

peror who had recognized the impossibility of leaving the place on horseback, replied that he could not rejoin the General, that, moreover, he could not consent to save himself by the sacrifice of a great number of his soldiers, and that he was determined to share the fate of the army. The proposition of General Wimpffen, as events proved, had not the slightest chance of success. He wished, nevertheless, to make this desperate attempt, but he could only assemble 2000 men, and, after having advanced 300 paces, he himself recognized the futility of his effort, and was forced to return into the town. Then it was the commanders of the *corps d'armée* came and announced to the Emperor that their troops, after having sustained for nearly 12 hours an unequal fight, weakened by fatigue and hunger, could no longer offer any serious resistance. In fact, the soldiers, driven back against the walls and thrown into the ditches, were decimated by the enemy's artillery; and Sedan itself choked with the *débris* of all the corps, was being bombarded on all sides.

The shells set the houses on fire and struck the wounded who had been carried into them. The great barracks, converted into a hospital, upon the top of which floated the red-cross flag, were not spared, and men and horses, huddled up in the courtyard, were continually hit. Many of the officers and men were killed in the streets swept by the enemy's fire, among them two Generals. The Emperor then endeavoured to make known to General Wimpffen the advisability of asking for an armistice, since every moment of delay only increased the number of victims. Not receiving any tidings of the General—at the sight of so much uselessly shed blood, and in such a hopeless situation, the Emperor caused the white flag to be hoisted upon the citadel. At the same time the King of Prussia sent an officer to Sedan to demand the surrender of the place. The Emperor not being in command of the army referred him to General Wimpffen. The latter, looking at the gravity of the situation, and not wishing to take upon himself the initiative of the capitulation, sent in his resignation, which was not accepted.

#### THE EMPEROR A PRISONER.

The Emperor convinced—according to the assertions of the press—that the King had declared that he made war not against France, but against her sovereign, did not hesitate to constitute himself a prisoner, hoping that the object of the war being attained by the sacrifice of his liberty, the conqueror would be less exacting towards France and the army. He addressed to the King, by one of his officers, the following letter:

Sire (My brother, Monsieur mon frere): Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty. I am of your Majesty the good brother (bon frere).

NAPOLEON.

The King replied as follows:

Sire (My brother, Monsieur mon frere): Regretting the circumstances under which we meet, I accept the sword of your Majesty and I pray you to name one of your officers provided with full powers to treat for the capitulation of the army, which has so bravely fought under your command. On my side I have named General Moltke for this purpose. I am of your Majesty the good brother.

WILLIAM.

Before Sedan, Sept. 1, 1870.

General Wimpffen betook himself to the Prussian headquarters in order there to discuss the terms of surrender. During the interview the French General tried to obtain more favourable terms, but General Moltke replied: "Your army does not number at this moment more than 80,000 men; we have 230,000 who completely surround you. Our artillery is everywhere in position, and can destroy the place in two hours. Your troops can only go out by the gates, and cannot possibly form before them. You have provisions for only one day, and scarcely any more ammunition. In such a situation the prolongation of your defence would be only a useless massacre, the responsibility of which must rest upon those who will not prevent it." On his return to Sedan, General Wimpffen called a council of war, composed of about 32 general officers, and, with but two dissentient voices, it was decided that any fresh struggle would but entail the useless loss of thousands of men, and the capitulation was signed. The 2nd of September was a day the evil omened memories of which will never be effaced from our mind.

