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THE CAUSES WHICH HAVE LED TO THE PRE-EMINENCE OF NATIONS IN WAR.

By Lieutenant HENRY ELSDALE, R.E.

“Gang forward.”

Introduction.

Proposed Method of dealing with the Subject.—The subject here proposed for consideration is one of vast extent. Historical experience, and reasoning based upon it, being evidently our only guide, it is necessary at the outset, in such a short essay as the present, to limit carefully our inquiry to a few marked and typical cases, assuming that such a sufficiently detailed reference to the facts of history, should be given for each case, as may afford some reasonable ground whereon to base our conclusions.

I propose then, first, to take a very brief and general survey of the whole subject, selecting as we proceed, those nations whose history seems best adapted for further inquiry. These we shall next consider *seriatim* in some detail. I will then conclude with a few general remarks, based upon our previous investigations, and upon the well-known facts of history.

Differing views of War in the Ancient and Modern World.—In the general idea and conception of war, there is observable a marked difference between the ancient and the modern world. In the former, war was very generally regarded as the normal condition, more or less, legitimate and laudable for pure self-aggrandizement.

Thus it is clear from the sculptures and monumental records of Egypt, Assyria, and the other ancient eastern monarchies, that war and conquest were thus regarded as praiseworthy, without any reference to any just cause of offence given by the unfortunate races who were the victims of unprovoked aggression. Again in Greece, we see Sparta wholly given to war, and thinking everything else of little account. And any respite which the Romans for centuries had from incessant fighting, was due from the long truces between them and their foes. When these lapsed, war was renewed again as a matter of course. This shows that to the Roman, war with his neighbours was the normal state, and peace the exception to be specially provided for by a special agreement.

Now in modern times, we are, unhappily, in no way exempt from wars of aggression or wars undertaken on no greater provocation than the jealousy of rival Powers. Still, broadly speaking, war now is the exception, not the rule, arising from some combination of circumstances, which sets the wishes, the passions, or the supposed interests of one people against those of another; and whenever these

temporary causes are removed, or the question decided by fighting in favour of one or other Power, the war comes to an end as a matter of course. Hence it arises that in more modern times, the development of military strength in nations is generally of a more fluctuating and uncertain character than was the case in ancient days; owing partly to the vast expense of standing armies, and of a constant state of preparation for war under modern conditions, and partly to the comparative rarity of war itself, which leads nations to presume upon the continuance of peace.

Thus we find the same power weak at one time and strong at another. Prussia, victorious under Frederick the Great, was humbled to the dust at Jena, but triumphed again of late in her wars against Austria and France. Great Britain, though not without her share of glory, has always been notorious for weakness and unreadiness at the beginning of a war.

Under these conditions, if we want to learn the secret of permanent and abiding military strength—which I assume to be the main object of our inquiry, rather than any temporary or ephemeral triumph to be obtained in a single campaign or series of campaigns—we must look for our examples, rather to the ancient than to the modern world.

Egypt, Greece, and Rome.—Egypt is the most ancient and long-enduring of all historic powers. We shall pass over the great ancient monarchies of Asia as inferior for our present purpose in interest and importance to Egypt—except in the case of the last of them, Persia, which will come into view in dealing with Greece. Rome is the last and greatest nation of the ancient world—Egypt, Greece and Rome, then, will be the three which we shall select for consideration. We shall then leave the ancient and pass to the more modern world.

Middle Ages.—After the culmination of the military empire of Rome, onwards for many centuries—comprising the period of her decay and downfall, all through the long darkness of the middle ages—there is from our present point of view comparatively little to be learnt.

Fighting, though in general on a small scale, comparatively speaking, there was plenty of, all this time. I am far from denying that wherever any two hostile bodies of men have met in conflict, there is some military instruction to be got from a study of the result. And no doubt there may be much in those dark ages that is interesting, such as the chivalrous militant Christianity of the crusades. But, broadly speaking, the art of war for many centuries lay under a dark cloud like all else throughout European life. We see everywhere a chronic state of skirmishing and bloodshed, but very little hard fighting on a decisive scale, and it is difficult, in such a shifting kaleidoscope, as the history of Europe then presents, to seize any general lessons suited to a rapid survey like the present.

The elaborate and highly-wrought civilization of the ancient world had perished, and carried with it the ideas, the principles, and the institutions by which great military empires had been founded and maintained. Such ideas and institutions had to be wrought out afresh by the hardly-bought experience of many centuries, before war as an art could again arrive at any excellence. Then too the pedantry of schoolmen hung like a cloud over military science, as over all other kinds of knowledge, checking its development and uselessly stereotyping its form. I propose therefore to pass over the long records of the throes and struggles, the

anarchy, the tumult, the rapine, and the intestine strife by which Europe was slowly winning her way to a better order of things.

I would make two remarks in passing; the first borrowed mainly from Mr. Grote ("Hist. of Greece," vol. i, p. 498), that the marked superiority of the defence over the attack in the days of walled cities, and bows and arrows, or before the invention of gunpowder, was, on the average and in the long run, a powerful agent for good—an ally of the side more generally representing law and order, as opposed to anarchy and licence. Secondly, that the universal employment of cavalry arose naturally out of the then condition, social and political, of Europe. For under the feudal system the nobles led their armed retainers to battle, thus forming everywhere the bulk of the armies.

Moguls and Tartars—Mohammedanism.—But ere we pass to modern times, there arises a chapter of contemporary Asiatic history, so extraordinary, so full of instruction, so illustrative of the causes which tend to create war, and successful war, on the largest scale, that I propose to devote a separate section to an inquiry into the great outbreaks of nomadic Asiatic races—the Moguls and Tartars. Next by an easy transition, we shall pass to consider a somewhat similar set of phenomena springing from a parallel set of causes, with the addition of an important exciting agent in the shape of religious fanaticism—I mean the great tide of war and conquest which is summed up in the word Mohammedanism, the consideration of which will demand a short section.

Returning now to European affairs we notice that the English distinguish themselves, as at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, by signal victories.

These were due partly to stubborn Anglo-Saxon fighting, and partly to a decided tactical preponderance which they established by their system of awaiting the attack in a prepared position, throwing the enemy into disorder by deadly showers of arrows as he approached, and charging him gallantly in flank with their cavalry when in confusion. These were much the same tactics—*mutatis mutandis*—as those of Wellington in the Peninsula; he also awaited the enemy's attack in a well chosen position, threw him into confusion by deadly volleys at close quarters, and then charged with the bayonet to complete his discomfiture.

The Swiss next caused infantry to be everywhere more highly esteemed by their successes, establishing such a reputation that kings sought companies of Swiss infantry for their body guards.

The great intellectual uprising which marked the era of the Reformation was followed by devastating wars all over Europe. Herein the brilliant career of Gustavus Adolphus and his Swedes form a distinct landmark in modern military history, but we have no space to consider it in detail.

Gustavus was a leader of great personal ability and influence, and was most successful in his improvements in tactics and equipment, and in the discipline and training of his troops. "He was indisputably the greatest general of his age. He "reduced the unwieldy squadrons of cavalry, and rendered their movements more "light and rapid; and with the same view he widened the intervals between his "battalions. Instead of the usual array in a single line he disposed his forces in two "lines. Europe first learned from him the importance of infantry. All Germany "was astonished at the strict discipline which at the first so creditably distinguished "the Swedish army within their territories."—Schiller.

Lieut.-Colonel Home ascribes the victories of Gustavus to the increased mobility and development of fire created by his very open formation, considering the period, of three ranks, and resulting employment of several lines instead of one,—to his

great improvements in artillery and musketry equipment,—and to his unrivalled skill in handling troops (*Précis of Modern Tactics*, p. 34). But the success of Gustavus was greatly due to the excellence of his material. The Swedes were courageous, patient of fatigue and privation, and full of devotion to the cause of their Protestant religion and their King. Briefly then, their great successes in this famous war were due to their own courage, unanimity, and devotion,—to the advantage which Gustavus possessed as Warrior King fighting at the head of his troops—and to his scientific warfare, with the many improvements which he introduced in organization and equipment, whereby he was enabled to establish a decided tactical superiority.

I give this brief analysis here, somewhat out of place, as we shall not have space to refer again to the subject.

After Gustavus for a long period, down to the end of the seventeenth century, the French, under Louis XIV, were indisputably the first military nation in Europe.

The French army was superior in generalship, in organization and in equipment; and a powerful centralized government was enabled to put as many as 400,000 men into the field. Turenne, Condé, and Saxe introduced many improvements.

Though at the beginning of the eighteenth century the victories of Marlborough and Eugene deposed France somewhat from this pre-eminence. Under the hands of Louvois and Vauban we see the creation of the first great modern standing army, and of the modern system of fortification.

—"the remains of the feudal system had disappeared. The distribution of the French Army and the arrangements for commanding it are fixed. Infantry gains its modern importance; the pike is done away with; the bayonet introduced. The column formations of the 30 years' war make way for the line formations of the 18th Century."—Boguslawski.

Frederick the Great.—In the middle of the eighteenth century when the French Army had sunk again to a low ebb, comes the next notable feature in military history in the victorious career of the Prussians under Frederick the Great. This we shall refer to under the heading of Prussia.

French Revolution.—All Europe was still wedded to the traditional methods of Frederick, when a new era, in military matters as in all else, set in with the abandonment of old traditions and fearless search after new which marked the French revolution. This, in its various phases, with the long wars which followed upon and arose out of it, constitutes, I suppose, the greatest struggle which the world has yet seen. In its progress all the capitals of continental Europe were occupied by foreign invaders, and war for years filled the minds and hearts of all men from the furthest confines of Russia on the east to the island borders of Britain on the west. To give even a short history of such a struggle embracing so many countries, would alone take up all our space. I shall, therefore, content myself with a brief general sketch of it at some of its most important and instructive phases.

Crimean War.—The long peace which followed the downfall of Napoleon brings us to the Crimean war with its lessons:

Such is the importance, if a war of any length is to be conducted with credit, of the careful training and organisation, in time of peace, of the staff and depart-

ments, including the important branches of supply and transport—the necessity of a proper system of reserves to fill up and maintain the cadres—the exhausting character, in the case of a vast empire thinly peopled and ill provided with transport, of a war conducted at a remote point of its circumference.

Omitting any detailed consideration of this war or of the great civil contest in America, and passing over the Austro-Italian and minor wars, we come, lastly, to the recent campaigns against Austria and France, which have lately placed Prussia at the head of the military powers of Europe. These we must consider briefly under the head of Prussia. We shall then conclude with a few general remarks.

Egypt.

Comparative Importance.—Egypt is a word of deep interest to the historian and the antiquary as the title of the oldest power in the world's history.

Two thousand years before the Christian era, we find pyramids already in existence. Egypt, even then, was an ancient power, with a history going back through many dynasties. The accounts of Manetho and Herodotus, would give us a total of nearly 5,000 years from Menes to the Persian invasion. Without absolutely relying upon this, we are yet justified in saying that Rome herself cannot compare for one moment, as regards duration of empire, with Egypt.

It is no less interesting to the artist or savant as the cradle and nursery of those arts and sciences which the keen intellect and refined artistic perception of Greece afterwards carried to such perfection. To the careful student of military history Egypt is of equal importance. Her pre-eminence in war is testified by innumerable monuments, no less than by the accounts of historians. At no period of her history does she appear to have been isolated, like China, through long centuries of stagnation, but rather surrounded by many enemies, and engaged in constant struggles. Hence, while the rest of the world was still more or less in its infancy in military matters, as in all else, Egypt had developed as one side of a self-evolved and highly wrought civilisation, an elaborate military system. Concerning this, it is much to be regretted that our information is but partial and imperfect, depending mainly upon the ancient monumental sculptures, which, however, form, as far as they go, an invaluable record. With the exception of the northern part about the Delta of the Nile, where we find a coast line of some eighty miles in extent, Egypt consists mainly of a very narrow strip of country along the course of the great river.

"The average breadth of the valley, from one mountain range to the other between Cairo in Lower and Edfoo in Upper Egypt, is only about seven miles; and that of the cultivable land, whose limits depend on the inundation, scarcely exceeds five and a half" (J. G. Wilkinson, "Ancient Egyptians," vol. i, p. 216).

From a period prior to the earliest authentic records, the population of this very limited tract appears to have been exceedingly large.

The number of towns and villages are variously given by ancient authors at from 20,000 to upwards of 30,000. "Josephus in the reign of Vespasian, still reckons seven millions and a half in the valley of the Nile, besides the population of Alexandria, which amounted to 300,000." If we take 10,000,000 to 12,000,000

as the maximum population of Egypt proper (exclusive of the numerous conquered provinces) in its palmyest days, we shall, perhaps, be approximately correct considering the very limited area.

From the earliest ages, Egypt was esteemed a rich country owing to the great fertility of its soil, which consisted mainly of the alluvial deposit from the Nile. We find traces of its exports of corn, yarn, fine-linen, cloth, and embroidered work in the Bible. Besides such manufactures, the Egyptians received a large revenue from the nations they had subdued in Asia and Ethiopia. Their commerce with surrounding countries, whether by sea or caravan, was considerable, and they had many valuable mines. But agriculture was the main source of their wealth. With a little consideration of these facts we shall hardly fail to recognise as one determining cause of Egypt's military greatness, the constant tendency to external expansion with its continual resulting practice in war created in the case of an intelligent and vigorous race by the pressure of increasing population upon a limited site, whose natural resources were insufficient for their requirements.

Constitution and Government.—The eastern system of class distinction appears to have prevailed from the earliest times in Egypt. The first caste with them consisted of the priests, from whom were chosen the King's responsible advisers, the judges and all the principal officers of State. The constitution was a despotism carefully restricted by stringent rules and customs, and especially by the requirements of religion, as interpreted by the powerful sacerdotal caste.

In a short essay like the present, covering such an immense field, we cannot attempt to go into details, nor do more than just glance at these leading facts with a view to justify the opinion that the stereotyped conservatism of constitutional forms and governmental traditions created by this union of sacerdotal and despotic government, was a leading cause of that stability of political life and long abiding military strength which enabled a low-lying and indefensible country like Egypt to maintain her ascendancy, unbroken by domestic struggles or foreign occupation, through so many long centuries of external war and dynastic change.

National Characteristics.—Glancing now for a moment at those national characteristics which go so far to determine a nation's military capacity and consequent success in war, we recognise in the ancient Egyptians a proud and imperial race.

They delighted to raise world-enduring monuments, whether to chronicle their success in war and conquest, or to deck the tombs of their ancestors and great men.

They were hardy and active.

In the midst of their vast stone palaces, and with every appliance of luxury at command, they slept on pillows of wood or alabaster almost identical in shape and character with those used at this very day by the hardy and unsophisticated Zulus in South Africa. Even the King's son, the heir to the throne, we are told was obliged to run an almost incredible distance every morning before breakfast to ensure his being active and strong in wind and limb.

They were a patient and hardworking, a methodical and organising race, capable

of transporting stupendous Sphinxes or vast monolithic columns across sandy deserts or soft alluvial soil.

They slew thousands of enemies in a well-organised and well-fought campaign, but never neglected to cut off the hands of the slain and count them in heaps by tens and by hundreds, in order that a proper and accurate record of their Kings' victories might be preserved.

Military System.—As the outcome of such national characteristics we will next glance at the forms which the military arrangements of the Egyptians assumed in practice. The military caste came next to the priests: "To them was assigned one of the three portions into which the land of Egypt was divided by an edict of Sesostris" (Wilkinson, p. 282), and the son of a soldier was forbidden from following any other profession. Every soldier was allowed a plot of land free from all charge and tribute: nor could he be cast into prison for debt. The whole force consisted, according to Herodotus, of 410,000 men, of whom 2,000 annually were selected for the royal body guard. They abode on their farms or portions of land when not wanted for active service or training. The land was a substitute for regular pay, and encouraged habits of industry.

"For the Egyptians justly considered that such employments promoted the strength of the body, as much as the idleness of a town life injured the physical and moral constitution, and the soldier was taught to look upon the pursuits of a mechanic as unmanly and contemptible. Indeed, they were absolutely forbidden to engage in any such occupation, as in Sparta they made war their profession, and deemed it the most worthy pursuit."—Wilkinson, page 286.

Field sports, gymnastic exercises, outdoor games of all kinds, wrestling, cudgeling, feats of strength, &c., were greatly in vogue, and appear to have constituted a regular part of the training of the soldier.

Each man was obliged to provide himself with the necessary arms offensive and defensive, and everything requisite for a campaign; and they were expected to hold themselves in readiness for taking the field when required.

Here we see that glorification of the military profession which is always such an element of strength in warlike and conquering races. The failure or negation of it, such as occurs where the best men in any nation tend generally to abandon and despise military service, or to leave the defence of their country to mercenaries, is a sure symptom of national degradation, present or prospective.

The basis of the Egyptian tactical organisation consisted of the heavy infantry divided into regiments. Masses of such, armed with spears and shields and a falchion or other weapon are seen on the ancient sculptures moving in an impenetrable phalanx, corresponding to our battalion in close column. They must have been well drilled, for besides such order, they were capable of deployment into line or of forming other descriptions of columns, or of resolving themselves into small independent bodies resembling our companies in sections or fours. The bowmen constituted a large part of the strength of the Army. They fought either on foot or in chariots, and were probably the chief part of both wings. These, as well as the light infantry, were taught either to advance in line, or to open out as skirmishers, according to circumstances and the nature of the ground. The regiments were probably divided into battalions or companies, with their proper company or battalion officers. Each battalion and company had its own standard, regarded by the troops with superstitious reverence; the standard bearers being officers of distinguished valour. The cavalry covered and supported the foot. It was an important arm, and the command of it was a highly honourable post, generally reserved for the most distinguished of the king's sons. The troops were summoned, assisted in their

tactical formations, and roused to the charge by the blast of the trumpet. The staff consisted mainly of the royal princes and the sons of the nobility and leading persons.

Besides infantry and cavalry, the Egyptians had also a large force of chariots.

