

the Church. You are well aware how in the year 1859 the chief cities of the Kingdom were stirred up to rebellion, by the Piedmontese authorities, who sent in troops, and by the arms and money; and now, not long afterwards, assemblies of the people have been convened, and suffrages having been taken, a pretended plebiscite was got up, and by that trickery and pretence Our provinces situate in that region were wrested from Our paternal Government; all good men in vain protesting against the act. You are also well acquainted with the fact, that, during the year following, the said Government made prey of other provinces situate in Piedmont, in Umbria, and in the Patrimony, and turned them to its own profit, alleging crafty pretences, and with a large army attacked by surprise Our troops and the volunteer band of Catholic youths, who, induced by the spirit of religion and piety towards their common Father, had hastened from all parts of the world to Our defence, and routed them in a murderous battle, they being taken at unawares, yet fighting bravely for their religion to the last.

Neither is any man ignorant of the extraordinary insolence and hyperis of this Government, which in order to extenuate the odium of their sacrilegious usurpation, has not hesitated to give out that it had invaded those provinces to restore in them the principles of moral order, whilst in reality it everywhere promoted the diffusion and cultivation of every false doctrine, and everywhere relaxed the restraints of law and impiety; likewise inflicting undeserved penalties on Catholic Bishops and on Ecclesiastics of every grade, whom it threw into prison and allowed to be harassed with public insults, while at the same time it granted impunity to those persecutors, and even to the assailants of the Supreme Pontifical dignity in the person of Our humility. It is moreover true that We, in the due discharge of Our office, have not only all along resisted reiterated counsels and demands offered to Us, to the effect that We should basely betray Our duty, throwing overboard and surrendering the rights and possessions of the Church, or entering into a sinful compromise with the usurpers. Also, it is true that We have opposed to these wicked attempts and crimes so perpetrated contrary to all law human and divine, Our solemn protests before God and Man; and that We have declared their authors and abettors to be involved in Ecclesiastical censures, and as far as the case required We inflicted anew those censures upon them; lastly, it is a well known fact that the aforesaid Government has persisted nevertheless in its contumacy and its plots, and endeavored to stir up rebellion in Our remaining Provinces by sending in without intermission its emissaries to stir up trouble, and by artifices of every kind. But these attempts not succeeding, as was expected, on account of the unshaken fidelity of Our soldiers, and the love and affection of Our people, which was remarkably and unwaveringly manifested towards Us, at last that fierce tempest broke out against Us in the year 1867, when during the autumn bands of desperate men burning with wickedness and rage, and aided by subsidies from the said Government, invaded Our territories and this City, where many persons belonging to the same bands had already found entrance and had concealed themselves; and from their violence and cruelty and arms all fierce and bloody outrages were to be feared by Us and by Our beloved subjects, as was clearly evident unless the merciful God had frustrated their attacks by the energy of Our troops and by the effective aid of a force sent to Us by the renowned French nation.

In so many conflicts, in such a succession of perils, anxieties and sorrows, Divine Providence conferred on Us meanwhile the greatest consolation, Venerable Brethren, from the noble piety and zeal of yourselves and of your faithful flocks towards Us and towards this Apostolic See, of which piety and zeal you continually gave signal proofs, by works of Catholic charity. And although the very grave dangers in which We were involved left Us scarcely any respite, yet with the help of God We never relaxed our efforts to secure the temporal prosperity of our subjects; and the state of public tranquility and security under Our rule, the condition of all the best arts and sciences, and the loyalty and affection of Our populations towards Us were matters of notoriety to all nations, from whom strangers continually came in crowds to this City; and especially on the occasions of the numerous solemnities which We celebrate, and at the times of the solemn festivals in their succession.

