

Reminiscences of the Franco-Prussian War

PARIS, July 15, 3 P. M.—The Corps Legislatif declared war against Prussia at ten minutes before two this afternoon.

WITH this despatch, forty-four years ago the New York Herald began its work of reporting the Franco-Prussian War in 1870.

Pregnant with meaning, yet crisp and fresh with the simplicity of the war despatch, the accounts of that campaign in the files of the Herald tell a more vivid story than many to be found in more stately pages of history.

Some of the despatches bear so closely on the conditions of today that they might almost be printed as current news value without exciting comment.

The correspondents of the Herald were everywhere active during the war. They accompanied the troops of both countries in all their encounters; they interviewed the most important men of the hour; some of them were shut up in Paris during the siege and sent their correspondence by the balloon post, on which and carrier pigeons, the beleaguered residents depended entirely for communication with the outside world; others marched into Paris with the victorious Germans.

The bitter feeling aroused in France by the effort to place a German upon the throne of Spain culminated in July, 1870, with the decision to resort to war.

NAPOLEON III. JOINING ARMY.
LEADS ATTACK ON PRUSSIANS
After the formal declaration of war the Emperor joined the army. Fighting began almost at once. The Herald published under date of August 3 the despatch of Napoleon III. to Paris giving the French version of the encounter at Saarbrück.

"The French troops passed the frontier at eleven o'clock. They instantly encountered the Prussians, strongly posted on the heights commanding Saarbrück, which were carried by a few battalions. The capture of the town immediately followed. NAPOLEON."

A shorter telegram from the Emperor arrived in Paris four days later—

"Metz August 6.

"Marshal MacMahon has lost a battle. NAPOLEON."

Through London, dated August 11, came the despatch announcing the proclamation of William, King of Prussia, to the French people:—

"We war against soldiers, not citizens; therefore the latter may continue secure in person as long as they remain from hostilities."

War despatches from opposite camps in those days bore a very striking resemblance to those of the present in their widely variant conclusions as to the result of a battle. The despatch which reached Paris after another sharp encounter of the forces at Metz was as follows:—

"LONGEVILLE, August 24.

"The Prussians suddenly attacked in great force. After a fight of four hours they were repulsed with great loss to them. NAPOLEON."

But from the Prussian side quite a different report was given to the war correspondents:—

"After a most impetuous assault by the Prussians the French army was routed with great slaughter."

HERALD CORRESPONDENT TELLS OF MARSHAL MACMAHON'S ROUT
Of great importance is a despatch dated:—

"LONDON, August 31, Night.

"A telegram from Bouillon, Belgium, containing special advice for the Herald states that there was a fearful loss opened yesterday between the combined armies of the Crown Prince and Prince Frederick Charles and the French army under the command of Marshal MacMahon.

"MacMahon retreated at the close of a series of actions with the remnant of his troops toward Sedan."

The following is the telegram received by the Queen of Prussia from the King:—

"SEDAN, September 2.

"The capitulation of the whole army was concluded by Wimpffen, who commanded in place of MacMahon, who is wounded."

"The Emperor surrendered himself to me, as he had no command."

WILHELM.
The overthrow of the dynasty of Napoleon took place September 16. The Herald correspondent, under date of September 14, refers to his paper a long interview with Victor Hugo on the situation in France.

"Prussia has had her anger promoted by the deeds of a public criminal, whom the justice of God has at length overtaken," said Hugo.

"It will be an eternal disgrace to King William of Prussia if he refuses to sheath his bloody sword now; that the exciting cause which made him draw it against France is gone."

"Will not the United States of America, the home of so many Germans and so many French—will not the citizens of the glorious Union—even if its government refuses to do so—send one grand Christian effort to extinguish the horrid, flaring torch of war?"

September 17 the Herald reported the terrible bombardment of Strasburg.

The fighting about Paris began at that time and continued in our place or another for many weeks. From the German capital the Herald received the following news through a message sent to the Queen:—

"BERLIN, October 27, 1870.

"This morning Bazaine and Metz capitulated: 150,000 prisoners, including 20,000 sick and wounded; army and garrison laid down their arms this afternoon; one of the most important events of the war. Providence be thanked."

"WILHELM."

