Lord Wolseley on Napoleon's Downfall.

The August number of the *Revue de Paris* contains the closing chapter of Lord Wolseley's "Decline and Fall of Napoleon." It is entitled "Waterloo," and gives an analysis of the causes which influenced the closing act in Napoleon's military career. Lord Wolseley writes: "The military critic who minutely examines the measures taken by Napoleon during this campaign discovers so many defects that he is unable to explain them except by the mysterious return of ill-health. That malady from which he had suffered more or less for a considerable time, and which had been the cause of so many of his disasters in Russia and at the battle of Dresden, now attacked him more frequently and more violently. When in its gripe he was incapable of any effective effort, either mental or physical. He had great difficulty in keeping awake, and his drawn features and dejected expression were indicative at once of bodily suffering and intellectual prostration. His strength, which was no longer that of ten years before, had been seriously tried by fifteen hours of work and worry undergone every day during his stay—full of anxiety—in Paris. But, once free from the ravages of this malady, his fine intelligence was as clear, his fertility of resource as marvellous his genius as brilliant, and his ideas as great as ever. Seated in his cabinet, he was able, as before, to form plans and combinations with an almost infallible judgment, and an unerring eye for everything that was necessary for success. He was always able to master the situation with all his old perspicacity." The pain of Napoleon's recent reverses, however, had not only seriously affected his health, but had robbed him of that confidence in himself which, in Lord Wolseley's opinion, is so essential to continued success in war. He was no longer the "little man of Rivolt," spare, thin, and active. His puffed-up face, his swollen chest, and his fat, round limbs indicated a man utterly unfitted for hard work on horseback. His heavy body was now beyond his control, and he suffered from overpowering somnolence. He was already old for his forty-seven years, and after having been the most independent, confident, and absolute of leaders, he had fallen into the loquacity of the dotard, and now asked advice of those whom he was accustomed to command. Towards the close of the chapter Lord Wolseley says: "I have dwelt upon Napoleon's state of health in this last act of his career because the more I study the plan of his campaign of 1815, so magnificently conceived as it was, the more I am convinced that the crushing defeat which closed it was primarily the result of a physical malady, which weakened his mental powers at that supreme moment when an instant an energetic decision was indispensable to success. Had he been able to bring to bear the moral and physical energy of the first period of his career upon the vast plan which he had conceived for the annihilation of Wellington and Blucher in Belgium, and if we may judge of what these generals would have done by what they did do, I believe that the prudent Englishman would at least have been obliged to beat a hasty retreat in order to re-embark at Ostend, while the impetuous Prussian—nearly destroyed, he was, at Ligny—would have been too glad to place the Rhine between the remnants of his beaten army and the conqueror of Jena."

A New Naval Invention.

Lecture at the R. U. S. Institution.

A lecture was delivered at the Royal United Service Institution on Wednesday by Lieut. Charles W. Sleeman, R. N. The chair was taken by Vice-Admiral Co'omb.

The lecturer said h's invention was applicable to any vessel designed to be run and directed without human agency actually present in the vessel itself, *i. e.*, by means of an electric cable "paid out" from the vessel as she proceeded ahead. Its purpose was to indicate the point of the compass on which such a vessel was heading at any moment during its run, this being notified to the person at the distant station who is directing the vessel or torpedo. The invention, which Lieut. Sleeman proceeded to explain by means of models and drawings, consist an ordinary ship compass electrically combined with a specially devised reversible "step-by-step" instrument, and a small battery. These are placed in the vessel, and a recording key instrument, a galvanometer, and another small battery are required at the station from which the the vessel is directed. When the vessel or torpedo is in the water ready for running, and with all the wires connected, the operator can ascertain in what direction the vessel is pointing by moving his key until the galvanometer is deflected. Subsequently the operator has only to watch the galvanometer, and by moving his key he is enabled to regulate the course at will to any point of the compass. The steering of the vessel, or torpedo, as the lecturer explained, was a function of control altogether apart from, and independent of, his "compass steering invention." He claimed that by his invention "a controllable vessel" of any kind could be steered on a compass course, even when entirely invisible to the operator, and quite as readily as though the operator were actually on board, instead of at a considerable distance. The "compass steering" invention was originally worked out with the object of applying to controllable torpedoes, in order to avoid the use of the masts or floats attached to these weapons in such manner as to be visible to the operator. The advantages claimed by Lieut. Sleeman for his invention were as follows:—(1.) The torpedo being without masts or floats could be submerged to a depth of 8 feet, and could then be rendered invisible. (2.) The speed of the torpedo would be increased by the absence of masts or floats. (3.) The torpedo could be more perfectly controlled. (4.) The range could materially be increased At present submarine vessels armed with the "Whitehead" had to approach, only partially submerged, to within 500 yards of the enemy before discharging a torpedo. If provided with a controllable torpedo, which could be guided by the compass, the vessel need not approach the enemy nearer than 1,500 yards. Having started her torpedo, she could then be completely submerged. The lecturer further claimed that ships could be steered from a position below the upper deck. This, he urged, would be useful in the case of torpedo boats in bad weather, or in ships designed specially as rams. Lieut. Sleeman concluded by explaining another invention termed "The Indicator Board," by means of which he claimed that the track of the vessel to be torpedoed together with its speed and distance from the operator directing the "controlled torpedo" could be rapidly determined. He also explained that the track of the torpedo could be similarly shewn, whereby the operator at the station could readily estimate the positions of both the enemy's ships and the torpedo. The usual discussion followed.