and the 'future security of the peace of Europe.

'I have the honour to be,

'My Lord,

'Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,

'NEWCASTLE.'

'General the Lord Raglan, G.C.B.,
'&c. &c. &c.'

Extreme stringency of the instructions.

In common circumstances, and especially where the whole of the troops to be engaged are under one commander, it cannot be right for any sovereign or any minister to address such instructions as these to a general on a distant shore; for the general who is to be intrusted with the sole command of a great expedition must be, of all mankind, the best able to judge of its military prudence, and to give him orders thus cogent is to dispense with his counsel.

Considerations tending to justify this stringency.

But in this war, the united forces of France and England were under two commanders; and, besides, since the expedition was dependent upon naval co-operation, the admirals of the two fleets would necessarily be taken into council. It is true that the French admiral was under the orders of Marshal St.

Arnaud, but there was no corresponding arrangement in regard to the English services, and our admiral's command was independent of the general commanding the land-forces.

Thus, it seemed to the Home Government that the question, if left to be decided on the shores of the Black Sea, would have to be weighed, not by one commander, but by a council of at least four, and to be actually decided by a council of not less than three; and it could scarcely be expected that such a body deliberating freely, would come to that vigorous decision which might easily perhaps be attained by any one of them singly. On the other hand, the two Governments were perfectly agreed. Upon the whole, therefore, there was some ground for resolving to transmit to the camps at Varna the benefit of that concord which reigned between Paris and London, and to subject the generals and admirals to the overruling judgment of the authorities at home.

Again, the chief reason which makes it unwise to fetter the discretion of generals—namely, the superior knowledge which they are supposed to have of the enemy's strength and of the field of operations—was in this instance wanting; for the generals in the camp at Varna had absolutely no trustworthy information except what came to them from Paris or London; and in their power of testing the statements which reached them in this way they were below the Home Governments, for they did not so well know the sources from which the accounts were drawn.

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Justice requires that these considerations should have their weight, for they tend in some measure to explain the extreme stringency of the instructions. The Minister who framed them had determined, with a boldness very rare in modern times, to take upon himself an immense weight of responsibility, and, having brought himself to this strong resolve, he rightly and generously did all he could to simplify the task of the general whom he ventured to direct, and to make the path of duty seem clear.

The power of deciding for or against the expedition becomes practically vested in Lord Raglan alone.

But Lord Raglan had a station in the Allied camp which made it very difficult for the Home Government to take his burthen upon themselves by any mere bold form of words. He commanded the land-forces, but he was clothed with a power of older date than the Queen's commission. He had been privy to the business of the wars which England waged in the great days; and if he had seen how Wellington ordered affairs in the field, he had witnessed too his endurance, and helped him in the patient unapplauded toil by which he prepared the end. Men serving under Lord Raglan were none of them blind to the distance which history herself interposed betwixt their general and themselves. There were none near the chief who would not feel bitter pain if they imagined that words or acts of theirs had thrown upon his face a shadow of displeasure. There were no men near him who would not fly with alacrity to execute his slightest wish. The ascendancy of the English General over his own people could not but reach into the French camp. Upon the whole, Lord Raglan had so great an

authority in the camp of the Allies, and amongst public men in England, that, if he had taken upon himself to resist the pressure of the Secretary of State, he would not have been left without support. On the other hand, if he should determine to follow the will of the Home Government, he would carry the French Marshal with him. So in effect the power of deciding for or against the expedition had passed from Paris and from London, and was all concentred in the English General.

Lord Raglan's deliberations.

Of the general officers in the English camp there was one whom Lord Raglan had always been anxious to have near at hand. This was Sir George Brown. He was a Scotsman, 66 years old, and had served with a great repute for his daring forwardness in some of the most bloody scenes of the Peninsular war. He was of an eager, fiery nature, and devoted to the calling of a soldier. After the peace of 1815 he began to hold office in the general staff of the army at the Horse Guards, and in time he became adjutant-general. He now commanded the Light Division. His zeal, and his lengthened toils in the Adjutant-general's office, had drawn him too far in a narrow path, and he overplied the idea of discipline, but he abounded in energy, and he was in many respects an accomplished soldier. He wrote on military subjects with clearness, with grace, and seemingly with a good deal of ease.

He requests the opinion of Sir George Brown.

After receiving the Duke of Newcastle's despatch, Lord Raglan sent for Sir George Brown and expressed to him a wish to have his opinion about it.

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He handed the paper to Sir George across the table, and then went on with his writing, leaving Sir George to consider its contents at his leisure. When he had read it, Lord Raglan asked him to give him his opinion. Before giving it, Sir George naturally inquired what information Lord Raglan had obtained in regard to the strength of Sebastopol, and what force he expected might be opposed to him in the Crimea.

Lord Raglan's answer was that he had no information whatever; that neither he nor Marshal St. Arnaud knew what amount of force the enemy had there; that they believed and hoped there might not be more than 70,000 men in the peninsula, but that in fact it had not been blockaded, and that no means had been taken to procure information, and that therefore they did not in reality know they might not be opposed by 100,000 men or even more.

Then Sir George Brown said, 'You and I are 'accustomed, when in any great difficulty, or when 'any important question is proposed to us, to ask 'ourselves how the Great Duke would have acted 'and decided under similar circumstances. Now, I 'tell your Lordship that, without more certain infor- 'mation than you appear to have obtained in regard 'to this matter, that great man would not have ac- 'cepted the responsibility of undertaking such an 'enterprise as that which is now proposed to you! 'But notwithstanding that consideration, I am of 'opinion that you had better accede to the proposal, 'and come into the views of the Government, for this

'reason, that it is clear to me, from the tenor of the 'Duke of Newcastle's letter, that they have made up 'their minds to it at home, and that, if you decline to 'accept the responsibility, they will send some one 'else out to command the army, who will be less 'scrupulous and more ready to come into their 'plans.'

Lord Raglan's determination.

This suggestion did not at all govern Lord Raglan's decision. At the time he discloseed no opinion of his own; but he soon made up his mind. His decision was governed by views which must be explained. He believed that the enterprise was one of a very hazardous kind, and was not warranted by any safe information concerning the state of the enemy's forces. Having that conviction, why did he not feel bound to assert it, notwithstanding the urgency of the Home Government? Lord Raglan was, as might be supposed, deeply imbued with reverence for the authority of the Duke of Wellington, and, rightly interpreted, that authority is surely the safest guide that an English general can follow. But there is a certain danger in the precepts of the Great Duke, unless when they are construed down to their right degree of significance by applying to them the splendid context of his deeds, for he was accustomed to use sayings founded on quaint and very literal readings of our English law, and the loyalty of his nature rose so high above the reach of all cavil, that the maxims which he uttered seemed to give a noble simplicity to the tenor of his public life, though in reality he rarely or never permitted them to derange

The grounds on which it rested.

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his policy, still less to confuse him in the management of war. Naturally, therefore, men were in danger of being misled by a too narrow reading of his precepts. Now, one of the Duke's theories was, that an officer commanding an army on foreign service owed obedience to the Secretary of State—obedience close akin to that which a military subordinate owes to his military chief. If this precept were to be narrowly construed, a Secretary of State who conveyed the wishes of the Government to a general commanding forces abroad would be in danger of finding that he had shut out from his counsels the one man in all the world who could best advise him, and the relations of the Austrian generals with the old Aulic Council at Vienna would have to be adopted as a guide, instead of being valued as a warning. Against this doctrine, understood in its narrow sense, the Duke of Wellington's whole military career in Europe was an almost unceasing rebellion; and it would be hard to find an instance in which he suffered his designs to be bent awry by the military opinions of the Home Government. During the Peninsular war he did not surely pass his time in obeying the Home Government, but rather in setting it right; and in educating it, if so one may speak, for the business of carrying on war.*

* The fierce, wilful, and contemptuous way in which the Duke of Wellington dealt with a Secretary of State who ventured to think he might take him at his word, and make him obey his wish, must be familiar to every reader of the Despatches; but I may refer to the specimen which will be found in Sir Arthur Wellesley's letter to Lord Castlereagh of the 5th of September, 1808. I mean the passage beginning: 'In respect to

It is known, however, that Lord Raglan accepted the Great Duke's precept without much qualification, and, when he applied it to the despatch which had come to him from the Secretary of State, he saw, as he believed, where the path of duty lay. For now, in all its potency, the strange sleep which had come upon the Cabinet on the 28th of June began to tell upon events. But for this, or some like physical cause, it could hardly have chanced that fifteen men, all gifted with keen intellect, and all alike charged with a grave, nay, an almost solemn duty, would have knowingly assented to the draught of a long and momentous despatch, without seeking to wedge into it some of those qualifying words which usually correct the imprudence and derange the grammatical structure of writings framed in Council. A few qualifying words of this sort would have enabled Lord Raglan to act upon his own opinion. But the tranquil mood of the Cabinet on the evening of the 28th of June had prevented the mutilation of the despatch; and it retained so perfectly all that bold singleness of purpose which characterized the mind of the framer, that it virtually directed the English General to undertake the invasion, unless it should happen that he had obtained fresh knowledge of the

' your wish that I should go into the Asturias, to examine the country and ' form a judgment of its strength, I have to mention to you that I am not ' a draughtsman.' It happened that just six days before, namely, on the 30th of August, Sir Arthur had addressed to the same Secretary of State his customary professions of obedience: ' I shall do whatever the Government ' may wish ;' but he never thought of suffering himself to be hindered from penning an angry refusal on the 5th of September merely because he had used a submissive phrase on the 30th of August.

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enemy's strength—fresh knowledge of such a kind as would enable him to controvert the statements sent out to him by the Home Government, and say distinctly that the Russian forces in the Crimea were too numerous to be encountered with common prudence by the Allied armies. Now, Lord Raglan had not succeeded in obtaining any information at all on the subject, and, therefore, the one circumstance which might have relaxed the stringency of the despatch was entirely wanting. In the state of things which actually existed, the Duke of Newcastle's communication was little short of an absolute order from the Secretary of State. The English General determined to obey it.

It was thus that Lord Raglan persuaded himself into the belief that he would be justified in foregoing his own opinion, and acceding to the will of the Home Government; but perhaps, though he knew it not, he was under the power of a motive more heating than this bare process of the reason. There were sentences in the despatch which seemed as though they were meant for the guidance of one not sufficiently prone to action. The writer seemed to have busied himself in closing the loops by which a general might seek to escape from the obligation of having to make the venture. In reality, as we have seen, the despatch had been framed with a view of giving unanimity to a council of generals and admirals, but it reached its destination at a time when (for the purpose of this decision) the whole power of the camp at Varna was centred in the

English General. Whether meant for the guidance of a council or not, the despatch was addressed to one man; and that man was Lord Raglan. Some may deem it wrong, and may call it a plan of life too closely deriving from times of chivalry; but it is still the habit of the English gentleman to think that his personal honour is no part of the property of the state; and that even for what may seem the public good he ought not to do a violence to his self-respect. He has his code formed in the time of his boyish conflicts or of his early manhood; and if there be fire and strength in his nature, he will not depart from it merely because he has become responsible and mature in years. Lord Raglan was of the bodily nature of those whose blood flushes hot to the face under the sting of an indignant thought; and if mortal eyes could have looked upon him when he revolved the contents of the despatch, they would have seen him turn crimson in poising the question whether he ought to resist the pressure of the Queen's Government,—and to resist because of mere danger. What the Duke of Newcastle meant was to do all he reasonably could to enforce the invasion; and, so intending, he did honestly in making his order as peremptory as possible; but if in any times to come it shall be intended that an English General commanding on a foreign service is to exercise his judgment freely and without passion, the Secretary of State must not challenge him as Lord Raglan was challenged by the despatch of the 29th of June.

Lord Raglan's decision governed the counsels of

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the Allied camp; for, although the staff of the French army* (including, as I believe, M. St. Arnaud himself) were adverse to the undertaking, the Marshal's instructions were so framed, that, if the English should be ready to go forward, he was virtually ordered to concur in the enterprise;† and we have seen that he had not such a weight in the French camp as would have enabled him to oppose any valid resistance to the wishes of his own Government and the determination of the English General.

His decision governed the counsels of the Allies.

In announcing his decision to the Home Government, Lord Raglan thus wrote to the Duke of Newcastle:—

He announces it to the Home Government.

'It becomes my duty to acquaint you that it was 'more in deference to the views of the British 'Government as conveyed to me in your Grace's 'despatch, and to the known acquiescence of the 'Emperor Louis Napoleon in those views, than to 'any information in the possession of the naval and 'military authorities, either as to the extent of the 'enemy's forces, or their state of preparation, that 'the decision to make a descent upon the Crimea was 'adopted.

'The fact must not be concealed that neither the 'English nor the French Admirals have been able to 'obtain any intelligence on which they can rely with 'respect to the army which the Russians may destine 'for operations in the field, or to the number of men

* This will be shown by the narrative in cap. 9, *post*.

† Lord Raglan had the advantage of knowing (by means of a communication from Lord Cowley) that the 'Emperor quite concurred in the views 'of the British Cabinet.'

'allotted for the defence of Sebastopol; and Marshal 'St. Arnaud and myself are equally deficient in 'information upon these all-important questions, and 'there would seem to be no chance of our acquiring 'it.' * CHAP. V.

The Duke of Newcastle's reply to this despatch was in full consistency with that fearless and unshrinking assumption of responsibility which had marked his instructions of the 29th of June.

The Duke of Newcastle's reply.

'I wish,' he writes,† 'that circumstances which are 'engrossing my attention this afternoon permitted 'my expressing to you the feelings of intense anxiety 'and interest which your reply of the 19th of July 'to mine of the 29th of June have created in my 'mind. I cannot help seeing, through the calm and 'noble tone of your announcement of the decision to 'attack Sebastopol, that it has been taken in order to 'meet the views and desires of the Government, and 'not in entire accordance with your own opinions. 'God grant that success may reward you, and justify 'us!

The Queen's expression of feeling.

'I wrote to the Queen the moment I received your 'despatch, and in answer she said, "The very impor- '"tant news which he conveyed to her in it, of the '"decision of the generals and admirals to attack '"Sevastopol, have filled the Queen with mixed '"feelings of satisfaction and anxiety. May the '"Almighty protect her army and her fleet, and '"bless this great undertaking with success!"

* 19th July.

† Private letter to Lord Raglan, 3rd August, 1854.

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'Let me add my humble aspirations and prayers 'to those of our good Queen. The cause is a just 'one, if any war is just, and I will not believe that 'in any case British arms can fail. May honour, 'victory, and the thanks of a grateful world attend 'your efforts! God bless you and those who fight 'under you!'

CHAPTER VI.

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Conference at the French head-quarters.

On the 18th of July a conference took place at Marshal St. Arnaud's head-quarters. It was attended by the Marshal, by Lord Raglan, and by Admiral Hamelin, by Admiral Bruat (who was the second in command of the French fleet), by Vice-Admiral Dundas, and by Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, who was the second in command of the English fleet. It lasted four hours.

Perhaps most of the members of the conference imagined that they were met for the purpose of determining upon the expediency of undertaking the invasion; but Lord Raglan had already made up his mind, not merely to support the wish of his Government in the Allied camp, but to cause its actual adoption; and he was so constituted that he could bring the resources of his mind to bear upon the object in view with as much abundance and strength as if he had himself approved or even devised it. Clearly a discussion upon the expediency of undertaking the enterprise would have been fatal to it, for no member of the conference, except Lyons and (possibly) Bruat, could have conscientiously argued

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that the scheme was wise or even moderately prudent. How was it to be contrived that a council of war disapproving the enterprise should be prevented from strangling it?

Lord Raglan's way of eluding objections.

As almost always happened in conferences where Lord Raglan had the ascendant, the grand question was quietly passed over, as though it were either decided or conceded for the purpose of the discussion, and it was made to seem that the duty which remained to the council was that of determining the time and the means. The French had studied the means of disembarking in the face of a powerful enemy. Sir Ralph Abercrombie's descent upon the coast of Egypt in the face of the French army was an enterprise too brilliant and too daring to allow of its being held a safe example, for he had simply landed his infantry upon the beach in boats, without attempting in the first instance to bring artillery into action. It seems that hardly any stress of circumstances will induce a French general to bring his infantry into action upon open ground without providing for it the support of artillery. Naturally, therefore, the French authorities at Varna were impressed with the necessity of being able to land their field-guns in such a way as to admit of their being brought into action simultaneously with the landing of their battalions; and, having anticipated some time before, that a disembarkation in the face of an enemy might be one of the operations of the war, they had already begun to make the boats required for the purpose. These were flat-bottomed lighters,

somewhat in the form of punts, but of great size, and so constructed that they would receive the gun-carriages with the guns upon them, and allow of the guns being run out straight from the boat to the beach. It was understood that the building of these flat lighters would take about ten days, and it was determined that in the mean time a survey of the coast near Sebastopol should be made from on board ship, in order to determine the spot best suited for a descent.

Reconnaissance of the coast.

With a view to cover the reconnaissance and draw off the enemy's attention, the Allied admirals cruised with powerful fleets in front of the harbour of Sebastopol, and meanwhile the officers chosen for the service went northward along the coast in the 'Fury,' seeking out the best place for a landing. The officers who performed this duty were, on the part of the French, General Canrobert and Colonel Trochu, with one engineer and one artillery officer; and, on the part of the English, Sir George Brown, Lieut.-Colonel Lake, R.H.A., Captain Lovell, R.E., and Captain Wetherall, of the Quartermaster General's department. The 'Fury' was steered by no common hand.

In the moment when Lord Raglan determined to treat the instructions of the Government as imperative, and to put them in course for execution, he came to another determination (a determination which is not so mere a corollary from the first as men unversed in business may think): he resolved to carry the enterprise through. He knew that, though

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work of an accustomed sort can be ably done by official persons acting under a bare sense of duty, yet that the engine for conquering obstacles of a kind not known before-hand, when they are many, and big, and unforeseen, must be nothing less than the strong, passionate will of a man. If every one were to perform his mere duty, there would be no invasion of the Crimea, for a rank growth of hindrances springing up in the way of the undertaking would be sure to gather fast round it, and bring it in time to a stop.

Sir Edmund Lyons.

Amongst the English Generals there was no one who had given his mind to the enigma which went by the name of the 'Eastern Question;' but Sir Edmund Lyons had been for many years engaged in the animating diplomacy of the Levant. In Greece, the activity of the Czar's agents, or perhaps of his mere admirers, had been so constant, and had generated so strong a spirit of antagonism in the minds of the few contentious Britons who chanced to observe it, that the institutions called "The Russian Party,' and 'The English Party,' had long ago flourished at Athens; and, since Sir Edmund Lyons had been accredited there for several years as British Minister, he did not miss being drawn into the game of combating against what was supposed to be the ever-impending danger of Russian encroachment. Long ago, therefore, he had been whetted for this strife; and now that the 'Eastern Question' was to be brought to the issue of a war in which he had part, he was inflamed with a passionate zeal. Resuming

at once the uniform and the bearing of his old profession, he cast aside—if ever he had it—all semblance of diplomatic reserve and composure, and threw himself with all his seaman's heart into the business of the war.

Lord Raglan drew Sir Edmund Lyons into his intimate counsels. I know not whether this concord of theirs was ever put into words, but I imagine that at the least I can infer from their actions and from the tenor of their intercourse, a silent understanding between them—an understanding that no lukewarmness of others, no shortcomings, no evasions, no tardy prudence, no overgrown respect for difficulty or peril, should hinder the landing of the Queen's troops on the coast of the Crimea. From the time that Lord Raglan thus joined Lyons to the undertaking he gave it a great momentum. To those within the grasp of the Rear-admiral's energy it seemed that thenceforth, and until the troops should be landed on the enemy's shore, there could be no rest for man, no rest for engines. The 'Agamemnon' was never still. In the painful, consuming passion with which Lyons toiled, and even, as some imagined, in the anxious, craving expression of his features, there was something which reminded men of a greater name.

This was the officer who steered the 'Fury.' He carried her in so close to the shore that the coast could be reconnoitred with great completeness. The officers came to the conclusion (a conclusion afterwards overruled, as we shall see, by Lord Raglan)

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that the valley of the Katscha was the best spot for a landing.

Rumoured change in the plans of the Czar.

We saw that the Czar's withdrawal from the Principalities would deprive the German Powers of their main ground of quarrel with Russia, and that our plan of engaging in a great marine expedition against Crim Tartary would cause Austria and Prussia to despair of all effective support from the West, thus driving or tending to drive them into better relations with Nicholas. Before the 28th of July there were signs that this change was beginning to set Russia free from the straits in which she had been placed by the unanimity of the Four Great Powers; and tidings which reached the camp at Varna made it appear (though not with truth) that the Russian commander had not only suspended his retreat, but was commencing a fresh movement in advance. To deliberate upon this supposed change in the character of the war, a conference was held at the French head-quarters, and was attended by

Second conference.

Marshal St. Arnaud, Lord Raglan, General Canrobert, Sir Edmund Lyons, General Martimprey, Sir George Brown, and Colonel Trochu. The French generals grasped this as an occasion for bringing about the relinquishment of an enterprise which they always had held to be rash. They submitted that the general instructions addressed to both of the Allied commanders made it their duty to provide in the first instance for the safety of the Ottoman territory, and that, until that object was secured, they were not warranted in attempting an invasion

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of a Russian province far distant from the threatened frontier of European Turkey; that the order to invade the coast of the Crimea had been framed by the Home Governments and acceded to by the Allied Generals upon the assumption that the armed intervention of Austria, then believed to be imminent, or, at the very least, a continuance of her menacing attitude on the flank of the Russian army, would preclude any attempt by the Czar to resume his war on the Danube; that that assumption now unfortunately turned out to be unfounded; and that the abandonment by Austria of the common cause made it the bounden duty of the Allied commanders to return to their defensive measures; because it was now plain that, if they quitted Bulgaria, Omar Pasha, without aid from any quarter, would have upon his hands the whole weight of the Russian army. Now then, supposing the premises to be conceded, the French counsellors had made out good grounds for abandoning a resolution which, only a week ago, had been adopted by the Allied commanders.

The French urge the abandonment of the expedition against the Crimea.

Lord Raglan, however, was resolved that the enterprise should go on. From the moment he knew that the siege of Silistria had been raised, he never doubted that, for that year at least, the invasion of European Turkey was at an end. But he knew that clever men who have taken the pains to build up a neat logical structure do not easily allow it to be treated as unsound, merely because it rests upon a sliding foundation. Without, therefore, combating the French arguments, he quietly suggested that

Lord Raglan's way of bending the French to the plans of the English Government

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the time which must needs elapse before the embarkation might throw new light on the probability of a renewed attack upon Turkey; and he proposed that, in the mean time, the preparations for the descent on the Crimea should be carried on with all speed. This opinion was adopted by every member of the conference. The preparations were carried on with increasing energy; and the theory that it was the duty of the Allied commanders to abandon the enterprise was never put down by argument, but left to die away uncontested.

Preparations.

Lord Raglan had been struck with the value of the French plan for landing artillery on flat lighters, and Sir Edmund Lyons and Sir George Brown were despatched to Constantinople with instructions to do all they could towards supplying the British army with means which would answer the same purpose. They discovered that a platform resting upon two boats might be made to serve nearly as well as one of the French lighters. How they toiled, the world will never know, for History cannot pause to see them ransacking Constantinople and the villages of the Bosphorus in their search after carpenters and planks; but before the appointed time the whole work was done. This was not all. Sir Edmund Lyons and Sir George Brown propelled the arrangements for buying and chartering steamers, trampling down with firmness, perhaps one might say with violence, all obstacles which stood in the way. Of those obstacles one of the most formidable was what was called in those days the 'official fear of incurring responsi-

bility.' Lyons and Sir George Brown taught men that in emergencies of this sort they should be pursued with the fear of not doing enough, rather than with the dread of doing too much. 'I cannot venture,' said a cautious official—'I cannot venture to give the price.' 'Then I can,' said Sir George Brown; 'I buy it in 'my own name!' It is thus that difficulties are conquered. When the restless 'Agamemnon' came back into the Bay of Varna with Lyons and Sir George Brown on board, Lord Raglan was at the head of a truly British armament. He had the means, by steam-power, and at one trip, to descend upon the enemy's coast, with all his divisions of infantry, with his brigade of light cavalry, and with the whole of his field artillery; and he would be enabled, if he landed in face of an enemy, to bring his guns into action, whilst his infantry formed upon the beach.

Ineffectual attempts of the Allies to deceive the enemy.

When the Allied Commanders determined to execute the orders addressed to them, they saw the importance of endeavouring to veil their project from the enemy. With this view they tried to induce a belief that Odessa was to be the object of attack. But the measures which they took for this purpose were very slight and weak. To deceive the enemy by the mere spreading of a report, the first step for a General to take would be that of uttering the false word to some of his own people. That would be a difficult service for Lord Raglan to perform; and I do not believe that he ever could or ever did perform it.

Another contrivance for diverting the enemy's

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attention from the Crimea was that of endeavouring to alarm him for his Bessarabian frontier. Partly to attain this end, and partly, as was surmised, with the more ambitious object of striking a blow at some of the Czar's retiring columns, Marshal St. Arnaud moved no less than three divisions into the Dobrudja. But, in truth, all secresy was forbidden to the Allies. The same power which dictated the expedition precluded its concealment. It was in a council of the whole people that England had resolved upon the enterprise; and what advantage there is in knowledge of an enemy's plans, that she freely gave to Russia. It might seem that for the Emperor of the French, who had shown that he was capable of the darkest secrecy in his own designs, it must have been trying to have to act with a Power which propounded her schemes in print. But, happily, he understood England, and knew something of the conditions under which she moves into action.

Fire at Varna.

On the 10th of August a fire broke out in the British magazines at Varna, and a large quantity of military stores was consumed.

Cholera.

But another and more dreadful enemy had now entered the camp of the Allies. From the period of its arrival in the Levant the French army had been suffering much from sickness. In the British army, on the contrary, though slight complaints were not unfrequent, the bodily condition of the men had been, upon the whole, very good; and so it continued up to the 19th of July. On that day, out of the whole Light Division, there were only 110 in

hospital. But it seems that one of the omens which portend the visitation of a great epidemic is a more than common flush of health. With the French, the cholera first showed itself on board their troop-ships whilst passing from Marseilles to the Dardanelles. It then appeared among the French quartered at Gallipoli, and followed their battalions into Bulgaria. There, its ravages increased, and before the beginning of the last week in July it reached the British army. By the 19th of August our regiments in Bulgaria had lost 532 men. But it was amongst the three French divisions marched into the Dobrudja, and especially in General Canrobert's Division, that the disease raged with the most deadly virulence. In the day's march, and sometimes within the space of only a few hours, hundreds of men dropped down in the sudden agonies of cholera; and out of one battalion alone it was said that, besides those already dead, no less than 500 sufferers were carried alive in the waggons. On the 8th of August it was computed, by an officer of their staff, that out of the three French divisions which marched into the Dobrudja, no less than 10,000 lay dead or struck down by sickness.

If the cholera had been confined to the land-forces, the Generals would not, perhaps, have allowed it to delay their embarkation; but it now reached the fleets. In a few days the crews were in such a state that all idea of attempting to embark the troops was, for the moment, quite out of the question; and on the 11th and 12th of August the Admirals put out from

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their anchorage, in the hope of driving away the disease with the pure breezes of the sea. But they had scarcely done this when, on board some of the ships, the mysterious pest began to rage with a violence rare in Europe. The 'Britannia' alone lost 105 men. The number of those stricken, and of those attending upon them, was so great, that it was impracticable to carry on the common duties of the ship in the usual way; and if the disease had continued to rage with undiminished violence for three days more, there would have been the spectacle of a majestic three-decker floating helpless upon the waves for want of hands to work her. This time of trial proved the quality of those who remained unstricken. There was a waywardness in the course of the disease, on board British ships, for which it is difficult to account. It spared the officers. On board British ships of war the seaman is accustomed to look to those who command him with a strong affectionate reliance; and now the poor sufferers, in their childlike simplicity, were calling upon their officers for help and comfort. An officer thus appealed to would go and lie down by the side of the sufferer, and soothe him as though he were an infant. And this trust and this devotion were not always in vain. Even against malignant cholera the officer seemed to be not altogether powerless; for partly by holding the tortured sufferer in his kind hands, partly by cheering words, and partly by wild remedies, invented in despair of all regular medical treatment, he was often enabled to fight the disease, or to make the men think that he did.

Almost suddenly the pestilence ceased on board the British ships of war. The dead were overboard, and the survivors returned to their accustomed duties with an alacrity quickened by the delight of looking forward to active operations against the enemy. Instinctively, or else with wise design, both officers and men dropped all mention of the tragedy through which they had passed.*

In a few days from the time when the cholera had been raging with its utmost fury the crews of the fleet were ready to undertake the great business of embarking the troops and landing them on the coast of the Crimea.

Weakly condition of the English soldiery.

In the camps of the Allied armies, at this time, the cholera had abated, but had not ceased. There were fevers, too, and other complaints. Grievous sickness fell upon that part of our camp which had been pitched in the midst of the beauteous scenery of the lake of Devna, but the whole English army at this time began to show signs of failing health. It appeared that, even of the men out of hospital and actually present under arms, hardly any were in the enjoyment of sound health; hardly any were capable of their usual amount of exertion.

This weakly condition of the men was destined to act, with other causes, in bringing upon the army cruel sufferings; and it may be asked whether, with the soldiers in this condition of body, it was right to

* I was for several days on board the 'Britannia' without once, I think, hearing the least allusion to the pestilence which just four weeks before had slain 105 of the ship's crew.

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undertake an invasion. The answer would be this:—the medical authorities thought, and with apparently good reason, that, for troops sickening under the fierce summer heats of Bulgaria, the sea voyage, the descent upon another and more healthy shore, and, above all, the animating presence of the enemy, would work a good effect upon the health of the men; and, although these hopes proved vain, they seemed at the time to rest upon fair grounds. And, after all, it is hard to say what other disposition of the troops would have united the advantages of being better and possible. To remain in Bulgaria, or to attempt to operate in the neighbourhood of the Danube, was to linger in the midst of those very atmospheric poisons which had brought the health of the army to its then state; and, on the other hand, our people at home would hardly have borne to see the army sent back to Malta, and forced to recede from the conflict, for the bare reason that some of the men were in hospital, and that the rest—without being ill—were said to be in a weakly condition.

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Our admiral had at his command the means for conveying the British force to the enemy's shore either in steam-vessels or in sailing-ships towed by steam-power; and until the eve of the embarkation the French believed that their resources would enable them to achieve a like result. So at a conference of the four admirals, held on the 20th of August, it was arranged that the whole of the French and English armament should move from the coast at the same time under steam-power; and the 2nd of September was looked forward to as the day when the armament might perhaps go to sea, but the exact time would of course depend upon weather and other circumstances beyond the reach of exact calculation.

Arrangements first made for the starting of the expedition.

On the 24th of August the huge operation of embarking the armies had already begun. The French embarked 24,000 infantry, and 70 pieces of field artillery; but since they were straitened in their means of sea-transport, the number of horses they allotted to each gun was reduced from six to four. The French embarked no cavalry.* A large portion of the

The embarkations.

* They took with them from 80 to 100 horsemen to perform escort duty; but of course I do not regard this as an exception to the statement that 'no cavalry was embarked.'

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French troops were put on board ships of war,* and other portions were distributed among a great number of sailing vessels. Some of these were very small craft.

Attached to the French army, and placed under the orders of Marshal St. Arnaud, there was a force of between 5000 and 6000 Turkish infantry. These men were embarked mainly or entirely on board Turkish vessels of war.

Sir Edmund Lyons was charged with the duty of embarking the English forces; and having first got on board our 60 pieces of field artillery, completely equipped, with the full complement of horses belonging to every gun, he proceeded with the embarkation of the 22,000 infantry and the full thousand of cavalry, which Lord Raglan intended to move from Bulgaria to the coast of the Crimea. To put on board ship a body of foot soldiers is comparatively a simple process, but the shipping of horses involves so heavy a cost, so great an exertion of human energy, that he who undertakes such a task upon anything like a large scale must needs be a man in earnest. On the other hand, it was clear that for an invasion of the Crimea a body of cavalry was strictly needed. Therefore, a sagacious interpreter of warlike signs,

* Our naval officers are strongly opposed to the practice of putting troops on board ships of war. They are not the men to set their personal convenience against the exigencies of the public service, but they cannot endure that the efficiency of a man-of-war should be for one moment suspended. It is well ascertained too that the presence of a great number of soldiers—men who for the time of the voyage are almost necessarily idlers—is injurious to the discipline of a ship.

who saw that the English General was embarking a thousand cavalry horses, and that the French were embarking none, would be led to conjecture that the English were resolved to make the descent, and that the French were not. It will be seen by-and-by that such a conjecture would have been sound.

The time necessary for embarking a given number of foot soldiers is small in proportion to that required for getting on board an equal number of troopers, with their chargers. Nor is this all. The embarkation of infantry is not necessarily stopped by a moderate swell. The embarkation of cavalry is rendered very slow and difficult by even a slight movement of the sea, and is stopped altogether by a little increase of surf. The business of embarking the British cavalry was checked during some days by a wind from the north-east, and its consequent swell, but afterwards the weather changed, and the whole force was got on board without the loss of a man.*

Lord Raglan could not repress the feeling with which he looked upon the exertions of our naval officers and seamen. 'The embarkation,' he wrote on the 29th of August—'the embarkation is pro-'ceeding rapidly and successfully, thanks to the able 'arrangements of Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, 'and the unceasing exertions of the officers and men 'under his orders. It is impossible for me to express

* The French were not so fortunate, for a painful accident occurred in the course of their embarkation. One of their steam-vessels ran down a boat laden with Zouaves. The men, encumbered by their packs, could do little to save themselves; and more than twenty were drowned.

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'in adequate terms my sense of the value of the 'assistance the army under my command derives 'from the Royal Navy. The same feeling prevails 'from the highest to the lowest,—from Vice-Admiral 'Dundas to the youngest sailor, an ardent desire to 'coöperate by every possible means, is manifest 'throughout, and I am proud of being associated with 'men who are animated by such a spirit, and who 'are so entirely devoted to the service of their 'country.'

Failure of the French calculations in regard to their command of steam-power.

Of course the French, unencumbered with cavalry, were on board before the English embarkation was complete; but the steam-power at the command of the French fell short, and the necessity of a variation from the plan determined upon by the four admirals was now announced. On the 4th of September Admiral Hamelin, and an officer on the staff of the French army, informed Vice-Admiral Dundas that their resources would not, as they had expected, enable them to have their sailing transports towed by steamers.

No explanation was given of the failure which had thus suddenly crippled the French armament. The result was distressing at the time, for it was seen that the whole flotilla would be clogged by the slowness of the sailing vessels in which the French troops were embarked, and the fate of the enterprise was rendered more than ever dependent upon the accidents of weather. Marshal St. Arnaud grew restless.

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Excitement and impatience of St. Arnaud.

We have seen that the 2nd of September had been looked forward to as the time for the departure of the united armaments, and on that day, with military punctuality, Marshal St. Arnaud went to Baljik; but the wind and the waves are still undisciplined forces, and the French embarkations were not destined to be completed until the evening of the 4th. The Marshal, therefore, was kept waiting at Baljik, and meanwhile sickness began to make havoc with his troops, for they were densely crowded on board the transports.

The marshal was much tortured by the anxiety which he had had to bear during these three painful days, and (possibly to calm his mind) Vice-Admiral Dundas seems to have suggested to him that, his sailing-vessels not being provided with steam-power to tow them, he might as well cause them at once to weigh anchor. By these causes, joined to his irritation at what he thought the backwardness of the English embarkations, the Marshal was induced to determine — not merely that he would act upon Dundas's suggestion — but that he himself would wait no longer, and would put to sea on the 5th of September with his sailing fleet; so when,

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on the same morning, Lord Raglan reached Baljik, he was surprised by the intelligence that the Marshal had already sailed out on board the 'Ville de Paris.'

He is induced to set sail without the English, taking with him all his sailing fleet and the troops on board them.

On the evening of the 6th the British armament was ready, and the arrangements for the voyage of the whole flotilla complete. The French fleet already at sea consisted of fifteen sail-of-the-line, with ten or twelve war-steamers, and the Turkish fleet of eight sail-of-the-line, with three war-steamers; but the French and the Turkish vessels were doing service as transports, and were so encumbered with troops that they could not have been brought into action with common prudence. It was upon the English fleet, therefore, that the duty of protecting the whole armada really devolved; and, supposing that the enemy were aware of the helpless state of the French and Turkish vessels laden with troops, and of the enormous convoy of transports which had to be protected, he might be expected to judge that it was incumbent upon him to come out of the harbour and assail the vast flotilla of transports; for under the guns of Sebastopol the Russians had fifteen sailing-ships-of-the-line,* with some frigates and brigs, and also twelve war-steamers, though of these, the 'Vladimir' was the only powerful vessel.† To encounter this force and to defend from its enterprises the rest of the armada, the English had ten sail-of-

The naval forces of the Allies.

Duty devolving on the English fleet.

* Some say sixteen.

† Unless the 'Bessarabia' be counted as a powerful steamer.

the-line (including two screw-steamers), two fifty-gun frigates, and thirteen lesser steamers of war heavily armed. CHAP. VIII.

Arrangements in regard to the English convoy.

The anxious duty of disposing and guiding the convoy was intrusted by Admiral Dundas to Sir Edmund Lyons, and, under Sir Edmund's directions, Captain Mends of the 'Agamemnon' framed the programme of the voyage. On the evening of the 6th the captains of transports were called by signal on board the 'Emperor,' and there, Mends read to them the instructions which he asked them to obey. The captains thus addressed were not in the Queen's service, but they were English seamen, and their answer was characteristic. They were not flighty men. They respectfully asked for an assurance that in the event of death their widows would be held entitled to pensions; and, as to the question whether of their own free will they would encounter the chances of a naval action, they answered it with three cheers. It is not by the mere muster-roll of the army or the navy that England counts her forces.

The forces and supplies now on board.

With his force of horse, foot, and artillery, Lord Raglan had on board the transports (now all collected at Baljik) * the full number of ammunition-carts required for the first reserve of ammunition, the beasts required for drawing them, and sixty other carts, also provided with draught-power. But, in order to move so large a force at one trip, it was

* At the time here spoken of there were two artillery transports lagging, but they were up in sufficient time.

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found necessary to dispense with the bât horses of the army, and the force was not provided with means of land-transport either for the tents of the men or for the baggage of the officers. There were also on board large supplies of field ammunition, of food for the troops, and of barley and hay for the horses. In some of the horse-transports there was an insufficiency of the forage required for the voyage. With that grave exception, all the arrangements seem to have been good. Due means had been taken for ensuring, so far as was possible, the simultaneous transit, not only of our ships of war, but of the whole force which Lord Raglan had embarked, together with its vast appendage of warlike stores and provisions; for every sailing-vessel, whether she were a ship of war or a transport, was towed by a sufficiently powerful steamer. None of our ships of war carried troops on board: they were all, therefore, ready for action.

Troops and supplies left at Varna.

In addition to the forces and the means of land-transport which were actually on board, Lord Raglan had in readiness for embarkation the whole brigade of heavy cavalry, another division of infantry, a siege-train,* and some five or six thousand pack-horses. The sick remained in Bulgaria, and such of the men out of hospital as seemed to be in a very weakly state were left at Varna and employed in garrison duty.

* The additional division of infantry (the 4th Division) was at Varna; the Scots Greys were on the Bosphorus; and the rest of the heavy cavalry in Bulgaria, where also the bât horses were left. The siege-train was on board off Varna.

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Vice-Admiral Dundas, commanding the whole British fleet, had his flag on board the 'Britannia;' Lyons, in the 'Agamemnon,' had charge of the convoy. Each vessel had assigned to her the place she was to take when the signal for moving should be given.

Before night [illegible]le of the English flotilla, together with that part of the French and the Turkish flotilla which had the command of steam-power was assembled in Baljik Bay, and in readiness to sail on the morrow.

[illegible] of the English Armada and of the French steam vessels.

Men remember the beauteous morning of the 7th of September. The moonlight was still floating on the waters when men, looking from numberless decks towards the east, were able to hail the dawn. There was a summer breeze blowing fair from the land. At a quarter before five a gun from the 'Britannia' gave the signal to weigh. The air was obscured by the busy smoke of the engines; and it was hard to see how and whence due order would come; but presently the 'Agamemnon' moved through, and with signals at all her masts, for Lyons was on board her, and was governing and ordering the convoy. The French steamers of war went out with their transports in tow, and their great vessels formed line. The French went out more quickly than the English, and in better order. Many of their transports were vessels of very small size; and of necessity, therefore, they were a swarm. Our transports went out in five columns of only thirty each. Then—guard over all—the English

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war fleet, in single column, moved slowly out of the bay.*

Here then, and apart from the bodies of foot and artillery embarked by the French and the Turks, there was an armament not unworthy of England. Without combat, and by the mere stress of its presence, our fleet drove the enemy's flag from the seas which flowed upon his shores,† and a small but superb land-force, complete in all arms, was clothed with the power of a great army by the ease with which it could be thrown upon any part of the enemy's coast.‡

Lord Raglan had not suffered himself to be disconcerted by the departure of Monsieur St. Arnaud and the consequent severance of the Allied forces. No steamer was sent to re-knit his communications with the errant French Marshal.

* I did not reach the fleet till some three days afterwards, when it was anchored at the rendezvous, and my impression of the scene in the Bay of Baljik is derived, partly from some MSS. which have been furnished to me, but partly also from what struck me as a very good account of it, which I saw in a printed book, by Mr. Wood, a spectator.

† I am justified in speaking of the English fleet as the force which kept the enemy's ships in duress, because, as we have seen, the French men-of-war were doing duty as transports, and were not therefore in a state for going into action.

‡ I of course speak here of the inherent power of such an armament, without reference to the fact that strictly-defined instructions had been addressed to Lord Raglan, and that the purport of these had become known to the enemy. The fixedness of the plan of campaign, and the publicity which it had obtained, reduced the power of the force to the level of its actual numbers and its intrinsic strength.

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WE have seen that Marshal St. Arnaud, under feelings of some vexation, put to sea on the morning of the 5th of September. He could not but know that, by his abrupt separation from the British fleet and army, he had offended against the English General. Upon reflection he could not but grieve that he had done this. But he had put to sea, and had since heard no tidings from the shore. No swift steamer had followed him with entreaties to stay his course. He was left free to pursue his voyage; and the voyage was growing more and more dismal.

'The Black Sea' is a truer name than the 'Euxine.' Now, as in old times (if the summer be hardly past), the voyager leaves a coast smiling bright beneath skies of blue and glowing with sunny splendour; yet, perhaps, and in less than an hour, the heavens above and the waters around him are dark with the gloom and threatening aspect belonging to the Northern Ocean.* Monsieur St. Arnaud

* The contrast between the climate of the Black Sea and that of the countries which surround it, is one of the enigmas to which scientific men have applied their minds; but whether as yet with success I cannot say.

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encountered this change. The wind blew from its dark quarter. Every hour was carrying the Marshal farther and farther into the centre of the inhospitable sea, farther and farther from the English fleet, farther and farther from Lord Raglan. If he went on, there was no junction to look for except at an imaginary point marked with a pencil on the charts, but having no existence in the material world; and from the wind and the angry waves, no less than from his own fast cooling thoughts, he began to receive a distressing sense of his isolation. The struggle in his mind was painful, but it came to an end. 'I am nearly 'twenty leagues,' writes the Marshal, on the evening of the 6th, to Lord Raglan—'I am nearly twenty 'leagues north-east of Baljik, separated from the 'English fleet, and from the part of my own convoy 'which was to sail with the convoy of the English 'fleet. Admiral Dundas's last letter being worded 'conditionally, so far as concerns his sailing this 'morning, I am not sure of not seeing increased, in 'great proportions, the distance which separates me 'from you, and then there is reason to fear circum-'stances of wind or sea which would render our 'junction difficult, and might compromise everything 'definitively. In this painful situation I decide to 'invite Admiral Hamelin (on his declaration that he 'cannot wait where he is) to return to meet the fleet 'and the convoy.' So the Marshal sailed back. Thus, happily, ceased the impulse which had threatened to sunder the fleets.

Marshal St. Arnaud at sea without the English.

His anxiety.

He sails back.

Lord Raglan's answer was stern. He removed the

grounds which the Marshal had assigned for his departure, and then pointed gravely to the true line of duty for the future. 'Thanks be to God,' he wrote, 'everything now favours our enterprise. Very soon 'we shall reach the appointed rendezvous, and then 'we shall have an opportunity of showing that our 'manner of acting together remains unaltered, and 'that the sincerity of which you speak will continue, 'as at present, to be our guide and our mutual satis-'faction.' *

Lord Raglan's reproof.

Coming from Lord Raglan, this language was a reproof; but the result tends to show that it was happily adjusted to the object in view. Thenceforth there was no longer any tendency on the part of Marshal St. Arnaud to break away from his colleague. From the hour of the first conference at the Tuileries in the spring of the year, Lord Raglan's authority in the Allied counsels had been always increasing; and now, as we shall presently see, it gained a complete ascendant.

Its good effect.

Lord Raglan's increasing ascendancy.

On the 8th the great flotilla, moving under steam, came up with the French and the Turkish sailing fleets which had left Baljik on the 5th of September. The French fleet was in double column, and tacking to eastward across the bows of the steam flotilla, but, upon being approached, the French ships backed topsails and lay to. Every one of the French vessels had kept its position beautifully, and, the moment the signal to lie to was given, it was obeyed with a

The whole Allied Armada comes together at sea.

* Translated from the French, in which the letter was written.

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quickness which was honestly admired by our seamen. The Turkish fleet also lay to; and, for a while, the whole armada of the Allies was gathered together. But the English fleet, being moved by steam, kept on to windward; and presently the French and the Turks began to sail off on opposite tacks. Between the fleets thus disparting, the English flotilla of transports passed through in five columns.

But the fleets are again parted.

The rendezvous was to be at a point forty miles due west of Cape Tarkan, and thither moved the three fleets with all their convoy.

Step taken by French officers with a view to stop the expedition against Sebastopol.

There were in the French army several officers holding high command, and being otherwise men of great weight, who had become very thoughtful on the subject of the contemplated descent upon the enemy's coast. Personally, they were men quite as dauntless as those who gave no care to the business in hand, but, being versed in the study if not in the practice of the great art of war, they had become strongly impressed with the hazardous character of the intended enterprise. It seems probable that up to this time they had relied upon the mature judgment and the supposed discreetness of Lord Raglan to prevent what they regarded as a rash attempt. It might well seem natural to them that two Governments in the West of Europe attempting to dictate an invasion of a Russian province at a distance of 3000 miles would, sooner or later, be checked in their project by the generals commanding the forces; and, of course, they would have liked that the disfavour

which unjustly attaches to military prudence should fall upon the English General rather than upon themselves or their own commander. But in the course of the 7th of September it became known to them that Lord Raglan was already at sea. They then knew, or rather they then recognised the fact, that the whole armada was really gliding on towards the enemy's coast, and the ferment their minds underwent now brought them to take a strange step.

Lord Raglan was on board the 'Caradoc,' and on the 8th of September, whilst the fleets lay near to one another, this vessel was boarded by Vice-Admiral Dundas. He came to say that a French steamer had conveyed to him the desire of the Marshal St. Arnaud to see Lord Raglan and the Vice-Admiral Dundas, and to see them on board the 'Ville de Paris,' because the Marshal himself was too ill to be able to move. It happened that the sea at this time was rough, and the naval men thought that it would be difficult for Lord Raglan, with his one arm, to get up the side of the three-decker in which the Marshal was sailing; Lord Raglan, therefore, deputed his military secretary, Colonel Steele, to accompany Vice-Admiral Dundas on board the 'Ville de Paris.'

Conference on board the 'Ville de Paris.'

The Vice-admiral and Colonel Steele found the Marshal sitting up, but in a state of much suffering, and they were informed that he was very ill. He however sat at the conference, and the other persons present were Admiral Hamelin, Admiral Bruat, Admiral Count Buat Wiliaumez, Colonel Trochu, General Rose, Vice-Admiral Dundas, and Colonel

St. Arnaud disabled by illness.

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Steele. The Marshal took no part in the discussion which ensued. It seems he could hardly speak.

Unsigned papers read to the conference.

It was stated that the meeting had been summoned in order that a paper might be read to it. The document bore no signature, and Marshal St. Arnaud was no party to it; but it was stated that it emanated from General Canrobert, General Martimprey, and the principal officers of the French artillery and engineers; and it was said too that General Rose* had furnished some of the materials from which it was composed.

The document took it for granted that there were three places for landing which merited discussion — the Katscha, the Yetsa, and Kaffa; and it then went on to show the advantages and the drawbacks which would attend an attempt to land at each of those three spots. The objections to the landing at the Katscha were stated with so much force as to show that the framers of the document entirely disapproved it, and indeed they urged that any landing north of Sebastopol would be surely followed by disastrous results. The document also raised weighty objections to a descent upon the coast near the Yetsa. The only plan which was made to appear at all justifiable was that of a landing at

* Now Sir Hugh Rose, the officer spoken of as Colonel Rose in Vol. I. He was at this time accredited as British Commissioner at the French Head-quarters. I have no reason for supposing that he intended to give any sanction to the step taken by the French Remonstrants; and I imagine that any materials which he may have put in their hands must have been confined to maps or statements showing the physical character of the country about to be invaded.

Kaffa, and, although the difficulties attending even that operation were placed in a strong light, it was orally stated that the framers of the document considered that plan to be one nearly free from objection.

Now Kaffa was a seaport in the eastern part of the Crimean peninsula, and divided from Sebastopol by many long marches over mountain-roads. The autumn had already come. The landing at Kaffa implied an abandonment for that year at least of all attempts against Sebastopol. It was to attack Sebastopol forthwith, and in the year 1854, that the great flotilla with all its precious freight had been gathered together, and now, whilst the vast armada was moving towards the enemy's coast, there came from the men of weight and science in the French army this singular protest—for that is what it really was—against an enterprise already begun.

St. Arnaud leaves all to Lord Raglan.

Marshal St. Arnaud was in a painful strait. Being, as he knew, without ascendancy in the French army, he apparently thought that the weight attaching to the combined opinion of all the protesting officers was too great to warrant him in meeting their interposition with reproof or inattention; yet, suffering as he did at the time under bodily anguish, he was ill able to go into the discussions thus strangely forced on by the remonstrants. He found a solution. He desired Colonel Trochu to say that he would concur in any decision to which Lord Raglan might come.

The conference, therefore, was adjourned to the

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'Caradoc,' and Lord Raglan and Sir Edmund Lyons were then present at it, together with all those who had met on board the 'Ville de Paris,' except only Marshal St. Arnaud.

Conference adjourned to the 'Caradoc.'

Thus then the ebullition of prudence which had broken out amongst the officers of the French army came under the arbitrament of the English General, and with him, and with him only, it rested to determine the movements of the whole Allied force.

The business of the conference was opened by Colonel Trochu. This officer, as we have already seen, was supposed to be better acquainted than any one else with the mind of the French Emperor, and his counsels, no longer bending in the direction of extreme caution, were now rather in favour of enterprise. The Colonel had possession of the document. He read it aloud; and, as he went on with the perusal, he commented upon every point; but he declared that he was no party to the contents of the paper, and that he did not share the anxieties* either of the army or the navy as to the disasters which might be expected to follow from a landing on the coast to the north of Sebastopol.

Thereupon Admiral Bruat repudiated the supposition of his being a party to the apprehensions attributed to the admirals. Lyons also repudiated it. Neither he nor Vice-Admiral Dundas had known before the conference that any such step as that of framing and presenting the remonstrance had been imagined by the French officers, and, as might be

* 'Préoccupations.'

expected, they were both very sure that nothing of the kind had sprung from the British navy.

The inference which Lord Raglan drew from the document was, that it evinced 'an indisposition to the 'expedition amongst the officers who are supposed to 'be looked up to and to exercise influence in the 'French army,' and, 'in fact,' said he, 'we were told 'as much at the meeting here on Friday.'

These then were the 'timid counsels'* of which the French Emperor afterwards spoke when he ascribed the glory of overruling them to Marshal St. Arnaud. If it was right, as most men will think it was, that these counsels should be overruled, there was merit due to St. Arnaud, but his merit lay—not in any personal resistance which he was able to oppose to his counsellors (for he was helpless, as we have seen, from bodily illness), but in the sagacity and good sense which had led him to entrust the decision to his English colleague.

Lord Raglan's way of dealing with the French remonstrants.

Lord Raglan's method of dealing with the protest of the French authorities was characteristic of himself and of the English nature. He did not much combat the objections set down in the paper, but he passed them by, and quietly lowered the debate from the high region of strategy to a question of humbler sort

* 'Timides avis.' When this letter of the French Emperor first appeared, it was imagined that the imputation of giving 'timid' counsels was intended to be cast upon some of our Generals or Admirals; but the Duke of Newcastle with a becoming spirit determined instantly that this should not be suffered to pass; and the 'Moniteur' was afterwards made to explain officially that the 'timides avis' were attributed by the Emperor—not to any Englishman, but to some unnamed officers in the French service.

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—a question as to what four steamers could be most conveniently employed for a reconnaissance on the enemy's coast.

So the conference which had been summoned to judge whether the enterprise against Sebastopol should not be brought to a stop, now found itself only deciding that the vessels sent on the reconnaissance should consist of one French steamer, together with the 'Agamemnon,' the 'Caradoc,' and the 'Sampson.'

But in truth the powers of the conference had silently passed into the hands of one man. Thenceforth the protest was dropped, for, if its framers had risen up against the notion of being drawn on into what they thought a rash venture by the mere effect of M. St. Arnaud's acquiescence, they were calmed when they came to know that the whole force at last had a leader. If still they held to their opinions, they did so in a spirit of cheerful deference which prevented them from throwing any further obstacle in the way of the enterprise. The armada moved on.

His now complete ascendant.

Again and again it has happened that mighty armaments, including the forces of several states and people of diverse races, have been gathered and drawn into scenes of conflict by the will of one man; but in general, when such things have been done, the compelling mind has been brought to its resolve by the cogency of satisfied reason or by force of selfish desire. What was new in this enterprise was, that he who inexorably forced it on did not of him-

The use he makes of his power.

self desire it, nor deem it to be wise nor even in a high degree prudent; and the power which had strength to bend the whole armada to the purpose of the invasion was—not ambition inflamed, nor reason convinced,—but the mere loyalty of an English officer refusing to stint the obedience which he owed to the minister of his Queen.