The Germans on their march to the capital soon surrounded Paris so that all regular postal facilities were abandoned, as well as all attempts of residents to leave the city. Balloon mail and passenger service then came into general use.

Balloons were regularly used to carry the mail over the lines of the enemy in the surrounding suburbs. Much of the Herald's correspondence from within the city was carried out in this fashion. The correspondent of the Herald sent the following description of the situation:—

"PARIS, October 13, 1870.

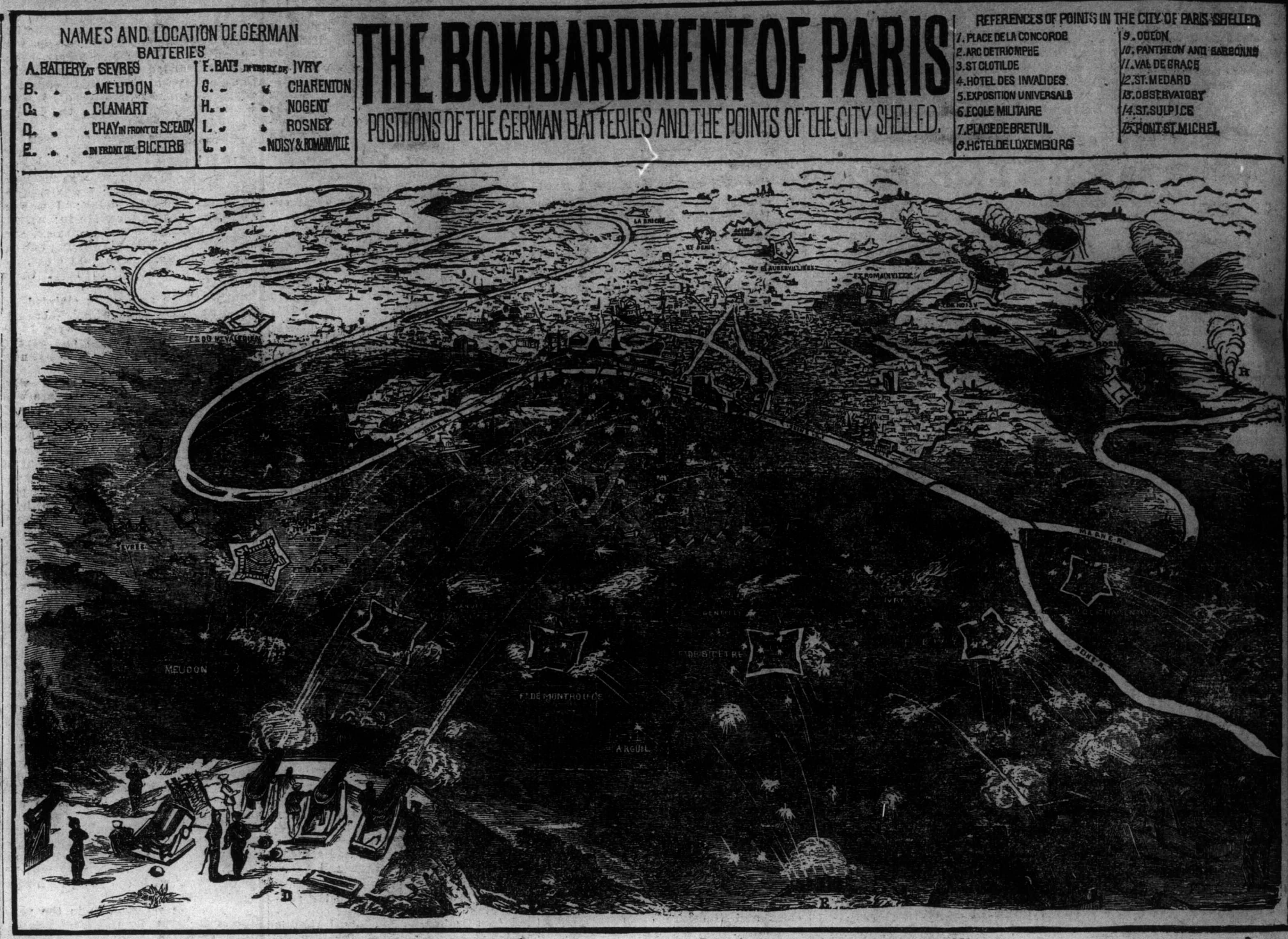
"Ballooning, as your readers know, has grown to be an accurate, every day science in Paris. The balloons bear despatches of the government, private letters left open to official inspection and some agent who either goes out as a contractor for supplies or as a patriot to wake up the dormant provinces. Regular letters must not exceed four grammes in weight, and must relate to private matters. Over a million letters have been sent since the siege and each balloon takes out about eighty thousand, which are deposited in the regular way."

