THE DAILY TIMES.

WATERTOWN, SEPT. 7, 1870.

We are rejoiced to know that Victor Hugo is again in Paris. One of the very best men in France he always was. Napoleon drove him into exile, because he knew this. Exit Emperor, enter Hugo!

The Great Battles Before Sedan.

BY TELEGRAPH TO THE N. Y. TRIBUNE.

WHAT THE FRENCH PRISONERS SAY.

After their defeat on the 30th and 31st ult., the French retired *en masse* on Sedan, and encamped around it. From what I learned of the French prisoners—of whom, as you may imagine, there was no lack in our quarter—it seems that they fully believed that the road to Mezieres would always be open to them, and that therefore, in case of another defeat before Sedan, their retreat would be easily accomplished.

Being at the Crown Prince's headquarters, Wednesday evening, at Chemery, 13 miles from Sedan, I saw at once that somethihg extraordinary was going on.—It was soon plain that the troops were in the lightest possible marching order. All their knapsacks were left behind, and they were carrying nothing but cloaks slung around their shoulders, except that one or two *bon vivants* had retained their camp-kettles. But if the camp-kettles were left behind, the cartouche-cases were there—hanging heavily in front of the men's belts, unbalanced, as they ought to be, by the knapsacks. Soon I learned that the whole Prussian corps—those lent from Prince Frederick Charles's army, the Second Army, and the Crown Prince's—were making a forced march to the left in the direction of Donchery and Mezieres, in order to shut in MacMahon's army in the west, and so drive them against the Belgian frontier. I learned from the officers of the Crown Prince's staff that at the same time, while we were watching regiment after regiment pass through Chemery, the Saxons and the Guards, 80,000 strong, on the Prussian right, under Prince Albert of Saxony, were also marching rapidly, to close on the doomed French army on the right bank of the Meuse, which they had crossed at Remilly on Tuesday, the 30th, in the direction of La Chapelle, a small village of 930 inhabitants on the road from Sedan to Bouillon in Belgium.

Anything more splendid than the men's marching it would be impossible to imagine. I saw men lame in both feet hobbling along in the ranks, kind comrades less footsore carrying their needle-guns.—Those who were actually incapable of putting one foot before another, had pressed peasants' wagons and every available conveyance into service, and were following in the rear, so as to be ready for the great battle, which all felt sure would come off on the morrow.

THE START FOR THE BATTLE-FIELD.

At seven Thursday morning my servant came to wake me, saying that the King's horses were harnessing, and that His Majesty would leave in half-an-hour for the battle-field, and as a cannonade had already been heard near Sedan, I jumped up, seized crusts of bread, wine, cigars, etc., and crammed them into my holster, taking my breakfast on the way.

Just as I got to my horse King William drove out in an open carriage with four horses, for Chevange, about three and a half miles south of Sedan. Much against my will, I was compelled to allow the King's staff to precede me on the road to the scene of action, where I arrived myself soon after 9 o'clock. It was impossible to ride fast, all the roads being blocked with artillery, ammunition wagons, ambulances, etc. As I rode on to the crest of the hill which rises sharply about 600 or 700 feet above the little hamlet of Chevange, nestled in a grove below,

A MOST GLORIOUS PANORAMA

burst on my view. As General Forsyth of the United States army remarked to me later in the day, it would have been worth the coming, merely to see so splendid a scene, without "battle's magnificently stern array." In the lovely valley below us, from the knoll on which I stood with the King and his staff, we could see not only the whole Valley of the Meuse, but also, beyond the great woods of Bois de Loup and Francheval into Belgium, and as far as the hilly forest of Numo on the other side of the frontier. Right at our feet lay the little town of Sedan, famous for its fortifications by Vauban and as the birthplace of Turenne—the great Marshal.

A GRAVE FRENCH BLUNDER.