And now, when things were in this posture, and Our people enjoying peace and quietness, the Piedmontese King and his Government, seizing the opportunity when two of the most powerful nations of Europe were engaged in a great war, with one of which the said Government had entered into a treaty to preserve inviolate the present state of the Church's Dominion and not to allow it to be invaded by the Revolutionists, all at once determined to invade the remaining territories of Our Dominion, and even Our See itself, and reduce them under their power. But why this hostile invasion, and what pretences were alleged for it? It is matter of notoriety what kind of representations were made in the letter of the King to Us, dated the 8th of September last, and delivered to Us by his envoy commissioned for the purpose. In that letter, with lengthy and insincere circuitousness of words and sentences, under the assumed character of a loving son and a Catholic, and under the pretext of the preservation of public order and of the security of the Papacy itself and of Our Person, the demand was made, that We would be pleased not to take as a hostile act the overthrow of Our Temporal Power, and would surrender that power of Our own accord in reliance on the futile promises made by himself, which, as he said, would reconcile the aspirations of the peoples of Italy with the Sovereign rights and free exercise of the Spiritual authority of the Roman Pontiff. We in truth could not but

greatly marvel at seeing in what manner the violence intended to be used against Us was intended to be veiled and disguised, nor could We help deploring from Our inmost soul the sad case of the said King, who, impelled by evil counsels, inflicts daily new wounds on the Church; and, having respect to men rather than to God, does not reflect that there is in the heavens a King of Kings and Lord of Lords who doth not regard the person of any man, nor fear the greatness of any man for He hath made both great and small; and that for the stronger there is but the stronger punishment (Wisdom, vii, 8, 9). But as to the propositions made to Us, We thought that we ought not to entertain them, but that We should obey the laws of duty and conscience, and imitate the example of Our predecessors, and especially of Pius VII., of happy memory, the sentiments of whose unconquered soul uttered by him in a cause completely similar to Our own We have pleasure in quoting:—

"Let us remember, with S. Ambrose (*De Basil, trad. n. 17*), that Nabuth, a holy man, and the possessor of a vineyard of his own, was called upon by a royal demand that he should make over his vineyard that the King might cut down the vines and plant common potherbs therein, and that he answered 'God forbid that I should sell the inheritance of my fathers.'—Much more do We judge that it would be unlawful for Us to surrender so ancient and sacred an inheritance, namely the Temporal Dominion of this Holy See, which not without the evident design of Divine Providence has been held in possession by the Roman Pontiffs Our predecessors through a long series of ages, or even to give a tacit assent that any man should take possession of the chief City of the Catholic world, when the unsettlement and abolition of the holiest form of Government which has been left by Jesus Christ to His Holy Church, and has been ordained by the Sacred Canons authorized by the Spirit of God, would introduce in its place that Code, which is contrary and repugnant not only to the Sacred Canons, but even to the precepts of the Gospel, and would bring in, as is usually the case, that new order of things which tends most manifestly to mingle and confound all sects and superstitions with the Catholic Church. Nabuth defended his vines with his blood (*S. Ambrose, ibid.*). Can We do otherwise, happen what may to Us, than defend those rights and possessions of the Holy Roman Church, as We are in duty bound to do by the solemn obligation of Our oath? Can We do otherwise than vindicate the liberty of the Apostolic See which is so intimately connected with the liberty and welfare of the Universal Church? And how great in reality is the congruity and necessity of this Temporal Principality to the assertion of that safe and free exercise of the Spiritual power granted by God to them over the whole world, too many facts that are now taking place (should other arguments be wanting) clearly demonstrate. (*Letters Apostolic, June 10, 1869.*)"

