

months without getting clothes of any kind, some never got uniform trousers at all, many never got knapsacks, and made the campaign fighting while carrying small carpet bags. The hardships these men endured, and the tude they displayed, well deserved a better fate. The following gives an idea of what these brave men endured: "We had hoped that after so frightful a day, we might have found tolerable quarters (they had marched 27 miles) in the little town of Sillé, but when we were three miles off, we saw the road in front illumined by a yellow smoke glare, and soon the whole horizon seemed on fire, we knew what that meant, we were to encamp or rather to bivouac in those fields, which were a foot deep with snows. As we drew near, the light became more distinct, and our last hopes vanished. At last came our turn, we piled arms, our muskets sinking deep in the snows; the promise of rations had been a deception, the men had neither meat, no bread, nor fuel; cries of anger and woe were heard in the adjoining fields, we were as near despair as men could be, but our duty was plain, it was for us to set an example. I called my brave sergeants, whose unflinching good humour had done so much to keep up the spirits of the others, and we set to work to clear away the snow. The quartermaster went and unfastened one of the large hurdles which enclosed the fields in Anjou and Maine, and dragged it into the camp. After many efforts, we got a few half-dry sticks to blaze, and we were soon seated on the larger pieces of wood around the fire; few amongst us could sleep. We passed the night in as much cheerful conversation as we could; it was the only way to avoid being overwhelmed with sadness, for the moment the sound of our voices ceased, we heard on every side the wailing of the weary and the deep hollow coughs of the sick, broken every now and then by wild imprecations of despair.

"The want of food and drink had deprived all of the power of rallying."

Yet these men were fighting not on a foreign soil, far from their resources, but on their own ground in their own country, fighting for their homes and the families. We read a prescription of the death of the Duke de Luynes, the largest territorial proprietor in France, and his brother, Paul de Chevreuse both simple Volunteers, rifle in hand. All that fair country which was drenched with the best blood of France; in the contest on the Loire, had belonged to their ancestors and was theirs still for the most part. The forest of Marchenoir had been their father's favourite hunting resort, and like the knights of old they fell, one never to rise again, fighting with their own men on their own land. Unlike the Volunteers of Paris, these Volunteers of the Loire, were anxious, desirous of knowing their duty and doing it, and gallantly and manfully they do it, but how can an army be improvised? How leaven 300,000 men with four regular regiments, one regiment of cavalry, and one battery of artillery? There is not a greater warning in all history of the impotence of gallantry and devotion, combined with ignorance, when opposed to knowledge and organization.

While the attempt was thus being made to place large armies of untrained men in the field, bodies of irregular troops, termed Franc-Tireurs, were employed largely in France; these bodies did much real service. They harassed the Prussian advance, kept the enemies' cavalry from advancing, and when employed in fortified places did much good work. It would seem as if irregular troops were better fitted for irregular fight

ing than for the steady action of large armies where the want of knowledge of details, their absolute incapacity for manœuvring, and the fact of their being quite incapable of taking advantage of the successes they achieve, render their exertions almost nugatory. It has generally followed in war that these bands do more good when scattered and acting independently than when massed. The history of the Peninsular War shows the same phase of war, but such bands can never make any sensible alteration in the final result. They simply brought great suffering on the inhabitants who were punished by the Prussians if a band of Franc-Tireurs did any damage; thus the villages were burnt, and the chief inhabitants shot, if it was found with a band of Franc-Tireurs had been harboured in any way—the consequence was, that the country people were opposed to them.

The siege of Belfort is a good example of the value of such bodies. These bodies defended the villages round that fortress, converting each into a strong post, and compelling the Germans to attack each village almost as if it were a fortification. Wanting ammunition, they cast their own shells, and made their own cartridges, and kept Belfort in French hands until the close of the war.