"The people at the post office never profess to know when a balloon is sailing, and one can only intrust one's letters to official convenience."

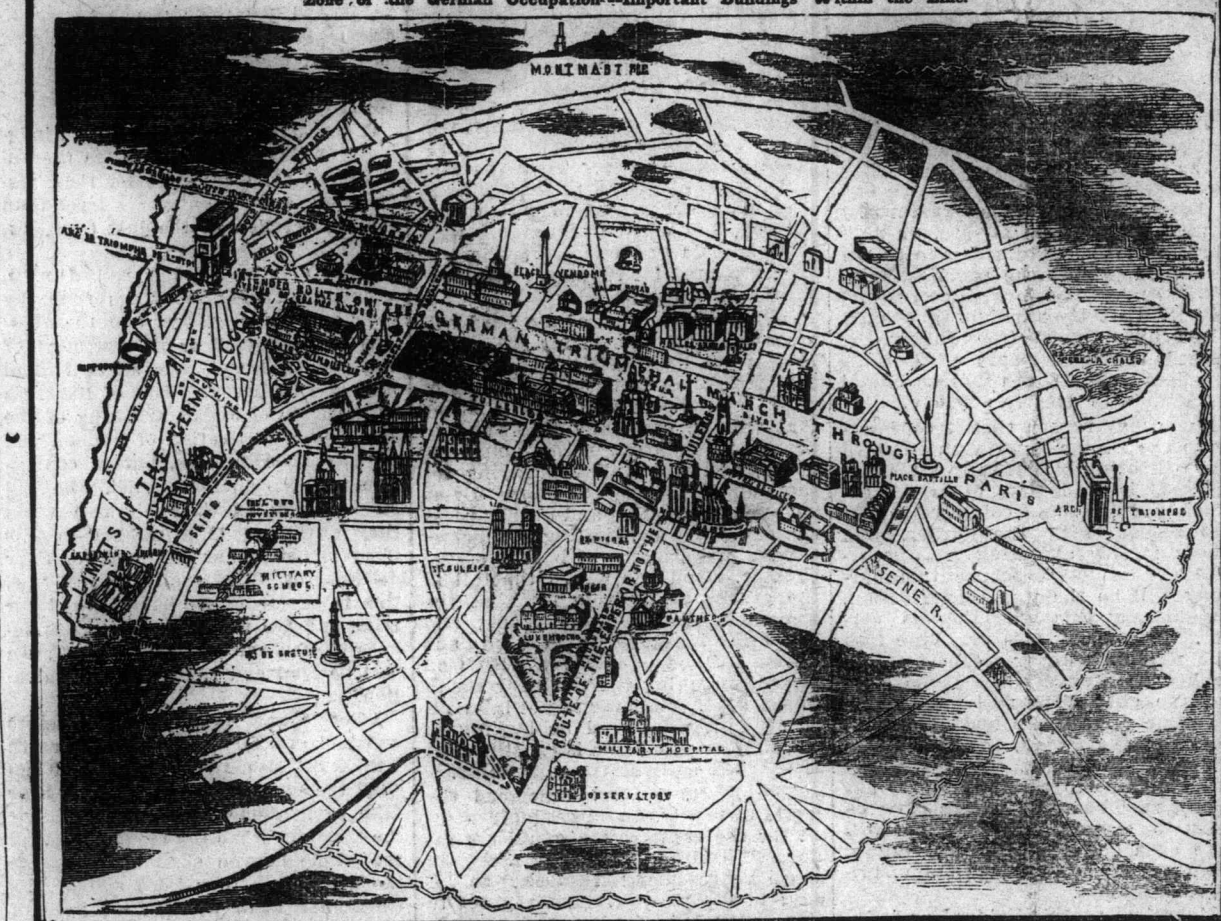
"Printed forms and sizes of letters are in use. Herewith is a specimen, printed in clear type, of the regular inscription. It is printed on the smallest and thinnest note paper known in amatory correspondence:—

Placer de la République.
Affranchissement: France et Algérie, 20 centimes. Étranger: Tarif spécial.