In attacking a fortified town, they advanced under cover of the arrows of the bowmen; and either instantly applied the scaling ladder to the ramparts, or undertook the routine of a regular siege: in which case, having advanced to the walls, they posted themselves under cover of testudos, a sort of light movable artificial tower, and shook and dislodged the stones of the parapet with a species of battering-ram. But when the place held out against these attacks, and neither a *coup de main*, the ladder, nor the ram were found, to succeed, they probably used the testudo for concealing and protecting the sappers, while they mined the place. On the line of march the chariots led the way. The infantry came next in successive divisions. In the centre of the heavy infantry came the royal standards. Here was the king in his war chariot, or commander-in-chief deputed by him, with his staff. The cavalry was probably ahead foraging for supplies and information as to the enemy's movements, or guarding the rear in a retreat. The troops were marshalled for the attack by trumpet calls. A line of archers first advanced upon the enemy, marching properly in step, in close order where the ground permitted, and drawing their bows all together by word of command. Under cover of the showers of arrows thus created, the infantry advanced in serried battalions, covered with their shields, which formed a wall in front of them. They were supported in flank by chariots, and very probably, by cavalry. These arms were also ready in reserve, watchful for an opportunity of completing the discomfiture of a shaken enemy or of following up his retreat to cut him to pieces, or, charging all together in heavy masses, the chariots were prepared to make a desperate effort to break the enemy's ranks should their own infantry fail in so doing. It is evident that the mere momentum of such a mass of these eight two-horsed chariots, driven at full gallop in line, would be tremendous, and that it would require very steady infantry to stand up against them with spears.

From the earliest ages the Egyptians appear, by the evidence of numerous sculptures, to have been engaged in constant wars with surrounding tribes and nations. They carried their arms into very remote countries, extending in a wide circle from the Scythians and nations on the borders of the Euphrates on the north and east to the black Ethiopians on the south.

Greece and Persia.

Physical Conditions.—If we examine a map of Greece, we shall recognise at once, that its two leading physical characteristics are *mountain and sea*.

The level spaces are very scanty and they are surrounded by mountain and crag. Two important results followed. Viewed from the outside, the general difficulty of access to the country protected the inhabitants from invasion, so as to favour their independent growth and development; while internally, the difficulty of communication and transport, and the universal defensibility of the ground tended to foster sub-division, and the growth of separate autonomous communities. [Compare the introductory chapter in Grote.] On the other hand, the universal accessibility to water, caused by the remarkably indented coastline, created a strong tendency to maritime occupations and commerce. It enlarged and quickened the intellectual growth and experience of the inhabitants, and it kept the subdivision above-mentioned within bounds so as to admit of a vigorous spirit of nationality. How far this combination of unity and individuality—marked unity of national life in general, with a

pronounced individuality of separate communities in detail—tended to create that wonderful self-evolved intellectual development which so characterised the Greeks, it is not our business here to inquire. But we must note—as being distinctly our concern—the fact of this superiority of intellect, as well as the physical conditions under which it had to be exercised—area small—climate probably more healthy than at present, owing to larger cultivation and better water supply—great diversity of soil, temperature and level—insufficient corn-growing capacity leading to foreign importation and commerce—moderate metallic resources—sea and mountain everywhere. These are all conditions tending to produce a hardy, active, self-reliant population, but not admitting of great numbers, nor leading to the accumulation of great wealth.

Compared with Persia.—The great importance of noting such facts as these, if we are to take any true measure of the causes and *limiting conditions* of the military success of Greece or of any other country, will be well seen, if we compare for a moment the above features in Greece with the corresponding points in the country of her great adversary Persia. There we find vast fertile plains, tending to create and maintain an enormous population—overwhelming indeed as compared with Greece, but one of a character so different and inferior as to neutralise their numerical superiority.

Historic Outline.—A survey of the history, civil or military of the Greeks, would take us over a very wide field with many changes. At the famous siege of Troy we find merely a rude and barbaric course. A number of petty chieftains, each with his small band of followers, each fighting conjointly with his fellows, or independently, or withdrawing from the scene altogether, according to the caprice of the moment. No cohesion, no discipline, no strategy, no tactics or none worthy the name. But soon, with the conquests of the Thessalians and the Dorians, the minds of the ablest race in history were directed to military matters, and war became more intelligent and systematic. The cavalry, maintained by the landed proprietors with their retainers, which formed the military force of the early Greek communities, began to give way to heavy-armed infantry composed of smaller proprietors and artisans. But the first regularly-trained and formidable force was created by Sparta which henceforward took the lead in all military matters, and showed the way to the rest of Greece: so to Sparta our attention must chiefly be directed.

Constitutions.—The early Greek constitutions were at first oligarchies.

There was a struggle in several of the States in the sixth century B.C., between oligarchy and despotism in which the former prevailed. The Lacedæmonians upheld oligarchy at home and abroad, and in their contests with Athens in the fifth century B.C., they assisted the oligarchical party to overthrow democracy.

Athens commenced with an oligarchy, which was modified and restricted by Solon's laws: and eventually the democratic principle triumphed shortly before the Persian war. Sparta was originally governed by two so-called kings, equal and co-ordinate in authority. But the five ephors changed annually, soon usurped all real power, and

the kings were reduced to the position of executive officers. The senate, and after them the assembly of the people, decided in general, great questions of war and peace. But ordinarily, the ephors reigned with a sway nearly as dark and bloody as that of the Venetian council of Ten.

See Mr. Grote's remarks on the inhuman massacre of two thousand distinguished helots, contrived secretly by the ephors.—Grote, Part II, ch. vi, p. 142.

Spartan Military Institutions.—For our present purpose, the Spartan institutions are the most interesting and important of any race in history, as being framed with a single eye to the one object of *pre-eminence in war*. They represent, therefore, the views and experience of an intelligent and uncompromising people as to the best method of attaining this pre-eminence. Not only was every Spartan citizen liable to military service from the age of twenty to that of sixty years, but, by the famous institutions of Lycurgus, the whole life of the nation, and of every individual in it, was made one continuous preparation for war. Thus every effort was made to create and maintain the strongest and healthiest possible breed of citizens.

By this idea the age of marriage,¹ the intercourse of the sexes, the treatment of the young women, and the faith of the married women were all governed. Both boys and girls underwent a process of strict discipline and careful gymnastic training, by which their physical powers were developed and increased. The boy found every detail of his whole life, public and private, regulated on the same principle of preparation for war. Thus he was taught his drill at an early age, and, as a man, whether married or single, rich or poor, he had to live in barracks, and take his frugal meals at a public table under governmental supervision.

"From the early age of seven years, throughout his whole life, as youth and man no less than as boy, the Spartan citizen lived habitually in public, always either himself under drill, gymnastic and military, or a critic and spectator of others—always under the fetters and observances of a rule partly military partly monastic—estranged from the independence of a separate home, seeing his wife during the first years after marriage only by stealth, and maintaining little peculiar relation with his children. The supervision not only of his fellow-citizens, but also of authorised censors or captains nominated by the State was perpetually acting upon him, his day was passed in public exercises and meals, his nights in the public barrack to which he belonged. Besides the particular military drill, whereby the complicated movements required from a body of Lacedæmonian hoplites in the field, were made familiar to him from his youth; he also became subject to severe bodily discipline of other kinds, calculated to impart strength, activity, and endurance. To manifest a daring and pugnacious spirit; to endure hunger and thirst, heat, cold, and fatigue; to tread the worst ground barefoot, to wear the same garment winter and summer; to suppress external manifestations of feeling, and to exhibit in public, when action was not called for, a bearing, shy, silent, and motionless as a statue; all these were the virtues of the accomplished Spartan youth."—Grote, Part II, ch. vi, p. 146.

The whole nation was in fact a military school, and the whole life of both sexes was given up to preparation for war. By these military institutions, and the natural superiority of trained men over

¹ Later than elsewhere, in Greece, where a too early marriage tended to deteriorate the population.

untrained, the Spartans soon acquired an undisputed pre-eminence in Greece: for they brought their elaborate system to perfection at a time when such matters were comparatively unknown in the rest of Greece,¹ and subsequently they remained the acknowledged masters in the art of war. The great moral result of that glorification of war, as I have called it above, which was at once the cause and the effect of such institutions as these, was naturally the creation of an intense military spirit in the whole nation.

"Return either with your shield or upon it," was the well-known and oft-quoted parting speech of mothers to their sons setting out for the field; and Xenophon says that, after the defeat at Leuctra, those mothers who saw their sons return defeated were the great sufferers, while those whose sons had been slain were comparatively quite well off and cheerful.

As regards the morale of the troops themselves, the cheerful and deliberate submission to the stern rule that a Spartan should never turn his back upon the foe—even where it involved certain destruction as in the far-famed defence of the pass of Thermopylæ by Leonidas—is only one instance in point, but perhaps sufficient. From the purely military side, then, and viewed with reference solely to its direct and immediate operation, such a system as this was, no doubt, admirably adapted to create a race of warriors unsurpassed in war. But looked at from the broader point of view of the statesman and the philosopher, it was so intensely narrow, artificial, and stereotyped as, however successful for a time, to ensure its own ultimate failure. The whole life of a Spartan was encompassed and fenced in by such a multitude of obstructive regulations that all free development was checked, including, in the long run, the natural increase of population. And that intense and short-sighted selfishness which characterized Sparta and her rulers throughout their history, prevented the introduction of fresh blood from the ranks of her subject populations, such as replenished the scanty population of Rome in her early and struggling days. Had a wise and liberal policy been adopted in the gradual and progressive emancipation, or admission to the rights of citizenship of the brave and unfortunate helots,² and the periecii—had a rigid and repressive military system been relaxed, and, while rendering to the art of war its proper share of attention, a yoke no longer been imposed upon the citizens such as human nature could not reasonably be expected to bear—the history of Sparta might have been far different. The natural and unfettered development of their own hardy and in-

¹ All citizens or freedmen, it is true, throughout the various states were armed and trained, and obliged to serve when required; but even down to a late period any such elaborate training and organization as the Lacedæmonian was not thought necessary or undergone. "The military force of the other cities of Greece, even down to the close of the Peloponnesian war, enjoyed little or no special training, having neither any small company like the *enomoty*, consisting of particular men drilled to act together, nor fixed and disciplined officers, nor triple scale of subordination and subdivision."—Grote.

² Instead of this they were at all times ground down and the Spartans lived in continual dread of their own helots, who, when their numbers tended to increase too fast, were at times inhumanly murdered. See the instance alluded to in a note above.

dustrious population, and the cordial co-operation of contented and thriving subjects around them, would have placed them in a position such that that hegemony or unquestioned leadership in Greece, which was the fondest ambition of every Spartan, would have fallen to them naturally and spontaneously, instead of dangling ever delusively before their eyes throughout their history, and eventually, after ruinous struggles and sacrifices, slipping from their grasp.

Athens.—A diametrically opposite order of things is seen on turning to Athens. In her case there was a marvellous increase of wealth, population, and resources achieved in a very short time. No doubt the triumph of liberal principles, as opposed to the narrow and bigoted oligarchic system of Sparta, was largely responsible for this.

"The democracy was the first creative cause of that astonishing personal and "many-sided energy which marked the Athenian character for a century downward "from Kleisthenes."—Grote.

Athens immeasurably superior to Sparta in all the arts of peace—in science and philosophy, in the play of poetic fancy and imagination, in eloquent and soul-stirring oratory, in all the glories and delights of architecture, sculpture, painting, and music—was, when need so required, not one whit behind her in war. Witness the famous victory of Marathon, the turning point in Greek history, won by Athens alone. I have however said, and shall say, little about Athens; for there is not much in her case, and for our present purpose, requiring special study. The military system of Greece is fairly due to Sparta, whose superior mastery in the art of war the Athenians themselves all along acknowledged. In their intestine struggles, both sides fought well: Sparta with the proud firmness of veterans, with a great reputation to sustain and a conscious mastery of the art of war; Athens with all the fierceness and energy of a young, vigorous, and aspiring democracy, to which everything seemed possible. We may, however, remark that the Athenians, from the lack of the continual steady and rigid discipline of Sparta, were much more excitable and liable to sudden panic. Like the French they were at all times better adapted to play a winning than a losing game. They needed a strict discipline, but it would have been impossible to make them submit to the severity which the Spartans endured patiently. The result was determined by other causes than that of any marked military superiority on either side, which we need not here go into.

Military System of the Greeks.—We shall hardly be in a position to form any true conception of the real causes of that marked superiority of the Greek over any or all of the Asiatic races without some consideration of their respective arms and method of fighting. The Greek tactics were based upon the confidence which they justly reposed in their heavy-armed infantry or hoplites in the phalanx order. The phalanx was broadly a dense mass of men in close column with a wide front, the depth varying according to circumstances. The long spear was its characteristic weapon, besides a short sword and a large brazen shield, covering the bearer from the shoulder to the knee. Moreover the hoplite wore, at all periods, the helmet, cuirass, and greaves, each

plated with bronze; so that he was protected from head to foot. When the ranks were closed for the fight each man had three feet linear space of front. At this interval their shields touched, and they were almost as well defended from the enemy as an armadillo with its scales.

The phalanx order was substantially the same at all periods, but appears to have been brought to its greatest perfection by Philip, King of Macedon. He increased the length of the spear, ordinarily twenty-one feet, to twenty-four feet. The ranks were arranged so that the spears of the fifth rank projected three feet beyond the first, and thus every man in the front rank was guarded by five spear points. The remaining ranks in rear inclined their spears upwards, resting them on the shoulders of the men in front. By these the missiles of the enemy were to a considerable extent arrested. Now this whole arrangement was eminently calculated to combine, in the highest possible degree, the great advantages of mutual protection and security for defence, with the most crushing and irresistible impetus in attack—provided only the ranks remained unbroken and in good order. No infantry similarly equipped could stand their charge, and no cavalry horses could be got to face their serried rows of spear points. But it is also clear that this very great solidity and strength was gained at the expense of freedom and mobility; and that the phalanx was very liable to be disorganized by manœuvring over uneven ground, by an attack in flank or by the assaults of light troops, armed with javelins, bows, slings, &c., whom it would be equally unable to avoid or pursue. As the conditions of its action were better studied, these facts became more clearly recognised, and we see all through Greek history a steadily increasing tendency to the use of light troops and cavalry as auxiliaries and protectors to the phalanx. Thus the Spartan hoplites were accompanied by helots, partly as attendants, partly as light armed troops. At Plataea each hoplite had the extraordinary number of seven helots. At the commencement of the Peloponnesian war the Athenians had a body of cavalry, a troop of bowmen of their own citizens, and a regiment of Thracian slaves also armed with bows. The Athenian general, Iphicrates, introduced important improvements in the equipment of the mercenaries. His *peltastæ* were a sort of compromise between heavy and light armed troops. The destruction of a body of Spartan hoplites by them, owing probably to their greater freedom and mobility in attack, was a notable fact in the military experience of the Greeks, indicating unmistakably the weak side of the phalanx system.

The cavalry was an important and distinguished arm in the armies of both Philip of Macedon and Alexander. The latter also, in his *dimachari*, had a mean between cavalry and infantry, a body of men designed to fight on horseback or on foot as required. He had also a train of artillery—*balistæ* and *catapultæ*—used with great effect at the passage of the Jaxartes. By the judicious employment of all such arms as these the heavy armed infantry of the phalanx could be spared much unsuitable work, and reserved fresh and intact to decide the fate of an engagement by its steady advance and irresistible weight. But there was another cause which largely contributed to obviate in practice the great apparent danger of confusion and disorganization in the shock of battle, namely, the high individual intelligence of the Greeks, and their excellence in drill, combined with a most simple and admirable system of manœuvring. The movements and arrangements of the phalanx depended upon this very convenient and simple principle, that the smallest tactical unit consisting of the *enomotia*, corresponding to our section, always extended the whole depth of the column, and was capable of independent action, having its own leader. However the numbers of these units or of the whole phalanx might vary from time to time, this was always the case. Thus, if the *enomotia* consisted of thirty-two men besides the leader, and the phalanx was in column eight deep, as at the battle of Mantinea, the front of each *enomotia* would comprise four files. If the phalanx was drawn up twelve deep, as at Leuctra, and the *enomotia* contained twenty-four files, its front would be only two files. Suppose now the army drawn up in close order in phalanx, and orders given to form the line of march. The *enomotia* on the extreme right of the right wing would march off in its existing order of three, or more usually of two files, and each of the others in succession would follow it. Thus the whole army would march in a long column of three or two files. Conversely, suppose it to be necessary to form in

phalanx from the line of march, the leading enomotia would halt or step short. The hindmost enomotia of the column would incline to its left, and form up in line with and on the left of the one in front of it. These two would then similarly form up in line with and on the left of the next preceding; and so on until the whole phalanx had been formed on the first enomotia, now the extreme right. By similar movements of these units, the depth of the phalanx could be increased or diminished, the army could be formed to a flank, or countermarched, or any other necessary movement effected, in a convenient and expeditious manner.—(Smith's "Dict. of Ant. Art. Exercitus.")

History repeats itself often in a curious and unexpected way. The above arrangement is precisely the same in principle as that recently adopted in the Italian army, with a view to meet the latest developments of modern war. This consists of squads of ten men, designed to work independently, each under its own corporal. By these it is thought that the front can be increased or diminished from the close battalion column to the extended line of skirmishers with the least possible delay and confusion. But to make the modern arrangement as simple for manœuvring purposes as the ancient, the depths of these units should extend to the greatest depth required for the present regimental close column of companies, by which the section would rule and be sufficient for all possible regimental formations.

War is the touchstone, as well as the end and object, of all military systems. We shall best appreciate the merits of the Greek system, by seeing it when opposed to that of Greece's traditional enemy—Persia.

Compared with Persia.—Persia is the last of the great empires which, from the days of the earliest conquerors—Chedorlaomer¹—far back in the earliest dawn of history down to the time of which we are now speaking, have risen up, flourished, and decayed in the countries between and bordering on the Euphrates and the Tigris.

It would hardly be possible to find a greater contrast in all history than that presented by Greece and Persia. In Greece we see, generally, extraordinary ability and activity, intelligent obedience and discipline, patient endurance of necessary restraint combined with vigour and originality of thought and action, as well as unlimited capacity for study and improvement. In Persia we find nothing but heaviness, slowness, uninventiveness, a blind and unreasoning devotion to numbers and brute force, a proud and obstinate adherence to the exploded traditions of the past, and an utter incapacity for profiting by its lessons. The military systems of the two nations were faithful representatives of their national characteristics. If in Greece, there is visible the swiftness and activity of the leopard, in Persia it is the heaviness and clumsiness of the bear.²

A motley assemblage of races of the most divers composition, as

¹ Kudur-Lagamer, the Elamitic prince, who, nearly twenty centuries before our era, having extended his dominion over Babylonia and the adjoining region, marched an army a distance of twelve hundred miles from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the Dead Sea, and held Palestine and Syria in subjection for twelve years, thus effecting conquests which were not again made, from the same quarter, till the time of Nebuchadnezzar, sixteen hundred years afterwards, has a good claim to be regarded as one of the most remarkable personages in the world's history, being, as he is, the forerunner and prototype of all those great oriental conquerors who, from time to time, have built up vast empires in Asia out of heterogeneous materials which have, in a longer or shorter space, successively crumbled to decay.—"Anct. Mon." Vol. I. page 219.