Therefore, adhering to the sentiments which in many of Our Allocations We have constantly professed, We reprove in Our answer to the King his unjust demands, and yet so as to show that, with Our bitter sorrow, there was conjoined that fatherly affection which cannot wholly repel from its solicitude even sons who imitate the rebellious Absalon. But this Our letter had not yet been conveyed to the King when the cities of Our Pontifical Dominion, which were as yet untouched and at peace, were invaded by his army, the garrisons whenever they attempted to make any resistance being easily routed; and then in a short time that unhappy day dawned, the 20th of last September, on which we beheld this City, the See of the Prince of the Apostles, the centre of the Catholic religion and the refuge of all nations, beset with thousands of armed men, its walls battered down, and itself terror-stricken by the cannon shots fired upon it. And We had to mourn over its capture *in arms* by order of the man who just before had professed so strongly his filial affection towards Us, and his fidelity to Religion! What could be to Us and to all good men more afflicting than that day? On it, when the troops entered the City, the City was filled with a large and promiscuous crowd of disorderly persons, and We immediately beheld public order overturned; We saw the dignity and sacredness of the Sovereign Pontificate in the humility of Our person insulted with impious language; We beheld Our very faithful troops treated with every kind of insult and licence and impudence; let loose without restraint far and near, where but just before the filial affection was conspicuous of those who were endeavoring to alleviate the grief of a common Father. And ever since that day there have ensued before Our own eyes things which cannot be mentioned without exciting the just indignation of all good men; wicked books stuffed with lies, obscenity and blasphemy, have begun to be exposed for ready sale, and to be disseminated everywhere; a multiplicity of newspapers intended to corrupt minds and morals are published, tending to insult and calumniate Religion, and to influence public opinion against Us and against this Apostolic See; foul and improper pictures are displayed openly, and other contrivances of the same kind, by which sacred persons and things are held up to ridicule and exposed to public derision, are exhibited; honours and monuments are decreed to those who have suffered by legal trial and sentence the just punishment of most heinous crimes; many ministers of the Church, against whom every species of odium is stirred up, are harassed with all kinds of insult, and some of them are stricken and wounded by the blows of treacherous assassins; some religious houses have been subjected to illegal search; Our Quirinal Palaces have been broken into; and from his residence in one of them a Roman Cardinal has been roughly thrust out by violent orders, and other Ecclesiastics of our household have been shut out of their use, and subjected to molestation; laws and decrees have been put forth which avowedly injure and destroy the liberty, immunity, property, and lawful rights of the Church of God; and all these most terrible evils, unless God avert it, We grieve to see are likely to progress; and We meanwhile are hindered by reason of our present position from applying any remedy; and are every day more rudely reminded of the captivity in which We are held, and of the absence of that full liberty which is pretended in lying words to be left Us for the exercise of Our Apostolic ministry over the world, and is professed to be meant to be secured to Us with safeguards (as they are called) by the intruding Government.

We cannot here, Venerable Brethren, pass under silence the commission of a heinous crime, which without doubt is known to you. As though the possessions and rights of the Apostolic See, sacred and inviolable by so many titles, and respected during so many centuries, could be to-day controverted and disputed, and as though the grave censures, which are incurred *ipso facto* and without fresh declaration by the violators of these rights and possessions, could lose their force by rebellion and po-

litical audacity, they have had recourse to force the sacred spoliation We have suffered in spite of the common law of nature and of nations they have had recourse (We say) to the show and conduct of a plebiscite, already employed when other provinces were robbed from Us. And those who were in the habit of rejoicing in the worst actions did not blush to parade, as in triumph, through the towns of Italy rebellion and contempt of ecclesiastical censures, thus insulting the true sentiments of the great majority of Italians, whose religion and fidelity towards Us and towards Holy Church, forcibly repressed in all sorts of ways, cannot have free course.

As to Ourselves, charged by God to rule and Govern the whole House of Israel, and made the Supreme Defender of Religion, of Justice, and of the rights of the Church, in order that We be not reproached before God and before the Church for having been silent, and for having by Our silence consented to this unjust revolution, renewing and confirming that which We have already declared in the Allocations, Encyclicals, and Briefs above-mentioned, and recently in the Protestation which, by Our order and in Our name, the Cardinal Secretary of State communicated on the 20th of September to the Ambassadors, Ministers, and Charges d'Affaires of foreign nations accredited to Us and to this Holy See. We declare anew before you, Venerable Brethren, with all possible solemnity, that it is Our intention, resolution, and will to retain in its integrity, intact and inviolable, all the Dominions and rights of this Holy See, and so to transmit them to Our Successors: that all usurpation of these rights, whether of a recent or of an earlier date, is unjust, violent, null, and void; and that all the acts of the rebels and invaders, already accomplished or to be accomplished with a view of confirming in whatever manner this usurpation, are by Us from this moment condemned, annulled, quashed, and abrogated. We moreover declare and We protest before God and before the Catholic World, that We are in such captivity as to render it altogether impossible for Us to exercise Our Pastoral authority with security, ease, and freedom. Finally, following the advice of S. Paul—"Quæ participatio injustitiæ cum iniquitate? aut quæ societas luci ad tenebras? quæ autem conventio Christi ad Belial?" (2 Cor. vi, 14, 15). We announce and publicly and solemnly declare that, faithful to Our office and to the solemn oath which binds Us, We neither consent nor will consent to any project of conciliation which may in any manner whatever destroy or lessen Our rights, which are the rights of God and of the Holy See; and We likewise profess that We are ready, thanks to the Divine assistance, and in spite of Our great age, to drink to the dregs for the Church of Jesus Christ the chalice which He first designed to drink for her, and that We will never commit the fault of yielding to, or acquiescing in, the unjust demands which are addressed to Us. For, as Our predecessor Pius VII. said: "To do violence to this Sovereign Empire of the Apostolic See, to separate the Temporal Power from the Spiritual, to disjoin, to tear asunder, and to cut up by the roots the offices of Pastor and of Prince, is nothing else but to desire to ruin and destroy the work of God; nothing else but to labor for the greatest injury to religion; is nothing else but to deprive it of a most efficacious bulwark, so that the Supreme Ruler, Pastor, and Vicar of God may not have it in his power to give to Catholics who, scattered all over the world, ask of him aid and succour, that help which they claim from his Spiritual Power, and which no one may hinder."

