

ed of the event, which continued to be sold till the end of the war. One paper told how "a lieutenant-colonel wounded had just returned to Paris, and related that such had been the slaughter of Prussians that he was able to protect his guns behind a parapet of Germans slain; we repeat that the source from which this account was received rendered it perfectly authentic." Other writers accused the English papers of having "invented not only French defeats, but battles which had never taken place and places which did not exist." The wife of a late English ambassador, writing from Vichy three days after the news of the capitulation of Sedan had been heard of at New York, observed that "as the French had been successful everywhere, she should return by Paris and spend some weeks there."

Under the necessity of a victory at all hazards, MacMahon and his army had marched, as it were, into a trap; crowded into a town where it was impossible to stand a siege, without supplies, food, or ammunition. The general was wounded early in the day, and De Wimpfen, who "took command of an army already beaten," as he complained bitterly, proposed to the Emperor to cut his way into Belgium. The slaughter, however, must have been tremendous, and after the fearful losses of the previous weeks, Louis Napoleon, sick and dispirited, seems to have felt that any end was better than the continuance of such dreadful scenes, and fancied (we may give him at least the credit of believing) that his abdication would end the war.

His interview with the ruler of kings, Bismarck, took place in front of a labourer's cottage in a village near Sedan. The Emperor in the undress uniform of a general and a *kepi*, the Chancellor in his white cuirassier coat, fur cap, and long boots, sat on a stone bench before the door on a slope close to the edge of the dusty *chaussee*, which stretched far and straight into the distance, bordered with the inevitable poplars. One who was present described how the Emperor went on pulling the vine leaves from the trellis one by one, and scattering them on the ground as the interest of the conversation increased, whence they were picked up by the bystander after the interview was over.

The hard part of the bargaining having been done by Bismarck, the meeting with the King of Prussia to receive the Emperor's abdication took place at Belleville, a country-house in the neighbourhood. There is a certain dignity given by circumstances to per-