The French had flooded the low meadows in the valley before coming to the railway bridge at Bazeille, in order to stop the Germans from advancing on the town in that direction. With their usual stupidity (for one can find no other word for it), the French had failed to mine the bridge at Bazeille, and it was of immense service to the Prussians throughout the battle. The Prussians actually threw up earthworks on the iron bridge itself to protect it from the French, who more than once attempted early in the day to storm the bridge, in the hope of breaking the Bavarian communication between the right and left banks of the Meuse. This they were unable to do; and although their cannon-shot have almost demolished the parapet, the bridge itself was never materially damaged.

THE FORCES ENGAGED.

The number of Prussian troops engaged was estimated by Gen. Moltke at 240,000, and that of the French at 120,000. We know that MacMahon had with him on Tuesday 120,000 men, that is four corps; his own, that lately commanded by Gen. De Failly, now under Gen. Le Brun; that of Felix Douay; and a fourth corps principally commanded by Garde Mobile, the name of whose commander has escaped me. MacMahon, although wounded, commanded in chief on the French side.

It is almost needless to say that the real Commander-in-Chief of the Prussians was Von Moltke; with the Crown Prince and Prince Albert of Saxony immediately next in command.

OPENING OF THE BATTLE.

There were a few stray cannon shots fired, merely to obtain the range, as soon as it was light; but the real battle did not begin until 6 o'clock, becoming a sharp artillery fight at 9, when the batteries had each got within easy range, and the shells began to do serious mischief.—At 11:55 the musketry fire in the valley behind Sedan, which had opened about 11:25, became exceedingly lively—being one continuous rattle, only broken by the loud growling of the mitrailleuses, which played with deadly effect upon the Saxon and Bavarian columns. Gen. Sheridan, by whose side I was standing at the time, told me that he did not remember ever to have heard such a well-sustained fire of small arms. It made itself heard above the roar of the batteries at our feet.

At 12 o'clock precisely the Prussian battery of six guns on the slope above the railway bridge over the Meuse, near La Villettee, had silenced two batteries of French guns at the foot of the bare hill near the village of Floing. At 12:10 the French infantry, no longer supported by their artillery, were compelled to retire to Floing, and soon afterward the junction between the Saxons and Prussians behind Sedan was announced to us by Gen. Von Roon, eagerly peering through a large telescope, as being safely completed.

THE FRENCH SURROUNDED.

From this moment the result of the battle could no longer be doubtful The French were completely surrounded and brought to bay. At 12:25 we were all astonished to see columns of retreating French infantry on the hill between Floing and Sedan, a Prussian battery in front of St. Menges making accurate practice with percussion shells among the receding ranks. The whole hill for a quarter of an hour was literally covered with Frenchmen running rapidly.

Less than half an hour afterwards - at 12:50—Gen. Von Roon called our attention to another French column in full retreat to the right of Sedan, on the road leading from Bazeille to the La Givonne wood. They never halted until they came to a red-roofed house on the outskirts of Sedan itself. Almost at the same moment Gen. Sheridan, who was using my opera-glass, asked me to look at a third French column moving up a broad, gross-covered road through the La Givonne wood, immediately above Sedan, doubtless to support the troops defending the important Bazeille ravine to the north-east of the town.

THE KEY OF THE POSITION.

At 1 o'clock the French batteries on the edge of the wood toward Torcy and above it opened a vigorous fire on the advancing Prussian column of the Third Corps, whose evident intention it was to storm the hill northwest of La Givonne, and so gain the key of the position on that side. At 1:05 yet another French battery near the wood opened on the Prussian columns which were compelled to keep shifting their ground till ready for the final rush at the hills, in order to avoid offering so good a mark to the French shells. Shortly afterword we saw the first Prussian skirmishers on the crest of the La Givonne hills above Torcy. They did not seem to be in strength, and Gen. Sheridan, standing behind me, exclaimed:

"Ah! the beggars are too weak; they can never hold that position against all those French."