But since Our admonitions, exhortations, and protests have been without effect, by the authority of Almighty God, of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and by Our own, We declare to you, Venerable Brethren, and by you to the whole Church, that all those who have perpetrated the invasion, usurpation, and occupation of any of the Provinces of Our Dominion and of this our Beloved City, or have done any of these things, of whatever dignity they may be, and even though they should be worthy of most special mention; and in like manner all their agents, abettors, assistants, counsellors, adherents, and all others, either obtaining the execution of those things, under whatever pretext or in whatever manner, or executing them themselves; have incurred, according to the form and tenor of Our Letters Apostolic, recited the 26th of March, 1866, the Greater Excommunication, and the other censures and ecclesiastical penalties published by the Holy Canons, Apostolical Constitutions, and the Decrees of General Councils, and particularly of the Council of Trent. (Sess. 22, C. 11 de Reformatione.)

But, calling to mind that We hold on earth the place of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost, We desire nothing more ardently than to embrace with paternal love the wandering sons who may return to Us; and, therefore, raising Our hands to Heaven in the humility of Our heart, remitting and recommending to God the most just of causes, which is His still more than Our own, We conjure and supplicate Him, by the bowels of His mercy, to aid Us by His succour, to aid His Church, and to bring about through His mercy and compassion that the enemies of the Church, thinking upon the eternal damnation which they are preparing for themselves, may hasten to appease His terrible justice before the day of vengeance, and to console by their conversion the affections of their Holy Mother the Church, and Our own grief.

In order to obtain from the Divine Mercy such special favors, We earnestly exhort you, Venerable Brethren, to join with Our supplications your fervent prayers, and those of the faithful committed to your care; and going altogether to the foot of the Throne of Grace and Mercy, let us engage the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and that of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. "The Church of God from her beginning until our day has often been in tribulation, and has as often been delivered. It is she who cries out, *Spera erguaturus ut a juvenitibus, etiam non potuerunt militi. Supra dorsum meum fabricaverunt, peccatores, proterga meum iniquitatem suam.* Neither to-day will the Lord allow the sceptre of sinners to determine the lot of the just, the arm of the Lord is not shortened, nor unable to save. Without doubt He will deliver His Spouse once again, His Spouse whom He has purchased with His blood, endowed with His Spirit, adorned with His heavenly gifts, and has also enriched with earthly gifts." (S. Bern., Ep. Conras Reg. 244.)

And now, We ask of God from the bottom of Our heart the abundant treasures of heavenly graces for you, Venerable Brethren, and for all the clergy and laity conjoined to the care of each of you, and as a pledge of Our special love for you, We affectionately grant to you from Our inmost heart the Apostolical Benediction, to you and to all the faithful, Our well-loved sons.

Given at Rome, at S. Peter's, the 1st day of November of the year 1870, Being the twenty-fifth year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. IX.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1870—BY THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