The English fleet at the point of rendezvous.

On the 9th the whole of the English fleet with all its convoy was anchored in deep water at the appointed rendezvous, a spot 40 miles west of Cape Tarkand.

Lord Raglan in person undertakes a reconnaissance of the coast.

Lord Raglan made haste to use the great powers with which he was now invested, and he determined to reconnoitre the coast with his own eyes. At four o'clock on the morning of the 10th General Canrobert, and the other French officers who were to attend the reconnaissance, came on board the 'Caradoc.' Lord Raglan had with him Sir Edmund Lyons, Sir John Burgoyne, and Sir George Brown. Not long after daybreak the 'Caradoc' neared Fort Constantine, and then approached the entrance of the harbour. It was a fair, bright morning, and the Sunday bells were ringing in the churches when Lord Raglan first saw the great forts, and the ships, and the glittering, cupola'd town. Afterwards, the vessel being steered round off Cape Chersonesus, he could see two old Genoese forts, and ridges of hills dividing the great harbour from the southern coast of the peninsula. What he looked on was for him fated ground, for the Genoese forts marked the inlet of Balaclava, and the ridges he saw were the

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'heights before Sebastopol.' But the future lay hidden from his gaze.

The 'Caradoc' was now steered towards the north, and the officers on board her surveyed the mouths of the Belbek, the Katscha, the Alma, and the Bulganak, and the coast stretching thence to Eupatoria. Of the sites thus reconnoitred General Canrobert thought the Katscha the one best fitted for a landing. Lord Raglan entirely disapproved of the Katscha, and he did not at all like the ground at the mouths of the other rivers; but when moving on in the 'Caradoc' he was off the part of the coast which lies six miles north of the Bulganak, he observed an extended tract of beach which seemed to him to be the ground for which the Allies were seeking. Without generating a debate upon the subject, he nevertheless elicited so much of the opinion of those around him as he deemed to be useful. Then he declared his resolve. He said that the Allied armies should land at Old Fort.

He chooses the landing place.

There are times when to anxious, doubting mortals no boon from Heaven is so welcome as the final resolve which is to govern their actions. It was so now. Debating ceased, and a happy alacrity came in its stead. That day, our fleet and the swarming convoy close gathered around had been still lying anchored in deep water at the point of rendezvous. To many, those long, peaceful Sabbath hours seemed to token a wanton delay—or worse than delay—some faltering in the great purpose of the Allies; but at night, the 'Caradoc' came in, and soon, though few could tell whence came the change, nor what had

been passing, there flew from deck to deck a joyful belief—a belief that in some way—in some way not yet understood, the enterprise had gathered new force.

The French and Turkish fleets, less amply provided with steam-power than the English, had fallen to leeward, but on the evening of the 11th they were anchored within thirty miles of the British fleet, and the communication was, of course, kept up by steam-vessels.

The whole Armada converging on the coast of the Crimea.

During the whole of Tuesday the 12th, the French, Turkish, and English fleets were slowly drawing together and converging upon the enemy's coast. Before sunset the armed navies were all near together, and from their decks men could make out with glasses the low cliff to the north of Eupatoria. The English fleet anchored for the night. The French Admiral sent to intimate that he would not anchor, but go on all night, in the hope of being ready for the landing the next morning. Vice-Admiral Dundas saw that that hope was vain, because large portions of the French convoy were still so distant that there could be no landing on the following day. The French, it will be remembered, were without steam-power for their transports, and the breezes were light. So, although every hour saw fresh clusters of vessels slowly closing with the fleet, the sea, towards the west, was always strewed with distant sails, and, before the hulls of those hove well in sight, the horizon got speckled again with sails more distant still. So the English Admiral anchored his fleet for the night.

The next morning, the 13th, the 'Ville de Paris,'

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under tow of the 'Napoleon' steamer, had come up, and, although, so late as noon, some of the French ships of war, and very many of their transports, were still distant, they were under such breezes as promised to enable them to close before long with the fleets. So, virtually, the momentous voyage was over. The weather—and upon that, in such undertakings, the hopes of nations must rest—the weather had favoured the enterprise. But the pest of modern armies had not relented. The cholera had followed the men into the transports. Many sickened on board the troop-ships whilst they were still off Varna or Baljik, and were carried back to die on shore. During the voyage many more fell ill, and many died.

St. Arnaud's sudden recovery.

But Marshal St. Arnaud, whose illness scarce three days before seemed bringing him fast to his end, was now almost suddenly restored, and, on the morning of the 13th, he was like a man in health. During the interval of five days in which the Marshal's illness had invested his English colleague with a supreme control, Lord Raglan had used to the full the occasion which Fortune thus gave him. In that time he had repressed the efforts of the French Generals who strove to bring the enterprise to a stop; he had committed the Allies to a descent upon the enemy's shores—on his shores to the north of Sebastopol; he had reconnoitred the coast, he had chosen the place for a landing, and meanwhile he had drawn the fleets on, so that now when men looked from the decks, they could see the thin strip of beach where the soldiery of the Allies were to land.

The progress made by Lord Raglan during the Marshal's illness.

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Our ignorance of the country and of the enemy's strength.

CONCERNING the country which they were going to invade the Allies were poorly informed. Of Sebastopol, the goal of the enterprise, they knew little, except that it was a great military port and arsenal, and was deemed impregnable towards the sea. Respecting the province generally, it was known by means of books and maps that Crim Tartary, or 'the 'Crimea' as people now called it, was a peninsula situate between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof; and there was a theory—not perfectly coinciding with the truth—that the only dry communication with the mainland was by the isthmus of Perekop. It was understood that the north of the peninsula had the character of an elevated steppe, that towards the south it was rocky and mountainous, and that the undulating downs which connected the steppe with the mountainous region of the south were seamed with small rivers flowing westward from the summits of the highland district. It was believed that the main of the inhabitants were Tartars, men holding to the Moslem faith. Of the enemy's forces in this country the Allies, in a sense, were ignorant; for

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although the information which had come round to them by the aid of the Foreign Office was in reality well founded, they did not believe at the time that they could at all rely upon it, and therefore they were nearly as much at fault as if they had had no clue. They knew, however, that the peninsula was a province of Russia, that Russia was a great military power, that, so long as three months ago, the invasion had been counselled in print, and that afterwards the determination to undertake it had been given out aloud to the world. From these rudiments, and from what could be seen from the decks of the ships, they inferred that, either upon their landing, or on some part of the road between the landing-ground and Sebastopol, they would find the enemy in strength.

This gives to the expedition the character of an adventure.

But beyond this little was known; and the imagination of men was left to range so free that, although they were in the midst of their '19th century,' with all its prim facts and statistics, the enterprise took something of the character of adventure belonging to earlier ages. Common, sensible, fanciless men, men wise with the cynic wisdom of London clubs, were now by force turned into venturers, intent as Argonauts of old in gazing upon the shores of a strange land, to which they were committing their lives. From many a crowded deck they strained their eyes to pierce the unknown. They could not see troops. They saw a road along the shore. Now and then there appeared a peasant with a cart. Now and then a horseman riding at full speed. Neither

peasant nor horseman seemed ever to pause in his duty that he might cast a glance of wonder at the countless armada which was gathering in upon his country. At the northern end of the bay there was a bright little town. Maps showed that this was Eupatoria.

Occupation of Eupatoria.

At noon, on the 13th, the English fleet had drawn near to this port of Eupatoria. There were no Russian forces there except a few convalescent soldiers; and, the place being defenceless, Colonel Trochu and Colonel Steele, accompanied by Mr. Calvert the interpreter, were despatched to summon it. The governor or head man of the place was an official personage in a high state of discipline. He had before his eyes the armed navies of the Allies with the countless sails of their convoys; and to all that vast armament he had nothing to oppose except the forms of office. But to him the forms of office seemed all sufficing, and on these he still calmly relied; so, when the summons was delivered, he insisted upon fumigating it according to the health regulations of the little port. When he understood that the Western Powers intended to land, he said that decidedly they might do so, but he explained that it would be necessary for them to land at the Lazzaretto, and consider themselves in strict quarantine.

On the following day the place was occupied by a small body of English troops. The few Russian inhabitants of the place, being mainly or entirely

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official personages, had all gone away, but the Tartar inhabitants remained; and although these men did not exhibit, as some might have expected, any eager or zealous affection for the allies of the Caliph, they seemed inclined to be friendly. Thoughtful men cared deeply to know, whether between these natives and the Allies the relation of buyer and seller could be established; for it was of vital moment to the success of the expedition that the Allies should be able to obtain supplies of cattle and forage in the invaded country; and it was probable that much would turn upon the success of the first attempt to make purchases from the people of the country. The first experiment which was made in this direction elicited a curious proof of the difficulty which there is in causing mighty nations to act with the forethought of a single traveller. It was to be expected that at the commencement of any attempted intercourse, the willingness of the natives to sell would depend upon their being tempted by the coins to which they were accustomed, because just at first they would not only be ignorant of the value of foreign money, but would also dread the consequence of being found in possession of coin plainly received from the invaders. Yet the precaution of bringing Russian money had been forgotten by the public authorities; and when Mr. Hamilton of the 'Britannia' was preparing to land, with a view of endeavouring to begin a buying and selling intercourse with the natives, he had nothing to offer except English sovereigns. It

chanced, however, that there were two or three English travellers on board the flag-ship, and that these men (foreseeing the likelihood of their having to buy horses or make other purchases from the natives of the invaded country), had supplied themselves with some of the gold Russian coins called 'half-imperials,' which were to be obtained without difficulty at Constantinople. The travellers — Sir Edward Colebrooke, I think, was one of them — advanced as many of these as they could spare to the public authorities; and Mr. Hamilton being thus enabled to land with a small supply of the magic half-imperials, and being, besides, a good-tempered, humorous man, with a tendency to make cordial speeches in English to all his fellow creatures alike, whether Russian, or Tartar, or Greek, he was able to make a merry beginning of that intercourse with the natives which was destined to become a fruitful source of strength to the Allied armies. The gains made by the first sellers soon drew fresh supplies into the place from the surrounding country; the commissariat afterwards began its operations in the town, and in time a good lasting market was opened to the invaders.

The whole Armada gathers towards the chosen landing-place.

After receiving the surrender of Eupatoria on the afternoon of the 13th, the assembled armada moved down towards the south. All day there were sailing vessels approaching from a distance, and closing at last with the French fleet, but before night (with the exception, it is believed, of two or three small lagging transports) the three fleets, and the host of vessels

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which they convoyed, were anchored near Old Fort in Kalamita Bay. The united armada extended in a line parallel with the coast, and in a direction, therefore, not far from north and south. The French and the Turkish fleets were on the south or right-hand side. The British fleet took the north, and formed the left of the Allied line.

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The landing-place.

THE ground chosen by Lord Raglan for the landing of all the Allied forces is five or six miles north of the Bulganak River. It gained its name of 'Old Fort' from an indication appearing on the maps, rather than from any slight traces of the structure then remaining. Along this part of the coast the cliffs rise to a height of from 60 to 100 feet, and for the most part they impend too closely over the sea to allow much room for the beach. Near 'Old Fort,' however, the high grounds so recede that at first sight they appear to embrace a small bay or inlet of the sea, but upon a nearer approach it is perceived that the inner part of the seeming bay is a salt-water lake, and that this lake is divided from the sea by a low, narrow strip of beach. A little further north the same disposition of land and water recurs, for there also another salt lake, called the lake of Kamishlu, is divided from the sea by a low, narrow strip of beach a mile and a half in length. The first-mentioned strip of beach, namely, the strip opposite to Old Fort, was the one which Lord Raglan had chosen for the landing of all the Allied armies.

It was arranged that a buoy should be placed

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off the centre of the chosen ground to mark the boundary between the French and the English flotilla. The French and the Turkish vessels were to be on the south of the buoy, the British on the north; and in the evening and night of the 13th the ships and transports of the three nations drew in as near as they could to their appointed landing-places.

Step taken by the French in the night.

But in the night of the 13th there occurred a transaction which threatened to ruin the whole plan for the landing, and even to bring the harmony between the French and the English forces into grievous jeopardy. During the darkness, the French placed the buoy opposite—not to the centre, but—to the extreme north, of the chosen landing-ground; and when morning dawned, it appeared that the English ships and transports, though really in their proper places, were on the wrong side of the buoy, or, rather, that the buoy was on the wrong side of them. Whether the act which created this embarrassment was one resulting from sheer mistake on the part of our allies, or from their over-greediness for space, or from a scheme more profoundly designed, it plainly went straight towards the end desired by those French officers who had been labouring to bring the enterprise to a stop. For what was to be done? If the English, disregarding the altered position of the buoy, were to persist in keeping to their assigned landing-ground, their whole flotilla, their boats and their troops, when landed, would be hopelessly mixed up with the French, and what might be

This destroys the whole plan of the landing.

expected to follow would be ruinous confusion—nay, even perhaps angry and violent conflict between the forces of the Allies. To propose to move the buoy, or to get into controversy with the French at such a time, would be to delay and imperil the whole undertaking; and yet the boundary as it stood extruded the English from all share in the chosen landing-ground. It might seem that the whole enterprise was again in danger of failure; but again a strong will interposed.

Sir Edmund Lyons.

From the moment when Lord Raglan consented to undertake the invasion he seems to have acted as though he felt that the belief which he entertained of its hazardousness was a reason why he should be the more stedfast in his determination to force it on. Nor was he without the very counsel that was needed for overcoming this last obstacle. Lyons, commanding the in-shore squadron of the British fleet, was intrusted with the direction of our transports and the whole management of the landing. Moving long before dawn in the sleepless 'Agamemnon,' he saw where the buoy had been placed by the French in the night-time, and gathered in an instant all the perilous import of the change. He was more than a mere performer of duty, for he was a man driving under a passionate force of purpose. Without stopping to indulge his anger he darted upon the means of dealing with the evil. He had observed that about a mile to the north of 'Old Fort' there was that strip of beach, before spoken of, which divided the lake of Kamishlu from the sea. There,

His way of dealing with the emergency.

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New landing-place found for the English at Kamishlu.

Lord Raglan and he now determined that the landing of the British forces should take place. It was true that this plan would sever the French from the British forces during the operation of landing, but the evil thus encountered was a hundred-fold less grave than the evil avoided, for, even in the face of an enemy, the separation of the French from the English would have been better than dispute or confusion; and, moreover, the observations of the previous day had led the Allies to conjecture that the enemy did not intend to resist the landing. The morning showed that this conjecture was sound: therefore, great as was the danger from which the Alliance had been delivered, it turned out in the result that the immense advantage of having two extended landing-places instead of one was not counterbalanced by any evil resulting from the severance of the two armies.

In point of security from molestation on the part of the enemy both of the two landing-places were happily chosen. Both of them were on shores which allowed the near approach of the fleets and placed the whole operation under cover of their guns. Also both landing-places were protected on the inland side by the salt lakes which interposed a physical obstacle in the way of any front attack by the enemy; and the access to the flanks of the disembarking armies was by strips of land so narrow that they could be easily defended against any force of infantry or cavalry. It is true that the line of disembarkation of either army could have been enfiladed by artillery

placed on the heights; but then those heights could be more or less searched by a fire from the ships, and the enemy had not attempted to prepare for himself any kind of defence on the high ground.

Position of the English flotilla adapted to the change.

The necessity of having to carry the English flotilla to a new landing-place occasioned of course a painful dislocation of the arrangements which had already been acted upon by the commanders of the transports; but, after much less delay and much less confusion than might have been expected to result from a derangement so great and so sudden, the position of the English vessels was adapted to the change.

The cause and the nature of the change kept secret.

Meanwhile few of the thousands on board understood the change which had been effected, or even saw that they were brought to a new landing-ground. They imagined that it was the better method or greater quickness of the French which was giving them the triumph of being the first to land. Both Lord Raglan and Lyons were too stedfast in the maintenance of the alliance to think of accounting for the seeming tardiness of the English by causing the truth to be known; and even to this day it is commonly believed that the English army effected its landing at Old Fort.

Position of the in-shore squadrons.

The bend of the coast-line at Kalamita Bay is of such a character that a spectator on board a vessel close in-shore is bounded in his view of the sea towards the south by the headland near the Alma; but if he stands a little way out to sea, the coast opens, and he then commands an unobstructed view home to the entrance of the Sebastopol harbour.

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So, whilst the in-shore squadrons approached the beach so closely as to be able to cover the landing, the bulk of the English fleet, commanded by Dundas in person, lay far enough out to be able to command the whole of the vast bay from Eupatoria to Sebastopol, keeping up an unbroken chain of communication from cape to cape, and always held ready to engage the Russian fleet if by chance it should come out and give battle.* Detached vessels reconnoitred the coast and practised their gunners upon every encampment or gathering of troops which seemed to be within range. As though in the arrogant, yet quiet assertion of an ascendant beyond dispute, one solitary English ship, watching off the Sebastopol harbour, stood sentry over the enemy's fleet. Men had heard of the dominion of the seas. Now they saw it.

Of the main English fleet.

The plan of the English disembarkation was imitated from the one adopted by Sir Ralph Abercromby when he made his famous descent upon the coast of Egypt; and it was based upon the principle of so ranging the transports and the boats as that the relative position of each company whilst it was being rowed towards the shore should correspond with that which it would have to take when formed upon the beach.†

Plan of the landing.

* It has been already explained that the French men-of-war were doing duty as transports, and were not therefore in a condition to engage the enemy. There were people who thoughtlessly blamed Dundas for not taking part with the in-shore squadron in the bustle of the landing. Of course his duty was to hold his off-shore squadron in readiness for an engagement with the Sebastopol fleet; and this he took care to do.

† The plans and the papers of instructions for the landing will perhaps

All the naval arrangements for the landing were undertaken by Sir Edmund Lyons; but, to dispose the troops on the beach—to gain a lodgment—to take up a position, and, if necessary, to intrench it —these were duties which specially devolved upon the Quartermaster-General. The officer who held this post was General Airey; and since it was his fate to take a grave part in the business of the war, and to share with Lord Raglan his closest counsels, it seems useful to speak here at once—not of the quality of his mind (for that will best be judged by looking to what he did, and what he omitted to do) but rather—to speak of those circumstances of his life, and those outer signs and marks of his nature which any bystander in the camp would be likely to hear of or see.

General Airey.

A strictly military career in peace-time is a poor schooling for the business of war; and the rough change which had once broken in upon Airey's professional life helped to make him more able in war than men who had passed all their lives in going round and round with the wheels. Airey was holding one of the offices at the Horse-Guards when he was suddenly called upon by his relative Colonel Talbot, the then almost famous recluse of Upper Canada, to choose whether he and his young wife would accept a great territorial inheritance, with the condition of dwelling deep in the forest, far away from all cities

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be given in the Appendix; but I abstain from giving a detailed account of the operation, because it was not resisted by the enemy.

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and towns. Airey loved his profession, and what made it the more difficult for him to quit it was the favour with which he was looked upon by the Duke of Wellington. It chanced that he had once been called upon to lay before the Duke the maps and statements required for showing the progress of a campaign then going on against the Caffres, and the Duke was so delighted with the perfect clearness of the view which Airey was able to impart to him that he instantly formed a high opinion of an officer who could look with so keen a glance upon a distant campaign and convey a lucid idea of it to his chief. Airey communicated to the Duke of Wellington Colonel Talbot's proposal, and explained the dilemma in which he was placed. 'You must go,' said the Duke; 'of course you must go; it is your duty to 'go; but we will manage so that whenever you 'choose you shall be able to come back to us.' Airey went to Canada. It had been no part of Colonel Talbot's plan to smooth the path of his chosen inheritor. He gave him a vast territory. He gave him no home.

Isolated in the midst of the forest, and with no better shelter than a log hut half-built, the staff-officer, hitherto expert in the prim traditions of the Horse-Guards, now found himself so circumstanced that the health, nay, the very life of those most dear to him, was made to depend upon his power to become a good labourer. He could not have hoped to keep his English servants a day if he had begun by sitting still himself and ordering them

to do the rough work to which they were unaccustomed; so he worked with his own hands, in the faith that his example would make every kind of hard work seem honourable to his people; and, being endued with an almost violent love of bodily exertion, he was not only equal to this new life, but came to delight in it. Clad coarsely during the day, he was only to be distinguished from the other workmen by his greater activity and greater power of endurance. Many English gentlemen have done the like of this, but commonly they have ended by becoming altogether just that which they seemed in their working hours—by becoming, in short, mere husbandmen. It was not so with Airey. When his people came to speak to him in the evening they always found him transformed. Partly by the subtle change which they were able to see in his manner, partly even by so outward a thing as the rigorous change in his dress, but most of all perhaps by his natural ascendant, they were prevented from forgetting that their fellow-labourer of the morning was their master—a master to whom they were every day growing more and more attached, but still their master. He therefore maintained his station. He did more; he gained great authority over the people about him; and when he bade farewell to the wilderness, he had become like a chief of old times—a man working hard with his own hands, yet ruling others with a firm command.

It was during a period of some years that Airey had thus wrestled with the hardships of forest life. At

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the end of that time Colonel Talbot died; and Airey, then coming home to England, resumed his military career. Those who know anything of the real business of war will easily believe that this episode in the life of General Airey was more likely to fit him for the exigencies of a campaign and for the command of men than thrice the same length of time consumed in the revolving labours of a military department; nay, perhaps they will think that, next to a campaign, this manful struggle with the wilderness was the very work which would be the most sure to set a mind free from the habits, the bylaws, and the petty regulations of office.

Before the expedition left England Lord Raglan had asked Airey to be his Quartermaster-General. Airey, preferring field-duty with the divisions, had begged that some other might be appointed, and Lord Raglan acceded to his wish; but when, on the eve of the departure of the expedition from Varna, Lord De Ros returned to England, the Quartermaster-Generalship was again pressed upon Airey in terms which made it unbecoming for him to refuse the burthen. His loyalty and affectionate devotion to Lord Raglan were without bounds; and he imagined that he was always acting with a strict deference to the wishes of his chief. But then Airey was a man of great ardour, of a strong will; and, having also a rapid, decisive judgment, he certainly accustomed himself to put very swift constructions upon Lord Raglan's words. No one ever used to see him in the pain of suspense between two opinions. Either he

really knew with minuteness Lord Raglan's views, or else he was so prone to take a great deal upon himself that, in his zeal for the public service, he might almost be called unscrupulous. Men who were hesitating and trying to make out what was the path of their duty soon came to know that Airey was the officer who would thrust away their doubts for them, because, rightly or wrongly, whether with or without due authority, he used to speak in such a way as to untie or to cut every knot. He was himself, it would seem, unconscious of exercising so much power as he really did; but it is certain enough that those who complained of his ascendancy were not very wrong in believing that he held a great sway; for though, being guileless and single-hearted, he always liked to receive his first impulsions from the chief, yet, when once he was thus set moving, his strong will used to burst into action with all its own proper force, and very much too in its own direction.

Notwithstanding this proneness to action, his manner had all the repose which is thought to be a sign of power. He did not in general speak at all until he could speak decisively; and he was more accustomed than most other Englishmen are to use that degree of precision and completeness of language which makes men content to act on it. Officers hesitating in the pain of suspense used to long to hear the tramp of his coming—used to long to catch sight of his eager, swooping crest (it was always strained forward and intent)—his keen, salient, sharp-edged features—his firm, steady eye,

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—for they knew that he was the man who would release them from their doubts. He was gifted by nature with the kind of eloquence that it is good for a soldier to have. His oral directions to those in authority under him were models of imperative diction; but when he spoke of what he had seen, the vivid pictures he drew were marked with a sharpness of outline hardly consistent with a perfect freedom from exaggeration: they wanted the true English haze. He was too eager for action to be able to stand still weighing phrases; and I imagine that he did not even know how to try the exact strength and import of words in the way that a lettered man does. Upon the whole, his qualities were of such a kind as to make it impossible for him to be without great weight in the army. His friends would call him a man plainly fitted for high command; his adversaries would say that power in his hands was likely to be used dangerously; but all would alike agree that, whether for good, or whether for evil, he had from nature the means of impressing his own will on troops.

The first day's landing.

The arrangements of the French were like those of the English; and at half-past eight o'clock on the morning of the 14th of September, 1854, their first boat touched the shore. The English had made such good haste to retrieve the time spent in moving to their new landing-place, that very soon afterwards their disembarkation began.

The morning was fine; the sea nearly smooth. The troops of the Light Division were in the boats,

and the seamen were at their oars, expecting the signal. The signal was given, and instantly from along the whole of the first line of transports an array of boats freighted with troops—boats ranged upon a front of more than a mile—darted swiftly towards the shore. It was said that the boat commanded by Vesey of the 'Britannia' was the first to touch the beach. He was an officer who would do all man could to be foremost.

As soon as the boats had landed, the soldiers stepped ashore and began to form line upon the beach; but presently afterwards they piled arms. There were some Tartar peasants passing along the coast-road with small bullock-waggons. The waggoners showed little or no alarm, and, knowing that they could not move off quickly with bullocks, they did not attempt to get away. Apparently they were not struck with any sense of unfairness when they saw that the English took possession of the waggons; and yet it could scarcely have been explained to them at that moment (as it afterwards would be) that everything taken by the English from private owners would be paid for at a just price. One of the waggons was laden with small pears, and the soldiers amused themselves with the fruit whilst the natives stood and scanned their invaders.

After a while, many of the battalions which had landed were ordered forward to occupy the hill on our right, and thenceforth during all the day, the acclivity was sparkling with the bayonets of the columns successively ascending it. But what were

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those long strings of soldiery now beginning to come down from the hill-side and to wind their way back towards the beach; and what were the long white burthens horizontally carried by the men? Already? Already, on this same day? Yes. Sickness still clung to the army. Of those who only this morning ascended the hill with seeming alacrity, many now came down thus sadly borne by their comrades. They were carried on ambulance stretchers, and a blanket was over them. Those whose faces remained uncovered were still alive. Those whose faces had been covered over by their blanket were dead. Near the foot of the hill the men began to dig graves.

Zeal and energy of the sailors.

But, meanwhile, the landing went merrily on. It might be computed that, if every man in the navy had only performed his strict duty, the landing would have taken some weeks. It was the supererogation, the zeal, the abounding zeal, which seemed to achieve the work. No sailor seemed to work like a man who was merely obeying—no officer stood looking on as if he were merely commanding; and, though all was concert and discipline, yet every man was labouring with the whole strength of his own separate will. And all this great toil went on with strange good humour, nay, even with thoughtful kindness towards the soldiers. The seamen knew that it concerned the comfort and the health of the soldiers to be landed dry, so they lifted or handed the men ashore with an almost tender care. Yet not without mirth; nay, not without laughter far heard,

when, as though they were giant maidens, the tall Highlanders of the 42nd placed their hands in the hands of the sailor and sprang by his aid to the shore, their kilts floating out wide while they leapt.

After midday the sea began to lose its calmness, and before sunset the surf was strong enough to make the disembarkation difficult, and in some degree hazardous. Yet, by the time the day closed, the French had landed their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd divisions of infantry, together with eighteen guns, and the English had got on shore all their infantry divisions, and some part of their field artillery.

Wet night's bivouac.

Some few of the English regiments remained on the beach, but the rest of them had been marched up to the high grounds towards the south, and they there bivouacked. At night there fell heavy rain, and it lasted many hours. The men were without their tents.* Lying in wet pools or in mud, their blankets clinging heavy with water, our young soldiers began the campaign. The French soldiery were provided with what they called dog-tents—tents not a yard high, but easily carried, and yielding shelter to soldiers creeping into them. It was always a question in the French army whether these tents gave the men more health and comfort than they could find in the open air.

Continuance of the landing;

The next morning was fine, but the surf had so much increased that for several hours the landing was

* This was because there were no sufficing means of land-transport for conveying the camp equipage towards Sebastopol. After the 14th the tents were landed, but they were afterwards reshipped.

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suspended. After the middle of the day it became practicable, though still somewhat difficult, to go on with the work; and great efforts were made to land the English cavalry and the rest of the artillery, with the appertaining horses and equipages.

Unless a man has stood in the admiring crowd which gathers to see the process of landing one horse upon an open sea-shore; and unless, whilst he carries in his mind the labour and energy brought to bear upon this single object, he can imagine the same toil gone through again and again and yet again till it has been repeated many hundreds of times upon a mile and a half of beach, he will hardly know what work must be done before a general can report to his Government that he has landed upon an open coast with a thousand cavalry and sixty guns ready for the field. By labour never once intermitted (except when darkness or the state of the sea forbade it), and continued from the morning of the 14th until the evening of the 18th, the whole of the English land-force, which had been embarked at Varna (together now with Cathcart's Division), was safely landed upon the enemy's coast.

Its completion;

The result then was, that under circumstances of weather which were, upon the whole favourable, and with the advantage of encountering no opposition from the enemy, an English force of some 26,000 infantry and artillerymen, with more than a thousand mounted cavalry, and sixty guns had been landed in the course of five September days; and although the force thus put ashore was without those

vast means of land-transport which would be needed for regular operations in the interior, and was obliged to rely upon the attendant fleet for the continuance of its supplies, it was nevertheless so provided as to be able to move along the coast carrying with it its first reserve of ammunition, and food enough for three days.

by the English;

The operation was conducted with an almost faultless skill, and (until a firm lodgment had been gained) it proceeded in the way that was thought to be the right one for landing in the face of the enemy. Though the surf was at times somewhat heavy, not a man was lost.

With the French, who had no cavalry and a scanty supply of artillery horses, the disembarkation was a comparatively easy task; and if they had so desired it, the French might have been ready to march long before the English, but, knowing that their allies, having cavalry, would necessarily take a good deal of time, they were without a motive for hurrying, and, during the whole of the five days which the English took for their disembarkation, a like work was seen going on at the French landing-place.

by the French;

The Turks did the work of landing very well; and, indeed, they quickly showed that they had an advantage over the French and the English in their more familiar acquaintance with the mode of life proper to warfare. They landed their camp equipage; for, with them, the carriage of tents is a very simple business. Two soldiers, one at each end, bear the pole of a tent between them, and the canvas is carried

by the Turks.

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by others in turns. So early as the 15th, the first day after that on which the landing began, the Turks were comfortably encamped on the ground assigned to them; and whilst the young troops of France and England were still sitting wretched and chilled by the wet of their night's bivouac, the warlike Osmanlies seemed to be in their natural home. Soliman, who commanded them, was able to welcome and honour the guests who went to visit him in his tent, as hospitably as though he were in the audience-hall of his own pashalic. He had all his tents well pitched; and his men, one could see, were still a true Moslem soldiery—men with arms and accoutrements bright, yet not forgetful of prayer. He had a supply of biscuit and of cartridges, and a good stock of horses, some feeding, some saddled, and ready for instant use. He was not without coffee and tobacco. His whole camp gave signs of a race which gathers from a great tradition, going on from father to son, the duties and the simple arts of a pious and warfaring life.

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Deputations from the Tartar villages to the English head-quarters.

WHEN the people of the neighbouring district came to see the strength of the armies descending upon their coast, the head-men of villages began to present themselves at the quarters of the Allies. The first of these deputations was received by Lord Raglan in the open air. The men were going up to head-quarters when they passed near a group of officers on foot in blue frock-coats, and they learned that the one whose maimed arm spoke of other wars was the English General. They approached him respectfully, but without submissiveness of an abject kind. Neither in manner, dress, appearance, nor language, would these men seem very strange to a traveller acquainted with Constantinople or any of the other cities of the Levant. They wore the pelisse or long robe, and, although their head-gear was of black lamb-skin, it was much of the same shape as the Turkish fez. They spoke with truthfulness and dignity, allowing it to appear that the invasion was not distasteful to them, but abstaining from all affectation of enthusiastic sympathy. They seemed to understand war and its exigencies; for they asked the interpreters to say that such of their possessions as might be wanted by

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the English army were at Lord Raglan's disposal. Pleased with the demeanour of the men, as well as with the purport of their speech, Lord Raglan told them that he would avail himself of some of their possessions, more especially their waggons and draught animals, but that everything taken for the use of the English army would be paid for at a proper rate. Much to Lord Raglan's surprise (for he was not accustomed to the people of the East), the headman of the village resisted the idea of the people being paid, and anxiously pressed the interpreter to say that their possessions were yielded up as free gifts.

Result of exploring expeditions.

Pure ignorance of the invaded country gave charm to every discovery tending to throw light upon the character and pursuits of the inhabitants; and if our soldiery had found in the villages high altars set up for human sacrifices, they would scarcely have been more surprised than they were when, prying into the mysteries of this obscure Crim Tartary, they came upon traces of modern refinement and cultivated taste. In some of the houses at Kentugan there were pianos; and in one of them a music-book, lying open and spread upon the frame, seemed to show that the owner had been hurried in her flight. But the owners of these dwellings must have been official personages. The mass of the country people were Tartars.

In the villages there was abundance of agricultural wealth. The main want of the country was water; but Airey caused wells to be sunk.

The English system of payment for supplies rapidly

began to bear its usual fruit, and the districts from which the people came in to barter with us were every day extending.

The English army, its absolute freedom from crime.

In their passage across the Euxine our battalions had not yet been followed by that evil horde who are accustomed to cling to an army, selling strong, noxious drinks to the men. Therefore our army was without crime.* It was with something more than mercy, it was with kindness and gentle courtesy, that the people of the villages were treated by our soldiery, and the interpreters had to strain the resources of the English tongue in order to convey a faint apprehension of the figures of speech in which the women were expressing their gratitude. Their chief favourites it seems were the men of the Rifle Brigade. Quartered for a day or two in one of the villages, these soldiers made up for the want of a common tongue by acts of kindness. They helped the women in their household work, and the women, pleased and proud, made signs to the stately 'Rifles' to do this and do that, exulting in the obedience which they were able to win from men so grand and comely. When the interpreter came, and was asked to construe what the women were saying so fast and so eagerly, it appeared that they were busy with similes and metaphors, and that the Rifles were made out to be heroes more strong than lions, more gentle than young lambs.

Kindly intercourse between our soldiery and the villagers.

Outrages perpetrated by the Zouaves.

A dreadful change came over that village. The Rifles were withdrawn. The Zouaves marched in.

* This statement, broad as it looks, is meant to be taken literally, and to be regarded as a statement taken from the right official source.

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There followed spoliation, outrage, horrible cruelty. When those tidings came to Lord Raglan, he was standing on the shore with several of his people about him. He turned scarlet with shame and anger. The yoke of the alliance had wrung him.

The duty of sweeping the country for supplies.

In general, it would fall within the duty of light horse to sweep the face of the invaded territory and bring in supplies; but the French were without cavalry; and although the body of horse which we had landed was called 'the Light Brigade,' the Lancers, the Hussars, and the Light Dragoons of which it consisted, were not of such a weight and quality, and were not so practised in foraging, as to be all at once well fitted for this kind of service. Besides, it was plain that in advancing through the enemy's country the power of the invaders would have to be measured by the arm in which they were weakest, and a material loss in our small, brilliant force of cavalry might bring ruin upon the whole expedition. There was the Commissariat. The officers of that department were gentlemen taken from a branch of the Treasury; and although they could make requisitions on the military authorities with more or less hope of a result, they had no force of their own with which to act. The regimental officers were of course busied with their respective corps. Yet it was certain that the power of operating effectively with the English army would depend upon its obtaining a large addition to its existing means of land-transport. In the result, it was the chief of one of the business departments of our Head-Quarter Staff

who pressed forward into the gap, and succeeded in achieving the work upon which, in a great degree, the fate of the campaign seemed likely to hinge.

Airey's quick perception of the need to get means of land-transport.

From the first, General Airey had seen that the mere inert presence of armies in an invaded province is a thing very short of conquest. Conquest, he knew, must generally rest upon the success with which supplies can be drawn from the invaded province; and he never forgot that, unless the country could be made to yield means of land-carriage, the Allies would have to creep timidly along the shore, tethered fast by the short string of carts with which they had come provided; therefore, even within a few minutes from the time when the landing began, he was already striving to gain—not the mere occupation of the soil—not the mere licence for the troops to stand or lie down on the ground—but that hold, that military grasp of the country which would make it help to sustain the invasion. When only a few battalions of the Light Division had landed and were beginning to form on the beach, he rode up to the high ground on our right, and there, at some distance, he caught sight of a long string of waggons escorted by a body of Cossacks. Instantly he rode back to the beach, got Colonel Lysons to give him two companies of the 23rd Fusileers, and with these advanced quickly in skirmishing order. The Cossacks tried hard to save the convoy by using the points of their lances against the bullocks, and even against the drivers, but, the Fusileers advancing and beginning to open fire, the Cossacks at length retreated, leaving Airey in

His seizure of a convoy.

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possession of just that kind of prize which the army most needed—a prize of some seventy or eighty waggons, with their oxen and drivers complete. Never ceasing to think it was vital to have more and more means of transport, Airey afterwards despatched the officers of his department in all directions to bring in supplies. Sending Captain Sankey to Tuzla and Sak, he thence got 105 waggons. Sending Captain Hamilton to Bujuk Aktash, to Beshi Aktash, to Tenish, and Sak, he got 67 camels, 253 horses, 45 cartloads of poultry, barley, and other supplies, with more than a thousand head of cattle and sheep.* At a later date, and when the army was moving, he took 25 waggons from a village near the line of march. One day moreover it happened that Airey sent his aide-de-camp Nolan to explore for water, and, though he was without a cavalry escort, Nolan boldly cut in upon a convoy of 80 government waggons laden with flour, and seized the whole of it. In all some 350 waggons were obtained, with all their teams and with their Tartar drivers.

His continued exertions.

Their result.

In general, the appropriation of the resources of the country is a business which ranges among mere commissariat annals; but in order to this invasion the seizing of means of land-transport was a business hardly otherwise than vital. Even as it was, the army was brought to hard straits for want of sufficing draught power; and without the cattle and

* In some but not all of these expeditions Sankey and Hamilton had cavalry escorts.

waggons which were seized whilst the troops were landing, the course of events must have been other than what it was.

Those Tartar drivers of whom I have spoken were a wild people, little fit, as it seemed, for the obedience and patient toil exacted from camp-followers; but the descent of the Allies upon the coast was the first military operation that they had witnessed, and, before their amazedness ceased, they found themselves unaccountably marshalled and governed, and involuntarily taking their humble part in the enterprise of the Western Powers. Many of them wore the same expression of countenance as hares that are taken alive, and they looked as though they were watching after the right moment for escape; but they had fallen, as it were, into a great stream, and all they could do was to wonder, and yield, and flow on. There were few of those captured lads who had strength to withstand the sickness and the hardships of the campaign. For the most part they sank and died.

The Tartar drivers.

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The forces now on shore.

THERE were now upon the coast of the Crimea some 37,000 French and Turks,* with sixty-eight pieces of artillery, all under the orders of Marshal St. Arnaud; and we saw that 27,000 English, including a full thousand of cavalry, and together with sixty guns, had been landed by Lord Raglan. Altogether then the Allies numbered 63,000 men and 128 guns. These forces, partly by means of the draught animals at their command, and partly by the aid of the soldier himself, could carry by land the ammunition necessary for perhaps two battles, and the means of subsistence for three days. Their provisions beyond those limits were to be replenished from the ships. It was intended, therefore, that the fleets should follow the march of the armies, and that the invaders, without attempting to dart upon the inland route which connected the enemy with St. Petersburg, should move straight upon the north side of Sebastopol by following the line of the coast.

The nature of the operation by which the Allies were to make good their advance to Sebastopol.

* 30,204 Frenchmen and 7000 Turks, according to the French accounts. Lord Raglan, I believe, thought that the French force was less, and put it at 27,600.

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The whole body of the Allied armies was to operate as a 'moveable column.' *

Comparison between regular operations and the system of the 'moveable column.'

Between an armed body engaged in regular operations, and that description of force which the French call a 'moveable column,' the difference is broad; and there is need to mark it, because the way in which regular operations are conducted is not even similar to that in which a 'moveable column' is wielded. It is, of course, from the history of continental wars that the principle of regular operations in the field is best deduced. A prince intending to invade his neighbour's territory takes care to have near his own frontier, or in states already under his control, not only the army with which he intends to begin the invasion, but also that sustained gathering of fresh troops, and that vast accumulation of stores, arms, and munitions, which will suffice, as he hopes, to feed the war. The territory on which these resources are spread is called the 'base of operations.' When the invading general has set out from this his strategic home to achieve the object he has in view, the neck of country by which he keeps up his communications with the base is called the 'line of 'operations;' † and the maintenance of this line of operations is the one object which must never be

* I make this endeavour to elucidate the true character of the operation for the purpose of causing the reader to understand the kind of hazard which was involved in the march along the coast, and also in order to lay the ground for explaining (in a future volume) the causes which afterwards brought upon the army cruel sufferings and privations.

† This is generally, but not invariably, the same line as the one by which he has advanced.

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absent from his mind. The farther he goes, the more he needs to keep up an incessant communicaton with his 'base;' and yet, since the line is lengthening as he advances, it is constantly becoming more and more liable to be cut. Such a disaster as that he looks upon as nearly equal to ruin, and there is hardly anything that he will refuse to sacrifice for the defence of the dusty or mud-deep cart-roads, which give him his means of living and fighting.

On the other hand, the commander of a 'moveable 'column' begins his campaign by wilfully placing himself in those very circumstances which would bring ruin upon an army carrying on regular operations. He does not profess nor attempt to hold fast any 'line of operations' connecting him with his resources. He says to his enemy, 'Surround me if 'you will; gather upon my front; hover round me 'on flank and rear. Do not affront me too closely, 'unless you want to see something of my cavalry 'and my horse artillery; but, keeping at a courteous 'distance, you may freely occupy the whole country 'through which I pass. I care nothing for the roads 'by which I have come. What I need whilst my task 'is doing, I carry along with me. I have an enterprise 'in hand. That achieved, I shall march towards the 'resources which my countrymen have prepared for 'me. Those resources I will reach or else perish.' If an army engaged in regular operations were likened to an engine drawing its supplies by means of long pipes from a river, the principle of the

'moveable column' would be well enough tokened by that simple skinful of water which—carried on the back of a camel—is the life of men passing a desert.

Each of the two systems has its advantages and its drawbacks. The advantages enjoyed by an army undertaking regular operations are:—the lasting character of its power, and its comparative security against great disasters. The general conducting an army in regular operations is constantly replenishing his strength by drawing from his 'base' fresh troops and supplies to compensate the havoc which time and the enemy—or even time alone—will always be working in his army; and if he meets with a check, he retires upon a line already occupied by portions of his force, already strewed with his magazines. He retires in short upon a road prepared for his reception, and the further he retreats, the nearer he is to his great resources. The drawbacks attending this system are the great quantity of means of land-transport required for keeping up the communication, and the eternal necessity of having to be ready with a sufficient force to defend every mile of the 'line of operations' against the enterprises of the enemy.

The advantages of the 'moveable column' are:—that its means of land-transport may be comparatively small—may in fact be proportioned to the limited duration of the service which it undertakes; and that, not being clogged with the duty of maintaining a 'line of operations,' it has, in truth, nothing to

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defend except itself. But grave drawbacks limit the power of a 'moveable column.' In the first place, it is an instrument fitted only for temporary use, because, during the service in which it is engaged, it has no resources to rely upon, except what it carries along with it. Another drawback is the hazard it incurs—not of mere defeat, but—of total extermination; for it is a force which has left no dominion in its wake, and if it falls back, it falls into the midst of enemies having hold of the country around, and emboldened by seeing it retreat.

Then, also, a moveable column, even though it be never defeated in any pitched battle, is liable to be brought to ruin by being well harassed; and very inferior troops, or even armed peasants, if they have spirit and enterprise, may put it in peril; for, having the command of the country all round it, they can easily prepare their measures for vexing the column by day and by night. Again, the 'moveable column' cannot send its sick and wounded to the rear. It must either abandon the sufferers, or else find means of carrying them wherever it marches, and this, of course, is a task which is rendered more and more difficult by every succeeding combat. Again, if the 'moveable column' is brought to frequent halts by the necessity of self-defence, there is danger that the operation in which it is engaged will last to a time beyond the narrow limit of the supplies which it is able to carry along with it.

In Algeria the French had brought the system of using small 'moveable columns' to a high state of

perfection; and there one might see a force complete in all arms, carrying with it the bread and the cartridges, and driving betwixt its battalions the little herd of cattle, which would enable it to live and to fight; one might see it bidding farewell for perhaps several weeks to all its communications, and boldly venturing into the midst of a wilderness alive with angry foes; but the Arabs and Kabyles, though not without some of the warlike virtues, were upon the whole too unintelligent and too feeble to be able to put the system of the 'moveable column' to a test sufficing to prove that the contrivance would hold good in Europe.

Upon the whole, it may be acknowledged that, for operating in a country where the enemy is looked upon as at all formidable, the employment of a 'moveable column' is a measure which will be likely to win more favour from those who love an adventure, than from those who are acquainted with the art of war.

But whichever of the two methods be chosen, it is of great moment to choose decisively, taking care that the operations are carried on in a way consistent with the principle of the system on which they proceed. A general conducting regular operations must be wary, circumspect, and resolutely patient. The leader of a 'moveable column' must be swift, and, even for very safety's sake, he may have to be venturesome, for what would be rashness in another may in him be rigid prudence. The two systems are so opposite, that to confuse the two, or to import into

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the practice of one of them the practice applicable to the other, is to run into grave troubles and dangers. Yet this is what the Allies did. When the English Government committed to this enterprise a large proportion of their small, brilliant army, and appointed to the command of it a general mature in years and schooled by his long subordination to Wellington, they acted as though they meant that the army should engage with all due prudence in regular operations. When they ordered that this force should make a descent upon the Crimea without intending to prepare for it a base of operations at the landing-place, they caused it to act as a 'move-'able column.' It will be seen hereafter that from this ambiguity of purpose, or rather from this dimness of sight, the events of the campaign took their shape.

Again, it is right to see how far it be possible to change with the same force from one of the two systems to the other. Upon this, it can be said that an army engaged in regular operations may well enough be able to furnish forth a 'moveable column;' but to hope that a 'moveable column' will be able to gather to itself all at once the lasting strength of an army prepared for regular operations is to hope for what cannot be. It is true, as we shall see hereafter, that by dint of great effort and the full command of the sea, the two mighty nations of the West were able in time to convert the remains of their 'move-'able column' into an army fitted for regular operations, but we shall have to remember that before the

one system could be effectually replaced by the other, the soldiery underwent cruel sufferings.

The Allies were to operate as a 'moveable column.'

The 63,000 invaders now preparing to march towards the south were the largest, and by far the best appointed force that the Powers of modern Europe had ever dared to engage in what (as distinguishing it from regular operations) may rightly be called an adventure. Their plan was to advance towards the north of Sebastopol, suffering the enemy to close round their rear, and intending to march every day to a new point of contact with the fleet. It was only at the mouths of the rivers that the cliffs between Old Fort and Sebastopol left room for anything like a landing-place; and (except so far as concerned the mere interchange of signals) the land-forces, whilst marching from the banks of one river to the banks of another, could not expect to be in communication with the fleets. Moreover, the Allied Generals were still in ignorance of the numerical strength of the enemy whom they were thus to defy. All they knew was that, so far as concerned his numbers of brave, steady, highly drilled troops, the Czar was reported to be the foremost potentate of the world; and that the publicity of the Allied counsels had given him a good deal of time for reinforcing the garrisons of the invaded province.

It may be said that since the Allied armies were to be attended along the coast by their fleets, they were not in the strictest sense a 'moveable column.' Each night, no doubt, they expected to be in communication with their ships, but, during each of the

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marches they were about to undertake, their dangers were to be in all respects the same as those which attend upon any other 'moveable column;' for every morning they were to cast loose from the ties which connected them with their resources, as well as with their means of retreat, and were to ground their hopes of recovering their communications upon their power to force their way through a country held by the enemy. In short, the Allied armies were a 'moveable column;' but a moveable column which could hope to find means of succour, and, if necessary, of retreat, by fighting its way to a point of contact with the attendant fleets, and covering its withdrawal by a victory. There is the more need for showing this by dint of words, since it happened that the true nature of the expedition was obscured by the course of events. It passed for a measure more prudent than it really was, because Prince Mentschikoff being wilful and unskilled did not take the right means for exposing its rashness.

Perilous character of the march from Old Fort.

The march now about to be undertaken by the invaders was of such a kind that an enterprising enemy who understood his calling might bring them to a halt whenever he chose; and, forcing them to try to convert their flank into a front, might compel them to fight a battle with their back to the sea-cliff: to fight, in short, upon ground where defeat would be ruin. When, therefore, on the 19th of September, 1854, the Allied armies broke up from their bivouacs and marched towards the south, they were engaging in a venturesome enterprise.

It seems that, although by human contrivance a whole people may be shut out from the knowledge of momentous events in which its armies are taking a part, there is yet a subtle essence of truth which will permeate into the mind of a nation thus kept in ignorance. To a degree which freemen can hardly imagine to be possible, the first Napoleon had succeeded in hiding the achievements of the English army from the sight of the French people; and since the French in after years were little tempted to gather up by aid of history the events which they had been hindered from learning in the form of 'news,' there was—not merely in the French army, but even in all France—a very scant knowledge of the way in which the two mighty nations of the West had encountered one another in the great war. Yet, now that the time had come for testing the faith which one army had in the prowess of the other, it suddenly appeared that a belief in the quality of the English soldier was seated as deep in the mind of the French army as though it were a belief founded upon historic knowledge. This will be understood by observing the relative place which the French commander was content to take in the order of march, and by looking at it in connexion with what then promised to be the character of the impending campaign.

When once the invaders had landed and seized the coast-road, the one line of communication which the Russians could trust to for linking the garrison of Sebastopol to the mainland was by the great road which passes through Bakshi Seräi and Simpheropol.

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It was vital to the Russian commander to be able to hold this road, for by that his reinforcements were to come. On the other hand, he had to try to cover Sebastopol; but such was the direction in which the Allies were preparing to march upon the place that by manœuvring with his back towards the great road passing through Simpheropol he could cling to his line of communication, and yet be able to come down upon the flank of the invading armies whilst they were marching across his front. In this way he would cover Sebastopol much more effectively than by risking his communications in order to place his army like a mere inert block between the invaders and their prey. Moreover he was known to be relatively strong in cavalry, and the country was of such a kind that the Allies advancing from Old Fort to the Belbec would have upon their left a fair undulating steppe such as horsemen exult to look upon. It was therefore to be expected that the whole stress of the task undertaken by the invaders would be thrown in the first instance upon that portion of the Allied force which might be chosen to form their left wing.

The fate of the whole Allied army dependent upon the firmness of that portion of it which should take the left.

In the armies of Europe the right is the side of precedence, and from the time that the Western Powers had begun to act together in Turkey, the French had always claimed, or rather had always taken, the right. Now it happened that both in Turkey and in the Crimea the side of precedence was the side nearest to the sea, whilst the left was the side nearest to the enemy. Lord Raglan had observed all this, but he

The French take the right.

had observed in silence; and finding the right always seized by our Allies, he had quietly put up with the left. Yet he was not without humour; and now, when he saw that in this hazardous movement along the coast the French were still taking the right, there was something like archness in his way of remarking that, although the French were bent upon taking precedence of him, their courtesy still gave him the post of danger. This he well might say, for, so far as concerned the duty of covering the venturesome march which was about to be undertaken, the whole stress of the enterprise was thrown upon the English army. The French force was covered on its right flank by the sea, on its front and rear by the fire from the steamers, and on its left by the English army. On the other hand, the English army, though covered on its right flank by the French, was exposed in front, and in rear, and on its whole left flank, to the full brunt of the enemy's attacks. If the Russian General should act in anything like conformity to the principles of the art of war, the whole weight of his attacks would have to be met in the first instance by the English alone; and although the French would have an opportunity of acting as a reserve, they would do so under circumstances rendering it very difficult for them to retrieve any check sustained by their Allies. In short, the French could not but know that, if the enemy should direct his enterprises against the open left flank of the invaders, the least weakness on the part of the English might enable him to roll up

Their trustfulness and good sense.

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the whole Allied force, involving French and English alike in one common disaster. Yet, so steadfast was the trust which the French reposed in the English, so unshaken the courage and good sense with which they committed themselves to the prowess of their ancient foe, that they never for an instant sought to meddle with the duty of covering the march from an attack on the left flank. They planned that the English should be there.

The advance begun.

On the morning of the 19th of September the Allied armies began their advance towards the south. On the right and nearest the sea the French army marched in a formation adopted by Marshal Bugeaud at the battle of Isly. The outline of the ground covered by their troops took the shape of a lozenge—a lozenge whereof the foremost apex was formed by the 1st Division, the angles on either flank by the 2nd and 3rd, and the rearmost point by the 4th Division. Within the mascle or hollow lozenge thus formed, there marched the Turkish battalions and those portions of the artillery and the convoy which were not specially attached to one or other of the divisions. Each French division* marched in two columns, consisting each of one brigade, and the artillery and incumbrances belonging to each division marched between the two

The order of march.

* It was intended and ordered that the 1st and 4th French Divisions should affect a lozenge formation analogous to that which characterized the general order of march, but the direction was not practically attended to. No one knows better than an African General the art of enfolding the helpless portions of a column in battalions of infantry; but the French force being covered on all sides in the way already described, no elaborate precautions were needed.

brigades. Each brigade was in regimental column at sectional distance. The Allied fleets slowly gliding along the coast covered the French army on its right flank, and carefully reconnoitred every seam and hollow of the ground in front which could be reached by the eyes of men looking from the ships.

Since the English army was to advance in a way which left it open to the enemy in front, in rear, and on its left flank, Lord Raglan of course deemed it likely that he would be attacked in his march; and that, upon smooth open ground, his army would be called upon to defend both itself and its trailing convoy against the assaults of an enemy who was strong in the cavalry arm. But this task was rendered less hard than it would otherwise be by the quality of the English soldier, and the peculiar order of battle in which he loves to fight. He fights in line; and therefore with his moderate force of infantry and artillery Lord Raglan was able to resolve that, from whatever quarter the onset might come, he would be ready to meet it with a front of bayonets and field artillery extending along nearly two miles of ground.

