

further for the causes which ruined the defensive operations of the Delegate Minister of War, and henceforth his amateur strategy and his dictatorial treatment of Aurelio de Paladines and Chanzy may pass unquestioned. The more those facts are considered, the more they will be thought worthy of the historian's attention. If Metz could not hold out any longer, plainly the Minister who continued the war under hopeless circumstances was to blame; but if the maiden fortress could hold out, and if Bazaine had failed in doing "all that duty and honour prescribed," the Minister was exonerated. The temptation was great, and Gambetta, on this theory, was not superior to it. He proclaimed Bazaine a traitor by placards all over France. He decreed him a traitor as he decreed the *ferce en masse*, and the abolition of the General Councils. As M. Jules Richard has said: "La France n'eût pas encore vaincu, elle était toujours trahie. C'est ce que peut la trahison et surtout la trahison d'un maréchal de l'Empire contre la légende révolutionnaire? N'avait-on pas les espionnes en futaine, les souliers en carton, les canons Naquet, les fusils et les cartouches de la commission d'armement. N'avait-on pas la légion des jeunes chefs qui n'avaient jadis servi, de jeunes chefs vierges de défaites et de victoires, vierges surtout de talents militaires? Cela ne suffisait-il pas amplement pour sauver désormais la France? Mais pour faire avaler aux Français le sabre hyperbolique de César Gambetta, il fallait de tout nécessité que Bazaine fût un traître—tout l'ancienne armée l'était avec lui—et tous les absinthiers de la veille pouvaient aspirer librement à la gloire de restaurer la vieille réputation militaire de la France."

Then again the consideration presses itself upon us that Trochu submitted to the Revolutionists and allowed himself to be proclaimed chief of the improvised government at the Hotel de Ville, while, on the other hand, Bazaine so far resisted the Revolution that he refused to know anything of it by hearsay, and being without official warrant for any other line of action, remained true to the Empire. Whether or not he was equally loyal to the person of the Emperor may be an open question, but it is hard to believe that for the ghost of a chance of five or six years' power, at most, in the position of regent or constable during the minority of the Prince Imperial, he would have risked the glory and the gains of a lifetime. We say nothing more on such an issue as this, but leave it for the enthusiasts at present, and for the lucky historian in the future who may be able to clear up the doubt by reference to unanswerable documents. That Trochu headed the Revolution, and Bazaine opposed it; that Trochu's impeachment would fail to serve Gambetta, and that Bazaine's conviction is Gambetta's triumph, are obvious facts. When the train which brought the news from Versailles arrived in Paris the mob was hardly kept back by a picket of *sergens de ville*. "What is the news?" cried one of them to the first man out of the train. "Condemned to death unanimously!" Then the words "A mort!" rent the air, and the whole multitude cheered a *la Française* by clapping their hands in wild savage delight along the streets. On the Boulevard the news spread like wildfire, and cries of "Mort a Bazaine!" where everything mingled with shouts and cheers of exultation.

After all it will be said, the loyalty of Bazaine must be judged by the evidence, and guilty by that evidence, his judges

have found him guilty. It is not possible in these columns to discuss so large a subject, but it is permitted to doubt if a tribunal, such as that assembled at Versailles, and in the present political circumstances of France, has been influenced by the evidence alone. We may say this without impeaching the honor of any officer at the table; for, to say nothing of "unconscious cerebration," it is only necessary to refer to the exact terms in which the four points were submitted to the court to see that much of the evidence might be considered, conscientiously, as irrelevant to the issue. Virtually, only one question was submitted to the court, "Did Marshal Bazaine, or did he not, do all that duty and honor prescribed?" This, it will be seen, is a very wide question, and it admits of being answered in the negative, even if, in the opinion of the judges, the most important witnesses had failed in establishing their statements. Very much, for example, rested on the question of the despatch sent to MacMahon on the 23rd, and the prosecution laid great stress on the evidence they were able to bring that it actually reached the marshal. Nevertheless, this testimony was rebutted, and the fair conclusion is that the despatch did not reach him. The judges may have admitted the fact in their own minds, and yet may have conscientiously declared that all was not done that honour and duty dictated. We quote this single item in the evidence to show that the points submitted to the tribunal were so worded, as to invite a conviction on general grounds, whatever might be the conclusion of the court on particular issues. We are justified in this view of the case by the unanimity with which the judges recommended Bazaine to mercy. If he were guilty the death of a dog would be too good for so great a crime as his, and we do not believe that any jury of patriotic Frenchmen could be found to extenuate a crime at once so base and so disastrous in its consequences. For this reason we remain of the opinion that the prosecution of Marshal Bazaine has been a purely political one, thinly veiled under the disguise of a technical investigation by a military court. That he committed faults as the Commander in Chief of an army so circumstanced as to demand that prompt and masterly handling, which in every age constitutes great generalship, is possibly true enough: it is for impartial history to judge. That he committed the treason for which he has been condemned, we refuse to believe in the interest of France herself, whose shame it would be that one capable of the baseness he is charged with could rise to so great an eminence—and sink so low.

