

my was all that prudence could expect. Dumont chose an advantageous situation for our six thousand men. He strengthened his right by the Senegal, and his left by a wide and deep fosse, which by a curve he extended along the front of the camp to the river. He placed advanced guards before the fosse, and taught the negroes ignorant of discipline, that on their vigilance alone could the army venture to take any repose. He visited them frequently during the night, to see that the orders, which he gave in the name of my father, were faithfully executed.

The enemy did not yet appear : and Dumont, choosing twenty intelligent and active negroes, ordered them to advance, with precaution, and reconnoitre their position, and, as nearly as possible, their forces.

Mean while our army increased every instant, and the fourth day it amounted to fifty thousand men. Dumont, judging that we might engage on this ground with advantage, encamped the new troops (as they arrived) between the ditch on the left, and a wood which was about a league distant ; leaving the six thousand men in their former position.

The party, who were sent to reconnoitre, joining courage to address, had approached the enemy so near as to take some of the stragglers prisoners. From these we learned, that they believed us to be without apprehension, and expected to find an easy prey ; that they would have made an irruption into our country some days since, but had waited for Darnel, who had just arrived ; finally, that their army amounted to forty thousand men ; and that we might soon expect to see the van advancing towards us.

My father instantly assembled a council of war : and Dumont, had hitherto served them too essentially, not to be invited to it. The greatest part of the chiefs were of opinion, that they ought to march towards the enemy, and attack them with the advantage arising from their surprise, and ignorance of our strength. Dumont almost alone combated this advice. ' Why,' said he, ' place in the hands of chance, that, which is in our own power ? Perhaps the enemy believe us ignorant of their design, and so have neglected every kind of precaution ; but it is our duty to suppose the contrary. They may have sent spies, whom we have not perceived : the facility with which these prisoners suffered themselves to be taken, may be a trick, to lull us into a perfidious security. Foreseeing the march which you propose, they may plant the road with ambuscades. Should we be thus surprised and routed, what re-

mains but to deliver our defenceless wives and children to the unjust fury of enemies, to the implacable insolence of conquerors ? Will you confide in me ? Remain then in the position which you now occupy. If they will enter our country, they must attack us ; and if they attack us, they are vanquished.'

The wisdom of this counsel was acknowledged. All resolved to wait for the enemy in our encampment : and my father, whose confidence in Dumont was without bounds, besought him to make the necessary dispositions for the battle.

It was agreed, that, as soon as the enemy should appear on the plain, that part of the army, ranged between the fosse and the wood, should be drawn out in order of battle, while the six thousand, who were first encamped, should remain concealed in their entrenchments. Dumont advised my father to head a body which was posted near a wood, and recommended him to make a most vigorous defence, to give time for other movements which he had concerted. To a nephew of Siratik he gave the command of a body of troops, which were placed near the fosse, on the left of the six thousand men. He ordered them to sustain the enemy's attack for some time ; then to feign a flight, and retreat till the pursuers should have passed the six thousand. Those he ordered to lie on the earth, and not to rise, till a certain signal should be given them. He gave to an intelligent negro the conduct of a detachment of ten thousand, which he placed in the cavities of the fosse. He commanded these to keep themselves concealed, till the six thousand should be engaged with that part of the enemy who would drive back the troops commanded by the nephew of Siratik ; then to spring from their retreat, and, spreading themselves on the plain, fall upon the rear of the enemy, engaged with my father. Finally, he reserved himself, with a design to fly to every part where his presence should be necessary.

The remainder of the day he employed in repeating the manœuvres to the army, and instructing each division in its particular duty, that all might be executed without confusion. He judged this precaution necessary, with negroes accustomed to combat in disorder, and ignorant of these evolutions, which, among polished nations, decide the fate of engagements.

In the afternoon of the following day, we discovered the van of the enemy, and about an hour after the whole army appeared. Astonished to see us, whom they did not suspect so near, they halted ; then spread themselves on the plain, so as ex-