The General's prophecy soon proved correct, for the French advanced at least six to one; and the Prussians were soon forced to retreat down the hill to seek re-enforcements from the columns which were hurrying to their support. In five minutes they came back again, this time in greater force, but still terribly inferior to those huge French masses.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL CAVALRY CHARGE.

"Good heavens! The French cuirassiers are going to charge them," cried Gen. Sheridan; and sure enough, the regiment of cuirassiers, their helmets and breast-plates flashing in the September sun, formed in sections of squadrons and dashed down on the scattered Prussian skirmishers, without designing to form a line. Squares are never used by the Prussians, and the infantry received the cuirassiers with a crushing "quick fire," *schnellfeuer*, at about a hundred yards distance, loading and firing with extreme rapidity, and shooting with unfailing precision into the dense French squadrons. The effect was startling. Over went horses and men in numbers, in masses, in hundreds; and the regiment of proud French cuirassiers went hurriedly back in disorder; went back faster than it came; went back scarcely a regiment in strength, and not at all a regiment in form. Its comely array was suddenly changed into shapeless and helpless crowds of flying men.

CAVALRY PURSUED BY INFANTRY.

The moment the cuirassiers turned back, the brave Prussians actually dashed forward in hot pursuit at double-quick; infantry evidently pursuing flying cavalry. Such a thing has not often been recorded in the annals of war. I know not when an example to compare precisely with this has occurred. There was no more striking episode in the battle.

NEEDLE GUNS VS. CHASSEPOTS.

When the French infantry saw their cavalry thus fleeing before foot soldiers, they in their turn came forward and attacked the Prussians. The Prussians waited quietly; patiently enduring a rapid and telling fire from the Chassepots until their enemies had drawn so near as to be within a hundred yards of them. Then to the fire of the Chassepots they returned a fire as rapid from their needle guns; and the French infantry could no more endure this Prussian fire than the cavalry to whose rescue they had come. The infantry fled in its turn, and followed the cavalry to the place whence they came; that is, behind a ridge about 500 yards on the way to Sedan where the Prussian fire could no longer reach them.

The great object of the Prussians was gained, since they were not driven from the crest of the hill they sought to hold. Holding it thus against cavalry, the Prussians persuaded themselves that it was possible to establish artillery on this hill.

"There will be a devil of a fight for that crest before it is won or lost," said Sheridan, straining his eyes through his field-glass at the hill which was not three miles from us. The full sun was shining on that hill; we gazing upon it had the sun behind us.

At 1:30 French cavalry—this time, I presume, a regiment of carabiniers—made another dash at the Prussians, who were receiving reinforcements every moment; but the caribiniers met with the same fate as their brethren in iron jackets, and were sent to the right about with heavy loss. The Prussians took advantage of their flight to advance—their line about 200 yards nearer the line which the French infantry held.

A LITTLE BALAKLAVA BUSINESS

was tried, but without the success of the immortal six hundred, who took the guns on which they charged. The cuirassers came down once more, this time riding straight for the two field pieces; but before they came within 200 yards of the guns, the Prussians formed line as if on parade, and waiting, till those furious French horsemen had ridden to a point not fifty yards away, they fired. The volley seemed to us to empty the saddles of almost the whole of the leading squadron. The dead so strewed the ground as to block the path of the squadron following, and close before them the direct and dangerous road they had meant to follow. Their dash at the guns became a halt.

RETREAT OF THE FRENCH.

When once this last effort of the French horse had been made and had failed—failed, though pushed gallantly so far as men and horses could go—the French infantry fell swiftly back toward Sedan. It fell back because it saw that the chance of its carrying that fiercely contested hill was gone, and saw also that the Prussians holding the hill were crowning it with guns, so that their own line could not be much longer held facing it. In an instant as the French retired, the whole slope of the ground was covered by swarms of Prussian tirailleurs, who seemed to rise up out of the ground, and push forward by help of every slight roughness or depression in the surface of the hill. As fast as the French went back, these active enemies followed. After the last desperate charge of the French cavalry, Gen. Sheridan remarked to me that he never saw anything so reckless, so utterly foolish, as that last charge. "It was sheer murder."