² See a very good description, too long to quote here, in Pusey's "Lectures on 'the Prophet Daniel,'" pp. 72-73.

regards arms, equipment, and mode of fighting, were assembled together, at the command of the great King, in one vast ill-organised host, and sent out to fight his battles under leaders who had little knowledge of war, but were impelled to do their best by fear of the wrath of an eastern despot if they were unsuccessful, and the promise of his favour if fortune should prove favourable. Or the King himself went at the head of his troops, and generally succeeded in showing that he would have done much better to stay at home, and entrust the command to an able lieutenant.

Marathon.—The victory of Marathon shows us the Greek arrived at a state of military attainment very similar to that of the Roman, as we shall hereafter notice, before the wars with Pyrrhus and Hannibal had enlarged his ideas on strategy and tactics. We must not condemn the Persians too much for the result, as their infantry had no reasonable chance against the formidable and impenetrable Greek phalanx.

The truth is that Greek intellect had devised a system under which they fought, as against the Persians in the greatest comparative safety so long as they kept their ranks unbroken. This is sufficiently shown by the very small proportionate loss on the Greek side at Marathon.

By this victory, the traditional prestige of the Persians was for ever dissipated, and the terror which they had inspired turned to contempt. The Greeks learned their own strength and the Persian weakness.

Superiority of the Greek.—Henceforward, the defeat of Persians by Greeks, whenever they met them in a fair fight, was a foregone conclusion.¹ The native Persians were often individually brave.² But then there was no skill in leading, no cohesion, no discipline. Their arms and organization were simply wretched compared with the Greek, and a determined attack by the well-armed and well-protected line of Greeks soon resolved them into a disorderly mob.

On the Greek side, the leading was most defective in the earlier battles, and the division of command and disunion were a perpetual source of peril.

But there was henceforward a steady improvement in tactics, in manœuvring, and in the knowledge of war, though not, perhaps, in the power of the individual soldier. In fact, the military science of the Greeks was created during the interval between the battles of Marathon and Chœroneia. It culminated in Philip of Macedon and Alexander.

All this time the Persians remained stagnant. Thus Darius Codo-

¹ Although Xerxes, ten years later (480 B.C.), overran Attica, including Athens itself, and had nearly succeeded in subjugating or destroying all Greece, it was by dint of overwhelming numbers, combined with the divided counsels and want of concert of the Greeks. Had the various States united all their scattered forces against the common enemy, under a generalissimo with unlimited powers, they might easily have faced him in the open, with all the myriads of Asiatics he could bring into the field.

² At Platœa we are told that they rushed gallantly upon the Lacedæmonian spears, seizing hold of them and breaking them, or combining together in small knots of eight or ten men to rush upon them, so as, by sacrificing themselves, to make way for the rest.

mannus, at Issus, displayed all the faults of Xerxes combined with his ruinous rashness. The cavalry fought well, but the infantry hardly as well as they had done at Plataea, one hundred and fifty years earlier.

While, on the Greek side, improvement was most marked. Generalship, combination, and tactical power had been added to the pre-existing excellence of the phalanx system.

The improvements which Iphicrates had introduced were carried out by Epaminondas. He first taught the different arms to co-operate together in action in a scientific manner, and showed how to gain a tactical advantage by refusing the attack with part of his line, while elsewhere he brought an overwhelming force to bear on a weak point of the enemy.

We cannot here trace the course of Greek history, or of the long Peloponnesian war, in which the Greek States paved the way for Macedonian supremacy, by wasting their strength in a ruinous internal struggle.

In the result—the Macedonian kingdom—we notice that military pride and esprit supplied the place of national sentiment (see Grote, Vol. VIII, page 301)

I shall say little more of Greece or of Persia. Greece was strong in intellect, in courage, in organization, in equipment, and in every military quality, but weak from intestine rivalry and discord, and from her comparative poverty in numbers. Persia was weak in the military qualities, but strong in numbers, in wealth, and in eastern diplomacy. This diplomacy and wealth enabled her to play off one party in Greece against another, or to array corps of Greek mercenaries in her own ranks. These, if only the campaigns had been conducted under an able general, would often have turned the scale in her favour.

Her intrinsic weakness and Greek strength was nowhere better shown than in the retreat of the Ten Thousand after Kunaxa, successfully conducted, in spite of the loss, through treachery, of their officers, over fourteen hundred and sixty-four miles of an unknown and difficult country, and against the whole power of Persia. "The Zenophontic Anabasis betrays her real weakness against any vigorous attack, while it at the same time exemplifies the discipline, the endurance, the power of self-action and adaptation, the susceptibility of influence from speech and discussion, the combination of the reflecting obedience of citizens with the mechanical regularity of soldiers, which confers such immortal distinction on the Hellenic character."—Grote, Vol. VI, ch. lxxi, page 344.

The last great historic battles were lost by the Persians, rather, it would seem, from bad generalship than from any other cause.

Thus Granikus, through the bad leading of the Persian satraps, was left mainly to the Persian cavalry. They fought well, but were overpowered, leaving the strong corps of Greek mercenaries, which, if skilfully employed, might easily have saved the day, to be surrounded and cut to pieces at leisure.

At Issus, again, as we have said, the cavalry fought well in parts, but the vast Persian host were cooped up in a narrow valley, where their numbers were of no use. The Greek mercenaries, thirty thousand strong, might here, again, have saved the day, but the cowardice of Darius, who turned and fled, did not give them a chance. Arbela, as the last, as also was perhaps the worst case of all. It was fought on a level plain—of Darius's own choosing, as good for cavalry—by a number of Persians, variously estimated at two hundred and forty-five thousand to a million, against forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse, under Alexander. It also was lost by the cowardice of Darius, who was first to fly. Here, also, the result was due

to the total absence of every necessary quality in the Persian leader. Had Darius been man enough to strike a bold stroke for victory and empire; had he avoided the direct attack in front of Alexander's veterans, as far as possible, and merely checked them with his own Greek mercenaries, while he surrounded and charged them repeatedly, at once in flank and rear, with his numerous and powerful cavalry, the issue would probably have been different. Alexander's conquering career would have been suddenly arrested, and the Persian empire might have lasted for generations to come. As it was, three-fourths of the Persians were never brought into action at all, and the battle was lost before it was fairly begun.

Rome.

Importance.—For the purposes of this essay no subject can be more important and interesting than an enquiry into the causes which led to the long supremacy of Rome through many centuries of continual warfare. So numerous were the countries wherein, and so diverse the conditions under which, this supremacy was asserted, that Rome may justly claim to be *the* military power in the world's history, and time and thought will perhaps be better bestowed on an attentive consideration of the springs of her military greatness than on a corresponding study regarding any other power in history. To Rome, then, I propose to devote a considerable portion of our space here.

Climate, Resources, and Population.—All armies are composed of men, so that a nation's military strength, whatever other conditions may affect it, will always be ultimately dependent upon its capacity for producing and maintaining men. The country round Rome in ancient days was much more habitable than is now the case, and capable of maintaining a numerous and hardy agricultural population.

It seems probable that in early days the climate of Italy was much colder in winter than at present. There was also a much greater extent of forest, a higher average rainfall, and more water, whether in lake or river. What is of more importance, and may probably be due to these conditions, the malaria appears to have been very much less prevalent. Thus the Campagna, which is now a malarious waste, was then fertile and highly cultivated.

So the rise and gradual growth of a strong power here was rendered possible. Upon agriculture then, and in a less degree upon foreign commerce, the wealth of Rome in early days was based. But, as pointed out by Arnold,¹ the portions of land allowed by law to each man were so small (only seven jugera) that agriculture could hardly be called a source of wealth. It was, I apprehend, this dependence upon agriculture, with a system of minute subdivision of the land, which mainly conduced to the creation and maintenance of two marked elements of military strength in ancient Rome; (*a*) a hardy, industrious, and frugal race, constituting a good raw material for the armies, as agricultural populations have done in all ages; (*b*) a redundant population, tending continually to external expansion and consequent foreign aggression, whereby a military spirit was created and maintained. The foreign commerce of Rome was also considerable from very early days.

This is shown by the early creation of a sea-port, Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, and, better still, by the commercial treaty with Carthage, concluded under the

¹ Arnold's "History of Rome," Vol. I, p. 87.

First Consuls. In this, trade is regulated, not only with Sicily and Sardinia, but with Carthage and the western coast of Africa, right up to the Pillars of Hercules.

National Character.—The early Romans were simple and frugal in their habits, severe and chaste in their morals. Strict discipline in their armies was but the natural sequel to the severe obedience to which every citizen had been trained in youth. For the fathers exercised without question a degree of power over their children of all ages, such as in modern times would be thought an unbearable tyranny. Severity and purity of morals and habits have in all ages conduced greatly to a nation's success in war, by creating a hardy and vigorous race, accustomed to listen to the call of duty rather than to the pleasure or ease of the moment. For war, however ably conducted, must involve much hardship, fatigue, and privation to the troops, and much loss and sacrifice to the nation generally, such as will hardly be patiently endured by an enervated and slothful or a luxurious race. The early history of Rome is nothing less than one continual record of struggle and conflict with a constant succession of enemies, whether Etruscans, Equians, Volscians, or Samnites. Herein her ingrained strength was toughened and hardened by many a hardly-earned victory, and her power was slowly consolidated by sheer strength of stubborn perseverance. And, lest she should be spoilt by too unchecked a career of victory, we see on two successive occasions, at an interval of the best part of a century, her aggrandisement rudely checked, and she herself reduced to begin, as it were, slowly to rebuild the fabric of her greatness, like Prussia after Jena in modern days.

The first of these occasions occurred in the Etruscan conquest of Rome after the expulsion of the kings. By this the Romans lost all their Latin cities, much territory, and one-third of their tribes. The second was the taking and pillage of Rome by the Gauls (about B.C. 364.)

Fortitude of the Romans.—What sort of a people they were who had gone through this severe discipline, and what the spirit in which they could face the most desperate circumstances, is nowhere perhaps better shown than by their conduct during Hannibal's march on Rome, about B.C. 211.

A rapid survey of their situation will be hardly beside our present purpose. Hannibal had traversed Italy from end to end; he had gained possession of the entire south, and had cut to pieces all the armies who had tried to stop him. Capua, the second city in Italy, had revolted to him; all Campania, Samnium, Lucania, and Apulia were banded together to support him. Rome had entered upon the war with 270,000 men, according to the regular census, of an age to bear arms. From these, if Gibbon's view¹ be correct, we must deduct about one-twelfth for those incapable of serving from age and infirmity. This leaves, say, 250,000 as the whole number of able-bodied citizens actually available. There had perished of these in the three bloody defeats of Trebbia, Thrasymene, and Cannæ, about 60,000, or one-fourth.² Out of the remainder about 100,000 men were accounted for

¹ "Decline and Fall." Vol. IV, chapter xxxi.

² Assuming the loss of the Romans in these battles as equal to that of the allied states, which is Arnold's very moderate assumption. "History of Rome," Vol. III, p. 122.

in twenty-three legions employed in camp or garrison in different parts of Italy, Greece, Sardinia, Sicily, and Spain. So when Hannibal encamped with his victorious army within three or four miles of Rome we are hardly surprised to learn that, to man the walls against an assault, the Romans had only the two raw city legions—say 10,000 men—whose assembly in Rome was fortunately due just at this time in the usual course of things.

There were also, it is true, the troops of the Latin colony of Alba. But this was an accident, not reckoned upon by the Senate, and due solely to the impromptu zeal of Alba, which saw Hannibal going past on his way to Rome, and sent all her available men off on the spot to forestall him there.

Yet in this well-nigh desperate situation the Roman senate refused to raise the important siege of Capua, then in progress, or to recall any of their widely scattered troops.

They calculated, we may presume, that Hannibal had no proper siege equipment, and that he could hardly take the city by storm. In contending with such a foe much must be risked with a view to ultimate success, and the general situation of the war regarded, rather than their own feelings, or any present outcry of the Roman populace. And doubtless the senate considered, after the experience of their late terrible defeats, that no force which they could hope to bring together would have any reasonable chance of beating Hannibal in the field. So that for the sake of the moral effect upon their numerous allies and subject populations, the proper course was to show a bold front everywhere until, if possible, they could take Capua, and strike terror into the hostile confederacy by its fall. This course necessarily involved leaving Hannibal altogether unopposed for the present, save by stone walls.

Nay, they even, says Livy, weakened their weak garrison, by sending off just at this moment some necessary reinforcements to the legions in Spain. Moreover, the ground on which the tent of Hannibal was then pitched was sold in the ordinary course of business by public auction at a fair price. This auction, as well as the Spanish reinforcements, may no doubt have been contrived by the senate, in order to keep up the spirit of the nation by a display of unshaken firmness. Yet let us look at the whole situation. Italy in one ferment from end to end, a quarter of the whole male population of Rome dead in battle, half the remainder contending with a legion of foes all over the world, and reinforcements marching quietly off on their long, weary route to Spain, on one side of the city, while Hannibal on the other was throwing his javelin over the wall. We see here a spirit and a temper in a nation and its rulers for which the empire of the world was but the natural and appropriate recompense.

Love of Order a marked Characteristic.—In all the Roman military arrangements there is observable an order and a method which conduced greatly to their success, and was a main cause of that marked feature in Roman history—the permanent and abiding character of all their conquests. Just such a character we saw to be remarkably allied with military success in the case of the Egyptians, the earliest nation of which we have any record. It is an equally conspicuous element, noted by all writers in the military arrangements of the latest great power in modern history—the Prussians.

In the case of Rome, and also of Greece, we cannot do better than quote the words of Arnold: "The most striking point in the character of the Romans, and

"that which has so permanently influenced the condition of mankind, was their love of institutions and of order, their reverence for law, their habit of considering the individual as living only for that society of which he was a member. This character, the very opposite to that of the barbarian and the savage, belongs apparently to that race to which the Greek and Roman both belong, by whatever name—Pelægian, Tyrrhenian, or Sikelian—we choose to distinguish it. It has indeed marked the Teutonic race, but in a less degree. The Kelts have been strangers to it, nor do we find it developed among the nations of Asia, but it strongly characterised the Dorians in Greece and the Romans, nor is it wanting among the Ionians."—Arnold's "History of Rome," Vol. I, p. 94.

This love of order, however, does not necessarily involve a settled and conservative form of Government. Greece, we know, tended to become more and more democratic, until by the natural reaction of all democracies, it came under a despotism. The coalition and mixture of races upon which Rome was founded, led to progressive changes and development in her constitution, which furnish us with a picture diametrically opposed to that presented by Egypt. And we see that a rigidly conservative despotism like the Egyptian is by no means a necessary condition of permanent military strength, though a strong government, under whatever form, is doubtless most conducive thereto.

The strength and despotic character of the powerful monarchy which we find in Rome under the later kings is shown by the great works which they left behind them. The walls of Servius Tullius were sufficient for Rome for eight hundred years, or all through her palmiest days. The Cloaca Maxima is of the same period. This was a system of main drainage, worked out on a grand scale by forced task-work, like the pyramids of Egypt. Probably the aristocratic element, which showed itself in the continual struggles of a patrician caste against long-suffering plebeians, may be ascribed to Etruscan blood and influence, and the growth and final triumph of freer institutions under the Commonwealth to the strength of the liberal Sabine and Latin element. The subsequent contented acquiescence in a despotism under the emperors marked the advancing demoralisation of the nation, through the increase of wealth and luxury.

But all through, whether the Government were regal, constitutional, or imperial, and whatever might be the turbulence of civil strife, one essential element of military strength was never wanting. The constant maintenance of discipline in the army shows the working of that same national love of order which caused so many fierce constitutional struggles to entail so little bloodshed. The army, as such, never interfered in civil dissensions, and all civil strife was forgotten the moment the citizen took his place in the ranks as a soldier.

We shall see, by and by, the evil of the opposite order of things in the demoralized state of the French armies at the commencement of the campaign of 1792, arising from their participation in the political tumult and licence of the Revolution.

The strictness of Roman discipline is proverbial and was maintained by very great severity.

"The maintenance of military discipline, by whatever degree of severity it was effected, was regarded by the Romans not as a crime, but as a second duty." Arnold, Vol. I, p. 223. Thus to select a single instance in the campaign with the Æquians and Volscians, B.C. 469, when the discontented soldiers of Appius Claudius would not fight under a general whom they hated, and suffered themselves to be beaten by the Volscians with no serious resistance, Appius executed every centurion whose men had not faced the enemy, every standard-bearer who had lost his standard, and

every tenth man out of the whole of the troops concerned. But when Appius himself was brought to trial shortly afterwards, on a variety of charges, including misconduct on this very expedition, this extreme severity was not brought forward in support of the accusation, shewing that it must have been generally accepted as legitimate.

