

FRENCH BULLETINS.

BULLETIN XXV.

Wolkersdorf, July 8.

"The works raised by General Count Bertrand, and the corps he commands, had, since the beginning of the month, entirely subdued the Danube. His Majesty instantly resolved to collect his forces in the island of Lobau, open upon the Austrian army, and bring on a general engagement. It was not because the position of the French army was not a very fine one at Vienna—master of the whole right bank of the Danube, having in his power Austria, and a considerable portion of Hungary, he enjoyed the greatest plenty. If some difficulties had been experienced in providing sustenance for the people of Vienna, this arose from an ill organised administration, from embarrassments which were every day diminishing, and from difficulties which were naturally produced by the situation in which the country was placed, in a land in which the trade in corn is an exclusive privilege of the government. But how could the troops continue to be separated from the hostile army by a canal of three or four hundred toises in breadth, when the means of passing over had been prepared and secured?—This would have given credibility to the impositions which the enemy had scattered with so great profusion throughout his own and neighbouring countries: this would have cast a doubt over the occurrences at Essling, and would, finally, have authorized the supposition of their being, in fact, a substantial equality between armies so different, of which one was animated, and in some measure reinforced, by multiplied successes and victories, while the other was dispirited by the most striking reverses.

"All the intelligence collected concerning the Austrian army shewed that it was considerable; that it had been recruited by numerous bodies of reserve, by the levies from Moravia and Hungary, and by all the *landwehrs* (fencible) of the provinces; that its cavalry had been remounted by requisitions in all the circles, and its draughts of artillery, trippled by immense levies of horses and carriages in Moravia, Hungary, and Bohemia. To add new chances in their favour, the Austrian Generals had raised military works, of which the right was protected by Gros-Aspern, and the left by Enzersdorf. The villages of Aspern, Essling, and Enzersdorf, and the intervals between them were covered by redoubts, surrounded by palisades and frizes, and defended by more than 150 pieces of battering cannon, taking from the fortresses of Bohemia and Moravia.

"It was inconceivable how the Emperor with his experience in war, could think of attacking works so powerfully defended, backed by an army estimated at 200,000 men, as well troops of the line as militia and new raised levies, and who were supported by 800 or 900 pieces of field artillery. It appeared more simple to throw some flesh bridges over the Danube, a few leagues lower down, and thus render useless the field of battle prepared by the enemy. But in this latter case it was not thought practicable to avert the inconveniences which had already nearly proved fatal to the army, and succeed in the course of two or three days in protecting these new bridges from the machines of the enemy.

"On the other side the Emperor was tranquil. Works were raised upon works in the Island of Lobau; and several bridges on piles, and several rows of floccadoes, were fixed at the same place.

"This situation of the French army, placed between these two great difficulties, had not escaped the enemy. He was aware that his army, too numerous and unwieldy, would be exposed to certain destruction if he acted on the offensive; but, at the same time, he believed that it was impossible to dislodge him from the central position in which he covered Bohemia, Moravia, and a part of Hungary. It is true that this position did not cover Vienna, and that the French were in possession of this capital. But this possession was, in a certain degree, disputed, since the Austrians remained masters of one bank of the Danube, and prevented the arrival of the articles most indispensable to the subsistence of so great a city. These were the reasons of hope and fear, and the subject of conversation in the two armies.

On the 1st of July, at four o'clock in the morning, the Emperor removed his head-quarters to the Island Lobau, which had been already named by the engineers, the Island Napoleon. A small Island to which had been given the name of the Duke of Montebello, and which bore upon Enzersdorf, had been furnished with ten mortars, and twenty 18-pounders. Another Island called Island Espagne, had been supplied with six pieces of battering cannon (12-pounders) and four mortars. Between these two Islands, a battery, had been raised, equal in force to that of the Island Montebello, and in like manner bearing upon Enzersdorf. These 62 pieces of battering artillery had the same object, were in two hours to destroy the little town of Ebenesdorf, drive away the enemy and demolish the works. On the right, the Island of Alexander, with four mortars, two 10-pounders, and twelve 6-pounders (battering cannon) were to bear upon the plain, and protect the operations of the bridges.