The London *Figaro* publishes the first instalment of a brochure about to appear at Brussels, entitled 'The Campaign of 1870, and the causes which led to the Capitulation of Sedan.' This pamphlet, the *Figaro* asserts, 'though ostensibly written by an officer attached to the general staff of the Emperor, was in reality dictated by Napoleon himself. The pamphlet opens by saying that the Emperor did not share in the illusion of the excited French multitude—that the campaign was destined to be merely a military pretence to Berlin. The Emperor knew that Prussia was ready to call out in a short time 900,000 men, and with this aid of the southern states of Germany could count upon 1,100,000 soldiers. France was only able to muster 600,000,

and as the number of fighting men is never more than one-half the actual effective force, Germany was in a position to bring into the field 550,000 men, whilst we had only about 300,000 to confront the enemy. To compensate for this numerical inferiority it was necessary for us by a rapid movement to cross the Rhine, separate Southern Germany from the North German Confederation, and by the aid of a first success secure the alliance of Austria and Italy. If we were able to prevent the armies of Southern Germany from forming their junction with those of the north the effective strength of the Prussians would be reduced 200,000 men, and the disproportion between the number of combatants thus much diminished. If Austria and Italy made common cause with France then the superiority of numbers would be in our favour. The Emperor's plan of campaign, which he confided at Paris to Marshals MacMahon and Leboeuf, was to mass 150,000 men at Metz, 100,000 at Strasbourg, and 50,000 at the camp of Châlons. The concentration of the first two armies, one on the Loire and the other on the Rhine, did not reveal his projects, for the enemy was left in uncertainty as to whether the attack would be made against the Rhenish provinces or upon the Duchy of Baden. As soon as the troops should have been concentrated at the points indicated, it was the Emperor's purpose to immediately unite the two armies of Metz and Strasbourg, and at the head of 200,000 men to cross the Rhine at Maxau, leaving at his right the fortress of Rastatt, and at the left that of Germersheim. Reaching the other side of the Rhine, he would have forced the States of the South to observe neutrality, and would then have hurried on to encounter the Prussians. Whilst this movement was in course of execution the 50,000 men at Châlons under the command of Marshal Canrobert were to proceed to Metz to protect the rear of the army and guard the north-east frontier; at the same time our fleet cruising in the Baltic would have held stationary in the north of Prussia, a part of the enemy's forces being obliged to defend the coasts threatened with invasion. The sole chance of this plan succeeding was to surprise the enemy in rapidity of movement. To accomplish this it was necessary to muster in a very few days at the points decided upon not only the number of men required, but also the essential accessories of the projected campaign, including wagon equipages, artillery parks, pontoon trains, gunboats to cover the passage of the Rhine, and, finally, the commissariat necessary to supply a large army on the march. The Emperor flattered himself with the hope of attaining these results, and in this he was deceived, as in fact everybody was led astray by the supposition that, by means of the railways, these could be concentrated, and horses and material brought forward with the order and precision indispensable to success where preparations had been made long in advance by a vigilant administration. It was found that the troops of France were dispersed over the whole country, and could not be concentrated towards the frontier in time, that the railways were insufficient for the transportation of not only material, and although the defective French administration managed by a tour de force to bring into line in a brief period armies incompletely formed, yet from the first the cause of the French was retarded by the confusion which prevailed in the working of the French system. The Emperor, however, trusted that the plan of his troops would compensate for many deficiencies and render victory assured. His illusions were not of long duration.