Conditions of Recruiting and Military Service.—The Roman armies for many centuries were composed entirely of Roman citizens, and, until the time of Marius, the lowest orders of these were excluded. Gradually, owing to the drain of men caused by constant wars, and the greatly enlarged area of the republic, which opened up new fields for recruiting, the privilege was extended. Thus after the close of the social war B.C. 87, nearly the whole free population of Italy were included; then the provinces were largely drawn upon; and eventually, by the edict of Caracalla, the army was thrown open to the whole Roman world. It was, however, late in the third century of our era before the admission to the army of foreigners not subjects was allowed on any large scale. Their numbers soon rapidly increased, until in the times of the later emperors we find an enervated and worn out stock continually replenished by shoals of barbarians drafted into the ranks. By this process the armies were maintained, though on a footing diametrically opposed to that on which their original strength was based, but the failing empire was propped up and the ruin of Rome for many generations averted. Side by side with these progressive changes in the materials of which the legions were composed, we must not fail to notice important corresponding modifications in the conditions of service, and in the social position of the soldier as a member of the body politic. Every Roman citizen was originally trained to arms, and liable to serve at any time, provided his fortune exceeded a prescribed limit. For whenever practicable, as through most of their earlier history, the lowest and poorest order of citizens were excluded from the distinction of serving in the ranks. But he was only required to serve for so long a period as the special service might require for which his legion was embodied. When the campaign was over he returned to his family. Thus for centuries the armies consisted entirely, in modern phraseology, of militia. But when as above, the large armies necessary for great struggles with distant powers, rendered it impossible to confine the recruiting area to Rome herself, so also the great distances to which troops had to be sent, and the necessity of meeting such opponents as Hannibal and Pyrrhus with well trained forces, rendered it impossible to break up an army at the end of a summer campaign. And as the dominion of Rome extended, the distances alone rendered constant relief out of the question. So there was a continual tendency in practice to lengthen the time for which the troops were embodied, but "down to the very termination of the "republic the ancient principle was recognised, that when a campaign was concluded, the soldier was entitled to return home and "resume the occupation of a peaceful citizen. For upwards of seven "centuries, there was no such thing as the military profession, and "no man considered himself a soldier in contradistinction to other

"callings."¹ *The identification of feeling and interests thus created between the Army and the nation generally, together with the high estimation in which the service was held, are most important elements and should be carefully noted.* The long civil wars and the custom, now largely introduced of giving grants of land as a pension for long service, tended to the creation of a military class, as also the admission to the ranks of the lowest orders of citizens, who being bettered by their position there, would not wish to return to civil life. Hence the way was paved for Augustus to consolidate and secure his newly founded empire by the creation of a large standing army, which thenceforward became a permanent and recognised institution. So from the reign of Augustus we may date that severance of feeling and interest between the soldier and the rest of the nation, and that ever-increasing line of demarcation between them which eventually culminated in the setting up of puppet emperors who were forced upon an unwilling and degraded people by the arms of the Prætorian guards.

The historian, Gibbon, sums up these important changes in the military history of Rome, with all his well known ability and weight. "In the purer ages of the commonwealth, the use of arms was reserved for those ranks of citizens who had a country to love, a property to defend, and some share in enacting those laws, which it was their interest as well as duty to maintain. But in proportion as the public freedom was lost in extent of conquest, war was gradually improved into an art, and degraded into a trade." Gibbon, Vol I, page 15.

Morale of the Troops maintained through great Changes.—A little consideration of the magnitude of the changes described above will lead us perhaps to ask an important question:—Was the morale of the troops sustained all this time, and, if so, by what means? No doubt there was a marked difference, in this respect, between the old days of the commonwealth, with its warriors like Regulus, whose indomitable courage Horace has handed down to all time in a pathetic and beautiful picture (Carm. III, 4, 5), and the times of the later empire!

For a period exactly intermediate between these extremes it is difficult to refrain from quoting the example of Horace himself—who, while elsewhere glorifying Regulus, refers to his own in-glorious flight from Philippi—*parvulâ non bene relicta*—rather with the philosophic indifference of an epicurean age than with the burning shame which Regulus might be supposed to experience at such a recollection. The marked difference of sentiment between these two odes is the measure of the difference in the military feeling of the two periods they treat of.

The morale of the army was however maintained, with more or less success, while the nation generally was growing enervated and corrupt, and that by means which are so well summarised by Gibbon that I can hardly do better than quote him :

"That public virtue which among the ancients was denominated patriotism is derived from a strong sense of our own interest in the preservation and prosperity of the free Government of which we are members. Such a sentiment, which had rendered the legions of the republic almost invincible, could make but a feeble impression on the mercenary servants of a despotic prince, and it became necessary to supply that defect by other motives of a different but not less forcible nature—

¹ Smith's "Dict. of Ant." Art. "Exercitus."
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"honour and religion. The peasant or mechanic imbibed the useful prejudice that he was advanced to the more dignified profession of arms, in which his rank and reputation would depend on his own valour; and that although the prowess of a private soldier must often escape the notice of fame, his own behaviour might sometimes confer glory or disgrace on the company, the legion, or even the army to whose honours he was associated. On his first entrance into the service, an oath was administered to him with every circumstance of solemnity. He promised never to desert his standard, to submit his own will to the command of his leaders, and to sacrifice his life to the safety of the emperor and the empire. The attachment of the Roman troops to their standards was inspired by the united influence of religion and of honour. The golden eagle which glittered in the front of the legion, was the object of their fondest devotion; nor was it esteemed less impious than it was ignominious, to abandon the sacred ensign in the hour of danger. These motives which derived their strength from the imagination, were enforced by fears and hopes of a more substantial kind. Regular pay, occasional donations and a stated recompense, after the appointed time of service, alleviated the hardships of the military life, whilst on the other hand it was impossible for cowardice or disobedience to escape the severest punishment."

The Roman Legion.—In the course of many centuries of continual warfare, waged in different countries under the most various conditions, it is not to be wondered at, that the Roman military system underwent many changes. These changes affected from time to time the strength and precise composition of the legion, but from the abandonment of the phalanx order at a very early date down to the latest times it continued to be the basis of the Roman military system. The fundamental idea of the legion, which was never departed from, was that of a complete and independent unit of force; small enough to give a handy and manageable body for a single command, but strong enough to enable it to make its mark in the general engagement of large armies, and to be sufficient in itself for all such minor military operations as the garrisoning of a fortress, the quieting of a rebellious province, the advance or rear guard of a large force. It was therefore at all times complete and self-contained as regards supply and transport, and generally consisted of all arms, including artillery, when from the progress of mechanical science and its application to war, a train of military machines had become—as in the days of the emperors—a recognised part of every properly equipped army. Hence the legion, though not precisely represented by any modern military body, corresponded most nearly to our division. Its numbers varied at different periods, and even at the same period they were often modified according to circumstances.

The Legion at different Periods.—We may take 5,000 infantry and 300 cavalry as a fair average.

The infantry increased gradually from 3,000 under Romulus in the earliest days to 6,000 under the emperors in the first century. In special cases the numbers were higher still: thus we find legions with infantry 6,200 strong, under Scipio Africanus, and later under Marius. The normal number of the cavalry was generally 300. This was sometimes reduced to 200 or increased to 400. During the period from Marius to the end of the Republic, however it was *nil*, all the cavalry being then united under separate commands. But under the emperors the old system was partially reverted to by attaching 120 horsemen to every legion. In estimating, however, the numbers of any Roman force, care must be taken to include the allies (*socii*) or auxiliaries. As the Roman dominion spread gradually over Italy, these contingents of subject populations were always attached to, and formed

part of the force, though not of the legion proper. Sometimes even they were organised in separate legions. Thus the allies usually provided an equal number of infantry and twice or thrice as many cavalry. If, therefore, a legion of such an average strength as above, were sent—say to fight against the barbarians in Gaul—it might have attached to it for the campaign 5,000 allied infantry and 600 cavalry, which would make the entire force number nearly 11,000 men. In later times light-armed auxiliaries, or mercenary troops of various kinds took the place of the socii, the latter having by this time, through the gradual extension of the military franchise, become legionaries.

As in numbers and, as we have seen, in materials and conditions of service, so also the legion varied from time to time in organisation, equipment and tactics. Hence a complete study of these would involve a separate consideration of several different periods. I propose here to describe briefly the condition of things about the time of Scipio the younger—partly because the legion was then at its best, one of the most complete and formidable military machines that the world has ever yet seen,—and partly because we have in the history of Polybius a more trustworthy and complete account of it than is available for any other period.

Command, and mode of Raising the Legion.—Referring then more immediately to a period extending from about the middle of the Punic wars, to the consulship of Marius, we find that four legions were, under ordinary circumstances, raised yearly, two to each consul. The consuls for the year having been elected in the usual course the twenty-four tribunes or chief officers of the legions, six to each, were first appointed partly by the votes of the people, partly by the nomination of the consuls.

Prior to B.C. 361, the tribunes were nominated by the head of the state whether king, consul or dictator, as the case might be. And from the reign of Tiberius onward, the emperors similarly appointed them. In the intermediate period a greater or less proportion of them were generally chosen by popular election according as popular or aristocratic influence was predominant. The authority of each of the six tribunes extended over the whole legion. They divided themselves into three pairs, and each pair took charge of all routine duties for two months, so that as the campaigning season generally lasted six months, each pair had their fair share of duty. The ten senior tribunes were chosen from persons who had served for ten campaigns each: similarly the fourteen juniors must have served for five campaigns. In later and laxer times these restrictions were relaxed.

On a set day all Roman citizens between the ages of 17 and 46 were assembled in their tribes before the consuls at the capitol.

Those who did not appear to answer to their names were liable to severe legal penalties. But any who had served twenty years in the infantry or ten in the cavalry were exempt. All those also whose fortune was below 4,000 asses were, in ordinary time, exempt from military though not from naval service.

The tribes were then taken in succession by lot, and parties of four equally matched men were picked out from each tribe by the tribunes, being one man to each legion. Each man of the four was assigned to his legion by choice of the tribunes in rotation. This process was continued until by repeated instalments of four, the required number of men had been raised. We may presume that the object of these peculiar arrangements was to provide the best men for the armies of the state, to equalise the legions in all

respects, and at the same time to divide the burden of military service as fairly as possible between the different tribes. The 300 men required for the cavalry were raised at the same time by selection from the censors' list recording their fortunes. The tribunes then administered the oath of obedience to orders to their own legionaries.

Divisions of the Legion.—The allies raised their respective contingents much in the same way. The infantry of the legion was divided into four leading classes, forming, when drawn up in fighting order, three lines of infantry, armed with sword, pilum¹ or spear, besides an independent line of skirmishers in front.² The whole were divided into ten equal cohorts or battalions, and further subdivided into thirty maniples³ and sixty centuries or companies. The velites or skirmishers did not form separate bodies, but were distributed equally among the maniples.⁴ The sixty centurions were chosen from the ranks, by merit.⁵

¹ The pilum was a very heavy javelin, with an iron head four and a half feet long, reaching half way down a thick wooden shaft, to which it was well secured, the whole length being about six feet nine inches. It was, of course, always reserved for close quarters, and then launched, just before closing, with such an irresistible impetus as would carry it through any shield or armour.

² Taking the whole number at 4,000, which appears to have been the normal type upon which the organization was based, though, as we have said, in the period of pressure and hard-fighting which we are now considering, it generally amounted to 5,000. The proportions and arrangements of the classes would be as follow:—

Velites, or skirmishers, selected from the youngest and poorest men, armed with javelins, sword, buckler, and head-piece	1,000
Hastati, next in age, or perhaps of the same age, but more wealthy, fully protected, defensively, by shield, helmet, breastplate, and greaves. They had also the straight, double-edged, sharp-pointed Roman sword, and the still more characteristic Roman weapon, the pilum; of these, each man had two, or, according to another authority, referring very probably to a different period, one heavy pilum and a lighter javelin	1,200
Principes, those in the prime of life, armed like the Hastati	1,200
Triarii, the oldest and most experienced men, armed like the Hastati, except that they carried long spikes or spears (hastæ) instead of the pilum....	600
	<hr/> 4,000

When the number of men in the legion exceeded 4,000, the first three divisions were increased proportionately, but the number of the Triarii remained always the same.

³ Ten for each of the three classes of Hastati, Principes, and Triarii. The word "manipulus," or "handful," is a reminiscence of a great and fundamental change in Roman tactics. Under the kings, in the earliest times, the troops were organized on the phalanx system. This order was soon abandoned, at what precise period cannot now be ascertained, and the cumbrous and unmanageable mass broken up into small and handy portions, called, by comparison, maniples or handfuls. Thenceforward, the mobility, manœuvring power, and general handiness of such bodies, armed with pilum and sword, became the basis of Roman tactics, instead of the sluggish defensive power and weighty charge of the phalanx.

⁴ Thus, a cohort would contain one maniple of each of the three former classes, together with their proportion of Velites. If, then, the legion consisted of 4,000, each cohort would contain 120 Hastati, 120 Principes, 60 Triarii, and 100 Velites, or 400 men in all. But these numbers would vary with the strength of the legion.

⁵ They were responsible for the drill, arms, clothing, food, and general conduct of the men of their century, which corresponded closely to one of our companies, being from 70 to 100 strong. They had the power of inflicting corporal punishment, and minor

The cavalry of the legion was organized in ten troops, equipped with a strong spear, a breast-plate, and a solid buckler.

They were originally furnished so as to secure the greatest possible mobility, with very slender lances and light shields; but, before the period with which we are now dealing, their equipment had been assimilated to that of the Greeks.

Weight carried by the Roman Soldier and length of a March.—In marching order the soldier carried, besides his weapons and his armour, provisions for a fortnight, three or four large stakes used in forming the palisade of the camp, and his share of sundry tools and camp utensils.

Josephus says that, even in his time, they were like mules of burden. The Romans were very proud of this endurance of their soldiers. Levy says that Scipio trained his men to carry food for thirty days, and seven stakes each.

With these tremendous loads, it is astonishing that they were able to march from twenty to twenty-five miles in a day.

Arrangements and Tactics of the Legion.—The legion was drawn up, as we have said, in three lines.

The tactical unit was the manipule, which consisted of two centuries in line, and commanded by the senior of their two centurions. There were, therefore, ten maniples in each line, usually drawn up at intervals, about equal to the front of a manipule, with the second and third lines covering the intervals of the first and second lines respectively.

The depth of the manipule was from five to ten ranks, at three feet intervals. Three feet was also the space along the front allowed to each file. In fighting against an enemy drawn up in line, at close order, to which it became desirable to oppose a similar continuous line; or where, from the presence of a superior hostile cavalry, it was desirable to avoid a formation of such small independent units liable to be overwhelmed, in detail, by cavalry charges, a continuous line could be immediately formed by simply marching up the second line of maniples into the intervals of the first line.

The fight was begun by the light troops or velites, who skirmished in four or five loose ranks in front of the legion, flinging their javelins and trying to throw the enemy into confusion. As the first line—Hastati—came on, they pressed through the intervals and formed up in the third line between the maniples of Triarii. The Hastati, advancing under cover of the skirmishers, launched their formidable pila into the enemy's ranks, at close quarters, and then closed with their swords. The Principes followed in the intervals, just when the shock of the Triarii had thrown the enemy back a little at the points of contact, tending to break his line and throw it into confusion. If the Hastati and Principes were repulsed, the Triarii advanced for the final effort. Besides the skirmishers, all available men of the two preceding defeated lines would, no doubt, rally behind them, to give weight and consistency to their charge. The essence of the Roman tactical system, therefore, lies in these successive and alternating shocks on the enemy's line, combined with the irresistible impetus of the deadly pilum, which no shield or armour could withstand, and followed up by the rush with the short cut-and-thrust sword, with which the soldier hewed his way through the midst of the closest *melee* of friend and foe. The legion, with its usual proportion of Italian allies,

punishments generally. Each centurion chose his own lieutenant—*optio*—who took post in rear of the company, whilst he was at its head.

arranged in a corresponding formation on its flanks, would number from 10,000 to 11,000 men, and form a formidable body covering about half-a-mile of front.

The Greek phalanx and the Roman legion being the two leading typical formations which the well-trying fighting capacity of the ancient world has produced, the question of their comparative merits has often been raised. Polybius (li. xvii, xviii, 15) gives a good dissertation on the subject. His leading points are just what a little consideration would have led us to expect, namely, that the phalanx has the advantage so long as it can be employed under the conditions necessary for its proper action. These are—level ground, free from trees or other obstacles, and a straightforward attack or defence. But for manœuvring, and notably over hilly, wooded, or broken ground—that is, over such ground as may usually be expected in Italy—the phalanx is greatly inferior to the more open, active and generally workable formation of the legion.

Staff.—The functions of the military tribunes were more staff than regimental. They had subordinate staff officers under them, and, with their aid, were responsible for all the duties with us devolving on the Quartermaster-General, Adjutant-General, and Engineer departments. The Romans had, also, a chief of the staff in a Quæstor or Prefect, and an elaborate organization of the Paymasters, Commissariat, Medical, and Military Train branches. It was a prominent characteristic of the Romans that, whatever they undertook, was done thoroughly and systematically, with no sparing of toil and trouble. Thus, wherever they went in an enemy's country, they always established a *piéd-à-terre*, in the shape of a fortified camp.

These camps were laid out on a most elaborate system. Each soldier, as we have said, carried a few of the stakes by which the parapet was rendered more secure from attack. Thus, at the end of a march, when the camp had been constructed and the guards and sentries told off, the force would go to sleep in safety with an enemy encamped within a few hundred yards of them.

A fresh illustration of this principle was afforded by the conduct of both sides, in the recent American War, wherein the hastily-constructed, but formidable camps secured the march and line of retreat of the armies, and frequently proved invaluable.

Next to this came a good military road, cleared, to a suitable distance, of all cover, of which an enemy might take an advantage. With such a good road, and camps at convenient intervals, the Romans established and maintained a firmer hold over warlike, difficult, and well nigh impracticable countries than any other power in history has succeeded in doing.¹

Enemies of Rome.—Having now taken a brief survey of the conditions under which the military strength of Rome was created, and the forms in which it embodied itself, we ought next to glance briefly at some of the enemies against whom it had to be exercised, with the results of the struggle. And herein, Rome's failures and defeats will be at least as instructive as her successes.

The long early wars with the neighbouring races of Italy I have

¹ The leading authority from which I have derived most assistance in the above account of the legion is the learned and admirable, though somewhat dry and technical article, under the heading, "Exercitus," in Smith's "Dictionary of Antiquities." There is also a valuable summary in Colonel Macdougall's "Campaigns of Hannibal."

already alluded to. They gave Rome an endless amount of practice in war for many generations; hardly, however, in scientific war, for anything more than a simple and straightforward style of fighting appears to be unknown. And this leads me to notice a feature in the Roman character which showed itself in their mode of fighting, and, until they were taught wisdom by bitter and terrible experience, paved the way for great disasters, such as we shall presently notice. I mean a certain straightforward take-the-bull-by-the-horns method of dealing with everything. Just this same proud impatience of opposition or compromise led them never to lay out their great roads so as to go round a hill when it was possible, but at double the expenditure of labour and trouble, present and prospective, to run straight over it. So in war they seem for long to have scorned elaborate manœuvres, their one idea being to go straight at the enemy in a fair fight. This uncompromising spirit, however, though occasionally it landed them in needless disaster, never failed, eventually, to bring them through all their difficulties.

But the Romans, through continual struggles, and that often for very existence, became emphatically a warlike people, from the highest to the lowest. And that admirable fighting machine—the legion—was slowly wrought out and brought into an efficient and workable shape by dint of continual practice. For practice in fighting, in the case of a race of any intelligence, inevitably leads to a certain amount of tactical progress and perfection, from the observed and obvious results of every fight. But progress and perfection, in strategy and the higher branches of the art of war, are only attained, as a rule, through the general advancement of knowledge and the application of careful and systematic study to war, as to all other matters.