On the 2d, the Aid-de-Camp of the Duke de Rivoli passed over to the Mill Island with 500 Voltigeurs, and took possession of it. This Island was also furnished with cannon. It was joined to the Continent, on the left side, by a small bridge. In the front a little flecke was raised, and this redoubt was called Petit.

In the evening the redoubts of Essling appeared to be jealous of these works: not doubting that they were a first battery, formed to act against themselves, they fired upon them with great activity. This was precisely the intention in having seized this Island. The attention of the enemy was to be drawn to this point, in order to conceal from him the operations really proposed.

Passage across the arm of the Danube, to the Island Lobau.

On the 4th, at ten in the evening, General Oudinot, caused 1500 Voltigeurs to be embarked on the great arm of the Danube, commanded by Gen. Conroux. Colonel Balle, with ten gun-boats, conveyed them, and disembarked them beyond the little arm of the Island Lobau, in the Danube.—The batteries of the enemy were soon silenced, and he was driven from the woods to the village of Muhleuten.

At eleven in the evening, the batteries raised against Enzersdorf received orders to begin the firing. The howitzers set this unfortunate little town on fire, and in less than half an hour the enemy's batteries had ceased to operate.

The Chief of Battalion Desfales, director of the bridges, and the engineer of the marine, had prepared in the Island Alexander, a bridge of 80 toises, of a single piece, and five great ferry boats.

Col. Sante Croix, Aid-de-Camp of the Duke of Rivoli, embarked in barges with 2500 men, and landed on the left bank.

The bridge of a single piece, the first of the kind which has hitherto been made, was fixed in less than five minutes, and the infantry passed over it with great rapidity.

Capt. Bazelle fixed a bridge of boats in an hour and a half. Capt. Payemoffe formed a bridge of rafts in two hours.

Thus, at two o'clock of the morning, the army had four bridges, and had debouched on the left 1500 toises below Enzersdorf, protected by the batteries, and the right upon Vitzau. The corps of the Duke de Rivoli formed the left; that of Count Oudinot, the centre; and that of the Duke of Auerstadt, the right; the corps of the Prince de Ponte Corvo, the Viceroy and the Duke of Ragusa, the guards, and the cuirassiers formed the second line, and the bodies of reserve. Utter darkness, a violent storm, and rain, which fell in torrents, rendered this night as frightful as it was propitious to the French army, and was about to be glorious to it.

On the 5th at day break, every one perceived what had been the project of the Emperor, who was then, with his whole army, arranged in order of battle at the extremity of the enemy's left, having turned all his entrenched camps, having rendered his works useless, and thus obliging the Austrians to abandon their positions, and come and offer him battle on the spot that was convenient to him. The great problem was thus resolved, and without passing the Danube on the other points—without receiving any protection from the works he had raised, he forced the enemy to fight three quarters of a league from his redoubts. From that moment the greatest and happiest results were prefigured.

At eight in the morning, the batteries which had played upon Enzersdorf had produced such an effect, that the enemy, was obliged to let that town be occupied by no more than four battalions. The Duke of Rivoli dispatched his first Aid-de-Camp, Sante Croix, against it, who did not meet with a great resistance, and took prisoners all who remained in it.

Count Oudinot surrounded the castle of Sachfengang, which the enemy had fortified, forced 900 men who defended it to capitulate, and took 12 pieces of cannon.

The Emperor then caused the whole army to spread itself along the immense plain of Enzersdorf.

BATTLE OF ENZERSDORF.

In the mean while the enemy, confounded in all his projects, gradually recovered from his astonishment, and endeavoured to regain some advantages in this new field of battle. For this purpose he detached several columns of infantry, a considerable number of pieces of artillery, and all his cavalry, as well of the line as the new levies, in order to attempt to out-flank the right of the French army. In consequence, he occupied the village of Zutzendorf. The Emperor ordered General Oudinot to carry this village, to the right of which he sent the Duke of Auerstadt, in order to proceed to the head-quarters of Prince Charles, going always from the right to the left.