The Prussians, after the French infantry fell back, advanced rapidly—so rapidly that the retreating squadrons of French cavalry being too closely pressed, turned suddenly round and charged desperately once again. But it was of no use. The days of breaking squares are over. The thin blue line soon stopped the Gallic onset.

There was neither artillery nor mitrailleuses, especially the latter, on the field to cover their infantry. The position was a most important one, and certainly worth straining every nerve to defend. One thing was clear enough, that the French infantry after once meeting the Prussians declined to try conclusions with them again, and that the cavalry were seeking to encourage them by their example.—About 2 oclock, and still other re-enforcements came to the Prussians over this long disputed hill between Torcy and Sedan to support the regiments already established there.

HAVOC AMONG THE BAVARIANS.

All the time that this great conflict was going on under Fritz's eyes, another was fought not less severe and as murderous for the Bavarians as the one I have attemptep to describe was for the French. If there was a want of mitrailleuses on the hill above Torcy, there was certainly no lack of them in the Bazeille ravine. On that side there was, for more than an hour, one continuous roar of musketry and mitrailleuses. Two Bavarian officers told me that the loss in their regiments was terrific, and that it was the mitrailleuses which made the havoc.

THE FRENCH FALL BACK ON SEDAN.

At 2:05 in the afternoon the French totally abandoned the hill between Torcy and Sedan, and fell back on the faubourg of Caval, just outside the ramparts of the town.

"Now the battle is lost for the French," said Gen Sheridan, to the delight of the Prussian officers. One would almost have imagined that the French had heard his words—they had hardly been uttered when there came a lull in the firing all along the line, at rather circle; as such it had now become.

At 2:45 the King came to the place where I was standing. He remarked that he thought that the French were about to try to break out just beneath us, in front of the Second Bavarian Corps.

At 3:50 Gen. Sheridan told me that the Emperor and Louis were in Sedan.

BRAVERY OF THE BAVARIANS.

At 3:20 the Bavarians below us not only contrived to get themselves inside the fortifictions of Sedan, but to maintain themselves there, working their way forward from house to house.

About 3 there was a great fight for the possession of the ridge above Bazeille.—That carried, Sedan was swept on all sides by the Prussian cannon. This point of vantage was carried at 4:40. When carried there could no longer be a shade of doubt as to the ultimate fate of Sedan.

At 6:30 there arose a sudden cry among the members of the King's staff—"*Der Kaider ist da!*"—and then came a loud hurrah. Soon we began to look anxiously for the arrival of a flag of truce. In ten minutes more Gen. Reilly rode up to the King of Prussia.

THE EMPEROR'S SURRENDER.

As soon as the French General was in sight, the slender escort of cuirassiers and dragoons we had with us was drawn up in line, two deep. Behind the King, in front of the escort, was the Staff; and ten yards in front of them again, stood His Majesty, King William of Prussia, ready to receive Gen. Reilly. That officer, as we soon learned, was the bearer of an autograph letter from the Emperor Napoleon to King William. The Emperor of the French wrote: "As I cannot die at the head of my army, I lay my sword at the feet of your Majesty."

Why Napoleon III. could not die, as did thousands of his soldiers, sword in hand, with his face to the foe, is not so clear.

On receipt of this astounding letter, there was a brief consultation between the King, the Crown Prince, wo had come over from his hill on the arrival of the flag of truce, Count Bismarck, Gen. Von Moltke, and Gen. Von Roon. After a few minutes' conversation, the King sat down on a rush-bottomed chair, and wrote a note (on another chair held as a table by two aides-de-camp) to the Emperor, asking him to come next morning to the king of Prussia's headquarters at Vendresse.

SHERIDAN CONGRATULATES BISMARCK.

