

short, difficult fellows to manage, as Dumouriez and his fellow-officers found out.

Wild, ragged, untrained, and insubordinate, they yet inaugurated that career of victory which was to carry the Imperial armies into all the countries of Europe. Where would have been the glories of Jena and of Wagram, of Laudschut, Tudela, and Borodino had not those masses of reckless, undrilled desperadoes, animated by the spirit of recovered freedom, driven back the Prussian charges on the heights of Valmy, and flung themselves fiercely against the redoubts of Jemappes."

The unconquerable spirit of regained liberty manifested itself in the strain of that noble hymn which, bursting spontaneously from forty thousand throats, thundered victoriously over the redoubts of Jemappes and up the pine-clad Wissembourg crags.

It is to this free and joyous feeling, acting upon the emotional nature of the Frenchman, and to the mutual influence of large bodies of men, animated by the same spirit, that we are to look for an explanation of their extraordinary success.

The victory of Jemappes, to which are at present to confine our attention, is worthy of note as being the first step in that course of aggression, which raised all Europe against them. Hitherto they had defended themselves, but now they entered upon a new path.

In October, 1792, the Comité de la Salut Publique, wishing to please their fierce constituents and gain some additional credit for themselves, resolved to assume the offensive. With this object in view they summoned to Paris Dumouriez, the victor of Valmy, who had forced Brunswick to retire beyond the Vosges, and given the embryonic republic an opportunity to nerve itself for the struggle.

At the conference which ensued, it was determined to maintain the defensive on the strong eastern border, while the bulk of their forces, under Dumouriez in person, was to assume the offensive in the north, expel the Imperial forces from the Low Countries, and give the people of those provinces an opportunity to throw off the Austrian yoke.

The Eastern frontier, from the Mediterranean to Landau, was covered by the commands of Montesquion and Biron; while Meusnier (12,000) and Kellerman (20,000) extended from Landau to Luxembourg, with Custine (17,000) thrown forward to Mainz. Kellerman was to march by Treves on Coblenz, and this movement, combined with the advance of Valence (18,000) upon Namur and Liege, would, if carried out, cut the Imperialists' line of retreat, and hem them in between the French army and the sea.

Dumouriez advanced on Mons with 40,000 men, supported on his right by D'Harville (12,000), and on his left by Labourdonnais from Lille. The Imperialists, under the Duke of Saxe-Teschén, were only about 40,000 strong and were disposed over a long line from Mons to Tournai, according to the usual defective strategy of the Austrians,

who had not yet learned, by bitter experience, that "a chain is no stronger than its weakest link."

In consequence of this fatal dispersion, they could only concentrate about 25,000 men at Mons to check the advance of Dumouriez.

On the evening of the 5th of November the two armies faced each other near the little village of Jemappes, a short distance south of Mons. The Imperialists were strongly posted along a range of heights crowned by three villages (Jemappes, Cuesmes, and Berthaimont): their front protected by abatis, woods, and a steep slope which enabled their artillery to search every portion of the ground before it, while the position was further strengthened by fourteen redoubts; altogether a tough nut to crack.

Dumouriez determined to attack in front with two columns, supported by attacks on both flanks; and, in accordance with this plan, D'Harville (who had joined on the previous evening) moved forward at daybreak to outflank Beaulieu, seize the heights at Berthaimont, and menace the line of retreat upon Ath and Brussels.

Shortly after sunrise Beurnonville opened the ball by a furious attack on Cuesmes. His brigades advancing in that loose, impetuous manner so characteristic of the French, rushed forward and strove to reach the enemy's lines, but recoiled shattered and disordered, their ranks riven through and through by the splendid practice of the Austrian artillery; and Ferrand's men were baffled in an attempt to flank Jemappes. It is now nearly midday, the enemy are still unbroken, the French have lost heavily, the untrained recruits are becoming unsteady, and showing symptoms of panic. Something must be done, and that right speedily. Dumouriez sends Thouvenot to replace Ferrand, and soon, through the smoke of the furious cannonade, can be seen the columns advancing; dashing forward with the bayonet, through Quaregnon, and up the heights to the west of Jemappes. Simultaneously with this attack, Dumouriez with the main column, drove straight at the Austrian front. With a shout of "*Vive la République*," the column puts itself in motion, and moves swiftly across the intervening space, but the men are untrained, excited, and shaken by the hail of bullets which ploughs through the massy columns; and now, to aid in their discomfiture, the splendid Austrian squadrons prepare to charge their flank. The forward movement is checked; one brigade on the right wavers, loosens, and falls back in disorder; the moment is critical; one charge, well pressed home, would scatter in panic flight that yielding mass of conscripts.

But the opportunity is lost, the brigade rallies and regains its place, and a furious combat ensues; while the enemy's powerful artillery pours a steady, unceasing, and deadly fire into the huge French columns.

The din is terrific; heavy banks of smoke lie brooding upon the earth along the line of the heights, pierced by the incessant flashes of the cannonade, and through which the