Mrs. JOHN DOE,
212 1/2 Madison Av.,
New York,
U. S. A.



THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF PARIS.



"Besides these there are little cards in use which are intrusted to balloons sent up at hazard."

On the same date the Herald published a letter received by Messrs. Kuhn & Co. from their representative, Mr. Jacques Friedmann, which described the perils of balloon travel from Paris, a method of leaving the beleaguered city which was quite generally resorted to:—

"Mr. Piper, a government contractor, attempted to leave Paris by balloon September 28, but was prevented from doing so by his bulk and weight. He then had a balloon constructed especially for his own use. Mr. Friedmann, who accompanied him, describes the journey:—

"DEAR MR. KUHN:—On the seventh of October Mr. Piper and I ascended in a balloon and have since endured the most terrible sufferings and anxieties in consequence of having fallen between the French and Prussian outposts near Stains, where both forces kept up a steady fire on us for more than an hour."

"We had fallen into an immense pond, and it was only by feigning to be dead for fully three hours, from the moment we descended until dark, that we escaped."

"At last we got away by swimming, sometimes plunging almost up to our shoulders into the mire of the pond and then only were enabled to reach the French outposts. All that we had with us was carried away by the balloon, which rose again at once as we left it."

"Your devoted,

"JACQUES FRIEDMANN."

AN INTERVIEW WITH BAZAINE AFTER CAPITULATION OF METZ.
Marshal Bazaine, commander in chief of the French Army of the Valley of the Meuse, which capitulated at Metz, was interviewed by the Herald's correspondent early in November. The interview, published November 7, 1870, was in part as follows:—

"Determined to obtain an interview with Marshal Bazaine, I alighted at the Hotel du Nord, which is crowded for the present with French officers who were made prisoners at Metz."

"It was a curious sight to see them seated at a long table in a spacious dining room. I remarked that they sat at considerable intervals from each other, and this circumstance the landlord explained in a whisper:—'They don't agree very well, sir. There are now in the hotel three marshals of France, more than twenty generals and sixty colonels and majors. Some of these officers, declaring that they have been the victims of treachery, will not associate with others.'"

The Herald correspondent asked Marshal Bazaine if hunger had forced him to open negotiations with the Prussians.

"Even if we had not been forced by hunger," said the Marshal, "I should have opened negotiations on the day when I learned that it was not the re-

play of legs, shoulders and bones of Newfoundland dogs. I was induced to try a couple of dog chops at four francs a pound and found them far superior to horse."

"Yesterday I saw a great crowd around the principal grocer's in the Rue Honore. I inquired the cause. The reply was:—

"It is a defender of the country who sells sugar for three francs a pound, the villain!"

"The situation of to-day strikingly repeats that of the former war in some of its features."

December 1, the Herald published a special despatch from Brussels to the London Telegraph saying that the Germans will immediately occupy Luxembourg as a military necessity.

"Count von Bismarck grounds his disregard for the neutrality of Luxembourg on the facts that the Grand Duchy had forbidden the transport of wounded Germans through its territory, had suffered the re-entrance of French fugitives," and omitted to stop French fugitives."

British feeling, although largely sympathetic with the German invasion in the matter of the violation of Luxembourg neutrality, ran much along the lines of the present. The Herald published the following despatch from London.

"The Pall Mall Gazette this evening in an editorial on the Luxembourg question declared it to be the duty of England to impress upon the Prussians the fact that the violation of the territory of Luxembourg will not be regarded with indifference."

SEWER RATS USED FOR FOOD.
IT IS PUBLISHED CITY OF PARIS

After Paris had been cut off from its suburbs by the Germans the question of the food supply became of startling importance. By way of London the Paris correspondent of the Herald throws an interesting light on this subject. The despatch is published under date of Paris, November 19, 1870:—

"The principal supply of rats is obtained from the sewers. Jars containing glucose syrup are placed in them. Of this syrup the rats are very fond, and in their eagerness to get it they vomitate into the jars and are caught like flies in molasses."

