

French had above 75,000 men and 300 cannons, ranged along the south side, also looking into the valley; and as this was the outermost or longest side of the bend, their line was three miles long, and rather inclosed the English army, who were, however, guarded by the thick forest behind. The English side of the valley was in parts rather the steepest, which helped them a little; and a narrow parish road ran along the brow, and had, for a little way at its east end, a broken hedge and bank, behind which the English put their canons. They also filled with soldiers the two lone houses and fifty yards in front of them to serve as castle; for no French could march to the English side without being open to the musket-balls from one or other of them.

Bonaparte had far the larger army, and his men were all French soldiers; but Wellington had not much above 30,000 English and Germans, while the rest of his troops were Dutch and Belgian, few of whom had been used to fighting. The Prussians were many miles to the eastward of the forest; and there was another French army watching them there. The Prussian general, Blücher, had promised the night before to get to Waterloo, if possible, by two o'clock, but was not able to reach it until about five. Bonaparte hoped to destroy our army before the Prussians could join us, and was only afraid the English, being so few (he did not mind the Dutch or Belgians), would get into the wood and wait there. But the English had no such thought: all they had to do was to beat off the enemy and stand their ground firm until their friends could get at the French from the other side.

The day and night before had been a soaking rain, not clearing off until nine o'clock, and the soldiers had slept on the half muddy ground, and rose up stiff and damp. While at breakfast, our soldiers heard the shouts of the French beginning to move, and were obliged at once to stand in order for fighting. At that season the corn, which covered all the country and field of battle, was tall and ripening, though in a few minutes to be trampled into mud by the thousands who rushed over it.

About ten o'clock the great part of the French army moved on divided into three parts, two of which rushed against the two lone farm-houses, and the other against the east end of the English line, where the broken hedge was, while their cavalry, or horse soldiers, galloped against the middle. They scarcely troubled the very western part of our army, where the ravine was, and that remained as a reserve, in case any other part should need help. As soon as the French cavalry were seen coming at full gallop, the English cavalry rushed to meet them; and when the shock of the two regiments was over, the French were seen all confused galloping back to their own side, while the English rode back in order to their places, and the ground was seen covered with dead. When the French, both horse and foot, made their dreadful rush against our

infantry regiments, the English soldiers stood firm like a rock, and in a few minutes the French recoiled and retreated, just as a child's ball thrown against a house starts back from the blow. Again, and again, and again, all day long, did the French cavalry and infantry, enraged at not gaining the victory over a smaller army, against our brave regiments, three or four to one, and as often were they driven back to their own side in confusion, leaving numbers of them dead. The English infantry never moved from their ground, never were driven back a foot; when one was killed, another stepped into his place instantly. The cannon on both sides were all this time firing down thousands of large iron balls and of grape shot (or bags full of small bullets): the roar of the cannon was heard incessantly for eight hours, even at Brussels twelve miles off. As afternoon came on the French had lost thousands of their best soldiers and made no progress; except that they had taken the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, because the brave Germans in it had spent all their powder, and even then would not give it up but were all killed; but it was no use to the French, for the English cannons a little behind fired down into the yard. They could not take Hougomont, for the brave regiment of Coldstream guards defended it all day against 30,000 French around it.

At last the Prussians came up through the forests and rushed against the east end of the French army, and then the two sides became more equal in numbers. At seven o'clock the French gathered their bravest regiments to make another desperate charge at the English line; but before they reached us, our soldiers fired so terribly on them that they staggered a moment. Wellington saw it, and called out "Forward!" A loud shout ran from one end to the other of the English army, who had been long-ing all day to rush at the French, and every regiment steadily dashed forward at once. The French could not stand that fearful shock, but in a moment turned and fled for their lives in one long line of hopeless confusion, leaving everything they had. The God of battles had broken the power of Napoleon and of France before the English army; and the Prussians were at hand, fresh and ready to chase them through the night, so that they should not get together any more as an army.

But what a scene was there when day-light broke upon those peaceful little country parishes and that rich corn valley! Tens of thousands of dead and wounded soldiers of all nations, lay scattered everywhere. Horses, cannons and waggons were every where spread about; and the corn, red with blood and trampled flat by the wheels and horse-hoofs, was strewn with soldiers' caps, muskets, swords, and all the wreck of the battle. The little farmhouse was battered to pieces; and one who saw it told us that its gutters and cattle-yard ran with streams of human blood. The pretty little country-house was burnt into a