Hannibal appears to have been a brilliant exception to this; though how far he may have owed his scientific war to Greek intellect and experience it is impossible, I suppose, now to determine.

War with Pyrrhus.—In the war with Pyrrhus we have the straightforward fighting of Rome defeated by a superior knowledge of the art of war, aided by novel and unforeseen tactics, arms, and equipment, as by elephants (Heraclea, B.C. 280), or by the weight of the Macedonian phalanx as opposed to an open formation and lighter equipment on level ground (Asculum, B.C. 279); but in the final struggle (Beneventum, B.C. 275) we see the failure of this very phalanx order, as well as of the elephant corps, when employed under unsuitable conditions, and opposed to a resolute enemy who had learned tactical wisdom by experience. The general result of the struggle shows us the triumph of a resolute and well-knit power, although fighting at a disadvantage as regards some important points, over a motley coalition of heterogeneous elements, headed by an able and ambitious military adventurer.

Punic Wars.—In the long and desperate struggle with Carthage again, the severe defeats but final triumph of Rome are most instructive. The Carthaginians were a people of Semitic race, characterized by all that fierce energy which belongs to it. Carthage was inferior to Rome in most respects. We must, however, except her superior

command of money, derived from the extended trade of a great commercial state, and her naval power, which was very formidable, while that of Rome at the commencement of the struggle, was absolutely nil.

But then the population of Carthage was quite ignorant of war; her armies consisted mainly of mercenaries or subjects of alien race; and her wealth and power depended largely upon an artificial system of extended commerce and colonial empire, liable to be rudely shaken by the vicissitudes and inevitable disturbance caused by a great war.

The analogy between the position of Carthage in the ancient, and Great Britain in the modern, world, is so striking that it has probably been often noticed. A struggle between us and one of the great military Powers of the Continent, would present conditions in many respects similar to those of the Punic wars. Like Carthage, our power and prosperity is based upon a vast and complicated system of commerce and colonial empire, liable to an unknown amount of disturbance in case of an unsuccessful war; and, like her, our fighting strength is chiefly naval.

Whereas the strength of Rome was based upon broad acres of fertile soil and a hardy agricultural population, together with a number of subject allies, held, on an admirable system, by a far stronger grasp than any of which Carthage could boast as regards her subject populations. Above all, every Roman was a soldier, and war had been the leading aim and study of Rome for centuries. Carthage was also very deficient in fortified places, in an age when, from the slowness of locomotion and difficulty of supply and transport, such strongholds to guard important lines of communication, and check the progress of a victorious foe, were most essential.

The breathing time which the Romans gained by the possession of such places as Nola and Casilinum, enabling them to check the conquering career of Hannibal, while they raised fresh troops and made new combinations, was an important feature in the war. It forms a marked contrast with the comparatively unchecked progress of the Romans in their invasions of Carthaginian territory. Viewing generally the conditions of the case, and the real and essential inferiority of Carthage, we can only say that the very narrow escape of Rome from destruction is one of the most marked instances in history of the uncertainty attending all *a priori* calculations of the course of such a great war. Above all we are taught the extraordinary influence and ascendancy which may be exercised in war, by the personal character and military genius of one man.

Or rather, let us say, of one family of men; for it would be very unjust that the fame of Hannibal should be allowed to make us forget his illustrious father, Hamilcar, or his two able brothers, Hasdrabal and Mago.

It is difficult to forbear from transgressing our prescribed limits here in order to mark the working of this genius, and the general progress of this great struggle; the bolder and wider strategy and superior tactical combinations, in presence of which the desperate but ill-directed efforts of the Roman generals only led to a more useless waste of brave men's lives, or the indomitable perseverance and gradual process of education in scientific war, by which the continually defeated at last overcame the conqueror.

A marked result of this educating process is seen in the introduction of reserves.

Up to this time the Romans had never employed them. But they learnt here, by bitter experience, that an able general can often decide the fate of a battle by bringing up a reserve of fresh troops at a critical moment ; and from this time forwards they always used strong reserves, both of infantry and cavalry.

One point, however, we must notice before we pass on. This is the essential influence upon the conduct of such a war, exercised by the character and powers of the home-government in giving or withholding proper support to the general in the field. Like Wellington in the Peninsula, Hannibal was continually hampered by lack of proper support from home.

His father, Hamilcar Barca, appears to have represented the popular party in Carthage as opposed to an obstructive and narrow-minded aristocracy, which exercised at first a preponderating influence in the government. Had Hamilcar lived long enough to grasp the reins of power more firmly, to send his son Hannibal to Italy, and to support him properly when there, we doubt not that between them, Rome would have been utterly crushed, and, it may be, the history of Europe and of the world altogether changed.

Results of the Punic Wars.—I shall not attempt to follow the military history of Rome further. Suffice it to say, that the conquest of Carthage was the turning point. When Carthage was out of the way, there remained no power in the world capable of opposing her with any reasonable chance of success ; so that all her numerous subsequent conquests followed naturally in due course.

Decline of Rome.—Nor can we attempt to trace the history of the decline of this great military power. The continually advancing conquests of Rome brought a continual increase of wealth ; but, like the French Revolution, "devouring her children," they used up and supplanted the materials from which they themselves were derived. The old hardy race of Roman yeomen fought and left their bones in every quarter of the known world, and gave place to myriads of slaves, following in the train of victory, who cultivated for a few rich landowners, those little seven-jugera plots, now turned into large estates. And with the advancing tide of wealth and luxury set in a gradual deterioration of the national morals. Thus the supply of the recruits of the old stamp died out, and the progressive declension of the nation made it impossible to replace them. As we have seen, recourse was necessary first to a class of recruits who in the old days would not have been tolerated in the army, and ultimately to barbarians.

The formidable strength of Rome, however, all through these changes, shows plainly the real excellence of her military system, and the power of those traditions of conquest, and *esprit de corps* which so long upheld the character of her legions ; as also the value of that enlightened and progressive conservatism which induced her to make necessary changes, from time to time, and which is, or should be, a characteristic of all well-ordered armies. But such a conservative process has its limits. A failing empire and a degraded people cannot be maintained indefinitely by the strength of any military system, however well devised. It is much if, as here, the evil day of ruin and collapse can be postponed. Rome and her legions are now but memories of the past, but they are still valuable guiding lights to

every student who wishes to learn the secrets of a military system which shall be, like hers, sound, strong and stable.

The Tartars.

Peculiar Military and Historical Character.—If we wish to see war reduced in its origin, in its progress, and in all its conditions to its simplest elements, and yet exercising for weal or woe the mightiest influence on the fortunes of untold millions of human beings, we should turn our eyes to those vast and little known regions of northern Asia popularly called Tartary. Under this name, I include the whole wide belt of country from the Uralian mountains to the sea of China and Japan.

Here, by the operation of the same recurrent causes, have been generated the forces, which, like the occasional outbreaks of a volcano pouring forth its lava, have sent out periodic streams of wild and savage barbarians to ruin and devastate all the neighbouring countries.

Thus have been caused terribly destructive wars and important changes in most parts of Asia, and in a considerable portion of Europe. The successive swarms of barbarians who overspread the decaying Roman Empire, show us but the extreme pulsations of a great undulating movement, whose centre and origin was in these remote steppes.

Thus the first entrance of the Goths into the empire in the reign of Valens was caused by the victorious advance of the Huns, impelling them irresistibly westward. The Huns again, if Gibbon's view be correct, had come from China or its confines, driven there by the Sienpi, a powerful tribe of Oriental Tartars.

Conditions of Tartar Life.—The vast plains of Tartary, from the nature of the soil and climate are better adapted for pasture than agriculture. In all ages they have been inhabited by numerous nomadic tribes living by their flocks and herds as well as by hunting. Thus, in these regions abounding in grass, they are well supplied with flesh and milk, but have no corn; and of the two great commissariat essentials, bread and meat, the former is altogether eliminated and the latter provides its own transport. The steppes supply in abundance a strong and hardy breed of horses, and the Tartars are very fond of hunting. Moreover, they have no ties of home or country to check distant enterprise. Their camp is their home and their country is anywhere where they can find grass and water. Here we have clearly all the conditions necessary for the movements of large bodies of men over vast distances; and, indeed, an expedition of many hundreds of miles is no more than they have been accustomed to all their lives, from the constant necessity of seeking fresh pasturage or more healthy localities for cattle according to the season.

Institutions and Government.—The tribes or hordes render a patriarchal sort of obedience to their chief or mursa. Any number of such hordes may unite together for mutual protection under the orders of a distinguished chief. Zinghis was the first king or khan who succeeded in uniting every such independent portion under his own

rule. But even the power of Zinghis or Timour was, nominally at all events, subject to the coroultai or general assembly of the mursas held every six months.

National Characteristics.—The laws which were promulgated by Zinghis on being proclaimed Great Khan or Emperor, show us the ruling spirit of the time, and, viewed in connection with the conditions which we have just described, give us the secret of Tartar conquest:—"The victorious (Tartar) nation was held sacred from all servile labours, which were abandoned to slaves and strangers; and every labour was servile except the profession of arms."

"The service and discipline of the troops, who were armed with bows, scimitars, and iron maces, and divided by hundreds, thousands, and ten thousands, were the institutions of a veteran commander. Each officer and soldier was made responsible, under pain of death, for the safety and honour of his companions, and the spirit of conquest breathed in the law that peace should never be granted unless to a vanquished and suppliant enemy."—Gibbon, Vol. VIII, ch. xlv.

Tactics.—Their tactics were simple. They consisted of repeated charges of cavalry, following each other in rapid succession. Reserves were always on the look out to improve an opportunity, to bear down upon a shaken enemy, to pursue and cut him to pieces if routed, or, if he were victorious, to cover the retreat of their comrades.

Here, then, we see a hardy, vigorous, and warlike people, living under the simplest conditions, with self-contained strength and the utmost facility of locomotion. Let a leader arise, capable of exercising sufficient ascendancy to quell their innumerable petty quarrels and jealousies, and to bind together all these scattered elements in the common pursuit of plunder and spoil, and we have the materials of a most formidable force in ages when arms of precision were unknown, together with all the complicated appliances and military elaboration by which barbarian races are at present rendered no match for the more civilised.

Historical Results—Zinghis.—The most marked and extraordinary outbreaks of these races, in historic times, are of course identified with the names of the great Mogul leaders Zenghis, or Zinghis Khan, in the thirteenth, and Tamerlane, or Timour, in the fourteenth century.

Zinghis Khan and the four first successors of his dynasty overran almost all Asia and a great part of Europe, including the vast and fertile empire of China (not to mention the neighbouring kingdoms of Corea, Tonkin, Cochin China, Pegu, and Thibet) Persia, and the whole empire of the Caliphs, Siberia, Russia, Poland, and Hungary.

"From the permanent conquest of Russia, they made a deadly though transient inroad into the heart of Poland and as far as the borders of Germany. The cities of Lubin and Cracow were obliterated: they approached the shores of the Baltic; and in the battle of Lignitz they defeated the Duke of Silesia, the Polish Palatines and the great master of the Teutonic order, and filled nine sacks with the right ears of the slain." Gibbon, Vol. III, p. 14.

Their forces were so numerous and their schemes so vast, that

acting under orders from the Khan at head-quarters, they invaded at the same time such distant countries as China, Syria, and Poland.

They filled all Europe with terror, and it is very doubtful whether there was then any power capable of stopping them if they had seriously invaded it with the bulk of their forces.

The determined defence of the Mamalukes, however, in the south-west, prevented their overrunning Egypt.

It has been remarked by Voltaire, and repeated after him by more than one writer, that European battles are petty skirmishes if compared to the numbers that have fought and fallen in Asia.

Timour.—In the fourteenth century, the exploits of Zinghis were equalled if not surpassed by Timour, or Tamerlane, who traversed Asia, including India, from end to end like a desolating scourge.

His cruelties were frightful. "Human bodies curiously piled to an immense height marked the progress of his conquests; and two several pyramids on the road to Delhi of 100,000, and on the ruins of the venerable city of Bagdad of 90,000 heads, gratified his unnatural ferocity. The indignation of the Persians against these invaders, occasioned the murder of a few Moguls in the streets of Ispahan. But the conquered people repented their imperfect submission, and the skulls of 70,000 Persians were piled in the form of towers in the principal squares of the city."—Mill's "Hist. of Mohammedanism," p. 223.

His great victory over the Sultan Bajazet at Angora, A.D. 1402, is memorable in history. Bajazet had 400,000 men, including 40,000 Janizaries and 20,000 European cuirassiers clad in armour. But the Tartar allies revolted to Timour and Bajazet was totally defeated and taken prisoner. Timour died when commencing his march for the reconquest of China, at the age of 70. His empire then reached from the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to Damascus and the Archipelago. It fell with him.

General Remarks.—Zinghis appears to have been a simple Deist and tolerated all religions. But there was a natural attraction for these fierce Asiatics in the religion of Mohammed, so that the Tartars abandoned their idolatrous superstitions and embraced it almost as soon as they were brought in contact with it; and we find the conquests of Timour carried out under the banner of Mohammed. So an element of fanaticism and religious propagandism must be taken into account in estimating the causes of the conquering career of Timour and later Moguls. In the earlier days this was not so, and we see in the first conquests of Zinghis, as I have said, war in its simplest elements, the spontaneous outbreak of pent-up forces. We see a bold, hardy, and active race dissatisfied with their own lot, not tied to it by any natural impediments to locomotion, and determined, therefore, to better themselves at the expense of their neighbours.

Conquest, of course, encourages pride and a warlike spirit; so that a successful leader, of unbounded personal influence, is placed in a position to direct the energies of a whole race into one perpetual search after glory and plunder, which lasts as long as he lives and is successful.

Mohammedanism.

Physical Conditions, &c., in Arabia.—We see, in Arabia, a set of

conditions in many respects very similar to those which we found in Tartary.

In certain special and more favoured localities, it is true, we find a stationary population,¹ employed in agriculture or trade and dwelling in towns. But the well-known epithets of "stony" and "sandy," apply to the greater part of the vast Arabian Peninsula; so the bulk of the population has always consisted of wandering tribes of Bedouins or pastoral Arabs, living, like the Tartars, in tents and dependent upon cattle and sheep. These flocks and herds, together with their camels and celebrated horses, supply all their wants, whether it be food, clothing, fuel, or transport.

National Characteristics.—The Arabs belong to the Semitic family of nations. In all ages they have been a free and independent race. Their freedom has been guaranteed by their vast sandy deserts, a far better protection than fortified cities. They alone know the scanty springs of water, and an invader would perish and has been known to perish, from thirst.

The conditions of their wild life—the division into small separate tribes, each under its sheik, the continual wars and blood feuds—have made them fierce and rapacious, though generous and hospitable. They are free, manly, and dignified in bearing, quick and intelligent in character and apprehension, but credulous and superstitious. So great was in, old days, the discord and chronic division, created by their continual internal struggles and feuds,² that there was need of some strong bond to draw them together before they could hope to make any figure in the world.

Religion of Mohammed.—Such a strong centralizing agent was their great prophet Mohammed. The religion which he created cannot here be discussed; suffice it to say that it was many-sided. Appealing alternately to the hopes and the fears, the highest ambitions and the lowest passions of a warm-blooded and credulous race, it was admirably adapted to attract and bind together all these scattered elements, and to turn them into the direction of foreign conquest and religious propagandism.

Without opportunity the best-tempered blade will be drawn in vain, and had better slumber in its sheath.

The weak and feeble state of the empires of the world in the seventh century made the opportunity of Mohammedanism. Of the two great powers at that time, Persia and Byzantium, Persia was decaying fast and her wars with Constantinople weakened her still more.

The Byzantine empire was distracted by intestine commotions, greatly given up to sensuality and idleness, and weakened by wars with the Persians and the inroads of the Huns or Goths. The state of the Christian world, viewed whether from the religious or political side was similarly weak. It was a time of great darkness. The

¹ Principally in the province of Yemen in the south, bordering on the Indian Ocean. There are also the well-known towns of Mecca and Medina, whose wealth was mainly derived from the caravan traffic across the desert.

² These were so perpetual that, by universal consent, two months were annually observed before Mohammed's time, during which all such wars and feuds were suspended. Compare the remarks above in the case of Rome.—Gibbon, Vol. VI, ch. 1, *Mills' Hist.*, p. 175.

seven patriarchal churches of Asia had fallen into corruption. The energies of Christians were consumed in endless controversy, sectarian zeal, empty ceremonial, saint and relic worship. The barbarians of the north had pretty well destroyed science and art, and literature was at its lowest ebb. The prevailing darkness and ignorance extended to military as well as all other matters. That great tide of improvement which started from the general introduction of gunpowder, and tended steadily to raise the value of infantry as opposed to cavalry, had not yet set in.

Mohammedanism was emphatically a warlike religion. It drew together any number of alien races and sent them forth in a compact band to fight under one banner in the name of the Almighty. The Caliphs united in their own persons all ecclesiastical with all civil power. Whether it were a question of public worship, of the ordering of a battle, or of a pilgrimage to Mecca, they were equally the leaders. Universal military service was the rule. The fatalism induced by the doctrine of predestination helped to maintain the courage of the troops, which was further stimulated by the tempting prospect of the rewards awaiting the faithful warrior in Paradise.

Saracens.—The strength of the Saracens consisted in their active well-mounted horsemen, who fought on equal terms against any cavalry then in existence, and the infantry that could stop them had yet to be created.

It is, therefore, very questionable whether there was any power in all Europe capable of arresting the victorious march of the Saracens, Charles Martel and his great victory notwithstanding, if they had made any serious effort to overrun it when at the height of their power. But fortunately they spent their strength mainly in Asia and Africa instead.

The undivided Caliphate did not last long, but fell rapidly to pieces by its own weight. The same causes which won for it its vast progress insured also its rapid decay. A huge empire, so rapidly created, had not in it the elements of political unity and permanence. The great sections of the divided Caliphate tended also to decay, and had it not been for an infusion of fresh blood, Mahommedanism seemed to be wearing out. But we have already noticed how the Tartars adopted the convenient creed, and carried it far and wide. It is impossible here to trace its renewed fortunes, whether under Timour or under the great Indian, Seljukian or Othman, dynasties. Suffice it to say generally that Mahommedanism fell on a kindred soil, very similar to that whereon it took its rise—"Savageness, ferocity, contempt of "danger and death, self-denial and energy of soul, distinguished as strongly the shepherds of Arabia as those of Tartary"—(Mills, p. 174.)—and it blazed up again as fiercely as ever. It is now going again to decay everywhere, nor have we now probably the conditions necessary for such another new lease of life for it.