"The person who is on the watch then seizes them, wrings their necks and soon afterward they are made ready for the steppan."

"The newspapers contain amusing articles discussing all fat men and extolling leanness, characterizing it as a necessary adjunct of the virtue of patriotism."

"Sparrows are selling at ten cents each. I tried a horse beef steak yesterday, but with 'ill' success. My butcher now supplies me with sheep brains once a week."

"Several pigeons have arrived within the last few weeks bearing despatches from Tours. The official despatch of Gambetta to Favre announcing the victory at Orleans arrived that way."

"The bombardment of the fortifications of Paris has been vigorously kept up in which the mobs and the troops have come into collision."

"LONDON, January 12.

"A balloon has arrived from Paris, bringing despatches from the Herald correspondent as follows:—

"The bombardment continues with great violence throughout each night until four o'clock in the morning, and after a brief respite is resumed and kept up all day."

"The red republicans of the city placarded the streets with revolutionary posters. In these it was declared that while the people are starving favorite soldiers are overfed and a demand is made that food be equally distributed."

"LONDON, January 13.

"The New York Herald's correspondent at Versailles telegraphs that General

FIRST NEWS SECTION

FORTY-FOURTH YEAR

ARMIES TRYING TWISTS

Flank Movements are Attempted Both Forces.

Heavy Rains Make Difficult Task for the Allies.

By Special Wire to the Courier

LONDON, Sept. 21.—With the fortunes of battle fluctuating between the lines along the center of the extended front in France, desperate efforts are being made to execute turning movements on both flanks.

"The Anglo-French left, which is gathering every ounce of strength to turn the flank of German general Von Kluck, is reported as having received heavy reinforcements, while the German left, according to a cautiously worded announcement from Berlin, is making equally strenuous efforts to outflank the French right resting on Verdun."

Under ordinary weather conditions the Anglo-French would be the easier, by reason that Verdun, heavily fortified, must fall before the French can be seriously threatened; on the German right the heavy rains have made such a morass of the Valley of the Oise that allies are hardly likely to march along what would be their natural course, until the German front north of Soissons has been driven back. The high ground between Noyon and Chauny has been heavily fortified by General Von Kluck and dominates the valley of the Oise.

The German position, which presents defensive possibilities, is indicated by the fact that their heavy artillery rests on cement foundations which have taken time to construct. Also the cement had to be allowed time to set.

Some reports received in London declared that the reason the desperate German counter-attacks on Rheims is found in movement of the allies to the westward.

More or less definite rumors continue to circulate in London the effect that the Germans are preparing a great retreat in France on their own border fortifications. The latest of these stories related by a French officer who has returned to Paris. This Frenchman declares that aeroplane reconnaissance has given rise to the belief that large portions of the German stores is retiring, accompanied by trains of heavy stores, and leaving only 200,000 men to cover the retreat.

One reason for the death news from the battle front, is to be found in the bad weather which has rendered ordinary marching and aeroplane scouting unreliable. Stories now filter through set forth that the Germans made desperate efforts, middle of last week, to recapture the ground they had lost at the river Aisne. Day and night the assaults continued. The masses of men on the hastily constructed entrenchments of the line. It was cold and snow, gold steel and ended in the holding the positions desperately won by them.

Rheims, where the ruins of famous cathedral are still standing, is likely to prove a subject of controversy long after the war forces now in the field ceased to contend for its possession. The Germans claim that cathedral was in the line of fire and that it was impossible to spare the building.

It has been said that a combined Russo-French army has been given the victory in Galicia.

According to advices received here the advance of the Serbians continues. According to a combined Serbo-Montenarian army expects to enter Sarajevo within a week.

WILL GIVE PROTEST.
PARIS, Sept. 21.—The Agency says that the government will make a protest with all their forces against the destruction of the cathedral at Rheims. It is said that it was impossible to spare the building.

It has been said that a combined Russo-French army has been given the victory in Galicia.

According to advices received here the advance of the Serbians continues. According to a combined Serbo-Montenarian army expects to enter Sarajevo within a week.

Private Cox of the 90th Regiment, Winnipeg, died at the Quebec hospital from enteric fever.

Two hundred Chinese have been sentenced \$112.25 to the Patriotic Moose-Jaw, Saskatchewan.