In order to be able at a few minutes' notice to show a front of this extent either towards the south, the east, or the north, Lord Raglan kept each of his infantry divisions massed in close column, and he disposed his 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and light divisions in such a way that the whole body had both a front and a depth of two divisions. A body which moves

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in columns of this kind is said to be marching 'in 'grand divisions.'* The distances between the divisions were so arranged that, without dislocation, they could form line either in front or towards the flank. The artillery attached to each division marched on the right or seaward flank of the force to which it belonged.

The advance guard consisted of the 11th Hussars and the 13th Light Dragoons, under Lord Cardigan. In rear of the small infantry advanced-guard, which followed the horsemen, there marched a detachment of the Rifles in extended order. Then on the right came the 2nd Division, and on the left the Light Division: the 3rd Division marched in rear of the 2nd, and the Light Division was followed by the 1st Division. Of the 4th Division the 63rd Regiment and two companies of the 46th had been left (with a squadron of the 4th Light Dragoons) to clear the beach at Kamishlu; but the remainder of the division, under Sir George Cathcart, marched in rear of the 1st Division. Along the left flank of the advancing columns, and at a distance from them of some 200 yards, were riflemen in skirmishing order, and a line of skirmishers from the same force closed the rear of the infantry. On the left flank, and nearly in the same alignment as the leading infantry divisions, was the 8th Hussars, and on the same flank, but in an alignment less advanced than the rear-

* There are four or five different terms which have been used by experienced Generals in describing this disposition of troops, but the authority on which I place the most reliance sanctions the term used in the text.

most of the infantry columns, there was the 17th Lancers. The cattle and the baggage marched in rear of the 3rd Division, and so as to be covered towards the left by the 4th Division. Then followed the rear-guard, and then a line of Rifles disposed at intervals in extended order. Last of all came the 4th Light Dragoons, under Lord George Paget.

The march.

Thus marched the strength of the Western Powers. The sun shone hotly as on a summer's day in England, but breezes springing fresh from the sea floated briskly along the hills. The ground was an undulating steppe alluring to cavalry. It was rankly covered with a herb like southernwood; and when the stems were crushed under foot by the advancing columns, the whole air became laden with bitter fragrance. The aroma was new to some. To men of the western counties of England it was so familiar that it carried them back to childhood and the village church; they remembered the nosegay of "boy's love" that used to be set by the Prayer-Book of the Sunday maiden too demure for the vanity of flowers.

In each of the close massed columns which were formed by our four complete divisions there were more than 5000 foot soldiers. The colours were flying; the bands at first were playing; and once more the time had come round when in all this armed pride there was nothing of false majesty; for already videttes could be seen on the hillocks, and (except at the spots where our horsemen were marching) there was nothing but air and sunshine, and, at intervals, the dark form of a single rifleman,

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to divide our columns from the enemy. But more warlike than trumpet and drum was the grave quiet which followed the ceasing of the bands. The pain of weariness had begun. Few spoke. All toiled. Waves break upon the shore; and though they are many, still distance will gather their numberless cadences into one. So also it was with one ceaseless hissing sound that a wilderness of tall crisping herbage bent under the tramp of the coming thousands. As each mighty column marched on, one hardly remembered at first the weary frames, the aching limbs which composed it; for—instinct with its own proper soul and purpose, absorbing the volitions of thousands of men, and bearing no likeness to the mere sum of the human beings out of whom it was made—the column itself was the living thing—the slow, monstrous unit of strength which walks the modern earth where empire is brought into question. But a little while, and then the sickness which had clung to the army began to make it seen that the columns in all their pride were things built with the bodies of suffering mortals.

Sickness and failing strength of many of the soldiers.

We saw that before the embarkation our troops had fallen into a weak state of health, and that even of those who were free from serious illness there were hardly any who had been able to keep their accustomed strength. It had been hoped that the voyage would bring back health and strength; but the hope proved vain; and Lord Raglan knowing the weakly state of the men, had ordered that they should be allowed to enfold the few things they most needed in

found an opening in the cliff before him, which promised to give him means of ascent. Into this opening he threw some skirmishers, and these, encountering no enemy, were followed by the main body of the brigade, and by the Turkish battalions. Pursuing the course thus opened to him, Bouat slowly crept forward with his column, and wound his way up and round towards the summit of the cliff. But it was only by marching with a very narrow front that he was able to effect this movement; and it was not until a late period of the action that he was able to show himself in force upon the plateau. Even then he was without artillery. The troops under his command had not an opportunity of engaging in any combat with the enemy, because they marched upon that part of the heights which the Russian General had determined to leave unoccupied.

Further advance of Autemarre's brigade.

Meanwhile Bosquet, marching in person with Autemarre's brigade, traversed the village of Almatamack, forded the river at ten minutes past two o'clock, and immediately began to ascend the road leading up to the plateau. The road, he found, was uninjured, and guarded by no troops. His artillery began the ascent, and meanwhile the keen and active Zouaves, impatient of the winding road, climbed the heights by shorter and steeper paths, and so swiftly, that our sailors, looking from the ships (men accustomed to perpendicular racing), were loud in their praise of the briskness with which the Frenchmen rushed up and 'manned' the cliff.

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As yet, however, Bosquet had encountered no enemy.

Guns brought out against him from Ulukul Akles.

It has been seen that the position taken up by Prince Mentschikoff fell short of the sea-shore by a distance of more than two miles, and that he was not in military occupation of the cliff, now ascended by Bosquet with Autemarre's brigade; but also, it will be remembered that at the village, in rear of the cliff, called Ulukul Akles, there had been posted some days before one of the Minsk battalions of infantry, with four pieces of light artillery, and that the detachment had there remained. These four guns were now brought out of the village, and, after a time, were placed in battery at a spot near the village of Ulukul Tiouets and within range of the point where the Zouaves were beginning to crown the summit of the cliff. The 'Minsk' battalion was not brought into sight, but at some distance, on the cliff overlooking the beach, there could be seen some squadrons of horse.

Bosquet after a momentary check establishes himself on the cliff.

As soon as a whole battalion of Zouaves had gained the summit, they were drawn up and formed on the plateau. No shot was as yet fired by the enemy; and General Bosquet, with his staff, ascended a tumulus, or mound, on the top of the cliff, in order to reconnoitre the ground.

Meanwhile, his artillery was coming up, and the first two of his guns had just reached the summit, when one of the carriages broke down. This accident embarrassed the rest of the column, and whilst the hindrance lasted the enemy opened fire from his

four guns.* The fire and the breaking-down of the gun-carriage produced for the moment an ill effect upon the head of the French column, and one of its battalions fell back under the shelter of the acclivity. But this check did not last. The road blocked by the broken-down gun-carriage was quickly cleared, the guns were moved up rapidly, and swarms of skirmishers, pressed up in all directions. Then the troops which were already on the summit moved forward, and lodged themselves upon a part of the plateau a little in advance of the steep by which they had ascended.†

Measures taken by Kiriakoff upon observing Bosquet's turning movement.

As soon as he began to hear guns in the direction of the West Cliff, Kiriakoff took from his reserves two of his 'Moscow' battalions, and posted them, the one low down, and the other higher up, on that part of the hill which looked down upon the White Homestead. He also drew from his reserve eight light pieces of artillery, and placed them in battery facing towards the sea, so as to command, though at a long range, the part of the plateau which Bosquet crossed by the Hadji road. Kiriakoff did not take upon himself to make any other dispositions for dealing with the turning movement which threatened his left.

Horsemen on the cliff.

Amongst the French who were gaining the summit of the plateau, no one seems to have divined the reason why a little body of Russian horsemen

* Half of the No. 4 battery of the 17th brigade of the Russian artillery.

† Sir Edward Colebrooke saw this operation from the deck of one of our ships of war, and describes it very well in his memorial. He was a skilful and very accurate observer of military movements.

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should have made its appearance on the cliff overlooking the sea, nor why, without attempting hostile action, it had tenaciously clung to the ground. Those troopers were the attendants of a man in great trouble. They were the escort of Prince Mentschikoff.

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The effect of Bosquet's turning movement upon the mind of Prince Mentschikoff.

The enemy's survey of the Allied armies had been so carelessly made, and had been so little directed towards the sea-shore, that Bosquet, it seems, had already got near to the river before his movement was perceived. Prince Mentschikoff, with Gortschakoff and Kvetzinski at his side, had been standing on the Kourganè Hill, watching the advance of the English army, and giving bold orders for its reception; but presently he was told that a French division was advancing towards the unoccupied cliff on his extreme left. At first, he was so shocked by the dislocation which his ideas would have to undergo if his left flank were indeed to be turned, that he had no refuge for his confusion except in mere disbelief, and he angrily refused to give faith to the unwelcome tidings.* For days he had been on the ground which he himself had chosen for the great struggle; but he was so certain that he had effectually learnt its character by glancing at its general features, that he had not, it seems, had the industry to ride over it, nor even to find out the

* Chodasiewicz.

roads by which the villagers were accustomed to ascend the heights with their waggons.

He seems to have imagined it to be impossible that ground so steep as the cliff had appeared to be could be ascended by troops at any point westward of the Telegraph Height; but when at length he was compelled to know that the French and the Turks were marching in force towards the mouth of the river, his mind underwent so great a revulsion, that having hitherto taken no thought for his left, he now seemed to have no care for any other part of the position. In his place, a General, calm, skilful, and conscious of knowing the ground, might have seen the turning movement of the French and the Turks with unspeakable joy; but instead of tranquilly regarding the whole field of battle under the new aspect which was given to it by this manœuvre, he only laboured to see how best he could imitate the mistake of his adversary—how best he could shift his strength to the distant, unoccupied cliff which was threatened by Bosquet's advance. The nature of the ground enabled him to make lateral movements in his line without much fear of disturbance from the Allies; and as soon as he saw that the French were detaching two-fifths of their army in order to turn his flank, he wildly determined to engage a portion of his scanty force in a march from his right hand to his left—in a march which would take him far to the westward of his chosen ground. For this purpose he snatched two light batteries from his centre and his right, gave orders that he

His measures for dealing with it. His flank march.

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was to be followed by the four 'Moscow' battalions which were the reserve of his left wing, and by the three 'Minsk' battalions which formed part of his 'Great Reserves,' and then with some squadrons of hussars rode off towards the sea.

Mentschikoff on the cliff.

It was certain that a long time would elapse before the troops engaged in this vain journey could be expected to get into action with Bosquet; and meanwhile the power of the whole force engaged in the flank movement was neutralised. But that was not all. Prince Mentschikoff's mind was so strangely subverted by the sensation of having his left turned, that, although it must needs be a long time before he could be in force on the West Cliff, he could not endure to be personally absent from the ground to which he now fastened his thoughts. So, when, with his Staff and the horsemen of his escort, he had got to the ground overlooking the sea, near the village of Ulukul Tiouets, and had seen the first groups of the Zouaves peering up on the crest of the hill, he still remained where he was. Whilst he sat in his saddle, the appearance of his escort drew fire from the shipping, and four of his suite were struck down. But the Prince would not move. It is likely that the fire assuaged the pain of his thoughts.

His batteries at length coming up, there begins a cannonade between his and Bosquet's artillery.

At this time, it would seem, he gave either no orders, or none of a kind supplying real guidance for his generals. Lingering upon the ground without troops at hand, he impotently watched the progress of Autemarre's brigade. His light batteries soon came up; but neither these, nor the squadrons of hussars

which formed his escort, were the best of implements for pushing back General Bosquet into the steep mountain road by which he had ascended; and in the hands of Prince Mentschikoff they were simply powerless. However, his guns, when they came up, were placed in battery, and, Bosquet's guns being now on the plateau, there began a cannonade at long range between the twelve guns of the French and the whole of the light artillery which Prince Mentschikoff had hurried into this part of the field. At the same time the French artillery drew some shots from the distant guns which Kiriakoff had placed looking seaward on the Telegraph Height; and the annals of the French artillery record with pride that the twelve pieces which Bosquet brought up with him engaged and overpowered no less than forty of the enemy's guns. Nor is this statement altogether without something like a basis of truth, for the Russians had now thirty-six pieces of artillery on the West Cliff, or the Telegraph Height; and, though most of them at this time were so placed that their gunners could attempt some shots at a more or less long range against Bosquet's guns, the French artillerymen not only held their ground without having a gun disabled, but soon pushed forward their batteries to a more commanding part of the plateau.

Bosquet maintains himself.

By this time the seven battalions of infantry which Prince Mentschikoff had been moving flankwise were very near to the spot where their General had been eagerly awaiting them; but just as he was

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about to have these troops in hand, the Prince seems to have come to the conclusion that, after all, he could do nothing in the part of the field to which he had dragged them. He was brought, perhaps, to this belief by seeing that the French and the Turks, who had been crossing the river at its mouth, were now beginning to show their strength towards the westernmost part of the cliff, for he may not have known that this force, being without artillery, could be easily prevented from advancing against his batteries on the open plateau. At all events, Prince Mentschikoff now thought it necessary to reverse his flank movement, and to travel back towards his centre with all the forces which he had brought from thence to his left.

Mentschikoff counter-marching.

But when the Prince began this last counter-movement, he was already beginning to fall under the dominion of events in another part of the field.

Position of Bosquet on the cliff.

Bosquet now stood undisturbed on the part of the plateau which he had reached. But he was not without grounds for deep anxiety. It did not fall to his lot on that day to be engaged in any conflict except with the enemy's artillery; but, from the moment when he began to establish himself on the plateau until towards the close of the action, he was in a dangerously isolated position; for he had no troops around him except Autemarre's brigade, and until the action was near its end he got no effective support either from Bouat on his right, or from Canrobert on his left.

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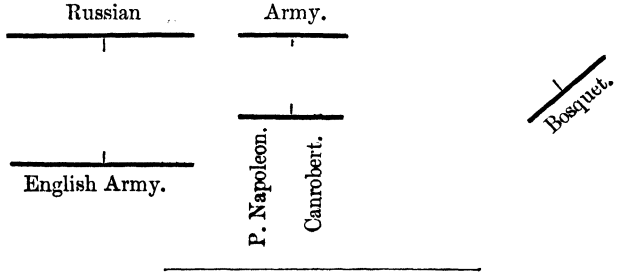
As soon as Marshal St. Arnaud perceived that Bosquet would be able to gain the summit of the cliff, he tried to give him the support towards his left which his position, when he got established on the cliff, would deeply need; and he determined that the time was come for the immediate advance of his 1st and 3rd Divisions. Addressing General Canrobert and Prince Napoleon, and giving them the signal for the attack, he said, I am told, these words: 'With men such as you I have no orders to 'give. I have but to point to the enemy!'* Hitherto these two French Divisions had been nearly in the same alignment as the leading divisions of the English army; but now that they were ordered forward, leaving the English army still halted, the true character of the movement to be undertaken by the Allies was for the first time developed. Their array was to be what strategists call 'an order of battle in three échelons by the right, the first, 'échelon making a turning movement.' †

St. Arnaud orders the advance of Canrobert and Prince Napoleon.

The order into which the Allies now fell.



* I have this from an officer who assures me that he heard the words.

† 'Un ordre de bataille à trois échelons par la droite, le premier échelon 'attaquant par le flanc.' These are the words in which a staff officer pre-

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Lord Raglan's conception of the part he had to take.

This disposition for the attack was not the result of any agreement made in words between Marshal St. Arnaud and Lord Raglan. It resulted almost naturally, if so one may speak, from Bosquet's turning movement, from the extent of the front which the enemy was now seen to present, and from the character of the ground. Just as the Marshal had kept back his 1st and 3rd Divisions till he saw that Bosquet could gain the height, so Lord Raglan, according to his conception at this time, had to see whether Canrobert and Prince Napoleon could establish themselves upon the Telegraph Height, before he endangered the continuity of the order of battle by allowing the English army to advance.

Artillery contest between the Russian and the French batteries.

During the first forty minutes of the cannonade directed against the English infantry there had been no corresponding fire upon the French from the Telegraph Height; because the guns in that part of the field had been placed at first so low down on the hill-side that no use could be made of them, and the process of moving them to higher ground was tedious: but when Kiriakoff had at length established a couple of batteries upon the high ground near the Telegraph, * the fire of those guns passing over the heads of the Taroutine and the militia battalions, began to molest the divisions which were led by Canrobert and Prince Napoleon.

sent in the action, and very high in the French service, has described to me the advance of the Allies. See the diagram, a much better guide than mere words.

* These were the batteries before spoken of as those from which shots at long range were attempted against Bosquet's artillery.

On the other hand, the artillery belonging to the dvisions of Canrobert and Prince Napoleon came down to a convenient ground above the edge of the vineyards, and opened fire upon the columns of the 'militia' battalions, now posted much farther up than before on the opposite height. And with effect; for although the range did not admit of great slaughter, some men were struck, and the rest, though they did not yet move, began to be displeased with the ground on which they stood.*

The swarms of skirmishers which the French threw forward went briskly into the cover, forded the river, and then made themselves at home in the broken ground at the foot of the Telegraph Height. When the soldier is upon service of this kind his natural character—neutralized in general by organization—is often seen to reassert itself. One man, prying eagerly forward, would labour to get shots at Russian sharpshooters still lingering near the river; another would sit down, take out his little store of food and drink, and be glad to engage with any one who passed him in something like cynical talk concerning the pastime of war. But, upon the whole, French skirmishers push on with great boldness and skill.

Canrobert's advance across the river.

When the foremost ranks of Canrobert's massed battalions had entered the vineyards, each man got through as best he could, and rapidly crossed the river; and though during part of the advance the troops were under the fire of the guns on the Tele-

* Chodasiewicz.

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graph Height, yet the nature of the acclivity before them was of such a kind that the further they advanced (provided the heads of the battalions did not show themselves on the plateau above the broken ground) the better they were covered from fire. And, except some lingering skirmishers, they had no infantry opposed to them at this time; for the two 'Moscow' battalions which Kiriakoff had sent down towards the ford of the White Homestead were now, it seems, made to take part in the marches and countermarches which Mentschikoff was directing in person, and there were then no other Russian columns in this part of the field.* So, when the head of Canrobert's Division gained the broken ground on the Russian side of the river, it was for the moment sheltered; but if it had then ascended above the broken ground so as to peer up over the crest, and face the open plateau at the top, it would not only have come under the fire of artillery, but would have before it the four battalions of militiamen, supported by the four Taroutine battalions.

His troops are sheltered from fire by the steepness of the hill-side.

For an army advancing to the attack, a rim of sheltered ground on the verge of the enemy's posi-

* There is some ground for supposing that the second 'Moscow' battalion was for a while forgotten, and that, not receiving in due time the order to rejoin the other battalions of the corps, it was left alone in the ravine till it found itself opposed to Canrobert's whole Division. If this is the case, and if there resulted anything which could be called a combat between the Russian battalion and the French Division, the statement that Canrobert was not met by any troops except skirmishers would have to be qualified. The statement of Chodasiewicz on this point receives no support from Kiriakoff, and that is the reason why I have not adopted it. Chodasiewicz did not belong to the 'Moscow' corps.

tion is of infinite use, because it enables the assailants to make without hurry their final arrangements for the assault; but to troops which are not propelled by the decisive order of some resolute commander, such shelter as that is sometimes a snare, because it tempts men to hang back. In such a situation the best troops will often abstain from going forward of their own accord, for it seems to officers and men, that if they are to quit good shelter and go out into the storm, they ought, at the least, to know that the movement is one really intended, and is needful to the purpose of the battle. The duty of pressing forward to terminate the isolation of Bosquet rested primarily with the general of the 1st Division.

Duty attaching upon the commander of the First French Division.

General Canrobert was a man of whom great hopes were entertained. According to every test which could be applied by school and college examinations, he promised to be an accomplished general. To the military studies of his youth he had added the experience of many campaigns in Africa; and even in the French army, where brave men abound, his personal valour had become a subject of remark. He was so deeply trusted by his Emperor, that he had become the bearer of a then secret paper which was to put him at the head of the French army in the event of St. Arnaud's death. He had the misfortune to have upon his hands the blood of the Parisians slain by his brigade on the 4th of December; but it was said—to his honour—that he, more than all the other generals employed at that time, had loathed the work of having to abet the midnight

General Canrobert.

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seizure of his country's foremost generals. His spirit, they say, had been broken by the pestilence which some few weeks before had come upon his Division in the country of the Danube; but the extremity of the grief to which he then gave way had so much to justify it in the appalling nature of the calamity which slew his troops, that it was not a conclusive proof of his being wanting in military composure. The most successful of respondents to school and college questions now had to undergo a new test. Commanding a fine French division, he had the head of his column close under a height occupied by the enemy; and this at a time when the isolated condition of a French brigade on his right seemed to make it a business of great moment for him to be able to bring support to his comrades.

But at the point where Canrobert faced the height, he found it impracticable to drag up artillery, and he was obliged to send his guns all the way down to the village of Almatamack, in order that they might there ford the river and ascend to the top of the plateau by the road which Bosquet had taken. This operation could not but take a long time; and what Canrobert was now called upon to determine was, whether he would wait until his artillery had completed its circuitous and difficult journey, or at once carry forward his infantry to the summit of the plateau, and engage the battalions there posted. He determined to wait. The maxims of the French army discourage the idea of bringing infantry into action upon open ground

Unable to get up his artillery he is unwilling to advance, without it, upon open ground.

without the support of artillery; and Canrobert did not, it seems, conceive that the predicament in which Bosquet stood was a circumstance which dispensed him from the observance of a general rule. So, whilst he was thus waiting for his artillery, he did not deem it right to push forward his battalions on the open plateau, but he brought the head of his Division to a point high up on the steep broken side of the hill, and extended it, in single and double battalion columns, on either side of the track by which he had ascended. He spread himself more towards his left than towards his right, and did not move any of his battalions in such a way as to be able to give a hand to Bosquet.

He posts his battallions on the higher steeps of the Telegraph Height close under the plateau.

Prince Napoleon's Division hung back in the valley, and the bulk of it at this time was still on the north bank of the river.

The bulk of Prince Napoleon's Division still on the north bank of the river.

Although the head of Canrobert's Division, being under the heights on the Russian side of the river, was enjoying good shelter, the masses of troops which stood more towards the rear, including some of Canrobert's battalions and the great bulk of Prince Napoleon's Division, were exposed to the fire of the guns on the Telegraph Height. They suffered; and a feeling of discouragement began to spread.

Fire sustained by such of the French troops as are not forward enough to have shelter from the hill-side.

Marshal St. Arnaud had understood the gravity of the danger which would result from any delay in the advance of his centre; but, to meet it, he used an ill-chosen safeguard. The way to send help to Bosquet was to give Canrobert due warrant to move up at once upon the plateau, whether with or without his

Discouragement.

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artillery.* What the Marshal did, however, was to order up his reserves, sending one brigade of his 4th Division to follow the march of Bosquet, and the other to support Canrobert. This last measure was actually a source of weakness rather than of strength, for, as far as numbers were concerned, Canrobert and Prince Napoleon were already in more than ample strength. With two superb divisions, numbering some 15,000 men, and having Bosquet and Bouat on their right with many thousands more, they were advancing upon a very narrow front; and the bringing up of fresh troops augmented the masses who came under the fire of the guns without at all propelling the leading divisions. So the evil lasted and increased. Inaction in the midst of a battle is hateful to the brave, impetuous Frenchman, and inaction under fire is intolerable to him. The troops towards the rear of the columns, not having the close presence of the enemy to animate them, and being without that shelter from the Russian guns which was enjoyed by the leading battalions, became discontented and uneasy. It was then that there sprang up among the French troops the ill-omened complaint that they were being 'mas-sacred.'

St. Arnaud pushes forward his reserves.

The ill effect of this measure upon the French troops.

Their complaint that they were being 'massacred.'

Anxiety on account of Bosquet.

All this while, Bosquet was on the summit of the cliff with his one brigade, and his isolation, as we

* If the objection to advancing on the plateau without artillery was, according to French ideas, insuperable, an effort, one would think, should have been made to push forward Prince Napoleon's Division. Prince Napoleon had in his front two roads leading up to the Telegraph, and one of these at the least was practicable (and was afterwards used) for artillery.

shall presently see, was becoming a source of great anxiety.

State of the battle at this time.

Minute after minute aides-de-camp were coming to Lord Raglan with these gloomy tidings; and, in truth, the action at this time was going on ill for the Allies. The duty of crowning the West Cliff had been fulfilled with great spirit and dispatch by a small body of men; but the step had not been followed up. Bouat, filing slowly round near the sea with some 9000 men, but without guns, was for the time annulled. Bosquet, with one brigade, stood halted upon the heights which he had climbed, and though happily he had not been assailed by infantry, his advanced and isolated position had become a source of weakness to the Allies. Of the two French divisions, charged with the duty of attacking the front and western flank of the Telegraph Hill, the one had its foremost battalions high up the steep, and on the verge of the open ground at its top; whilst the other was all down in the valley; but (although in different ways, and for different reasons) these divisions were both hanging back; and no French force had hitherto attacked any part of the ground held by the enemy's formed battalions. Meanwhile the batteries still swept the smooth approach to the table-land where the Telegraph stood, and not only kept it free of all assailants, but, pouring their fire over the heads of their own soldiery, were able to throw plunging shots into the midst of Prince Napoleon's Division.

All this while the English army had been kept

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under the fire of the Russian artillery; and although the men had been ordered to lie down, the ground sloping towards the river yielded no shelter, and many had been killed and wounded.

At first our batteries replied; but after a while it had been ascertained that the advantage the enemy had in his commanding ground was too great to be overcome, and the English artillery had ceased to fire. Lord Raglan asked why this was: 'I observe,' said he, 'the enemy's six-pounders amongst us; why 'cannot we send our nine-pounders amongst them?' But he was told that our fire had proved to be ineffectual; and that it was therefore discontinued. He seemed struck. Perhaps the answer which he had received became one of the grounds on which, a few minutes later, he resolved to change the face of the battle.

XV.

Opportunities offered to Mentschikoff.

For some time the course of the action had been offering to the Russian General an opportunity of striking a great blow; and circumstanced as he was it would have been easier for him to gain a signal victory before three o'clock than to stand on the defensive and hold his ground till sunset. The English forces, confronting as they did a position of great natural strength, and having their left on ground as open as a race-course, would have been hampered in every attempt to storm the Great Redoubt if their flank had been assiduously threatened

and now and then charged by the enemy's powerful cavalry. Therefore, if Mentschikoff, checking the English forces by a vigorous use of his horsemen, had undertaken at this time such an advance against Canrobert's Division as was afterwards successfully executed by Kiriakoff, he would have found the French battalions quite soft to his touch, by reason of their want of artillery;* and Canrobert's retreat from the verge of the plateau would have occurred at a time when half the French army was so far from the true scene of conflict as to be unable to give the least help. Except by reckoning broadly upon the quality of the French and the British troops, or else upon the smiles of fortune, it is hard to see how the Allies could then have escaped a disaster. CHAP. XVI.

But men move so blindly in the complex business of war, that often, very often, it is the enemy himself who is the best repairer of their faults.

It was so that day. During the precious hour in which the Russian forces might have wrought a way to great glory, their cavalry were suffered to remain in idleness, and the battalions which formed the instrument afterwards used for striking the blow were marching in vain from east to west, and from west to east. The torpor and the false moves of the enemy countervailed the shortcomings of the Allies.

No combat of any moment was going on at this time. It is true that Major Norcott with the left The battle at this time languished.

* I should not have ventured upon this sentence, if it were not that I am warranted in doing so by what actually occurred a little later. See *post*.

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wing of the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade had gone into the vineyards in front of our Light Division, and by this time he had not only driven the enemy's riflemen from the enclosures, but had even stolen over the river higher up, and was opening fire on the left bank. But everywhere else the battle flagged. The men of our infantry divisions, though they were under the fire of thirty guns, still lay passive upon the ground. Our cavalry awaited orders. Our artillery declined to fire without being able to strike: The Russian and the French artillery continued engaged at long range. No French battalion advanced above the broken ground, though, covering their front and the left flank of their trailing columns, swarms of skirmishers were alive. Of these, some were firing to show where they were, some duelling with the Russian riflemen who yet remained in the valley: others ascended the knolls and vexed any Russians they saw with long, careful shots: others again sat down, and contentedly took their rest.

This languishing of the battle seemed to promise ill for the Allies. They had undertaken to assault the enemy's left; and to that enterprise they stood committed; for they had drawn away from the real field of battle to the West Cliff some fourteen thousand men. Yet since the moment when Bosquet began to ascend the cliff more than forty minutes had elapsed, and nothing had yet been done to win a result from his movement, nor even to give him that support which he very grievously wanted. Both from Bouat on his right and from Canrobert

on his left he was divided by a wide tract of ground.

Hitherto then the operations planned and undertaken by the French had not only done nothing towards carrying the position, but had even brought the Allies into danger.

Causes which had occasioned the failure of the French operations.

The causes of the miscarriage were, the physical obstructions which hindered both Bouat and Canrobert from bringing up their guns with them, and the stiffness of the objection which prevents French generals from engaging their infantry on open ground without the support of artillery. According to the intended plan of operations, Bosquet, after gaining the cliff with his whole column of some 14,000 men, was to bring round his right shoulder in order to fall upon the flank of the Russians, and simultaneously with his appearance on the plateau a vigorous and resolute onslaught was to be made by the rest of the French army upon the front of the enemy's left wing. But Bosquet, as we saw, though he was personally present on the part of the plateau overhanging Almatamack, had only one brigade there, and whether he looked to Bouat on his right or to Canrobert on his left, he looked in either case to a general who, though he had masses of infantry, was without artillery, and he therefore looked in vain. In such circumstances, the utmost that Bosquet could be expected to do was to hold his ground, and this he did.

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For an hour and a half the Allies had lain under fire, without even beginning to assail the enemy's formed battalions. The only ground gained was that occupied by Bosquet. But Bosquet's achievement not having been followed up, his very success now threatened to bring disaster upon the Allies. When a French soldier is one of a body placed in a false position, he knows it, and comments on the fact; and the very force and vivacity of his nature make it difficult to keep him long upon ground to which he feels a scientific objection. A French aide-de-camp came in haste to Lord Raglan, and represented that unless something could be done to support or relieve Bosquet's column it would be 'compromised.' Gifted himself with the command of graceful diction, Lord Raglan was not without fastidious prejudices against particular forms of expression, and it chanced that he bore a singular hatred against the French word which we translate into 'compromised.' So he archly resolved to have the meaning of the word fully expanded into plain French, and he asked the aide-de-camp what would be the actual effect upon the brigade of its being 'compromised.'

A desponding account of Bosquet's condition is brought to Lord Raglan.

The answer was, 'It will retreat.' *

Was it time for the English General to take the battle into his own hands?

* "Battra en retraite."

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So long as Bosquet with Autemarre's brigade stood isolated upon the cliff, and Canrobert's and Prince Napoleon's Divisions remained hanging back in the vineyards and the broken ground below the Telegraph Height, an advance of our forces would plainly distort the Allied line in a hazardous way, and Lord Raglan had watched for the moment when the development of the expected French attack on the Telegraph Height would warrant him in suffering our infantry to go forward.

Lord Raglan resolves to precipitate the advance of the English army.

But he had hitherto watched in vain; and, not knowing how long the causes of the French delay might continue to operate, he resolved to depart from the scheme of action which had hitherto governed him, and to precipitate the advance of the English forces. It is true that whilst Bosquet stood halted on the cliff, whilst Canrobert abstained from assailing the Telegraph Height, and whilst Prince Napoleon's Division was still low down in the valley, the advance of the English forces against the Causeway and the Kourganè Hill would ruin the symmetry of the plan which the French had contrived; and if Bosquet should be obliged to retreat at a time when the English were hotly engaged in an attack upon the enemy's heights, the whole array of the Allies would be brought into peril. But the timely incurring of dangers is proper to the business of war; and, though the enemy had hitherto been torpid and indulgent, the cause of the Allies had fallen into such a plight, that a remedy which involved heavy risks might nevertheless be the right one. And,

Grounds tending to cause, or to justify, the resolve.

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so far as concerned his understanding with the French, Lord Raglan was freed from all care; for he had been already assured that Marshal St. Arnaud anxiously desired him to advance, and one aide-de-camp, as we have seen, had told him plainly that nothing less than a diversion by the English forces would prevent General Bosquet from retreating.

A man may weigh reasons against reasons, but sometimes after all it is the power of the imagination or else some manly passion which comes to strike the balance and lead him on to action. The motive of which Lord Raglan felt the most conscious was the simple and natural longing to cease from being passive. He could no longer endure to see our soldiery lying down without resistance under the enemy's fire.*

Order for the advance of the English infantry.

He had been riding slowly upon the ground between the Great Causeway and the left of the French army; but he now stopped his horse, and the cavalcade which had trailed in his wake whilst he moved, then gathered more closely around him. There were altogether some twenty horsemen; and although with several of them Lord Raglan from time to time talked gaily, yet, so far as concerned the duty of taking thought how best to conduct the action, he was like a man riding in mere solitude, for it was not his custom to seek counsel, and the men around him so held their chief in honour that none of them

* This is the motive for accelerating the advance of the British troops which Lord Raglan avowed to me on the evening of the action.

would have liked to assail him with question or advice. Still, any one there could see that, besides Lord Raglan himself, there was one man of the Head-Quarter Staff whose mind was engaged in the business of the hour. We saw that Airey had already begun to wield great power in the English army. With the power was its burthen. Whilst most of the other men on the Head-Quarter Staff seemed to be merely spectators or messengers, there was care, vexing care on the lean, eager, imperious features of the Quartermaster-General. He was not simply impatient of the delay; he judged it to be a great evil.

It was to him that Lord Raglan now spoke some five words. Whatever it was that was said, it lit the face of the hearer, and turned his look of care into sunshine. The horsemen in the surrounding group rose taller in their saddles and handled their reins like men whose limbs are braced by the joy of passing from expectancy to action. Every man, whether he had heard the words or not, saw in the gladness of his neighbour's face that the moment long awaited was come.

Our infantry was to advance. The order flew; for it was Nolan—the impetuous Nolan—who carried it to the 2nd Division. A few moments later, and the order had reached the Light Division. The whole of the foremost English line from the 47th Regiment on our right to the extreme left of the Light Division rose alert from the ground, dressed well their ranks, and then, having a front of two

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miles with a depth of only two men, marched grandly down the slope.*

XVII.

Evans detaches Adams with two battalions, and with the rest of his Division advances towards the bridge.

Sir De Lacy Evans, commanding the 2nd Division, had before him the blazing village. In that conflagration no man could live, and in order to make good his advance on either side of the flames, he had split his force by detaching General Adams to his right with two regiments† and Turner's battery. With that force Adams, driving before him some Russian skirmishers, marched down towards the ford which divided the French and English armies. Evans himself with four battalions and Fitzmayer's battery of field artillery, had to assail the defences which Prince Mentschikoff had accumulated for the dominion of the Pass and the great road. Soon, however, Evans was a good deal strengthened in the artillery arm; for an opportunity of rendering service in this part of the field was observed and seized by Captain Anderson with a battery belonging to the Light Division, and by Colonel Dacres with a battery belonging to the 1st Division. By the time that the infantry had got down to near the enclosures, eighteen English guns had begun to reply to the

* Computing from the right of the 47th Regiment, the English front was a little short of two miles, but, computing it from the ground on which Adams was advancing, the front was more than two miles in extent.

† The 41st and 49th.

‡ The 1st brigade, under Pennefather, and the 47th Regiment, belonging to Adams's brigade.

fire which the enemy was pouring upon Pennefather's brigade.

The conflict in which he became engaged.

But Evans's task was a hard one; for having on his right an impassable conflagration, and being cramped towards his left by our Light Division, he was forced to move along the unsheltered line of the Great Causeway upon a narrow and crowded front; and this under a converging fire of artillery; for with the sixteen guns of the Causeway batteries, and the flanking fire poured down from the left shoulder of the Great Redoubt, the enemy swept the main road and the bridge, and searched the fords both above and below it. And, whilst the enemy's batteries thus dealt with the more open approaches to the bridge, his infantry was strong in that part of the ground which could not be searched by round-shot, for, posted in the covert on either side of the Causeway, Prince Mentschikoff had six battalions,* and besides these, there was a great portion of the sixteen battalions posted on the slopes of the Kourganè Hill which was near enough to be available for the defence of the Causeway as well as the Great Redoubt. Moreover, the enemy's reserves were so disposed as to be in close and easy communication with this part of the field. The Russian skirmishers at this time,

* Viz. the four battalions of Borodino, the 6th battalion of 'riflemen,' and the battalion of sappers and miners. According to some accounts, there were only a few companies of the sappers and miners. There is some obscurity as to the operations of the Borodino corps. They were so placed as to become severed from the actual control of their divisional general, and they were covered, it seems, by the conflagration; but all accounts agree in stating that the Borodino corps was in the Pass and close to the great road.

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were swarming in the thick ground which belts the river.*

Confronting these defences, Evans strove to work his way forward; but although the walls and enclosures on the skirts of the village here and there formed islands of shelter, the rest of the ground which had to be traversed was so bare, that every man of the force, as long as he stood there, came under the eyes of the Russian gunners; and their fire being therefore effective, Pennefather's brigade, though always moving forward a little, could only gain ground by degrees.

At times when the balls were falling thickly, the men would shelter themselves as well as they could behind such little cover as the ground afforded; and when there came a lull, they would spring forward and find shelter more in advance. There were some buildings which afforded good cover against grape and musketry, and some of the men, having gained this shelter by a swift rush across the open ground under very heavy fire, were slow to move out again into a storm of grape, canister, and musket balls. At a later time the enemy shattered the walls of these buildings with round shot, and some of our men were crushed or suffocated by the ruins. But those who died that poor death were men hanging back.

This kind of struggle did not of course allow the troops to adhere to their order of formation; but

* No less than three out of the above six battalions were thrown out as skirmishers.

whenever any number of men got together upon ground which enabled them to extend, they quickly fell into line. And this they did notwithstanding that the groups thus instinctively hastening into their English formation were sometimes men of different regiments. Several times the men were ordered to lie down.

The 47th Regiment, pushing in between the river and the burning village, and afterwards fording the stream a good way below the bridge, was better sheltered from the fire of the Causeway batteries than the regiments of Pennefather's brigade.

Colonel Stacey of the 30th persistently worked his men through the gardens and enclosures till at length he was able to cross the river and establish his regiment under cover of the steep bank on the Russian side of the stream. Thence for some time he maintained a steady fire against the gunners of the Causeway batteries.

The 95th, like the other regiments of the brigade, stole forward from one sheltering spot to another, and at one time three of its companies got divided from the rest of the corps, and united themselves in line with the 55th; but the whole regiment had been again got together when, the Light Division coming on, it appeared that its right regiment was overlapped by the 95th. Lacy Yea did not choose to stop, and, the 95th being halted at the time, he with his 7th Fusileers passed through it. But the 'Derbies' could not endure to be thus left behind, and soon the regiment rushed forward, bearing so

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strongly towards the left, that the fortunes of the corps thenceforth became connected with the exploits of Codrington's brigade.

The 55th Regiment, whilst advancing in line over open ground, came under so crushing a fire that it staggered; and though the line did not fall back, it was broken. But Colonel Warren soon rallied his regiment, and carried it forward. Afterwards, when he reached a spot which yielded shelter to a man lying flat on the ground, he ordered his men to lie down, but he himself kept his saddle and remained steadfast in the centre of his regiment until the moment came when again he could lead it forward.

The kind of struggle in which Evans was engaged could not be long maintained without involving heavy loss. Major Rose, and Captain Schane, and Lieutenant Luxmore, were killed. Evans himself received a severe contusion, and almost all his staff were struck; for Percy Herbert, his Assistant Quartermaster-General, was dangerously hit, and Captain Thompson, Ensign St. Clair, and Captain A. M. McDonald were severely wounded. Of the officers of the 30th, 55th, and 47th regiments, Major Rose, Captain Schane, and Lieutenant Luxmore were killed. Colonel Warren was wounded, and so were Pakenham, Dickson, Conolly, Whimper, Walker, Coats, Bisset, Armstrong, Lieutenants Warren, Woollcombe, Philips, and Maycock. Pennefather's brigade alone lost in killed and wounded nearly one-fourth of its strength.*

* This, as well as all other statements which I make of casualties in the English army, is taken from the official returns.

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So long as the Causeway batteries swept the mouth of the Pass, Evans, with his three shattered battalions,* could do no more than maintain an obstinate and bloody combat in this part of the field, and gain ground by slow degrees. He was not yet able to push forward beyond the left bank of the river, and assail the enemy in the heart of his position across the great road.

XVIII.

Advance of the Light Division.

On Evans's left, but entangled with some of his regiments, Sir George Brown moved forward with the Light Division. He had before him the Great Redoubt, armed with fourteen guns of heavy calibre, and this stronghold was flanked on the one side by the Lesser Redoubt with its eight guns, and on the other, by the artillery and the infantry which guarded the Pass. Upon the slopes of the Kourganè Hill, and so posted as to look down into the Great Redoubt, there was a battery of field artillery, and in rear of this a battery and a half, besides the four guns of the sailors, were held in reserve.†

The task it had before it.

Sixteen battalions of infantry ‡ were posted upon the flanks or in the immediate rear of the Great Redoubt. Of this force, the four Kazan battalions, formed in two columns of attack, stood in front near

* The 30th, 55th, and 47th Regiments. As to the 95th, see *post*.

† The details of these forces have been given already.

‡ The four Kazan, or Archduke Michael's, battalions, the four Vladimir battalions, the four Sousdal battalions, and the four Ouglitz battalions.

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to either shoulder of the Great Redoubt, and these were supported by the four battalions of the Vladimir corps. On the right—proper right—of these troops, but somewhat refused, there were two of the Sousdal battalions: more in advance, and so placed as to form the extreme right of the Russian infantry line, there were the two remaining battalions of the same corps. Besides the masses thus pushed forward, General Kvetzinski held in hand the four battalions of the Ouglitz corps as an immediate reserve, and posted them upon the higher slopes of the Kourganè Hill. Further towards the rear (except, perhaps, whilst they were employed as skirmishers) there were placed the two battalions of sailors. On the extreme right, and massed in columns at intervals upon the eastern and south-eastern slopes of the Kourganè Hill, there were the bulk of the Russian cavalry.* This force of horsemen was so placed that, whilst it covered the right and the right rear of the position, the Russian commander could, so to speak, swing it round, and hurl it against the flank of an enemy assailing his Great Redoubt. In few words, that Kourganè Hill, now about to be assailed by our Light Division, was defended by two redoubts, by forty-two guns, and by a force of some 17,000 men.

Again, the troops which defended the Causeway could aid the defence of the Kourganè Hill, and, moreover, the troops which Prince Mentschikoff called

* The whole of it, except the squadrons which Prince Mentschikoff took with him when he rode towards the sea.

his 'Great Reserve,' were so placed that they might be regarded as operating in support of the troops in this part of the field. CHAP. XVI.

It rested with the four Kazan battalions to make the first attack upon the English troops. This was to be done whilst our soldiery, after struggling through the fords, were gaining the top of the bank. The enemy's massive columns were to throw our men back into the channel of the river before they could find time to form.

The slope which led up from the top of the bank to the parapet of the Great Redoubt was almost as even as the glacis of a fortress; and, except to one who knew beforehand how unaccountably life and limb are spared in a storm of artillery fire, it seemed hard to understand that upon that smooth ground men would be able to live for many moments under round shot, grape, and canister from fourteen heavy guns.

Being on the extreme left of the Allied forces, Sir G. Brown had to stand prepared for an attack of cavalry on his flank. On our side of the river, home down to the edge of the vineyards, the broad and gently undulating downs, thickly clothed with elastic herbage, were all that horsemen could wish for, and even on the left bank, the ground in this part of the field was practicable for the evolutions of cavalry. Hardly ever in war did 3000 troopers sit still in their saddles under stronger provocation to enterprise, for they were upon fair ground, they were confronted by a body of horse which was in

CHAP. XVI.

numbers but one-third of their strength, and they gazed upon the naked flank of an infantry force advancing to the attack of a strong position. Therefore, the contingency which actually occurred—the contingency of the enemy's withholding his cavalry arm instead of lifting it against the open flank of the Allies, could not have been looked for beforehand, and can only be accounted for now by ascribing it to the eccentric forbearance of the Russian commander.*

Rightly, therefore—though the apprehension was not afterwards justified by the event—the Light Division was carried into action with an idea that cavalry charges were to be expected on the flank; and the duty of preparing against enterprises of this sort pressed specially upon General Buller, because he commanded the left brigade.

To storm a position thus held in strength by forces of all arms, and to answer at the same time for the safety of the whole of the Allied army against a flank attack, was a task of great moment; but, on the other hand, Sir George Brown was not without means for preparing a well-ordered assault; for the enemy was making no attempt to hold the vineyards in strength, and on the Russian side of the river, the bank, though very steep, and from eight to fifteen feet in height, was yet so broken that a skirmisher seeking to bring his eye

Means for preparing a well ordered assault were open to the assailants.

* Before the action, there was a good deal of conversation amongst officers in the Light Division with respect to the way in which the expected charges of the Russian cavalry should be met, and it was then—then perhaps for the first time—that the idea of receiving the enemy's horse in line was broached.

and his rifle to a level with the summit, would easily find a ledge for his foot. Here then was exactly the kind of cover which the assailants needed, for if this steep bank could be seized and lined for a few minutes by their skirmishers, it would enable their main body to recover its formation after passing through the enclosures and fording the river. But in order to lay hold of the advantage thus offered by the nature of the ground, it was of necessity to take care that the advance of the Light Division should be amply covered by skirmishers. This was not done. The rifles under Norcott had long before scoured the vineyards; but they had swerved away towards their left, and, fording the river higher up, had left Codrington's brigade without any skirmishers to cover its advance. No other light infantry men were thrown forward in their stead, and the whole body went stark on with bare front driving full at the enemy's stronghold.

The Division not covered by skirmishers.

XIX.

Sir George Brown's right brigade, consisting of the 7th Fusileers, the 33rd and the 23rd Regiments,* was under General Codrington. The left brigade, consisting of the 19th, the 88th, and 77th Regiments, was commanded by General Buller. The orders

The tenor of Sir G. Brown's orders for the advance.

* When I speak of several regiments in the same limb of the sentence, I generally follow the order in which they would be ranged, going from right to left. In a brigade consisting of three regiments, say *e. g.* of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Foot, the 1st would be posted at the right, the 2nd at the left, and the 3rd in the centre.

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which General Codrington received from Sir George were simply to advance with his brigade, and not to stop until he had crossed the river. A like order, it is believed, was given to General Buller. The Division still moved in line; and, after losing a few men from the fire of the enemy's artillery, it reached the boundary of the vineyards and gardens which belt the course of the river.

The advance through the vineyards;

In their eagerness for the conflict, the regiments strove to advance quickly; but it was a laborious task to traverse the gardens and enclosures, and many of those who had hitherto kept their knapsacks, here laid them down. In a few minutes the whole of the Light Division of infantry, drawing along with it in its impetuous course the 95th Regiment, had forced a way into the vineyards. There our young soldiers found themselves, as they imagined, in a thick storm of shot and cannon balls; but it seems that missiles of war fly crashing so audibly through foliage that they sound more dangerous than they are.

The loss at this time was not great. Our men were in the belief that speed was required of them, and having before them no chain of skirmishers to feel the way and control the pace of the Division, they struggled forward with eager haste. In passing from one of the enclosures to another, part of the line came to the top of a vertical bank, revetted with stone, and forming a kind of 'sunk fence.' Standing there the men observed that a violent gust of shot was beating in against the stone work

at their feet; and it seemed to them that, the moment they sprang from the top of the fence to the lower vineyard, their legs would be shattered by a thousand missiles. For a moment they paused, as though for some guidance; but the guidance was such as is given by 'Forward! first company!' 'Second company, show them the way!' The first who leaped down stood unscathed in the vineyard below; the rest followed. Dangers shrink before the advance of resolute men. There was not much loss in that lower vineyard. The troops pressed on.

Amongst the vineyards there were, here and there, farm-cottages and homesteads; and since the obstructions which the men were encountering had destroyed their formation, it became possible for such as loved their safety more than their honour to linger in the shelter afforded by these buildings. Some few, they say, lingered.

and over the river.

The Division hurried forward with just such trace of its original line-formation as could remain to it after rapidly passing through difficult enclosures. The river, though flowing in a swift current, was fordable by a strong man in most places, but it was of very unequal depth. General Codrington was seen riding quickly across at a point where the stream hardly flowed above his horse's fetlocks, and yet, almost close to him, the taller charger of another officer went down and had to swim. The soldiers rapidly waded across. Some few perished in the stream, and it was never known whether they fell

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from shot or from not being able to keep their footing in the current.

That part of Pennefather's brigade which was overlapped by the 7th Fusileers,* had become entangled with the Light Division, and, at the moment of Codrington's advance, Hume of the 95th seized a colour, and, dashing across the river, carried with him almost the whole of the regiment; but the men bore so much towards their left, that by the time they gained the foot of the bank on the Russian side of the river they had got blended—not (as might be supposed) with the right, but—with the left regiment of Codrington's brigade. They were destined to share the glory and the carnage which awaited the 23rd Fusileers.

At length the whole Light Division together with the additional regiment which had strayed into its company was upon the Russian side of the river; but as yet the troops only stood upon the narrow strip of dry ground at the water's edge, and such of them as were in the centre or towards the right were penned back by the rocky bank which rose steep and high over their heads. The soldiery were a crowd—a crowd shaped and twisted by the winding of the river's bank, yet with some remains of military coherence, for although the enclosures and the fording of the river could not but destroy all formation, the men of every company had kept together as well as they were able.

But a general who had omitted to line the bank

* *i.e.* after the Fusileers had marched through the 95th.

with his own skirmishers, might well expect to see it fringed with the enemy's rifles; and the strong wall which nature had offered to the English as a cover for the formation of their battalions was now, of course, held by the enemy's skirmishers. These light troops were in greatest force along the bank which faced the centre and the right of the Light Division. They came to the edge of the bank, fired down into the crowd of the red-coats, and then drew back for a pace or two that they might load in peace and be ready to fire again. They could kill and wound men in the crowd below without laying themselves open to fire.

Along the part reached by Codrington's brigade the left bank is lined with the enemy's skirmishers.

Towards the left of the Light Division the bank was less abrupt and also more free from the enemy's skirmishers. There, after passing the river, General Buller, who commanded the 2nd brigade, was able to form it at his leisure. He ordered the 77th Regiment to lie down under the cover afforded by the configuration of the ground, and, upon a slope somewhat sheltered from the fire of the enemy's artillery, he placed the 88th Regiment.* With these two regiments he remained long halted, not partaking in the subsequent advance of Codrington's brigade. His reason was, that, a large body of cavalry and infantry appearing on the plain to threaten his left, he thought it right to keep two regiments in hand until he should find himself supported by the near approach of the Highland brigade. He conceived that he ought to beware

Course taken by General Buller.

* As to the 19th Regiment see *post*.

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Nature of the duty attaching upon him.

of outstripping the 1st Division by too great an interval; and, in truth, the duty which attached upon General Buller at this moment was one of a grave kind; for if the enemy should seize the moment of Sir George Brown's assault upon the Great Redoubt as his time for making a resolute attack with horse, foot, and artillery, upon the flank of our advancing troops, the safety of the whole Allied army would be challenged, and would be found to rest upon such dispositions as General Buller might have made for covering our left.

Sir George Brown's order to Buller empowered him to advance until he was over the stream; but, that duty having been executed, the brigadier now found himself on the bank of a river, without, so far as I know, having any fresh orders to guide him, yet charged by circumstance with the duty of covering the flank of the whole Allied army at the moment of an assault upon the enemy's stronghold. The business was a vital one; and the caution which Buller used at this time was required by the occasion.* For, to push forward the two regiments which formed the extreme left of the whole Allied front, and to march them against the enemy's stronghold in a line, outflanked by the enemy's horse and even, it would seem, by a portion of his foot would have been to lay open—not Buller's brigade merely, but—the whole Allied army, to the risk of

* The way in which the 88th and the 77th Regiments were handled at a later period of the action was not the necessary result of the dispositions made at this time, and is a fit subject for distinct comments.

a flank attack involving great disasters. In these circumstances it was Buller's duty to take up such a position as would enable him to cover the advance of Codrington's brigade and to sustain the shock of a flank attack. It was to that end that he kept in hand the 88th and the 77th Regiments.

XX.

The 19th Regiment.

Though forming part of Buller's brigade, the 19th Regiment was suffered ere long to associate itself with General Codrington's advance. So, with this and the other stray regiment * which clung to it, Codrington's brigade was swollen to a force of five battalions.

State of the five battalions standing crowded along the left bank of the river.

These five battalions were extended in a broken chain at the foot of the bank on the Russian side of the river, and were falling—especially towards the right—under the close fire of the skirmishers who crowned the top. In this strait some of our officers instinctively tried to clear the front by getting the men to mount part way up the bank and bring their rifles to a level with the summit. But among the foremost the general commanding the Division had forded the river. Sir George Brown was an officer whose career had begun, and begun with glory, in the great days under Wellington; but whilst he was still in his early manhood, wars had ceased, and thenceforth for near forty years he had brought his

Sir George Brown.

* The 95th. See *ante*.

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strong energies to bear upon the kind of military business which used to be practised by the English in peace-time. A long immersion in the Adjutant-General's department had led him to go even beyond other men in laying stress upon the value of discipline; but the practice of this sort of industry had not at all helped to school him for the command of a division in war-time; for in labouring after that mechanic perfection which, after all, is only one of many means towards an end, the end itself had been much forgotten by those who controlled our military system, and the business of war (as, for instance, the art of carrying a brigade in line through enclosures and thick grounds) had been little or never practised in England.* To a military system which omits to anticipate and to deal with the common obstacles to be expected in a battle-field, war is a rough disturber; and, unless the industry of the barrack-yard is supported by other and better resources, it is liable to be turned to nothingness by even a gentle contact with reality. A belt of garden-ground, a winding, though fordable stream, and an enemy hitherto inert, had sufficed to make Sir George Brown despair of being able to present his troops to the enemy in a state of formation. Great dislocation of military order was, of course, the necessary result of having to pass through enclosures and to ford a winding stream; so what the main body needed to have before it when it approached the left bank of

* Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, used to press the importance of practising troops in this way, but without success.

the river, was a swarm of skirmishers clearing its immediate front and prepared to cover it during the process of forming anew. This cover, however, was wanting. Sir George Brown declared that to attempt any formation after the passage of the river would be impossible, and that he had "determined to trust to the spirit and individual courage of the troops." Thus, on ground giving rare opportunity for the deliberate preparation of an attack, and under no great stress of battle, the Light Division—the "Light Division" whose very name carried with it a great inheritance of glory —was suffered to lapse into a mere throng of brave men. In this plight the five battalions had to advance under the guns of a powerful battery supported by heavy columns of foot.