From noon till nine in the evening, the French armies manoeuvred in this immense plain. All the villages were occupied, and when the French had reached the heights of the entrenched camps of the enemy, they fell of their own accord and as if by enchantment. The Duke de Rivoli caused them to be occupied without resistance. It was thus we seized the works of Essling and Gros-Aspern, and the labour of 40 days was of no use to the enemy. He made some resistance in the village of Raschdorf, which the Prince de Ponte Corvo caused to be attacked and carried by the Saxons. The enemy was every where overwhelmed by the superiority of our fire. This immense field of battle was covered with his remains.

BATTLE OF WAGRAM.

Strongly alarmed by the progress of the French army, and the great successes which it obtained, with scarcely any effort, the enemy put all his troops in motion, and at six in the evening he occupied the following position:—his right from Stadelau to Gerasdorf, his centre from Gerasdorf to Wagram, and his left from Wagram to Neufiedel. The French army had its left at Gros-Aspern, its centre at Raschdorf, and its right at Glenzindorf. In this position, the day was nearly at a close, and we had necessarily to expect a great battle on the morrow; but this was to be avoided, and the position of the enemy to be intersected, so as to prevent him from forming any plan, by taking possession in the night of the village of Wagram. In this case, his line, already of an immense length, being suddenly assailed and exposed to the chances of combat, the different bodies of his army would be dispersed without order or direction, and we should succeed at an easy rate, and without any serious engagement. The attack on Wagram took place, and our troops took possession of the village; but a column of Saxons and French mistook each other in the dark for enemies, and this operation failed.

We then prepared for the battle of Wagram. It appears that the dispositions of the French General and the Austrian General were inverted. The Emperor passed the night in accumulating his forces towards his centre, where he was in person within cannon shot of Wagram. With this view the Duke de Rivoli moved upon the left of Aderlatsau, leaving at Aspern a single division with orders for it to fall back in case of necessity upon the Island of Lobau. The Duke of Auerstadt received orders to leave unoccupied the village of Grosshofen that night to approach the centre.—The Austrian General, on the contrary, weakened his centre to secure and augment his extremities, which he still further extended.

On the 6th at day-break, the Prince de Ponte Corvo occupied the left, having the Duke of Rivoli in a second line. The Viceroy connected him with the centre, where the corps of Count Oudinot, that of the Duke of Ragusa, those

of the Imperial Guards, and the divisions of cuirassiers, formed seven or eight lines.

The Duke of Auerstadt marched from the right to reach the centre. The enemy, on the contrary, put Bellegarde's corps in motion for Stadelau. The corps of Collowrat, Lichtenstein and Hilliar, connected their right with the position of Wagram, where Prince Hohenzollern was, and with the extremity of the left at Neufiedel, where the corps of Rosenberg debouched in order also to out flank that of the Duke of Auerstadt.—The corps of Rosenberg, and that of the Duke of Auerstadt, moving in opposite directions, encountered each other with the first rays of the sun, and gave the signal of battle. The Emperor instantly repaired to this point, ordered the Duke of Auerstadt to be reinforced by the division of the Duke of Padua's cuirassiers, and the corps of Rosenberg to be attacked in flank by a battery of twelve guns of the division of Count de Nansouto. In less than three quarters of an hour, the fine corps of the Duke of Auerstadt gave a good account of the corps of Rosenberg, defeating it, and driving it beyond Neufiedel with considerable loss.