A German writer, speaking of the effect of these Franc-Tireurs, on the German cavalry in the later stages of the war, tells us:—

"In the tiresome campaign on the Loire, the cavalry divisions lay for weeks in front of the enemy, so as to ensure some rest to the infantry, much exhausted by the numerous sanguinary fights. The cavalry patrols, worked in broken ground, with a steadiness and determination for which the French so often expressed their admiration, as notwithstanding their vanity, they still retained a spark of justice. And how much was our cavalry harassed by the bands of Franc-Tireurs, fully organized after October, and carrying on a dangerous guerilla warfare in the country about the Loire, and to the north of it, how many heavy, unmerited losses did it endure, yet it wearied not. It was, however, often quite necessary to attach infantry to it, to old small posts or to enable it to cross certain tracts of country.

They further destroyed the railways and telegraphs in rear of the Germans, blowing up tunnels and bridges. But the Germans checked this by an exercise of power hardly in accordance with the laws of war; they invariably burned the adjacent villages, and shot the chief inhabitants, thus compelling the unfortunate French people to protect their lines of communication. As an example of this we may instance the bridge near Nancy, the Franc-Tireurs destroyed it; the Germans burnt the adjacent village, shot the chief inhabitants, levied 100,000*l.* on the Province of Lorraine, and compelled the people of Nancy to repair the bridge, the Prussian Perfect issuing the following notice:—

Nancy, 23rd January, 1871, 4 p.m.

"The Perfect of the Marthe sends the Maire of Nancy the following order.—

"If to-morrow, the 23th January, at 12 noon, 500 workmen from the workshops of the town are not at the railway station, the foremen first, and a certain number of the workmen next, will be shot."

These were no empty threats, and the action of the Franc-Tireurs was really confined and hampered far more by their own countrymen than by the Germans. Their being this great difference between the guerillas

of Spain during the Peninsular War, and these Franc-Tireurs, that the former operated in a thinly-peopled, poor, mountainous country, the latter, in a fertile, rich populous country; in the former case, the people had little or nothing to lose; in the latter, much.

I have been, perhaps, tedious in describing the real state of the French Army at this time, but I have done so because I am desirous of combating two statements that I have often heard made, as being deducible from the war.

One of these statements is—

"That, because the French Mobiles were unsuccessful, therefore our Militia and Volunteers are useless, and not to be relied on."

Now, I think if you consider what I have told you, you will see that, far from this being the case, the ill success of the Mobile is really an encouragement to our Militia and Volunteer officers.

I am quite prepared to admit that, when two armies meet, other things being equal, the worst trained men must yield; it is as absurd to expect untrained men to stand up before regular trained warlike troops, as it would be to expect one of us to stand up to a professional prize fighter. But, if you look at the Mobiles of France, and compare them with our Volunteers and Militia, you will find that the latter are infinitely superior to the former as a fighting body. They have been in existence for many years, they are organized, officered, and trained. Their cadres contain, not only many regular officers, but many very many other men who have a large amount of military knowledge. They have been accustomed to act together; to act with regular troops, more or less; and have confidence in themselves. To say that, because the French Mobiles were beaten by the Germans, therefore our auxiliary forces are useless is, I think, a sad error, based on the entire misconception of the case. Our Militia and Volunteers are, as fighting bodies, immeasurably superior to the French Mobile. They have received a far greater amount of training, although their training and organization falls short of what would be required to meet veteran troops.

Therefore, the first conclusion which, I think, we can fairly draw from the recent war is, that our auxiliary forces should not be depreciated, but that, looking to what the Mobile did accomplish, and the far more efficient state of the auxiliary forces, we may fairly conclude that they would prove most valuable troops.

Another statement I often hear made is that, in case of war, our Militia and Volunteers would have the support of the regular Army, and would not be compelled to meet a hostile force alone, or almost alone. Now this statement is one which, I think, the recent war entirely disproves. At the beginning of July, 1870, there was a motion in the French Assembly, somewhat similar to a motion we often hear in England, to reduce the Army by 10,000 men. The Foreign Minister was appealed to, and said France was at profound peace, and need anticipate no war. The Finance Minister said the country would benefit by reduced taxation, and so the Army was reduced on the 1st of July, 1870, by 10,000 men, and yet on the 15th of October, 100 days afterwards, the regular Army of France was only four regiments of infantry, one regiment of cavalry, and six guns.

(To be continued.)

Two members of the Manitoba Mounted Police, on duty at Toronto, were fined ten dollars each for going to take a drink.