But an officer honoured with the command of British troops can always hope that when his skill fails him, his men may still retrieve the day by sheer fighting; and to a commander frustrated in his evolutions, the prospect of a rude conflict with the enemy may offer the best kind of solace, and perhaps even a happy issue out of trouble. Of such comfort as was to be got from close fighting, there seemed to be fair promise in the Great Redoubt. And there, Sir George Brown resolved to seek it. Eager to have, at the least, a forward place in the armed throng, he suffered agony lest the bank, very steep at the spot where he faced it, should be inaccessible to a mounted officer; but he soon found a place where a break in the stiffness of the acclivity

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left room for the two or three ledges which a horseman must find before he can reach the top. Then he quickly gained the open ground above. The Russian skirmishers were there. Schooled in habits of deep reverence for military rank, these men may have been startled perhaps by the sudden apparition of the flowing plumes which bespoke a general officer, and, what was worse, a general officer in a state of displeasure. It seems too there is something in the bearing of a fearless, near-sighted man which disturbs the reckonings of other people, for they see that his ways are not their ways, and they do not know but that he may be right in not fearing them, and that if they were not to be afraid of him, they themselves might be in the wrong. At all events, the enemy's skirmishers, omitting or failing to bring down the English General, suffered him to remain unhurt on the top of the bank. There, flushed and angry—he was angry perhaps with himself, or angry with the gardens and walls and the perverse winding of a stream which had broken the cherished structure of his battalions—he sat on his gray charger full under the guns of the Great Redoubt, and the dun oblong columns of the enemy's infantry that flanked it on either side. However eagerly he might be longing to carry forward his Division, he was without the means of sending swift orders along his line.

General Codrington.

But towards the right of Sir George Brown a movement corresponding with his determination had already begun. General Codrington, ordered to advance in line, and not to stop till he had crossed the

river, had obeyed very swiftly, and the men of his brigade (in common with the 95th Regiment), having moved with a converging tendency during their passage through the vineyards and the river, were now thickly clustered under the left bank in a chain which took its bends from the winding of the stream. Codrington was at this time between the 33rd Regiment and the 23rd Fusileers. He strove to do something towards restoring the formation of his troops; but the crowd, jammed together, twisted into fantastic shape by the bends of the river's bank, and standing helpless under the fire of the skirmishers shooting down into it from above, could hardly even try to perform an evolution requiring free space and time. And, if for a moment it seemed possible that any approach to a formation under the bank could be effected, the hope was rudely destroyed; for on ground lower down the river a body of the enemy's light troops found for themselves a spot yielding them shelter, yet so placed that it enabled them to pour a flanking fire along the strip or ledge which divided the stream from the bank, and this at a part where the earth was alive with our devoted soldiery.

To keep the men under this fire for many minutes, and to keep them, too, standing all the time in unresisting masses, would be to lose a brigade. The only order received by General Codrington had been obeyed to the full. He had no time to seek guidance from his divisional general. Clearly there was come upon him one of those rare conjunctures in which a

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career is made to hinge upon the decision of a moment. General Codrington a few weeks before had been only a traveller * on a visit to the army in Bulgaria. He now commanded a brigade. His father was that admiral whose achievement at Navarino had been a link in the chain of events which now brought the son in arms for the Sultan's cause. And any one who loved our navy, even to jealousy of the land service, might persuade himself that the bright, ardent, straightforward glance, and the bold, decisive speech of the Coldstream officer, must have come by inheritance from a sailor. He had the close, tight lips bespeaking the obstinate man who lives a life undistracted by breadth and diversity of views. And much of what he seemed he was; a firm, plain soldier, not liable to be bent from the simple path by refined or complex views.† He could not see far without the help of the glass which he kept attached to his cap, but he was more alive to the world around him than near-sighted men often are. He had never before been in action. He could not suffer his troops to remain for another minute a helpless crowd under heavy fire. He knew not how he could withdraw them to any ground apt for manœuvring, and it was hardly possible for him to exert such a control over the crowd of soldiers hemmed in under the

* With the rank of colonel, but—unattached.

† I of course know that an opinion attributing to General Codrington this manly simplicity of mind is liable to be challenged by those who remember the style of his despatches. My answer is, that his despatches do not indicate the man. His private letters do. They are written very simply, but with a good deal of power.

bank as would enable him to repair the evil by covering his brigade with skirmishers. CHAP. XVI.

XXI.

Nelson, gliding into the bay of Aboukir, told his assembled captains that if any one of them in the coming battle should chance to be disturbed by doubts about what he ought to do, he might find a good way out of trouble by closing with an enemy's ship.

Codrington resolves to storm the Great Redoubt.

And, it was a solution of this sort which Codrington sought, for, with no authority except that which was cast upon him by the stress of the moment, he resolved to storm the Great Redoubt. And he resolved to do this instantly. His immediate power over the disordered masses around him was confined within the range of his voice, but, lifting himself a little in his stirrups, he spoke to the men in his clear, ringing voice, and ordered them (all who could hear him) 'to 'fix bayonets, get up the bank, and advance to the 'attack.'

His words to the men.

He gains the top of the bank.

Then also Codrington imagined that the need of the moment was a ready leader rather than a cool and placid general. Besides, this was his first battle; and perhaps—our army, and not the world, will understand him if so it was—he unconsciously felt that the foremost place was peculiarly befitting a Guardsman who commanded a brigade of the line. With the quickness of a man accustomed to hunting, he found a spot where the bank was practicable, and, facing it obliquely, his small white Arab with two or

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three strides carried him to the summit. From the spot which he thus reached the enemy's skirmishers had withdrawn;* and Codrington, with the few soldiers who had already been able to gain the top, was alone upon this part of the hill-side. Looking up the smooth, gentle slope, he had before him the Great Redoubt; but for the moment the mouths of the heavy guns which armed it remained black and silent. On his right front he saw a body of infantry, massed in column. The men in their long, gray, sombre coats, stood formed with great precision and rigidly still; but right and left of the mass there was a chain of skirmishers so placed on the flanks of the column as to be abreast of its front rank. The troops close in rear of the body in front could hardly be seen, for they were almost hidden by the dip of the ground, but the crest was fringed with sparkling light, and the light was light playing upon the bayonet points of battalions massed in the hollow.

Our troops were yearning to be commanded, and if the men, far and near, could have seen that the horseman on the small white Arab above them was a general officer, they would have looked to every wave of his arm for a guiding signal; but Codrington had come to the East a mere traveller, and his simple forage cap had not the significance of the hat and the flowing plumes, which would have shown men far from the spot that a general officer was on the top of

* I imagine that they were withdrawn from this spot because it was under the guns—the guns of the Great Redoubt—from which the enemy was about to open fire on our troops.

the bank. There were soldiers, however, who gained the top almost at the same moment as their leader. First one here and there, then knots, then bevies of men clambered up.

Hitherto the knowledge that there was to be an advance beyond the bank had been confined to the people who chanced to be near Sir George Brown or General Codrington; but those who heard the words or caught the meaning of the divisional general and the brigadier, hastened to give effect to the will of their chiefs by sending their words along the line.

The 7th Fusileers being on the extreme right of Codrington's brigade was beyond the reach of his personal guidance, but Lacy Yea * who commanded the regiment was a man of an onward, fiery, violent nature, not likely to suffer his cherished regiment to stand helpless under muzzles pointed down on him and his people by the skirmishers close overhead. The will of a horseman to move forward, no less than his power to elude or overcome all obstacles, is singularly strengthened by the education of the hunting field, and Lacy Yea had been used in early days to ride to hounds in one of the stiffest of all hunting-counties. To him this left bank of the Alma crowned with Russian troops was very like the wayside acclivity which often enough in his boyhood had threatened to wall him back and keep him down in the depths of a Somersetshire lane whilst the hounds were running high up in the field some ten or fifteen

Lacy Yea and his Fusileers.

* Pronounced Yaw.

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feet above. His practised eye soon showed him a fit 'shord' or break in the scarped face of the bank, and then shouting out to his people, 'Never mind 'forming! Come on, men! Come on, anyhow!' he put his cob to the task, and quickly gained the top.

On either side of him, men of his regiment rapidly climbed up, and in such numbers that the Russian skirmishers who had been lining it fell back upon their battalions.

The heaving of the crowd beneath the bank.

And now, in the masses still crowded along the foot of the bank there rose up that murmur of prayer for closer fighting which, coming of a sudden from men of Teuton blood, is the advent of a new and seemingly extrinsic power—the power ascribed in old times to the hand of an Immortal. From the first company of the 7th Fusileers to the left of the 19th Regiment, the deep, angry, gathering sound was 'Forward!' 'Forward!' 'Forward!' The throng was heaved; and presently the whole 1st brigade of the Light Division, carrying with it the 19th and the 95th Regiments, surged up, and in numberless waves broke over the bank.

Effect of the converging tendency which had governed the troops.

That tendency to converge of which we have already spoken had contracted the front presented by the five regiments now on the crest of the bank to a fraction only of the line which they would have formed if they had been deployed in due order. The operation of taking ground and opening out into line is hardly one to be undertaken by a crowd of soldiery on ground which may be called the glacis of the enemy's fortress, and in the close presence of

his formed battalions; but the 7th Fusileers, being on the extreme right of the brigade, and not being cramped at that time by any pressure from the regiments of the 2nd Division, was able to find space, and though numbers of the regiment were wanting, and though many belonging to other corps were mixed up with the Fusileers, Lacy Yea using violent energy was able in some degree to make the men open out. But the silence which is the pride of the English army, could not at that moment be preserved, for numbers of men, separated from their companies and their regiments, yet eager to follow the path of duty, were anxiously seeking advice from officers, and trying in fact to place themselves under such command as time and circumstance would allow. In this condition of things the utmost that could be done was to give to the mass the rudiments of a line formation. Colonel Blake with the 33rd was able to make his regiment open out and form line.

Endeavours of the men to form line on the top of the bank.

In the other three regiments, too, the soldiers strove hard to put themselves in their English array; but on either flank space was wanting; and although these battalions, having now open ground before them, were no longer a helpless mass, their state was not such as to enable them to move at the will of a commander. They were an armed and warlike crowd.

The five regiments now gathered on the crest of the bank were the first body of Allied troops which moved up on that day to dispute with the enemy for ground which he held in strength. Both their right

The task they had before them.

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and their extreme left confronted the Russian infantry massed in columns upon either flank of the Great Redoubt; but the centre and left centre of this part of our assailing force stood right under the face of the work.

Although at this time there was in general no due formation, still the knotted chain into which the men of the five regiments found themselves extended, was much more than long enough to outflank the Great Redoubt on either side; and the troops which formed the extreme left and the extreme right of our line were less exposed than the centre regiments to fire from the face of the work. But in order that he might at once crush those portions of our clustered force, the enemy, as we have seen, had massive columns of infantry posted on either flank of the redoubt. Two of these columns—columns formed of the Kazan corps—now moved down the hill.

The Right Kazan column advances against the 19th Regiment and some companies of the 23rd.

The column * descending from the eastern flank of the work marched against that part of our line which was formed by the 19th Regiment and some of the left companies of the 23rd. It had already come part way down the slope before any great number of the English had clambered up to the top of the bank; and our soldiers, it would seem, at that time might have been forced back into the channel of the river by a continued and resolute advance of

* A double battalion column, I believe, containing 1500 men. This Kazan corps, of which we shall see a great deal, is more commonly called in Russian accounts the 'Grand Duke Michael's Regiment.' It was a regiment of 'fusileers.'

The column is defeated and retreats.

the column; but when one by one, and in knots and groups, our men gained the top of the bank, when they saw the ground above spreading smooth and open before them, and the huge gray square-built mass gliding down to where they were, then, happily for England and for the freedom of Europe—for on this in no small measure the common weal seems to rest—it came to be seen that now, after near forty years of peace, our soldiery were still gifted with the priceless quality which hinders them from feeling, in the way that foreigners feel it, the weight of a column of infantry. In their English way, half sportive, half surly, our young soldiers seemed to measure their task; and then—many of them still holding betwixt their teeth the clusters of grapes which they had gathered in the vineyards below—they began shooting easy shots into the big, solid mass of infantry which was solemnly marching against them. The column was not unsteady, but it was perhaps an overdrilled body of men unskilfully or weakly handled. At all events those who wielded it were unable to make its strength tell against clusters of English lads who stood facing it merrily, and teasing it with rifle-balls. Soon the column was ordered or suffered to yield, and since it fell back to a spot where the ground was hollow, it lapsed nearly or quite out of sight. Then the 19th and the left companies of the 23rd, having thus ridded themselves of the infantry force in their front, began, as they advanced, to bend towards their right, and became a part of the force which was storming the Great Redoubt.

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The Left Kazan column begins its fight with the 7th Fusileers.

But the other Kazan column*—the column coming down from the west flank of the redoubt—was a force of high mettle; and it now began that obstinate fight with the 7th Fusileers which was destined to last from the commencement of the infantry fight until almost the close of the battle.

XXII.

The storming of the Great Redoubt.

But between the two bodies of troops thus engaged on either flank with the enemy's infantry, the great bulk of Codrington's brigade, swollen by the accession of the 95th Regiment, was already moving up under the guns of the Great Redoubt. Codrington, indeed, had not waited for the moment when his whole brigade reached the top of the bank; for, having gathered some knots of men on either side of him, he rode forward gently a few paces, then waited until he gained some increase in numbers, and then again moved on, thus canvassing, as it were, for followers, and gradually carrying forward with him more and more of the troops. At first, he got on slowly, for the bulk of our officers, having had no order to dispense with formation, they judged, when they gained the top of the bank, that they ought to strive to form line before they advanced, and they were labouring to that end; but when it came to be understood that an advance without formation was sanctioned by the generals or compelled by stress of events, the whole of the force, though clubbed and

* A double battalion column, I believe, containing 1500 men.

broken into clusters of men, began to move up the gentle slope of the hill.

For a little while, every gun in the great battery above remained dark and silent.

Amongst the Russians who were plying their field-glasses from the parapet of the Great Redoubt there was a question meet for debate:—'If the 'scarlet men of the sea were presumptuously bent 'upon storming the work, where was the great 'column of attack, and where the great column of 'support, and where the great columns of reserve 'which would have been formed for such an enter-'prise? Yet, if they had no such purpose, why 'were so many men coming up under the guns, 'within grape-shot range? And, unless those Eng-'lish were really attacking in force, why, in the name 'of the Holy Virgin and our own blessed Sergius,* 'why, riding forward even in front of the skir-'mishers, should there be that superb-looking horse-'man on the gray charger, whose visible rage no 'less than his flowing plumes clearly showed that he 'held high command?'

Upon the whole, it seemed that the advance of the red-coated soldiery was an irruption of skirmishers preparatory to an attack in force, but was an irruption so strong as to be worthy of all that artillery could do to crush it. So, the Russian sharpshooters having now for the most part fallen back, or moved

* The troops in and near the redoubt belonged to the 16th Division, and this Division carried with it a wooden image of the saint, solemnly entrusted to it by the Bishop of Moscow.

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aside out of the line of fire, the gunners in the Great Redoubt made ready to open fire upon our regiments with round-shot, canister, and grape.

First one gun, then another, then more. From east to west the parapet grew white, and henceforth it lay so enfolded in its bank of silver smoke that no gun could any longer be seen by our men, except at the moment when it was pouring its blaze through the cloud. On what one may call a glaçis, at three hundred yards from the mouths of the guns, the lightning, the thunder, and the bolt are not far apart. Death loves a crowd; and in some places our soldiery were pressing on so close together that when a round-shot cut its way into the midst of them, it dealt a sure havoc.

There began a slaughter of our people. Some of the men struck down had got up a good way on the slope; others were so newly come to the top of the bank that they fell back dead and dying into the channel of the river; but all who were not struck down moved forward. Some of the clusters into which our men had gathered were eight or ten deep; and the round-shot, tearing cruelly through and through, mowed down so many of our devoted soldiery that several times the crowd left standing was thinned.

But only for a moment; because that singular tendency which had begun with the advance into the vineyards was now setting in more strongly. Moving to the attack without being ordered to make towards any given spot, almost every officer and man

(except those towards the flanks who were engaged with the enemy's infantry) had instinctively proposed to himself the same goal; and this goal was the Great Redoubt. Upon the Great Redoubt, therefore, the regiments kept always converging; and in less time than it took the Russian artillerymen to sponge and load their guns, our people, inclining away from the flanks, and pressing in towards the centre, filled up every space cut clear by the shot; and this so constantly that, again, after a fall of many men, and again, and still again, there was always a flock ready for the slaughter. In the 'Derby-'shire,'* Captain Eddington was shot in the throat and killed; Polhill was torn and slain with grape. The colonel was wounded, and Champion took the command of the regiment. He was a man of great gentleness and piety; and if he was not highly endowed with intellectual gifts, he was able to express the feelings of his heart with something of a poetic force. His mind was accustomed to dwell very much on the world that lies beyond the grave; and in the midst of this scene of carnage he gained, as it were, a seeming glimpse of the happy state; for when the younger Eddington fell at his side, Champion paused to see what ailed him, and looking upon his young friend's pale face, he saw it suddenly clothed with a 'most sweet expression.' It was because death was on him that the blissful look had come. In the mind of Champion the sight had a deep import; for he was of the faith that God's Providence is special,

* The 95th.

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and to him the beautiful smile on the features of 'the 'dead' was the smile of an immortal man gently carried away from earth by the very hand of his Maker.

Yet this piety of his was of no unwarlike cast. Nay, he was of so noble a sort that, though he had not willingly chosen the profession of arms, yet, when he prayed, he was accustomed to render thanks to his Creator for vouchsafing to make him a hardy soldier; and being, he said, very strong in the belief that he could die as piously on the battlefield as in 'a downy bed,' he pressed on content with his 'Derbies' to the face of the Great Redoubt.*

And now, whilst the assailing force was rent from front to rear with grape and canister poured down from the heavy guns above, another and a not less deadly arm was brought to bear against it; for the enemy marched a body of infantry into the rear of the breastwork, and his helmeted soldiers, kneeling behind the parapet at the intervals between the embrasures, watched ready with their muskets on the earthwork till they thought our people were near enough, and then fired into the crowd. Moreover, the troops on either flank of the redoubt began to fire obliquely into the assailing mass.

Then, for such of our men as were new to war, it became time to learn that the ear is a false guide in the computation of passing shot, and that amid notes sounding like a very torrent of balls, the greater part of even a crowded force may remain unhurt.

* Champion's letters.

The storm of rifle and musket balls, of grape and canister, came in blasts; and though there were pauses, yet whilst a blast was sweeping through, it seemed to any young soldier, guided by the sound of the rushing missiles, that nowhere betwixt them, however closely he might draw in his limbs, could there be room for him to stand unscathed. But no man shrank. Our soldiers, still panting with the violence of their labour in crossing the river and scaling the bank, scarcely fired a shot, and they did not speak; but they, every one, went forward. The truth is, that the weak-hearted men had been left behind in the gardens and buildings of the village; the dross was below, and the force on the hill-side was pure metal. It was so intent on its purpose, that no one, they say, at this time was seen to cast back a look towards the 1st Division.

The assailants were nearing the breastwork, when, after a lull of a few moments, its ordnance all thundered at once, or, at least, so nearly at the same moment, that the pathway of their blast was a broad one; and there were many who fell; but the onset of our soldiery was becoming a rush. Codrington, riding in front of the men, gaily cheered them on; and all who were not struck down by shot pressed on towards the long bank of smoke which lay dimly enfolding the redoubt.

But already—though none of the soldiery engaged then knew who wrought the spell—a hard stress had been put upon the enemy. For a while indeed the white bank of smoke, lit through here and there with

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the slender flashes of musketry, stood fast in the front of the parapet, and still all but shrouded the helmets and the glittering bayonets within; but it grew more thin: it began to rise; and, rising, it disclosed a grave change in the counsels of the Russian Generals. Some Englishman—or many perhaps at the same moment—looking keen through the smoke, saw teams of artillery horses moving, and there was a sound of ordnance wheels. Our panting soldiery broke from their silence. 'By all that is holy! he is limbering 'up!' 'He is carrying off his guns!' 'Stole away! 'Stole away! Stole away!' The glacis of the Great Redoubt had come to sound more joyous than the covert's side in England.

The embrasures were empty, and in rear of the Work, long artillery teams—eight-horse and ten-horse teams—were rapidly dragging off the guns.

Then a small child-like youth ran forward before the throng, carrying a colour. This was young Anstruther. He carried the Queen's colour of the Royal Welsh. Fresh from the games of English school life, he ran fast; for, heading all who strove to keep up with him, he gained the redoubt, and dug the butt end of the flagstaff into the parapet, and there for a moment he stood, holding it tight and taking breath. Then he was shot dead; but his small hands still clasping the flagstaff, drew it down along with him, and the crimson silk lay covering the boy with its folds; but only for a moment, because William Evans, a swift-footed soldier ran forward, gathered up the flag, and raising it proudly made claim to the

Great Redoubt on behalf of the 'Royal Welsh.'* The colours floating high in the air, and seen by our people far and near, kindled in them a raging love for the ground where it stood. Breathless men found speech. Codrington, still in the front, uncovered his head, waved his cap, for a sign to his people, and then, riding straight at one of the embrasures, leapt his gray Arab into the breastwork. There were some eager and swift-footed soldiers who sprang the parapet nearly at the same moment; more followed. At the same instant Norcott's riflemen came running in from the east, and the swiftest of them bounded into the work at its right flank. The enemy's still lingering skirmishers began to fall back, and descended—some of them slowly—into the dip where their battalions were massed. Our soldiery were up; and in a minute they flooded in over the parapet, hurrahing, jumping over, hurrahing, a joyful English crowd. CHAP. XVI.

The cheer had not yet died away on the hill-side, when from the enemy's battalions standing massed in the hollow, there rose up—as though it had been wrung from the very hearts of brave men defeated—a long, sorrowful, wailing sound. This was the bitter and wholesome grief of a valiant soldiery not content to yield. For men who so grieve there is

* Afterwards, there being a punctilio which governs those matters in our service, William Evans delivered the colour to his superior, Corporal Soulbey, and Corporal Soulbey delivered it to Sergeant Luke O'Connor. Sergeant Luke O'Connor, though he soon got badly wounded, would not part with the honour of carrying the cherished standard, and he bore it all the rest of the day.

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hope. The redoubt had been seized by our people; it was not yet lost to the Czar.

There was only one piece of ordnance remaining in the Work. This was a brass 24-pound howitzer. At the sight of the piece (for our people were mainly of Anglo-Saxon blood), a characteristic desire to assert the claims of private ownership began to seize upon the crowd; and more than one man, so they say, scratched his mark upon the piece that he might make it the peculiar trophy of himself or his regiment.

But there was a better prize than this within the reach of a nimble soldier; * for of the guns moving off towards the rear, there was one which, dragged by only three horses, had scarcely yet gained the rear of the redoubt. Captain Bell, of the Royal Welsh, ran up, overtook it, and pointing his capless pistol at the head of the driver, ordered him, or rather signed to him, to stop instantly and dismount. The driver sprang from his saddle and fled. Bell seized the bridle of the near horse, and he had already turned the gun round, when Sir George Brown riding up angry, and ordering him to go to his company, he of course obeyed, yet not until he had effectually started the horses in the right

* When troops obtain the possession of a gun left by the enemy in a field-work, they are not said to have 'taken a gun' in the true and highest sense of the phrase. It is only by the observance of this distinction that the Duke of Wellington can be said to have 'never lost a gun.' He surely, for instance, abandoned guns at Burgos; but because they were left by him in the works, and not taken from him in the field, the acquisition of them by the enemy was not a capture.

direction; for they drew the gun down the hill, and the capture became complete.* CHAP. XVI.

Bell went back to his corps, and in truth his services there were soon about to be needed; for already Colonel Chester, commanding the regiment, had been killed, and Campbell, who then took the command, being afterwards struck down, the charge of the regiment devolved upon Bell.

Of the men of the five regiments which had moved forward from the top of the river's bank, many now lay upon the hill-side dead or wounded; and the 7th Fusileers, with fragments of other regiments, was still engaged with the enemy's infantry; but the greatest portions of four battalions,† and a wing of another battalion,‡ were now upon the ground which the enemy had made his stronghold.

Yet the tendency to converge towards the redoubt as their goal had so closely compressed the assailing mass, that its front now hardly outflanked the parapet; and all the assailants of the redoubt were either within the Work or closely gathered round it.

They were perhaps 2000 men, and their onset had for the moment so bewildered the enemy that, having close at hand great masses of infantry, unbroken and scarcely touched—masses numbering full 10,000 bayonets—he nevertheless hung back, and for a while did little to molest our people in their occupa-

* The gun is now at Woolwich. The horses served for some time in our 'Black Battery.'

† The 33rd, the 'Royal Welsh' (or 23rd), the 'Derbies' (95th), and the 19th.

‡ 2nd battalion Rifle Brigade.

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tion of the Work. Our soldiery were well inclined to rest and make themselves at home; and Codrington, alighting from his horse, began to show the men how best to establish themselves on the ground they had won by lying down outside the parapet, and resting their rifles upon its top.

Thus the assaulting force had carried the great field-work which was the key of the enemy's position on the Alma; and if at this time the supporting Division had been half way up the hill, or even if it had been beginning to crown the banks of the river on the Russian side, the toils and perils of the day would perhaps have been over. But our men were only a crowd; and they, all of them, wise and simple, now began to learn in the great school of action, that the most brilliant achievement by a disordered mass of soldiery requires the speedy support of formed troops.

No supports yet coming up from the top of the river's bank.

Then—and then, as is said, for the first time—the men cast back a look towards the quarter from which they might hope to see supports advancing; but when they carried their eyes down the slope strewn thick with the wounded and the dead, they saw that, from the ground where they stood down home to the top of the river's bank, there were no succours coming.

XXIII.

The Duke of Cambridge.

Where were the supports?

The Duke of Cambridge is the grandson of King George III., and a cousin of the Queen. At the

outbreak of the war he was 35 years of age. He had made the most of such experience as could be gained by following the vocation of a military life in the British Isles. He understood the mechanism of our army system; and, so far as could be judged by the test of home service, he was a good and a diligent soldier. Nay, he had some qualifications for command which are not very common in England. He loved order, method, and organisation. Long before the war it had been said that he was gifted with that faculty of moving troops which is one of the prime qualifications of a general officer; and the skill with which his superb Division had been now deployed seemed to give safe ground for saying that the flattering rumour was true. He was zealous and devoted to duty. He had the habit of exercising forethought. He was sagacious, and was more keenly alive than most other men of our land-service to passing and coming events. He had a good military eye.*

He was a great respecter of the public voice in England, and was even, perhaps, too ready to suffer himself to be swayed by light, transient breezes of 'opinion.' He had no dread of innovations, and the beard that clothed his frank, handsome, manly

* A few words which fell from Lord Raglan in October, 1854, have caused me, perhaps, to speak with more confidence on this subject than I might otherwise venture to show. In that month—I believe on the 15th—Lord Raglan spoke to me of the exceeding anxiety of the Duke of Cambridge about the Inkerman position, and he said that in consequence of this pressure measures had been taken. Exactly three weeks afterwards the very ground about which the Duke had been so anxious was the scene of the mighty onslaught which commenced the battle of Inkerman.

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face was the symbol of his adhesion to a then new revolt against custom. He was much loved, for he was of a genial temper; and his rank was so well helped out by his hereditary faculty of remembering those with whom he had once conversed that—far from chilling his intercourse with other men—it enabled him to give happy effect to the kindliness of his nature. But, after all what a general has to do is to try to overcome the enemy by exposing his own soldiery to all needful risks. At any fit time he must be willing and eager to bring his own people to the slaughter for the sake of making havoc with the enemy; and it is right for him to be able to do this without at the time being seen to feel one pang. Nay, however certain it may be that his gentler nature will overcome him on the morrow, it is well for him to be able to pass through the bloodiest hours of battle with something of a ruthless joy. The Duke of Cambridge was wanting in this kind of truculence; and, however careless of his own life (for he had the personal courage of his race), he was liable to be cruelly wrung by the weight of a command which charged him with the lives of other men. He was of an anxious temperament; and with him the danger was that, in moments when great stress might come to be put upon him, the very keenness of his desire to judge aright would become a cruel hindrance. Nor was he a man who would be driven to burst his way through scruples and doubts by the impulse of any selfish ambition. Far from straining after

occasions for acting on his own judgment, he would have liked, if he could, to receive a series of precise orders which would serve to guide him in every successive change. But a general of division must not expect to be long in a campaign without being thrown upon his own judgment. Lord Raglan had furnished the Duke with one order—an order 'to support the Light Division in its forward move-'ment'—and the Duke of Cambridge had begun to obey it by following the advance of the Light Division, and bringing his force home down to the enclosures; but, having thus come to the end of the open ground, he felt the want of some new sanction before he carried his Division into the vineyards. He knew that, for a while at least, the superb array of his Guards and Highlanders would be shattered by passing through enclosures, and he wished for another order from head-quarters before he submitted to see his beautiful line broken up. The order 'to support the Light Division' was becoming an imperfect guide, because that same Light Division had rushed headlong upon a task which was dissolving great part of it into a vast swarm of skirmishers. Were the Guards and Highlanders to do the like? Were they to do thus, although their efficacy as a force acting in support of the troops in advance was likely to depend upon their being able to come up in good order? The 1st Division was halted; yet the Light Division was moving rapidly forward.

Halt of the 1st Division before entering the vineyards.

Why was there this failure of concert between the

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Light and the 1st Divisions? Why was there no man there who could link the one division to the other by a few decisive words?

Lord Raglan had already given his orders, and at this moment, led forward by a golden chance, he was riding far away in another part of the field. Sir George Brown, already in the enclosures, and having no line of skirmishers to cover the advance of his battalions, was unable to govern the movements of his Division in such a way as to prevent it from getting too far in advance of the Guards and Highlanders; and afterwards, when Sir George went forward in person with that part of his Division which stormed the Redoubt, he seems to have found no means of communicating with the Duke of Cambridge and pressing for the immediate support of the 1st Division.

Every moment was precious; for the men of the Light Division were moving down at a run through the vineyards, or wading across the river.

At the time of this halt the battalion of the Grenadier Guards was across the great road. Thither now from the west a horseman came galloping up.

General Airey comes up.

Of an actual order General Airey was not the bearer; but he was a man whose loyalty towards his chief made him always feel certain that what he himself saw clearly to be right was exactly what his chief desired to have done, and the result was, that in an emergency he was able to speak with a weight which virtually brought to bear upon the matter in hand the whole power of Head-Quarters.

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His keen eye had detected the halt of the 1st Division, and he saw also that the Light Division was pushing forward at a run. Another man would have gone round or sent to the commander of the forces for his opinion; but every moment of the lapsing time was bringing danger.

His exposition of the order to advance in support.

Airey rode straight up to General Bentinck,* and explained it to be Lord Raglan's meaning that the 1st Division should instantly continue its advance in support of the Light Division. 'Must we,' asked Bentinck, 'must we always keep within three 'hundred yards of the Light Division?' 'No,' said Airey, 'not necessarily at any fixed distance; 'that would not be possible. What His Royal 'Highness has to do is to support the Light Division 'by advancing in conformity with its movements.'

The 1st Division resumes its advance.

Then the 1st Division moved forward, and, breaking into the enclosures, began to work its difficult way through the vineyards.

The Division again stopped for a time.

Afterwards — but not, it seems, by any formal order to halt—the advance of the 1st Division was again stopped for a time: yet Codrington's brigade had then begun to rush forward. From the ground on which he was riding, Sir De Lacy Evans could see in profile the swift disordered advance of Codrington's brigade and the stop to which the 1st Division had come. He understood the danger; and, comprehending at once that the advance of Cod-

Step taken by Evans.

* Lord Raglan had made an order specially providing that the bearer of an order for a divisional general should deliver it to the first brigadier whom he happened to find; to be by him transmitted to the divisional chief.

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rington's brigade was a movement requiring instant support, he took upon himself to send a message conveying his opinion to the Duke of Cambridge.

Want of free communication along a line passing through enclosures.

But when a division of infantry extended in line is marched through gardens and walled enclosures, the power of the general commanding it must always be more or less thrown into abeyance, because the want of an unobstructed view and of free lateral communication makes it impossible for him to know what is going on along the whole line or to send swift orders to the more distant companies. For a time his authority is necessarily dispersed among many; and if the force is moving deliberately and in the face of an enemy, numbers of little councils of war will of necessity be going on here and there, in order to judge how best to deal with what seems to be the state of the battle in each field, each garden, each vineyard.

The Guards.

The right of the 1st Division was formed by the brigade of 'Guards.' In its origin the appellation given to the regiments called 'the Guards,' imported that the personal safety of the sovereign was peculiarly committed to their charge. Princes have imagined that by specially ascribing this duty to a particular portion of their armed forces, rather than to the whole, and by granting some privileges to troops specially distinguished as their chosen defenders, they secure to themselves good means of safety in time of trouble, and that still, upon the whole, they do more good than harm to their military system by establishing a healthy spirit of

rivalry between the favoured body and the rest of the army. The danger is that a corps thus set apart will come to be considered as a great reserve of military strength, and that, for that very reason, any disaster which it may sustain will be looked upon as more ruinous than a disaster of equal proportions occurring to other regiments.

With us, the corps of Guards numbers only seven battalions, distributed into three regiments, called the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream, and the Scots Fusileer Guards; and each of these three regiments had sent one battalion to form the brigade of Guards now serving in the 1st Division. The officers of the corps enjoy some privileges tending to accelerate their advancement in the army. They are, for the most part, men well born or well connected; and, being aided by a singularly able body of sergeants and corporals, they are not so overburthened in peace-time by their regimental duties as to have their minds in the condition which too often results from monotonous labour. They have deeply at heart the honour of the whole brigade as well as of their respective corps, and the feeling is quickened by a sense of the jealousy which their privileges breed, or rather, perhaps, by the tradition of that ancient rivalry which exists between the 'Guards' and the 'Line.'

The men of the rank and file have some advantages over the line in the way of allowances and accoutrements. They are all of fine stature. Without being overdrilled, they are well enough practised

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in their duties; and whoever loves war, sees grandeur in the movement of the stately forms and the towering bearskins which mark a battalion of the Guards. It is true that these household troops are cut off from the experience gained by Line regiments in India and the Colonies; but, whenever England is at war in Europe, or against people of European descent, it is the custom and the pride of the Guards to take their part.

The force is deeply prized by the Queen, and the class from which it takes its officers connects it with many families of high station in the country. Its officers have so many relatives and friends amongst those who generate conversation in London, that when 'the Guards' are sent upon active service, the war in which they engage becomes, as it were for their sake, a subject of interest in circles which commonly yield only a languid attention to events beyond the seas. Grief for the death of Line officers is dispersed among the counties of the three kingdoms; and when they fall in battle, it is the once merry country-house, the vicarage, or the wayside cottage of some old Peninsular officer, that becomes the house of mourning. But by the loss of officers of the household regiments the central body of English society is touched, is shocked, is almost angered; and he who has to sit in his saddle and see a heavy slaughter of the 'Guards,' may be almost forced to think ruefully of fathers, of mothers, of wives, of sisters, who are amongst his own friends.

There was nothing in the history or traditions of the famous corps of 'the Guards' to justify the notion that they were to be more often kept out of the brunt of the battle than the troops of the line; and in this very war they were destined to encounter the hardest trials of soldiers, and to go on fighting and enduring until the glory of past achievements, the strange ascendancy which those achievements had won, and a few score of wan men with hardly the garb of soldiers, should be all that remained of 'the Guards.' Still it is certain that the household battalions were more or less regarded as a cherished body of troops, and that the loss of the brigade of Guards would be looked upon as a loss more signal, and in that sense, more disastrous than the loss of three other battalions of equal strength.

Now the enemy, whilst he dealt with the tumultuous onset of Codrington's brigade, had rightly enough given some of his care to the more ceremonious advance of the 1st Division; and, since the Guards confronted both the Causeway batteries, and the Great Redoubt, they of course underwent for a time a fire of artillery, and some men were struck down.* The Grenadiers and the Scots Fusileers suffered the most. This loss did not occur as a consequence of any mistake: it was in the order of things that it should be. But, when men are new

* Even when the Great Redoubt had been dismantled, and the Causeway batteries withdrawn, there were some guns in battery at more remote spots, which seem to have been brought to bear on the Guards.

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to war, and so placed in the battle-field as to be for the moment cut off from all knowledge of what is going on elsewhere, they are prone to imagine that a force which they see undergoing slaughter, yet having no immediate means of attack or resistance, must needs be the victim of some piece of forgetfulness or error; and when once this notion has got its lodgment in the brain of an officer, his next step probably is to try to avert what he fancies to be an impending disaster by venturing to disobey orders, or by counselling another to do so.

Suggestion that the Guards should fall back in order to re-form.

'The brigade of Guards will be destroyed,' said one adviser; and he asked whether it ought not to fall back a little in order to recover its formation?

These words were spoken by an officer not holding any high rank,* and they owe their whole importance to the answer which they elicited and the propulsion which thereupon followed.

He who answered the question was a veteran soldier, and it was with a deference no less wise than graceful that the Duke of Cambridge loved to seek and to follow his counsels.

Sir Colin Campbell.

Whilst Ensign Campbell was passing from boyhood

* I foresee that what I here say as to the obscure rank of the officer who made this suggestion will be regarded by some as inaccurate; and indeed I am aware that the belief of those who hold the contrary of this to be true is based upon grounds apparently strong. I did not hear the words myself; and all I can say is, that my statement is founded upon authority which makes me feel certain that I do rightly in making it: though I also think I am right in saying that I did not myself hear the words. If my statement as to the obscure rank of the officer is true, it follows, I think, that I am right in not disclosing his name; because (upon that supposition) his words had no sort of importance beyond that attributed to them in the text.

to man's estate, he was made partaker in the great transactions which were then beginning to work out the liberation of Europe. In the May of 1808 he received his first commission—a commission in the 6th Foot—and a few weeks afterwards—then too young to carry the colours—he was serving with his regiment upon the heights of Vimieira. There, the lad saw the turning of a tide in human affairs, saw the opening of the mighty strife between 'Column' and 'Line,'* saw France—long unmatched upon the Continent—retreating before British infantry, saw the first of Napoleon's stumbles, and the fame of Sir Arthur Wellesley beginning to dawn over Europe.

He was in Sir John Moore's campaign, and at its closing scene—Corunna. He was with the Walcheren expedition; and afterwards, returning to the Peninsula, he was at the battle of Barossa, the defence of Tarifa, the relief of Taragona, and the combats at Malaga and Osma. He led a forlorn hope at the storming of St. Sebastian, and was there wounded twice. He was at Vittoria; he was at the passage of the Bidassoa; he took part in the American war of 1814; he served in the West Indies; he served in the Chinese war of 1842. These occasions he

* In his most interesting and most valuable 'Life of the Duke of Wellington,' Mr. Gleig repeats the description of Vimieira, which the Duke once gave in his presence at Strathfieldsaye. The Duke's words are thus given by Mr. Gleig:—'The French came on on that occasion with great boldness, 'and seemed to feel their way less than I always found them to do afterwards. They came on, as usual, in very heavy columns, and I received 'them in line, which they were not accustomed to, and we repulsed them 'three several times.'

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had so well used that his quality as a soldier was perfectly well known. He had been praised, and praised again and again; but since he was not so connected as to be able to move the dispensers of military rank, he gained promotion slowly, and it was not until the second Sikh war that he had a command as a general: even then he had no rank in the army above that of a colonel. At Chilianwalla he commanded a division. Marching in person with one of his two brigades, he had gained the heights on the extreme right of the Sikh position, and then bringing round the left shoulder, he had rolled up the enemy's line and won the day; but since his other brigade (being separated from him by a long distance) had wanted his personal control, and fallen into trouble, the brilliancy of the general result which he had achieved did not save him altogether from criticism. That day he was wounded for the fourth time. He commanded a division at the great battle of Gujerat; and, being charged to press the enemy's retreat, he had so executed his task that 158 guns and the ruin of the foe were the fruit of the victory. In 1851 and the following year he commanded against the hill-tribes. It was he who forced the Kohat Pass. It was he who, with only a few horsemen and some guns, at Punj Pao, compelled the submission of the combined tribes then acting against him with a force of 8000 men. It was he who, at Ishakote, with a force of less than 3000 men, was able to end the strife; and when he had brought to submis-

sion all those beyond the Indus who were in arms against the Government, he instantly gave proof of the breadth and scope of his mind, as well as of the force of his character; for he withstood the angry impatience of men in authority over him, and insisted that he must be suffered to deal with the conquered people in the spirit of a politic and merciful ruler.

After serving with all this glory for some forty-four years, he came back to England; but between the Queen and him there stood a dense crowd of families — men, women, and children — extending further than the eye could reach, and armed with strange precedents which made it out to be right that people who had seen no service should be invested with high command, and that Sir Colin Campbell should be only a colonel. Yet he was of so fine a nature that, although he did not always avoid great bursts of anger, there was no ignoble bitterness in his sense of wrong. He awaited the time when perhaps he might have high command, and be able to serve his country in a sphere proportioned to his strength. His friends, however, were angry for his sake; and along with their strong devotion towards him, there was bred a fierce hatred of a system of military dispensation which could keep in the background a man thus tried and thus known.

Upon the breaking out of the war with Russia, Sir Colin was appointed—not to the command of a division, but of a brigade. It was not till the June of 1854 that his rank in the army became higher than that of a colonel.

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Campbell was not the slave, he was the master of his calling, and therefore it was that he had been able to save his intellect from the fate of being drowned in military details. He knew that although a general must have a complete mastery of even the smallest of such things, still they were only a part—a minute though essential part—of the great science of war. He understood the precious material whereof our army is formed. He heartily loved our soldiery; for he was a soldier, and had fellow-feeling with soldiers, and they had fellow-feeling with him. Instinctively they knew that together they might do great things—he by their help, they by his. Knowing the worth of their devotion and their bodily strength, he cherished them with watchful care; and they, on their part, loved, honoured, and obeyed him with a faith that all he ordered was right. He set great store upon discipline, but it was never for discipline's sake that he did so (as if that were itself an end), but because he knew it to be one of the main sources of military ascendancy. So, although the officers and soldiers serving under him got no more rest than was good for them, they were never vexed wantonly; and in proportion as they grew in knowledge of their calling, they came to understand why it was that their chief compelled them to toil.

A bodily ardour for fighting may be more or less masked and hidden; but he to whom this great passion is wanting is without the quality of a general. For, warfare is so anxious and complex a business that against every vigorous movement heaps of

reasons can for ever be found; and if a man is so cold a lover of battle as to have no stronger guide than the poor balance of the arguments and counter-arguments which he addresses to his troubled spirit, his mind, driven first one way and then another, will oscillate, or even revolve, turning miserably in its own axis and making no movement straight forward. Now it is a characteristic still marking the Scottish blood, that often—and not the less so when it flows in the veins of a gentle-hearted being—it is seen to fire strangely and suddenly at the prospect of a fight. Campbell loved warfare with a deep passion; and at the thought of battle his grand, rugged face used to kindle with uncontrollable joy.

'The brigade of Guards will be destroyed; ought 'it not to fall back?' When Sir Colin Campbell heard this saying his blood rose so high that the answer he gave—impassioned and far-resounding—was of a quality to govern events.

Campbell's answer to the suggestion that the Guards should fall back.

'It is better, sir, that every man of Her Majesty's 'Guards should lie dead upon the field than that 'they should now turn their backs upon the enemy.' Doubts and questionings ceased. The Division went forward.

Advance of the 1st Division to the left bank of the river.

Sir Colin Campbell rode off to his left. His brigade at this time was not under a heavy fire, and he effected the operation of passing the river very simply; for, without attempting formal evolutions, each of his regiments whilst it advanced tried to keep up, as well as the nature of the ground would

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allow, the rudiments of its line formation, and when it gained the opposite bank its array was carefully restored. As soon as one of the regiments was duly formed on the Russian side of the river, it was moved forward, and since the ground presented more obstacles towards our left than towards our right, the brigade fell naturally, and without design, into direct echelon of regiments. The 42nd was in advance; on the left of that regiment there was the 93rd, somewhat refused; and, on the left of the 93rd, but still further refused, there came the 79th.

Meanwhile the Guards descended towards the bank with so much of the line formation as was permitted by the obstacles they had to overcome. Upon gaining the river's side, the Coldstream broke into open column of sections, in order to make the most advantage of the ford; and when it reached the opposite bank it preserved its column formation for a time, in order to march the more conveniently round an elbow there formed by the river. When this movement was complete, the colour-sergeants went out to take ground, and the battalion opened out into line formation with all the precision and ceremony of a birthday review. On the right of this battalion, and moving with less deliberation, the Scots Fusileer Guards got through the enclosures and the river. On the right of that last corps there marched the battalion of the Grenadier Guards. The Grenadiers were a body of men so well instructed, and so skilfully handled, that in working their way through the enclosures they were able to preserve

all the essential elements of their line formation.* When they came to the bank, they looked for no ford, but, treating the river as a brook—as a brook which a soldier must pass without picking his way† —the battalion marched through it in line;‡ and though there were some points where a passage was easy, others where the soldiers had to wade deep, and some few, so they say, where the men were put to their swimming, still each file kept its place in the line with a near approach to exactness. At length—but after a painful lapse of time, for Codrington's disordered battalions were clinging all this while to the parapet of the Great Redoubt—the brigade of Guards stood halted, and forming anew under cover of the bank on the Russian side of the river. Their people were sheltered; but the heads of their colours, protruding a little above the top of the bank, could be seen by men looking down from the redoubt.

Time was lapsing.

But already there was nearly an end of the precious moments in which it was possible for the 1st Division to bring an effective support to the troops in the Great Redoubt.

No support brought by the two battalions which remained under Buller.

Nor did General Buller succeed in bringing his battalions to the rescue. We saw that the 19th

* No less than seven of the officers serving with this battalion had acted as adjutants of the regiment, and to this circumstance the skill with which it was carried through the enclosures is in some measure ascribed.

† For very good reasons soldiers in marching are called upon to go straight through brooks and pools of water without picking their way.

‡ With the exception of one (the 2nd) company, commanded by Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar, which happening to be near the bridge, filed over it.

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regiment had slipped from his control, and joined with Codrington's brigade in storming the redoubt. The two battalions which remained in his power were the 88th and the 77th Regiments. He was in person with the 88th, some way above the bank of the river; and the 77th, under the orders of Colonel Egerton, was on the extreme left of the English infantry line. The 88th and the 77th were not at this time under fire; but before them, at somewhat long distances, there were heavy columns of Russian infantry; and the enemy's horsemen, though not, it seems, visible at this moment, were known to be hovering on the left front of the English line. Buller, however, had not yet apprehended that the Russians were preparing any enterprise against his left flank; and when he saw how matters stood in the redoubt, he rightly determined to advance at once with the two battalions which remained under his control. He therefore sent an order to Colonel Egerton, directing him at once to move forward with the 77th, and he himself prepared to advance at the same moment with the 88th.

The cause of this.

Colonel Egerton was a firm, able man, and he felt the momentous importance of the duties attaching upon an officer who had charge of the extreme left of our infantry line; for it was obvious that a successful flank attack upon the one battalion which he commanded would bring into grievous jeopardy the whole array, English and French. The dips and hollows which marked the hill-side towards his left, made it hard for him to see what the enemy was

intending to do, and he failed to infer that the Czar's renowned forces were really abstaining from the enterprise which seemed to be almost forced upon them by the nakedness of our left wing, and by their strength in the cavalry arm. At the moment when Buller's order was brought to him, Colonel Egerton was so deeply impressed with a sense of the danger which he had to withstand in this part of the field, that—deliberately, and with a firmness which might have won him great praise, if the actual course of events had brought him his justification—he took upon himself a grave burthen. He took upon himself to say that, in the circumstances in which he stood, he ought not to obey the order. This answer the aide-de-camp carried back to General Buller. Buller was a near-sighted man;* and being, it would seem, distrustful of what had been his own impression of the enemy's attitude, he acquiesced in Colonel Egerton's decision, allowed the 77th to remain where it was, and not only refrained from advancing with the 88th, but threw the regiment into square, as though it were about to be attacked by cavalry.

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State of things in the Redoubt.

So when the men of Codrington's force looked back to whence they came, and when also they looked to

* It has already been said that Sir George Brown who commanded the Division, and Codrington who commanded its 1st brigade were, both of them, near-sighted. The Light Division was the force which had to feel and fight its way to the key of the position, and it was an error to allow it to be carried into action by three near-sighted generals.

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their left rear, they saw they were alone—still alone—upon the hill-side. Then such of them as had the instinct of war began to understand that the blood of their comrades had been shed in vain.

For they were only clusters of men without the strength of order; and masses of infantry, in a perfect state of formation, were heavily impending over them. The columns which were the nearest to them were in the dip behind the redoubt, and so placed that, without any danger to them, a Russian battery, which had been planted higher up on the side of the Kourganè Hill, could throw its fire into the site of the redoubt. The guns of this battery were soon brought to bear upon those of our soldiery who were within the redoubt; and this fire, after killing and wounding several men, drove the rest to seek cover by betaking themselves to the outer side of the parapet. This movement, though it wanted the sanction of orders, was scarcely wrong or unsoldierly; for, since the men were without formation, their duty became like the duty of skirmishers, and the parapet of the redoubt supplied that kind of shelter which the need of the moment demanded. Yet the movement looked like the beginning of a retreat, and Codrington strove to check it; for being at the moment on the outside of the Work, he for the second time put his horse at the parapet, and again entered the redoubt, with a hope that the men would follow him in once more. But this time his example was little observed; for almost every man being driven, by want of formation, to rely upon his own means of making a stand,

A battery on the higher slopes of the hill brought to bear on our men.

Our men lodge themselves outside the parapet.

was busied with the work of settling himself down as well as he could for a stubborn defence; and it was plain (as Codrington himself had been showing the men some few minutes before) that the best ground for making a stand was the foot of the parapet on its outer side.

When good infantry soldiers, in the immediate presence of a powerful enemy, are disordered, but still undaunted, the slightest rudiment of a fieldwork is of infinite value to it, not simply nor chiefly on account of the shelter which it affords, but rather because it gives a base and nucleus for that coherence which is endangered by the want of formation. If our men, then lying or kneeling along the foot of the parapet, had been well covered at the flanks, it would have been their duty to hold the ground firmly against even a great body of infantry attacking them in front.

But on either flank, as well as in front of the lengthened crowd of English soldiery which lay clustering about the parapet the enemy's masses were gathered. On their right rear there was the double battalion column of the Kazan corps, still engaged with the 7th Fusileers. On their left and left front there were the two remaining battalions of the Kazan corps, and the four battalions of the Sousdal corps; but in their immediate front, and posted in the hollow behind the redoubt, they had before them the four superb battalions of the Vladimir Regiment. These forces were supported by the four battalions of the Ouglitz corps, which stood massed in

The forces gathered against them.

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one column on a higher slope of the Kourganè Hill. The two battalions of sailors also were in this part of the field; and, besides the battery which armed the lesser fieldwork, and the one which commanded the dismantled redoubt, there were two batteries of artillery held in reserve. Moreover, 3000 horsemen were close at hand on the enemy's extreme right. Thus (omitting the Kazan column, which was occupied with the 7th Fusileers) there was impending over our 2000 men, then kneeling or lying down by the parapet of the redoubt, a force of some 14,000 cavalry and infantry in a state of perfect formation, and supported by powerful batteries.

Warlike indignation of the Russian infantry on the Kourganè Hill.

And by this time there had sprung up amongst the Russian infantry on the slopes of the Kourganè Hill a sentiment of warlike indignation. Any Russian officer who had been standing on ground high enough to command a view of the river, must have seen that from the moment of their first onset on the left bank, the troops which stormed the redoubt were an isolated, and for the most part a disordered force; and even for some minutes after seeing them carry the Work, he would be unable to make out that any supports moved up from the river were coming as yet to their aid. Naturally he would be shamed to think that many thousands of the once famous Russian infantry had been yielding up the Great Redoubt to a body which might almost be called a mere flush of skirmishers. Besides, it was known, by this time, in some of the Russian battalions that, of the pieces which had armed the redoubt, two were

wanting, and to recover these, there arose a burning desire. Unless the stain was to be lasting, it seemed clear that the red-coats still clinging to the dismantled redoubt must be driven at once down the hill.

Movemen of the Ouglitz column.

Without, it seems, receiving any orders from head-quarters, or from the divisional commander, the great column formed of the Ouglitz battalions, and posted on the high ground above the redoubt, began to come swiftly down the hill; and for a few moments it came on, hot with zeal or anger, for the men of the front ranks fired vain passionate shots whilst they marched, and young soldiers in the centre of the column kept shooting wildly into the air above them. Soon however this body was halted.*

Advance of the Vladimir column.

But it was in the great Vladimir column that there sprang up the warlike spirit which was destined to bring the foot soldiery of Russia and of England into a closer strife. The column, as we have seen, was a mass composed of the four battalions of the Vladimir corps; and although it stood near to the English soldiery lying clustered along the outer side of the parapet, still, since it was in the dip behind the rear of the earthwork, it could not be perfectly seen even by such of our men as might be standing up, and could not be seen at all by those who were lying down or kneeling.

For the honour of having led this high-mettled

* No mention is made of this movement in the Russian accounts, and I imagine that it was a spontaneous movement soon stopped by orders from some one in authority. The movement was observed by English officers so placed as to command a view of this part of the field, and if I am guilty of any error, it is the error of ascribing the movement to the wrong corps.