In the meantime a cannonade commenced along the whole of the line, and the enemy's dispositions were every moment discovering themselves. The whole of his left was secured with artillery. One might have said that the Austrian General was not fighting for victory, but was looking only to the means of improving it. The disposition of the enemy seemed so absurd, that some snare was apprehended, and the Emperor delayed some time before he ordered those easy dispositions which he had to make to disconcert those of the enemy, and render them fatal to him. He ordered the Duke of Rivoli to make an attack on the village occupied by the enemy, and which somewhat threatened the extremity of the centre of the army. He ordered the Duke of Auerstadt to turn the position of Neufiedel, and then to push on upon Wagram, and he formed the Duke of Ragusa's troops, and those of General Macdonald, in column, to carry Wagram at the moment the Duke of Auerstadt should debouch.

While these proceedings were taking place, information was received that the enemy was making a furious attack upon the village carried by the Duke of Rivoli; that our left was out flanked by 3000 toises, that a brisk cannonade was already heard at Gros-Aspern, and that the space between Gros-Aspern and Wagram seemed to be covered with an immense line of artillery. There was no longer any room for doubt. The enemy had committed an enormous fault, and we had only to profit by it. The Emperor instantly ordered General Macdonald to form the divisions of Broussier and Lamarque in columns for an attack. He ordered the division of Nansouto to be supported by the horse guards, and a battery of sixty guns belonging to the guards, and forty of different other corps. General Count Laurillon at the head of his battery of 100 pieces of artillery, marched at a trot against the enemy, advanced without firing to within half a gun-shot distance, and there opened a prodigious fire which silenced that of the enemy, and spread death among his ranks. General Macdonald then advanced at the *pas de charge*. The General of division, Reille, with the brigade of fusiliers and sharp shooters of the guards, supported General Macdonald. The guards made a change of front, in order to render the attack infallible. In an instant the enemy's centre lost a league of ground; his right became alarmed, and perceiving the dangerous position in which it was placed, rapidly fell back. The Duke of Rivoli, at that moment, attacked it in front. Whilst the rout of the centre struck consternation into the right of the enemy, and precipitated its movements, the left was attacked and out flanked by the Duke of Auerstadt, who had carried Neufiedel, and who, having gained the elevated plain, was marching upon Wagram.—The division of Broussier and Gudin covered themselves with glory.

It was then only ten o'clock in the morning; and those who had the least penetration saw that the fate of the day was decided, and that the victory was ours.

At noon Count Oudinot marched upon Wagram, to assist the attack of the Duke of Auerstadt. He was successful, and carried that important position. After ten o'clock the enemy sought only to effect his retreat; at twelve this was manifest; it was conducted in disorder; long before dark the enemy was out of sight. Our left was posted at Jetelsee and Ebersdorf; our centre upon Obersdorf; and the cavalry of our right extended their posts as far as Shoukirchen.

On the 7th, at day-break, the army was in motion, and marched upon Korneuburg and Wolkersdorf, and had some posts near Nicholtsburg. The enemy, cut off from Hungary and Moravia, had been forced to fall back upon Bohemia.

Such is the narrative of the battle of Wagram, a battle decisive and ever memorable, in which from three to four hundred thousand men, and from twelve to fifteen hundred pieces of cannon, contended for great interests, upon a field of battle, studied, planned and fortified, by the enemy for several months. Ten pair of colours, forty pieces of cannon, 20,000 prisoners, including 3, and 400 Officers, and a considerable number of Generals, Colonels and Majors, are the trophies of this victory. The fields of battle are covered with the slain; among whom are the bodies of several Generals, and among others, one called Norman, a Frenchman, a traitor to his country, who prostituted his talents against her.

All the enemy's wounded have fallen into our hands.—Those whom he abandoned at the commencement of the action, were found in the adjacent villages. It may be calculated that the result of this battle, will be that of reducing the Austrian army to less than 60,000 men.

Our loss has been considerable; it is estimated at 1500 in killed, and from 3 to 4000 wounded.

The Officers of the Staff are preparing a return of our losses. The Emperor of Austria left Wolkersdorf on the 6th, at five in the morning, and ascended a tower, from which he had a view of the field of battle, and where he remained until midnight—he then set off in haste.

The French H. Qrs. were transferred to Wolkersdorf on the morning of the 7th.