The Secret of its Strength.—Perhaps the most certain sign of the present decay of Mohammedanism is its quiescent, non-militant character; for Mohammedanism tolerant and unproselytising is lost. Religious propagandism—fierce, militant, unsparing¹—was the secret

¹ "The Saracens carried the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other. Political aggrandisement was the means, not the end, of their warfare. The success of their religion and their arms kept equal pace. 'The circumference,' says the sagacious Paley, 'that Mohammed's conquests should carry his religion along with them, will create little surprise when we know the conditions which he proposed to the vanquished: death or conversion was the only choice offered to idolaters. To the Jews and Christians was left the somewhat milder alternative of subjection and tribute, if they persisted in their own religion, or of an equal participation in the

of its strength, and carried it in one unbroken tide of victory from the parched deserts where a fanatical enthusiast and one or two paltry little tribes of wandering Bedouins started it, to the furthest confines of Spain in the west and India or China in the east.

Wars consequent upon the French Revolution.

I do not propose to enter upon any general consideration of the long-cherished military history of France. With our limited space it will be more profitable to confine ourselves to one single epoch. I have therefore chosen the period of France's greatest ascendancy in Europe as the most suitable for our present purpose. Neither shall we consider such matters as the physical conditions, population, resources, and government of France.

The leading points—the broad acres of fertile corn and grape-growing soil; the frugal, steady-going and industrious rural population, forming the real basis of French strength, in contradistinction to the volatile and pleasure-seeking inhabitants of Paris and the large towns; the love of glory, which has made France a great military power for centuries; the excitable and enthusiastic temperament which has always made the French soldier formidable in attack, but ill-adapted for playing a waiting or a losing game; all such points as these are too well known to need any detailed comment here.

We pass, then, to our immediate subject.

Opening Campaign in 1792.—When France commenced this great struggle by declaring war against Austria and Prussia she had three armies on foot, amounting nominally to 193,000 men in all.

But revolution rather than war had for some time occupied the minds of the troops.¹ Discipline consequently was at its lowest.² Altogether the army was in a demoralised condition.

At the first sight of the enemy in the Low Countries whole regiments fled without firing a shot, calling out, "Nous sommes trahis!" much in the same way as was done by some of their successors in the hasty levies of the last war.

Austria and Prussia might easily have crushed the ill-organised and undisciplined troops opposed to them, had they put forth their strength. They invaded France with 113,000 men in a slow, dilatory, and half-hearted manner; their movements being all throughout dictated as much by political as military considerations.

Thus at the very time when the Duke of Brunswick in command was supposed to be anxious to bring on a general engagement, he was secretly carrying on a political correspondence with the French General Dumourier. Moreover, there was an ill-concealed jealousy and antagonism between Austria and Prussia themselves, which showed itself disastrously in the conduct of affairs.

"rights and liberties, the honours and privileges of the faithful, if they embraced 'the religion of their conquerors.'" (Mills' Hist. of Moh., p. 176.)

¹ Instead of remaining aloof from civil commotions, they had entered into them with fiery partisan feeling, and had been filled with that spirit of revolutionary licence and rebellion against all constituted authority, which was then everywhere rampant.

² Above 12,000 of the officers were among the royalist emigrants who had fled from France, and now furnished a contingent to the allies. Their places had to be supplied by the hasty promotion of individuals chosen for their republican partisanship rather than for any military knowledge.

This cause, coupled with the general slowness and lack of vigour and breadth of view which characterised military operations generally at that time ruined the campaign for the allies.

Thus they lost the finest opportunity of crushing the French round Sedan by a rapid attack, after the flight of General La Fayette and before the arrival of Dumourier to take command, during which time the French army was left without a head. They allowed Dumourier to occupy the defiles of the Argonne Forest by a flank march, undertaken with very inferior numbers and close across their front; and they then omitted to crush him by a determined attack while defending an extended line with very weak forces. They permitted him to retreat almost unmolested from the forest when 1,500 hussars had utterly demoralised 10,000 of his best troops, and his whole army might easily have been scattered to the winds by a determined pursuit. Hence he was enabled to gain time for reinforcements, and establish himself 70,000 strong, in a powerful entrenched camp, where he was in a position to restore the spirit of the troops by maintaining his ground in face of the enemy, and had time to attend to their discipline and equipment.

Eventually, winter approaching, they had to retreat without effecting anything. The general result of the campaign was to raise the spirits of the revolutionary party in France and all over Europe, by the spectacle of the successful resistance of the armies of the Revolution.

Their retreat paved the way for the invasion of the Low Countries by Dumourier, and the victory of Jemappes over the Austrians, which, being the first pitched battle gained by the Republicans, created an immense moral effect, and caused the conquest of the whole of the Netherlands. The conduct of the invasion from a military point of view was simply contemptible. On more than one occasion, as above described, the most favourable opportunities for a crushing attack on the French were lost. And at any time in the earlier stages of the campaign a determined advance of the allies, with concentrated forces, could hardly have failed to bring them to Paris. Here the Republican Government were in no condition to oppose them; for they had not yet got that hold upon France with all its resources which they afterwards established by the aid of the guillotine; and their hands were very full with faction and discord within and without. The monarchical and anti-revolutionary party in the country was still very strong, as was instanced by the desperate struggles of La Vendée in the following year.

By a determined effort the war might have been finished in three months, a constitutional government established in France, and twenty years of war prevented, with all its untold sufferings and loss to the allies themselves, and to all Europe.

The leading lesson of the campaign is perhaps the importance in war, and especially in dealing with a revolution, of employing a sufficient force with promptness and energy at first. This principle has recently been brought home to all the world through the immense advantages gained by Prussia in the two last European wars by the employment of a preponderating force at the commencement of the struggle.

1793.—We find a very similar set of conditions in the next campaign, in 1793.

The previous year had left the armies of the Republic in a very disorganised state, in spite of their successes, and partly in consequence of them. For the licence of plunder had demoralised them, the equipments were in a miserable condition, and numbers of the troops had abandoned their colours to form bands of plunderers, or had returned home.

After the taking of the camp at Famars the allies might easily have proclaimed Louis XVII, marched on Paris 80,000 strong, and terminated the war, there being nothing capable of stopping them. But

the views of both governments and generals were too narrow-minded and selfish for such a course, and they only laid siege to Valenciennes and Condé, which they took. The fall of these important fortresses and taking of the camp of Cæsar, which fell almost without a shot fired, left the French dismayed and panic-stricken, army and people.

Critical Situation.—And this brings us to a critical and turning point in the history of the war, to which I particularly wish to direct attention; for the Republic was now in an apparently desperate situation. Of 280,000 allies in the field 180,000 were ready to march on Paris, within, say, 160 miles. Valenciennes, Condé, and Mayence were lost, and covering the invaders' communications. The great cities of Toulon and Lyons were in open revolt, and a great part of the south was ready to join them. In La Vendée 60,000 insurgents were fighting heroically for the Royalist cause. The armies of the République were weak, undisciplined, untrained, and mostly in a wretched condition. They needed a vast increase of strength in every respect to place them fairly in a position to cope with the gigantic task before them; and for this neither men, money, nor material were, to all appearance, forthcoming. The situation seems hopeless. But if now we turn to the end of this very campaign, we are astonished to find the Republic everywhere victorious! Whether we look to the allied invasion, the southern revolt, or the Vendéan war, the Convention had triumphed.

Causes of the Triumph of the Convention.—The causes of this remarkable success on the one side, or of this lamentable failure on the other, are equally instructive and important for our present enquiry. Turning first to the latter side—the elements of weakness on the side of the allies which led to ultimate failure—we see first of all an individual selfishness and consequent general disunion.

That narrow seeking after self-aggrandizement rather than the common welfare, which in the congress at Antwerp had led to the mention of indemnities and securities, had soon taken a visible shape in the hoisting of the Austrian colours on the walls of Valenciennes and Condé; and this, as announced in the public Proclamation, by right of conquest. This changed the whole character of the war, which became henceforth one of national defence for France against hostile aggression, instead of a struggle for the putting down of a usurping faction of demagogues. Thus that wide-spread and formidable opposition to the Convention, which had shown itself in the open revolt of Lyons and Toulon, as well as in the Vendéan rising—now was held up to all France as a playing into the hands of her invading foes, by crippling the executive Government opposed to them. Moreover, this policy, as Alison says, “sowed divisions among the allies as much as it united its enemies.”

Prussia was not going to fight for the aggrandizement of her rival Austria. From this time forward she made no serious effort to prosecute the war with vigour, and eventually seceded from the alliance and concluded a separate peace. Similarly England, by insisting, in opposition to the rest of the allies, on sending her contingent to besiege Dunkirk at the very time when the united Armies ought to have marched on Paris, gave an invaluable breathing time to the Convention, and largely contributed to the general failure of the campaign.

The antiquated and vacillating notions of war, on the part of the allied Generals, were also largely responsible for the result.

Instead of recognising that the way to deal with a Revolution was to crush it

at once by a vigorous attack while in its early disorganised state, they deliberately gave it time to marshal and equip vast forces while they wasted their own time in comparatively unimportant sieges, such as Valenciennes, Condé, Dunkirk, Quesnoy.

Republican Energy.—Again the wonderful success of the Convention was mainly effected by an extraordinarily great and rapid development of power both civil and military.

A small knot of able and uncompromising men, nominated by the Convention, and called the Committee of Public Salvation, directed the whole power and resources of France to the one object of repelling the invasion. Twelve hundred thousand men were raised in an incredibly short time. What between confiscations of estates, loans, requisitions, and paper assignats, all the wealth and resources of the country were utilized to arm, equip, and support this great host.

The Revolutionary ardour and ferment, the ruin of trade, the widespread poverty and distress, had combined to make the Army the only opening for enterprising and talented men; at the same time that a judicious system of selection, carefully carried out by the able Carnot, gave every man of ability and zeal a fair chance of rising to high command. So all the talent and energy in France tended more and more to the Army. This state of things soon showed itself in a radical improvement in organisation, tactics, rapidity of action, and in every military quality.

Thus, while the allies were vacillating over the sieges of unimportant fortresses, holding long-winded councils of war, and wasting their time and strength in indecisive operations generally—with Armies composed of well-drilled troops indeed, but led by officers trained under an aristocratic system in an obsolete and un-enterprising school—the French were rapidly creating a vast host, which, like a young and enterprising giant, was impatient of the fetters which military routine and prejudice had imposed upon the allied operations.

We are dealing here with first causes; it is not possible to trace their operation and working in any detail.

The raising of the siege of Dunkirk, due to the absurd dispersion of the allied troops, which enabled the French to concentrate superior forces for the attack—the victory of Wattignies, and consequent raising of the siege of Mauberge, caused by very similar conditions—the dreadful sieges of Lyons and Toulon—the execution of the unfortunate General Houchard in spite of important successes gained by him—all showed the ferocious energy of the Republican Committee, as well as their superior grasp of the true principles of war in spite of all the difficulties with which they had to contend; while their cause was favoured by the cold co-operation of Prussia and dissensions between the allied Commanders, even on the field of battle (at Weissenburg, December 26th), ending in the driving of the Austrians across the Rhine.

The fierce energy then of this young democracy was the main secret of their success. They had to contend, in the course of the war, with all the Governments of Europe, and with the forces which those Governments could manage to wield on the comparatively limited scale required by the recognised ideas of war in those days, and corresponding to their ordinary and limited powers. But the allies fought with a whole nation in arms, and with all the strength and resources of that nation, and of every individual in it, concentrated on the one object of furthering the war.

Here first, then, in modern times, we find a great national struggle waged by a really national Army—a principle, which as carefully worked out on a permanent footing by Prussia, we have lately seen to effect such mighty results, that it is now recognised by all the great Powers of the continent as the proper and necessary basis of their military strength.

Importance of the Campaign.—It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of this campaign, both as regards the war generally and the history of Europe.

Here was laid the foundation of that vast fabric of Napoleonic conquest, which was soon to rise to such an astonishing height. For Carnot and the Comité de Salut Publicque forged the sword which Napoleon wielded so well. And those military principles, whether tactical or strategical, which the master-mind of Napoleon worked out with such telling results, had already, in no small measure, been grasped by the Republican leaders.

1794. *Successes of the Convention, growing Exhaustion of France.*—The Convention now began to reap, in more decided and telling successes, the harvest which they had sown by unparalleled exertions and sacrifices. This was a glorious campaign for France. 1,700,000 men were at one period fighting on land or sea. The Armies were full of enthusiasm under the most severe privations. The allies still adhered to the same system of a too great extension and division of their forces, and wasted their strength in secondary enterprises instead of making every minor object give way to a direct and concentrated attack.

The French Armies, under a severe régime, were getting far better disciplined, and were rapidly improving in knowledge of war. The advantage to France of acting on interior lines in a central position, and of the command of fortresses wherewith to check the advance of an enemy or to cover her own, was conspicuously manifest.

But the Convention were eating up the resources of France by their lavish expenditure of men and money. The question of finance alone would soon have brought them to a standstill if some new system had not been introduced.

For in spite of the immense amount of national property upon which the assignats were secured, the issue of them had been so enormous that their market value had fallen to 1s. 8d. in the pound; and the war was costing 8,000,000*l.* sterling a month.

1795. In this campaign the growing exhaustion of France was apparent in spite of the great victory of Loano, won by Massena.

In this the Austrian line was broken by a determined attack on his centre, forming a leading illustration of a principle which was subsequently so well carried out by Napoleon. The end of the campaign, however, left the Republicans hard pressed and disheartened, and the allies victorious and advancing.

1796. Napoleon assumed the command. His genius and daring are nowhere better shown than in this his first campaign. With an Army never reaching 50,000 men he overran Italy and routed, after desperate fighting, four large Austrian Armies. The chief secrets of his success were wonderful rapidity, and accumulation of overwhelming strength on crucial points, the one condition enabling him to carry

out the other. By the heavy contributions which he levied everywhere, he also supported his Army and made war maintain war, while a combined system of requisitions and contracts assisted greatly to maintain rapidity of movement. Add to this the preparation for the attack by artillery, and the crushing of parts of the enemy's line by the fire of masses of it, preceding determined attacks by infantry and cavalry—improvements in infantry tactics in the employment of columns for attack and in the use of skirmishers—and the division of the forces into complete semi-independent bodies or army corps.

1797. Early next year he resumed his conquering march, defeated the Austrians at all points, and dictated peace almost within sight of Vienna.

1798–1800. The genius and fame of Napoleon, and the principles of order which he represented as opposed to Revolution, had an astonishing effect in animating the spirit of the French, and making them ready to endure any sacrifices.

Thus, at the close of 1799, when Napoleon first assumed the direction of affairs as First Consul, he found the army beaten and dispirited, invading enemies in France on two sides, a great deficiency of stores, munitions of war and money, revolt and anarchy rampant. In six months all was changed, the ranks were filled with enthusiastic soldiers, the treasury was well supplied, the Austrians had been beaten and Italy recovered. Shortly after, in 1800, the breaking of the Austrian communications consequent upon Napoleon's march across the St. Bernard, resulted in the hardly-won triumph of Marengo. There is more in all this than can be accounted for by the ability and personal ascendancy of Napoleon. "It was the transition "from anarchy to order, from the tyranny of demagogues to the ascendant of talent, "from the weakness of popular to the vigour of military government, which was "the real cause of the change."—Alison, Vol. V, p. 339.

1805. *Campaign of Austerlitz. Different Position of Napoleon.*—In 1805, five years of continental peace had enabled Napoleon to mature, at his leisure and unopposed, a military machine after his own heart; and on the outbreak of war again we see, in the wonderful campaign of Austerlitz, the master-hand setting this machine in motion with the most crushing results. No longer the aspiring General fighting for fame with such materials as might be committed to his hand, we see him as the mighty conqueror carrying into execution his own well-laid schemes for the ruin of empires.

No doubt he was favoured by circumstances. He also ran terrible risks—

Such as the vacillation of Prussia, which prevented the Russians from coming earlier into the field, and the bad dispositions of the Austrians by which 80,000 of their best troops were uselessly wasted on secondary objects in Italy under the Archduke Charles, while Mack was left to almost certain destruction in meeting Napoleon at the decisive point with a far inferior force. Add the want of forethought in leaving Ulm unprovisioned for a siege—the stupidity by which the bridge at Vienna was not destroyed and gave the French command of both banks—and the bad tactical arrangements by which the allies were assailed in the midst of a flank march at Austerlitz.

Had the allies waited, avoided a general action, and retired before Napoleon's advance until all their forces could be assembled to crush him, he, having no reinforcements to expect, must either have retreated under great difficulties, or would almost to a certainty have been overwhelmed and destroyed.

But whether we look at the bold and masterly combinations, the

rapidity and secrecy of the converging march of the troops, the cutting off of the opposing General Mack from his base, leading to the surrender of Ulm, the rapid march on Vienna, or the tactical ability with which the final struggle at Austerlitz was conducted, we cannot fail to recognise that the triumph of Napoleon and of France was mainly due to his own wonderful energy and transcendent military ability.

1806. *Campaign of Jena*.—The campaign of Jena in the next year was, if possible, more astonishing than that of Austerlitz. If Austria had been overthrown in three months, Prussia was humbled to the dust in three weeks. Here, again, the result was mainly due to the rapidity and boldness of Napoleon's attack, combined with a careful calculation of the chances, and the unwearied attention of a master-mind to the organization and arrangement of detail.

The fall of Prussia left France raised to the highest point of military pre-eminence, and Napoleon at the very zenith of his fame.

1807—1815.—In the long, chequered campaigns which followed and paved the way for his final overthrow, I do not propose to follow him.

Causes of the Overthrow of Napoleon.—Suffice it to say, that incessant fighting exhausted France, and used up the materials, by the skilful employment of which, victories had been won; while, at the same time, the gradual process of education in war, which Napoleon's campaigns forced upon his adversaries, rendered victory more and more difficult of attainment.

No doubt, such great events as the retreat from Moscow or the battle of Waterloo are historically of the highest importance and interest. But the main issue and final result were, to a great extent, independent of any one such event, however remarkable in itself.