While the King was writing this note, Count Bismarck came up to Gens. Sheridan and Forsyth, and myself, and heartily shook our hands. "Let me congratulate you most sincerely, Count," said Gen. Sheridan. "I can only campare the surrender of Napoleon to that of Gen. Lee at Appomattox Court-House."

When it came my turn to grasp the Chancellor's hand I could not help saying, after I had warmly congratulated him:

"You cannot but feel a pride, Count Bismarck, in having contributed so largely to the winning of to-day's victory."

"Oh! no, my dear Sir," was the mild answer: I am no strategist, and have nothing to do with the winning of battles. What I am proud of is that the Bavorians, the Saxons, and the Wurtembergers have not only been on our side, but have had so large a share—the largest share—in the glory of the day; that they are with us, and not against us. That is my doing. I don't think that French will say now that the South Germans will not fight for our common Fatherland."

THE IMPERIAL PRISONER

Next morning early, I started for Belgium. As I rode along I suddenly came first on a knot of Uhlans; then on two lackeys in the green and gold Imperial livery. Directly behind them came His Majesty Napoleon III., in his traveling carriage, on his way to report himself a prisoner at King William's headquarters at Vendresse, a little dirty village some eight miles from Sedan.

A Great Feat of Telegraphing.

The Tribune correspondent at the seat of war, has telegraphed by cable six columns of matter for the Tribune, an exploit which cost that newspaper the sum of about $5,000 in one day. But as the information is for the public, we make free use of it in our columns for the readers of the Daily Times. It is certainly a marvel that we should be able, in three days, to give the full particulars of such a series of battles 3,000 miles away.

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WHITTLESY—EVANS—At the residence of the bride's parents, August 29th, by Rev. Brown, Mr. Nelson Whittlesy, of Emporio, Kansas, to Miss Julia C. Evans, of Alexandria.

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GOODWIN—In Russel, August 11, 1870, Aaron Goodwin, aged 76 years.

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After a short geographical and historical sketch, showing the central position of the State and the events of its young history, follows a description of its beauty and fertility from the testimody of high military and literary authorities; an exhibit of mineral resources; a description of its beautiful lakes rivers, timber, game and fish; a dissertation on the climate, illustrating its marvelous healthfulness and adaptability to agriculture; shows how the cultivated area grew from 1,000 acres in 1850 to 1,690,000 acres in 1869, with a surplus of 14,000,000 bushels of wheat for export; gives tables of occupation, proving officially that Minnesota excels Iowa and Ohio in her average product of wheat, and all other staples except corn; shows a more ample and effective water power than all New England, and that, while not a tithe of this power is yet used, the extent and value of manufacture has increased 244 per cent in nine years.

The book also shows the value and importance of the lumbering interest, commercial resources and prospects, railroads constructed and projected, including the North Pacific—already energetically pushed forward—the amazing development of its common schools from thirteen districts, five schools and 59 scholars in 1851; to 2,520 districts, 1,920 school houses and 102,086 scholars in 1869—progress in population in which she is shown to have outstripped all her sisters. Due attention is given to political and social instructions, government, taxation, value of property, distribution and wealth, improvement of farms, exemption laws, law of descent, legal practice, statistics of charitable institutions, poor, post offices, newspapers, religion, Sunday School, Masons, Odd Fellows, &c.

It concludes with a chapter on "Public Lands, how and where to get them," shows the amount of unoccupied lands, how to obtain "free farms," gives the location of the government land offices, describes the different classes of public lands and the several modes and costs of obtaining them under the homestead laws, by pre emption, &c., with suggestions as to the manner and cost of starting farms, when to commence, what money can do, what pluck and muscle may do—wages, employment, and who should come to the State—affording, in short, all such information as emigrants most need.

Part of the edition is accompanied with an excellent map, showing the character of the different locations, &c.

This book will be sent to any address in America or Europe free of postage or other expense, on application to F. PAGE DAVIS, Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Minnesota, No. 156 Broadway, New York, where all information in regard to the state will be cheerfully given. sep6 4w

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