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column against English infantry, two men contend. From the time when Prince Mentschikoff rode off towards the sea, Prince Gortschakoff had been left in command of the whole of the forces opposed to the English; and General Kvetzinski, who commanded the Division to which the Vladimir battalions belonged, was under Prince Gortschakoff's orders. Each of these generals says that (without knowing of the presence of the other) he gave orders for the advance of the column, and led it on in person. Their statements may perhaps be reconciled, for it is possible that Gortschakoff and Kvetzinski—the one riding with the left, the other with the right of the column—may have, both of them, done what they said they did. In that view of the matter the coincidence would be accounted for by supposing that the resolve of each of the two Generals sprang from the same cause—sprang from the warlike anger which was heaving the mass. I am however inclined to believe that Prince Gortschakoff is mistaken in his statement;* and that the impulse which he gave to the Vladimir battalions was after the movement now spoken of. Be this as it may, it is certain enough that—either alone, or jointly with Prince Gortschakoff—Kvetzinski led on the column.

These troops of the 16th division had been touched with the warlike fire which a patriot priesthood can draw from Gospels, Epistles, and Psalms. With the baggage of the Division there was carried an image

* I found this belief upon a comparison of Prince Gortschakoff's statements with the known facts.

of the blessed Sergius; and when these troops were ordered to the south, the Archbishop of Moscow had taken care to whet them for the strife. "Children of the Czar"—so ran the Primate's blessing—"Children of the Czar our father, and Russia our mother, my warrior brethren! The Czar, your country, the Christian faith, call you to great deeds, and the prayers of the Church and country are with you. . . . Should it be the will of God that you too face the foe, forget not that you are doing battle for the most pious Czar, for our beloved country, for holy Church, against infidels, against persecutors of the Christian faith — persecutors of men united to us by ties of religion and of blood—insulters of those who bow before the Holy Places, sanctified by the birth, passion, and ascension of Christ. Blessing and honour to him who conquers! Blessing and happiness to him who, with faith in God, and love for his Czar and country, offers up his life as a sacrifice! It is written in the Scriptures, concerning those of olden times who fought for their country, 'By faith were kingdoms conquered' (Heb. xi. 33). Now by faith you too shall be conquerors. Our most holy father Sergius whilome blessed our victorious war against the enemies of Russia. His image was borne in your ranks in the days of the Emperor Alexis, of Peter the Great, and finally in the great war against twenty nations in the reign of Alexander the First. That sacred form journeys with you also as a token of his fervent and beseeching prayers to God on your behalf. Take unto yourselves, moreover, the triumphal war-cry of

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the Czar and prophet David, 'In God is my salvation and glory!'"*

The Vladimir column came on. It moved slowly, as though it were held in by some kind of awe or doubt. Still it moved; and without firing a shot, for the orders were not to fire but to charge with the bayonet. Huge and gray, the mass crept gliding up the slope which divided it from our soldiery.

Our men, gathered round the parapet, were kneeling or lying down; and being thus low they could not see into the dip which lay at a little distance before them. But mounted officers of course could see farther, and even men on foot (especially those near to either flank of the redoubt), if they stood up for a moment to gain a wider view, could see a whole field of bayonet-points, ranged close as corn, and seeming to grow taller and taller. And though none of our men knew the strength of the column which was closing upon them, yet sometimes from what he himself saw, but more commonly by hearsay, almost every man came to know that towards the part of the parapet where he lay there was a mass of Russian soldiery coming.

Presently the head of the great Vladimir column approached the crest; and our men, whilst they lay with their rifles levelled across the parapet, and their eyes a little above its top, were face to face with the front rank of the mass.

* Psalm li. 8; Eastern Papers, Part VII., p. 50.

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Aspect of the column.

Before it confuses itself by hasty firing, a Russian column in good order is a solemn expression of warlike strength. With the hard, upright outlines of a wall, it is in its colour a dark cloud; and the lowly beings who compose it are so merged in the grand unity of the mass, that in the hour of battle the aspect of it weighs heavy upon the imagination of anxious men. More, a hundredfold more than it is it seems to portend; and now, when the Vladimir column three thousand strong and withholding its fire, emerged in silence from the hollow, when it slowly grew over the crest, and rose up at last stark and square between the eyes of our soldiery and the light beyond, its power over the mind of a beholder was less the power of a substance than of a shadow—a shadow approaching—the dim, mighty shadow that is thrown forward by a military empire when it comes in great earnest to the front.

It is certain, however, that whatever the cause be, some high quality of the soul, or only, after all, a certain hardness of temperament, our people in general are not impressed by the sight of massed infantry in the way that the nations of the Continent are; and when our soldiers are formed in their English array, they can make merry with a mere column as a thing that is foreign, a thing with vast pretensions to strength, but helpless as a flock of sheep against firm men standing in line. Even now, though our men lay in clusters without formation, they were ready enough to begin shooting into the column; and those who first caught sight of the

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Russian helmets were going to deliver their fire, when suddenly they were checked by a voice which implored every man to stay his hand.

Confusing rumours amongst our soldiery.

When troops are about to be overpowered, confusing rumours flit round them; and if it happen that these rumours become the immediate causes of a default, they do not for that reason excuse it, because the very spreading of such tales is not the cause, but the effect of the bewildered state into which the troops are lapsing. The voice which had stayed the fire of our men was a voice crying out, "The column is French!—the column is French! Don't fire, men! For God's sake don't fire!" The prohibition, repeated again and again, travelled fast along the line; and presently it was further impressed, for a bugler of the 19th, under orders from a mounted officer, began to sound the "cease firing."

Unauthentic orders and signals to the men.

Our men, obeying the voice and the signal, withheld their fire and remained still. The belief that the column must be French was confirmed—and indeed it is likely that it had been caused—by observing that it delivered no fire; and although, if Kvetzinski's statement be accurate, the front rank men had their muskets brought down as though for a charge with the bayonet,* still the slow, formal movement of the approaching mass was so little like what the English regard as a 'charge,' that no one

* His expression as rendered from the Russian into French is "l'arme au bras, prête à la baionette." This I suppose must mean that the front rank men had their bayonets "at the charge," and not merely "at the trail."

seems to have accounted for the silence of their firelocks by suggesting that the movement was intended for an attack with the bayonet. It seems that the column now halted,* as if from a suspicion of some snare, or perhaps from a dread of the unknown, for the men of the column could not see the stature of our men, but they saw forage-caps and a crowd of English faces of a fresh-coloured hue very strange to their eyes, and they saw the muzzles of rifles levelled thickly across the parapet. From mistake on one side, and misgiving on the other, there had come to be a strange pause. Yet not along the whole line; for either with a part of the Vladimir column or else with some other body of troops, two or three of the companies of the 33rd were exchanging at this time a sharp fire. Obeying the light, simple motive which sometimes governs the soldier when his mind is a blank, the men of the column took the fancy of pouring the main volume of their shot towards the ground where the colours of the 33rd were upraised. The colours were new; and, as though the mere richness of their crimson folds were enough to draw the eye and the aim of the Russian musketeer, they were riddled in two or three minutes with numbers of balls. Of those who stood near them a large proportion were struck down.†

* The Russian accounts do not speak of this halt. They represent the whole advance of the column as a bayonet charge, and it seems quite true that the column really withheld its fire, but it would be a mistake to suppose that the forward movement of this body was marked with any of the swiftness or violence commonly associated with the idea of a "charge."

† I do not see anything in the Russian narratives which I can identify with the combat in which a part of the 33rd was engaged, and I have not

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Codrington, seeing that the fruits of the exploit performed by his brigade were going to be lost for want of supports, had already sent his aide-de-camp, Campbell, to press the advance of the Scots Fusileer Guards, the battalion most directly in his rear. But the very moments then passing were the moments charged with the result, and there were no other and later moments that could ever be used in their stead.

It is said—but my faith in men's impressions of what passed at this minute is wanting in strength—it is said that one of the heavy columns which the enemy had on his extreme right was now seen to be marching upon the left flank of the English soldiery who lay clustered along the parapet of the redoubt;* and it seems there are grounds for believing that the left of our line was the spot where a conviction of the necessity of retiring was first acted upon. According to testimony which seems to be trustworthy, a mounted officer† rode up to a bugler of the 19th Regiment, and ordered him to sound the "retire." The man obeyed, and buglers along the whole line, from left to right, took up and repeated the

A bugler sounds the 'retire.'

been able to say which of the Russian corps it was with which the 33rd was at this time exchanging fire.

* The Russian accounts do not confirm this belief.

† Afterwards the bugler described the officer in a way which might have enabled a court of inquiry to identify him. He was not an officer of the regiment to which the bugler belonged, and he was not a general officer; and he did not deliver the order as coming from any one other than himself. The incident goes far to justify the opinion of officers who think that (unless it is strictly confined to the business of guiding skirmishers) the use of a bugle during an action is dangerous.

signal. But the instinct of self-preservation, no less than the natural courage and tenacity of the soldier, made almost every man of the force very unwilling to abandon the ground; for it happened that at this time a brisk shower of missiles was passing over the heads of our men without doing them harm, and hearing how thickly the balls were raining into the ground behind them, they knew that a retreat would not only be an abandonment of ground dearly won, but also would bring them at once under a heavy fire. So strong was their conviction of the expediency of holding fast to the ground where they lay that the sounding of the "retire" was believed to have originated in some error; and in order that they might determine what should be done, the officers of several regiments, but more especially of the 23rd, gathered into a group and began to consult together. Being firm, proud men, with a great self-respect, they did not, it seems, like to crouch for shelter under the parapet whilst they were exchanging counsel; so they conferred standing upright, but under so thick a flight of balls that several —nay, they say almost all of them were struck down and killed.* However, those who survived con-

The troops had a double motive for remaining where they were.

Conference of officers at the parapet. Their fate.

* I shall presently give the names of the officers who were killed in the 23rd, and the other regiments which stormed the redoubt, but I cannot undertake to say which of them fell at this time. In general it seems to be almost beyond the power of human testimony to fix the time and the spot at which an officer falls when he is killed in battle. The difficulty is occasioned—not by the dearth but by the vast abundance of testimony—testimony all seeming to be perfectly trustworthy, yet strangely contradictory. It will be seen, however, that the number of officers killed in the 23rd was very great, and there is an impression that no small proportion of them met their death in the way above stated.

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tinued to say that the sounding of the "retire" must have been a mistake, and that the force ought to hold its ground.

The 'retire' again sounded.

But then again, and from the same quarter as before, a bugle sounded the "retire;" and again, as before, the signal was taken up along the line. The repetition of the signal seemed to make it almost certain that the order must be authentic, but the troops were yet slow to persuade themselves that this was the case, and they still lingered at the parapet. Then a sergeant of the 23rd, standing upright in order to make himself better heard, told the men that they had twice heard the "retire" sounded, and that they must do their duty and obey. Whilst he spoke he was shot down and killed. But it was now judged by officers and men that a signal twice made, and twice carried on along the line from regiment to regiment, was not to be neglected. The retreat began; and the men quitting the shelter of the breastwork, fell back into open ground and incurred the fire which was pelting into the slope beneath.

Our soldiery retreat from the Redoubt.

As the advance had been, so also the retreat was for the most part without order, but for the most part also it was not hurried. Our soldiers in their retreat took care to ply the enemy with fire; and they picked up and carried off with them those of our wounded officers and men whom they found lying wounded on the slope. Except in one place, the retreat was like the movement of skirmishers when they find themselves recalled to their battalions by sound of bugle. But a part of the retreating force,

consisting mainly of the 23rd and the 95th, got heaped together in an unwieldy crowd, and became, as will be presently seen, the cause of a fresh disaster.

The enemy might have inflicted heavy loss upon the clusters of our soldiery then retreating down the slope, but there was some spell which bound him; for when the Vladimir column had moved forward as far as the parapet of the breastwork, it used a strange abstinence and halted, attempting no movement in pursuit. Of the two missing pieces of ordnance which the enemy had yearned to recover, one, they found, had disappeared;* and the other (the howitzer) was lying on the ground dismounted, and was so unwieldy that Kvetzinski says his Vladimir men were unable to drag it away. It remained in the redoubt.

At the moment when this retreat began, the 1st Division had not yet emerged from the cover afforded by the river's bank; but General Codrington's message hurried the forward movement of the Scots Fusileer Guards. The battalion climbed to the summit of the bank, formed line, and advanced.

But whilst this battalion moved forward, the remnant of the men who had stormed the redoubt were coming down the hill, and some of them were huddled in a throng, and bearing towards the left companies of the Scots Fusileer Guards. Therefore the Scots Fusileer Guards received in their advance much of the fire directed against our retreating soldiery, and many were struck down; still the onward movement was maintained; and the Grenadiers

* This was the gun taken by Captain Bell.

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on the right, and the Coldstreams on the left of this battalion were now also moving up. But at last the advancing line of the Scots Fusileers and the crowd descending from the redoubt came into bodily contact; and this so roughly that the retreating crowd, by its sheer weight, broke through the left companies of the Scots Fusileers and destroyed their formation. The weight of the retreating throng at that one spot was so great and so unwieldy, that a soldier of the Scots Fusileers was thrown, it is said, to the ground, and got his ribs fractured. The left companies of the Scots Fusileer Guards, being thrust out of line by physical pressure, fell back in disorder.

At a later moment some of the men who were retreating, but retreating in less heavy clusters, came down upon the Grenadier Guards. The Grenadiers neatly opened their ranks for the discomfited soldiery, and afterwards formed up again, soon recovering their perfect array.

Losses of the regiments which stormed the work.

During this conflict the four regiments which stormed the redoubt had undergone cruel slaughter. In the 23rd Regiment, besides Colonel Chester, Wynn, Evans, Conolly, Radcliffe, Young, Anstruther and Butler, and 3 sergeants, were killed; and Campbell, Hopton, Bathurst, Sayer * and Applethwaite, and 9 sergeants, were wounded. Of the rank and file 40 were killed, and 139 wounded.

In the 33rd, Lieutenant Montague and 3 sergeants were killed, and Colonel Blake, Major Gough, Cap-

* Sayer was one of those struck down by that salvo-like discharge which preceded the dismantling of the redoubt.

tain Fitzgerald, Wallis, Worthington, Siree, and Greenwood, and 16 sergeants were wounded.* Of the rank and file 52 were killed, and 172 were wounded.

In the 95th, Dowdall, Eddington, the younger Eddington, Polhill, Kingsley, Braybrooke, and 3 sergeants, were killed; and Hume, Reyland, Wing, Sargent, Macdonald, Gerard, Braybrooke, Brooke, Boothby, Bazalgette, Gordon, and 12 sergeants, were wounded. Of the rank and file 42 were killed, and 116 wounded.

In the 19th, Stockwell and Wardlow were killed; and Cardew, Saunders, M'Gee, Warden and Currie, and 4 sergeants, wounded. Of the rank and file 39 were killed, and 170 wounded.

In the Rifles there were 11 killed and 38 wounded, and most of those casualties occurred in the left wing. So, of the four line battalions and the four companies of Rifles which had stormed the redoubt, there was a loss, in killed and wounded, of about 100 officers and sergeants, and 800 men.

* Colonel Blake would not report his wound lest the account should alarm his wife and family. His horse was struck in three places. Siree though badly wounded insisted upon remaining out on the hill-side all night in order that men in a worse condition should be first attended to. Wallis was badly wounded, but he tied a handkerchief round the place, and remained with his regiment to the close of the battle. Worthington died from the amputation which was necessitated by the wound he received.

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Cause which paralysed the Russians in the midst of their success.

But what was the spell which bound the Czar's commanders? and why did they throw back the gifts which seemed to be brought them by the fortune of battle?

When our storming force under Codrington was ascending the glacis in a crowd—in a crowd torn through and through by grape and canister—how came it that the enemy could suddenly make up his mind to stop the massacre, and dismantle his Great Redoubt?

When the remnant of our storming force was flocking back down the hill, why did the enemy spare from destroying it, and bring to a halt his triumphant Vladimir column?

Having several thousands of troops between the Causeway and the Kourganè Hill, why did the Russian Generals suffer Lacy Yea, still to keep his stand on open ground with one disordered battalion?

We saw that when Mentschikoff, disturbed by the report of Bosquet's flank movement, rode off in great haste towards the sea, Prince Gortschakoff was left in command of all that part of the Russian army which confronted the English. Kvetzinski, the brave and able general who commanded the division on the Kourganè Hill, was under the orders of Prince Gortschakoff, and as long as the absence of the commander-in-chief was protracted, Gortschakoff was the officer who had to answer for the defence of the Pass and of

the whole position thence extending to the extreme right of the Russian army. Every part of the ground thus committed to Prince Gortschakoff's care was precious, but the Kourganè Hill was the key of the whole position on the Alma. There, and there only, the ground had been intrenched. There, and there only, heavy guns had been planted. That barren hill had become the very gage for which the Great Powers of the West and the Czar of All the Russias were to join in a strife computed to last many days. Prince Mentschikoff himself had so judged it. Establishing his head-quarters on the slope overlooking the Great Redoubt, and so disposing his troops that, whilst standing there he could exercise an immediate personal control over more than two-thirds of his whole force, he had intended that every movement of this part of the field should be under his own eyes. It might well be deemed certain that any one of Prince Mentschikoff's lieutenants entrusted, during the absence of his general, with this great charge would be tenacious of the ground. As a general in high command, he would act upon the knowledge that the hill was vital to the whole position. As an officer commanding troops placed in a fortified Work, he would be taught by the punctilio of his profession to hold his intrenchments, even at great sacrifice, until the weight of his charge should be taken from him by an order from the commander of the forces.

But there was a whim of the Emperor Nicholas which tended to weaken and disperse the authority of any man in command of his army. Longing always

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to make Wellington an example for his generals, but mistaking the gist of the saying that "the Duke never lost a gun," Nicholas gave his commanders to understand that the loss of a piece of ordnance would be likely to bring them into disgrace.* The result of such an intimation was just what a more sagacious prince would have easily foreseen. The commander who received the warning took good care to hand it down—to hand it all down the steps of the military hierarchy; and every general of division, every brigadier, nay, every artillery officer who commanded a battery was evidently made to understand that, happen what might, he must not lose a gun. In other words, every such officer, rather than run the risk of losing a gun, was empowered to resolve upon the abandonment of a fortified position, and even to commence a retreat, which might carry with it the retreat of the whole army.

It was therefore very natural that the anxiety which had seized upon the mind of Prince Mentschikoff should not only extend to Prince Gortschakoff and to General Kvetzinski, but also to the artillery officers who commanded the Causeway batteries and the guns in the Great Redoubt. Now, from the moment when Prince Mentschikoff rode off towards the sea, he had never

* The sense in which it can be said that Wellington "never lost a gun," has been referred to in a former note. The fact of the Duke never having lost a gun in action is a superb and summary proof that his career was unchequered by the loss of a battle; but his avoidance of the loss of guns was not the cause, but the effect and the proof of his ascendancy in war. The Duke would have scorned the notion of risking the loss of a battle for the sake of keeping his guns safe.

reappeared in the Pass, or on the Kourganè Hill, he had sent no good tidings, and apparently had dispatched no orders or directions of any kind.* With every moment the just grounds for alarm were increasing, and when the foremost divisions of the British army sprang to their feet and rapidly advanced along their whole line, the Russian generals and commanders of batteries had to cast in their minds and see how far their desire to hold fast a position very precious to the army and to the honour of the empire could be made to consist with the absolute safety of a few pieces of ordnance. They were about to be assailed by the English army. But this was not all they had to look for. The continued detention of Prince Mentschikoff in that part of the position which confronted the French gave ground for the fear that an evil crisis must there be passing. The fear would be that Bosquet's turning movement against the Russian left was producing its full effect, and that the tide of war, rolling up along the line of the Russian position, had set in from west to east.

If men were filled with this dread—a dread well justified by inference fairly drawn at the time, though not by actual facts—it would be to the Telegraph Height that they would bend their inquiring eyes, and there they would gaze with minds prepared to learn that the French, marching eastward, had doubled up the Russian left wing, and were coming to ground

* I think I might have almost ventured to leave out the "apparently," for although the narratives of Gortschakoff and Kvetzinski do not in terms declare that they received no orders, the tenor of their statements is all but equivalent to actual assertion.

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from which they would look down triumphant into the flank of the Causeway batteries. Suddenly, to men thus expectant of a dreaded calamity, there was presented a sight well fitted to confirm their worst fears—nay, even to make them imagine that the whole tenor of their duty was changed. For one of the high knolls jutting up from the eastern slopes of the Telegraph Height, and closely overlooking the Russian reserves, became crowned all at once with a gay-looking group of horsemen, whose hats and white plumes shewed that they were staff officers. What made the apparition seem the more fatal was that it was deep in the very heart of the Russian lines, and even somewhat near to the ground where Prince Mentschikoff had posted his reserves. It could be seen that the horsemen wore coats of dark blue. They were exactly on the ground where the van of the French army might hope to be if it had achieved a signal victory over the left wing of the Russian army. It was hardly to be imagined possible that the Allies could have a numerous staff in that part of the field without being there in great strength. Even a tranquil and cautious observer of the apparition could hardly have failed to infer that the French, carrying all before them, had marched through and through from west to east, and made good their way into the centre—nay, almost into the rear of the Russian position. Oppressed by this belief, Russian officers would be led to think that if they stood bound to provide against the possibility of losing their guns, the time they had for saving them was beginning to run very short.

Apparition of horsemen on a knoll in the midst of the Russian position.

The divisional general who was in command on the Kourganè Hill does not allege that he had any authority from Prince Gortschakoff or from the commander of the forces to remove the guns which armed the Great Redoubt. What he says is that the defeat of the Kazan battalions by the English troops left the battery exposed, and necessitated its withdrawal.* General Kvetzinski, however, was the master of sixteen prime battalions, of which twelve were at this time untouched. At the time when the order must have been given for the removal of the guns the defeat which one of his 'Kazan' columns had sustained was nothing which, in the eyes of a man so firm as he was, would seem to justify despair.† Yet, to remove these guns was to abandon the key of the position on the Alma. It is hard to imagine that Kvetzinski could have brought himself to take such a step without trying resistance, unless he had been in some measure governed by an inculcated dread of

* This is what Kvetzinski says:—'During this time masses of English troops were directing their steps towards the regiment of the Grand Duke Michael (the "Kazan" regiment). The batteries of our first lines began firing violently. Shells and missiles worked their bloody way through the lines of the enemies, but they immediately re-formed their lines, and under cover of a strong line of bayonets, and their battery then standing behind the smoking ruins of Bourliouk, they hastened to force their way over the ford in order to reach the breastwork. The "Kazan" regiment bravely met them, but, tormented by the destroying fire of the enemy, and having lost a frightful amount of men, was obliged to give way under the superior numbers of the enemy. The battery being thus left exposed was obliged to move.'

† Up to the time when Kvetzinski dismantled the Redoubt, the only defeat which the Kazan corps had sustained was the one inflicted upon two of its battalions by the 19th Regiment and the left companies of the 23rd. See *ante*. The defeat of the other two battalions—the battalions engaged with Lacy Yea—had not then occurred.

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losing guns, and also by what he wrongly imagined to be the state of the battle on the other side of the Causeway. Be this as it may, it is certain that within some fifteen minutes from the time when the horsemen were first seen on the knoll the Great Redoubt was dismantled.

The riders whose sudden appearance on the knoll thus scared and misled the enemy were a group of perhaps eighteen or twenty Englishmen. How came it that they were sitting unmolested in their saddles and contentedly adjusting their field-glasses in the heart of the Russian position?

The road which Lord Raglan took when he had ordered the advance of his infantry.

At the time when Lord Raglan despatched to his leading divisions the final order to advance he was riding between the French and the English armies, and was close to a road or track which led down towards a ford below the burning village. Impelled by his desire for a clear view of the coming struggle, and guided only by Fortune, or by the course of the track, he rode down briskly into the valley, followed close by his staff, but leaving our troops in his rear. He soon reached, soon passed through the vineyards, and gained the bank of the river.

The stream at this spot flowed rapidly, breaking against a mass of rock, which so far dammed it back as to form on the upper side of it a pool about four feet deep. One of the staff rode into the stream at that point, and his horse nearly lost his footing. Lord Raglan, almost at the same moment, took the river on the right or lower side of the rock, and crossed it without any trouble. Though he was parted at this time

from his own troops, there were several French soldiers near him. They were a part of the chain of skirmishers which covered the left flank and left front of Prince Napoleon's Division. They seemed to be engaged with some of the enemy's sharpshooters, whom they were able to discern through the foliage; for they were sheltering themselves behind vineyard walls, watching moments for firing, and receding in order to load, or cautiously peering forward. They looked surprised when Lord Raglan, with the group which followed him, rode down and passed them. More than one of them, sagacious and curious, paused in his loading, and stood gazing, with ram-rod half-down, as though he were trying to make out how it accorded with the great science of war, that the English General and his staff should be riding through the skirmishers, and entering without his battalions into the midst of the enemy's dominions.

Though they were unseen by our officers, the Russian sharpshooters who had been exchanging shots with the French riflemen, were not far away. Of this they gave proof. Leslie dropped out of his saddle and fell to the ground. His startled horse, making a move much as though he were blundering at a grip, the fall seemed at first sight like a fall in hunting; but a rifle-ball had entered Leslie's shoulder. Nearly at the same time Weare, another of the staff, was struck down. There was not a heavy fire, but the Russian sharpshooters had been patiently duelling with the French skirmishers, and, of course, when they saw Lord Raglan and his plumed followers they seized the occa-

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sion for easier shooting, and tried to bring down two or three of the gay cavalcade.

After gaining the left bank of the river, Lord Raglan at first got parted from most of those who had followed him, for he took a track into a kind of gulley towards his right, and there for a moment he had no one very near him except one man, who had crossed the stream next after him; for the rest of the horsemen, when they reached the dry ground, had borne rather towards their left. Some one, however, from that quarter cried out, "This seems a better way, my lord," and Lord Raglan, then turning, rejoined the rest of the staff, and took the path recommended. I do not know who the officer was who advised this road. He has possibly forgotten the counsel which he gave; but if he remembers it, and sees how the issue was governed by taking the path which he chose, he may suffer himself to trace the gain of a battle, with all its progeny of events, to his few hurried words.

The brown bay Lord Raglan rode was of course well broken to fire, and he had been quiet enough during the earlier part of the action; but now, suddenly, his blood rose, and for all the rest of the day he was so eager that he would hardly suffer his rider to use a field-glass from the saddle. The truth is, that in other times he had been ridden to hounds in England, and although he had long stood careless of all that was done by the Causeway batteries, yet when he and his rider and the horsemen around him cantered down into the valley, when they plunged into the river, when

they briskly dashed through it, and began to gallop up the steep broken ground on the Russian side, the old hunter seemed to think of the chace and great days in the Gloucestershire country.

But it was not "Shadrach" * alone who felt the onward impulse. They say that there lurks in the men of these isles a vestige of Man the Hunter and Man the Savage, and that this, after all, is the subtle leaven which, in spite of the dangerous inroads of luxury, still keeps alive the warlike spirit of the people, and the freedom which goes along with it. It was not right—nay, if it were not that success brings justification, it would have been scarcely pardonable—that a general, charged with the care of an army, should be under the guidance of feelings akin to the impulses of the chace; but what one has to speak of is not of what ought to have been, but what was. By the stir and joyous animation of the moment Lord Raglan was led on into a part of the field which he would not have sought to reach in cold blood. He would have regarded as nothing the mere difference between the risk of being struck by shot in one part of the field and the risk of being struck by shot in another; but he knew that in general it is from a point more or less in rear of battalions actually engaged that a chief can exercise the most constant and the most extended control over his army; and an ideal commander would not suffer himself to ride to so forward a spot as to run the risk of losing the government of his troops for many minutes together in the critical period of an

* The name of the horse.

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action; but the horseman who now rode his hunter across the valley of the Alma and indulgently gave him his head was not an ideal personage, but a man of flesh and blood, with many very English failings. "*Avant tout je suis gentilhomme Anglais,*" was the preface of the fierce message sent by the then foremost man of the world to the king of France,* and certainly in the nature of that "*gentilhomme Anglais*" the wilfulness is so firmly set that no true sample of the breed can be altered and altered down to suit a pattern. The state must dispense with his services or take him as he is.

Body and soul, Lord Raglan was so made by nature, that, though he knew how to be prudent enough in the orders he gave to officers at a distance, yet when he was in the saddle directing affairs in person, and there came to be a question between holding back and going forward, his blood always used to get heated, and, like his great master, he had so often been happy in his choice of the time for running a venture, that his spirit had never been cowed. Having once begun to ride forward, he did not restrain himself. And surely there was a great fascination to draw him on. The ground was of such a kind that, with every stride of his charger a fresh view was opened to him. For months and months he had failed to tear off the veil which hid from him the strength of the army he undertook to assail; and now, suddenly in the midst of a battle, he found himself suffered to

* To Louis the XVIIIth in the summer of 1815, shortly after his second restoration.

pass forward between the enemy's centre and his left wing. As at Badajoz, in old times, he had galloped alone to the drawbridge and obtained the surrender of St. Christoval, so now driven on by the same hot blood, he joyously rode without troops into the heart of the enemy's position; and Fortune, still enamoured of his boldness, was awaiting him with her radiant smile. For the path he took led winding up — by a way rather steep and rough here and there, but easy enough for saddle horses—and presently in the front, but some way off towards the left, he saw before him a high commanding knoll, and, strange to say, there seemed to be no Russians near it. Instantly, and before he reached the high ground, he saw the prize and divined its worth. He was swift to seize it. Without stopping—nay, even, one almost may say, without breaking the stride of his horse, he turned to Airey, who rode close at his side, and ordered him to bring up Adam's brigade with all possible speed. Then, still pressing on and on, the foremost rider of the allied armies, he gained the summit of the knoll.

Lord Raglan's position on the knoll.

I know of no battle in which, whilst the forces of his adversary were still upon their ground, and still unbroken, a general has had the fortune to stand upon a spot so commanding as that which Lord Raglan now found on the summit of the knoll. The truth is, that the Russian commander had not troops enough to occupy the whole position, and the part which he neglected was, happily, that very one into which Lord Raglan had ridden. During the earlier part of the

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day a battalion had been posted in the ravine close under the knoll; but, in an evil hour for the Czar, the battalion had been removed,* and the enemy having no other troops in the immediate neighbourhood, and having no guns in battery which commanded the summit of the knoll, the English General, though as yet he had no troops with him, stood unmolested in the heart of the enemy's position—stood between that wing of the Russian army which confronted the French, and that much larger portion of it which confronted the English; but so far in advance as to be actually in the close neighbourhood of the Russian reserves. The knoll was not, indeed, so situated as to command a distant view towards our right, and the view towards the front was obstructed by the features of the ground; but, looking to his left, or, in other words, looking eastward and up the valley of the river, Lord Raglan commanded nearly the whole ground, destined to be the scene of the English attack.†

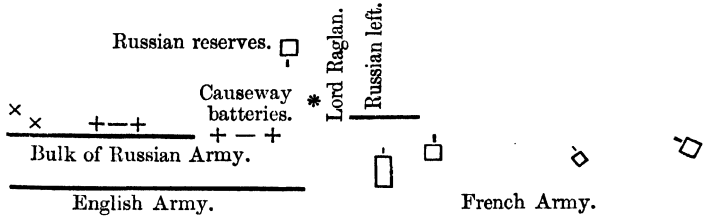
But more; he looked upon that part of the Russian army which confronted ours; he saw it in profile; he saw down into the flank of the Causeway batteries which barred the mouth of the Pass; and beyond, he saw into the shoulder of the Great Redoubt, then about to be stormed by Codrington's brigade.‡ Above all, he saw, drawn up with splendid precision, the bodies of infantry which the enemy held in reserve.

* The No. 1 Taroutine battalion, Chodasiewicz.

† *i.e.* That attack the first stages of which have been already described.

‡ As already narrated. It will be remembered that Codrington's brigade was joined in the storming by the 19th and 95th Regiments.

They were massed in two columns.* The formation of each mass looked close and perfect as though it had been made of marble, and cut by rule and plomb-line. These troops being in reserve were of course some way in rear of the enemy's batteries and his foremost battalions; but they were only 900 yards from the eye of the English General; for it was Lord Raglan's strange and happy destiny to have ridden almost into the rear of the position, and to be almost as near to the enemy's reserves as he was to the front of their array.



All this—now told with labour of words—Lord Raglan saw at a glance, and at the same moment he divined the fatal perturbation which would be inflicted upon the enemy by the mere appearance of our Head-quarter staff in this part of the field. The knoll, though much lower than the summit of the Telegraph Height, stood out bold and plain above the Pass. It was clear that even from afar the enemy would make out that it was crowned by a group of plumed officers; and Lord Raglan's imagination being so true and so swift as to gift him with the faculty of knowing how

* See former note as to the probable number of the troops in these columns, and the corps to which they belonged.

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in given circumstances other men must needs be thinking and feeling, it hardly cost him a moment to infer that this apparition of a few horsemen on the spur of a hill was likely to govern the enemy's fate. It would not, he thought, occur to any Russian general that fifteen or twenty staff officers, whether French or English, could have reached the knoll without having thousands of troops close at hand. The enemy's generals would therefore infer that a large proportion of the Allied force had won its way into the heart of the Russian position. This was the view which Lord Raglan's mind had seized when, at the very moment of crowning the knoll, he looked round and said, 'Our presence here will have the best effect.' Then, glancing down as he spoke into the flank of the Causeway batteries, and carrying his eye round to the enemy's infantry reserves, Lord Raglan said, 'Now, if we had a couple of guns here!' *

Lord Raglan desires to have a couple of guns brought up to the top of the knoll.

His wish was instantly seized by Colonel Dickson † and one or two other officers. They rode off in all haste.

The rest of the group which had followed Lord Raglan remained with him upon the summit of the knoll, and every one, facing eastward and taking out his glass, began to scan the ground destined to be assailed by the English troops.

The Light Division had not then begun to emerge

* I heard him say so, and say so immediately upon crowning the knoll.

† Colonel Dickson of the Artillery. It was the happy accident of his being with Lord Raglan as chief of the staff of interpreters which gave him the opportunity of rendering the services narrated in the text.

from the thick ground and the channel of the river, but presently some small groups, and afterwards larger gatherings of the red-coats appeared upon the top of the river's bank on the Russian side, and at length—seen in profile by Lord Raglan—there began the tumultuous onset of Codrington's brigade against the Great Redoubt.*

Meantime, he watches the progress of the battle.

Lord Raglan knew that the distance between him and the scene of the struggle at the redoubt was too great to allow of his then tampering with it; for any order that he might send would lose its worth in the journey, and tend to breed confusion. And it was not in his way to assuage his impatience by making impotent efforts. Nor would he even give vent to his feeling by words or looks disclosing vexation. He had so great a power of preventing his animal spirits from drooping that no one could see in his glowing countenance the faintest reflection of the sight which his eyes took in. His manner all the time was the manner of a man enlivened by the progress of a great undertaking without being robbed of his leisure. He spoke to me, I remember, about his horse. He seemed like a man who had a clue of his own and knew his way through the battle.

Watching the onslaught of Codrington's brigade, Lord Raglan had seen the men ascend the slope and rush up over the parapet of the Great Redoubt. Then moments, then whole minutes — precious minutes—elapsed, and he had to bear the anguish of finding that the ground where he longed to see the

* See *ante*.

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supports marching up was still left bare. Then—a too sure result of that default—he had to see our soldiery relinquishing their capture and retreating in clusters down the hill.

A French aide-de-camp on the knoll.

Moreover, at that moment affairs were going ill with the French. The appearance of our head-quarters on the knoll had been marked by our Allies as well as by the enemy; for now a French aide-de-camp, in great haste, came climbing up the knoll to seek Lord Raglan. He seemed to be in a state of grievous excitement; but perhaps it was the violence of his bodily exertion which gave him this appearance, for he had quitted his horse in order the better to mount the steep, and he rushed up bareheaded to Lord Raglan, but so breathless from his exertions that for a moment he could hardly articulate; and when he spoke, he spoke panting. He persisted in remaining uncovered. What he came to ask was that Lord Raglan would give some support to the French; and as a ground for the demand, he urged that the French were hardly pressed by the enemy. 'My Lord,' he said, 'my Lord, my Lord, we have before us eight battalions!'* One could see, or imagine that one saw, what was passing in Lord Raglan's mind. He was pained by thinking that, either from mental excitement or from the violence of his bodily exertion, the officer should seem discomposed; but what tormented him most was the sight of the young man standing bareheaded, for to tell him to be covered

His mission.

Lord Raglan's way with him.

* 'Milord, milord, nous avons devant nous huit bataillons.' I heard him say those words.

would be to assume that the bared head was an obeisance meant to be rendered to himself. Bending in his saddle, Lord Raglan turned kindly round towards his right—towards the side of his maimed arm,—and his expression was that of one intent to assuage another's pain, but the sunshine of the last two days had tanned him so crimson, that it masked the generous flush which used to come to his face in such moments. He did not look at all like an anxious and vexed commander who had to listen to a desponding message in the midst of a battle. He was rather the courteous, lively host entertaining a shy, youthful visitor, and trying to place him at his ease. In his comforting, cheerful way, he said, 'I can spare you a battalion.' * But it was something of more worth than the promise of a battalion that the aide-de-camp carried back with him. He carried back tidings of the spirit in which Lord Raglan was conducting the battle. At a time when the French were cast down, it was of some moment to them to learn that the English head-quarters, strangely placed as they were in the midst of the Russian position, were a scene of robust animation, and that Lord Raglan looked and spoke like a man who had the foe in his power.

* 'Je puis vous donner un bataillon.' I heard Lord Raglan make that answer. Lord Raglan I imagine meant to fulfil the promise by detaching one of the two battalions about to arrive under Adams; but by the time that force came up the course of events rendered it unnecessary to send the promised aid. However, Sir Richard England afterwards moved into the close neighbourhood of Prince Napoleon's Division.

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Causes of the depression which had come upon the French.

It is now time to speak of the events which had been bringing the French army into a state of increased depression. We saw that General Kiriakoff, commanding the Russian left wing, had charge of the Telegraph Height, and confronted the Divisions of Prince Napoleon and Canrobert, having also on his left and left front, though at greater distances, the two separated brigades of Bosquet's Division, and the five battalions of Turks. The infantry force remaining under Kiriakoff's orders had been reduced by Prince Mentschikoff's abstraction of the 'Moscow' troops to a force of only nine battalions; and afterwards, when the second 'Moscow' battalion rejoined the rest of the corps, the infantry force remaining under Kiriakoff consisted only of the four 'Taroutine' and the four 'Militia' battalions. The part which these 'Taroutine' and 'Militia' battalions had been taking in the battle may be told in a summary way. They did not attack the French, and no French infantry attacked them; but since they were kept massed in battalion columns upon slopes which faced towards the French, they were exposed to a good deal of artillery fire at long range, and were from time to time forced to shift their ground. The 'Militia' battalions were troops of inferior quality; and finding at last that wherever they stood they were more or less galled by artillery, they dissolved.* So,

Operations on the Telegraph Height.

* Chodasiewicz.

although he was supported by Prince Mentschikoff in person, with 'the column of the eight battalions' of which we shall presently speak, yet in his own hands Kiriakoff had only four battalions of sound infantry, with which to show a countenance to thirty thousand Frenchmen and Turks. But both of Bosquet's brigades were distant. Canrobert indeed was on the verge of the plateau, and had so spread out his battalions as to have them in readiness for an encounter. Nay, seeing that he had no enemy before him, except on his left front, he had somewhat brought round his right shoulder, and was fronting towards the Telegraph, but he was still without his artillery, and was therefore hanging back cautiously on the steep ground close below the smooth cap of the hill.

Backwardness of the 3rd French Division.

Prince Napoleon's Division at this time was in the bottom of the valley, close to the river; and indeed, of the whole force which the Prince at this time had around him, there were only two battalions which had hitherto forded the stream.* To the hopes which the French army had of being able to take a great part in the action, this backwardness of one of their finest divisions was almost ruinous; and it is natural enough that a divisional general, whose rank gave him shelter from the ordeal of a fair military investigation, should for that very reason be made to suffer the more bitterly from the stings which men robbed of their freedom are accustomed to plant with the tongue.

* The battalion of the 19th Chasseurs, and one of the battalions of the Marine Corps. The 2nd Zouave Regiment had also crossed, but this, it will presently be seen, was not a part of the force which Prince Napoleon 'had around him.'

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Prince Napoleon.

Resembling the first French Emperor in outward looks, Prince Napoleon was also very like his uncle, not apparently in his main objects, but in the character of his intellect; for he had that rare and exceeding clearness of view which man is able to command when he can separate things essential from things of circumstance, and keep the two sets of thoughts so clean asunder as to be able to go to the solution of his main problem with a mind unclouded by details—unclouded by even those details which it is vital for him to master and provide for, though he refuses to let them mix with the elements from which he fetches out his conclusion. And although one cannot help knowing that the most cruel of all the imputations which can be brought against a soldier has long been kept fastened upon Prince Napoleon, I may say that such knowledge as I have hitherto chanced to gain of his career has not yet enabled me to infer that he is a man of lower grade than his uncle in the matter of personal courage.

The mishaps which befel him.

Before the delinquency of the 3rd French Division on the day of the Alma is accepted as one of the grounds which entitle the world to ratify its harsh judgment against Prince Napoleon, men ought in all fairness to know the mishap which befell the Division, and to understand the considerations which rendered this same mishap a much more grave evil than it might seem to be at first sight.

The French are so military a people that when a great national sentiment is once aroused, the very children are ready to seize their little muskets and

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fall into columns of companies; but in the meantime, and until the mighty nation is challenged, the great bulk of the French peasantry are perhaps more homely, more rustic, more unadventurous than most of the people of Europe. From these quiet millions of people, many tens of thousands of small, sad, harmless-looking young men are every year torn by the conscription, and immense energy—energy informed with the traditions of an ancient and ever warlike nation—is brought to bear upon the object of turning these forlorn young captives into able soldiers. All that instruction can achieve is carefully done; but the enforced change from rural life to the life of barracks and camps seems not to be favourable to the animal spirits of the men, for although, when seen in masses or groups working hard at their military duties, they always appear to be brisk, and almost merry, their seeming animation is the result of smart orders—the animation of a horse when the rowels on either side are lightly touching his flanks; and during the hours whilst they are left to themselves, the French soldiers of the line engaged in campaigning are commonly depressed and spiritless.* Of course this want of lustiness in the French army is superbly masked by all the resources of military pomp, and all the outward signs which seem to show the presence of vigour, despatch, and warlike ardour; but the material of which the line regiments are composed must always keep a good deal of its original nature, and whoever

The materials from which the bulk of the French army is taken.

* I rest this upon what I have seen of the French army in Africa, in the Crimea, and on board ship.

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glances at the rising steps of French officers successful in Africa will find that they have climbed to eminence, not by leading troops of the line, but by obtaining, in the critical part of their career, the command of choice French regiments, or, failing that, the command of troops of foreign race.* These choice French regiments are not composed of materials at all like those which supply the line. On the contrary, they number in their ranks many thousands of bold, adventurous men who take service in the army of their own accord; and it is in these choice regiments that France sees the true expression of her warlike nature. Of all these choice regiments the 'Zouaves' are the most famous, and each of the three foremost Divisions of the French army on the Alma had in it a regiment—a regiment with its two war battalions—belonging to the corps of the Zouaves. What the spear-head is to a spear, that its Zouave Regiment was to each of these three Divisions.†

The great difference between their choice regiments and the rest of their troops.

Each Division therefore is furnished with a Zouave or other choice regiment.

Prince Napoleon's Division comprised 9000 men, and of these, some 2000 were men of the 2nd Regiment of Zouaves. Whether this regiment was impatient of the supposed slowness with which Prince Napoleon had hitherto advanced, whether it was governed by its contempt of line regiments, and a fierce resolve to have no neighbourship with any other than Zouave comrades, or whether there were

Prince Napoleon is abandoned by his Zouave regiment.

* *i.e.* of the Foreign Legion, or of the native African levies.

† I have borrowed this expressive image from one of our veteran commanders, who used it once in conversation as a means of illustrating the kind of power which even a large body of our native Indian troops is accustomed to derive from the presence of one or two English battalions.

other causes which shaped its movements, I have not learnt; but what happened was this:—The regiment, after fording the river, broke away from the unfortunate Division to which it belonged, marched off towards its right front, began to climb the height, and never stopped until it had coolly ranged itself close alongside of the 1st Zouave Regiment—a regiment which formed the left of Canrobert's array. With Canrobert's Division, instead of with Prince Napoleon's, the regiment continued to act until the close of the battle. Before men are hard upon a divisional general for his seeming backwardness in an action, they ought to allow for the misfortune which left him indeed the master of some 7000 men, but robbed him of the warlike corps on which he must have relied as the element for giving life and fire to his masses. For, if one might recur to the image already used, one would say that the spear-head had flown off, and that what remained in the hands of Prince Napoleon was only the wooden shaft. Justice in this regard is the more needful, since it would plainly be unfitting and impolitic for Prince Napoleon to say in his defence, that with 7000 French troops around him he was still reduced to helplessness by the want of his Zouave Regiment.

There is another consideration which alone would seem to free Prince Napoleon from almost all the blame founded upon the backwardness of his Division. In the midst of that very Division, Marshal St. Arnaud was all this time riding; and it is obvious that by being thus present with a force which was

Also St. Arnaud was riding with this Division, and he therefore was answerable for its place in the field.

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hanging back out of its place, the officer who commanded the whole French army brought full upon his own shoulders the weight of the blame which might otherwise be thrown upon the divisional general.

D'Aurelle's brigade thrusts itself forward in advance of Prince Napoleon;

But the eloping of his Zouave Regiment was not the only mishap which befel Prince Napoleon. We saw that D'Aurelle's brigade—a brigade forming part of the 4th or Reserve Division—had been ordered to support Canrobert. Of the motives which governed the leader of this brigade I know nothing. Perhaps, whilst he was low down in the bottom of the valley, he lost his conception of the distance (the lateral distance from east to west) which separated him from the Division he was ordered to support. At all events what he did was this:—Having his whole brigade in a close, deep, narrow column, he pushed forward and jammed it into a steep road exactly in front of Prince Napoleon's foremost battalion. He thus made it impossible for Prince Napoleon to get into action by that road,* and put him in the plight of a man left behind—in the plight of a general who commands one of the Divisions intended to be foremost, and yet is left planted with his force in the rear of troops meant to act as reserves. Nor did D'Aurelle's brigade do any the least good by thus thrusting itself into the road in advance of Prince Napoleon; for, either because of the nature of the ground or from some other cause, the brigade never spread itself out so as to be capable of fighting. Always in deep column

* There was another road by which the Prince could, and by which at a later period he did ascend.

with narrow front, it hung back clinging fast to the steep part of the hill, and remaining unseen by Kiriakoff, who moved freely across its front, as though there were no such force on the hill-side. Upon the whole, the result was, that, taken together, D'Aurelle's brigade and Prince Napoleon's mutilated Division were a column of near 12,000 men which might be said to be in mere order of march during all the critical period of the battle; for with a depth of nearly a mile, the column had a front of only a few yards. Thus disposed, the 12,000 men who formed the column were not of course in a state which allowed of their attempting to engage an enemy inclined to make a stand against them; and they were even, it would seem, very helpless for purposes of mere self-defence.* Indeed it is hard to see how they could have escaped a great disaster, if a bold Russian officer who knew the ground had come down with a few score of light infantry men upon the flank of D'Aurelle's brigade. Apparently Kiriakoff's abstinence from all enterprises of this sort, and the quiet confidence with which he afterwards manœuvred on the plateau, were both owing to the steepness of ground which hindered him from perceiving the small slender head of D'Aurelle's column.

but in an order which incapacitates it from any immediate combat.

Helplessness of the deep column which was formed by D'Aurelle's Brigade and Prince Napoleon's Division.

Upon the whole, then, Kiriakoff, though handling no forces except his two batteries, his four Taroutine battalions, and his fast dissolving militiamen, was

Condition of Kiriakoff on the Telegraph Height.

* See the plan shewing the way in which Prince Napoleon's Division and D'Aurelle's brigade were disposed. It is taken from the official French plan of the 'Atlas de la Guerre d'Orient.'

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not at this time out of heart. His artillery, sweeping down the smooth cap of the Telegraph Height, both on its northern and north-western sides, commanded the only ground by which Canrobert could advance; and, firing over the heads of the Taroutine battalions, effectually kept him down. Moreover, it still tormented all those masses of French infantry which though approaching the Telegraph Height, were yet so low down as not to have come in for the shelter which the steepness of the hill-side afforded.

The 'column of the eight battalions.'

And now we shall see the cause of the stress which had been put upon the French army by that incubus of the 'eight battalions' of which the aide-de-camp spoke. We left Prince Mentschikoff countermarching from west to east with the seven battalions which he had under his personal orders. The detached battalion of the 'Moscow' corps had been afterwards called in, and its junction brought up the whole body to eight battalions. With this force gathered in mass, and standing halted on the right rear of the Telegraph, Prince Mentschikoff was preparing to make an onslaught upon the head of Canrobert's Division; but just as he was going to move, he abandoned the idea of leading the column in person. The cause of this change is obvious. Evidently Prince Mentschikoff was called off to another part of the field by tidings of what the English were doing.

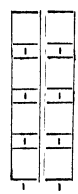
Kiriakoff is invested with the charge of this column.

Kiriakoff had had a horse shot under him, and was standing on foot near one of his 'Taroutine' battalions when Prince Mentschikoff rode up; and (apparently suppressing the tidings which forced him to

quit this part of the field) gave Kiriakoff the charge of the great 'column of the eight battalions' which had been amassed for the purpose of an attack upon Canrobert's Division. The Prince then rode off, and was not again seen or heard of in this part of the field. Of course it follows that he went as straight as he could towards that part of his position which was undergoing the assault of the English.*

He marches it across the front of D'Aurelle's brigade.

Kiriakoff instantly took a fresh horse, and rode to the ground—ground on the right rear of the Telegraph — where the 'column of the eight battalions' awaited him. This vast column he disposed in a



solid body with a front of two and a depth of four massed battalions. When all was ready he began to move it flankwise from east to west. Plainly hindered by the ground from seeing the head of the column which was formed by D'Aurelle's brigade and Prince Napoleon's Division, he dealt with the French as though they had no such force near; for with that heavy column of his which trailed as we have seen to a depth of four battalions, he marched straight across

* I say 'it follows,' because Prince Mentschikoff was a brave man, incapable of quitting one of the two scenes of battle except for the purpose of going to the other. In the mention which they make of Prince Mentschikoff's presence in different parts of the field the narratives of the Russian divisional generals leave a chasm of several important minutes. This chasm, as will be seen at a later page, I try to fill up by conjecture.

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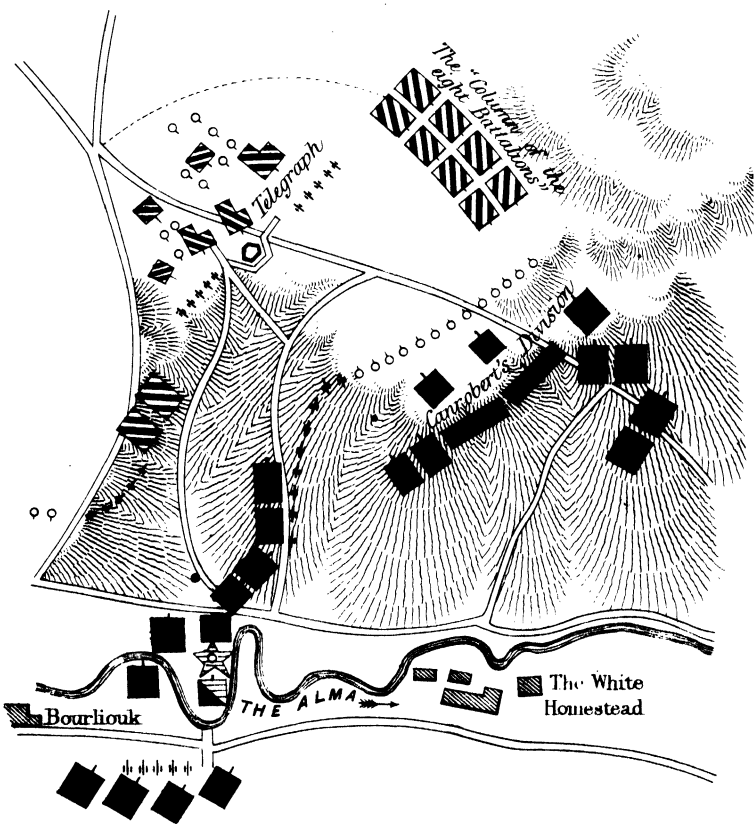
the front of D'Aurelle's brigade. He marched in peace. Nay, so far were the French from looking upon his hazardous movement in the light of a gift offered them by Fortune, that it was the dread apparition of this vast Russian column which had sent the panting aide-de-camp to the side of Lord Raglan's stirrup.

And then advances upon the right centre of Canrobert's Division.

Bending afterwards more towards the north, Kiriakoff advanced upon the right centre of the ground on which Canrobert had spread his battalions. Canrobert's troops did not long stand their ground; for when Kiriakoff advancing, and still advancing, was nearly at last within musket-shot of his foe, the French no longer bore up under the weight that is laid upon the heart of a continental soldier by the approach of a great column of infantry. Kiriakoff conceives that he inflicted a sheer defeat upon his foe. 'Canrobert's Division,' he writes, 'could not resist our charge. Hastily taking off their batteries, they began to descend the hilly bank.'* On the other hand the French say nothing of this reverse. Perhaps the truth lies intermediately between the broad assertion of Kiriakoff and the unfaithful silence of the French; for what seems the most likely is, that Canrobert, being still without his artillery, was for the moment resolved to decline the combat, and that with that view, and of his own free will, without

* Kiriakoff's narrative. It will be observed that his statement clashes with the passage in which I say that Canrobert was without his guns. I have relied upon the detailed statements supplied to me from French sources, and if I am right in doing so, it follows that Kiriakoff must have been mistaken in supposing that he saw the French carrying off their guns.

Plan (taken from the French official Atlas) showing the advance of the "Column of the eight Battalions against Canrobert's Division.



NB. Those parts of the above plan which shew the position of the "Column of eight Battalions" & of the French troops are believed to be nearly accurate, but the other parts of the plan are not to be relied upon.

waiting to be put under stress of actual fight, he drew his troops down to a steeper part of the hill-side. Be this as it may, it is certain that, under the pressure of Kiriakoff's great column, the head of Canrobert's Division fell back. *

The head of Canrobert's Division falls back.