Napoleon's boundless ambition and conquering career were bound, sooner or later, to band all Europe together against him; while the Allies fought at a less and less disadvantage as they became better instructed in war, and as the French veteran troops were killed off or died out, and were replaced with increasing difficulty and ever worse material.

Similarly, we cannot inquire here into the details of the fighting or of the French tactics.

Summary.—A number of able men making war the business of their lives, and gaining vast practical experience in it, must and did make many improvements which contributed in their proper place to the desired end, and form a most interesting and instructive study in scientific war. But the broad issues of the case lie deeper than all this.

The French Revolution, with its abandonment of old traditions, and fierce upholding of new, turned the energies of a highly-gifted and warlike race into the direction of war; and, by the pressure of circumstances, the army became the natural career for the most able and talented men in it.

The supineness, the slowness, the mutual jealousies of the Allies, and their blind adherence to an obsolete mode of warfare, enabled

the revolutionary authorities to gain time, and tide over their early difficulties.

Soon the combination of men, means, and energy, with rising talent and increasing experience, began to tell, and the young armies of the Convention grew too formidable to be put down without a greater expenditure of force than the European Powers were prepared for. Still these made such increasing efforts as were only met by the Convention by an expenditure of men and money which must soon have utterly exhausted France, had not a man of great genius arisen in Napoleon. He, partly by the wonderful success and rapidity of his operations, and partly by his system of throwing the whole burden of maintaining the troops on the enemy—through invading his country and levying contributions—enabled France to maintain the war with great success. And by intervals of peace, during which his country could repose for a time, while he was maturing his plans and materials—alternating with brilliant and crushing campaigns—he succeeded in raising France to the highest pitch of military greatness. But, in the long run, his system contained within it the seeds of its own ultimate failure. It was too aggressive without, and too exacting within, to last. He stirred up so great a coalition against himself, and educated it to such a point by the experience of his own victories, that eventually it was bound to prove too strong for him. Still, even to the last, his prestige and mastery of war gave him such a great advantage, that had it not been for the exhaustion of France, he might very probably have defied all opposition for his lifetime.

Prussia.

General Remarks.—As in the case of France, so now in that of her great rival Prussia, I do not propose to enter upon any detailed consideration of those external conditions, which, in the case of ancient and perhaps less known historic Powers, it has seemed proper to do.

The great plains of Central Europe are not as fertile as many more favoured districts of France; nevertheless, they yield a return to careful and plodding cultivation. A great part of Prussia proper is inclined to be barren and sandy. She is very deficient in seaboard and ports, and not rich in mineral wealth. Moreover, she has had to contend with great disadvantages from the widely-scattered character of her territory and the want of unity and homogeneity in her population.

The absence of naturally defensible frontiers—coupled with a straggling and incompact formation—is a standing menace to the safety of Prussia, and although partly neutralized by the possession of strong fortresses,¹ has, in the course of her history, led to great disasters.

Prussia is but a modern Power, owing her recent unprecedented rise partly to her great capacity for profiting by the lessons of experience, which has caused her downfall during the great tide of Napoleonic conquest, to result in the patient and painstaking elaboration of a very perfect and complete military system,—and partly to her

¹ Upon which, whether on the side of France or Russia, Prussia has recently been, or is now spending, a vast amount of labour and money.

capacity for leading and identifying herself with the strivings and aspirations after national unity of an earnest and patriotic people.

Frederick the Great.—Prussia first rose to any importance in Europe through the unscrupulous and high-handed policy of her king, Frederick II, in the war of the Austrian succession, which terminated in 1748. She was soon after raised to the first rank among military Powers by Frederick the Great in the seven years' war.

In this, Frederick sustained a grand struggle with Austria, Prussia, Sweden, and France. He showed the greatest courage, endurance, and fertility of resource, combined with a scientific study of war. No doubt, he was greatly assisted by circumstances, such as the money of England, the bad leading and worse condition of the French troops, the half-hearted co-operation of the Russians, the timely death of the Empress Elizabeth, and the general want of concert and sustained energy among the Allies ("La division et la faiblesse de ses adversaires furent ses meilleurs alliés."—Jomini). To these external causes we may add the good state of preparation for war in which the last King of Prussia had left both army and kingdom. Thus, like Alexander the Great, when succeeding Philip of Macedon, Frederick found a complete military machine ready to his hand. But, in dealing with such a tremendous coalition, these favouring conditions will scarcely detract from his fame (compare Jomini, "*l'Art de la Guerre*," p. 314). His troops were superior to those of his adversaries in steadiness and in general excellence. But there was no such decided superiority in his raw material as would account for his victories.

His successes, and the consequent military pre-eminence of Prussia at this time, were mainly due to his own military talents and energy, coupled, as in the case of Gustavus-Adolphus, with the great advantage conferred by his position as warrior-king commanding his own armies in person. This enabled considerations of military expediency to take precedence of all else throughout his realm.

Coming a little more to details, we see that the decided tactical superiority which he established was mainly due to:—

1. Increased development of fire. "It is said that the fire of the Prussian infantry was so rapid, that each man had a piece of leather to protect his left hand from the heat of the barrel."—Home's "*Précis de M. T.*," p. 35.

2. The excellence of the drill and general instruction of his troops, and resulting superior mobility, and manœuvring capacity. Cavalry which, in the wars of Louis XIV, had abdicated its true place, and taken to firearms like infantry, now resumed its proper sphere, and, trusting to the headlong charge and the sword alone, achieved a great reputation.

3. Frederick's well-known system of attack, called the oblique order. This last stood him in good stead, as opposed to the sluggish and uninstructed adversaries with whom he had to deal. But such a system in presence of a vigilant and active foe, would be most hazardous, as it affords a fine opening for a bold counter-attack on the flank of an extended line of troops while on the march. Moreover, in the case of a movement hanging upon the united and carefully pre-arranged march of a whole army to a flank, any slight unforeseen difficulty or opposition causing delay or hindrance to a part of the force, might easily ruin the whole plan. The battles of Prague and Leuthen show us Frederick winning great victories with the aid of his peculiar system of attack. In his defeat at Kolín, we see the hazard of any such flank march in presence of a determined adversary. While at Rosbach, Frederick himself teaches us how his own offensive tactics could best be met and turned to the defender's advantage (compare Jomini, "*Guerre des Sept Ans*," pp. 409, 392).

The end of the war left things as they were at the beginning, except that Prussia had been exalted to the highest military rank, and the French had lost Canada.

Causes of the Downfall of Prussia at Jena.—We shall next glance

briefly at that dark chapter in the history of Prussia which is summed up in the word Jena.

In the early days of the French Republic, Frederick William, King of Prussia, was one of the most ardent supporters of the opposing coalition of European Powers. This he was also the first to desert, by a separate peace.¹ By this he secured a large share of Poland. He thus sacrificed ingloriously his own reputation and the fame of the Prussian army and embarked in a disastrous line of policy,² which ten years later brought ruin on his country. We may say briefly that Prussia paved the way for her own downfall by her narrow, short-sighted, and selfish policy. In the campaign of Jena she was left to bear the brunt of the contest alone.

Austria had had too much experience of the tergiversations of Prussia and had too bitter a remembrance of her conduct during the preceding campaign of Austerlitz to join her. Aid was expected from Russia and England, but did not arrive in time.

Napoleon, knowing better than any man the value of time, advanced to the attack as rapidly as possible with 186,000 men.³ The Prussians, instead of standing on the defensive along the line of the Elbe and the fortresses⁴ until the Russians could come up, took the field against him with 120,000.

The disasters which followed were mainly due to the slow and antiquated ideas of the Prussian generals as compared with Napoleon's rapid and bold movements—to the rash attempt of the Duke of Brunswick to cut the French off from the Rhine by marching through the Thuringian forest—leading to an interposition by the French between the Prussians and their magazines and line of communication—and to the unfortunate division of the Prussian forces.

But Napoleon's tactics at Jena in attacking, with the defiles of the Landgrafenburg in his rear were very hazardous, and had it not been for that unlucky and imprudent division of the Prussian force, the very day before the battle, by which he was left to contend with only 40,000 instead of 100,000 men it might have gone hard with him. Jena was a well-fought battle, and by no means discreditable to the Prussians considering the immense disproportion of force under which they had to contend—only 40,000 against 80,000 French. But the glory of the fighting rests with Davoust, who, under every difficulty with only 30,000 men, defeated the

¹ Basle, 1795.

² The deceitful and time-serving policy, which during these ten years, characterised Prussia, and alienated from her the goodwill of all Europe, culminated in December, 1805, when Prussia having at last joined the allies, the minister Haugwitz, who came to Vienna to declare war against Napoleon, on learning the result of the battle of Austerlitz, proceeded instead to congratulate Napoleon on it, and to propose a treaty by which Hanover should be annexed to Prussia in return for Prussia's joining France! The vacillating policy of Prussia, earlier in the same year, was a main cause of the disasters of Austria at Ulm and Austerlitz. Had Prussia joined Austria and Russia at first, she would have taken the French at a critical time in flank and ruined their plans, have given time to the Russians to come up, and probably by a timely union of forces, have crushed Napoleon had he dared to face the overwhelming coalition that would have been arrayed against him.

³ Not reckoning Marmont in Illyria.

⁴ Dresden, Torgau, Wittenburg, Magdeburg.

Prussian King with 65,000. There was very hard fighting at Auerstadt. The gallant division of Gudin, which bore the whole brunt of the fighting alone for some time, lost half its numbers, and, on the Prussian side, the divisions of Schmecttau and Wartensleben were not much better off. On the whole it was one of the most glorious victories that the French ever won. Napoleon's rapidity and energy are nowhere better seen than by the manner in which he followed up his victories, giving the enemy no time to pause or recover himself. And the way in which a sudden and unexpected reverse will paralyse and even prostrate an army and a people was well illustrated by the utter collapse of Prussia after Jena, with the inexcusable surrender of strong fortresses.

The bold initiative, and superior mastery of war of Napoleon, which enabled him to take the lead and keep it all through, contributed more to the result than any want of fighting power on the part of the Prussian troops.

The Prussians had trusted too much to the prestige of Frederick the Great's victories, and too little to a close and scientific study of war in the best of all schools—experience. They had been resting on their laurels and on their established reputation. Moreover they had neglected to provide proper reserves.

Prussia learnt a Lesson.—But in these defeats and in the bitter humiliation which followed—for Napoleon having once got his foot on the neck of Prussia, ground her down unsparingly—she learnt a lesson which she has never since for one moment forgotten. At Jena and Auerstadt the seed was sown which has borne fruit; in due course, at Sadowa and Sedan. If there be one cause which is above all else responsible for Prussia's recent successes, it is that close and careful study of war in all its branches, and all its details, which has long been characteristic of her. This devotion of a whole nation to military matters,—this patient submission to the heavy yoke of an universal conscription and ever-increasing army estimates—can only be accounted for by the deep resentment of a patriotic people at their country's humiliation, and their firm determination to prevent the possibility of its recurrence.

Modern Prussian Military System.—We have neither time nor space here to tell again the thrice-told tale of that elaborate military system which is the concrete outcome and result of such a determination—or to trace in detail its working in the two last wars. These things are so well known that it is unnecessary to do more than refer to the leading points of the case, in which I shall endeavour to summarise the causes of recent German success and of French failure.

The two cardinal principles which Prussia adopted as the basis of her military reorganisation after the disastrous campaign of Jena were:—

1. *Universal liability to service.*
2. *No substitution.* These rules, contrary to other nations, she retained after Waterloo: and they have been the groundwork of all her subsequent successes.

Frederick the Great's army, organised on the limited and exclusive basis of those times, had been famous all over Europe for discipline and training. It was the combination of this old Prussian spirit of obedience and careful instruction with the much broader foundation now given by universal service, which created for Prussia an army excelling both in numbers and quality.

The problem of combining numbers with economy was solved by the Prussians by the well-known principles of:—

3. *Short service and strong reserves*, or *landwehr*. But in order that every man in time of peace may know his place in the cadre, and may get there on the outbreak of war in the shortest time, with the least possible trouble and confusion, and with arms and equipment complete, two more conditions were necessary and were strictly carried out. These are:—

4. *Decentralisation*, by which every army-corps is complete in itself in all respects, and so can mobilize itself at the shortest notice.

5. *Localization*, by which every individual man knows his place, and goes no long distance to get there. The careful working out of the five guiding principles above accounts for much that only recently took all Europe by surprise. We may further mention as leading causes of Prussian success:—

6. *Education*. Prussia had for many years enjoyed the distinction of being the best educated country in Europe. This universal education—combined with the absence of substitutes, which kept good men in the ranks, when once drawn in the conscription—tended to the creation of a high standard of intelligence and mental activity in all ranks, which is very necessary in modern war.

7. *Continual progress and improvement*. This intelligence and mental activity conducted greatly to further that incessant study and progressive modification and improvement in every department which is such a marked feature in the Prussian army.¹

8. *System of Command*. The rank and file always obey most cheerfully—and fight best under—men whom they recognise as their natural leaders, both from fitness for command and from superior social position. The working of the Prussian system is to officer the army from educated men of such a superior class whom the soldiers respect and obey implicitly.

The evil of an opposite order of things was fully demonstrated in the case of the French army in the course of the last war. A democratic and republican soldiery when things went wrong frequently insulted a body of officers for whom, in the ordinary course of things they had no great respect, and whom, therefore, at small provocation, they were ready to turn upon.

9. *Excellency of the General Staff*.—Much of the success of Prussia was no doubt due to the careful and systematic study of all military questions, and of everything that could facilitate the arrangements for all possible campaigns, made in time of peace by the general staff in Berlin. The excellence of the staff, again, is to be attributed to the system of selecting officers for it out of the entire army, after they had had some years' experience of practical regimental work, and were of proved capacity.

10. But above and beyond all these things we must reckon this, that the Prussian army, as a whole, was pervaded in all ranks with a much stronger and more earnest spirit of duty than was the case with the French. Thus while the French officers were lounging along Boulevards or sipping absinthe in cafés, the Germans were drilling

¹ Compare Boguslawski. *Tact. Ded.*, p. 147.

their men and seeking to improve themselves and those under them in every possible way.

Condition of the French Army.—Turning now to the French army, it is difficult to say precisely where that serious declension set in, which can alone account for the marked difference in its condition at the time of the campaign of Jena say, and again in 1870. Perhaps we may date the commencement of this declension from the revolution of 1848 as affecting it in the vital point of discipline.

Subsequently to this time, no doubt, the French gained victories in the Crimean and Austro-Italian wars. Still we shall hardly find anything in either of those campaigns which can be compared for a moment with the fighting, say at Austerlitz—nor, on a close view, shall we fail to detect signs of weakness and falling off. One result the victories of the second empire undoubtedly had, they contributed to lull the nation to sleep, and to leave them more than ever convinced of the surprising military excellence of France; and they thereby rendered the work of army reform and progress far more difficult than it might otherwise have been.

The encouragement given by the state to a system of substitutes, and of evading personal service by a money payment was a great evil.

It allowed whole classes, and those the most educated and intelligent, of the population, to escape military service. It thereby prevented that infusion of intelligence and ability through the rank and file which, as we have said, was such a valuable element in the German army. It diminished the number of trained men in the country by giving bounties to old soldiers to continue in the ranks. Above all, it tended to check that identification of feeling and interest between the soldier and the population generally which has been a marked result of the German system. Thus the army tended to become a class apart, and military matters a professional affair, unknown and uncared for by the nation generally. A process was here going on just the reverse of that which we have seen to constitute such an element of success in the days of the revolution, where all the talent and energy in France gravitated naturally towards the army, and the feeling and interests of the civil population became bound up with it.

The diminishing interest of the nation generally in the army is shown by the circumstance that "the number of candidates for admission to St. Cyr, which in former times amounted generally to 2,000, fell off in the last years of the Empire to 600." (Boguslawski.)

The French system of a staff trained and serving always apart from the rest of the army was vicious, as tending to make staff officers a set of theorists, with no practical knowledge of the conditions of action of the different arms, or of the needs and requirements of the service generally.

But the great declension of the French army in discipline and in morale was of comparatively recent growth, subsequent to the campaign of 1859, and was due to the spread of luxury and immorality, and to the increasing pursuit of pleasure rather than duty which characterized the whole population, including the army.

After all this has been said, we must not for one moment ignore the fact that the French army, though, as we have seen, far from perfect, yet contained at the outbreak of the war in 1870 many excellent regiments who fought very well; so that the result, with a less disproportion of numbers and better generalship, might have been different.

When two armies prepared for war under such conditions as these came into collision their comparative strength or weakness exhibited

itself in practice, as was to be expected, continually and in many different ways.

The leading points were mainly as follows :—

1. Numbers. The German short-service system enabled them to put 410,000 men into the field at the outset of the war against 270,000 on the French side, a proportion of more than three to two.

2. The French showed a marked deficiency of reserve troops behind the first fighting line, whereas the Germans with their Landwehr system had abundance. Such reserves are most necessary to replace casualties to guard the line of communication, garrison fortresses, or take the field as required. Thus when the field army was destroyed by a rapid series of catastrophes, the French had no means of checking the invaders' progress, and no proper organization of trained or half-trained troops whereon to engraft their vast subsequent levies; so that everything had, to a great extent, to be created from the beginning. This caused the Germans to gain an amount of time which was perfectly invaluable to them. It was the leading cause which, coupled with the unfortunate fall of the fortresses, prevented France from recovering herself in the second period of the war.

The Garde Mobile, which had been created by Marshal Niel with the best intentions towards supplying this want, might no doubt have been of great value had he been in a position to carry out his ideas properly. But it met with so much opposition from army and people that the scheme was in practice a complete failure. Nevertheless even the little that had been done was of some value in enabling the Government to get great masses of men into the field. Had they only been even tolerably disciplined, instructed, and commanded, great results might have been achieved.

3. The French artillery was greatly inferior to the Prussian both in material and training. The mitrailleuse was a novelty, faulty in construction—radius of dispersion so small, that while it cut one or two foes to pieces, their near neighbours in the ranks got off uninjured—and its proper use little understood. Nevertheless the chasseur à pied was a good arm, superior to the needle-gun; but the troops for lack of steady and careful training wasted their ammunition at absurd ranges.

4. The German artillery distinguished themselves greatly. They were pushed well to the front in great force at the beginning of the fight, and maintained their ground with great effect at the closest ranges, often with little or no support from the other arms.