#### THE INTERVIEW WITH COUNT BISMARCK.

M. de Bismarck had sent word to the Emperor, the previous evening, that the King of Prussia offered him an interview on the morrow. Consequently the Emperor left Sedan on the morning of the 2nd, and sent to inform Count Bismarck of his arrival, asking him where was the place fixed upon for the interview. He waited for the Chancellor of the North German Confederation in a small house on the road to Donchery. Bismarck did not long delay in meeting him. In the conversation that ensued the Emperor hastened to declare that, as he had given full powers to the Regency, with it alone could negotiations for peace be conducted, that he merely delivered his own person into the hands of the King, claiming nothing for himself, but appealing to his generosity for the army and for France. He added that the war having been unfortunate, he would not altogether throw off the responsibility which lay upon him, but that, nevertheless, he was bound to state that he had only obeyed a violently excited national feeling. The papers have made a crime of these words of the Emperor. However, both in his proclamation to the army on the eve of his departure from Paris, and in his answer to the President of the Corps Législatif, he had expressed the same thoughts when he said, "We have done all in our power to avoid war, and I can say that it is the entire nation which has in its irresistible *élan* prompted our resolution." This statement was indispensable, since every day the Emperor is still accused of having drawn the sword in a dynastic interest. The two Sovereigns met in the Chateau of Belle Vue, in the outskirts of Sedan. At this conference the King showed the lofty feelings which animated him by exhibiting to the Emperor all the consideration which his misfortunes demanded, and the Emperor preserved an attitude of the utmost dignity. Gen. Wimpffen, who had told the Emperor the army counted upon his intervention with the King of Prussia for better conditions, was informed of the fruitlessness of his efforts. Such is the recital of the military operations which terminated so unhappily in the surrender of the army at Sedan. So tremendous a disaster should not only bring from us our tears, it should also be pregnant with instruction, and should furnish lessons never to be forgotten.

#### THE PRIMARY CAUSE OF THE DISASTERS.

The successes of Prussia are due to the

superiority of numbers, to the rigorous discipline of her army and to the empire exercised throughout Germany by the principle of authority. May our unhappy fellow-countrymen who are prisoners at least profit, during their sojourn in Prussia, by appreciating that which gives strength to a country—the powers that be respected, the laws obeyed, the military and patriotic spirit dominating all interests and all opinions! Certainly the struggle was disproportionate, but it would have been longer sustained and less disastrous to our arms, if military operations had not been unceasingly subordinated to political considerations. We should also have been better prepared if the Chambers had not incessantly been desirous of reducing the war budget, and had they not always opposed any measure to increase the national forces. Fifteen days before the declaration of war, the Committee on the Budget in the Corps Législatif expressed an intention to suppress the Imperial Guard and to reduce the effective strength of the army.

To these principal causes of our reverses we must add the lamentable habits introduced into the army by the wars in Africa. Want of discipline, want of cohesion, absence of order, exaggeration of the weight carried by the soldier, and the quantity of baggage of the officers—these are the abuses which have been introduced into our armies. The French foot soldier formerly noted for the rapidity of his march, is becoming heavier than the German infantryman. Carelessness of bearing affects a military spirit: our officers and soldiers seem to be no longer proud to wear their uniforms, and the mediocrity of costumes painfully affects the eye. This *abandon* in deportment is reflected in everything else. One comes across no more that regularity, that love of duty, that abnegation of self which are the first qualities both of those who command and those who obey.

To sum up, the army always reflects the state of society in which it has been formed. So long as authority in France was strong and respected, the constitution of the army presented a remarkable solidity; but when the excesses of the tribune and of the press were permitted to enfeeble authority, and to introduce everywhere a spirit of criticism and insubordination, the army felt the effects of it.

God grant that the terrible drama which is now being enacted may serve as a lesson for the future, and that our country may rise again from the catastrophe which now overwhelms her.

The totally unexpected defeat of the favoured Mr. Garvie has completely crushed the Anti's of Nova Scotia, and they are seeking to retire from the advocacy of a lost cause with as little publicity as possible. Several of the prominent men of that party have, it is reported, in their humiliation and vexation, resolved to eschew politics in the future; and one of them, a member of the House of Commons, is credited with the intention of resigning his seat.

John B. Gough once, while on a lecturing tour through England, was introduced to a village audience in these terms. "Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honor to introduce to you the distinguished lecturer, Mr. J. B. Gough, who will address us on the subject of temperance. You know that temperance is thought to be rather a dry subject, but to night as we listen to our friend, the orator from over the ocean, we may hope to have the miracle of Samson repeated, and to be refreshed with water from the jawbone of a hussar!"