Along almost their whole array at this time it seemed to fare ill with the Allies. Still close to the sea-shore, Bouat, with one French brigade and 5000 Turks, was without artillery, and was therefore holding back from the plateau, far away from any scene of strife. Following the same barren track, General Forey with Lourmel's brigade was marching to the sea-shore, and was annulled. Bosquet, with his one brigade on the plateau, had long been isolated, and was not so near to any Russian battalion as to be able to engage it with his infantry. Canrobert was undergoing the check which we have just seen. The unwieldy column formed by d'Aurelle's brigade and by Prince Napoleon's Division—a column, with a front of only a few yards, and the depth of a mile, was in an order adapted for the march, but not for fighting, and, its small slender crest being kept close down out of sight, had failed to exert that pressure which—even without firing a shot—may be inflicted by the known presence of a great body of troops. And the forces thus palsied were nothing less than the whole French army, including

State of the battle at this time.

* Upon this point Kiriakoff's narrative is confirmed by Romaine. Writing from his saddle, and at the very minute of witnessing the event, he recorded it in these words:—'French centre falling back.' Romaine's saddle-notes.

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even their reserves. Much, of course, might always be hoped from the bravery and the swift invention of the warlike French; but apart from that vast though undefined resource, and apart from what fortune might do for him, Marshal St. Arnaud was without the means which would enable him to bear up against any grave disaster, and hinder it from becoming sheer ruin.

The fortunes of the English had been chequered; and it might be said that at this moment their prospects were a good deal overcast. Evans, still repressed by the commanding fire of the Causeway batteries, and having but three battalions to fight with, was sustaining a hard conflict. Codrington's people had been forced to relinquish their hold of the Great Redoubt; and the shattered remains of the battalions which stormed the Work were descending the slope of the hill, and breaking down by their bodily weight the left wing of a battalion of Guards. Finally, General Buller, on our extreme left, was in an attitude of mere defence. It is true that the Great Redoubt had been dismantled, that (with the exception of the centre battalion of the Guards) our supports had not yet tried their prowess, and that the bare apparition of our Head-quarter Staff on the knoll was putting a heavy stress on the enemy. It is true, also, that there was one English regiment still fighting with a Russian column. All else had of late gone ill.

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This was the condition of things, when, having been hurried down to the ford, and dragged through the river, and up over steep, rugged ground, the two guns, for which Lord Raglan had prayed, were brought up at length to the summit of the knoll. They were guns belonging to Turner's battery, and they were already crossing the river when Dickson came upon them. The two pieces were soon unlimbered; and one of them—for the artillerymen had not all been able to keep pace—was worked by Dickson with his own hands. The guns were pointed upon the flank of the Causeway batteries. Every one watched keenly for the result of the first shot. The first shot failed. Some one said: 'Allow a little more for the wind;' and the words were not spoken as though they were a quotation from 'Ivanhoe,' but rather in a way showing that the speaker knew something of artillery practice. The next shot, or the next shot but one, took effect upon the Causeway batteries. It struck, they say, a tumbril which stood just in rear of the guns.

The two guns which Lord Raglan had called for are brought to the top of the knoll.

Their fire enfilades the Causeway batteries and causes the enemy to withdraw his guns.

It presently became a joyful certainty that the Causeway batteries exposing their flank to this fire from the knoll, could not hold their ground; and in a few moments a keen-eyed officer, who was one of the group around Lord Raglan, cried out with great joy, 'He is carrying off his guns!' And this was true. The field-pieces which formed the Causeway

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batteries were rapidly limbered up, and dragged to another ground far up in the rear.*

It ploughs through the enemy's reserves and drives them from the field.

With the two great columns of infantry, which constituted the enemy's reserves, it fared no better. After not more than two failures, the gunner got their range, and our nine-pounders ploughed through the serried masses of the two Russian columns, cutting lanes through and through them. Yet for some minutes the columns stood firm. And even when the still increasing havoc at length overruled the punctilio of those brave men, it seemed to be in obedience to orders, and not under the stress of any confusing terror, that the two great columns gave way. They retreated in good order.

Our gunners then tried their pieces upon the Vladimir battalions, and although the range was too great to allow of their striking the column, they impressed Kvetzinski with a contrary belief. He was sure that these troops were reached by the guns on the knoll; and it will be seen by and by that this his belief was one of the causes which helped to govern his movements.

This was the time when the great column of the Ouglitz corps, being fired as it seemed with a vehement spirit, was still marching down from the higher slopes of the Kourganè Hill with a mind to support the Vladimir battalions, and enable them to press the

* Kiriakoff says that these guns were dragged off by the men of the Borodino corps. I do not think that there were any observers on the knoll who saw guns dragged from the field by infantry; but there were features in the ground which prevented their seeing into the line of retreat as effectually as they had seen into the batteries.

retreat of our soldiery then coming down in clusters from the Great Redoubt; but the disasters which Lord Raglan had that moment inflicted upon the enemy by the aid of the two guns on the knoll, made it natural for the Russian Generals, who saw what was done, to stop short in any forward movement. The Ouglitz column as we before saw, was stopped in the midst of its eager advance; and, for want of the support which these troops had been going to lend, the triumphant Vladimir column was brought to a halt on the site of the Great Redoubt.

The Ouglitz column was stopped in its advance.

So also was the Vladimir.

So, here was the spell which now for several minutes had been governing the battle. The apparition of a score of plumed horsemen on this knoll may have had more or less to do with the resolve which led Kvetzinski to dismantle the Great Redoubt; but at all events this apparition and the fire of Lord Raglan's two guns had enforced the withdrawal of the Causeway batteries; had laid open the entrance of the Pass; had shattered the enemy's reserves; had stopped the onward march of the Ouglitz battalions; and had chained up the high-mettled Vladimir in the midst of its triumphant advance.

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On and near the great road leading down to the bridge, Evans had been continuing his difficult struggle. He still shared with the flames the possession of the village; still held the vineyards below it; and a part of his small force had succeeded, as

Progress hitherto made by Evans.

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already shown, in crossing the river, and establishing itself under the bank on the Russian side; but beyond the ground thus gained, Evans had not yet been able to push; for the Causeway batteries were so well placed and so diligently served, that they closed the mouth of the Pass.

The force around Evans was scant, but in other times he had commanded an army, and whilst he watched the efforts of the only three battalions* remaining near him, he was alive to the progress of the action in other parts of the field. He had just witnessed the onset of Codrington's brigade; and he was sitting in his saddle tormented with the grief of observing that, for want of supports, the storming of the Great Redoubt was likely to be all in vain, when suddenly he heard the report of a nine-pounder gun sounding from a very new quarter,—sounding from somewhere among the knolls and broken ground on his right front, and in the heart of the Russian position. The fire was repeated. Evans keenly watched the Causeway batteries in his front. And not in vain, for again the nine-pounder was heard, and there followed that sort of change in the Russian batteries which seemed to show that they were under fire—under fire coming flankwise from the west. Again and again the fire of the nine-pounder was repeated. The sound came from a quarter to which it was to be expected that the French might

He hears the guns from the knoll, and presently sees their effect upon the Causeway batteries.

* The 47th, the 30th, and the 55th. The 95th, as we saw, was carried forward in the rush of Codrington's brigade, and Evans's second brigade (with the exception of the 47th Regiment) was in another part of the field.

have reached; but some, they say, fancied and said, 'That is an English gun!' A busy change began to stir in the Russian batteries. Presently, though the smoke of the burning village lay heavy in this part of the field, our people could make out what the change was. It was one of great moment to the Allies; for the enemy was limbering up, and beginning to carry off the sixteen guns which up to this minute had barred the mouth of the Pass. The great road lay open.

He at once advances.

Evans understood the battle. He acted instantly. He saw that, though he was weak, yet the moment had come for the advance of his three battalions.

The 47th Regiment had to ford the river below the bridge, and at a part where the water was deep. It encountered a good deal of difficulty in crossing. Some men were drowned, but the rest gained the bank on the Russian side of the stream, and moved forward. Evans rode across the stream at a point between the 47th and Pennefather's brigade.

Pennefather pressed forward. Colonel Stacey needed no order to advance. Understanding the business of war, he had already gained a lodgment for his battalion* under the farther bank of the river, and he was plying the Russian artillerymen with rifle fire when he observed that the enemy's batteries suddenly slackened their fire. He inferred the change that was coming; and at once caused his men to spring up the bank, formed them carefully on the top, and then, having his battalion in a beautiful line, marched straight up towards the site of the

* The 30th Regiment.

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Causeway batteries. Colonel Warren moved up his battalion* in the same direction. The enemy had partly destroyed the bridge.†

From first to last the enemy, so far as I know, had done but little with the two formed battalions of his Borodino corps which had been posted in this part of the field;‡ and he now began to draw in the multitude of skirmishers which had hitherto swarmed in the valley.§ He did not engage his infantry in further endeavours to bar the mouth of the Pass; nor even show one of his battalions in this part of the great road; but upon the hillocks, a good way in rear of the ground just abandoned by the Causeway batteries, he again established his guns; and from this new position, though not with great effect, he opened fire upon our advancing troops.

The enemy does not further resist this advance with his infantry.

To this fire Evans was now able to reply with a strong force of artillery, for Sir Richard England rode up, proposed to accompany him in the advance, and offered to place both his batteries at Evans's disposal. So the two divisional generals rode forward together, having with them altogether some thirty pieces of field-artillery.‖

Evans joined by Sir Richard England in person, who now has with him thirty guns.

* The 55th Regiment.

† He imagined that his battalion of sappers and miners had destroyed it, but this was an error. Except to the parapet which was removed not much harm was done to the bridge.

‡ General Kiriakoff says, as we have already mentioned, that the Borodino battalions dragged away the guns of the Causeway batteries, but I cannot find any other distinct statement of things done by the regiment in the course of the battle.

§ Three battalions it seems, viz. two out of the four Borodino battalions and the No. 6 rifle battalion, were employed as skirmishers.

‖ i. e. with the three batteries belonging respectively to the 1st, the 2nd, and the Light Divisions.

Moreover the Division of Sir Richard England was following him into the Pass, and would soon bring a welcome support to Evans's three battalions.*

Sir Richard England's dispositions for bringing support to Evans.

But some minutes elapsed before these supports could come up, and, by reason of the disasters which had befallen our soldiery at the Great Redoubt, the three battalions which Evans had with him were for some time almost alone upon the enemy's ground. Yet not utterly; for on the western slope of the Kourganè Hill one English battalion—Lacy Yea, with his 7th Fusileers—was still holding its ground, still engaged with a mass of the enemy's infantry. That stand that Lacy Yea had been making was a hinge on which a good deal might turn. If he should hold his ground a few minutes more, he would cover from the enemy's masses the left flank and left front of Evans's three battalions, and at the end of that time the supports would be up. Evans was an old commander, who knew how to read the signs of a battle, and he was able to see and understand that

Evans's situation in the mean time

* Apparently Sir Richard England did not know of the disaster which befel the Scots Fusileer Guards in time to be able to adapt his measures to that event. Of course, if he had known it in time, he would have been anxious to put a literal interpretation upon the order 'to support the Guards,' and would have moved a part of his force towards the chasm which had been wrought in the centre of the Household brigade. I took pains to make out the exact movements of the 3rd Division, but in vain; for those who would be the most likely to know, differ broadly the one from the other. By farther trouble I might have dispelled this obscurity; but the Division was not engaged to an extent greater than might be inferred from its losses (one killed and seventeen wounded), and therefore I have desisted from further endeavours. It may be safely said, however, that after receiving the order to support the Guards, Sir Richard England held his Division in hand, sending portions of it to give support where he deemed it to be needed; and that when Pennefather's brigade crossed the river it was followed by the whole or by the bulk of the 3rd Division.

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the enemy, almost in the very moment of his success at the Great Redoubt, was palsied by the guns still sounding from the knoll and was losing his freedom of action. He resolved to stand firm in the Pass; and he established his thirty guns near the site of the batteries which had just been withdrawn by the Russians. For some minutes his position was rather critical; and he had to trust much to the hope that Lacy Yea and his Fusileers would be able to hold their ground.

XXIX.

Protracted fight between the 7th Fusileers and the left Kazan column.

It was between the Great Causeway and the slopes of the Kourganè Hill that Lacy Yea, with his 7th Fusileers, had long been maintaining an obstinate conflict. Long ago, as we saw, he had crossed the river, had brought his men to the top of the bank, and was trying to form them, when there came down marching upon him a strong Russian column,—a column of two battalions, and numbering 1500 men. These battalions belonged to the corps which was sometimes called the Regiment of the Grand Duke Michael, and more often the Regiment of Kazan. Like the English corps to which they stood opposed, these battalions were 'Fusileers.' Soon the column was halted.

It was then that for the first time in that war the soldiery of the Western Powers were brought so near to a body of Russian troops as to be able to scrutinize its material. The men of the column were of high stature and strictly upright, with broad, plain,

whitish faces, all seemingly cast in a common mould, and very similar the one to the other. The long gray over-coat, worn alike by all the officers and men of the Russian forces, and reaching down to the ankles, gave no clue to distinguish this mass from any other of the Czar's battalions; but spiked helmets, glittering with burnished plates of brass, led some of the English to imagine that the column formed part of the Emperor's guard.* The body was formed with great precision in close column with a front of only one company; but a chain of skirmishers thrown out on either flank in prolongation of the front rank, sought to combine with the solid formation of the column some of the advantages of an array in line.† The steady men were in the front and on the flanks of the column; and the constant firing in the air which went on in the interior of the solid battalions showed that that was the place assigned to the young soldiers. The column stood halted at a distance of, perhaps, some fifty yards from the knotted chain of soldiery which represented the 7th Fusileers.

Lacy Yea was so rough an enforcer of discipline that he had never been much liked in peace time by

* The notion was ill-founded, there being none of the Imperial Guard in the Crimea. I supposed at one time that the helmet imported the presence of heavy infantry, and that the flat round forage cap with which Crimea men are so familiar, denoted a light infantry regiment. This however is not, it seems, the case. The regiment of Kazan was a light infantry regiment.

† The advantages of this hybrid formation were strongly urged about the middle of the last century by General Lloyd, an Englishman. General Lloyd was an officer in the service of Russia, and it seems probable that the formation of which he was a vehement advocate may have been adopted in the Russian service in consequence of his advice.

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those who had to obey him; but when once the 7th Fusileers were, in campaign, and still more when they came to be engaged with the enemy, they found that their chief was a man who could and would seize for his regiment all such chances of welfare and glory as might come with the fortune of war. Before many months were over, they learnt that although other regiments might be dying of want, yet by force of their Colonel's strong will there was food and warmth to be got for the 7th Fusileers; and still sooner, they came to know that the fiery nature of their chief was the quality which would help them to have dominion over the enemy. Thenceforth the strong man was a king beloved by his people.

Lacy Yea had not time to put his Fusileers in their wonted array, for the enemy's column was so near, that forthwith, and at the instant it was necessary to ply it with fire; but what man could do, he did. His very shoulders so laboured and strove with the might of his desire to form line, that the curt red shell-jacket he wore was as though it were a world too scant for the strength of the man and the passion that raged within him; but when he turned, his dark eyes yielded fire, and all the while from his deep-chiselled, merciless lips, there pealed the thunder of imprecation and command. Wherever the men had got clustered together, there—fiercely coming—he wedged his cob into the thick of the crowd—the 'rooge,' he would call it in his old Eton idiom of speech—and by dint of will tore it asunder. Though

he could not form an even array, yet he disentangled the thickest clusters of the soldiery, and forced the men to open out into a lengthened chain approaching to line formation. Numbers of the Fusileers were wanting, and on the other hand there were mingled with the battalion many of the soldiery of other regiments. With a force in this state, Yea was not in a condition to attempt a charge or any other combined movement. All he could hope to be able to do was to keep his people firm on their ground, to hinder them from contracting their front or gathering into heavy clusters, and then leave every man to make the best use he could of his rifle.

Continental generals would not easily believe that upon fair open ground there could be a doubtful conflict between, on the one side, a body of fifteen hundred brave, steady, disciplined soldiers, superbly massed in close column, and on the other a loose knotted chain of six or seven hundred light infantry men without formation. Yet the fight was not so unequal as it seemed. A close column of infantry has only small means of offence, and is itself a thing so easy to hurt that every volley it receives from steady troops must load it with corpses and wounded men. Tested strictly in that way—tested strictly by its small means of hurting people, and the ease with which it can be hurt—the close column is a weak thing to fight with; and yet it has power over the troops of most nations, because its grandeur well fits it for weighing upon the imaginations of men.

But Lacy Yea and his islanders were not so

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fashioned by nature, nor so tamed down by much learning, as to be liable to be easily coerced in any subtle, metaphysical way; and although the shots of individual soldiers and small knots of men had not of course the crushing power which would have been exerted by the fire of the 7th Fusileers when formed and drawn up in line, still, the well-handled rifles of our men soon began to carry havoc into the dark gray oblong mass of living beings which served them for their easy target. And though seemingly the front rank of the compact mass yearned to move forward, there was always occurring in the interior some sudden death or some trouble with a wounded man, which seemed not only to breed difficulty in the way of an advance, but also to make the column here and there begin to look spotted and faulty. The distance was such as to allow of a good deal of shooting at particular men. Once, Yea himself found that he was singled out to be killed, and was covered by a musket or rifle, but the marksman was so fastidious about his aim, that before he touched the trigger a quick-eyed English corporal found time to intervene, and save his colonel's life by shooting the careful Russian in the midst of his studies. 'Thank you, my man,' said Lacy Yea, 'if 'I live through this, you shall be a sergeant 'to-night.'

Whilst this long fight went on, it sometimes happened that the fire and impatience of one or other of the Fusileers would carry a man into closer quarters with the column. Of those who were spurred by

sudden impulses of this kind, Monck was one. He sprang forward, they say, from his place on the left of the Fusileers, and saying, 'Come on, 8th com-'pany!' rushed up to the enemy's massed battalions, ran his sword through a man in the front rank, and struck another with his fist. He was then shot dead by a musket fired from the second rank of the column. Personal enterprises of this kind were incidents varying the tenor of the fight; but it was by musket or rifle ball at a distance of some fifty yards that the real strife between the two corps was waged.

It was not always against the enemy that Lacy Yea was labouring. He came to know or imagine that some of his Fusileers had remained behind in the valley finding base shelter. That this should be, and that even for a few minutes this should pass, was to him not tolerable; and in the fiercest heat of his strife with the column, one of his best officers was sent back that he might turn the drove out of their sheds, and force them to come instantly into the presence of the enemy,—into the presence—more terrible still—of their raging colonel.

The fight lasted. When Codrington's people were scarce beginning their rush towards the face of the Great Redoubt, the 7th Fusileers—rudely and hastily gathered, but contriving to hold together—were beginning this battle of their own. When the storming battalions came down, the regiment was fighting still. When the despondency of the French army was at its worst; when the head of Canrobert's

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Division was pushed back down the hill by the 'column of the eight battalions;' when along the whole line of the Allies there was no other regiment fighting, Lacy Yea and his people were still at their work. When Evans, having crossed the river, was leading his three battalions to the site of the Causeway batteries, it was the 7th Fusileers that stood fighting alone on his left; and nearly at the very time when disaster befel the centre of the brigade of Guards, Lacy Yea and his Fusileers were gathering at last the reward of their soldierly virtue.

For by this time death and wounds making cavities and compelling small changes in the great living mass, had injured the symmetry of the spruce Russian column. As a piece of mechanism, it was no longer what it had been when the fight began, but the spirit of the brave and obedient men who composed it was still high. The cohesion of the mass was not yet destroyed; but it was endangered, and had come to depend very much upon the personal exertions of officers.

Lacy Yea observed that every now and then, when a part of the column was becoming faulty, a certain man always on foot, but of vast towering stature, would stride quickly to the defective spot, and exert so great an ascendancy, that steadiness and order seemed always to be restored by his presence. The gray over-coat common to all, shrouded the rank of every Russian officer, and since this man was not on horseback, there was nothing to disclose his station in the corps save the power which he seemed to wield.

What its colonel was to the 7th Fusileers, that the big man seemed to be to the Russian column, and it was not, I think, without a kind of sympathy with him; it was not, one would believe, without a manly reluctance that Yea ordered his people to shoot the tall man. He did, however, so order; and he was quickly obeyed. The tall man dropped dead, and when he had fallen there was no one who seemed to be the like of him in power.

The issue of this long fight of the Fusileers was growing to be a thing of so great moment, or else the sight of it was become so heating, that Prince Gortschakoff now resolved to take part in it bodily. So, deputing Colonel Issakoff, then acting as his Chief of the Staff, to represent him in his absence, he rode down to the column and strove to lead it on to a charge with the bayonet. But he could do nothing, for, because of the disorder already beginning, and the loss of great numbers of its officers, the heart was nearly out of the column. So, giving orders for the battalions to keep up their fire, he rode away to his right, and left the column still engaged with Yea and his Fusileers.*

Portions of the column—mainly those in the centre and in the rear—became discomposed and unsettled. Numbers of men moved a little one way or another,

* What Prince Gortschakoff says was this :—'I first rode towards the 'Fusileers who were standing firm under a very heavy fire, although losing 'a large amount of men. I first tried to lead them on (à la baionette), but 'finding that they could not re-form immediately for a charge, and had lost 'nearly all their officers, I left them with orders to continue their feu de 'bataillons.'

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and of these, some looked as though they stepped a pace backwards; but no man as yet turned round to face the rear. However, though the movement of each soldier taken singly was trifling and insignificant, yet even that little displacement of many men at the same time was shaking the structure. Plainly, the men must be ceasing to feel that the column they stood in was solid. The ranks which had been straight as arrows, became bent and wavy.

The Russian officers well understood these signs. With drawn swords, moving hither and thither as actively as they could in their long, gray, melancholy coats, they seemed to become loud and vehement with their orders, their entreaties, their threats. Presently their gestures grew violent, and more than one officer was seen to go and seize a wavering soldier by the throat. But in vain; for seemingly by some law of its own nature, rather than under any new stress of external force, the column began to dissolve. The hard mass became fluid. It still cohered; but what had been, as it were, the outlines of a wall, were becoming like the outlines of a cloud. First some, then more, then all, turned round. Moving slowly, and as though discontent with its fate, the column began to fall back.

Defeat of the column.

The 7th Fusileers bought this triumph with blood. In killed and wounded it lost twelve officers, and more than two hundred men. Monck, we before saw, was killed; and Hare, Watson, Fitzgerald, Persse, Appleyard, Coney, Crofton, Carpenter, and Jones, were wounded. For some time one of the

colours of the regiment was missing, but it did not at any time fall into the hands of the enemy. It was safe in the charge of some soldiers belonging to the Royal Welsh.*

A regimental officer engaged in a general action cannot often at the time compute the relative importance of the duty which he is performing; but on the morrow of the battle, or even perhaps much later, he may learn that the fortune of the day was hinging upon the conduct of his single regiment. Lacy Yea was a simple-hearted straightgoing man, with a wholesome ardour for fighting, and a great care for the honour and welfare of his regiment, but not looking far beyond it. Around him the battle had been flowing and ebbing. With the watching of those changes he did not much vex his mind. He hardly perhaps remarked them. He was too busy with the fight to be able to contemplate the battle. Except when he yearned to unearth the people whom he believed to be skulking, and to have them dragged before him, he thought of nothing but that the corps he commanded should stand fighting and fighting till it got the victory. He went through with his resolve, and hardly knew at the time the full worth of his constancy. He hardly knew that whilst he fought, the whole of the English front line — first on his left hand, and then on his right—had been getting the support it

* The colour, I believe, was found lying upon the ground, but how that came to happen I do not know, and I have not thought it necessary to find out, because the colour was never for a moment "lost."

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grievously needed from the tenacity of his 7th Fusileers.*

It is arranged that the defeated column is to be pressed by the Grenadier Guards.

It was plainly right that the defeated column should be pressed in its retreat by troops in a state of formation; and Yea, looking back, perceived that the Guards were now at hand. Troubridge went to the Grenadiers, saw one of its officers; told him of the defeat of the Russian column, and of the condition of the 7th Fusileers; and asked whether it would not be well that the Grenadier Guards should come up and clinch the defeat of the retiring column. Colonel Hood was referred to, and he at once consented to do as was proposed.

Sir George Brown—his grey so wounded that men saw the blood from afar—now chanced to ride to the part of the hill-side where Troubridge was passing. After telling him of the defeat of the Russian column, and of the state of the 7th Fusileers, Troubridge asked him whether the Fusileers should go on, or allow the Guards to pass them.†

Sir George said, 'Let the Guards go on. Collect 'your men, and afterwards resume the advance.'

* See plan. When Codrington's people were storming the redoubt, they were covered on their right by the fight which Yea was there maintaining. When they had to fall back, it was still that stand of the Fusileers which covered their flank. When Evans advanced with his three battalions, there was nothing but the 7th Fusileers to cover his left.

† At this time, and whilst he was still speaking with Sir George Brown, Troubridge observed the sight which will be referred to in a future page as fixing the order in which events followed one another in different parts of the field.

XXX.

State of the field in this part of the Russian position.

When it was nearly abreast of the Great Redoubt, the column just defeated by Lacy Yea's Fusileers was able to rally, and again show a front to the English;* for it had on its right the great Vladimir column, which still stood halted near the parapet of the Great Redoubt. On the right rear of the Vladimir men there was a double-battalion column, formed out of the Kazan corps.† On the right of that last column, but still further held back, there was another double-battalion column, formed of the Sousdal corps; and next to these, but much more in advance, and standing on the extreme right of the whole of the Russian infantry, there were posted the two remaining battalions of the Sousdal corps. Somewhere in this part of the field, but operating, it would seem, as skirmishers, and not perhaps bringing any very material accession of strength, there were the two battalions of sailors. As an immediate reserve, or rather as a support for all these forces, the four Ouglitz battalions were kept in hand on the higher slopes of the Kourganè Hill, and were still, as before, massed in column. At some distance on the extreme right of the Russian position, the enemy's cavalry stood posted as before, confronting from afar, but never

* After their defeat, the two battalions which composed the column seem to have parted from one another. The two bodies into which it resolved itself remained bravely, lingering on the hill-side, though, having lost most of their officers, they were in a helpless condition.

† The column defeated by the 19th Regiment, and by some of the men of the 23rd.

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provoking, the horsemen of our Light Brigade. After allowing for casualties, and especially for the heavy losses sustained by the column which engaged our 7th Fusileers, it may be conjectured that these Russian forces on the Kourganè Hill amounted to some 15,000 men. Except the Kazan battalions, none of these troops had been hitherto engaged in hard fighting, for the triumphant Vladimir column had not yet encountered formed troops. Nearly all the Russian artillery had been taken away from the front, and, except that there were five pieces of ordnance not yet withdrawn from the Lesser Redoubt, the enemy had no guns now remaining in battery. The impending struggle was a fight—a sheer fight—of infantry.

The Scots Fusileer Guards advance up the slope.

The advance of the Guards had an ill beginning. We saw that whilst the Grenadiers and the Coldstream were still forming under the bank or completing their passage of the river, the centre battalion of the brigade—the battalion called the 'Scots Fusileer Guards'—had been hurried forward by the appeal from the troops then still clinging to the redoubt, had incurred the fire of the Vladimir column, and had afterwards encountered a heap of our men retreating, which broke the formation of its left companies by sheer bodily force, and compelled them to fall back in disorder. The remnant of the battalion thus maimed was at the moment without support; for directly in its rear there were no formed troops coming up, and of the two battalions on its right-hand and on its left, neither one nor the other

Disaster which befel its left companies.

had hitherto come up abreast of it. On the other hand, the force to which the remnant of this English battalion stood opposed was that majestic Vladimir column which had just been driving our Light Infantry men from the parapet of the redoubt. Numbering perhaps some four or five hundred men, these remains of what had been the centre battalion of the Guards, stood drawn up in line upon a smooth, open slope, and were met by a hitherto victorious column, which was nearly three thousand strong. Still, for some time the maimed battalion pushed forward, and when afterwards it came to a halt, a hard effort was made to hold the ground. But in vain. Either the overwhelming weight of the column in its front, or the mishap encountered by the left companies of the English battalion, or some other cause of evil had destroyed its principle of cohesion; for this right wing now followed the fate of the left one, got into disorder and fell back. For a time, the whole battalion of the Scots Fusileer Guards was in confusion near the bank of the river.

Situation in which the remnant of the battalion stood.

It falls back in disorder.

This disaster, and the hard struggle maintained by those who sought to avert it, inflicted loss upon the Scots Fusileer Guards. Lord Chewton and 3 sergeants were killed. Colonel Dalrymple, Colonel Berkeley, Colonel Hepburn, Colonel Haygarth, Astley, Bulwer, Buckley, Gipps, Lord Ennismore and Hugh Annesley,* and 13 sergeants, were wounded; and

* It happened to me afterwards to see and wonder at the high courage and composure with which Annesley bore his dreadful wound. A musket-shot had entered his jaw, and passed, tearing its way through the mouth.

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of the rank and file 17 were killed, and 137 wounded.

The Grenadier Guards ascend to the top of the bank; and there dress their ranks under fire.

When Colonel Hood consented to move forward his battalion against the column just defeated by Lacy Yea, he at once caused his men to ascend the bank which had hitherto sheltered it; and as soon as the battalion was on the top, its left wing began to incur a good deal of the fire of the Vladimir column. Burgoyne, carrying one of the colours, was wounded; and the charge of the colours then devolving on Lieutenant Robert Hamilton, he also in the next minute was struck down by shot; but he quickly rose from the ground, recovered his hold of the standard, and was able to carry it to the end of the battle. Under this fire the battalion dressed its ranks with precision, and marched forward in beautiful order. This it kept till its left wing encountered some of the clusters of men coming down from the Great Redoubt. Then, as we saw before, the battalion opened its ranks for the passage of the retreating soldiery, and afterwards formed up anew. This done, it marched on.

Their march up the slope.

Codrington rallies some of the men of the Light Division, and proposes to place them in the chasm left by the centre battalion of the Guards.

Meanwhile General Codrington had been labouring to bring together the remnant of his brigade. Sergeant O'Connor of the 23rd still bore the colour which he had been carrying with loving care through the worst stress of the fight. The missing colour

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The wound was of such a kind that it seemed as though nothing but death could be of use to him. Yet he was not only uncomplaining, but able to think and act for others.

of the 7th Fusileers, now committed to the honour of the 23rd, was borne by Captain Pearson. Around these two standards Codrington rallied such men as he could gather, and made them open out and form line two deep. The body thus formed numbered about 300 men, and Codrington was going to move it forward and place it on the left of the Grenadier Guards, in order to fill up a part of the chasm which had been wrought in the Household Brigade by the discomfiture of its centre battalion.* But it occurred to him—for he was himself a Guardsman, and he knew the feelings of the corps—that to place soldiers of the Line abreast of the Grenadiers and in the room of the broken regiment might give pain to a battalion of the Guards; so he sent to the Grenadiers to know if they would like troops to come up to fill the empty space. The answer was a proud one. It was also, perhaps a rash answer;† for the Vladimir column—vast and strong, with a sense of the power it had just put forth—was impending over the left front of the Grenadiers, and confronting the interval which the defeat of the centre battalion left empty. However, the answer was, 'No!' and the Grenadiers, with their left flank stark open, but in beautiful order, contentedly marched up the slope.

His proposal rejected by the Grenadier Guards.

Continued advance of the 1st Division.

A little later, and at a moment when the Grena-

* The Scots Fusileer Guards. See *ante*, p. 423.

† It would be so, if the emergency was one in which three or four hundred men, hastily gathered from several broken regiments, were likely to do good. Upon the contrary supposition, the answer of course was a wise one.

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diers were halted on the slope with the Vladimir column impending over their left flank, Major Home of the 95th, and an ensign of the same corps, came bearing the colours of their regiment, and having with them eight men. Home, accosting Colonel Hamilton, who commanded the left wing of the Grenadiers, said that the eight men then following the colours of the 'Derbyshire' were all that remained together, and that he wished to take part with the Grenadiers in continuing the fight. Colonel Hamilton assenting, told Home to fall in on the left of the Grenadiers. Afterwards other men of the 'Derbyshire' came up and joined their colours. A few moments later, Colonel Berkeley came up, bringing with him a company of the Scots Fusilier Guards, which he had been able to rally, and he also was requested to place himself on the left of the Grenadiers.

Afterwards some men of the 95th Regiment, and a rallied company of the Scots Fusileer Guards come and advance on the left of the Grenadiers.

On the left of the Grenadiers there was that chasm which had been wrought in the brigade of Guards by the defeat of its centre battalion; and on the left of the chasm there stood the 'Coldstream.' This battalion of the Guards confronted the centre and right of the great Vladimir column, and was drawn up in line with beautiful precision. Because of the position of the ground on which it advanced, it had been much less exposed to fire and mishaps than either of the other battalions of the brigade, and it had not been pressed forward, as each of the two other battalions had been, to meet any special emergency occurring on its front. Therefore it was that it fell to the lot

The Coldstream.

of the Coldstream to become an almost prim sample of what our Guards can be in the moment which precedes a close fight. What the best of battalions is, when, in some Royal Park at home, it manœuvres before a great princess, that the Coldstream was now on the banks of the Alma, when it came to show its graces to the enemy. And it was no ignoble pride which caused the battalion to maintain all this ceremonious exactness; for though it be true that the precision of a line in peace time is only a success in mechanics, the precision of a line on a hill side with the enemy close in front is the result and the proof of a warlike composure. And it ought to be remembered — though our knowledge of the final result makes it hard to go back into the dark, trying dimly to measure the worth of deeds done in the hour of trial—it ought to be remembered that the undertaking of the troops in this part of the field was not an undertaking to swell the tide of victory, but to retrieve a disaster.

The temper of English soldiery advancing in support after a check sustained by their comrades.

Happily it is then, just then, after the discomfiture of troops in front, that English soldiery advancing in support attain their highest glory. For by nature they are so constituted, that the misfortune of their comrades carries no alarm into their ranks. It only heats their blood, rousing, as it seems, a sentiment akin to anger; and when they have thus been wrought upon, they are sterner men for a foe to have to do with than they are when all has gone well.

The Duke of Cambridge was with this battalion, for its left was nearly in the centre of the troops over

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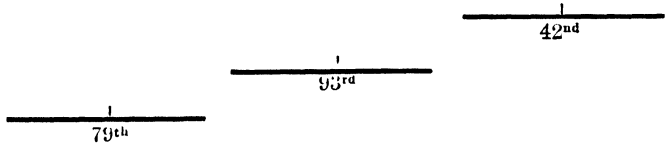
which his command extended. With it also there was a visitor, whose presence showed the strength of the tie between the officer and his regiment. Colonel Steele had broken loose from his duty at Headquarters, and was riding with his own beloved 'Coldstream.'*

Advance of the Highland brigade.

Further to the left, and in the same formation, the three battalions of the Highland brigade were extended. But the 42nd had found less difficulty than



the 93rd in getting through the thick ground and the river, and, again, the 93rd had found less difficulty than the 79th; so, as each regiment had been formed, and moved forward with all the speed it could command, the brigade fell naturally into direct echelon of regiments, the 42nd in front. And although this order was occasioned by the nature of the ground traversed and not by design, it was so well suited to the work in hand that Sir Colin Campbell did not for a moment seek to change it.

These young soldiers, distinguished to the vulgar eye by their tall stature, their tartan uniforms, and the plumes of their Highland bonnets, were yet more marked in the eyes of those who know what soldiers are by the warlike carriage of the men, and their strong, lithesome, resolute step. And Sir

* He was military secretary to Lord Raglan.

Colin Campbell was known to be so proud of them, that already, like the Guards, they had a kind of prominence in the army, which was sure to make their bearing in action a broad mark for blame or for praise.

From the time when General Buller had judged it right to abstain from bringing his force to the support of his comrades in the Great Redoubt, the two battalions which remained under his control had stood halted near the bank of the river, and one of them—the 88th—was still formed in a hollow square, as though expecting a charge of cavalry. Sir Colin Campbell conceived that this attitude of the 88th was unsuited to the time and the place, and not knowing that General Buller in person was directing the regiment, Sir Colin, in some anger, took upon himself to request, nay, almost to command, that the hollow square should be instantly changed into line formation. When the ranks of the Highlanders came up to this part of the ground, and still went on continuing their advance, a man of one of the halted regiments—a man speaking—perhaps, in a coarse cynic spirit, perhaps in the deep, honest bitterness of his heart—cried out, 'Let the Scotchmen go on! 'they'll do the work!' Then the Highlanders marched through, leaving General Buller and his two battalions in their rear.

It was upon Sir Colin Campbell now, as on General Buller a short time before, that there devolved the anxious duty of securing the Allied armies from any flank attack which might be undertaken against them

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at a moment when our troops were engaging the enemy in front; and Sir Colin at one moment judged that with the battalion which formed his extreme left he ought to stand ready to show a front in any direction. He therefore sent Sterling to direct that the 79th should go into column.*

But, seen in the dim field of battle, an enemy's force bears marked on its front faint, delicate, momentous signs, analogous to those which, in speaking of a man or a woman, are called 'expression of countenance;' and it is given to men who know and love the business of war, to be able to read those signs. Sir Colin Campbell well understood that the enemy ought to assail his left flank with a storm of horse, foot, and artillery; and, to deal with any such onslaught he at first took care to stand ready; but when he came to ride forward and gain higher ground, the old soldier was able to divine that with all their three thousand lances, and all their columns of infantry, the Russians would venture nothing against his flank. He therefore recalled his order to the 79th, and allowed it to go forward in line.

Including the chasm which divided the Grenadier Guards from the Coldstream, the whole line in which the Duke of Cambridge now moved forward to the attack of the Kourganè Hill was more than a mile and a half in length.† It was only two

* It is from a body of troops massed in column that the greatest variety of manœuvres can be quickly and safely evolved. When a battalion extended in line is called upon to change its front, the radius of the segment in which it must wheel is of course very long.

† The 1st Division was upon a greater front than had been covered by

deep; but its right regiment was supported by a part of Sir Richard England's Division; and Sir George Cathcart was on its left rear with the part of his Division then on the field. On the extreme left and left rear of the whole force, there was the cavalry under Lord Lucan.

The nature of the fight now about to take place on the Kourganè Hill.

These troops were going to take part in the first approach to close strife which men had yet seen on that day between bodies of troops in a state of formation deliberately marshalled against each other.* The slender red line which began near the bridge, and vanished from the straining sight on the eastern slopes of the Kourganè Hill, was a thread which in any one part of it had the strength of only two men. But along the whole line from East to West these files of two men each were strong in the exercise of their country's great prerogative. They were in English array. They were fighting in line against column.

the 47th Regiment, Pennefather's brigade, and the Light Division; yet it did not cover a foot more of ground than was right. We before saw the effect produced by trying to put ten battalions upon ground which was now found to be not more than enough for six. It is hardly necessary to say that a knowledge of the quantity of ground covered by a single battalion in a barrack-yard would not give a sufficient clue for getting at the extent of ground which was covered by six battalions drawn up in line upon a field of battle. Sir Colin Campbell was free to take ground to his left, and he took it amply, contriving to outflank, or almost to outflank the enemy's infantry array.

* The French had not been engaged in any conflicts of this sort, for, though the head of Canrobert's Division confronted formed troops for a moment at a distance of a few hundred yards, it dropped back, as we saw, without fighting. Evans's struggle had been in thick ground, not allowing regular array. Codrington's people (including Lacy Yea's Fusileers as well as the stormers of the Redoubt) had had hard fighting, and against troops in perfect order, but they had gone through their struggles without the advantage of being themselves in a state of formation.

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After the rupture of the peace of Amiens, Sir Arthur Wellesley, being then in India, became singularly changed, growing every day more and more emaciated, and seemingly more and more sad. He pined; and was like a man dying without any known bodily illness, the prey of some consuming thought. At length he suddenly announced to Lord Wellesley his resolve to go back to England; and when he was asked why, he said, 'I observe that in Europe the 'French are fighting in column, and carrying every-'thing before them, and I am sure that I ought to go 'home directly, because I know that our men can 'fight in line.' From that simple yet mighty faith he never swerved; for, always encountering the massive columns of infantry, he always was ready to meet them with his slender line of two deep. With what result the world knows.*

Long years had passed since the close of those great wars, and now, once more in Europe there was going to be waged yet again the old strife of line against column.

Looking down a smooth, gentle, green slope, chequered red with the slaughtered soldiery who had stormed the redoubt, the front-rank men of the great Vladimir column were free to gaze upon two batta-

* An account of Sir Arthur Wellesley's pining sickness, his "wasting away," as he himself described it, is given in published accounts of men who remarked it (in Malcolm's book, I think, or Monro's), and his disclosure of the motive which caused him to return to Europe was preserved and handed down by Lord Wellesley. What I have ventured to do is to seem to connect the pining sickness with the mighty resolve which was destined to change the fate of the world.

lions of the English Guards, far apart the one from the other, but each carefully drawn up in line; and now that they saw more closely, and without the distractions of artillery, they had more than ever grounds for their wonder at the kind of array in which the English soldiery were undertaking to assail them. 'We were all astonished,' says Chodasiewicz—yet he wrote of what he saw when the English line was much less close to the foe than the Guards now were—'We were all astonished at the 'extraordinary firmness with which the red-jackets, 'having crossed the river, opened a heavy fire in line 'upon the redoubt. This was the most extraordinary 'thing to us, as we had never before seen troops fight 'in lines of two deep, nor did we think it possible for 'men to be found with sufficient firmness of morale 'to be able to attack in this apparently weak forma-'tion our massive columns.' But soon the men of the column began to see that though the scarlet line was slender, it was very rigid and exact. Presently, too, they saw that even when the Grenadiers or the Coldstreams began to move, the long line of the black bearskins still kept a good deal of its straightness. and that here on the bloody slope no less than in the barrack-yard at home, the same moment was made to serve for the tramp of a thousand feet.

XXXI.

Beginning on our right hand with the Grenadier Guards, and going thence leftwards to the Coldstream, and, lastly, to the Highland brigade, we

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shall now see what manner of strife it was when at length, after many a hindrance, five British battalions, each grandly formed in line, marched up to the enemy's columns.

Advancing upon the immediate left of the ground already won by Pennefather's brigade, the Grenadiers were covered on their right, but their left was bare; and it was in that direction—in the direction of their left front—that the Vladimir battalions stood impending. The Grenadiers were marching against the defeated, but now rallied column, which had fought with the 7th Fusileers, when Prince Gortschakoff, having just ridden up to the two left battalions of the Vladimir, undertook to lead them forward. First sending his only unwounded aide-de-camp to press the advance of any troops he could find, the Prince put himself at the head of the two left Vladimir battalions, and ordered them to charge with the bayonet.* The

Prince Gortschakoff's advance with a column of the Vladimir corps.

* I must acknowledge that I do not gather from the Russian accounts any distinct mention of this separation of the great Vladimir column into two columns of two battalions each. Prince Gortschakoff's narrative speaks of the column with which he moved as 'the battalions of the Vladimir regiment standing on the left of the epaulement' (the breastwork), and this is an expression which might either apply to two battalions which had been separated from the other two, or it might apply to all the four battalions of the corps. I have however found it so impracticable to reconcile this last interpretation with known facts that I have adopted the former one. Upon this point I am not in terms helped by Kvetzinski's narrative; but as he himself was clearly with *some* of the Vladimir battalions all this time, and as he had no knowledge of the fact that Gortschakoff had made a charge with battalions of the same corps, it seems to follow as a necessary consequence that at this time the four battalions had been divided into two columns. A concurrence of circumstances leads me to infer that this was the case, and that one of the columns, as I have stated, was towards the right and the other towards the left of the redoubt. At first sight it may seem odd that Kvetzinski, the divisional general, should not know what

Prince then rode forward a good deal in advance of his troops, and his order for a bayonet charge was so far obeyed, that the column, without firing a shot, moved boldly down towards the chasm which had been left in the centre of our brigade of Guards. The north-west angle of this strong and hitherto victorious column was coming down nearer and nearer to the file—the file composed of only two men—which formed the extreme left of the Grenadiers.

Colonel Hood's manœuvre.

Then, and by as fair a test as war could apply, there was tried the strength of the line formation, the quality of the English officer, the quality of the English soldier. Colonel Hood first halted; and then caused the left subdivision of the left company to wheel—to wheel back in such a way as to form, with the rest of the battalion, an obtuse angle. The manœuvre was executed by Colonel Percy (he was wounded just at this time) under the directions of Colonel Hamilton, the officer in command of the left wing. In this way, whilst he still faced the column which he had originally undertaken to attack, Colonel Hood showed another front, a small but smooth comely front to the mass which was coming upon his flank.

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was being done with two of his battalions posted at only a small distance from the column with which he rode; but the truth is that Gortschakoff, having for the time the supreme command in this part of the field, and being (as is evident from his own account) in a high state of excitement, rode up to the Vladimir battalions, which he found near the (Russian) left of the earthwork, and, so to speak, snatched them without saying a word to the general commanding the Division. After all, the movement which he made in advance was only a slight one; and for that reason, perhaps, it was hardly looked upon as severing the troops taking part in it from those which remained with Kvetzinski.

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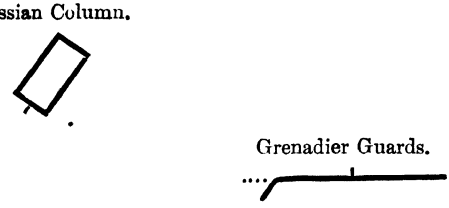
His manœuvre instantly brought the Vladimir to a halt; and to those who—without being near enough



to hear the giving and the repeating of the orders—still were able to see Colonel Hood thus changing a part of his front and stopping a mighty column, by making a bend in his line, it seemed that he was handling his fine slender English blade with a singular grace; with the gentleness and grace of the skilled swordsman, when, smiling all the while, he parries an angry thrust. In the midst of its pride and vast strength of numbers, the Vladimir found itself checked; nay, found itself gravely engaged with half a company of our Guardsmen; and the minds of these two score of islanders were so little inclined to bend under the weight of the column, that they kept their perfect array. Their fire was deadly, for it was poured into a close mass of living men. It was at the work of "file firing" that the whole battalion now laboured.

Its effect.

The Coldstream.

On the left of the interval wrought by the displacement of the centre battalion of the Guards, the Coldstream, drawn up in superb array, began to open its smart, crashing fire upon the more distant battalions which formed the right wing of the Vladimir force.

We shall see the share which other Russian and other British troops were destined to have in governing the result of the struggle, but if, for a moment, we limit our reckoning to the troops which stood fighting at this time, it appears that the whole of the four Vladimir battalions and the lessened mass of the left Kazan column were engaged with the Grenadiers and the Coldstream. In other words, two English battalions, each ranged in line, but divided the one from the other by a very broad chasm, were contending with six battalions in column. And, although of these six battalions standing in column there were two which had cruelly suffered, the remaining four had hitherto had no hard fighting, and were flushed with the thought that they stood on ground which they themselves had reconquered.

The Grenadiers and the 'Coldstream' engaged with six battalions in columns.

But, after all, if only the firmness of the slender English line should chance to endure, there was nothing except the almost chimerical event of a thorough charge home with the bayonet which could give to the columns the ascendancy due to their vast weight and numbers; for the fire from a straitened, narrow front, could comparatively do little harm, whilst the fire of the battalion in line was carrying havoc into the living masses. Still, neither column nor line gave way. On the other hand, neither column nor line moved forward. Fast rooted as yet to the ground the groaning masses of the Russians, and the two scarlet strings of Guardsmen, stood receiving and delivering their fire.

The stress which a line puts upon the soldiery of a column.

But meanwhile, on the part of the English, another

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mind, as we shall see by and by, was bringing its strength to bear upon this part of the battle.

And upon a general who has charge of columns.

If the English method of array puts a grievous stress upon the soldiery of continental masses, its pressure is not less hard upon the mind of a general who has the suffering columns in his charge. It not only shocks him by the sight of a great slaughter of his people occurring in small spaces of ground; it not only forces upon him a sense of being outflanked, but sometimes, it even seems, oppresses him with a belief that he is overwhelmed by mighty numbers. General Kvetzinski was with the right Vladimir column. He was a brave, able man, and we have already seen something of what the relative numbers were with which the Russians and the English were fighting; but it seems that the spectacle of the immense front presented by the English array broke down the General's sense of his own comparative strength, and put upon him the belief that he was cruelly outnumbered. Even the sight of the wide chasm there was between the two battalions of the Guards did not lift the weight from his heart. 'The enormous forces,' said he,—'the enormous forces of the enemy made 'our position a very dangerous one.'

Impressions as wrought upon the mind of Kvetzinski by the English array.

It was near the eastern shoulder of the redoubt that he sat in his saddle. Every moment he had been growing more anxious, for, besides the troubles that were besetting his front, he could not but know that Pennefather's brigade was established in the Pass, and the apparition of our Head-quarter Staff on the knoll, followed quick by Turner's guns, had

cheated him into the notion that the whole French army was marching straight eastward into the English field of battle. Nay, he imagined that the guns on the knoll were throwing a flanking fire into the left of his Vladimir battalions;* and indeed it would seem that these battalions were really struck—not by cannon on the knoll, but—by some guns just put in battery on one of the spurs overlooking the Pass.† But now, when he looked to his right; when he looked slantwise down to the east of where the Coldstream stood ranged, he saw an array of tall

* He was wrong in this. Turner's guns tried their range against the columns on the Kourganè Hill, but found the distance too great. The passage in which Kvetzinski speaks of the state of things in the direction of 'the knoll' is this:—'From the left the French, having forced our 'left wing foreposts, were hurrying to the rescue of their allies, whose 'efforts were beginning to flag before the unheard of and unparalleled 'heroism of the brave Vladimirtzi. The French battery having taken up 'its position on the left wing of our side' (this so called "French battery" 'was Turner's battery on the knoll), 'began to fire sideways on the fast 'thinning ranks of our gallant regiment. Their reserve were hastening to 'cut off our retreat.' I have already shown how all but inevitable it was that Kvetzinski and all other Russians on the Kourganè Hill should make this mistake, should suppose that the group of plumed officers in blue frocks who crowned the knoll betokened the presence of the French army in that part of the field, and that Turner's guns were a French battery. If amongst the French or their friends there are any men so constituted as to wish to keep the benefit derived from this mistake, their best course will be to quote this passage from Kvetzinski, and to suppress the explanation which shows how his error arose. For the sake of fairness, and not without a foresight of the wrongful use which may be made of the passage, I give what I believe to be a close and accurate translation from the Russian words in which it was written.

† I rest this belief entirely upon the authority of Colonel Hamley's soldierly narrative, 'The Campaign of Sebastopol,' p. 31. Colonel Hamley was himself in the artillery, and all that he says respecting the operations of the arm to which he belonged has of course a peculiar value. The guns were some of those thirty pieces of ordnance which Evans and Sir Richard England had just brought into the Pass.

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plumes, having eight times the front of one of his own battalion columns; looking a little farther eastward, he saw another array which, though it was not yet so near, was like to the first, and was moving. Again, when he looked still further eastward, he saw yet another array coming up, and though it was less near than the first, and even less near than the second, it was like to either of them in the greatness of its front, and the towering plumes of the men. Kvetzinski could see that, taken together, these three lines of plumed soldiers had a front some twenty times broader than one of his battalion columns, and (still, it seems, suffering himself to infer vast numbers from mere extent of front) he began to have that torturing sense of being outnumbered and outflanked which weighed upon the memory and for ever replenished the diction of the warlike Psalmist. It seemed to him that the enemy 'increased upon him to trouble him;' that 'the nations compassed him round about;' that they 'came round about him like water;' that they 'kept him in on every side; yea, that they kept him 'in on every side.' This anxiety was all wrongly based. Far from having his whole array outflanked towards the east to any woeful extent, Kvetzinski had a column on his extreme right which fairly enough confronted the extreme left of the English infantry; and, far indeed from being outnumbered, he was fighting this fight of the Kourganè Hill with a strength of nearly three against two; but it followed from the difference between his and his enemy's manner of fighting that each of his columns, taken sepa-

rately, was widely outflanked, and he was becoming an example of what must happen to the commander of columns when (without exerting his weight by trying to charge home with the bayonet) he strives to set his dense masses against troops standing firmly in line.

The sight of a battalion advancing upon his right front convinces him that he must move.

Presently he saw that the array of plumed soldiers which had stood ranged next to the Coldstream was moving—was moving up—was moving swiftly; and he knew that the nearest of the columns which he had on his right was so far from the ground where he stood, and so hindered, too, by the intervening dip of the ground, as to be unable to engage the new comers before the moment when (unless he retreated) they would reach the flank of his right Vladimir battalions. On the other hand, he could not in common prudence stand still and wait to be turned by the battalion now gliding up the slope on his right, for, brave as were his Vladimir men, a huge massive Russian column was not the delicate weapon with which he could try to imitate Colonel Hood, showing a front at once on two sides. Therefore it became but too clear to him that the columns along the redoubt must move to some ground other than where they were. And this almost instantly, for the bending plumes did not cease from coming.

Mean time, the columns along the redoubt are becoming distressed by their fight with the Grenadiers and the Coldstream.

But, also, all this while the columns along the redoubt were more and more feeling the stress that was put upon them by the fire and the array of the Guards. Just after the moment when the Vladimir men were brought to a halt by Colonel Hood's manœuvre, Prince Gortschakoff, still riding at the head of

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the column, was violently thrown to the ground. He had received no wound from the shot which caused his fall, but his charger was killed by it; and, there being no other horsemen near, he was obliged to remain on foot. It would seem that the concussion of the fall may have clouded his judgment. At all events, after this accident he walked away towards a column which he saw coming down in support.* On his road he passed through the site of the Great Redoubt, and there found General Kvetzinski. The Prince, walking up to the divisional general, told him that he had had his horse shot under him, and that all the field-officers of the regiment† he commanded had been killed. It is not stated that the two Generals thus meeting at a critical moment, took occasion to consult about the way in which they should fight out the battle. When their conversation had ended, Prince Gortschakoff walked up the hill-side, going on towards the column which he wanted to meet.‡

The shot which dismounted Prince Gortschakoff, his departure from the ground where the Vladimir stood, the spruce beauty of the slender red line which had brought it to bay, and the steadiness of the fire with which the brave column had been plied for now several minutes—all these were causes which helped to distress the left Vladimir battalions; and although

* The four Ouglitz battalions.