5. The tactics adopted were not suited to the genius of the French troops. Their strong point has always been the offensive; but from force of circumstances, and partly from mistaken instructions in the drill book, they generally fought on the defensive.

6. The powerful German cavalry were of great service in acting as a screen and feeler to the army, and in providing for its security whether in front or flank. The French cavalry did little else except sacrifice themselves uselessly against breech-loaders on two or three occasions.

7. Patrol and outpost duties generally had been greatly neglected on the French side, which led to much disaster. Had the French cavalry been trained in outpost and reconnoitring duties like the Germans, this would have been avoided, and a most valuable knowledge of the enemy's movements acquired.

8. The advantage of the most recent experience in war rested with the Germans. More than half the soldiers and the great majority of the officers had fought on the largest scale and conquered in 1866. The experience then gained had been improved to the utmost. Some of the weak points of 1866, indicated by Captain May in his brilliant pamphlet, "The Tactical Retrospect," had in 1870 become the strongest features in the German tactics, *e.g.* the independent action and forward employment of artillery.

9. The French system of centralization—diametrically opposed to the German—involved the storing of all army material, ammunition, equipment waggons, &c., in huge central depôts. This, combined with the partial failure of their intendance system, created so much delay at the outset that Napoleon's plan of the campaign

was entirely ruined. He thereby lost the lead in the war, which Germany gained and kept throughout.

10. Bad generalship on the French side was responsible for very much. While their plans of operations were bold to rashness, as in the case of the original design of taking the offensive in Germany with inferior forces, or in the flank march for the relief of Bazaine, their execution was lame and impotent.

11. The fall of her fortresses again was a matter of the most vital moment to France. Had Metz and Paris been better provisioned and obstinately defended, the gain of only another month might, viewing the great efforts which the French were making, have changed the course of the war.

Concluding Observations.

We will now endeavour to summarise briefly the leading conditions which determine pre-eminence in war. We shall find, I think, that they may be referred in the main to four classes:—

1. *Physical Configuration and Position, Climate, Resources, and Population.*—These are the great external facts which determine in the long run a nation's very existence, and tend to modify seriously, though not absolutely to determine, its character and capabilities, whether in peace or war. Thus, to come near home, an extended coast-line and good natural harbours, coupled with a favourable situation for commerce, have a tendency to create an active, intelligent, adventurous, and self-reliant population, and, so far, one formidable in war.

We see instances of this in the case of Great Britain, Holland, and ancient Greece; or of various Semitic races, as Carthage and the Phœnicians.

Similarly, mountainous countries in all ages have been famous for fostering a bold and hardy race of inhabitants.

The cool, breezy air, and the necessity for labour and exposure, whether to the shepherd or the huntsman, are simple and healthful conditions, better for the physique than the crowded contamination of cities, and better for the mental powers than the plodding routine husbandry of flat fertile plains. Moreover, the mountains encourage an independent spirit, by affording aid and protection to the mountaineers in their struggles against the aggression of powerful neighbours. The Swiss, the ancient Greeks, the Montenegrins, the Sikhs, and the troublesome hill tribes of India, are familiar instances of this. No doubt if a nation is to cut any great figure in the world, it must generally have a better claim to notice than is conferred by the possession of many square miles of barren mountain and moor. Still, even in the case of a large mixed population, the mountaineer element, so far it goes, will have its value. Probably the best and most reliable portion of the Italian army at this moment consists of the mountaineers of the Alps and Appenines.

A cold climate, again, is generally held to foster an active and war-like race.

But here we must not go too far, for great fundamental distinctions between different races at once come into view. To attempt to grapple with such a question would lead us far afield, and without it we should be ignoring conditions which vitally affect the case. Thus a burning tropical sun seems only to warm the blood and fire the courage of some Asiatic or African races—of such a Semitic people, say, as the Arabs. Whereas the same sun would tend to enervate the constitutions and sap the military qualities of many or most branches of the great Indo-European family of nations. Thus much, however, we may safely say: that, whatever be the differing influence of climate where different races are concerned, it has un-

doubtedly a marked influence on the condition and character of any given race. It will be observed, ere we pass on, that the two physical characteristics of mountain and sea, which I have selected for illustration as being most favourable to the development of the best military qualities, meet in Greece. See my remarks in the section devoted to that country.

All those physical causes, again, which tend to create and maintain a large population will, so far, increase a nation's fighting strength. But it frequently happens that these same conditions help to give a character to the population which effectually neutralizes the advantage of numbers. Thus the fertile plains of India maintain swarming millions of patient and toiling Hindoos; but a few bold Sikhs or Mahrattas would be worth more than any number of them in a campaign.

2. *Government and Constitution*.—Forms of government also exercise a great influence.¹

The question is not, however, one of the name, but of the real nature and practical working of the Government under whatever name, as regards its influence upon—

(a) The general progress, prosperity, and character of the nation, upon which in the long run its military strength must depend;

(b) Its particular influence upon the question of its preparedness for war, and upon the proper conduct of the campaign when entered upon.

Nations differ so much in character, circumstances, and progress in civilisation, that the great question of the best form of government generally can only be settled, if settled at all, by a special consideration of the circumstances of each particular case. But, whether or no, any general discussion of it is evidently beyond our province here.

Coming, then, to the second question, which lies more properly within our range, we see that the great desideratum for a nation's success in war is a strong and stable government, under whatever name, which knows its own mind and is in a position to carry out its views consistently avoiding those fluctuations in estimates and in policy which are so hurtful to any army. No doubt, from this point of view, personal and despotic government presents great advantages.

Had Napoleon had to contend with a parliamentary opposition, which insisted on retrenchment and cutting down military expenditure, he would never have overrun all Europe, or at least, like Cromwell, he must first have turned his Parliament adrift with a strong hand. Had it not been for a strong Opposition in the French Chambers, Napoleon III might have averted great disasters, by entering upon the war of 1870 with a much stronger army, and under more favourable conditions generally. And had Wellington been consistently supported in the Peninsula by a strong and despotic government at home, he would have effected far more, with a far less expenditure of time, labour, and patience. Hannibal, as we have already said, might have conquered Rome and changed the history of the world, had he been similarly supported, instead of which, he was perpetually robbed of the necessary supplies, probably through the intrigues of a reactionary political party in Carthage.

¹ "On ne saurait meconnaître toutefois que, dans les mœurs actuelles, les formes gouvernementales entrent pour beaucoup dans le développement des forces militaires d'une nation et dans la valeur réelle de ses milices."—Jomini.

But there is something to be said on the other side, namely that these strong despotic governments are not necessarily the best for making a strong nation, or for leading it to employ its strength aright, whether for peace or war.

Had Napoleon I been held in check by our imaginary parliament, the exhaustion of France, owing to his insatiable ambition, and her consequent humiliation at the occupation of Paris might have been avoided. The despotic oligarchy of Sparta, which sacrificed everything to military considerations, ended, as we have seen, in making her weaker in war, as in all else, than under a more liberal system she might easily have become.

Thus despotic and military government, pushed to an unnatural extreme, in the long run defeats its own object.

However, whether under the form of a despotism or no, the government should be stable and strong.

The most powerful and stable military powers in history are, as we have seen, Egypt and Rome. The government of Egypt owed its great strength and permanence, as we considered, to its peculiar combination of kingly and priestly power. That of Rome, though subject to many changes and constitutional struggles, was yet for military purposes at all times a strong government.

Coming to modern times, had not the King of Prussia and his able Minister Bismarck been strong enough to defy for years a powerful parliamentary opposition, they would never have raised the Prussian strength to the pitch which led to the great victories of 1866 and 1870.

But probably the most remarkable instance in history of the effect of centralised and unlimited power in preparing the way for great military success is on the side of popular, rather than kingly or despotic government. It was unlimited power alone, as we have seen, that enabled a small committee of French revolutionary leaders to achieve results which a monarch armed with all the authority of an Eastern despot might have despaired of. But this only goes to show that, in ordinary times popular government must be weaker for military purposes than personal. (Compare Jomini's "*L'Art de la Guerre*," p. 38.)

3. *Incentives to War—their Nature and Force.*—War, if it is to be waged on a large scale or with any vigour, demands great sacrifices, whether personal or pecuniary, from the nation which enters upon it. Such sacrifices will not be patiently endured without some constraining influence; and we may take it as an axiom that the stronger and the more popular this constraining cause, the fiercer and more desperate will be the resulting struggle.

Thus wars waged only from state policy, as for the famous "balance of power," do not enlist the personal sympathies of the mass of a nation to any great extent, which goes far to account for the sleepy way in which we find many historic wars dragging on year after year, the troops going forth in spring to fight a few battles or lay siege to a strong place or two, and by and by into winter quarters again, and all in a calm, professional manner. Here the Government ordered the war for its own purposes, but the feelings of the bulk of the population were not deeply affected. But let a burning popular question arise which touches the masses, as in the recent struggles between North and South in America; or let two warlike nations be urged against each other by strong national pride and resentment—as in the case of Rome and Carthage, or, more, recently, France and Prussia—and we shall see a different and more vigorous order of things. This is why civil wars, and, above all, wars of religion, are notoriously the fiercest. Here also burning questions are raised affecting the personal sympathies or the deep-seated convictions of the people generally. "*Les guerres les plus déplorables sont sans doute celles de religion.*"—Jomini.

Natural pride and vanity and lust for aggrandizement have not-

riously been accountable for much of the fighting which is so abundant in history. Religious propagandism is also responsible for endless bloodshed.

It was, as we have noted, the secret of the strength of Mohammedanism, which is the fighting creed *par excellence*. Long before this, it was a leading element in the conquests of ancient Assyria. This is well shown by the inscriptions on the duplicate cylinders in the British Museum, describing the reign of Tiglath Pileser I (about B.C. 1130). Professor Rawlinson remarks, "Perhaps the most striking feature of this inscription is its intensely religious character. The king glorifies himself much, but he glorifies the gods more. His wars are religious wars, at least as much as wars of conquest. The religious spirit displayed is, as might have been expected, in the highest degree exclusive and intolerant; but it is earnest, constant, and all-pervading."—Rawlinson's "Ancient Monarchies."

Religious conviction generally has in all ages been the strongest, as well as the highest of all incentives to hard fighting.

The Crusades form a familiar instance. In more modern times the Thirty Years' War. In the gallant struggle in La Vendée we see a war mainly inspired by religion, waged under such exceptional conditions, and with results so extraordinary and instructive, that I regret that I have not had space to devote a separate section here to its consideration, as was my original intention. The results achieved by the raw peasants of La Vendée in contending with troops of more or less regular composition and training, not only from behind their own protecting hedges but in the open, and on the large scale, form a standing protest against pushing too far, the well known and now-a-days universally recognised superiority of trained men over untrained. And they show, above all, the influence of the moral in war, and of such a strong exciting impulse as is here in question.

I will venture to give one more instance, showing how religion makes men fight, on the authority of an excellent fighting man, Oliver Cromwell. He, in a speech in Parliament, says that he used these words to Mr. Hampden: "Your troops," said I, "are most of them old, decayed serving men, and tapsters, and such kind of fellows; and their troops (*i.e.*, the Royalists) are gentlemen's sons, younger sons and persons of quality. And do you think that the spirit of such base and mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen that have honour and courage and resolution in them? You must get men of a spirit; and, take it not ill what I say, of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go; or else, I am sure, you will be beaten still. I told him so. He was a wise and worthy person, and he did think that I talked a good notion but an impracticable one. I told him, I could do somewhat in it; and I raised such men as *had the fear of God in them*, and some conscience of what they did. And from that day forth *they were never beaten*; but whenever they engaged the enemy they beat continually."—Peck's "Cromwell."

Generally, then, success in war depends greatly upon a firm and unanimous purpose, arising from whatever cause, in the nation which undertakes it. But here character is clearly so much concerned that we are led to speak of this most indispensable element.

4. *Characteristics of Race or Nationality.*—The national characteristics of the leading nations in history are closely bound up with, and go far to account for, their military pre-eminence.

In the ancient Egyptians we saw a certain fierce aggressive energy of spirit externally, combined with an intense politico-religious conservatism internally—and a great capacity for intelligent and systematic labour, thought, and arrangement.

In Greece generally we have seen pre-eminent ability, and capacity for almost unlimited advance and improvement, whether in the arts of war or peace, leading to a military system far in advance of their neighbours. This was particularly manifested in Athens. In Sparta we saw an intense military spirit—a devotion of a

whole people to war, which is unparalleled in history. Rome was conspicuous for a certain hard, stubborn, unyielding pride of race, combined with a patriotic devotion to the country's good. The strength of Mohammedanism in all its form was mainly derived from an aggressive spirit of uncompromising religious propagandism. In the case of the Arab or Saracenic conquests—we see this spirit working in a people of Semitic origin, perfectly compatible, as in the polished Moors of Spain, with a high degree of civilisation, refinement, and artistic cultivation. In the later Tartar Mohammedan empires on the contrary, there is visible nothing above or beyond the sword; and when the sword has done its work, a steady downward progress of disintegration and decay sets in.

France has always been conspicuous for national pride and vanity, and a resulting thirst for military glory and distinction. This, though no very sure foundation on which to base permanently a nation's military strength, has yet been a leading element in making France for many years the first military power in Europe.

In Germany, we see a heavier and more solid way of looking at things, a spirit of thorough research and enquiry which has shown itself strongly in military matters, as well as in every branch of literature and science.

Courage common to all.—However different races may vary in different points of character, one essential element has never been wanting in any race which has ever shown any capacity for war. Courage is the soldier's first requisite, without which all else is vain. But courage again, partaking of these national peculiarities, has varied much in character and quality.

In the Athenian or the Frenchman, though their courage is not precisely alike, we see generally a ferrid, excitable, impassioned character—a courage impatient of delay and suspense—capable of being worked up by successful action to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; but equally capable of being cast down by suffering and defeat to the lowest depth of despondency and despair. Thus the Frenchman is notoriously better adapted for a winning than a losing game, and for the élan and onward rush of the attack rather than for the passive resistance of the defence.

At the other end of the European scale we may, I suppose, place the stubborn and tenacious Russian, who has been defeated indeed, but seldom or never routed; who does not shine in a brilliant and impetuous onset, but rather in a hard fought and well contested retreat. Between these extremes we may place the German and the Briton—each allied to both of them perhaps in certain features of character. The German enthusiasm may approach nearer to the Frenchman, though of a much more solid and serious type: and the English tenacity, though admitting on occasion of a loud cheer and a brilliant charge, may approach nearer to the Russian. But the greatest contrast, probably, is to be obtained by comparing the nervous and excitable courage of our typical Frenchman with the half-latent animal ferocity of certain Asiatics—such as the Sepoy—or of people of Semitic origin as the Jew or the Arab. These fight best when the situation is desperate. When the beaten and desponding Frenchman is throwing down his arms in despair, and crying “tout est perdu,” these begin to get their courage screwed up to the sticking point—to rage and glare like a hunted tiger, or to set themselves to die in a savage and silent struggle, like a rat, a badger, or a wolf.

Courage comes first: but we shall not have read aright the lessons of history, I think, if we fail to notice, in the character of some of the races distinguished above all others in war, a common element besides courage, which appears to have contributed very largely to the successful result. It is difficult to express this element in any one word: but for want of a better term I shall call it the spirit of *Order*. With a short description of it we will conclude.

This Order is the one conspicuous feature common to the character of such diverse, and in other respects, opposite races, as the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, and the German.

In Egypt, as we have seen, this spirit showed itself in an orderly and stereotyped system of class distinction—in a set of customs having the force of law, by which the conduct, whether of king or subject, was equally regulated—in a well worked out and elaborate military system, and in all such minor matters as the careful counting of the heads of the slain foes for record after a victory.

The Egyptians were an orderly and methodical people in all their ways.

In the Greek, this spirit showed itself rather in that subtle and refined perception of the laws of harmony, proportion, and artistic effect, which made Greece pre-eminent in architecture and all other arts, in oratory, in poetry, and in song. We see it also in an intelligent and willing obedience to the necessary restraints of law. The last feature was equally conspicuous in the Roman, as in modern times it is in the Anglo-Saxon. The laws of the Romans were the foundation of our modern legislation. In the case of Rome, we also see this spirit of order in the high standard of discipline in the Army, in the striking subjection of children to parents, and similarly of every individual of the body politic, to the legitimate demands, however onerous, of the State. Whether, however, in the Greek, the Roman, or the Briton, this willing subjection to law has been combined with a sturdy and independent clinging to personal freedom, which is the best guarantee for the unfettered development and progress of the individual and of the nation generally. In Germany, again, we see a careful, systematic, and thorough study of every branch of knowledge, which has resulted in the creation of the richest and profoundest literature in Europe—and, as applied to military questions, has given the telling effects considered in our last section. For in this, as in each of these other nations, this spirit of order, as applied to the Army, has found expression in an elaborate military system, well organised on a permanent basis.

Order, when translated into military language, means much. It means—

1. *Organization*.—For organization is only the working of the spirit of order upon a mass of otherwise incoherent units, making them one organic whole, fitted for the performance of a certain definite task.

2. *Equipment*.—For equipment, in all its branches, is but the orderly adaptation of means to an end. It is the application of mechanical science and inventive skill to the production of certain definite results.

3. *Training*.—For training and instruction are but the orderly working up of the raw material into the finished military article.

4. *Supply*.—For supply is but the orderly maintenance, in due and proper condition and fitness for work, of the fighting elements which organization, equipment, and training had created.

The spirit of order then, I say, understood in its widest sense, has here given us the four essential elements which go to make and maintain the fighting machine. But that this machine may work properly, two more essential elements are wanting; and these also the spirit of order supplies, in—

5. *Command*.—For command (in the widest sense, including the functions of all ranks of officers, whether staff or regimental) is but the orderly direction and conduct of the various parts of the machine, that all may work in harmony together towards a definite end.

6. *Obedience*.—For discipline, in all ranks, is the ordering and controlling agent which causes all parts of the machine to remain in due subordination to each other and to the master mind.

With these six elements, our fighting machine is apparently complete. But if we wish to see it really and permanently formidable,—if we want it to progress with the age, to change and modify its forms

with the advance of knowledge and science, and to maintain its own vigorous life, by an uniform and consistent development—we must add one more—the seventh and last,—and this, also, the spirit of order supplies to us—

7. *Study*.—For the theoretical and practical study of war, whether in reference to strategy and tactics, or to the lessons of experience observation and common sense generally, is the means whereby a due and proper order, course and direction may be given to our completed machine, under the various and changing conditions of its action.