When the campaign opened the army of Metz, instead of 150,000 men, only mustered 100,000 men, that of Strasbourg only 40,000 instead of 100,000, whilst the corps of Marshal Canrobert had still one division at Paris and another at Soissons. His artillery as well as his cavalry were not ready. Further, no army corps was even yet completely furnished with the equipments necessary for taking the field. The Emperor gave precise orders to the effect that the arrival of the missing regiments should be pushed on, but he was obeyed slowly, excuse being made that it was impossible to leave Algeria, Paris and Lyons without garrisons. Nevertheless the hope of carrying out the original plan of the campaign was not lost. It was thought that the enemy would not be ready before us. His movements were not known nor in what quarter his forces were being massed and it was with a view of determining these things that on the 2nd of August initiative steps were taken at Saarbrück, but on the 4th the attack upon the Douay division at Wissemburg by imposing forces, and two days after the glorious fatal battle of Frœschweiler caused all uncertainty to pass away. By the bold initiative of the German troops, who poured in simultaneously by the Saar and by the Rhine, we were caught in the act of formation. The corps of General De Failly had not had time to reinforce that of Marshal MacMahon, and found itself cut off from the army of Metz. The corps of General Douay, which was slowly mustering at Belmont, found itself far distant from the theatre of military operations; and the army of Marshal Canrobert was not yet completely formed at the Champ de Châlons. Under these circumstances he was so profoundly depressed at witnessing all his combinations destroyed and driven in these few days to think no longer of any but a defensive position. The Emperor resolved immediately to lead back the army to the Camp of Châlons, where it might have gathered together the debris of Marshal MacMahon's army, Failly's corps, and that of Douay. So well did the Prussians conceal their movements behind the formidable shelter of cavalry which they deployed before them in all directions, that notwithstanding the most persevering inquiries, it was never really known where the mass of their troops was, nor, in consequence, where our chief efforts should be directed. On the 14th of August, as also on the 16th no one imagined that the whole Prussian army had to be dealt with. No one doubted at Gravelotte that Verdun could easily be reached on the morrow. At Paris they were no better informed than we. These melancholy openings of the campaign must, naturally enough, have affected public opinion in a painful manner. The Emperor felt that he was held responsible for the wretched situation of the army, whilst that army was charging Marshal Leboeuf with the delays and with the insufficiency of the organisation. He decided, therefore, to give the command to Marshal Bazaine, whose ability was recognised on all sides, and to suppress the functions of the post of Major-General. As soon as he reached the Camp of Châlons the Emperor found there the Duke of Magenta and General Trochu. The latter had been nominated by the Minister of War commander of the troops at the camp. These two general officers were summoned by the Emperor to a council, at which there were present Prince Napoleon, General Schmitz (General Trochu's chief staff officer), and General Berthaut, the commander of the National Garde Mobile. It was decided that the Emperor should nominate General Trochu to the command of the army in Paris, and that the troops collected at Châlons should be directed towards the capital under the orders of Marshal MacMahon; that the National Garde Mobile should go to the camp of St. Mamm, at Vincennes, and that the Emperor should go to Paris where his duties called him. When this decision was learned by the Government, it excited an animated opposition nevertheless it was decided to carry out the orders of the Emperor, whilst the propriety of succouring Bazaine was still insisted upon, but the Duke of Magenta informed the Minister of War that to march towards Metz would be one of the greatest imprudences, and pointed out all the dangers of such an operation. He urged that it was most dangerous to expose troops imperfectly organised to the peril of a flank march on the force of an enemy very superior in numbers; but the language of reason was not understood in Paris. It was wished at all hazards to give to public opinion the empty hope that Bazaine

could still be succoured, and the Duke of Magenta received from the Council of Ministers, to which had been joined the Privy Council and the Presidents of the Chambers, a most pressing injunction to march towards Metz. MacMahon obeyed, flattered by the idea that by attacking towards himself all the forces of the enemy he was for the moment delivering the capital, and giving it time to finish its means of defence. As to the Emperor, he made no opposition. The army therefore retraced its steps and left Rheims on the 23rd, but scarcely had it made a march towards establishing itself on the Suippe at Bethemville when commissariat difficulties obliged Marshal MacMahon to reapproach the line of the railway. He made a movement on his left, and reached Reims on the 24th in order to obtain for his troops several days subsistence. This distribution occupied the whole of the day of the 25th. From Reims the headquarters were transported to Tourteron, and the march towards Sedan commenced. The pamphlet, in concluding the battle of Sedan and the dispositions which led up to it, according to the Majesty's view of the position, he was hemmed in upon the north-east and east by the Prussian army corps, while several bodies of German cavalry held the ground on the west of the great bend of the Meuse below Sedan, that is between the departmental road to Mézières and the railway which passes just to the north of Donchery. The Emperor's position thus shut him out from all possibility either by advancing upon Metz or of retreating upon Mézières without opposition, but the latter plan even on the 1st of September was decidedly better than fighting. The pamphlet proves nothing more than that French generalship was at a low ebb.

London, Friday Night.—The *Figaro* of this evening gives the continuation and conclusion of what is now accepted here as the ex-Emperor's report of the great Prussian-French campaign of 1870, up to his surrender at Sedan. I furnish you with the continuation in *extenso* as the events it treats of are of great importance, and were much debated and questioned at the time of their occurrence:—