† Meaning, I imagine, the Kazan Fusileers.

‡ All this is told by Prince Gortschakoff himself with simplicity and apparent truthfulness. It is plain that his fall had shaken and confused him.

it was the turning movement on the right of the Russian columns which made it a thing of sheer need to move, and to move at once;* still, it would seem that General Kvetzinski's measures for dealing with the new emergency were forestalled by what he presently saw on his left front; and the event which was destined to put its actual and direct governance upon this part of the battle was the still pending fight between the left Vladimir battalions and the Grenadier Guards.†

Continuance of the fight between the Grenadier Guards and the left Vladimir column.

The Grenadiers when we left them just now were busy with their rifles along their whole line, and were making good use of that delicate bend in the formation of their leftmost company which enabled them to pour their fire into the heart of the Vladimir column then hanging on their flank. The reckoning of him who puts his trust in column is mainly based on the notion that its mere grandeur of aspect will give it a clear ascendant as soon as it is seen at all near; and when the English line had once delivered its fire, the front-rank men of the column were not without grounds for making sure that their next glimpse of the red-coats would be a glimpse of men in retreat; for to have come forward to within a distance convenient for musket-shots and to have once

* Kvetzinski says: 'The decisive moment I had been fearing and expecting had arrived: the English moved higher up in three lines, and threatened to turn our right wing.'

† 'The left wing,' he says, 'began to falter, leaving my left side exposed.' I understand him to be speaking of troops on the immediate left of the column with which he was riding, and not of any troops on the left of the whole Division which he commanded, because the retreat of the troops in the Pass had taken place before the time of which he is speaking.

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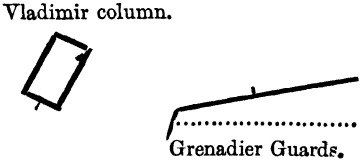
delivered their fire, this was surely the utmost in the way of close fighting that files of only two men each would attempt against masses. But when, though only a little, the smoke began to lift, the gleams that pierced it were the light that is shed from bayonet points and busy ramrods — gleams twinkling along the line of the two ranks of soldiery who still, as it seemed, must be lingering in their strange array; and wherever the smoke lifted clear, there — stedfast as oaks disclosed by rising mist — the long avenue of the Bearskins loomed out. And, so righteously in place as to begin to enforce a surmise that, after all, the files of the two men each might be minded to stand where they were, ceremoniously shooting into the column and filling it minute by minute with the tumult of men killed or wounded. And, though it was but a few of the men planted close in the massive columns who could thus from time to time look upon the dim forms of the soldiery who dealt the slaughter, yet the anxiousness of those who could gain no glimpse of the Bearskins was not for that reason the less. Nay, it was the greater; for he who knows of a present danger through his reading of other men's countenances, or by seeing his neighbours fall wounded or killed around him, is commonly more disturbed than he who, standing in the front, looks straight into the eye of the storm.

Still, up to this time it was only from the extreme left of the Grenadiers' line that fire was poured into the column. A harder trial was awaiting the Vladimir men. Colonel Hood had hitherto wielded

his line as though he judged it right to deal carefully with the left Kazan battalions still lingering on his front; and up to the last, he did not think himself warranted in disdaining their presence; for he could not know that their loss in officers had made them so helpless as they were; but he now saw enough to assure him that his real foe was the left Vladimir column on his flank. Thither, therefore (though he would not altogether avert his line from the defeated troops in his front), he now determined to bend the eyes and the rifles of a great portion of his battalion. So he wheeled forward his battalion upon its left, or in other, and perhaps the more expressive form of military speech, he 'brought forward his right 'shoulder.' Still respecting the presence of the defeated Kazan troops, he did not carry this manœuvre so far as to place his battalion bodily on the flank of the Vladimir column, but he carried it far enough to make the column a mark for the troops which formed his left wing. The Vladimir was



wrapped in fire: was wrapped in that fire which is hardly tolerable to soldiery massed in column—fire poured upon its flank. Even this for some minutes the brave Vladimir bore.

If the voice of the English soldier is heard loud

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in fight, his shout may be the shout of triumph achieved, or else—and then it is of a thousandfold higher worth—it may be the like of what used to foretoken the crisis of the old Peninsular battles when late in the day the voice of 'the Light 'Division' was heard;—the almost inspired utterance by which the soldier, growing suddenly conscious of an overmastering power, declares and makes known his ascendant. Of two things happening in a field of battle at nearly the same time it is often hard to say which was the first, and yet upon that narrow priority of a few moments there may depend the question of which event was the cause, and which the effect. What people know is that there was an instant when the Vladimir column was seen to look hurt and unstable, and that, either at the same instant, or the instant before, or the instant after, the Grenadiers were hurrahing on their left, hurrahing at their centre, hurrahing along their whole line. As though its term of life were measured, as though its structure were touched and sundered by the very cadence of the cheering, the column bulged, heaving, heaving. 'The line will advance on the centre! The men may advance firing.' This, or this nearly, was what Hood had to say to his Grenadiers. Instant sounded the echo of his will. 'The line will advance on the centre! Quick march!' Then between the column and the seeing of its fate the cloud which hangs over a modern battle-field was no longer a sufficing veil; for although whilst the English battalion stood halted there lay in front of its line that

dim, mystic region which divides contending soldiery; yet the Bearskins, since now they were marching, grew darker from east to west, grew taller, grew real, broke through. A moment, and the column hung loose. Another, and it was lapsing into sheer retreat. Yet another, and it had come to be like a throng in confusion. Of the left Kazan troops there was no more question. In an array which was all but found fault with for being too grand and too stately, the English battalion swept on.*

Defeat of the left Vladimir column; and of the left Kazan battalions.

Seeing that before many moments were over, the Grenadiers would be up in the redoubt, Kvetzinski conceived that his retreat by the great road was already cut off, and he ordered that the right Vladimir column — the column with which he was present — should move from the field obliquely, avoiding the English right. This was a path which would take the column along the eastern skirts of the Kourganè Hill, and bring it towards the spot where the right Kazan column stood posted. Kvetzinski, still firm and soldierly, charged a few of his men with the duty of covering his retreat; and, entrusting the command of this little rear-guard to Ensign Berestoffsky, gave orders that the march should be leisurely. He was not ill obeyed; but the movement was hardly one which could be executed with all the accustomed dignity of Russian troops in retreat, for the column had to move slantwise across

Kvetzinski's oblique movement of retreat with the right Vladimir column.

* The criticism alluded to in this sentence was that of a French officer who witnessed the advance of the Guards. After speaking of it with enthusiastic admiration, he ended by saying that it was 'too majestic'— 'trop majestueux.'

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the front of the battalion which was swiftly ascending the hill, and, if it were to lose many moments, the plumed soldiery would be on its flank.

The Duke of Cambridge is master of the Great Redoubt.

The left wing of the Grenadiers was quickly in the part of the battery where lay the dismounted howitzer, and on the opposite, or eastern, shoulder of the Work, the Duke of Cambridge, riding up with the Coldstreams, stood master of the Great Redoubt.

Kvetzinski is wounded and disabled.

In its retreat, the right Vladimir column was still plied with the fire of the Coldstream. General Kvetzinski had his horse shot under him; and presently afterwards he was so wounded in the leg as to be unable to move on foot. The soldiers around formed a litter for him with their muskets, and the brave man, causing his bearers to march with the rear-guard, continued to give his orders to Ensign Berestoffsky. Presently, however, he was again struck by shot, and, indeed, he was now almost shattered, being wounded in two of his limbs and in the side. To the last he had comported himself as a good soldier.

XXXII.

Sir Colin Campbell's conception of the part he would take with his brigade.

But whose was the mind which had freshly come to bear upon this part of the fight, and what was the plumed array which, threatening Kvetzinski on his right front, forbade him from farther tarrying on the line of the Great Redoubt? Before the moment when the Guards and the columns began their fight, Sir Colin Campbell was sitting in his saddle by the left of the Coldstream, and talking from time to time

with the Duke of Cambridge. The veteran was watching for his time. And although the ground before him favoured the concealment of troops, yet his skill in the reading of a field of battle had enabled him to see, or in some way know or divine that what forces the Russians had on their right of the Great Redoubt were all more or less held back. So, if he could swiftly move up a battalion to the crest which rose straight before him, he would be on the flank of the position from which the Vladimir confronted the Guards before any other battalions could come down to engage him. Upon descrying his advance, the Russians, he thought, would see the instant need of abandoning their struggle with the Guards; but if by chance, or because of their obstinacy, they should fail to do so, then, as soon as he could reach the ground he longed for, he would bring round the left shoulder, turn full towards the west, and roll up the Muscovite columns before their supports could come down to save them. This was what he thought might be done, and the keen, perfect weapon with which to do it had come fresh into his hand. The other battalions of the Highland brigade were approaching; but the 42nd—the far-famed 'Black Watch'—had already come up. It was ranged in line. The ancient glory of the corps was a treasure now committed to the charge of young soldiers new to battle; but Campbell knew them, was sure of their excellence, and was sure, too, of Colonel Cameron, their commanding-officer. Very eager—for the Guards were now engaged with the

The 42nd was at his side.

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enemy's columns—very eager, yet silent and majestic, the battalion stood ready.

Sir Colin Campbell and the Highland Brigade.

Before the action had begun, and whilst his men were still in column, Campbell had spoken to his brigade a few words: words simple, and for the most part workmanlike, yet touched with the fire of warlike sentiment. 'Now, men, you are going into 'action. Remember this: Whoever is wounded—I 'don't care what his rank is—whoever is wounded 'must lie where he falls till the bandsmen come to 'attend to him. No soldiers must go carrying off 'wounded men. If any soldier does such a thing, 'his name shall be stuck up in his parish church. 'Don't be in a hurry about firing. Your officers will 'tell you when it is time to open fire. Be steady. 'Keep silence. Fire low. Now, men'—those who know the old soldier can tell how his voice would falter the while his features were kindling—'Now, 'men, the army will watch us; make me proud of 'the Highland brigade!' *

Their engagement with several Russian columns.

It was before the battle that this, or the like of this, was addressed to the brigade; and now, when Sir Colin rode up to the corps which awaited his signal, he only gave it two words. But because of his accustomed manner of utterance, and because he was a true, faithful lover of war, the two words he

* Of course the memory of those who unexpectedly found themselves hearing Sir Colin's address to his brigade can supply but an imperfect record of the words which were uttered; and perhaps if the impressions of any great number of the hearers were compared, few or none would be found to be closely similar. I think, however, that the address given in the text is not grossly wide of the truth. At all events I can answer for the substantial accuracy of the injunction against quitting the ranks in order to carry off wounded men.

spoke were as the roll of the drum: 'Forward, '42nd!' This was all he then said; and, 'as a steed 'that knows his rider,' the great heart of the battalion bounded proudly to his touch. CHAP. XVI.

Sir Colin Campbell went forward in front of the 42nd, but before he had ridden far, he saw that his reckoning was already made good by the event; and that the column which had engaged the Coldstream was moving off obliquely towards its right rear. Then, with his staff, he rode up a good way in advance, for he was swift to hope that the withdrawal of the column from the line of the redoubt might give him the means of learning the ground before him, and seeing how the enemy's strength was disposed in this part of the field. In a few moments he was abreast of the redoubt, and upon the ridge or crest which divided the slope he had just ascended from the broad and rather deep hollow which lay before him. On his right, he had the now empty redoubt; on his right front, the higher slopes of the Kourganè Hill. Straight before him there was the hollow, or basin, just spoken of, bounded on its farther side by a swelling wave or ridge of ground which he called the 'inner crest.' Beyond that, whilst he looked straight before him, he could see that the ground fell off into a valley; but when he glanced towards his left front, he observed that the hollow which lay on his front was, so to speak, bridged over by a bending rib which connected the inner with the outer crest—bridged over in such a way that a column on his left front might march to the

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spot where he stood without having first to descend into the lower ground. More towards his left, the ground was high, but so undulating and varied that it would not necessarily disclose any troops which might be posted in that part of the field.

Confronting Sir Colin Campbell from the other side of the hollow, the enemy had a strong column—the two right battalions of the Kazan corps—and it was towards this body that the Vladimir column, moving off from the line of the redoubt, was all this time making its way. The Russians saw that they were the subject of a general officer's studies; and Campbell's horse at this time was twice struck by shot, but not disabled. When the retiring column came abreast of the right Kazan column it faced about to the front, and, striving to recover its formation, took part with the Kazan column in opposing a strength of four battalions—four battalions hard-worked and much thinned—to the one which, eager and fresh, was following the steps of the Highland General. Looking towards his left front, and along the natural bridge or viaduct which has just been spoken of, Sir Colin Campbell saw another column much heavier than either of the two which confronted him. This heavy column was composed of two battalions of the Sousdal corps, and it was of greater size and strength than the Vladimir and the Kazan columns, because it was as yet untouched. A column formed of the two remaining Sousdal battalions—battalions also untouched—was on the extreme right of the enemy's infantry position, but

so placed that at this moment it could not be seen by Campbell. On the higher slopes of the Kourganè Hill, the four Ouglitz battalions stood impending over the scene of the coming fight, and these battalions were also untouched. With three battalions Sir Colin Campbell was about to engage no less than twelve;* but the three were in line, and the twelve were massed in five columns.

Few were the moments that Campbell took to learn the ground before him, and to read the enemy's mind; but, few though they were, they were all but enough to bring the 42nd to the crest where their General stood. The ground they had to ascend was a good deal more steep and more broken than the slope close beneath the Redoubt. In the land where those Scots were bred, there are shadows of sailing clouds skimming straight up the mountain's side, and their paths are rugged, are steep, yet their course is smooth, easy, and swift. Smoothly, easily, swiftly,

* Taking the eight untouched Russian battalions at 6000, and supposing the four thinned battalions to have been reduced by one-third, *i. e.*, from 3000 to 2000, the Russian force here engaging would be 8000; and if the numbers of the Highland brigade be put at 2500, it results that the numbers of the Russians were to those of Sir Colin as 16 to 5, or rather more than 3 to 1. If it be thought fairer to exclude the Ouglitz column (on the ground that its soldiery did not actually exchange fire with the Highlanders, and might therefore be regarded as counterbalanced by the force under Cathcart), the numbers of the Russians actually engaging Sir Colin Campbell would be to the Highland brigade in a proportion of exactly two to one. This comparison of numbers is given in order to convey a true idea of the nature of the fight in which the Highland brigade took part; but it would be a mistake to use it as a warrant for anything like vaunting over a brave enemy; for after the retreat of the Vladimir from the Great Redoubt, and the shot which disabled Kvetzinski, the divisional General, a comparison of the mere numbers which took part in the succeeding fight could not be justly put forward as a means of showing the relative prowess of the combatants.

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the 'Black Watch' seemed to glide up the hill. A few instants before, and their tartans ranged dark in the valley. Now, their plumes were on the crest. The small knot of horsemen who had ridden on before them were still there. Any stranger looking into the group might almost be able to know—might know by the mere carriage of the head—that he in the plain, dark-coloured frock, he whose sword-belt hung cross-wise from his shoulder, was the man there charged with command; for in battle, men who have to obey sit erect in their saddles; he who has on him the care of the fight seems always to fall into the pensive, yet eager bend which the Greeks—keen perceivers of truth—used to join with their conception of Mind brought to bear upon War. It is on board ship, perhaps more commonly than ashore, that people in peace time have been used to see their fate hanging upon the skill of one man. Often, landsmen at sea have watched the skilled, weather-worn sailor when he seems to look through the gale, and search deep into the home of the storm. He sees what they cannot see; he knows what, except from his lips, they never will be able to learn. They stand silent, but they question him with their eyes. So men new to war gaze upon the veteran commander, when, with knitted brow and steady eyes, he measures the enemy's power, and draws near to his final resolve. Campbell, fastening his eyes on the two columns standing before him, and on the heavier and more distant column on his left front, seemed not to think lightly of the enemy's strength; but in

another instant (for his mind was made up, and his Highland blood took fire at the coming array of the tartans), his features put on that glow which, seen in men of his race—race known by the kindling gray eye, and the light, stubborn crisping hair—discloses the rapture of instant fight. Although at that moment the 42nd was alone, and was confronted by the two columns on the farther side of the hollow, yet Campbell, having a stedfast faith in Colonel Cameron and in the regiment he commanded, resolved to go straight on, and at once, with his forward movement. He allowed the battalion to descend alone into the hollow, marching straight against the two columns. Moreover, he suffered it to undertake a manœuvre which (except with troops of great steadiness and highly instructed) can hardly be tried with safety against regiments still unshaken. The 'Black Watch' 'advanced firing.' *

But whilst this fight was going on between the 42nd and the two Russian columns, grave danger from another quarter seemed to threaten the Highland battalion; for, before it had gone many paces, Campbell saw that the column which had appeared on his left front was boldly marching forward, and such was the direction it took and such the nature of the ground that the column, if it were suffered to go on with this movement, would be able to strike at the flank of the 42nd, without having first to descend into lower ground.

* We saw that Colonel Hood with the Grenadier Guards 'advanced firing,' but at that moment he had already brought the column which he attacked to the verge of its ruin.

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Halting the 42nd in the hollow, Campbell swiftly measured the strength of the approaching column, and he reckoned it so strong that he resolved to prepare for it a front of no less than five companies. He was upon the point of giving the order for effecting this bend in the line of the 42nd, when, looking to his left rear, he saw his centre battalion springing up to the outer crest. But almost in the same moment he saw or in some way divined that this battalion, in its exceeding ardour for the fight, was coming up wild and raging. He instantly rode to his left.

The 93rd in the Crimea was never quite like other regiments, for it chanced that it had received into its ranks a large proportion of those men of eager spirit who had petitioned to be exchanged from regiments left at home to regiments engaged in the war. The exceeding fire and vehemence, and the ever-ready energies of the battalion, made it an instrument of great might, if only it could be duly held in, but gave it a tendency to be headlong in its desire to hurl itself upon the enemy.

In a minute this fiery 93rd came storming over the crest, and, having now at last an enemy's column before it, it seemed to be almost mad with warlike joy. Its formation, of course, was disturbed by the haste and vehemence of the onset; and Campbell saw that, unless the regiment could be halted, and a little calmed down, it would go on rushing forward in disordered fury, at the risk of shattering itself against the strength of the hard, square-built column which was solemnly coming to meet it.

But he who could halt his men on the bank of a cool stream when they were rushing down to quench the rage of their thirst, was able to quiet them in the midst of their warlike fury. Sir Colin got the regiment to halt and dress its ranks. By this time it was under the fire of the approaching column.

Campbell's charger, twice wounded already, but hitherto not much hurt, was now struck by a shot in the heart. Without a stumble or a plunge the horse sank down gently to the earth, and was dead. Campbell took his aide-de-camp's charger; but he had not been long in Shadwell's saddle, when up came Sir Colin's groom with his second horse. The man, perhaps, under some former master, had been used to be charged with the 'second horse' in the hunting-field. At all events, here he was; and if Sir Colin was angered by the apparition, he could not deny that it was opportune. The man touched his cap, and excused himself for being where he was. In the dry, terse way of those Englishmen who are much accustomed to horses, he explained that, towards the rear, the balls had been dropping about very thick, and that, fearing some harm might come to his master's second horse, he had thought it best to bring him up to the front.

When the 93rd had recovered the perfectness of its array, it again moved forward, but at the steady pace imposed upon it by the chief. The 42nd had already resumed its forward movement. It still advanced firing.

There are things in the world which, eluding the

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resources of the dry narrator, can still be faintly imaged by that subtle power which sometimes enables mankind to picture dim truth by fancy. According to the thought which floated in the mind of the churchman who taught to All the Russias their grand form of prayer for victory, there are 'angels of light' and 'angels of darkness and horror,' who soar over the heads of soldiery destined to be engaged in close fight, and attend them into battle.* When the fight grows hot, the angels hover down near to earth with their bright limbs twined deep in the wreaths of the smoke which divides the combatants. But it is no coarse, bodily help that these Christian angels bring. More purely spiritual than the old Immortals, they strike no blow, they snatch no man's weapon, they lift away no warrior in a cloud. What the Angel of Light can bestow is valour, priceless valour, and light to lighten the path to victory, giving men grace to see the bare truth, and seeing it to have the mastery. To regiments which are to be blessed with victory the Angel of Light seems to beckon, and gently draw his men forward. What the Angel of Darkness can inflict is fear, horror, despair; and it is given him also to be able to plant error and vain fancies in the minds of the doomed soldiery. By false dread he scares them. Whether he who con-

* This is part of the Russian prayer for victory :—'Oh, Lord! . . . . . 'hear us this day praying for these troops that are gathered together. 'Bless and strengthen them, and give them a manly heart against their 'enemies. Send them an Angel of Light, and to the enemies an Angel of 'Darkness and Horror to scatter them, and place a stumbling-block before 'them to weaken their hearts and turn their courage into flight.'

ceived this prayer was soldier or priest, or soldier and priest in one, it seems to me that he knew more of the true nature of the strife of good infantry than he could utter in common prose. For indeed it is no physical power which rules the conflict between two well-formed bodies of foot.

The mere killing and wounding which occurs whilst a fight is still hanging in doubt, does not so alter the relative numbers of the combatants as, in that way, to govern the result. The use of the slaughter which takes place at that time lies mainly in the stress which it puts upon the minds of those who, themselves remaining unhurt, are nevertheless disturbed by the sight of what is befalling their comrades. In that way, a command of the means necessary for inflicting death and wounds is one element of victory. But it is far from being the chief one. Nor is it by perfectness of discipline, nor yet by a contempt of life, that men can assure to themselves the mastery over their foes. More or less all these things are needed; but the truly governing power is that ascendancy of the stronger over the weaker heart which (because of the mystery of its origin) the churchman was willing to ascribe to angels coming down from on high.

The turning moment of a fight is a moment of trial for the soul and not for the body; and it is, therefore, that such courage as men are able to gather from being gross in numbers, can be easily outweighed by the warlike virtue of a few. To the stately 'Black Watch' and the hot 93rd, with

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Campbell leading them on, there was vouchsafed that stronger heart, for which the brave, pious Muscovites had prayed. Over the souls of the men in the columns there was spread, first the gloom, then the swarm of vain delusions, and at last the sheer horror which might be the work of the Angel of Darkness.* The two lines marched straight on. The three columns shook. They were not yet subdued. They were stubborn; but every moment the two advancing battalions grew nearer and nearer, and although—dimly masking the scant numbers of the Highlanders—there was still the white curtain of smoke which always rolled on before them, yet, fitfully, and from moment to moment, the signs of them could be traced on the right hand and on the left in a long, shadowy line, and their coming was ceaseless.

But, moreover, the Highlanders being men of great stature, and in strange garb, their plumes being tall, and the view of them being broken and distorted by the wreaths of the smoke, and there being too an ominous silence in their ranks, there were men among the Russians who began to conceive a vague terror—the terror of things unearthly; and some, they say, imagined that they were charged by horsemen strange, silent, monstrous, bestriding giant chargers.† The columns were falling into that plight—we have twice before seen it this day—were falling into that plight, that its officers were moving hither and thither, with

* See the next note.

† It was from the poor wounded prisoners that our people gathered the accounts of the impression produced upon their minds by the advance of the Highlanders.

their drawn swords, were commanding, were imploring, were threatening, nay, were even laying hands on their soldiery, and striving to hold them fast in their places. This struggle is the last stage but one in the agony of a body of good infantry massed in close column. Unless help should come from elsewhere, the three columns would have to give way. But help came. From the high ground on our left another heavy column—the column composed of the two right Sousdal battalions—was seen coming down. It moved straight at the flank of the 93rd.

So now for the third time that day a mass of infantry, some fifteen hundred strong, was descending upon the naked flank of a battalion in English array; and, coming as it did from the extreme right of the enemy's position, this last attack was aimed almost straight at the file—the file of only two men—which closed the line of the 93rd.

But some witchcraft, the doomed men might fancy, was causing the earth to bear giants. Above the crest or swell of ground on the left rear of the 93rd, yet another array of the tall, bending plumes, began to rise up in a long, ceaseless line, stretching far into the east, and presently, in all the grace and beauty that marks a Highland regiment when it springs up the side of a hill, the 79th came bounding forward. Without a halt, or with only the halt that was needed for dressing the ranks, it sprang at the flank of the right Sousdal column, and caught it in its sin—caught it daring to march across the front of a battalion advancing in line. Wrapped in the fire

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Defeat of the four Russian columns.

thus poured upon its flank, the hapless column could not march, could not live. It broke, and began to fall back in great confusion; and, the left Sousdal column being almost at the same time overthrown by the 93rd, and the two columns which had engaged the 'Black Watch' being now in full retreat, the spurs of the hill and the winding dale beyond became thronged with the enemy's disordered masses.

Then again, they say, there was heard the sorrowful wail that bursts from the heart of the brave Russian infantry when they have to suffer defeat; but this time the wail was the wail of eight battalions; and the warlike grief of the soldiery could no longer kindle the fierce intent which, only a little before, had spurred forward the Vladimir column. Hope had fled.

After having been parted from one another by the nature of the ground, and thus thrown for some time into echelon, the battalions of Sir Colin's brigades were now once more close abreast; and since the men looked upon ground where the gray remains of the enemy's broken strength were mournfully rolling away, they could not but see that this, the revoir of the Highlanders, had chanced in a moment of glory. Knowing their hearts, and deeming that the time was one when the voice of his people might fitly enough be heard, the Chief touched or half lifted his hat in the way of a man assenting. Then along the Kourganè slopes, and thence west almost home to the Causeway, the hill-sides were made to resound with

that joyous, assuring cry which is the natural utterance of a northern people so long as it is warlike and free.*

Descending into the hollow where the vanquished troops flooded down, the waves of sound lit upon the throng and touched it, some imagined, as a breath of air touches a forest, lighly stirring its numberless leaves. And in truth it might be that even in this the hour of turmoil and defeat the long-suffering Muscovites were stirred with a new thought; for they never before that day had heard what our people call "cheers," and the sound is of such a kind that it startles men not born to freedom.

The three Highland regiments were now reformed, and Sir Colin Campbell, careful in the midst of victory, looked to see whether the supports were near enough to warrant him in pressing the enemy's retreat with his Highland brigade. He judged that, since Cathcart was still a good way off, the Highlanders ought to be established on the ground which they had already won; and, never forgetting that all this while he was on the extreme left of the whole infantry array of the Allies, he made a bend in his line, which caused it to show a front towards the south-east as well as towards the south.

Stand made by the Ouglitz battalions.

The great column of the four Ouglitz battalions was still on the rise of the hill beyond the hollow. It was a force 3000 strong, was as yet untouched, and

* Many of our people who had heard the cheers of the Highlanders were hindered from seeing them by the bend of the ground, and they supposed that the cheers were uttered in charging. It was not so. The Highlanders advanced in silence.

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was glowing with the same fire and zeal as when it had come down in anger to support the attack upon Codrington's brigade. From the high and commanding ground where the column stood posted, its officers had been able to see and understand the numerical proportions of the combatants more clearly than any man could who was toiling in the smoke of the fight. Looking down from the slope they had had to endure to see the gathered masses of their fellow-countrymen giving way to the slender lines of the red-coats; and, not bearing to think that their Czar and his famed infantry were to be coerced by means so small and delicate, they became inflamed with a great indignation against their own people for being defeated; and presently the whole column came down the hill, undertaking nothing less than to stay the ebb of the tide. It thrust itself full against the retreating masses, and angrily strove to drive them back into the fight.

The enemy's neglect of other measures for covering the retreat.

But the Highland brigade now again opened fire, and the enemy, being left very helpless, and having no guns in battery wherewith to attempt a stand, the Ouglitz column was forced to turn. It went part way up to its old ground in order to be able to cover the retreat of the vanquished masses.

The enemy's brave and devoted infantry, already abandoned by their ordnance, were now deserted in their great need by the Russian cavalry. Those horsemen, near 3000 strong, had been so palsied by orders or want of orders, or by some failure of spirit or capacity, that, although they were confronted by

only a third of their number of horse, they had not only abstained from all challenge, but had twice borne to look upon the open flank of a slender infantry line ascending to carry the heights, they themselves standing still all the while on the pleasant slopes of the hill; and now, when the faithful soldiery might well look for charges of horsemen to cover the retreat, their cavalry still remained idle, though it lingered for a while on the field.*

Our cavalry, long impatient of the restraint imposed upon it by the commander of the forces, had crossed the river without Lord Raglan's authority, and although the nature of the ford and the upset of a gun-carriage had caused a good deal of delay, they reached the top of the hill soon after the Highlanders had crowned it. With Lord Lucan's sanction, three guns of the horse-artillery, under Captain Maude, were placed in battery, and three guns of Captain Brandling's troop, which came up at the time, were established on the right of the 42nd. The fire of these six guns told cruelly upon the enemy's retreating masses; and the like being done by other English batteries on the west of the Kourganè Hill, the slaughter was so great that, of those who fell, very many fell upon their comrades, making in some

Slaughter of the retreating masses by artillery.

* At an early period of the action symptoms of this backwardness of the Russian cavalry had been sagaciously detected by the practised eye of Sir George Cathcart. Being on our extreme left, he had narrowly watched the enemy's horsemen, and even before the deployment of the 1st Division he had found himself able to assure Lord Raglan that nothing serious was likely to be attempted by the enemy's cavalry on the right bank of the river. This message was carried, I think, by Captain Elliot. It was of great value to Lord Raglan.

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places small banks of slain or wounded men; but where the round-shot ploughed into columns still keeping something of their old coherence, there the men so fell, that there were—but I care not to speak any more of the slaughter that is wrought by cannon when the infantry strife is all over.

Of the four Russian Generals who took part in this fight of the Kourganè Hill three were wounded, and nearly all the field-officers, together with very many officers of humbler grade who were on duty with the enemy's infantry in this part of the field, were either killed or wounded. The brave Vladimir, and the Kazan corps suffered dreadful losses. The loss of the four Kazan battalions alone was put at no less than seventeen hundred.*

Losses sustained by the enemy on the Kouganè Hill:

by the Guards and Highlanders.

This achievement of the Guards and the Highland brigade was so rapid, and was executed with so stedfast a faith in the prowess of our soldiery and the ascendancy of Line over Column, that in vanquishing great masses of infantry 12,000 strong,† and in going straight through with an onset which tore open the Russian position, the six battalions together did not lose 500 men.‡

* Chodasiewicz, p. 76. The estimate was not official, and was made under the influence of the despondency created by the retreat. It seems probable, therefore, that it exaggerated the loss.

† This figure is got at by first taking at their usual strength the 18 battalions which were on the Kourganè Hill, and then deducting 2500 (a very ample deduction) for losses which these troops sustained before the advance of the Guards.

‡ The exact number seems to be 438, and of this loss a large proportion was occasioned by the disaster which befel the Scots Fusileer Guards. Besides the casualties occurring to officers, which have been mentioned elsewhere, Cust of the Coldstream, and Abercrombie of the 93rd, were killed, and Baring of the Coldstream was wounded.

Is it then with slight loss, is it thus in a swift march of a few hundred paces on a hill-side, and with all this seeming ease and grace, that the last of the work is done whereby nation gains the mastery over nation?

Well, the truth is, that before it comes to a struggle like this, a State waging war may have to bear cruel losses—losses at sea, losses by pestilence and famine; losses also inflicted by the enemy before he consents to give battle with his infantry upon open ground; and it might happen to a nation to have to go through a campaign without coming once to the strife for which her people are fitted; but when at last, after many an obstacle vanquished, after many a tormenting delay, the English array of two deep is suffered to reach open ground and there measure its strength with gross columns, then the annals of our country have taught us that, unless there be an almost overwhelming disparity of numbers, there ought to be no misgiving about what will be the end of the fight.*

* The power which a nation may have of fighting in line depends, perhaps, mainly upon the constitutional temperament of its people, but in some degree also upon the question whether the high quality of its soldiery is fairly spread through the bulk of its army. No nation can expect to be able to fight in line if the prowess of its people is so abundantly gathered into the choice regiments as to leave the rest of the army in a condition of recognized inferiority. In Sir George Cathcart's book there is an interesting statement both of the causes which deprived the French of the power of fighting in line, and of the manner in which the predicament was met by the genius of Dumouriez. The system which Dumouriez contrived as a makeshift was attended with success so brilliant, that it was not only acted upon by France herself throughout the revolutionary war, but was adopted by all the continental Powers which came into conflict with her; and, until the English displayed to them once more the line formation,

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On the western slopes of the Kourganè Hill no step, that I know of, was taken for covering the withdrawal of the defeated troops, and if in the minds of Russian officers in that part of the field there yet remained any notion of trying to govern the retreat, their last hope was blasted by the new and ominous sign which then started full into view. On the fatal knoll whence evil seemed always to come to the army of the Czar, there took place a sudden change. The horsemen with the white plumes were withdrawn from sight, and in a minute the knoll was surmounted with a scarlet arch. The arch was an arch built of English troops ranged in line across the summit, and thence on either side stretching down the steep

The scarlet arch on the knoll.

Bonaparte and the other imitators of Dumouriez were encountered by nothing but their own system—their own system, worked out with inferior ability, and with means to which the system was ill adapted. Dumouriez's system is the one still used by France, and still rendered necessary by the manner in which the French army is constituted. A French general goes into action probably with a strong proportion of cavalry, but certainly with a very powerful artillery. He also has several Zouave, Chasseur, or other choice regiments, well fitted for skirmishing, and for close, bold fighting in villages, enclosures, and broken ground; but a great part of the rest of his army consists of masses—the fruit of the conscription—masses which may be so displayed as to give an appearance of impending strength, but which, he well knows, must not be placed in any very trying situation. Thus provided and thus clogged, he tries to make such a use of his artillery and of his choice regiments as shall *avert any extended conflict between formed battalions*. If he can do that (he did so in the Italian campaign of 1859, but at the horrible cost of sacrificing his choice regiments); he will have a very good chance of winning the battle. His difficulties, however, are likely to be increased by the progress of modern invention, for the new artillery is making it hard for him to know where to place the less impetuous part of his army.

shoulders of the knoll. And this arch of formed troops rose up in the heart of what had been the Russian position. Moreover, it faced towards the south-east, plainly showing that it was in the mind of the red-coats to cross the higher part of the Pass, and spring upon the flank of the troops which were retiring along the Great Causeway.

Then, perhaps, if not long before, the most hopeful of the Russian officers who looked from the Pass or from the western slopes of the Kourganè Hill, would be constrained to acknowledge that their army had fallen under the mastery of that gracious-looking horseman long seen on the knoll who managed his charger and his field-glass with one hand, and a half empty sleeve. And, indeed, the mastery was now so complete that to any poor Muscovite soldier who was simply moving from the field with all the speed he had, his officers could hardly say with truth that they knew any better strategy than his.

It will be remembered that when Lord Raglan, after crossing the river, gained his first joyful glimpse of the knoll, he ordered up Adams's brigade in all haste. The force encountered some trouble in passing the river; but it was keenly urged forward, and the moment it gained the summit of the knoll, Lord Raglan, with his own eye and voice, caused it to be drawn up in line. In order to make way for it on the top, the Head-quarter Staff moved aside, and Lord Raglan so placed the line that it fronted towards the south-east.

If the battle at this time had been hanging in

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doubt, Lord Raglan, placed as he was with these two battalions in his hand, could hardly have failed to make them the means of governing the result, for their advance would have threatened to roll up the enemy's line from its centre to its extreme right. As it was, the force became that scarlet bow on the knoll which seemed to present to the enemy the alternative of sheer flight or captivity.

Lord Raglan, however, perceived that the cogency with which these battalions would act in hurrying the retreat, depended rather upon their mere appearance in this part of the field than upon any real power that they had of intercepting the enemy; for though the enemy might judge them to be very near, they were parted from him by deep hollows, and it was plain that if they were moved forward before the knowledge of their presence had sufficiently spread, they would in a great measure lose their weight; because in crossing the hollow which divided them from the line of the retreat, they would necessarily drop out of sight. So, in order that the aspect of the force might sink into the enemy's heart, Lord Raglan kept it formed upon the summit of the knoll for two or three minutes. He then moved it towards the south-east.

Retreat of the last Russian battalions, which had hitherto stood their ground.

Nearly at this time the column of the Ouglitz battalions began to fall back. Then, there was no part of the Russian army in this part of the field which was not in full retreat.

The guns of Turner's battery were limbered up and pushed forward to a commanding spot further up

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in the Pass, and thence at long range they continued to pour their fire upon the enemy's retreating troops. In the performance of this duty they were aided by a French battery. Afterwards Lord Raglan sent an aide-de-camp with orders to cause the guns to advance to a more commanding ground, which he had observed on their left front. The English battery advanced accordingly; but the officers in command of the French battery declined to move forward. It was at this time that Walsham was killed. He was the last officer who fell that day. Besides Walsham, our artillery corps lost two officers killed, namely, Dew and Cockrell; and of the rank and file, nine were killed and twenty (besides one serjeant) were wounded.

Final operations of the artillery.

Their losses.

XXXV.

Lord Raglan now descended from the knoll whither Fortune, in her wild and puissant governance of human events, had happily chosen to lead him. Bending his steps towards the ground just won by the Duke of Cambridge's Division, he rode across the main causeway.

Lord Raglan crossing the Causeway:

At that very time, as I make it,* there was riding towards Lord Raglan, and riding, too, along the same road, though at a distance of some few hundred

Prince Mentschikoff riding down towards him.

* The General who describes his meeting with Prince Mentschikoff shows the stage to which the battle had reached at the time when the meeting took place; and it seems to me that that was just the stage in which the battle was when Lord Raglan crossed the great road. This is my only ground for supposing that the two incidents occurred simultaneously.

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yards, a man confounded and troubled, who had helped to bring great woe on his country.

Clearly wanting in many, nay, perhaps in most, of the qualities which make an able commander, Prince Mentschikoff was still a brave man. It could not but be that his heart was in the cause. A momentous battle had been raging. Of one of the contending armies he was the Commander-in-Chief. He was in full health. He yearned to be acting. Yet from the moment when he entrusted to Kiriakoff the great column of the eight battalions, his mind had given no impress to events.

The part which he had been taking in the battle.

In order to see how this came to be possible, it must be remembered, first, that the tract of ground over which Prince Mentschikoff watched was somewhat broad, and, secondly, that all the decisive fighting of that day was condensed into a narrow period of time. The Allies had been advancing upon a front of five miles; and all the fights in which the combatants had engaged with their ranged battalions took place, as I reckon it, within a period of some thirty-five minutes. Now, if any man used to the saddle, and acquainted also with a country of open downs much divided by hollows and ravines, will fasten his mind upon any two hill-tops or other landmarks which he knows to be five miles asunder, and will then imagine a number of brief events to be happening, first in one part of this extended tract, and then in another, but all within little more than half an hour, he will be able to understand how it might be possible for the Russian

General to be eagerly riding from east to west and from west to east, yet always being so luckless as never once to strike in upon the ground where the event which he yearned to witness and to control was swiftly passing. It was not, I am sure, from any neglect or delinquency that Prince Mentschikoff came to be annulled during all the heavy stress of the battle.

We left the Prince handing over to Kiriakoff the charge of the great column of the eight battalions, and it is only by conjecture that I can form an idea of what became of him during the critical period of several minutes which then immediately followed. He would not have abandoned the personal command of the column which he had eagerly gathered together for a great enterprise, unless he had been dragged away by tidings of what was happening in the English part of the field. Thither, therefore, he would ride, and he would ride no doubt with the knowledge (for that was what his last tidings must have taught him) that the English had stormed and carried the Great Redoubt. But he would have to cross the great road, and before he got thither he would see, and would see, one may imagine, with unspeakable astonishment, that the columns which formed his "great reserves" were no longer in their place. Finding that they were retiring, or had already retired, and knowing nothing of the way in which Lord Raglan had driven them from the field by the use of his two guns on the knoll, the Prince would be likely to ride in the direction which the

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reserve columns took, very eager to find some man upon whom to vent his anger. The minutes it took him to ride after the reserves to seek out the cause of their retreat, and to come back to the front, would be those very minutes in which the position held by the centre and the right of the Russian army was falling into the hands of the English.

Prince Mentschikoff's reappearance in the English part of the field.

This, I repeat, is only a conjectural mode of filling the chasm which is left open by the Russian narrators; but the spot where the Prince is found when he reappears to the eye of History, is exactly the one in which those who adopt my surmise would expect to see him riding. For it was by the great road, where his reserves had been posted, that Prince Mentschikoff came back into that part of the field with which the English had dealt. When last he saw it, the position, immensely strong by nature, was held in the gripe of powerful batteries, and battalions standing rigid as granite. Since that time, it is true, some hours had passed, but it was only a few minutes before that he had been the assailant in the other part of the field, placing a mighty column in the hands of Kiriakoff with orders to make an onslaught upon Canrobert's Division. Now—he gazed, and gazed again, being slow to understand—being slow to let in the belief that the gray, rolling masses which approached him were the ruins of two-thirds of his army. But presently he came upon a sight hardly less strange, hardly less shocking to him than his retreating soldiery. He met on the road a lone man—a lone man on foot, walking away from the field. He looked,

and came to make out that this lone pedestrian was Prince Gortschakoff—Prince Gortschakoff, the chief to whom he had entrusted the command of the whole centre and the whole right wing of his army. 'What is this?' 'What is the matter?' 'Why 'are you on foot?' 'Why are you alone?' These, as was natural, were the questions hurled at Prince Gortschakoff by his troubled, amazed commander. 'My horse,' said Gortschakoff, 'was killed near the 'river. I am alone, because all the aides-de-camp 'and officers of my Staff have been killed or 'wounded. I have received six shots;' and then, in a spirit scarce worthy of historic moments, scarce matching with the greatness of the disaster which his overthrow had brought upon a proud and mighty empire, Prince Gortschakoff showed the rents which shot had made in his clothes.*

His meeting with Gortschakoff.

At this time, so far as I know, Prince Mentschikoff used none of the means by which, though forced to retreat, skilled commanders can make themselves feared. On the very road where he stood, the Czar's faithful infantry—infantry famous for its heroism in the trying hour of a retreat—was left to extricate itself from the field by brute flight. It would seem that Prince Mentschikoff's authority—already for some time neutralized by the mischances which, all the day long, had been throwing him into the wrong part of the field—now slipped from out of his hands. He had no longer a grasp of his army. A little later

He does not at this time effect any operation for covering the retreat

* It is Prince Gortschakoff himself who gives this account of his meeting with Prince Mentschikoff.

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He is carried along with the retreating masses.

he was seen borne along with the ebb, a dismal unit in the throng. Endued with a high spirit, and having a good deal of the pride which a man may justly take in his country so long as it is warlike and honest, he broke out into a loud, angry cry, 'It is a 'disgrace,' he said, 'for a Russian soldier to retreat!' An officer, hearing his words, and being maddened, partly by the defeat, and partly, as they say, by strong drink—fiercely answered his general, and told him to his face, in the hearing of the soldiery, that if he had ordered the men to stand they would have held their ground.* To this depth of wretchedness Prince Mentschikoff fell in the nineteenth month from the time when, in the name of a mighty empire, and under the gaze of all Europe, he came down into the Bosphorus with commission to trample upon the Ottoman State.

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The army of the English army on the ground they had won.

Mean time Evans, still on our right front, had been rejoined by the two regiments detached under Adams. The Scots Fusileers had resumed their place in the centre of the brigade of Guards. The Light Division, re-formed, had followed the advance of the Duke of Cambridge. Sir Richard England, pushing forward towards his right front, had taken up ground on one of the eastern spurs of the Telegraph Height. At the opposite extremity of our line Cathcart had established himself on the left rear of the Highland

* Chodasiewicz.

brigade. Facing almost due south, pushed forward to the reverse of the slopes which made the strength of the Russian position, and ranged upon a front of two miles, the British infantry looked down upon the enemy's retreating masses.

Operation of the English cavalry.

At this time, Lord Raglan sent the Adjutant-General with his orders to the cavalry. Those orders, however, did not authorize the operations by which it is usual for horsemen to gather in the fruits of a victory. A commander, even in battle, must not forget the campaign. The Western Powers were invading a province of Russia, with forces which had to march through an open country. Their pretension to wage such war as that depended upon their having at their command all the three arms of the service. Therefore the strength of the arm in which they were the most weak, was the measure of their power as invaders. The French, as we saw, had no cavalry, and the English had rather more than a thousand sabres and lances. With such a force thrown forward to intercept the enemy's retreating masses, many prisoners, together perhaps with some guns, might have been taken; and it was to be expected that blows of this kind would aggravate the despondency of the beaten army. But Lord Raglan judged that no practicable capture of trophies or prisoners was worth the risk of losing a material part of his small, brilliant cavalry force. He therefore declined to let his horsemen push forward without the support of a powerful artillery; and the orders he sent by the Adjutant-General directed that the cavalry should

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escort the foot batteries to the front. In delivering this instruction, Estcourt cautioned Lord Lucan, and told him 'that the cavalry were not to attack.'

Lord Cardigan, with one-half of the cavalry force, was directed to escort the guns which were to go to the right, whilst Lord Lucan in person went forward with the rest of the cavalry, and escorted the guns advancing on our left. Lord Lucan, riding in advance of the guns with a squadron of the 17th Lancers, came upon many of the enemy's stragglers in retreat, and he ordered the horsemen who were with him, supported by another squadron, to pursue, and take prisoners. A troop of the 11th Hussars had been ordered (it was said by Lord Raglan himself) to do the same thing, and the 17th had already taken a great many prisoners, when the operation was stopped by special orders from Lord Raglan. What Lord Raglan had meant was, that the troopers employed in taking prisoners should be spread out as skirmishers; and, when he saw that they were acting in serried ranks, and were going on far in advance, he became anxious lest some of the enemy's guns should be brought to bear upon them, and occasion him a loss in that one description of force with which the Allies were scantily provided. He therefore sent, first one and then another Staff officer to the commander of the cavalry, with orders to give up the pursuit of prisoners, and return to the duty of escorting the guns. Thereupon Lord Lucan recalled the troopers in advance, and the prisoners they had taken were set free.

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XXXVII.

Progress of a French artillery train along the plateau from west to east.

It will be remembered that at the time when the head of the first French Division was pushed back by the 'great column of the eight battalions,' Canrobert was still without his artillery. But these batteries, having been sent down to Almatamack, and having there crossed the river, had at last been brought up to the plateau, and (along with some guns belonging to Bosquet's Division) they were now travelling eastward. In the part of the field where Bosquet stood, and from which this long train of artillery had commenced its eastward journey, there was no enemy at hand, and even when the guns had come to within a short distance of the ground in front of Canrobert's right wing, there was no Russian battalion which could be seen by the French artillerymen; for the train was moving along a hollow which, so long as a man rode low down, was deep enough to hinder him from seeing far either on his right hand or on his left. But some of the officers who were with the guns now thought it was time to obtain a wider view of the ground, and they therefore rode part way up the slope which overhung the ravine towards their right. Before they had yet got quite up to the flat ground above the ravine, they suddenly stopped; for —monstrous, immense, and obtruded before them on the plateau, at a distance of only a few hundred yards, they saw a gray, oblong-cut block—saw what in one moment they knew to be a mass of Russian

Officers riding with the train descry the 'column 'of the 'eight bat- 'talions.'

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infantry—a mass of unwonted size—standing rigidly built in close column. This was the great 'column of the eight battalions'—the dumb, gliding phantasm of the Telegraph Height, whose bare aspect had given strange speed to the breathless French aide-de-camp on the knoll, and had just been constraining the head of Canrobert's Division to fall back, and drop under the crest. With that warlike swiftness of thought which is natural to the French in the hour of battle, the officers who caught sight of this apparition darted straight upon the perception of what ought to be done. Some of the guns were brought up to a part of the slope from which—without being easily seen—they could throw their fire into the column.*

The column is torn by artillery fire.

Suddenly Kiriakoff found that his close mass of eight battalions was cruelly rent by shot and shell coming from the west. Without stopping to find out by calm scrutiny the quarter whence the fire really came, Kiriakoff hastily accepted the belief that it came from the sea; and in order to place his troops out of the reach of the ships, he began to move off his column in an inland, or easterly direction, taking nearly the same route as that by which he had advanced.† Whilst he thus marched, shot and shells

* See the plan. It is taken from a sketch which was made for me by a French officer who was present with the artillery thus brought to bear on the column.

† At one time the French stated (see Ducasse, 'Precis Historique,) that the retreat of this great column was the result of a fight with their infantry, but no such representation is now persisted in, for the French official statement (agreeing in that respect with Kiriakoff) says fairly that what forced the column to retreat was—not any sort of combat with the French infan-

continued to cut their way into the midst of his hapless column, inflicting a dreadful slaughter. This trial—the trial of men who have to march under a shattering fire without being able to strike one blow at their slayers—was borne by the Russian soldiery with a great fortitude. Order was maintained; and, torn as it was from moment to moment, the column marched grandly. Along with the column there were two batteries; but, far from helping to cover its retreat, these guns were suffered to become a burthen; for, several of the horses having been

Kiriakoff moves it.

Its demeanour.

try, but the fire of the batteries mentioned in the text. After describing the advance of the great Russian column, the official French statement says:—'Déjà cette colonne était parvenue à 150 mètres de la droite du 7e 'de ligne, et la situation devenait très critique lorsque les deux batteries de 'la division Canrobert (qui avaient été forcées d'aller passer au gué d'Al-'matamak), et les deux batteries de la division Bosquet arrivent au galop 'sur le champ de bataille, ouvrent un feu terrible contre la colonne Russe, 'lui font éprouver des pertes considerables *et la forcent à la retraite.*'—*Atlas Historique et Topographique de la Guerre d'Orient.* The only words in this official statement which might produce a wrong impression, are those which describe the guns as coming up at a gallop. When the train was travelling along the hollow, it no doubt moved as fast as it properly could; but when the guns were brought part way up the slope, and unlimbered and placed in battery, the operation was performed so skilfully and, so to speak, so stealthily, that Kiriakoff never made out the quarter whence destruction came, and imagined that his column was rent by the gunnery of the ships. My knowledge of the exact way in which these guns were brought to bear upon the hapless column is derived from a French officer who was present with the guns, and who to rt in seizing the occasion which was presented by the sudden discover of the column. When an account of an infantry fight with 'the column of the eight battalions' had once gone out to the world, it may seem strange that the story should be afterwards repudiated by any French personages writing or drawing officially; but, besides that there is really a strong, honest leaning towards truth in the 'Atlas Historique,' it is obvious that the French artillery officers, whose skill and quickness had shattered the great column and driven it from the field, might justly and most cogently call upon the authorities to withdraw the falsehood which gave to French infantry the credit justly due to French gunners.

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wounded or killed, the task of dragging off the cannon was thrown upon soldiers. It would seem, however, that the natural awe with which Canrobert's troops had looked upon the advance of the huge column was not lifted off from their minds when first they saw it withdrawing; for no French infantry moved forward to press the retreat of the eight battalions. 'The French,' says Kiriakoff, 'did 'not follow us. I am ignorant of the reason why. 'May be they did not want to stand between the fire 'of their ships and our regiments. May be the sight 'of the two bodies of Hussars, headed by Colonel 'Wailinovich, may have checked them.* In fact, I 'cannot explain their conduct.' By pursuing his easterly march for some time, Kiriakoff brought his column out of the artillery fire which had been tearing it, and he came at last to a halt upon a spot on the right rear of the Telegraph. Although it was the destiny of this 'column of the eight bat-'talions' to be able to put a great stress upon the French army, and afterwards to be cruelly shattered by cannon, yet from first to last the body which thus did and thus suffered, was without an occasion for firing a shot.

is not followed by the French, and is halted on the right rear of the Telegraph.

The part his great column had taken in the battle.

XXXVIII.

Moved from west to east along the top of the plateau, the French guns which had dealt with the

* The translation I have says 'annoyed them,' but I gather from the context that the word I have ventured to substitute more accurately represents the General's meaning.

column were now once more in battery, and upon ground from which they threw a flanking fire in the direction of the troops which still remained on the slopes in front of the Telegraph Height. The only infantry forces which had been placed in that part of the field were the four Taroutine, and the four 'Militia' battalions; but, supposing that the breaking-up of the 'Militia' battalions was by this time virtually complete, Kiriakoff had no infantry on the whole Telegraph Height, except the four Taroutine battalions and the stricken, the bleeding column which he had just withdrawn from the front. Yet at this time, though Kiriakoff evidently did not know of the proximity of many of the French battalions which were hanging back close under the plateau, there were in reality some thirty thousand Frenchmen and Turks standing on ground from which in a period of only a few minutes they might close in both upon his front and his left flank. Without apprehending the extent to which he was encompassed, Kiriakoff came to see that the troops he had in front of the Telegraph must not be left standing under a cross-fire of artillery. He had not in his own hands the means of repelling or silencing the guns which were pouring their fire from the west along the summit of the plateau; and being without orders, and even, it seems, without tidings, he tried to find a clue for the guidance of his conduct by learning the course which the battle was taking in the English part of the field. Hitherto his glances

A flanking fire from the French artillery is poured upon the Troops on Telegraph Height.

Condition of things in that part of the field.

The result of what Kiriakoff had hitherto observed in the English part of the field.

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in that direction had brought him no comfort. Even so early as the time when he pushed back the head of Canrobert's Division he had found that the English were gaining the ascendancy over the centre and right wing of the Russians. 'When,' he writes—'when the first success of the enemy had been 'stopped on the left wing, in the centre * and the 'right wing * the turn of affairs was beginning to be 'against us. I cannot judge the particulars of that 'part of the battle, being fully occupied by doing 'my own duty, and I could not observe as well the 'events on my right; but thus far I could see, that 'the enemy had taken up a strong position on the 'left bank of the Alma.' This, at the moment of his success against Canrobert, had been Kiriakoff's perception of the course which events were taking in the English part of the field; and now, when he looked once more to where the red-coats were moving, he saw that in that part of the field the battle was lost to the Czar. He saw—not only that the Causeway batteries had been withdrawn, and that upon their site English regiments were established (apparently he had seen that before†), but that Mentschikoff's infantry reserves were in retreat; and that, looking eastward along the Russian side of the river as far as his eye could reach, he was unable to see the end of the slender red line which marked the advance

He now sees that in that part of the field the English have won the battle.

* *i. e.* Those portions of the Russian army which were opposed to the English.

† When he said that the English 'had taken up a strong position on the left' [*i. e.* the Russian] 'bank of the river.'

