

thing under 250,000 men, while Prussia had nearly double that number. Both sides wished to take the offensive, but a French invasion of South Germany was soon found to be impossible, owing to the utterly unprepared state of the French army. Early in August the French Army of the Rhine was defeated by the Prussian 1st Army at Forbach-Spicheren, while the Army of Alsace, under MacMahon, was destroyed by the Prussian 3rd Army, under the Crown Prince, at Wörth. Then the three Prussian armies combined to attack the Army of the Rhine, and inflicted on it three defeats in five days, at Borny, Mars-la-Tour, and Gravelotte. The Prussian 1st and 2nd Armies next laid siege to Metz, while the 3rd marched on Châlons. MacMahon attempted to relieve Metz, but was surrounded and forced to capitulate, with the Emperor himself and his whole army, at Sedan (September 2). As a French historian tersely puts it: 'There was no French Army left.' The remainder of the war centred on Paris, which was invested by the Prussian 3rd and 4th Armies on September 19. The 2nd Army remained before Metz, and compelled Bazaine to surrender that city six weeks later. During the winter the French armies of the Loire, of the East, and of the North, were all defeated, and on January 24, 1871, Paris capitulated. A week earlier King William had been crowned Emperor at Versailles. Bismarck insisted on the cession of Alsace and part of Lorraine, the occupation of Paris by the Prussian army until the treaty of peace was ratified (this was only forty-eight hours), and the payment of an indemnity of six milliards of francs (which was reduced to five by the efforts of Thiers). The treaty embodying these terms was finally signed at Frankfort in May.