The following article from the United States Army and Navy Journal of the 27th December, is a fair exposition of the value of the Monitor System. We are satisfied that a wooden frigate, such as the *Shah*, properly handled in a sea way would make short work of any iron clad in existence. The *deck scrapers* are like the *torpedoes* a novelty of no practical utility.

"The insufficiency of laminated armor to resist heavy rifled ordnance having been pointed out by prominent British officers, we made the following explanation in our issue of October 13, 1866. 'We advise our maritime friends not to calculate on finding laminated armor only to practice against, should unhappily a conflict ever occur. The monitor turret is purposely so put together

that its plating may be readily removed and changed. So with regard to the side armor; it forms no part of the hull, and may be detached and replaced at any time. The armor backing and plating of the *Panac* class of monitors were in some instances applied in little over a month.'

"It will be remembered that Captain Sherard Osborn, in his memorable letter to the London Times of September 22, 1866, said, respecting short ranges in connection with our monitors: 'When it comes to that distance, having a steam engine under foot, there will be a much closer hug, be assured, and the boarders and riflemen with needleguns will settle the question whether English sailors have lost their cunning.' Our reply was: 'We can assure the gallant Captain that neither cunning boarders nor needleguns will avail against monitors, for however irritating their low looks may appear, when the sea is not high enough to wash intruders overboard, our deck scrapers will infallibly be at work—a 'cunning' contrivance consisting of elongated shells which suddenly rise above the deck and instantly explode. Experiments on wooden representations of an enterprising enemy have shown, that by this inhospitable mode of receiving visitors, a whole ship's crew may be swept off the monitor's deck in an instant.'

"Now that unhappily a conflict may occur, have our monitors been provided with *deck scrapers*?—has the laminated plating been replaced by *solid armor*? If not, are we in a position to challenge maritime nations provided with iron clad ships and rifled ordnance of heavy calibre? Our naval authorities cannot plead ignorance regarding the resisting power of armor of different kinds, since the widest possible publicity has been given to the result of English and continental rifle practice against armor plates of all sorts. Accordingly, every naval officer here and elsewhere, knows that the eleven one inch plates composing our monitor turrets may be easily penetrated by chilled shot projected by rifle guns of scarcely eight inch calibre. The Swedes, who copied our monitors before the advent of heavy rifled ordnance, have since abolished the laminated armor; the turrets of their last monitors and turreted gun-boats, are built of solid plates. The Norwegians are also now engaged in reconstructing their monitors, applying solid armor. The published result of target practice at Finspong, near Stockholm, is conclusive as to the utter inability of the laminated armor, which necessity compelled us to employ during the war, to resist chilled cast-iron rifle shot. The rifled guns employed by the Swedes in the target practice referred to, are made of cast-iron hooped with steel bands, on the French system, the bore being twenty-four centimetres or nine and one third inches. The targets, twelve inches in thickness, were built up of plates two inches thick, composed of the best Swedish iron, bolted together on the same plan as the plates of the monitor turrets. The range was two hundred yards, yet each shot passed through the target and two feet of wood backing, entering the bank of earth behind the target to get a depth of eight feet. Apart from this destructive effect, bolts and splinters of the broken armor plates, weighing from 300 to 500 pounds, were detached to each shot.

"With reference to Captain Osborn's objection, that the slow monitors may be boarded by the crews of swift iron-clads, it may be urged that monitors being intended for harbour defence only, and drawing very