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of the English supports. Even if he did not observe or understand the ominous silence of the Great Redoubt, he could not fail to see that the withdrawal of the Causeway batteries and of the infantry reserves was not only an abandonment of the great 'position 'on the Alma,' but was also a retreat with which it was his obvious duty to conform. For that reason he first ordered his troops to retire to a part of the Great Post-road which lay on the right rear of his position; and when he got to that spot, he found that the victory won by Lord Raglan was by that time so well assured, as to oblige him to continue his retrograde march, and conform at once to the movements of the seven-and-twenty battalions then yielding to their English assailants.

He conforms to the movement of the troops retreating before the English.

'Impossible'—writes Kiriakoff, after speaking of the direction in which French artillery had been brought to bear upon his troops in front of the Telegraph—'impossible to leave the left wing thus 'exposed to a cross-fire, and I could not send or wait 'for orders from the Commander-in-Chief. The right 'wing* having already begun a very decisive move-'ment of retreat, I commanded the march towards 'the main road, on either side of which I ranged the 'troops. This road was beyond the height where 'our principal reserves had stood. Then I became 'aware that our right wing* was indeed retreating; 'and, wishing to conform as much as possible with 'their movements, I ordered a second march towards

i. e. troops opposed to the English.

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'a height beyond the road. . . . The enemy 'did not follow us.' †

is retreat not olested y French fantry.

In their retreat the Taroutine battalions—the troops which marched in what was then the rear of Kiriakoff's force—were plied with the fire of cannon, but were not at all vexed by French infantry.‡

* If full faith be given to this testimony of Kiriakoff, it is of course conclusive of the question as to where the Russian retreat began, for he speaks as an eye-witness of the retreat which had taken place in front of the English, and he was the actual ordainer of the retrogade movement which he deemed to be the necessary consequence of the defeat which his countrymen had sustained at the hands of the English. It may be said that it was for his interest to make this statement, and that therefore he is not an impartial witness. This is true: but, besides that his character for honour and high spirit places him above the suspicion of gross and intentional misstatement, it happens that his account is corroborated in the most distinct terms by Anitchkoff, an apparently impartial narrator. Anitchkoff, when he wrote, was an officer on the General Staff of the Russian army, writing under circumstances which gave him considerable means of knowing the truth, and which made it his duty to hold the balance evenly between Gortschakoff, Kiriakoff, and Kvetzinski. Yet in clear words he corroborates Kiriakoff. After speaking of the centre and right wing of the Russians—the troops with which the English had been dealing—and of their retreat 'to 'the former position two versts to the south,' he adds immediately these 'words: 'Whither they were' [remark the word presently coming] 'whither 'they were followed by the left wing, who had withstood and repelled the 'attack of the whole of the four French Divisions until the moment of the 'general retreat.'

† Kiriakoff does not himself say that he made any of the arrangements commonly resorted to by a general who has to withdraw his troops from the enemy's presence; but the French authorities say for him that he covered his retreat with a powerful artillery. The whole tenor of Kiriakoff's memorial leads to the impression that, at the time of his retreating from the Telegraph Height, there was no French infantry near enough to induce him to take the usual means for covering his retreat. It is probable, however, that, without any express orders from their divisional general, officers commanding Russian batteries may have found and seized opportunities of using their guns.

‡ Chodasiewicz. This writer was a field-officer in the Taroutine corps, and his statements (almost all of them valuable) are an excellent authority in all that relates to the operations of his own regiment.

XXXIX.

Great conflux of French troops towards the Telegraph.

When Kiriakoff's battalions had withdrawn, Canrobert's Division and d'Aurelle's brigade — that brigade followed close by Prince Napoleon—moved straight upon the Telegraph. This took place at the moment when, in the English part of the field, our Grenadier Guards were stepping up from the river's bank to engage the enemy's columns.* The two Zouave Regiments, which stood side by side on the left front of Canrobert's force, and, almost at the same moment, the 39th Regiment of the line—the regiment which formed the head of d'Aurelle's column—pushed swiftly forward towards the Telegraph; and some of the more active men of these soldiery, running on in advance of their comrades, successively planted the colours of their three regiments on the stump of the unfinished pillar, or on the scaffolding which the builders had placed there. It is said that whilst he was in the very act of thus uplifting the colours of his regiment, Lieutenant Poitevin of the 39th was struck by a shot and killed.

When soldiers in battle break loose from the guidance of their commanders, they so feel the need of a purpose, that a tree, a house, or a windmill, any object, in short, which stands out plain in the landscape, may have power to draw men towards it; and when a conflux like this has once set in, the eddy soon begins to run strong. First three or

* See, in the Appendix, the grounds on which I rest this statement.

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four eager and venturous men, then clusters, then scores, then hundreds, then thousands of panting soldiers were thronging from several quarters upon a single point. There could not but be a great turmoil. Joy, warlike ardour, the instinctive longing of the young soldier in his first battle to keep on discharging his musket, and perhaps (with some) the sight of the body of Lieutenant Poitevin—all these were causes much more than enough to account for abundance of firing on the part of the French troops; and when the mound of smoke thus generated was once piled up, the soldiers would be likely to continue firing into it for some time. Besides, the French artillery at this period was playing upon the enemy's retreating battalions, and on the other hand it may be believed that the Russians were covering their retreat by a more or less diligent use of their ordnance. It is probable that this fire of the Russian artillery took effect at a time when the heads of the French columns had already thronged up to the Telegraph—for it is certain that several of the Zouaves were there struck down; and although it is made plain that no Russian infantry were intentionally placed at the Telegraph with orders to make a stand, there is no difficulty in supposing that a knot of Russian soldiers may have been lingering about near the scaffolding of the turret, and may have remained long enough to have an opportunity of firing into the heads of the great columns which were converging upon the spot and provoking a fire in return. In that way, though the Russian accounts show no trace of it, there was perhaps a farewell interchange of shots.

Turmoil and supposed fight at the Telegraph.

Be this as it may, it is certain that (from the causes already shown) there was much of the appearance of a real fight at the Telegraph, and, until the Russian narratives brought other light to bear, it was believed that the French and the Russian infantry had met in fierce strife at this spot. On the other hand, the enemy's accounts represent that Kiriakoff's troops withdrew quietly from the Telegraph Height, without being even annoyed by French infantry, and without making or trying to make a defensive stand either at the pillar of the Telegraph, or on any ground near it; and unless all the Russian narrators, though speaking with very different and even opposite feelings, have united to join in an unaccountable * perversion of the truth, it must now be held certain that the impetuous Zouaves, no less than their despised and peaceful comrades of the line, were precluded by sheer want of opponents from the means of engaging in that dreadful scene of hand-to-hand fighting and slaughter which, under the description of 'the combat at the Telegraph,' has found a place in French annals.†

At length the state of the smoke allowed men to see that there were no Russians near. Then the close of what resembled a fight was joyfully hailed as a victory.

* I say 'unaccountable' because, if the French story were true, the stand which must have been made at the Telegraph by Kiriakoff's infantry would have been an achievement so heroic, that, far from disowning, or concealing, or forgetting it, every good Russian would have made it his pride and his boast.

† The narratives which French historians have given of this supposed fight, together with my reasons for excluding their stories from my text, will be found in the Appendix.

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Marshal St. Arnaud.

From the time when the bulk of the French advanced to the banks of the river, Marshal St. Arnaud had placed himself in the midst of Prince Napoleon's battalions; and, the Prince's Division having been kept low down in the bottom during the critical period of the battle, it must have been hard for a man who remained jammed down with those troops to get a fair view of what was going on*; but the Marshal, it seems, now galloped up to the Telegraph, and sharing, no doubt, in the belief that there had been a hot fight there, and inferring also that the fight had been won by the thousands of eager Zouaves whom he saw thronging round the pillar, he turned, it is said, to these his most trusted soldiery, and said to them, 'I thank you, my 'Zouaves!'

Canrobert's and Prince Napoleon's Divisions, with d'Aurelle's brigade betwixt them, were then massed about the Telegraph upon a very small space of ground.

XL.

Opportunity of cutting off some of the enemy's retreating masses.

At this time two messengers came in haste from different parts of the English field of battle. They both came with the same object. The first of these was an aide-de-camp sent straight from Lord Raglan to the nearest French troops he could find. The other was Colonel Steele, who came charged with the request which General Airey from another part

* See the plan (taken from the 'Atlas Historique'), which shows the Marshal's position.

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of the field had taken upon himself to address to Marshal St. Arnaud. Whilst the Russian battalions were retreating before the English infantry, Lord Raglan in one part of the field, and Airey in another, had, almost at the same moment, observed the same opportunity, and fastened upon the same mode of seizing it. Each of them had seen that masses of the retreating infantry were moving in such a direction and through a gorge which so straitened their movements, that their retreat could be cut off or turned into a ruinous disaster by the immediate advance of a few battalions pushing forward from the left of the French line, and bearing towards the great road.

Vain endeavours of Lord Raglan and of Airey to cause the requisite advance of French troops.

When Lord Raglan's aide-de-camp reached the Telegraph, he found that the troops he came upon had just halted, two hundred yards in front of the building, and that the column with which he sought to find the Prince was under a good deal of excitement. Used to the silence of English troops, the aide-de-camp was a good deal struck with the effect produced by thousands of soldiers in heavy masses talking all at the same time. The aide-de-camp was accompanied by Vico, the French commissioner accredited to the English head-quarters. Vico conveyed Lord Raglan's wishes to the general commanding the brigade, and was told in answer that the troops would advance. This, however, they did not do.

The similar request which Colonel Steele addressed to St. Arnaud was met by a refusal. The

Marshal excused himself for declining to advance by saying that his troops had left their knapsacks in the valley below.

St. Arnaud. The extent to which his mind was brought to bear on the battle.

Marshal St. Arnaud was able to remain all day on horseback; and it does not appear that the state of his health at this time was such as to hinder him from using his intellectual powers; but he did not place himself in a part of the field from which a general could hope to be able to govern events. And from the time when he despatched his ill-devised orders to the 4th Division, I have not been able to perceive that his mind at all touched the battle.

XLI.

Situation of Forey with Lourmel's brigade.

General Forey, perhaps, had hoped that in the presence of the enemy he might be able to cover over the mark which his reputation contracted on the 2nd of December, on the day when, along with Maupas's commissaries of police, he suffered himself to be publicly used as the assailant and the gaoler of the unarmed legislature of France; but if by chance this man shall be brought some day to his account, it will not be by an appeal to the memory of the Alma that he will be able to avert his punishment. With Lourmel's brigade,* as we saw,

* This Lourmel was one of those who acted against Paris in the massacres of the 4th of December, and although he was only a colonel at that time, it is still proper to keep the December badge upon him, because it was the known character of the colonels commanding regiments which had caused the President to bring them and their regiments to Paris with a view to use them.

he had followed the steps of Bouat, marching off to the peaceful sea-shore, and becoming null in the battle. When d'Aurelle was already at the Telegraph, Forey with Lourmel's brigade had but just crossed the river at its very mouth, and was more than two miles distant from the nearest of the enemy's forces. But with the exception of this annulled brigade under Forey, and the two Turkish battalions which had been left to guard the baggage, the whole of the French and Ottoman troops were now ranged upon the plateau of the Telegraph Height. Their array was upon ground less advanced than that taken up by the English. It fronted towards the east.

The rest of the French army arrayed upon the plateau.

XLII.

When Kiriakoff's movement of retreat had brought him to the ridge which lay at a distance of nearly two miles in rear of the Telegraph, he forthwith took up a position, and once more showed a front to the Allies. Having with him not only his own artillery, but that also which Prince Mentschikoff had brought from the centre at the commencement of the action, and being in company at this time with some of the cavalry, he was able to complete the semblance of something like a defensive stand by placing thirty guns in battery, and covering his left front with several squadrons of hussars. By this wise and soldierly attitude Kiriakoff masked the confusion into which the rest of the Czar's army had been thrown,

The position taken up by Kiriakoff.

The effect produced upon the Allies by his soldierly attitude.

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and caused the Allied commanders to believe that they had still a formidable enemy in their front.

He moves forward some cavalry.

Not only did Kiriakoff thus face round, but he even caused the body of cavalry which he had on his left to move forward; and it happened that this advance of the Russian Hussars brought them down to a spot which was near the ground where Lord Cardigan rode with his squadrons. It seems, however, that there was an intervening bend or rise in the formation of the ground, which prevented these two hostile bodies of cavalry from being visible the one to the other.

Lord Raglan's vexation.

Lord Raglan with some of his staff had ridden forward to this part of the field. He met the advance of the enemy's squadrons with an almost cold gaze. The joyous animation with which from the summit of the knoll he had watched the changeful battle—this had passed. He wore the look—men came to know it too well before he died—the look which used to show that he was feeling the stress of the French alliance, and dissembling the pain of his anger.

XLIII.

Question as to the way in which the retreat should be pressed.

The world was old enough to know that, in order to be made to yield its natural fruits, a victory ought to be followed up; and that, in general, a victorious army is made to press on in pursuit, until nightfall or other good cause makes it prudent or needful to halt. But the maps of this Crim Tartary gave no

indication of the existence of any fresh water between the Alma and the Katcha—a stream some seven or eight miles distant. It seemed that unless the troops which might be pushed forward could reach the Katcha, and reach it, too, in strength enabling them to establish themselves on its banks, they would have to bivouac on the hills without the means of allaying the rage of thirst. Except at the mouth of the Alma, or at the mouth of the Katcha, the nature of the coast did not allow free communication between the Allied armies and the ships. It was half-past four o'clock. Soon after six the sun would set. Since morning the soldiery of both armies had toiled under a burning sun. They were very weary; and many of them—indeed almost all the English — were in a weakly state of health. These were reasons which made it needful for the Allies to effect their farther pursuit of the enemy by preconcerted arrangements. They were not, I think, reasons which warranted a protracted halt of the whole of the Allied armies on the heights of the Alma. Lord Raglan had been swift to see what ought to be done by the Allies, and not less swift to determine what he himself could offer to do. He deemed that the Allies ought to push forward instantly with such portions of their force as were the least wearied. We have seen the share which the English soldiery had had in the work of the day; but, compared with the troops of the 1st, the 2nd, and the Light divisions, Sir Richard England's Division was fresh. With that force of

Lord Raglan's opinion. His plan.

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infantry, together with the whole of his cavalry and horse-artillery, Lord Raglan desired to press forward; but he required that a portion of the French army should take part in this movement, for he did not understand that the rout of the enemy's forces was so complete and irremediable as to put them in the power of one English division of infantry and a thousand horsemen. Besides, he well knew that (even though the aid should be given for mere form's sake and not for actual use) there was a political reason which forbade him from pressing forward without making sure that his advance would be accompanied by a portion of the French army; for it was nearly certain that an English General advancing on the afternoon of a battle, and leaving his sensitive allies in the rear, would so mortify the French people as to put the alliance and even the ruler who contrived it in grievous peril.

It is proposed to the French.

Accordingly, General Airey proposed to General Martimprey, the chief of the French Staff, that the whole of our cavalry, together with one English division of infantry, and such portion of the French army as the Marshal might think fit, should move forward and press the enemy's retreat.

They decline to move.

The answer was that any farther advance of the French on that day was 'impossible'; and the necessity of returning to where the knapsacks had been laid was once more used as the reason which forbade all forward movement. Men may fairly surmise that a sterner method than that which Lord Raglan took would have served his purpose better, and that if he

had simply ordered his cavalry and Sir Richard England's Division to advance, M. St. Arnaud would have been compelled to follow. But to act upon such a speculation as that would have been hardly consistent with the duties imposed upon the English General. Lord Raglan, it is true, was a soldier acting against an enemy in the field. But he was something more. He was a diplomatist specially charged with the care of that fragile structure on which the war was resting. He was charged with the care of the French alliance. Except on grounds of paramount cogency, he had no right to break loose from the fetters by which his Queen's Government had thought fit to bind their country.

Question whether a sterner method with the French might have answered better.

XLIV.

Lord Raglan watched the advance of the Russian cavalry until he saw it come to a halt. Then it seemed—he was used of old to read such signs—it seemed that he regarded this movement and this halt of the enemy's horse as a kind of farewell gesture which marked the end of the battle; for, turning his horse's head, he slowly rode back to the ground where his infantry stood.

The close of the battle.

When our soldiers observed the approach of the Head-quarter Staff, they looked eagerly into the group that they might see if amongst the plumed horsemen the Chief himself were coming; and the moment they got a sure sight of the frock with the half-empty sleeve, it came into their hearts to offer

The cheers which greet Lord Raglan.

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to their General that which is of other worth than vulgar treasures, nay, that which in common times the world cannot give. They brought him the greeting which a proud soldiery can bestow upon their chief in the hour of victory, and upon the field of battle. Begun at first by one corps, taken up by the next, and then by the next again, the cheers flew on from regiment to regiment, and tracked the chief in his path, till all along from the spurs of the Telegraph Height to the easternmost bounds of the crest which had been won by the Highland brigade, those desolate hills in Crim Tartary were made to sound like England. And the sound travelled back to the plateau on which the French were halted, and descended also the slopes where our dead and wounded lay thick. There many a red-coat, so wounded that the roar of artillery and the tramp of battalions had become to him mere idle sounds, would yet find his heart stirred anew by the English cheers on the heights, and would raise himself on his arm, and strive so to use his last strength that, in the swelling tumult of the voices above, his own faltering 'hurrah!' might be one.

He rides back to Bourliouk and visits the wounded.

But pensive and intent on sad thoughts, Lord Raglan now rode down into the valley, recrossed the river, and entered the village of Bourliouk. The flames had been extinguished; and in some of the farm-buildings less burnt than the rest, there lay many wounded officers. Amongst the painful scenes in those barns and sheds Lord Raglan passed a long time, giving tender care to the sufferers. Yet of the

sunlight of that day there were nearly two hours remaining. There was a routed enemy in front; and, beyond, there was the mighty prize for which the invaders were come.

Ambition lends strength and momentum to the purposes of a general. Lord Raglan gave his heart to wounded men. A commander wrapped in self, and burning for fame, would have risked a breach of the French alliance, would have hardened his heart, and, killing perhaps some few of his people with cruel fatigue, would have drunk of the Katcha that night. If he had done thus, the reconnaissance of the next morning would have brought him some knowledge of hardly less worth than a victory.

The Allied armies bivouac on the ground they have won.

The Allied forces bivouacked on the ground which they had won. The French were on the Telegraph Height. The English head-quarters were established on the left bank of the river near the road leading up from the bridge, and almost on the site of that Causeway battery which, until it was touched by the mastering key, had barred the mouth of the Pass.

Colonel Torrens' force comes up in the evening. Lord Raglan in his marquee.

In the evening our army was joined by Colonel Torrens with the troops which had been left at Kamishlu to clear the beach; and at about nine o'clock, whilst Lord Raglan was dining in his little marquee with only one man for his guest, Torrens came to report his arrival. A third cover was laid for him. He had made a forced march, and was in bitter pain because his great haste had not availed to bring him up in time for the battle. With kind, frank, thoughtful words Lord Raglan strove to soothe him.

XLV.

Continuation of the Russian retreat.

The position which Kiriakoff had taken up was not held for many minutes. To any calm man who looked from that ridge towards the north it must have been plain that the Allies were making no movement in pursuit. But—for thus powerful and thus wayward is the imagination of man in his fears—the Russians were no sooner in safety than vague terrors came assailing their minds, and panic began to drive them. The brave soldiery who had stood superbly firm when shot were tearing their ranks were scared by phantom thoughts, and the square-built, hard, rigid battalions which had chequered the hill-sides on the Alma, now dissolved into shapeless masses. Even when, after accomplishing several miles of retreat, the troops at length reached the hill-sides which looked down on the banks of the Katcha, they had no belief that the Allies would suffer them to drink of its waters in peace; and the army of the Czar degenerating into a helpless throng, officers, men, horses, guns, tumbrils, carts laden with stores, carts laden with the wounded, all pressed into a gorge leading down to the ford; and then the disorder was so complete, and the masses which choked the gorge were so dense and helpless that it seemed as though a small force of cavalry and horse-artillery would have sufficed to make the whole army prisoners, or bring it to utter ruin.

When the Russian soldiery have no longer an enemy near them, their retreat degenerates into a disorderly flight.

When they had crossed the Katcha, the bulk of the

troops still hurried on, though with no idea of the direction they were to take, except that their course ought to be a prolongation of the line of the retreat already accomplished.

But presently even that poor clue failed them; for some got to imagine that, instead of falling back upon Sebastopol, they were to make for Baktchi Seräi. Then darkness came; and, there being no landmarks, the army was as a child that has lost its way at night in a trackless moor. Sometimes the masses were bent in their course by a voice shouting out, 'To the right;' and then again they would swerve the other way under the impulse of a cry, 'To 'the left.' All idea of bearings was so utterly lost, that even in their flight the fugitives could no longer be sure that they were retreating; for they did not know but that they might be marching all the while towards an enemy. Afterwards the uselessness of this wild movement in the dark got to be understood; and, shouts for a halt becoming general, the masses at length stood still.*

All this while the Allied armies were quietly bivouacking upon the banks of the Alma, at a distance of several miles from the enemy; and the Staff of the Russian army, having ascertained that no pursuit was going on, mounted officers and Cossacks

* One day at Balaclava I had some conversation with Lord Raglan respecting the panic which seized the Russian army on the banks of the Katcha, and he told me that he thought the panic may have been occasion by the appearance of his patrols; but I have never heard from any other source that our cavalry patrolled to the neighbourhood of the Katcha on the evening of the battle; and I imagine that Lord Raglan must have spoken rather from what he inferred than from what he knew.

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were sent to announce to the wandering battalions that the Katcha was the rendezvous. But some of the messengers, having received these directions before they crossed the river, carried on the very words entrusted to them with the servile exactness of a Chinese copyist, and told the troops which had long ago forded the stream, and were thence marching southward, that they were to 'go on to the 'Katcha.' Orders thus conveyed led to a belief that the stream already passed was not the Katcha; and although in reality the troops had overstepped the place of rendezvous, they imagined that they had not yet reached it.

Thus confusion was prolonged; but the halt began after a time to produce good effects. The officers called for men who could undertake to find the way back to the Katcha. Some were found. These acted as guides; and at midnight the wearied roops regained the river. For about two hours they rested; but then—by panic, it is believed, in the first instance, and afterwards by orders which the panic engendered—the army was hastily roused, and thrown once more into full retreat. It moved upon Sebastopol.*

XLVI.

Losses of the French.

In this action the French lost three officers killed;† and on grounds which he deemed, and (privately)

* My knowledge respecting the enemy's retreat to the Katcha is mainly derived from Chodasiewicz; but on the 23rd of September the peasantry of the village of Eskel, on the banks of the Katcha, described to me the scene of panic which they had witnessed in the night of the 20th.

† St. Arnaud's Despatch.

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stated to be, to his mind 'conclusive,' Lord Raglan came to the belief that their whole loss in killed was 60, and their number of wounded 500.* The English army lost 25 officers and 19 serjeants killed, and 81 officers and 102 serjeants wounded; and of rank and file 318 killed, and 1438 wounded, making, with the 19 who were missing, and who are supposed to have been buried in the ruins of the houses in the village, a total loss of 2002. The loss of the Russians in killed and wounded was officially stated at 5709, and it is believed that later and more accurate computations would carry the loss up to a much higher number. Except the Russians left wounded on the field, there were scarcely any prisoners taken by the Allies; and by the Russians none. Amongst the wounded Russians left on the field and taken by the English there were two general officers. Great quantities of small arms were left upon the ground;

Of the English.

Of the Russians.

* The French official accounts state the total loss of their army in killed and wounded at 1339 (or, according to M. St. Arnaud's despatch, 1343), but those statements have not obtained such credence as to induce me to place the figures in the text. Lord Raglan, I know, believed not only that the French returns were grossly erroneous, but that they were intentionally falsified, for in the same letter in which he states it to be 'impossible' their accounts could be true, he also speaks of the 'pains' which the French authorities took to make him believe them. On the other hand I think it right to say that I am acquainted with the grounds on which Lord Raglan based his low estimate of the French losses, and that, not thinking them quite so conclusive as he did, I have abstained from hazarding a positive statement on the subject. The field of battle did not give indication of considerable losses by the French; and I recollect that the morning after the battle a French soldier told me he estimated the whole loss of his people at fifty (une cinquantaine). As an actual estimate of the losses, of course, his statement was of no worth, but it went towards showing what was the first impression of the French army as to the extent of the carnage.

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The trophies of victory were scanty.

but of prouder trophies there were few. The French captured a small four-wheeled open carriage, in which a clerk had been travelling with a quantity of office forms and papers. The English had the gun taken by Captain Bell, and the howitzer abandoned by the enemy in the Great Redoubt.*

XLVII.

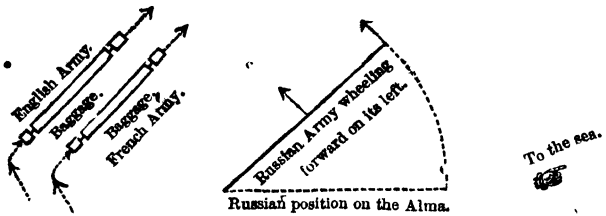
Question whether the attack upon the position of the Alma could have been avoided.

Whether it was wise to assail the enemy on the very ground where he sought to make his stand, is a question depending upon the measure of respect which was due from an Anglo-French army to a Russian force one-third less in numbers. On the inland or eastern flank of the position on the Alma the country was open; and therefore it was possible for the Allies to avoid all encounter with the enemy on his chosen stronghold by taking ample ground to their left, and boldly marching round him. If a man so resolute as Marshal Pelissier had been then at the head of the French army, this perhaps is what he would have proposed to do. At all events, this is the way in which, under like circumstances, he

* On the following day the French quietly came with an artillery team, and were going to carry off one of the guns taken by the English. An English officer caught them in the act, and prevented them from executing their purpose. This enterprising attempt was the more curious since it happened that the gun was more than a mile distant from the ground on which the nearest of the French troops had been moving. Apparently it was calculated that any Englishman who chanced to observe the French drivers would assume that they were acting under authority from Lord Raglan, and that when once the gun was in the French lines, the transcendant importance of the alliance, and of a cordial feeling between the two armies, would be relied on as grounds which might prevent the English General from reclaiming it.

would now undertake to deal with a Russian army. But then he judges things by the light of what has since passed, and especially by the light of his own great achievement. To have undertaken so daring a flank movement as this, in the presence of an unhumbled and confident foe, would have implied a stedfast faith in the excellence of the whole Allied army, and a somewhat early perception of that want of nimbleness and enterprise on the part of the Russians, which was afterwards found to be characteristic of their field operations. Those who know how heavily —even down to the day of the Alma—the thought of the Moscow campaign still weighed upon the mind of the French, will hardly wonder that Marshal St. Arnaud and his advisers should have shrunk from the idea of lending the flank of the French army to the enterprises of a foe who had still a great warlike repute, and whose numbers were imperfectly known. Besides, since the French had taken the right, the success of any such plan, and with it the honour and safety of the whole Allied force, would have been made to depend upon the stability of the French troops alone, rather than upon the prowess of the whole Allied army. Even if Marshal St. Arnaud had desired to make the venture, there is no reason for believing that Lord Raglan would have consented to move into the interior, with a French army marching on his right between him and the enemy.* To

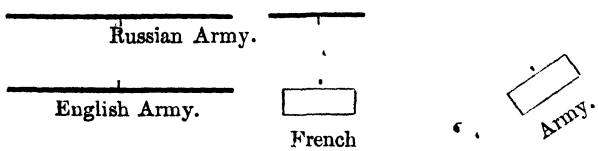
* The first diagram on next page will perhaps convey some idea of the nature of the hazard which would have been incurred by venturing upon a flank march.



have done so would have implied great confidence in the steadiness of the French army.

The course actually taken.

But whatever be the worth of a plan for turning instead of attacking the Russian position on the Alma, it is certain that Marshal St. Arnaud and his advisers thought it would be more prudent to choose the course, which they actually took, to possess themselves of the unoccupied ground which lay between the Russian position and the sea-shore, to pit the rest of the French forces against Prince Mentschikoff's left, and to leave to Lord Raglan the duty of dealing with the enemy's centre, as well as with his left wing.



XLVIII.

ummary the ittle.

Told summarily, the battle of the Alma was this :— The French seized the empty ground which divided the enemy from the sea, and then undertook to assail the enemy's left wing; but were baffled by the want of a road for Canrobert's artillery, and by the exceeding cogency of the rule which forbids them

from engaging their infantry on open ground without the support of cannon. Their failure placed them in jeopardy; for they had committed so large a proportion of their force to the distant part of the West Cliff and the sea-shore, that for nearly an hour they lay much at the mercy of any Russian general who might have chosen to take advantage of their severed condition. But, instead of turning to his own glory the mistake the French had been making, Prince Mentschikoff hastened to copy it, wasting time and strength in a march towards the sea-shore, and a countermarch back to the Telegraph. Still, the sense the French had of their failure, and the galling fire which Kiriakoff's two batteries were by this time bringing to bear on them, began to create in their army a grave discontent, and sensations scarce short of despondency. 'Seeing the danger to which this condition of things was leading, and becoming for other reasons impatient, Lord Raglan determined to order the final advance of the English infantry without waiting any longer for the time when Canrobert and Prince Napoleon should be established on the plateau. So the English infantry went forward, and in a few minutes the battalions which followed Codrington had not only defeated one of the two heavy 'columns of attack' which marched down to assail them, but had stormed and carried the Great Redoubt. From that moment the hill-sides on the Alma were no longer a fortified position; but they were still a battle-field, and a battle-field on which, for a time, the combatants were destined to meet with

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chequered fortune; for, not having been supported at the right minute, and being encompassed by great organized numbers, Codrington's disordered force was made to fall back under the weight of the Vladimir column; and its retreat involved the centre battalion of the brigade of Guards. Nearly at the same time Kiriakoff, with his great 'column of the 'eight battalions,' pushed Canrobert down from the crest he had got to, obliging or causing him for a time to hang back under the cover of the steep. At that time the prospects of the Allies were overcast. But then the whole face of the battle was suddenly changed by the two guns which Lord Raglan had brought up to the knoll; for, not only did their fire extirpate the Causeway batteries, and so lay open the Pass, but it tore through the columns of Prince Mentschikoff's infantry reserves, and drove them at once from the field. This discomfiture of the Russian centre could not but govern the policy of Kiriakoff, obliging him to conform to its movement of retreat; and he must have been the more ready to acknowledge to himself the necessity of the step he was taking, since by this time he had suffered the disaster which was inflicted upon his great 'column of the eight battalions' by the French artillery. He retreated without being molested by the French infantry; and took up a position at a distance of two miles from the Alma. Meanwhile, after a sheer fight of infantry, the whole strength that the enemy had on the Kourganè Hill was broken and turned to ruin by the Guards and the

Highlanders. Thenceforth the slaughter that is wrought by artillery upon retreating masses was all that remained to be fulfilled. CHAP. XVI.

XLIX.

Question how far the Allies were entitled to take glory to themselves.

The trophies, we saw, were scanty. But was there a gain of that priceless spoil which one nation takes from another, when it proves itself the better in arms? The Western Alliance had the ear of Europe, and it awarded to itself an unstinted measure of glory. Was this glory honestly taken?

The Allies were more than 60,000, and the strength of the Russians fell short of that by one-third. This was a disparity which made it unbecoming for the Great Alliance of the West to indulge in the language of a boisterous triumph. But, besides that the strength of the ground went some way towards making the conflict equal, the very faults and shortcomings of the Allies had the effect of putting a heavy stress upon some portions of their united army; for, by sending two-fifths of his army to the sea-shore, and by crowding the remainder of it upon a narrow front, the French Marshal placed Prince Gortschakoff and General Kvetzinski upon a numerical equality with their English foes; and, the Russian artillery being vastly more powerful than ours, and the ground being intrenched and singularly strong by nature, the Russians were in circumstances which tended to give them a great advantage over their English adversaries. Besides, though

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our forces were equal in numbers to the part of the Russian army with which they had to deal, yet it happened that in each distinct infantry fight, the English battalions were almost always confronted by masses far greater in numerical strength. Justly, therefore, there may be rendered to some of the components of the Allied army a part of the glory which History must refuse to the aggregate host.

At three o'clock, as we saw, the battle had been suffered to lapse into such a condition that, there was then bitter need of a general, and of troops so placed in the field, and so inclined towards the practice of close fighting, as to be able to restore—to restore, as it were, by sheer force—the waning fortune of the day. How the occasion was met, this History has shown. I narrate, and soldiers will comment. They must judge, and say whether for simplicity's sake it be better to pile up a heap of praise, and distribute it, like a cargo of medals, amongst all the French, English, and Turks who heard the sound of the guns; or, in a harsher and more careful spirit, to part off the troops which fought hard from the troops which scarce fought at all, and to show by whose ordering it was that the course of the battle was governed.

I have been eager to acknowledge the valour and the steadiness of the Russian infantry. If I had caused it to appear that, upon the whole, Marshal St. Arnaud and the troops he commanded had done marvels on the day of the Alma, I should have been helping to prolong a belief in that which I know to

be false, and should be even running counter to what, with good reason, I hold to be the opinion of the French army;* but I have tried to do careful justice to those who were then our allies by marking and commending the warlike quality which was displayed by their artillerymen, as well as by their keen, bold, active skirmishers. Of my own countrymen I have hardly once suffered myself to speak in words of praise. I have only told what they did.

L.

Those three sunny hours of the 20th of September were the time, and the only time, when a French and an English army stood abreast in an open pitched battle;† and therefore it is that, when many generations shall have passed away, mankind will still gaze and gaze upon a barren hill-side in Crim Tartary, comparing the demeanour of the two great

* I speak in great measure from knowledge acquired long subsequently to the battle, but the conviction of which I speak was not slow to show itself in the French army. Writing three days after the battle, and speaking of the conviction which was produced upon the English army by the fact that Marshal St. Arnaud had not 'kept moving on after he had 'turned the enemy's left,' Lord Raglan says: 'I have reason to believe 'that the same feeling is prevalent amongst the officers of the French 'army.' For any one who was not in the Crimea during the month which followed the battle of the Alma, it would be difficult to form a conception of the state into which the repute of the French army had fallen. Later events (and the first of these was the brilliant charge of two squadrons of the Chasseurs d'Afrique at Balaclava) showed that the warlike spirit of France was not extinct in her army.

† The English at Inkerman were valiantly aided by a body of French troops; but that great fight was not one of which it could be said that a 'French and an English army stood abreast in an open pitched 'battle.'

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rivals of the West whilst they fought side by side on the Alma. Yet, if people shall end this comparison without making honest allowance for the ban I am going to speak of, they will do a wrong to the war-like repute of France.

Cause of any shortcomings on the part of the French army.

It would be unjust to look upon the action between Marshal St. Arnaud and the Russian left wing as a fair sample of what a French army can do. That glance at the things done in Paris which helped us to understand the origin of the Anglo-French alliance, will now serve to teach us the cause of any shortcomings which may be attributed to the army commanded by Marshal St. Arnaud.* We saw something of a strange decree which enacted that services rendered by military men in their operations against Frenchmen should hold good as titles to advancement in the same way as though they were deeds done in war against the foreigner.† Incredible as it may seem, that decree was long observed to the full;‡ and the shameful principle which it involved was made to weigh heavily upon France during several of the months which followed the landing at Old Fort. Indeed, the principle, though partly waived for a time in 1855, was found to be still in dire operation long after the close of the Russian war. Just as in a later year the French Emperor entrusted to a scared and bewildered literary man the command of a whole French army in

* *Ante*, Vol. I., cap. 14. † *Ibid.* Decree of 5th December, 1851.

‡ It was carried to the length of making Magnan and St. Arnaud Marshals of France.

Italy, so now he committed the honour of the flag— committed it almost exclusively—to men who had shared with him in the adventure which put France under his feet. His reckoning was that, whether it were led by honourable and skilled commanders, or were tossed and flung into action by him and his December friends, a French army engaged in a short, brisk war against a continental state, would always be likely to push its way to more or less of success; and that if it should chance to do this under the leadership, or apparent leadership, of him and his friends, he and they would become similar to heroes. If they could attain to be thus thought of for a time, they might hope that for a still longer period they would enjoy the immunity and the thousand rewards which nations are accustomed to lavish upon victorious commanders. CHAP. XVI.

This was the principle which governed the choice of the man to whose charge, on the day of the Alma, the honour of the French arms was left. He who commanded the army was St. Arnaud, formerly Le Roy, the person suborned by Fleury. Under him in the Crimea there were four Divisions of French infantry. He who commanded the 1st of these Divisions was Canrobert. This officer, as I have said, was not without honest titles to military distinction; but whilst he had a professional repute which would have earned him the approval of even the most loyal of monarchs, he had also the qualification which entitled him to the favour of the French Emperor. He had commanded one of the brigades

CHAP. XVI.

which operated against the gay boulevards on the 4th of December. The 2nd Division was commanded by Bosquet. Bosquet was a man without a stain; but he was the only French General of Division at the Alma who could say that he did not owe his command to the December plot; and, since it happened that he was left isolated with only one brigade during the whole time when the issue of the battle was pending, his presence at the Alma was only an imperfect exception to what was, as it were, the general rule. He who commanded the large detached force of some 9000 men * which first crossed the river at its mouth, was General Bouat; and Bouat, it seems, was an officer who earned his command by exploits against Parisians in the boulevard, the rue St. Denis, or the neighbourhood of the Nouvelle France.† He who commanded the 3rd Division was Prince Napoleon. He who commanded the 4th Division was Forey; and no man could come within the principle of selection more clearly than he did, for it was he of whom I spoke when I said that he had suffered himself to be used as the assailant and the gaoler of an unarmed Legislature. There were, besides, the Lourmels, the Espinasses, and numbers of others, no doubt, whose names could be easily found in their Emperor's list of worthies. Therefore it is that the part which was taken by Marshal St. Arnaud and his troops in the battle of

* One of Bosquet's brigades, and the whole of the Turkish Contingent, except the two battalions left to guard the baggage.

† With the 33rd Regiment.

the Alma was no fair sample of what could be done by a French army. It was only a sample of what a French army could manage to do when it laboured under the weight of a destiny which ordained that all its chiefs should be men chosen for their complicity in a midnight plot, or else for acts of street slaughter.* Because they had perpetrated an extensive massacre of their unarmed fellow-countrymen, there was no certainty perhaps that they might not be men firm and able in honest war against the foreigner; but also there was no such close similarity between what these men had done in Paris, and what they were meant to do in the Crimea, as to warrant the notion of entrusting to them almost exclusively the honour of the French flag. There was a salient point of difference between the boulevards and the hill-sides of the Alma. The Russians were armed.

No! The Power which fought that day by the side of England was not, after all, mighty France,—brave, warlike, impetuous France. It was only that intermittent thing which to-day is, and to-morrow is not. It was what people call 'The French 'Empire.'

LI.

Effect of the battle upon the prospects of the campaign.

The Battle of the Alma seemed to clear the prospects of the campaign, and even of the war. It

* Prince Napoleon's complicity was only, as I am inclined to believe, a complicity after the fact; but it is of course clear enough that he owed his command entirely to the Coup d'Etat.

CHAP. XVI.

confirmed to the Allies that military ascendancy over Russia which had been more than half-gained already by the valour of the Ottoman soldiery. It lent the current sanction of a victory to the hazardous enterprise of the invasion. It ended the perils of the march from Kamishlu, and made smooth the whole way to the Belbec. It established the Allies as invaders in a province of Russia. It did more. Upon condition that they would lay instant hands on the prize, it gave them Sebastopol.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Note respecting the torpor of the English Cabinet on the evening of the 28th of June, 1854.

APP. No. I.

WHEN a man has been set to sleep by a document, he commonly imagines that he was awake all the time, and that he "heard every word." A firm impression of that sort is one of the known phenomena of sleep in a chair; and it is obvious therefore that any of those who slept the sleep of which I have spoken may honestly contradict the statement in the text, without however being entitled to expect that their contradiction will have any weight. But though the accuracy of the statement will be denied—and denied in perfect good faith—by those who slept, it will not, I am sure, be questioned by any of those who remained awake. Of course the deliberations of a Cabinet ought to be kept secret; but sleep is not deliberation, and there is no rule nor principle which precludes a Minister from describing any natural phenomenon which he may have observed at a cabinet meeting.

I own that to me the assenting disposition of those who remained awake (for they were anxious, careful, laborious men) is harder to account for than the condition of those who were in a complete state of rest; and I incline to the solution which I have spoken of as likely to be offered by the analytical chymist, because his theory (that of a narcotic substance having been taken by some mischance) would account for a torpor which affected all more or less though in different ways and in different degrees.

That I am right in the view I take as to the inexorable stringency of the Despatch, is shewn, I think, clearly enough by the effect which it instantly had upon the minds of the

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two men who first saw it when it reached the camp—namely, Lord Raglan and Sir George Brown. Lord Raglan's letter of the 19th of July (p. 121) shews clearly that he submitted to act with soldierly readiness under instructions which he looked upon as imperative, or, at all events, violently cogent; and Sir George Brown gives his interpretation of the Despatch (p. 115) with a bluntness which precludes all doubt about the light in which he regarded it. The Government, he considered, were resolved that at all hazards the expedition should proceed; and if Lord Raglan should not consent to lead it, he thought they would instantly send out some one else who would.'

It may be said that this sleep of the Cabinet is one of those things which, however true they may be, it is better not to disclose. Certainly no one is obliged to go and state a thing thoughtlessly or without a purpose merely because it happened. But I have to account for a great transaction—the invasion of a Russian province. I ascertain that this invasion was caused, and caused entirely, by the peculiar wording of a despatch. But why was it that a despatch so worded received the approval or the tacit assent of a Cabinet? It would be unfaithful for me to stop short at that point in the chain of causation unless I were brought to a stop by the want of knowledge, or by the want of a right to disclose what I know. It so happens, however, that neither of these excuses is available to me. I know the truth, and I learnt it under circumstances which gave me a full right to disclose it.

No. II.

Note respecting the order of time in which certain events occurred at the Battle of the Alma.

It may be remembered that when Sir Thomas Troubridge had just delivered the message which was followed by the immediate advance of the Grenadier Guards, he met Sir George Brown, and from him received his directions as to the course to be taken by the 7th Fusileers. Now it happened that, whilst Troubridge was still in conversation with Sir George Brown, he observed that a movement was taking effect on the Telegraph Height; and, drawing out his field-glass, he presently saw the left of the French army moving fairly up towards the Telegraph. The fact of his seeing this at the time of his interview with Sir George Brown has happily fixed the exact point which had been reached by the progress of events in the English part of the field at the moment when the French army made good its advance from the cover of the steep hill-sides to the smooth plateau above. It has shown in a summary way—and the conclusion exactly agrees with inferences deducible from other grounds—it has shown that the advance of the French to the smooth plateau leading up to the Telegraph was after the storming and the dismantling of the Great Redoubt; was after the withdrawal of the Causeway batteries; was after the retreat of the enemy's reserves; was after the overthrow of the column long engaged with Lacy Yea's Fusileers; and was exactly simultaneous with the movement which brought our Grenadier Guards into their final engagement with the enemy's columns.

No. III.

Note respecting the truth of the accounts which represent that a great and terrible fight took place near the Telegraph on the day of the Alma.

APP. No. III.

In the beginning of the year 1855 the Baron de Bazancourt was sent to the theatre of war by the French 'Minister of 'Public Instruction,' and the 'Mission' with which the Baron went charged, was that of writing a history of the Crimean expedition. He was accredited to the then French Commander-in-Chief by the Minister of War, and he seems to have been freely supplied with all such materials for getting at the truth as could be found in the military journals of the French army, and in the statements voluntarily made to the historian-elect by officers who had themselves directed the operations which they undertook to describe.* Closely translated, the Baron's account of the supposed fight at the Telegraph runs thus. After speaking of the point where the building of the Telegraph stands, he says:—'It is there that 'the battle is; it is there that there are the efforts of attack 'and defence. On all sides we crown the plateau; but the 'considerable Russian forces massed behind the Telegraph, 'the sharpshooters sheltered in this partly-built tower, and 'the batteries placed right and left, decimate our troops. 'Already the 1st Zouave Regiment and the 1st battalion of 'the Chasseurs of the 1st Division, and on their left the 2nd 'Zouaves of the 3rd Division shelter themselves behind the 'undulations of the plateau, and were keeping up a sustained 'fire against the Russians, when two batteries of the reserve, 'led by Commandant La Boussiniére, came to oppose artil-'lery to artillery. The battery of Captain Toussaint quitted 'the road in order to arrive more rapidly by a movement 'towards its left, just in front of the Telegraph; the Zouaves 'themselves help to drag the guns up the last acclivities.

* See his Preface, p. vi.

APP. No. III.

'They are soon placed, and open their fire, to which the 'Zouaves of the two divisions and the foot Chasseurs add a 'redoubling of fire. Four Russian guns quickly limber-up 'and withdraw. But the fire of the enemy's masses and 'that of the artillery placed in rear of the Telegraph cause 'us serious losses. This position of expectancy could not 'long be maintained; an impetuous charge of the Russian 'cavalry on this point was imminent.

'Colonel Cler, who knows the war-tried and resolute 'troops which he commands, comprehends that he cannot 'save them from utter destruction but by one of those sacri- 'fices which snatch victory. For an instant he hesitates 'between a charge with the bayonet against the great front 'of the Russian square, and an attack on the tower of the 'Telegraph, the centre and culminating point of the enemy's 'line. It is upon this last plan that he decides; and, going 'forward in advance of the angle formed by the regiments, 'and putting his horse into a gallop, he cries out, "To me, '"my Zouaves! To the tower! to the tower!"

'All precipitate themselves at the same time—that is, the '2nd Zouaves, the 1st Zouaves with Colonel Bourbaki at 'their head, the foot Chasseurs, the 39th Regiment, which 'comes up with Colonel Beuret and General d'Aurelle.

'It is a human torrent which nothing stops. Colonel Cler 'comes the first to the tower; all have followed him; all 'arrive ardent, impetuous, irresistible. The struggle was 'short, but it was one of those bloody, terrible struggles in 'which man fights body to body with his enemy, in which 'the looks devour each other [où les regards se dévorent, 'whatever that may mean], in which the hands grapple each 'other, in which arms dashed against arms are made to yield 'sparks of fire.* Dead and dying are heaped together, and 'the combatants trample upon them and smother them.

'The Russians received this formidable shock on the 'points of their bayonets; they ask each other if these are 'indeed but men [si ce sont des hommes] who thus dare to

* I have observed this phenomenon in fights upon the stage.

PP. III.

'rush upon death; they fight, but soon they stagger, and 'these formidable masses, menaced on all sides by the two 'divisions which advance in close columns, become broken, 'and operate their retreat.

'Colonel Cler seized the eagle of his regiment, which he 'plants on the tower to the cry of, "May the Emperor live!" 'Serjeant-major Fleury of the 1st Zouaves rushes upon the 'upper scaffolding of this partly-built building and balances 'the flag, which sinks with the intrepid non-commissioned 'officer struck in the forehead by a ball. The flag of the '1st Zouaves also floats on this glorious trophy, which a frag-'ment of a shell breaks at the staff [flotte aussi sur ce 'glorieux trophée qu'un éclat d'obus brise a la hampe]; 'Lieutenant Poitevin, ensign-bearer of the 39th, precipitates 'himself in his turn outside his battalion, and comes in the 'midst of a rain of projectiles to plant on the tower of the 'Telegraph the eagle of his regiment; a bullet strikes him 'full in the breast, and stretches him lifeless. Every one 'amongst all these intrepids seemed to have in himself the 'enthusiasm of death.'

That is the account which M. de Bazancourt gives, and he does not seem to have found himself cramped by the officially admitted fact that in the whole battle the French only lost three officers killed. One of these, Lieutenant Poitevin, was struck, as we saw, after the Telegraph was carried, and when the Russians were operating their retreat; but in the actual fight, terrific and murderous as M. de Bazancourt represents it to have been, it does not appear than any French officer was either killed, wounded, or hurt.

It would seem that in 1856 the feeling of the French army respecting the story of the supposed fight at the Telegraph was not in such a state as to favour anything like a repetition of M. de Bazancourt's description, for in that year M. du Casse published his 'Preçis Historique;' and, although he describes some portions of the battle at considerable length, he disposes of the capture of the Telegraph in terms which do not necessarily denote any kind of infantry fight,

and in only eight words.* 'The Telegraph, the key of the 'position, is carried.' 'Le Télégraphe clef de la position est 'enlevé.'

If the accounts given by the French had ended there, it might have been inferred that they wished quietly to repudiate the bloody narrative of M. de Bazancourt, and to drop the notion of saying that there was really a great fight at the Telegraph; but the official atlas of the French Government renews the story; for in the plan which illustrates this period of the battle, it places the Taroutine and the 'Militia' battalions close in front of the Telegraph and around it; and the letter-press narrative accompanying the plans has these words:—'Le Général Canrobert lance sa division sur les 'défenseurs du Télégraphe; après un combat opiniâtre, 'auquel prend part le 39e de ligne de la brigade d'Aurelle 'de la 4e division, les Russes sont chassés de leur position, et 'les drapeaux des 1er et 2e de Zouaves et du 39e de ligne 'flottent successivement sur le Télégraphe.'

That the three flags were hoisted on the Telegraph no one doubts; but the question is whether those triumphant demonstrations were preceded by anything like a serious fight. The difficulty of believing this is occasioned by the tenor of the Russian accounts. General Kiriakoff was naturally anxious to show that he had made an obstinate stand; and it may be imagined that if the heroic struggle described by M. de Bazancourt had really occurred, General Kiriakoff's narrative would have put it in full relief. He, however, says not a word of any such struggle. In one part of his narrative he speaks of the Taroutine and the 'Militia' battalions as being so far in advance, and so low down, that the batteries near the Telegraph fired over their heads: and at a later period of his narrative, without having said a word about any intermediate operation, he says that these battalions were under a cross-fire of artillery, and that, for that

* He adds an account of the planting of the flags on the Telegraph; but his narrative of the *taking* of the Telegraph is, as I have said, in eight words.

APP. No. III.

reason, and because the troops opposed to the English were already in full retreat, he 'commanded the march towards 'the main road.' He does not say a word of the bloody struggle with infantry in which the French represent his troops to have been engaged.

At first sight, it does not seem highly probable that upon the very summit of a smooth hill-top, where there was nothing to offer cover for the body of even one man, a few battalions (already dispirited by the passive endurance of artillery fire to which they had been condemned) should be ordered to make a stand against the 30,000 Frenchmen and Turks who were converging upon that very point from the west, as well as from the north; and if Kiriakoff had resorted to such a measure, it is all but incredible that his careful and almost minute narrative of his operations should have omitted all mention of an exploit strange in itself, and, if only it were true, redounding very much to the glory of his troops. Not only, however, does Kiriakoff appear to have been ignorant of any such fight, but the whole tenor of the narrative in which he describes what he did is inconsistent with the notion that anything of the kind could have passed. According to his statement, he was a divisional general left without orders; he saw his troops suffering under a cross-fire of artillery; he knew (though apparently in an imperfect way) that overwhelming masses of French troops were more or less near to the verge of the plateau, and being thus circumstanced, and seeing, moreover, that the English had already carried the position, he thought it time to withdraw his battalions from the line of the artillery fire; but from first to last he never was challenged or vexed by the near approach of any French infantry. Such is his account. But this is not all. Both Kiriakoff and the official French statement of the 'Atlas de 'la Guerre d'Orient' agree in representing that, after the check which it had given to Canrobert's Division, the great 'column of the eight battalions' had been kept together and moved a good way in the right rear of the Telegraph, without ever engaging in any kind of struggle with infantry. Now,

except the troops composing that column, the only battalions of Russian infantry which were at any time in this part of the field were the Taroutine and the 'Militia' battalions; and accordingly these are the troops which the French official 'Atlas' places in array at the Telegraph. Now, the 'Militia' battalions, we saw, were inferior troops, and had dissolved. There remained the Taroutine battalions; and if any stand had been really made at the Telegraph, these must have been the troops which made it. It happens, however, that an intelligent and highly instructed field-officer of that corps has written an apparently complete account of every part of the battle of which he was competent to speak; and if any of Kiriakoff's forces, but still more if any of the Taroutine battalions had made the stand alleged, it is quite incredible either that Major Chodasiewicz, who was present with the Taroutine corps, should have remained ignorant of the fact, or that, knowing it, he should have omitted to state the truth. If any of the Taroutine battalions had been engaged in a fight of this sort, it would have been for them the grand, the all-absorbing event of the day; for it certainly was not their fate to be brought into conflict with French infantry in any other part of the field, and they would not have failed to remember an obstinate and bloody fight of the kind described by the French. But Chodasiewicz, though he minutely describes the way in which the Taroutine battalions were galled in their retreat by the fire of artillery, does not say a word of any kind of fight at the Telegraph between French and Russian infantry. Yet his was the very regiment which, if the French story were true, must have borne the brunt of the alleged fight.

Upon the whole, I have conceived that these authentic and trustworthy narratives of General Kiriakoff and Major Chodasiewicz * forbid me to admit into my text any statement

* Anitchkoff was an officer of the staff, whose narrative is based on accounts taken from various Russian sources, and he says not a word of any fight at the Telegraph or of any other combat which could have been confounded with it.

APP. No. III.

similar to the account given by M. de Bazancourt, or even to that contained in the 'Atlas de la Guerre d'Orient;' but those who are so constituted as to wish to incline the ear to a teacher duly prepared for them by the French Emperor's 'Minister of Public Instruction,' will find in the above quotation from M. de Bazancourt the sort of guidance they like.

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Note respecting the following Plans of the Battle of the Alma.

THE plan of the country, as shown by these Maps, is taken from the French official 'Atlas Historique,' but with some slight changes exaggerating in some degree the natural features of the ground, in order to make some of the slopes and hollows more easily apparent. The signs purporting to indicate the positions of the troops have been made by myself; but it is not intended that anything seen in the Plans should be regarded as varying, or in any way qualifying, the description contained in the foregoing chapters; and must not be understood that the positions of the troops are asserted to have been at any two moments such as they are represented to be in these two Plans. The object of the Plans is not to assert any one of the facts thereby appearing to be indicated, but merely to aid the reader in his endeavours to follow the statements contained in the text.

A. W. K.