On the 27th of August the army arrived at the Chene-Populeux. At this place the army of the Prince of Saxony had effected its junction with that of the Prince Royal of Prussia, and their vanguards, had already come to blows with the corps of Generals de Failly and Douay. The Marshal, observing that the enemy was gaining upon him, resolved, in order to save the sole army which France had at her disposition, to turn back in a westerly direction. He immediately gave orders to this effect; but during the night he received by telegraph formal injunctions to continue his march towards Metz unquestionably, the Emperor could have countermanded this order, but he was resolved not to oppose the decision of the Regency, and had resigned himself to submit to the consequences of the fatality which attached itself to all the resolutions of the Government. As for the Duke of Magenta, he again bowed to the decision made known from Paris, and once more turned towards Metz. These orders and counter-orders occasioned delays in the movements. Headquarters reached Sedan on the 26th. Unfortunately, the different corps, separated from each other, were unable to group themselves round this position, and those of De Failly and Douay were attacked separately. The intention of the Marshal was to reach Sedan, and from thence Montmédy. But the enemy was already in strength in the first of these two towns. The Prussian army had made forced marches, whilst we, encumbered with baggage, had occupied six days with fatigued troops, in marching twenty-five leagues. We were, therefore, obliged to establish headquarters at Raucourt, in order to pass the Meuse at Mouzon. Whilst, on the morning of the 30th August, a portion of the army effected this movement, already executed on the previous evening by General Lebrun, the corps of De Failly and Douay, still on the left bank of the Meuse, became engaged near Beaumont with the vanguard of the main body of the Prussian army. De Failly's corps, sharply pushed by the attacking troops, fought well for several hours, but it was finally thrown back in disorder towards Mouzon. The brigade sent to support it was involved in the retreat. As for General Douay, arriving at Remilly, he was obliged to cross the narrow passage of the Meuse, which offered the greatest difficulties. Confusion took place also amongst his troops. Finally, the corps of Ducrot reached Crignagan after a long and painful march. For the third time, Marshal MacMahon was compelled to abandon the project of going to the succour of Marshal Bazaine; and, during the night of the 30th, the events of the day having shown him the impossibility of reaching Montmédy, he gave the order to withdraw upon Sedan. This city, classed as a fortress, is commanded on all sides, and incapable of resisting the power of the new artillery. It was, moreover, imperfectly armed and badly provisioned, possessed no exterior works, and offered no shelter to an army in retreat. Whilst the French army took up its position around Sedan, the Prussians, to the number of 230,000, continued their march upon our track, and arrived at nearly the same moment as ourselves in sight of the town. It was too late to avoid the battle which they offered, and which we were now obliged to accept, in the disadvantageous position where we had been driven. Our four corps d'armée were massed, not far from the city, in the order assigned for the movement of retreat. On the morning of the 31st, the corps of General Lebrun had already been engaged, and had sustained the struggle with equal energy and courage. But the army of the enemy, relying upon the superiority of numbers, had divided its forces in two principal masses, which were to attack separately—the one by the right the other by the left. His object was to turn the two wings of our army, and by routing again upon the heights behind Sedan to entirely surround it. A reserve corps, composed of infantry and a large body of cavalry, drawn up in the plain near Donchery, was so placed as to prevent any communication with Mézières; and the opposite batteries, upon the left bank of the Meuse, were bristling with a numerous artillery, which flanked the fire of the right bank. Under these circumstances, it appeared to us that the only one last resource remained by which the army could be saved, and that was, to take up a line of retreat upon the neutral territory of Belgium. It was too late to attempt to break through—either on the east, towards Crignagan, or to the west, towards Mézières—for in both directions the army would have found itself exposed to a cross-fire, in the presence of superior forces. But to escape from an investment, and to effect a safe retreat, it was necessary to occupy in force the heights of Illy and Givonneux; to abandon the town of Sedan to its own resources; to face about, and to retire by the roads leading into Belgium. By crowning with a numerous artillery the heights which have been mentioned, it was to be hoped that the enemy would have been held in check, and the retreat efficaciously covered. Unfortunately, however, the two generals who succeeded MacMahon, after he was wounded, in the command of the army, each proposed a different plan; and as a consequence, the plateau of Illy, which was the most important position, was but feebly occupied. Before five o'clock on the morning of the 1st of September, the attack commenced towards the east, at Bazailles, extending to Moncelle and Givonneux; and to the west, upon the heights of Floing. At five o'clock, Marshal MacMahon proceeded to the advanced posts near Bazailles, and sent to inform the Emperor, who mounted his horse, and hastened to the field of battle. On his way he met the Marshal, who was being carried back to Sedan, wounded by the splinter of a shell. This unfortunate event at the commencement of the action was an evil omen; the army had unbounded confi-