

battles of the Thirty Years' War, nearly two centuries before.

Here was fought one of the fiercest and most decisive struggles of that quarter century of conflict. It was a fight for life, a battle to decide the question of who should be lord of Europe. Napoleon had been brought to bay. Despising to the last his foes, he had weakened his army by leaving strong garrisons in the German cities, which he hoped to re-occupy after he had beaten the German armies. On the 16th of October the great contest began. It was fought fiercely throughout the day, with successive waves of victory and defeat, the advantage at the end resting with the allies through sheer force of numbers. The 17th was a day of rest and negotiation, Napoleon vainly seeking to induce the Emperor of Austria to withdraw from the alliance. While this was going on large bodies of Swedes, Russians, and Austrians were marching to join the German ranks, and the battle of the 18th was fought between a hundred and fifty thousand French and a hostile army of double that strength, which represented all northern and eastern Europe.

The battle was one of frightful slaughter. Its turning-point came when the Saxon infantry, which had hitherto fought on the French side, deserted Napoleon's cause in the thick of the fight, and went over in a body to the enemy. It was an act of treachery whose fatal effect no effort could overcome. The day ended with victory in the hands of the allies. The French were driven back close upon the walls of Leipsie, with the serried columns of