

to what corps they belonged. The forts which defend it would require a considerable number of men to man them properly; and I do not think the place could hold out many *hours* before such artillery as the Germans use in their siege operations. The old "carronades" of Nelson's days were sometimes called "smashers"; much more appropriate is such a name to the monster howitzers which the Germans use to smash up their opponent's defensive works; and yet I am not one of those who are appalled by the destruction effected by huge guns. Modern forts are not strong enough, and are not constructed on the principle which is best calculated to withstand the battering of Krupp's huge ordnance; but they may be made of sufficient strength to defy any guns. In a competition between forts and guns, forts if properly constructed and defended must win. By "defended" I mean so placed that they cannot be subjected to direct fire. This can always be done. For if they cannot be placed on elevated ground, they can be sunk in it; and my experience is that a gun sunk in a pit is the most difficult of all marks for an artillerist to hit. In fact, I do not think it can be done, except by a chance shot, and chance shots do not win, or lose, fortresses.